

Georgia's Archaeology Month Operations

By Betsy Shirk

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May 2005 will mark the 12th anniversary of an archaeology awareness promotion in Georgia. From its inception as a weeklong celebration in 1994, the observance has grown to an entire month of special public events, exhibits, and demonstrations in communities across the state. The *Society for Georgia Archaeology* (SGA), a 501(c)3 organization composed of interested members of the general public along with avocational and professional archaeologists, serves as the primary sponsor. A packet of information including the Governor's Proclamation, a poster, lesson plan, and a calendar of events (listing activities scheduled for the month) is distributed to schools, regional libraries, state legislators, and to state and federal historic sites and parks as part of *Georgia Archaeology Month*.

Funding - Co-sponsors help defray the costs of bringing these publications and programs to the public. Sponsorship is invited in one or more of the following ways: *Cash Donations*, which are used to print and mail the poster, information packets, and calendar of events brochures, and *In-Kind Services*, which may include printing, photography, media coverage and promotion, or other services. Donations of \$500.00 or more entitle co-sponsors to have their names printed on the front of the poster. Contributions can be for the general operating fund or for specific events.

Past sponsors include the Office of the State Archaeologist, Parks and Historic Sites Division (Georgia Department of Natural Resources), Brockington and Associates, Bulloch Hall Archaeological Society, Coosawatee Foundation, Environmental Services Inc., Council on American Indian Concerns, Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists, LAMAR Institute, Southeastern Archeological Services, New South Associates, Southern Research, TRC Garrow Associates, Edwards-Pitman Environmental, and Antonio J. Waring, Jr. Archaeological Laboratory.

Planning – SGA board members chair the Archaeology Month committee, which ideally includes the following Sub-Committees:

- Poster – design, graphic artist, text
- Events – send event request memos to parks, libraries, historical organizations, chapters, consulting firms, universities – put article in Profile - prepare events brochure
- Educational Materials – 8th grade level lesson plan that complements poster
- Distribution – contact regional educational services area (RESA) districts, update mailing labels, order packaging materials, package (approx. 50 man-hours), take to UPS/Post Office
- Publicity – proclamation request; press release; other (newspaper/radio) – statewide; website, bookmarks
- Fund-raising – letters soliciting co-sponsors sent to state agencies, private and nonprofit organizations; matching funds; grant applications

An eleven month planning calendar (beginning in June of the previous year) is as follows:

- June – decide on theme
- August – preliminary poster design – front and back; begin fund-raising
- September – memos requesting events sent to state parks and historic sites
- November – events memos to others (libraries, historical organizations, chapters, consulting firms, universities)
- December – finalize poster; put events request in *Profile* (SGA newsletter)
- Feb – deadline for events; by mid-Feb, poster, educational materials, and events brochure ready for printer
- March – package and distribute Archaeology Month materials; spring meeting details in *Profile*
- April – press release; publicize spring meeting locally

Printing – The number of posters printed averages 3000 and costs around \$2500. At least 800 lesson plans are produced at an average cost of \$1000. The number of event brochures printed varies, but several years enough were printed to send to welcome centers across the state. Costs vary from \$600 to \$1500.

Distribution - Over 400 sets of 4 posters (1600 posters) each were packaged in mailing tubes for delivery to public 8th grade school teachers across Georgia. Each school also receives a copy of the teachers' packet (lesson plan), an evaluation form, and an events brochure. All but 40 of these are sent UPS to the Regional Educational Services Area (RESA) districts for distribution to the individual schools. Packaging materials (mailing tubes and envelopes) average \$800 and distribution averages \$1000.

DNR, Parks and Recreation distributes posters and event brochures to the 63 state parks and historic sites.

The 236 mailing tubes containing a poster, teachers' packet and events brochure are hand delivered to the mailroom at the Capitol for distribution to the state legislators.

Publicity - SGA requests a proclamation signing at the Capitol. Archaeology Month is publicized in the Preservation Georgia Online, the newsletter of the State Historic Preservation Office. A press release for Archaeology Month that includes a list of events is sent statewide to newspapers, radio stations and television stations. The event brochures that were distributed to schools, libraries, state parks and historic sites, and Georgia Welcome Centers publicized activities. Individual event sponsors also publicized their activities through newspaper and radio announcements, and flyers.