



# Tourism Tidbits

**June 17, 2020**

A bi-weekly newsletter from HCTDA

## Call Before You Go

The Visitor Center is advising guests to call or check the web before they head out to an activity or attraction. Things are changing so quickly it is difficult to keep up with openings when there are so many options throughout Western North Carolina.

Several of the accommodations are reporting that their occupancy is increasing, which is a great punch in the arm to the local economy. The Henderson County Tourism Development Authority continues to advertise in national publications, "When You are Ready to Travel, we have Your Passport." Keep up the good work, things are looking up!

## Blue Ridge Parkway Increases Recreational Access in NC

The Blue Ridge Parkway has increased recreational access at many park picnic areas and restrooms. The National Park Service (NPS) is working service wide with federal, state, and local public health authorities to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and using a phased approach to increase access on a park-by-park basis.

The Parkway reopened access to picnic areas and/or restroom facilities, at the following locations:

- \*Linville Falls Picnic Area, 316.4
- \*Craggy Gardens Picnic Area, 367.6 (port-o-johns)
- \*Mt. Pisgah Picnic Area, 407.8
- \*Folk Art Center, Milepost 382
- \*Graveyard Fields Trailhead, Milepost 418.8
- \*Waterrock Knob Visitor Center, Milepost 451.2



While these areas are accessible for visitors to enjoy, a return to full operations will continue to be phased and services may be limited. When recreating, the public should follow local area health orders in North Carolina and Virginia, practice Leave No Trace principles, avoid crowding and avoid high-risk outdoor activities.

With public health in mind or due to maintenance concerns, the following seasonal visitor facilities remain closed:

- \*Campgrounds park-wide
- \*Visitor Center park-wide
- \*Select Picnic Areas in Virginia and North Carolina

For a complete list go to <https://www.blueridgeparkway.org/>

## Tune Into Tourism Speaks & the Hendersonville Travelogue

Hear the latest tourism industry news, and trends from state and local organizations on HCTDA's Tourism Speaks Radio show every Tuesday at 5:30pm on WTZQ-1600 AM.



The newest show is the Hendersonville Travelogue, which takes you on a journey throughout Henderson County. The show delves into local history, the arts, culture, recreation, fun facts and so such more. The show airs on WTZQ-1600 AM on Thursdays at 5:30pm.

## Count on Me NC

Count On Me NC is a joint effort created by government and health officials in partnership with industry leaders from across the state. Evidence-based COVID-19 training developed by public health officials and food safety experts will provide a vital roadmap for reopening your business. Each module contains best practices and procedures that will give your staff and guests the confidence you're doing everything possible to ensure their safety.

Over 10,000 people have taken the Count On Me NC courses and are listed on their web site <https://countonmenc.org> A marketing plan is being developed to highlight all the businesses that have complete the course. If you have taken the course and are not listed contact Laura Hayden at NC Restaurant & Lodging Association [countonmenc@ncrla.org](mailto:countonmenc@ncrla.org)

## Bearfootin' Brochures

The 2020 Bearfootin' brochures have arrived at the Visitor Center, 201 South Main Street. They are also available in the rack outside of the Visitor Center by the front door, or by download at <https://www.visithendersonvillenc.org/businesses/bearfootin-public-art-walk>

## Advertising Outlook

Nielsen cautions that not spending this year could seriously damage a brand's future revenue potential.

- According to Nielsen, "Marketers who maintain brand equity by adjusting their creatives – even if that means simply adding COVID-related brand awareness messages to existing campaigns – are poised to be better positioned following any recovery, immediate or prolonged."
- Nielsen estimates the penalty for a brand going dark for the remainder of 2020 is an estimated 11% drop in revenue in 2021, and notes a benefit for categories that continued spending after the pandemic started – an increased share of voice among consumers.

Resources – Nielsen & AARP

## HCTDA Sponsored Events

- **Groups Sales Forum** / Jun 17 & Jul 1 / call for virtual meeting info
- **HCTDA Board Meeting** / June 23 / Cascades Mtn. Resort / 1pm
- **4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks** / south side of town near the intersection of Hwy. 225 South and Hwy. 176
- **Monday Night Live** / Jul 20, Aug 3, 17 & 31 / 7-9pm / Visitor Center
- **Music on Main** / Jul 24 – Sept 18 / 7-9pm / Visitor Center
- **Street Dance** / Jul 27, Aug 10, 24 & Sept 14 / 7-9pm / Visitor Center (schedule subject to state mandates)

## Changes in the NC Apple Festival

Due to the ongoing concerns over the Coronavirus, the NC Apple Festival Board of Directors has made some changes to this year's Festival. They have determined that they are unable to hold a Street Fair including the associated Entertainment and Kiddie Carnival, as well as, the King Apple Parade. Due to the street layout they are not able to control the number of attendees, which would allow for social distancing. This decision was made after speaking with local leaders in government and in the health field.

They are **NOT** cancelling the Festival. The history of the North Carolina Apple Festival goes back many years prior to the Street Fair. Originally, the Festival Board worked with the Downtown Merchants and local Non-Profits who operated events. They will be working with them to promote their event through our website and social media. For more info go to: <https://www.ncapplefestival.org>

They will begin immediately to begin planning for next year's event which will be the 75<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Apple Festival

## Online Tourism Industry Survey

The Henderson County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors need your input as they assess the negative impact on Henderson County's local economy and tourism industry. Please take a few minutes and complete the Post Covid-19 survey to provide useful information as they plan for the future. Your survey response will be submitted as anonymous unless you choose to share your name.

<https://hendersoncountytada.wufoo.com/forms/zu0tigi09artxp>

## Car Travel

- Road travel continued to increase last week and was at its highest level since the week ending March 7
- Road travel over the last seven days (through Monday, June 8) was 9.4% higher than the previous seven days

Resource – U.S. Travel Association

## Contact Us

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