



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,  
CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

To: TDA Board

From: Nick Breedlove, TDA Executive Director  
Caleb Sullivan, TDA Sales & Marketing Manager

Date: September 10, 2020

Subject: Updates for TDA Board

### **Executive Director Report – Nick Breedlove**

Topping our news for this JCTDA meeting are two excellent highlights:

1. In our August Financial Report for July stays, we topped \$233,000 in Occupancy Tax Collections, which is our highest collection month in TDA history. That represents accommodation sales totaling \$5,825,000. Airbnb and VRBO/Homeaway continue to drive the significant increases we see post-COVID-19.
2. We received an \$88,000 marketing grant from VisitNC. The grant is part of the CARES Act funding that I worked alongside state leadership and Senate leadership to get passed. We are eligible for the maximum amount under the program, and all funds must be used before Dec. 31. Over the last week we reviewed the terrific opportunities and placements for Jackson County and secured them, with hopes of bringing visitation during a traditionally slow time, our 'Secret Season'. We are fortunate to already have a campaign ready to roll in promoting our winter season to visitors.
3. This week we presented a [12-page brief \[Link\]](#) to Jackson County Commissioners on the work done by our organization over the last several months since COVID-19 began. We're required under our founding legislation to present updates to Commissioners once a year. Still, more importantly, we wanted leaders to be aware of all of our recovery efforts for the hospitality industry. The report was well-received at Commissioners' Sept. 8 work session.

4. At their Sept. 8 work session Count Commissioners agreed to move forward with [our request \[Link\]](#) to ask the NC DOT study pedestrian safety and parking issues at Shadow of the Bear and Silver Run Falls, two popular and heavily utilized sites. In addition, Commissioner Gayle Woody, also asked that we add Cashiers Sliding Rock to the list, as that area is heavily used by visitors and does not have adequate parking.
5. The TDA finalized the reprint of its 2020-21 Visitor Guide, which contains dozens of changes related to COVID-19, traveler sentiment about visiting during a pandemic and promoting safe travel. The new guides will be here in approximately two weeks before the majority of our fall visitors arrive. Our visitor centers will change all the old guides at their centers, welcome centers, kiosks, hotels, and businesses with the new ones. New restaurants and dropped restaurants (due to Chamber membership non-renewals), new imagery, new itineraries, and crowd-sensitive language appear in the new guide. This quantity is estimated to last until March 2021, when we print our 2021-22 guide. We are fortunate to fund the inclusion of the popular fold-out hiking map this year, and all outfitter listings, hikes, and features have been updated on this foldout map.
6. We are seeing record Visitor Guide requests right now, and this, coupled with the massive influx of overnight stays, is a positive sign showing demand for our mountain towns and their off-the-beaten-path locations.
7. In upcoming projects, we are awaiting a final decision from the EDA on the grant application for \$208,000 we submitted in July. We are also working on a large-scale to be announced project which we hope to be able to share the details of soon once it is officially announced.
8. We received new 2019 Visitor Spending numbers, showing that Visitors in 2019 spent \$207.48 million, supporting 1,870 jobs. The new figures show a .81-percent increase over 2018 and is positive news.

Year	Expenditures \$(millions)	Change from previous	Payroll \$(millions)	Employment (thousands)	State Tax Receipts \$(millions)	Local Tax Receipts \$(millions)	Tax Savings Per Resident
2019	\$207.48	0.81%	\$51.85	1.87	\$11.36	\$9.50	\$470.46
2018	\$205.81	5.30%	\$50.87	1.89	\$11.34	\$9.50	\$464.01
2017	\$195.44	3.71%	\$48.52	1.85	\$10.86	\$9.08	\$462.46
2016	\$188.45	7.12%	\$44.91	1.81	\$10.55	\$8.63	\$457.77
2015	\$175.92	2.78%	\$41.53	1.71	\$9.79	\$8.04	\$428.70

**As a reminder there is NO Full Board Meeting in October.**

## Social Media & Blog Status Report – Caleb Sullivan

### Cross Channel Report August 1 – 31 vs. July 1 – 31

- Total Audience Growth increased by 1.7% MOM (3,715) (222,263 total)
  - Total Instagram Followers (18,468) – Net Increase of 2,233 (423%)
    - This significant increase in followers was due to our Bear Lake Reserve Getaway Giveaway.
  - Total Facebook Page Likes (201,718) – Organic Increase of 985 (16.84%)
- Total Impressions decreased by 4.3% MOM. (2,288,294)
- Total Engagement increased by .99% MOM (154,009)
  - YOY Comparison vs. 2019:
    - 221% Increase in Impressions (1,034,954)
    - 250% Increase in Engagements (61,417)

### Google Posts Platform

- Total Impressions for August totaled 70,905.
- Total Engagements for August totaled 4,786.
  - Highest number of single month Impressions

### Instagram Stories

- Instagram Story Impressions totaled 23,326 for August, a 16.2% increase over July.



### Pinterest

- Total Impressions for August totaled 41,140.
- Total Engagements for August totaled 911.


### Updates

- Partnered with Bear Lake Reserve to promote a “Getaway Giveaway.” This campaign yielded 35,967 Impressions, 7,177 engagements and increased Instagram followers by 2,200 in one week.
- The Hammock Capital of the USA Instagram Giveaway continues to be a strong performer. The Giveaway ends September 25. Stats to be reported on in campaign’s entirety for October’s Report.
- Selected to serve on the Southeastern Tourism Society’s Networking Pillar Committee. Attended my first “New Member Orientation” on September 3, with committee work beginning in October.
- Applied to be a presenter at Crowdriff’s SEE International Virtual 2020 Conference in November. This would be a great PR opportunity for the JCTDA if selected.



## Top Performing Posts for August

  North Carolina Mountain T...  
Wed 8/19/2020 10:26 am PDT


It's important we all do our part to keep each other safe. 🧡❤️ That is why we've become proud partners of





<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>36,892</b>
Reactions	25,099
Comments	677
Shares	3,426
Post Link Clicks	278
Other Post Clicks	7,412

  North Carolina Mountain T...  
Sat 8/8/2020 3:45 pm PDT


Bear Lake Sunsets always soothes the soul. 💜📷 If you're looking to get away from it all, check out our "Avoid the





<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>13,887</b>
Reactions	8,598
Comments	402
Shares	1,443
Post Link Clicks	332
Other Post Clicks	3,112

  North Carolina Mountain T...  
Wed 8/12/2020 10:24 am PDT

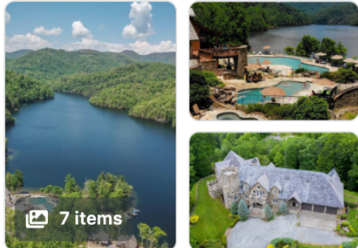
Forbes names Panthertown as one of "Six Underrated Southern Destinations to Include on a Nature Lover's Road Trip."





<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>2,736</b>
Reactions	1,558
Comments	54
Shares	209
Post Link Clicks	162
Other Post Clicks	753

  discoverjacksonnc  
Mon 8/24/2020 6:15 am PDT


! GIVEAWAY Alert! 🏠🏡 2-night, 3-day getaway! 🎉🎉🎉 Enter for your chance to win a FREE NC Mountain Getaway to Be...





<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>6,073</b>
Likes	1,741
Comments	4,217
Saves	115

  discoverjacksonnc  
Wed 8/19/2020 7:49 am PDT

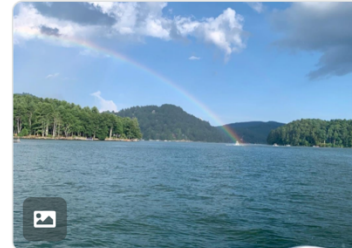
It's important we all do our part to keep each other safe. 🧡❤️ That is why we've become proud partners of



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>1,383</b>
Likes	1,314
Comments	11
Saves	58

  discoverjacksonnc  
Sat 8/29/2020 8:09 am PDT

Ahoy! 🌊🚤🌈 Nothing beats a day on the lake. With 26-miles of shoreline, 7 islands, and 3 hidden waterfalls, Lake Glenville is



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>974</b>
Likes	942
Comments	6
Saves	26

## **Blogs**

Completed three blogs for August:

[Beat the Heat in the NC Mountains](#) – Posted 8/14/20

[Perfect Patios for Al-Fresco Dining](#) – Posted 8/17/20 (Refreshed copy originally created by Pineapple. Changed to reflect COVID-19 benefits to outdoor dining, added new restaurants, and updated older locations)

[Experience Jackson County's Golden Hour with These Top 8 Sunrise/Sunset Spots](#) – Posted 8/28/20