

NOVEMBER 2018

ANNUAL CASHIERS LEAF FESTIVAL – A very successful festival and concert were held October 5-7, 2018 on the Village Green. While foliage color was not yet turning, the popular special event brought hundreds of visitors to the Plateau. (JCTDA Board Member and Village Green Executive Director Ann Self to provide details.)

HIGH HAMPTON RESORT ANNOUNCEMENT – The 2018-2020 operational schedule was announced. (JCTDA Board Member and HHR General Manager Tom Garcia to provide details.)

FESTIVAL OF TREES/ANNUAL CASHIERS CHRISTMAS PARADE – The Village Green will host its traditional tree lighting and Santa/Mrs. Claus festivities at the Crossroads gazebo Thanksgiving weekend (Friday November 23rd). The Chamber will produce the 44th Annual Cashiers Christmas Parade at noon on Saturday, December 8, featuring floats, marching band, animals, children, fire trucks and more! The event will be streamed live on the internet at tv.thehighsouth.com

VILLAGE GREEN/COMMUNITY WIFI – JCTDA Board Member Ann Self, executive director of the Village Green, and Stephanie Edwards, CACOC, in coordination with JCTDA Director Nick Breedlove, met with representatives of Balsam West to discuss installation of a community wifi network in the new Arts & Culture all-weather/year round facility now under construction. Under a JCTDA and Balsam West partnership, the visitor center was connected to fiber in December 2017. In this enhanced scenario, fiber service would be run to the Village Green building and deployed wirelessly to welcome visitors in the village core and provide convenient, complimentary online access. Funding opportunities with Appalachian Regional Commission and other public resources will be explored.



CHOOSE & CUT “MAKE MEMORIES” CAMPAIGN – During the height of the fall season traffic, the Chamber displayed a prominent banner urging the public to “Make Memories” by visiting a local Fraser Fir Christmas Tree Farm. (Note: JCTDA website shown rolls to current domain name.)

JACKSON COUNTY CASHIERS SMALL AREA PLAN – The draft of a community development plan was discussed at the October Cashiers Planning Council meeting. Among initiatives and implementation recommendations were sidewalks, wayfinding signage and other infrastructure enhancements that will benefit the tourism industry. CPC members will review more details of the document in early November and the County Board of Commissioners is expected to vote on approval in the next few months so projects can be considered for 2019-2020 fiscal year funding.

NCDOT JACKSON COUNTY PEDESTRIAN GRANT APPLICATION – The Cashiers Area Chamber submitted a letter of endorsement of the County's pedestrian planning and development process grant which would priority projects and identify strategies for an integrated pedestrian network. The Chamber also continues its pedestrian safety campaign with high profile banners urging drivers to watch for crosswalk traffic.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – UPDATE: Staff meeting with JC School Board on county initiatives (11/7) and also touring Smoky Mountain High School and briefing with public school staff (11/6). Efforts continue to expand the current labor pool on the Plateau, particularly for hospitality positions. The Chamber and JCTDA work with the Jackson County school system on hospitality training programs in high schools.



BEAR SHADOW OVERLOOK – UPDATE: The Chamber hired a drone operator to capture video footage of the shadow from the proposed quarry site. Next steps: Stakeholder discussion on viability of viewing trail and platform. Onsite inspection weather permitting. 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.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Lake Glenville and Bear Lake Reserve Fishing Conditions – as a follow up to conversation between JCTDA Director Nick Breedlove and Edwards, and concerns expressed to the Chamber by local fishing guides, we contacted Friends of Lake Glenville and other stakeholders to urge vigilant environmental monitoring to protect fish population and fishing conditions. (Nick Breedlove to provide additional comments.)

- TWSA announced efforts to develop a Cashiers Community Water System/Water Tower which will provide additional commercial development opportunities (food and beverage, accommodations, etc.) as well as improve environmental protection of water resources. The Chamber works closely with TWSA Director Dan Harbaugh on community priorities and communications.
- US 64 East Visitor Information Billboard (\$230 per month paid by Chamber) has been reinstalled pending event publicity in 2019
- October visitor center hours were extended from 10 to 2 on Saturdays
- Proactively distributed Play On guides to area accommodations and high volume distribution sites
- Working with JCTDA on upgraded visitor center displays (fish models, ad graphics), brochure racking and other amenities (water cooler)

For more information, contact Stephanie Edwards, Executive Director, Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce & Jackson County Visitor Center at Cashiers, [stephanie@CashiersAreaChamber](mailto:stephanie@CashiersAreaChamber.com) or info@DestinationCashiers.com 828.743.5191