

# JAMESTOWN'S BIG DAY is two days away, and despite sluggish sales, some say it's meeting its goals.

## Plenty of people, plenty of tickets

- Reach Michelle E. Shaw at (757) 446-2667 or [michelle.shaw@pilotonline.com](mailto:michelle.shaw@pilotonline.com).

BY MICHELLE E. SHAW  
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

If you're thinking about heading to Jamestown for the commemoration of America's 400th anniversary, you shouldn't have much trouble getting a ticket. Just two days before the big weekend begins, more than half of the available 90,000 tickets remain unsold. Though slightly disappointed planners have found a way to put a positive spin on things.

"There are a couple of ways we're looking at this," said Ross O. Richardson, director of marketing for Jamestown 2007. "And one of them is that one of the goals of all of this was to get people to come to Jamestown, and that is certainly being fulfilled."

Although Jamestown 2007 staff members say things are running smoothly, some questions remain. For instance, the logistics of a visit by President Bush on Sunday are still being arranged, said Mike Litterst, spokesman for Historic Jamestowne, which is run by the National Park Service and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

"We don't really know where he's going to be right now," Litterst said. "There are events going on in several places, and I think the goal right now is that we are all ready."

A potentially unwelcome hiccup could be a protest, planned for Friday and Saturday, by groups opposed to commemorating a history that includes the enslavement of Africans and the oppression of Native Americans. Black Lawyers For Justice, the American Indian Movement, the New Black Panther Party For Self Defense and the All-African People's Revolutionary Party have scheduled what they call "opposition events" to be held near Anniversary Park.

Richardson said anniversary officials are aware of the possible protests and are considering what arrangements should be made.

The Jamestown 2007 commemoration officially began in May 2006, launching 18 months' worth of activities, including several professionally produced "signature events," to recognize the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in America.

Though Queen Elizabeth II's visit last week drew a number of out-of-town visitors, the biggest influx is expected Friday through Sunday for America's Anniversary Weekend. Organizers are capping attendance at 30,000 each day because that is the maximum number the transportation system can handle, Richardson said.

The weekend's highlights include a joint performance by the Virginia and Richmond symphony orchestras, the first time the two groups have played together; and a concert featuring Bruce Hornsby & The NoiseMakers. Sunday's entertainment includes Journey of Destiny – a musical production about Jamestown's early years – and a fireworks finale.

Richardson said that despite the less than optimal weather the past few days, preparations are on schedule.

"Things are 85 percent done, which is right where we should be," he said of the construction of Anniversary Park. "Once everything is done and set up, then we've got some fine-tuning to do, and right now, we've got plenty of time to do that."

The park is just across from Jamestown Settlement, which also is busy with last-minute work.

"We are very much on schedule," said Debby Padgett, spokeswoman for the settlement, a living-

history museum originally built in 1957 for the 350th anniversary. "The seating is in place, and I think the last of the staging is going up. We are ready."



**CHRIS TYREE/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT** Amber Marcum, design coordinator for Scecon in Portsmouth, handles America's Heritage Flag, which will be unveiled on the Festival Stage at Anniversary Park in Jamestown this weekend.



Preparations for America's Anniversary Weekend are in full swing as vendors stock tourist information into one of the booths at Anniversary Park on Tuesday. **CHRIS TYREE/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT**