



Tourism Tidbits

October 22, 2020

A bi-weekly newsletter from HCTDA

The Visitors Center Gains Momentum

The Visitor Center has been gaining momentum assisting travelers since reopening in late May. Each month there has been a steady increase in visitors and occupancy tax collected, as the traveling public is becoming more confident in moving from state to state and sightseeing. The fall harvest season is proving to be the shot in the arm that many businesses needed after such a slow start as things opened up after the shutdown. The apple orchards have been overwhelmed with people seeking fun family activities, while practicing social distancing.



It seems that local residents and downtown employees are parking regularly in the Visitor Center parking lot eliminating valuable parking for visitors seeking information about what to do and see in Hendersonville. In the past two months, the Visitor Center has been greeting on average 200 guests a day. We invite visitors to Hendersonville so they will stay overnight and spend money in our economy. If local residents and business employees park in the Visitor Center lot, it prevents our guests from staying in our community as long and our parking spaces not turning over as often.



We ask our local residents and downtown business employees to park elsewhere to free up the Visitor Center parking lot for our potential guests and your customers. There is parking on the avenues and Church Street for longer term parking. HCTDA appreciates your assistance spreading the word on keeping the Visitor Center parking lot available to guests visiting Hendersonville so that they can enjoy Hendersonville's hospitality and spend money!

Henderson County TDA Awarded Deer Park® Grant

The Blue Ridge Parkway Association and the Deer Park® Brand partnered together to establish a number of sustainability grants that fund important conservation initiatives that benefit member communities and visitors alike. The grants are a part of the Deer Park® Brand's larger conservation efforts. The competition for the grants was fierce, three projects stood out for their ability to have meaningful impact on the community and educate and inspire visitors to embrace sustainable practices in their own homes and neighborhoods.

Henderson County Tourism Development Authority will deploy the grant to create a demonstration pollinator garden in the center of the historic Main Street district in downtown Hendersonville that will motivate residents and visitors alike to make simple changes in their own landscapes to help sustain local ecosystems. The garden will incorporate interpretive signage and a larger-than-life bee mural painted by celebrated artist, Matt Willey, as part of "The Good of the Hive" global initiative to inspire actions to help sustain healthy ecosystems.

The other two winners were The Orchards at Altapass and the Haywood County TDA. The Orchards at Altapass is a non-profit organization that works to preserve the regional traditions, culture, and food-ways of the Blue Ridge and is one of the most popular spots along Parkway. The Haywood Tourism Development Authority will use the grant for two water conservation and sustainability projects in the Pigeon River Watershed of Haywood County, NC that will complement local volunteer initiatives.

Bearfootin Virtual Auction

The 18th annual Bearfootin' Art Walk Auction is taking place virtually this year in order to ensure the health and safety of the community. All of the bears are gathered in front of the Historic Courthouse for viewing. All bidding is being conducted through the virtual auction website through October 24th, <https://www.aceevents.com/e/BearfootinArtWalkAuction> The public is invited to tune in to Downtown Hendersonville's Facebook page on October 24th at 5:30pm for a live virtual production to receive final bids and announce the winners. <https://www.facebook.com/DowntownHendersonville>

The auction raises funds for the Bearfootin' Art Walk and the many non-profits that the bears represent. Winning bids up to \$3,000 are split evenly between the downtown program and the winning non-profit, bid amounts that exceed \$3,000 go to the non-profit in their entirety.

Free Webinars

- **October 26** - How to Find Your Customers, 12-2pm <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50400145>
- **October 28** - Are You Ready to be an Entrepreneur? 1-2pm <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50400171>
- **October 29** - Build Your Business with Instagram, 5-6pm <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50400138>
- **October 29** - How to Start a Business, 5:30-7:30pm <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50400151>
- **November 4** - Building Your Business Around Your Community, 10-11am <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50400172>

Last Call for Restaurants Open for Holiday Dining

HCTDA compiles a list of restaurants each year that open during the holiday season. The guide is listed on the Visitor Center web site, emailed to the Henderson County accommodations, and given out at the Visitor Center. The list is a helpful tool in assisting visitors to our area during the holidays, it has also become very popular with the residents in planning their holiday season. This year, we are also listing restaurants that are offering takeout holiday meals. This is a free service of HCTDA. **Deadline is October 23, 2020.** Check out the 2019 Dining Guide <https://www.visithendersonvillenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-Holiday-Dining-Guide.pdf>

Please send Melanie Black an email, info@visithendersonvillenc.org if you are open on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day. **Please, list ONLY the holiday(s) you are open in the email.**

Fall is Wildfire Season in NC

The NC Forest Service and the USDA Forest Service urge people to be cautious with campfires and when burning yard debris, during the fall wildfire season. The season in NC typically lasts from Mid-October until mid-December, the time of year people burn leaves and yard debris. The leading cause of wildfires are fires left unattended and when embers escape and start wildfires.

The USDA Forest Service also reminds people to use caution around campfires. Use fire rings and clear a safe area around them of at least 15 feet. Never leave them unattended and make sure they are complete out before leaving. For burning safety tips go to: https://www.ncforestservice.gov/news_pubs/newsdesk_2020.htm#20201008

HCTDA Sponsored Events

- **HCTDA Board Meeting** / October 27 / 1pm / Cascades Resort
- **Home for the Holidays** / Nov. 1 – Jan. 1 / events happening throughout Henderson County
- **Hendersonville Bridal Show** / Nov. 14 / Blue Ridge Community College
- **Peppermint Bear Scavenger Hunt** / Nov. 27 – Dec. 23 / Downtown
- **Residents Christmas Decorating Contest** / Dec. 7 - 18
- **Merchant Christmas Decorating Contest** / Dec. 7 - 18 (schedule subject to state mandates)

Media Spotlight

- **Times-News / HCTDA's Monthly Colum / Workcations on the Rise** https://www.blueridgenow.com/news/20201020/tda-column-workcations-are-on-rise?fbclid=IwAR14dQciqftY5E7Pdp_E6EA8fHIQN1n5yhQ0_D9jB669AAu_ibqf0SUCg5Y
- **UNC-TV NC Weekend** - <https://www.pbs.org/video/from-cherryfield-campsite-in-brevard-t2hrqo/>
- **AVL Today** - <https://avltoday.6amcity.com/ashevilles-fall-bucket-list/>
- **ShermansTravel** – Great Hotels for Social Distancing https://www.shermanstravel.com/slideshow/great-hotels-for-social-distancing?utm_source=PostUp&utm_campaign=15842&utm_medium=email&recip_id=6932641

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