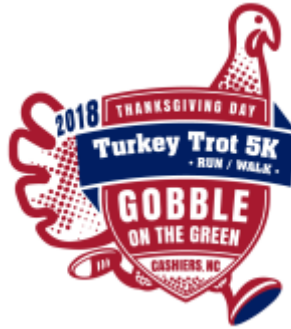


**DECEMBER 2018****HIGHLIGHTS**

**GOBBLE ON THE GREEN/ & FESTIVAL OF TREES/THE VILLAGE GREEN** – A record crowd of 622 participants, representing 28 states, descended on Cashiers' Village Green central park early Thanksgiving morning for the inaugural Gobble on the Green 5K turkey trot and 1 mile fun run. The annual tree lighting event and Santa hospitality event was well attended despite foggy weather. For running event details, visit <https://plateadailynews.com/2018/11/25/inaugural-thanksgiving-gobble-on-the-green-5k-draws-over-600-runners-to-cashiers/> (More information available from JCTDA Chair Ann Self, Executive Director of The Village Green)

**ANNUAL CASHIERS CHRISTMAS PARADE & BLOCK PARTY** – Due to forecast deteriorating and severe weather conditions, the 44th Annual Cashiers Christmas Parade will NOT be held as scheduled. Instead, join us for the Cashiers Christmas Parade Block Party on Tuesday, 12/11, 3:30 to 5:30 on Frank Allen Road where floats, entertainment, and Santa & Mrs. Claus will host a 'Parade Promenade' for the public to enjoy. Cashiers Cares will host their traditional fund raising meal at the firehouse. Frank Allen Road will be closed to vehicular traffic from the rec center to the fire department. See the Cashiers Area Chamber Facebook page for additional details. Please attend and support our parade participants who enthusiastically prepared for this special event.



**FRASER FIR CHOOSE & CUT SEASONAL ACTIVITIES** – Jackson County Fraser Fir Christmas Tree farms welcomed visitors who flocked to the mountains this year for their annual holiday tradition of selecting a tree. According to local grower Tom Sawyer, this year’s sales have outpaced 2018. He said there is a shortage of 8-10 foot trees because many growers chose to leave the industry during the recession. Seedlings take 10-15 years to grow to a mature tree of that height. Sawyer provides a full “elf experience” for destination appeal and supplements its business as a wedding venue in other months.

**CHAMBER FUNDS CASHIERS SIDEWALK SURVEY** -- In support of its pedestrian mobility and safety strategic initiative, the Cashiers Area Chamber recently funded a topographical land survey related to the installation of an “inner loop” sidewalk from the Crossroads south on NC 107 to Frank Allen Road, west to US 64 and east to NC 107. This financial underwriting further demonstrates the business league’s leadership and continuing commitment to improving pedestrian access in the Cashiers Village core. The \$4,325 survey paid for by the Chamber will be used to create a planning tool to execute engineering for future sidewalk construction. An inner-loop segment -- encircling the Village Green, public amenities and nearby retailers -- has been identified as the initial priority in a community-wide pedestrian network.



**BEAR SHADOW OVERLOOK** – UPDATE: Representatives of the Cashiers Area Chamber & Visitor Center, JCTDA and Highlands Cashiers Land Trust (HCLT) recently met with Jackson County Manager Don Adams to discuss the opportunity to create a Bear Shadow/Cashiers Valley viewing trail and parking on land .4 miles from the Big Rhodes View overlook. Adams subsequently provided written confirmation to HCLT of the County’s willingness to continue researching the project as possible interest in a “potential partnership to develop this property...” NEXT STEPS: The HCLT Board will continue its dialogue with the parcel owners about their donation. If successful, this new site 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 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 HIGHLANDS FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL** -- The Highlands Chamber reported a sell-out crowd for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary November 10-13<sup>th</sup> culinary destination weekend which featured celebrated chefs, renown entertainment and related activities across the Highlands area. The festival is produced by Eleven Events of Greenville, SC, who has continued a dialogue with the Cashiers Area Chamber about possible partnerships and venues in Cashiers.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

- **News:** Former JCTDA board member and Cashiers Area Chamber President Debby Hattler announced that her company Mountain Lake Rentals will join Landmark Vacation Rentals to become one of the largest vacation home rental agencies on the Cashiers-Highlands Plateau.
- As part of a continuing workforce development strategic initiative, the Cashiers Area Chamber recently submitted a letter of endorsement to NCWorks of the NC Division of Workforce Solutions, supporting Southwestern Community College and the Southwestern Workforce Development Board in the development and creation of the Hospitality Institute.
- A JCTDA grant application will be submitted for funding support for the US 64 East Visitor Information Billboard (\$230 per month currently paid by Chamber). Without participation, the board likely will be released back to Allison Outdoor Advertising for resale. The waiting list for Cashiers Area board rentals is as long as several years because of a limited number of grandfathered billboards available and scenic byway restrictions.
- **News:** The Cashiers Area Chamber recently installed new officers and new directors including: President Mary Lanning, GM of Hampton Inn & Suites and former JCTDA Vice Chair; President-Elect Glenn Ubertino of Zoller Hardware; Treasurer Ben Harris of Harris Custom Builders, and Ashton Harris of Country Club of Sapphire Valley, Lec Hobbs of Highland Hiker, Wendy Lupas of Gracewear Collection, and Don Shuey of Signal Ridge Marina.
- The Chamber proactively distributes Play On guides to area accommodations and maintains 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.com](mailto:stephanie@CashiersAreaChamber.com) or [info@DestinationCashiers.com](mailto:info@DestinationCashiers.com) 828.743.5191*