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Wake County Tourism Numbers Increase in January

Raleigh, NC – After a year of economic downturn and decline in travel figures across the country, the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau has released January 2010 travel figures showing an increase in Occupancy and Tax Collection numbers.

Occupancy in Wake County hotels was **48 percent** higher than last year's figure of **46 percent**. These figures are also above the national average of **45.1 percent** and North Carolina's average of **40.2 percent**. Tax collections also saw an increase of **2.7 percent**, when compared year-to-date calculations according to Smith Travel Research, an industry research firm which tracks the hotel industry.

Major meetings and conventions held in the Raleigh area significantly impacted these figures including: Big Rock Sports East, a national sports equipment dealer show, which impacted 12 area hotels with 5,000 attendees yielding more than 4,600 room nights. The National Agents Alliance Leadership Conference met at the Raleigh Convention Center with more than 2,500 attendees generating nearly 1,800 hotel room-nights was also a factor in the increased figures.

"According to data from Smith Travel Research and other credible industry sources, we are beginning to see an up-swing in leisure and business travel," said Dennis Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The Raleigh area positions itself as an affordable and accessible destination, making it the ideal choice for a meeting or a leisure weekend."

Figures for February have not yet been released by Smith Travel Research but the expectation is that Occupancy and Tax Collection numbers will continue to increase.

ABOUT THE GREATER RALEIGH CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business.

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