

**It's Official!**  
**\$7,188.7 million in tourism spending in**  
**Metro Atlanta in 2008!**

If you were not able to attend the January 25<sup>th</sup> TDAG Grassroots 101 Seminar, you will be able to get the power point presentation from the TDAG website soon! The presentation gave some great tools for insuring a productive day at the Capitol. A special Thank you to Joy for arranging this very informative session and for having Representative Butch Parrish, Representative Kevin Levitas and Representative Matt Ramsey meet with workshop attendees to take time to answer questions and give insider information on best practices when working with your legislators. Another special Thanks to Mark Vaughn and the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau for being our gracious hosts.

Tourism Day at the Capitol started with a flurry of activity as the travel regions set up their booths in preparation to start spreading the Good News! The annual tradition of the presentation of the Big Check on the steps was at 8:30am this year. We were honored that our new Speaker of the House, David Ralston was able to join us for the check presentation of \$850.6 million representing state tax revenue generated from tourism-related expenditures.

With Schedules and Budgets tighter than ever, I must say a hearty THANK YOU to the volunteers that stepped up and gave their time to work the AMTA booth: Christina Rittenhouse and Harriet Rosenberg, Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism; Theresa Jenkins, Marietta Welcome Center; Katie Brenkle, Dunwoody CVB; Jo Ann Haden-Miller and Tara Spann, Atlanta CVB; Lee Klaer, Lamplighter Tours of Atlanta; Randi Miles and Kimberly Weaver, Douglasville CVB; Gillian Hanes, Great Southern Publishers; and Wil Thomas and Linda Murphy of the Gwinnett County CVB, I appreciate your time and dedication to make sure AMTA stays on the minds of our legislators as they enter this difficult budget session.

See you in Metro Atlanta!

Kym Hughes,

Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism