



Tourism Tidbits

May 31, 2018
A biweekly newsletter from HCTDA

FAM Tour Deepens Awareness

The inaugural Tourism Industry FAM (Familiarization) Tour, held May 15, allowed owners and employees from Henderson County's tourism-related businesses to explore the county together. Participants boarded a bus at the Visitor Center for an all-day adventure to area attractions such as Flat Rock Playhouse, Holmes Educational State Forest, Etowah Valley Golf & Resort, Bold Rock Hard Cider, Bullington Gardens, Burnshirt Vineyards and more.

The FAM Tour was designed by the Henderson County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) to increase awareness about area attractions. Julie Hayes, outreach coordinator for the TDA, explains, "It's helpful for people on the front line who handle visitors' questions to have a deeper understanding of Henderson County destinations. The better the customer service we provide tourists, the longer they stay and the more they spend!"

Donna Lyleryly of Yonderways attended the tour and was amazed at how much she learned. "I learned so much. I'm now able to recommend new places to visitors who, in turn, will have an enriched experience and spend more money. Another benefit for me was meeting other business owners and employees. I have new contacts in my business arsenal, so the networking aspect is just huge. It was a fun, fun day, and I believe every hospitality worker in Henderson County should take one of these tours."



The TDA will host two more tourism industry FAM Tours on August 1 and November 7, so stay tuned for details.

Summer Concerts Begin in June

Summertime in Hendersonville doesn't seem to arrive anymore until folks are downtown singing, dancing and relaxing in the glow of our mountain evenings. The wait is almost over. The free summer fun begins next week.

The summer concert season will kick off June 4 with Monday Night Live, held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. each Monday in June.

Music on Main Street will open its 11-concert season June 8 and will continue each Friday night from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. through August 17.

The Street Dances begin July 9 with a special 100th anniversary celebration of this Hendersonville tradition. Dances will continue each Monday evening from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. through August 13 and will feature both bands and cloggers. Street Dances are part of the Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina.

These events are sponsored by the TDA. Please stop by the Visitor Center to pick up a supply of the 2018 Summer Music Series brochure. You can also [download the brochure.](#)



New Wayfinding Signs Will Be Dedicated June 12

A total of 72 new wayfinding signs, designed to help visitors and tourists find key points of interest in Henderson County, have been installed all across the county. The large vehicle-level signs feature key information to help visitors and residents navigate to various destinations and attractions. Signs have been installed in Hendersonville, Mills River, Flat Rock, Fletcher, Laurel Park and other areas of the county.

The new signage is the culmination of a three-year process led by the Henderson County Tourism Development Authority (TDA). Several hundred stakeholders—including city and town officials, tourism industry leaders and representatives from local businesses and attractions—participated in planning for this major project. With the ever-increasing number of day visitors and overnight travelers coming to the county, the TDA recognized that a wayfinding system could have a tremendous economic impact on Henderson County and enhance visitors' experiences.

Beth Carden, executive director of the TDA, explains: "As a growing travel destination, Henderson County drew in visitors and tourists from 39 countries and all 50 states last year. And they spent millions of dollars for attractions, accommodations, food and other services. The wayfinding project is just one more tool in our arsenal to help enhance our economic vitality."

Based on the experiences of other cities and counties that have instituted wayfinding programs, the TDA anticipates the wayfinding project will:

- Expand awareness of Henderson County destinations, historic sites and attractions, driving economic benefits for the area
- Help brand our area destinations with attractive signage that provides a consistent and distinctive visual communication system
- Increase overnight stays at area accommodations
- Increase both day trips and overnight trips, with visits to area tourism attractions and local businesses
- Encourage repeat visits by promoting awareness of the scope of Henderson County destinations, increasing the connectivity of community assets
- Develop an enhanced sense of place, with the identification of unique neighborhood and institutional districts
- Help people navigate more safely and comfortably through the county and help encourage exploration of the region by tourists

The total cost of the project, including design, sign fabrication and installation, was approximately \$473,000. Major funding was provided by the TDA. Hendersonville, Mills River, Fletcher and Laurel Park also contributed limited municipal funds in order for specific destinations to be included.

"It's important to note that all of the funds provided by the TDA were generated by room taxes that are collected from overnight visitors who stay in Henderson County accommodations," says Carden.

Special thanks go to past and present TDA board members and staff, as well as to Lew Holloway, the downtown economic development director and a former TDA board member, who served as project manager.



Mark Your Calendars

Wayfinding Project Dedication Ceremony

Tuesday, June 12
2:00-2:30 p.m.

Home Trust Bank parking lot
(corner of King Street and U.S. 64,
across from City Hall)

The TDA will host a dedication ceremony for the signs. City and county officials, representatives from the tourism industry and local business leaders will be on hand to officially unveil the wayfinding signs.

Garden Jubilee Is Smash Hit!



In spite of dire predictions of torrential rains because of tropical depression Alberto, the 25th annual Garden Jubilee escaped the deluges around the region, with only a few sprinkles falling May 26-27 during the lawn and garden festival. This good fortune allowed vendors and local businesses to have a successful event, with many repeat vendors saying it was one of the best years ever in terms of sales and interest, and with new vendors expressing interest in returning next year.

Although visitor attendance was down slightly due to weather forecasts, the event still drew more than 125,000 people to downtown Hendersonville for the event. The streets were filled with young families, couples, groups having a “girls day out,” seniors and singles.

Visitor surveys conducted by the TDA indicated that many visitors came from out of town, with an average two-night stay in area accommodations. Those overnights also spent money at area restaurants and shops, as well as at Garden Jubilee. One couple, for instance, indicated they had traveled five hours to attend the show, spending \$200 a night for three nights at a bed & breakfast, more than \$300 in local shops and \$200 at festival booths. They commented, “No negatives! We like it so much we’re telling family and friends.”

The TDA would like to thank all the volunteers who helped make the event a success, as well as all our tourism-industry partners who helped promote Garden Jubilee, increasing its economic impact on Henderson County.

TDA Announces Grants

The Henderson County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) has awarded its 2018-19 grants to nine recipients. The grant budget is \$20,000 for the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Each year the TDA invites nonprofit organizations to apply for advertising and promotional funding through the Grant Program. These reimbursable grants are awarded to Henderson County nonprofit organizations for the purpose of promoting events, attractions and festivals which draw visitors from more than 40 miles outside Henderson County, and which encourage overnight stays, thus stimulating spending and boosting the local economy.

Grants went to the recipients listed on the right.

Arts Council of Henderson County	Art on Main September 29–30, 2018
Bullington Gardens	Fall Plant Sale September 7–8, 2018
Bullington Gardens	Holiday Craft Sale November 30–December 1, 2018
Hola Community Arts	Fiesta Hendersonville September 23, 2018
Historic Flat Rock	Historic Flat Rock Tour of Homes July 21, 2018
Epic Pickleball	Land of Sky Tournament July 6–8, 2018
Henderson County Curb Market	Ol’ Timey Christmas Open House November 30–December 1, 2018
Henderson County Curb Market	Ol’ Timey Day September 29, 2018
WNC Air Museum	WNC Air Fair June 1–2, 2018

Closures Announced Due to Rains

Heavy rains have made many of the trails at DuPont State Recreational Forest susceptible to damage from trail users, resulting in temporary closures of all DuPont single-track trails. This will not apply to graveled two-track trails such as Hooker Falls Trail, High Falls Loop and Triple Falls Trail, which will remain open. Forest officials expect most trails will be reopened by June 1-3. Check for updates at www.facebook.com/FriendsOfDuPontForest/.

Chimney Rock Park has been closed until further notice because a retaining wall collapsed May 26 due to heavy rains. The park will remain closed until the collapsed wall in the upper parking lot can be stabilized. Look for information on the park reopening at www.chimneyrockpark.com.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is closed from milepost 355.5 to 381.9 because of fallen trees. Check the Parkway's [real map](#) for updates.

Bill Moore Community Park—formerly Fletcher Community Park—is also closed due to flooding until further notice.

Pisgah National Forest has closed the trails in Bent Creek Experimental Forest until June 1 at the earliest. Check <http://www.facebook.com/nfsnc> for updates.

The WNC Air Fare, scheduled for June 1–2, has been cancelled.

RSVP for Next Tourism After Five

The next Tourism After Five will be held June 14 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Lazy Otter Outfitters. We encourage you to join us and see what Lazy Otter has to offer so you can make informed recommendations to tourists. There will be games and prizes at the event, as well as food and a sampling of local beers. Please RSVP to Julie Hayes at 828-693-9708 or at outreach@visithendersonvillenc.org.

Tryon Games News

Michelle Yelton, a representative for Tryon Equestrian Center, was the guest this week on the radio program “Tourism Speaks,” which airs on WTZQ Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. and on WHKP Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. Yelton indicated that there will be a robust shuttle system for the FEI World Equestrian Games, including shuttle service from Hendersonville. Details will be announced later. She also said rumors that many events have sold out aren't true. While some day passes have sold out, most have not. Still, it's a good idea to get tickets early, especially for popular events. Yelton also reports there are multiple price points, with some tickets only \$20 for a single event, and that there will be free events as well. Go to www.tryon2018.com for details.

Media Spotlight

- **Times News** – Music on Main
- **Food Wine Travel Magazine** – <http://fwtmagazine.com/48-hours-in-hendersonville-north-carolina>
- **WLOS TV** – Garden Jubilee live spots May 27; website article: <http://wlos.com/news/local/annual-garden-jubilee-fills-downtown-hendersonville-with-plants-and-more>
- **Romantic Asheville** – Garden Jubilee: <https://www.romanticasheville.com/garden-jubilee>
- **Asheville Radio Group** – Garden Jubilee: <http://the828.com/2018/05/27/gardenjubilee/>
- **WTZQ Radio** – Garden Jubilee

HCTDA Upcoming Events

June 4–25 Monday nights 7:00–9:00 p.m.	June 8 – August 17 Friday nights 5:00–7:00 p.m.	June 12 2:00 p.m.	June 14 5:00–7:00 p.m.	June 26 1:00 p.m.	June 28 11:00 a.m.–noon
Monday Night Live	Music on Main	Wayfinding Sign Dedication	Tourism After Five	HCTDA Board Meeting	Group Sales Forum
Visitor Center Stage 201 S. Main Street	Visitor Center Stage 201 S. Main Street	Parking lot of Home Trust Bank, downtown	Lazy Otter Outfitters	Visitor Center 201 S. Main Street	Visitor Center 201 S. Main Street

Contact Us

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