

GEORGIA TRAVELER 212
CAPTION SCRIPT

Music

David VO:

On this episode of Georgia Traveler, we're driving on Corridor Z in search of family fun...a place to eat, a place to sleep, an outdoor activity, and a local legend. That's next on Georgia Traveler.

Music

On the road most every day, looking for a place where you can play, looking for the best place you can stay. From the mountains to the coast, looking for a trip you'll like the most, we may even find a friendly ghost, we're Georgia Traveler. Well, we're from Georgia and we travel, that's why we call it Georgia Traveler, and nothing rhymes with Georgia Traveler, but still we're called the Georgia Traveler.

Music

Woman VO:

Georgia Traveler is made possible in part by...

Music

Man VO:

Few places on earth match Georgia for natural beauty, and we plan to keep it that way. We're Georgia Power, a proud sponsor of public broadcasting. We're on, so you can be. Georgia Power, a Southern Company.

Music

Woman VO:

And by supporters of Georgia Public Broadcasting. Thank you.

Music

David Zelski:

Hello and Welcome to GA Traveler, I'm David Zelski, and this week Keely, Phil, and I explore South Georgia's Corridor Z....

Music

David Zelski:

And no place better to start than Georgia's wildest destination, the Parks at Chehaw in Albany, Georgia, and...oh, what's this? Ah, this must be Blue Gene Simmons, the blue tongue skink! What do you got to say, buddy? Super!....

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David Zelski:

Developed as Chehaw State park in 1937, the original 586 acres have since expanded to over 700 acres, and now boasts one of the state's most impressive collections of animals from all over the world. To find out more, I tracked down executive director, Doug Porter, who was with a Black Rhino named W. Doug Porter, I'm David Zelski.

Doug Porter:

Hey, good to see you. Welcome to Chehaw.

David Zelski:

Thank-you very much. Well, I really love this place and I want to help out however I can. What can I do?

Doug Porter:

Well, our volunteers are the backbone of our organization, and we've got a great job for you this morning. John, here, will get you started.

David Zelski:

Alright! Oh, ahh! Black rhino, huh? Yeah, seen this before! *Grunts*. Well, this is fun. Volunteer work is good, but I'm really excited to see what the rest of the park has to offer.

Music

David Zelski:

So after that experience cleaning up W's mess, I figured the best was yet to come...and I was right.

Doug Porter:

Being an accredited zoo, we're able to feature some animals here that some places might not have. For example, the black rhinoceros, a highly endangered species. We have four young cheetahs that are just wonderful animals. And the people that sent those here had to have a lot of confidence in the abilities of our staff and our facilities to send them here. Our staff last year started doing something called Breakfast with the Cheetahs, and we invite guests out here to have a full hot breakfast; to have a little behind the scenes encounter with the cheetahs, and then see the cheetahs run the lure course. And it's like \$25 a person. And that has sold out every time we've done it.

David Zelski:

You got guys like this over there just kinda...

Doug Porter:

Yea.

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David Zelski:

roamin' around...

Doug Porter:

Ring-tailed lemurs, four different varieties out here, the Ring-tailed lemurs, the Black- and White-ruffed, the Red-ruffed lemurs, and then the little Red-crowned lemurs, which are a fair bit smaller. All of these guys are native to Madagascar. And this is kind of a unique exhibit, we call it a free range exhibit because they have access to this piece of real estate, and they can climb trees, and people viewing them would see them much like they would in the wild. Most of us, when we were growing up, we remember Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom and one of the feature folks on that was Jim Fowler. He's from Albany. He did the original layout and design for this zoo about 30 or 35 years ago. And he's since come back and began to work with us a little bit to try to develop some new habitats out here. So he's influential in how this park has developed and maybe how it develops in the future.

David Zelski:

The Park consists of moss covered sub-tropical Cyprus swamps, climax hardwood forests and a burn controlled longleaf pine wiregrass habitat... And speaking of wiregrass...

Train Whistle noise

David Zelski:

Be sure to jump on board the wiregrass express while you're here. This small but powerful locomotive is not only a fun ride; it's a great way to see the park. Georgia's official weather prognosticator is General Beauregard Lee. He's a ground hog at the Yellow River Game Ranch. But if you don't have time to get up to Lilburn to see him you may want to come to the Parks at Chehaw where you'll find Sheldon. He's a gopher tortoise. And he's the weather prognosticator for this part of Georgia. It may take a little bit longer but he does a good job.

Music

David Zelski:

You may catch some of Sheldon's kin folk leisurely roaming the park. Pitch a tent and relax for a few nights. Or stay in one of the 42 RV camping spots.

Doug Porter:

In the evening when the park is closed and everybody's gone home and you're sitting out there in your little camp spot, the deer come across and we have you know raccoons and armadillos and just a wonderful experience out here after hours.

David Zelski:

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You can spend one day exploring the boardwalks of the wild animal park and the next fishing in Lake Chehaw... Either way, when visiting the Parks at Chehaw you are in for a treat.

Music

David Zelski:

And speaking of treats have you ever heard of a Jimmie Dog? I better let Phil explain this one.

Phil Proctor:

That's right Dave. I'm down here in Albany on South Jackson Street just around the corner from the Albany Civic Center. The place you're talking about is Jimmie's Hot Dogs. Now I understand that they can serve up to 2 thousand hotdogs a day. 2 thousand hotdogs a day. This is my kind of place.

Music

Male Customer:

It's a perfect hot dog. It's the best hot dog you ever want to eat.

Female Customer:

It's good. It's like you know you shouldn't be eating it but it's good.

Tommy Mathes:

Their grandfathers probably brought them here while they were kids. And now they probably have become grandfathers and they're bringing their grandsons here. So it's like a tradition. She puts the hotdogs, the weenies into the bun. Then with a stick she puts the mustard on the weenie. We always start from right to left. Then with a spoon she uses to put the chili on the hotdog. And after that then the person who's wrapping the hotdogs, she grabs the hotdogs, puts the onions or cheese or slaw, however the customer orders the hotdogs, wraps them, then she gives them to the cashier. The cashier rings them up and then she bags them and the customers have what they've ordered.

Phil Proctor:

Alright Tommy, I've been watching the girls work and I think I can probably fill in now. You said these are four important positions man where do you want me to start?

Tommy Mathes:

Let's go right here at wrapping boss.

Phil Proctor:

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Wrapping? Ok. I'm taking over wrapping. Hey good afternoon, how are you doing? Welcome to Jimmie's can we take your order? Come on girl stop laughing. You ready to eat? Do you want to eat?

Female Customer:

Yea, let me get two chili dogs.

Phil Proctor:

Two chili dogs. Ok. I've got to wrap this.

Tommy Mathes:

With our without onions.

Phil Proctor:

Oh, with or without onions?

Female Customer:

Without.

Phil Proctor:

Ok, without. No onions. Ok and there's a skill to this. It's my professionalism that you respect. Hum. Hang on.

Tommy Mathes:

Let's go.

Phil Proctor:

I'm working on it. No, wait a minute. What didn't they teach you how to, what, what is, hold up...

Tommy Mathes:

Brittany get back up here we've got a line.

Phil Proctor:

Wait a minute I was doing so... Brittany how do you do that?

Brittany:

I do it backwards but...

Phil Proctor:

Oh, ok. Huh. Wrapping is not my forte.

Tommy Mathes:

Maybe eating them is a little bit easier.

Phil Proctor:

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I tell you what. You said you all can serve about 2 or 3 thousand, can you make me up a few?

Tommy Mathes:

Yea we can make a few up.

Phil Proctor:

Ok.

Tommy Mathes:

We're making them as quick as you can make them. And these people aren't ordering 1, 2, or 3 hotdogs. They're getting 10, 20's, 30's and 40's at a time.

Phil Proctor:

Tommy one thing I noticed when I came in you've got this nice counter, all these great folks working behind the counter, where are the chairs?

Tommy Mathes:

That's just the way it's been for years. One of the first things that I was told when I bought this place is not to change it. The original owner was Jimmie Baltous. And I understand that he came in this building in 1947 but before that I understand that he used to sell them in a cart. He had a little push cart where he would sell his hotdogs. He'd spend World War II, the 50's, the 60's with the riots I mean right across the street is where Martin Luther King, I mean you can see his footsteps. That's where they had the march. You know just think all the times that have changed. You know all these decades of change. And it's something that you just want to uphold, you want to try to keep this tradition going.

Phil Proctor:

Although Jimmie's doesn't have any table or chairs inside they do have a nice area just outside the restaurant. Now let me see. I've got my chips. I've got my cola. And more importantly I've got my Jimmie's hotdogs. This is one of my favorites, cheese and chili. Yum, that's fantastic. It's another fantastic food find here in Albany.

Music

David Zelski:

Next, we head east to Alapaha to find our local legend.

Music

David Zelski:

That night I dreamed about a hog. I drifted off, at first thinkin' about

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the sheer beauty of Corridor Z. But now I was haunted by a vision of [screams]... He was horrible. The Lone porker of the Apocalypse. He could turn day into night and lay to waste everything in his path. I didn't know where he came from or why. I didn't know if he was dream or a vision. But I feared that I myself had unleashed him. For he was the fury that would be...Hogzilla

Ken Holyoak:

Nobody had ever seen I don't recon or they act like they had never seen a hog this big. I know I hadn't.

David Zelski:

Ken Holyoak is the owner of Ken's Fish Farms and the operator of River Oaks Plantation. A hog hunting site where Hogzilla was shot.

Ken Holyoak:

He had 20 inch tushes. And they didn't believe he was real you know they thought he was some hog been grown in a pin somewhere. So we cut his head off. His head weighed over a 100 pounds. We buried it in a separate place so when National Geographic's came down they dug up the body they yea yea'd back in forth about the hog. And they said he's got to be a tame hog. So I said well aren't you all going to do a DNA test. Oh yea yea, so they cut them a piece of meat off of the hog and they went and done a DNA test and he was a wild hog.

David Zelski:

The hogs aren't the only thing at Ken's fish farm that grow big. His ponds boast the world record holder for bream. Dubbed the Georgia Giant, these monsters have grown to be up to five pounds! So how might these large fish tie into Hogzilla's abnormal size? Ken has a theory.

Ken Holyoak:

We know he'd swim out in the water at night and eat our fish feed that's why he got so big probably. We have a lot of people call here want to buy some of our fish feed to feed their hogs so they can get try to get them to grow big. Oh we got us some people that race greyhounds. They want our feed too to feed the greyhounds, so maybe they'll run faster.

David Zelski:

What if humans eat it?

Ken Holyoak:

We got all kind of crazy things that goes on around this place.

David Zelski:

The legend of Hogzilla continues even after his death. 8 feet underneath where I'm standing see all these stones. This is Hogzilla's grave sight. It was once a nice grave sight with a cross but mysteriously in the night these stones were

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disappearing. Apparently other hogs, cousins of Hogzilla possibly have been grabbing the stones and throwing them into the woods. Could these be jealous hogs.

Music

Ken Holyoak:

When we buried Hogzilla it was about two foot high. And they toted all the rocks off and they toted off the cross and they toted off the plastic flower. He's down there.

David Zelski:

Why would they do that?

Ken Holyoak:

Who?

David Zelski:

The hogs?

Ken Holyoak:

That's your problem. It ain't mine.

David Zelski:

And you said there's other stones around that they don't mess with.

Ken Holyoak:

Well there's a whole stack of cement down there and a whole stack of cement up here and they don't mess with that.

David Zelski:

Interest in Hogzilla has brought reporters from Nova Scotia, Russia and Japan all the way down to Ken's Fish Farm in Alapaha, Georgia, but it's also inspired the movie industry...The latest... from Tifton, Georgia based Lithium Productions...The Legend of Hogzilla. This movie's not meant to be funny?

Daniel West:

No definitely not. This is a horror film. This is a giant monster that is going to eat you.

David Zelski:

We caught up with the production team in Tucker, Georgia where they were holding auditions

Daniel West:

Hogzilla isn't a little pig by any means.

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Rick Trimm:

We want to see how many times people can throw their popcorn. We want to see how many times they scream and just how many people want to get up and walk out in general.

David Zelski:

Could this young lady be the next teen scream queen...[screams] Or this talented Bogart-like actor be accepting an Academy award...[grunts] Quite possible...but they will have competition landing the lead role. Enter the Georgia traveler team who specialize in method acting.

Daniel West:

I want you to give me this terrifying, gut wrenching, I'm about to die or someone else is about to die scream. [screams]

Phil Proctor:

Let go of my arm. I'm not done... [screams] Let go of that... The brother's always the first to go. Let me go.

Keely Muse:

[screams]

David Zelski:

Well, Rick, Daniel and the production team never asked Keely or the rest of us to come back inside...in fact we haven't even had a call back. I guess they are just saving us for the sequel. Because as Ken will tell you, there's another Hogzilla out there.

Ken Holyoak:

Hogzilla was red, this other hog was black and white. And they were standing out there side by side. And I took their picture. Now the only thing I couldn't tell from the picture was their tusks, tusks. So I don't really never know what the other one and I've had eight hunters see that black and white one. But nobody's shot him. They're there.

David Zelski:

So search the back woods of Alapaha if you dare, but just know that another Hogzilla is lurking...and in each day that passes...The hog and the legend grows...

Music

David Zelski:

From a local legend to a legendary swamp, our outdoor activity puts us deep in the heart of the Okefenokee.

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Keely Muse:

When I heard that we were doing a show on Corridor Z, I knew that I wanted to go to the Okefenokee. It's one of my favorite places in the whole world. So I invited Phil along and we hooked up with Chip Campbell, owner of Okefenokee Adventures. Alright are we ready?

Chip Campbell:

Sure.

Music

Phil Proctor:

Alright here we go. Oh beautiful. Oh yea.

Music

Keely Muse:

The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is a 400 thousand acre swamp in the far southeast corner of Georgia. And the only way across it is by canoe. An average trip would take 3 to 5 days.

Music

Phil Proctor:

Alright so this is a whole new experience for a brother from the city. Washington D.C. was nothing like the swamp. I think the closest thing I had was an ocean, it was a long way away. I'm actually kind of getting the hang of it. Chip was talking to me earlier about what to do. Keely don't worry I'm going to make sure that I don't get us all the way over to the side.

Keely Muse:

We're headed for a tree.

Phil Proctor:

Don't worry I got you covered, watch this, watch how I told you I got mad skills with this thing now. There you go.

Keely Muse:

You're cocky already.

Music

Keely Muse:

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Our destination is Coffee Bay Shelter. It's similar to the types of camping platforms available. And it's just another 6 miles down the Suwanee Canal.

Music

Chip Campbell:

We're about to enter the National Wilderness area. Most of the refuge has an overlay designation as a federal wilderness area, the Okefenokee Wilderness area. And what that essentially means is that this is some of the wildest land in America. This is a place that's you know functionally, fundamentally intact ecologically and genuinely wild. This is wilderness.

Keely Muse:

So this is where the alligators really start to cop an attitude. Yea?

Music

Keely Muse:

There are many different ways to experience the Okefenokee Swamp. Okefenokee Adventures on the east side of the swamp offers boat tours with guides, boat rentals for the more intrepid, and overnight excursions for the truly adventurous.

Chip Campbell:

I've stayed here several times this spring.

Keely Muse:

That sure would be fun to stay overnight.

Chip Campbell:

Oh it's a hoot. I really think, anyway you can get out here is great but the wilderness canoe trips really are the Okefenokee experience.

Keely Muse:

Yea. How's your bottom.

Phil Proctor:

Alright, just so you know, you can't sit down that long...

Chip Campbell:

You feel it don't you man.

Phil Proctor:

Oh, I'm beginning to feel my age. But you know what, nothing stops me because it's about lunch time.

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Chip Campbell:

Yes sir.

Keely Muse:

Well there's nothing like camp food. It always taste so good.

Music

Keely Muse:

After a lunch break at Coffee Bay, the only option is to canoe the 6 miles back. Canoeing any distance, not to mention 13 miles requires a good deal of teamwork. Good work Phil. The day was long, the paddling arms are tuckered but I had a great time, beautiful wildlife, great company, the kind of blissful exhaustion that comes at the end of a long day. I hope that Phil and the crew, non of whom had ever been to the swamp before had as good a time as I did. I wonder if any of them will ever come back.

Phil Proctor:

I tell you what...

Keely Muse:

It feels good to stand up.

Chip Campbell:

You feel it?

Keely Muse:

I'm a little worried.

Phil Proctor:

Hey, I feel like big foot. You know Chip I have to admit that was the most interesting 13 miles... you know and Keely I'm not sure if I want to hang out with you any more. I've got all kind of tightness. Oh but it was incredible just being out there to see you know a lot of things in the wilderness and wildlife you don't get a chance to see and you know canoeing I hadn't done that since I was a boy scout, since I was about 12. I actually fit in it a lot better now than I did then. But I'll tell you what I'm going to go. You all can talk for a minute. I've got to go walk this off.

Chip Campbell:

Ok, bless his heart.

Keely Muse:

Um, maybe not.

Music

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Keely Muse:

From the Okefenokee, we continued our journey east to the coast and our getaway on St. Simon's Island.

Music

Keely Muse:

St. Simons Island. The present day designation is derived from San Simone, the name 17th century Spanish explorers gave to this "Golden Isle". Rich in history, beautiful St. Simons is also the location of our getaway, The King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort.

Bud St. Pierre:

The resort has a wonderful history actually. It opened first in nineteen thirty-five. And it actually opened up as a dance club here on the island.

David Zelski:

Two fires in the club's early history were attributed to arson, but the King and Prince was rebuilt each time.

Bud St. Pierre:

Well the resort now has a 189 rooms. We've added an oceanfront building that has 55 rooms. And we also have 43 villas on either side of the property.

Music

Bud St. Pierre:

The hotel is actually a member of the Historic Hotels of America, which the qualification for membership is that you're fifty years old. The hotel is actually dating back to the 1935. Well this building is actually on the National Registry of Historic Places, which is very special to all of us here. The owners have really kept up the quality here of the furnishing and the amenities for the guests. We have a wonderful location, right along the beachfront. It's a wonderful beach for walking and swimming. The resort has its privately owned golf course on the North end of the island, the Hampton Club.

Phil Proctor:

It sounds like we're going to need some energy to fully explore The King and Prince. A big breakfast is definitely in order. Alright. It's been said, breakfast is the most important meal of the day, right?

David Zelski:

Uh-huh

Phil Proctor:

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Alright and we're at the Delegal dining room. They got a monster buffet behind us okay. Here's two most important rules. One, always use a clean plate. Two, use plenty of em. Are you ready?

David Zelski:

Ready

Phil Proctor:

Georgia Traveler on three. 1,2,3.

Everyone:

Georgia Traveler

David Zelski:

Alright. Let's do this.

Music

Keely Muse:

Cheers

Phil Proctor:

Thank you.

Keely Muse:

Well nourished for the day, I think I'll head to the beach while David and Phil travel to the north end of the island for golf at the Hampton Club.

David Zelski:

Here?

Phil Proctor:

No you've been talking about playing golf for so long I finally get a chance...

Rick Maddox:

Good afternoon gentleman, welcome.

Phil Proctor:

How are you doing?

David Zelski:

Hey, I'm David Zelski.

Rick Maddox:

David, I'm Rick Maddox.

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Phil Proctor:

Rick, Phil Proctor.

Rick Maddox:

Phil, Rick Maddox. Pleasure having you with us.

Phil Proctor:

Thank you.

David Zelski:

We're hoping to get out on the course today.

Rick Maddox:

Well we're certainly glad to have you and I think we can give you an experience you'll never forget.

Music

Rick Maddox:

Each hole has its own special characteristic. Really designed for the golfer from zero to a 40 handicaper. It's not back breaking links. It's wide approaches. It's big fairways, you know but still includes a lot of the features that we have. We have the island wholes which are 12, 13, 14, and 15 and they're connected by 800 feet of bridge work and spectacular in how it engulfs the panoramic views of the marshes and makes it really something special.

Music

David Zelski:

Teamwork.

Phil Proctor:

You know what man, that was a great round.

David Zelski:

Great round, lots of fun.

Music

Keely Muse:

While the guys finishing up on the course, my daughter Tuesday and I are relaxing on the beach. Can I add more water here? Ready?

Music

David Zelski:

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Play on the links, the beach or in an oceanfront pool, because this getaway has something for everyone.

Keely Muse:

Well that's it for this episode of Georgia Traveler. We wanna thank Bud and all our friends here at the King and Prince.

Phil Proctor:

We hope you'll join us for our next Georgia Traveler. But until we meet again, I'm Phil Proctor.

Keely Muse:

I'm Keely Muse

David Zelski:

And I'm David Zelski, wishing you pleasant journeys.

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Woman VO:

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Man VO:

Few places on earth match Georgia for natural beauty, and we plan to keep it that way. We're Georgia Power, a proud sponsor of public broadcasting. We're on, so you can be. Georgia Power, a Southern Company.

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Woman VO:

And by supporters of Georgia Public Broadcasting. Thank you.

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Man VO:

Georgia Traveler is produced in partnership with the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Georgia Tourism Foundation.

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Man VO:

This has been a production of Georgia Public Broadcasting.