



[www.lynchburgchamber.org](http://www.lynchburgchamber.org)

# MEDIA RELEASE

**Date: 05/02/05**

Contact: Lisa K. Meriwether  
Vice President of Tourism Services  
Tel. (434) 845-5966

---

## **Lynchburg Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, a division of the Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, Celebrates See America Week/NTW**

*Lynchburg, Va, 05/02/05* — In recognition of travel and tourism's tremendous economic, social, and cultural impact in Lynchburg, Va, The Lynchburg Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, a division of the Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, announced today that it plans to observe See America Week (formerly National Tourism Week) the week of May 7–15, 2005. The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) sponsors this annual celebration nationally.

Week long activities have been planned and will include free admission at participating attractions through our "Discover Pass" program. Activities will include daily food & beverage showcase, limousine tours of historic districts, Civil War trolley tours, book signings by Jim Elson, *Lynchburg, The First 200 Years*, and more! There will be door prize drawings compliments of Virginia Dare Cruises, Mariner's Landing, and The Homestead Resort. All activities are being held or originate from the Lynchburg Visitor Information Center located at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Church Streets, Lynchburg.

A primary growth opportunity for the U.S. economy is the \$555 billion travel and tourism industry. There are 7.2 million direct travel-generated jobs in the U.S., which translates to one of every eight people in the U.S. civilian labor force. In a rapidly changing world, the tourism industry is evolving and becoming increasingly diversified and sophisticated. Often the industry is viewed as disorganized because only its most obvious segments, such as airlines, airports, restaurants, rental cars, hotels, and travel agents, are immediately recognized by the public or reported on by the media. From entry-level employees to top-level executives, tourism-related jobs in the U.S. can be found in

(more)

technology, transportation, hospitality, meeting services, attractions and theme parks, sightseeing, entertainment, special interest travel, recreation, outdoor, and nature-based travel, as well as travel marketing and promotions.

“See America Week/NTW is a time when Lynchburg, VA focuses on the impact of travel and tourism in our area,” said Lisa Meriwether, Vice President of Tourism Services. “We thank our visitors for their patronage, honor the employees who serve them, and show our pride for our industry.”

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation, tourism’s economic contribution to Virginia in 2003 reached \$15.2 billion, up 5.2% over 2002. In 2003, the travel and tourism industry was the fifth largest private sector employer in Virginia, with 280,700 direct full-time jobs. Nearly 36 million person trips were made to Virginia in 2003, up 1.1% since 2002. This represents 3.2% of all person trips taken in the US. Tourism-generated jobs provided \$10.6 billion in labor income to Virginians (benefits and salaries) in 2003. Tourism is economic development and responsible for \$2 billion in state tax revenues in 2003. Dollars spent by travelers produce a ripple effect, which is felt through every aspect of our community and beyond.

“The dollars spent by visitors have strengthened Lynchburg’s economy by creating jobs, supporting local businesses from gas stations to retail stores, and creating greater tax revenues to support our community,” remarked Meriwether. “As a result, it’s easy to see how ‘Tourism Works for Lynchburg’ and why the industry’s slogan is, ‘Tourism Works for America’.”

For a complete listing of See America Week (National Tourism Week) activities, please contact the Lynchburg Visitor Information Center located at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Church Streets in downtown Lynchburg. 434-847-1811, 1-800-732-5821 or e-mail [Tourism@lynchburgchamber.org](mailto:Tourism@lynchburgchamber.org).

###