

SEPTEMBER 2018

HIGHLIGHTS



BEAR SHADOW OVERLOOK – Following years of discussion initiated by the Cashiers Area Chamber, the Highlands Cashiers Land Trust has tentatively agreed to accept a 2-acre parcel of land located on US Highway 64 West, near the Rhodes Overlook, and to allow Jackson County to construct a visitor viewing platform and parking area on the site. This will provide a safe pull off alternative to the Jackson/Macon County line on-road congestion that currently occurs during the Bear Shadow phenomenon and with leaf-viewing traffic. The Chamber is coordinating next steps to meet with JCTDA, HCLT and Tate Landscaping (who previously developed options for platform viewing at the Rhodes site) for detailed consideration. The shadow appears twice a year with the most popular viewing in October during the height of the leaf season. The area offers a stunning vista of the vibrant fall foliage in the Cashiers Valley below at the popular western gateway to Jackson County.



2018 TOUR DE CASHIERS MOUNTAIN CYCLING & 5K RUN EXPERIENCE –

Despite the hurricane threat, the 27th annual mountain cycling event is scheduled to be held on September 15th. Peak Racing Events will direct the ride, a new logo has been introduced, the date was changed to the fall and a 5K run added to the agenda. Partnerships with Whiteside Brewing Company and Baldaroo will incentivize participants to stay overnight. More than 200 riders and 50 runners registered in advance.

BALADAROO -- The second annual outdoor concert sponsored by the Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau is scheduled to be held on Saturday, September 15th. A partnership with the Tour de Cashiers was established to further promote overnight stays. Weather conditions at press time were uncertain but the event will be held rain or shine. Advance ticket sales have been very successful with significant guerilla marketing efforts.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – Efforts continue to promote expanding the current labor pool on the Plateau, particularly for hospitality positions. The Chamber and JCTDA continue to work with the Jackson County school system to introduce the Prostart program into the high schools. This NC Restaurant & Lodging Association curriculum develops customer service skills and promotes travel and tourism employment and career opportunities to students. The Chamber has agreed to fund necessary expenses in an effort to roll out the program as early as Spring 2019.

VISITOR CENTER UPGRADES – Met with Nick Breedlove and representative of The Source Group regarding potential improvements to reception area space planning and literature display. The Source Group developed the racking in use at the Asheville Airport which is a design that would be a very good aesthetic and functional fit at the Cashiers office.

MISSION HEALTH SYSTEM/HCA HEALTHCARE – As a matter of information, a very significant Asset Purchase Agreement has been approved by the local Highlands Cashiers and regional Mission hospital boards and HCA Healthcare, a leading national provider of healthcare services. As a result of the not-for-profit/for-profit relationship, a successor foundation – The Dogwood Health Trust – will be created to fund hundreds of millions of dollars into 18 western North Carolina counties to improve the health and wellbeing of all citizens. Of interest, will be the improved access to healthcare (such as urgent care clinics) for visitors to the Plateau. The agreement is under review by the NC Attorney General and the transaction is expected to close by the end of the year.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Arrangements have been made to extend October visitor center hours from 10 to 2 on Saturdays
- Partnered with the Highlands Chamber to advertise in the Chronicle/Highlander newspapers' printed events calendar to promote Cashiers411.com
- Former JCTDA Vice Chair and incoming President of the Chamber Board Mary Lanning, of Hampton Inn & Suites, has been nominated for the next Jackson County Citizens Academy
- Under the direction of the Cashiers Valley Garden Club, a professional landscaper has been hired for routine maintenance of the visitor center.
- Followed up with Highlands Chamber executives and board members to discuss tourism and economic development issues and marketing and training opportunities
- Proactively distributed Play On guides to area accommodations and high volume distribution sites
- Working with Deerfoot Lodge Blue Ridge executives regarding community open house and stakeholder introductions in October. 600 campers in four sessions are expected to start in May 2019. Similar to Camp Merrie-Woode impact, visiting parents during session intake are expected to significantly contribute to overnight stays and tourism receipts.

For more information, contact Stephanie Edwards, Executive Director, Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce & Jackson County Visitor Center at Cashiers, stephanie@CashiersAreaChamberorinfo@DestinationCashiers.com 828.743.5191

2018 Analytics Reporting

SOURCE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Internet Analytics													
TourDeCashiers.com Pageviews	29215	36761											
Cashiers411.com Pageviews	1601	661	2570										
Cashiers411.com Visits	653	180	889										
CashiersAreaChamber.com Pageviews	4967	4727	6024	4406	5713	7243	9350	8593					
CashiersAreaChamber.com Visits	1544	1303	2170	1737	3078	2731	4130	3602					
Destination-Cashiers Pageviews	83	138	506	939	1127	705	224	85					
FB Likes - Chamber	1863	1875	n/a	n/a	1946	1961	1971	1991					
FB CACOC Daily Total Reach	2488	6600	21930	13924	3797	5183	3912	7426					
FB CACOC Weekly Total Reach	9344	29768	104675	85188	19740	26017	23401	36087					
FB 28 Day Total Reach	40741	68021	200131	332242	75173	76419	72908	90394					
FB Likes - Tour De Cashiers	602	605	n/a	n/a	675	700	734	843					
FB Tour De Cashiers Daily Total Reach	75	80	59	34	1081	5124	6236	20797					
FB Tour De Cashiers Weekly Total Reach	463	476	447	252	6079	27791	35330	118186					
FB Tour De Cashiers 28 Day Total Reach	1417	1530	1825	1127	7768	49472	147485	200125					
Mountainlovers.com Referral	2	3	3	5	4	0	6	8					
MountainloversNC.com Referral	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
JacksonNC.org Referral	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
VisitNC.com Referral	0	0	0	3	2	9	2	9					
On-Site													
After Hours Information Pick Up	50	160	150	220	200	210	492	422					
Information Packets Mailed	8	16	15	20	150	6	14	16					
On Site Visitors	76	46	150	150	150	232	326	244					
Email Inquiry	7	10	10	15	15	12	7	10					
Phone Inquiry	120	78	140	140	140	145	244	223					
Play On Merchandise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
Mass Distribution													
Cashiers Visitor Guide	139	474	900	2500	13500	1870	2320	1010					
Cashiers Shopping & Dining Guide	755	274	500	1250	500	1675	560	665					
JCTDA Visitor Guide	161	90	1000	1500	500	713	1661	627					
JCTDA Waterfall Map	405	162	700	1700	500	1370	980	1165					
Fly Fishing Guide	40	50	200	350	50	165	400	115					
Lifestyle & Living Map	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	370	75					
Cashiers Adventure Map	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9050					
Mass Distribution Monthly Totals	1500	1050	3300	7300	15050	5793	6291	12707					
JC TDA Visitor Guide (handouts)	48	42	75	100	100	75	110	110					