



*Johnston
County*
VISITORS BUREAU

WHAT TOURISM DOES FOR SMITHFIELD

SECTION 01

MINI ANNUAL REPORT

THE STAFF AND BOARD OF THE JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE A BRIEF REVIEW OF OUR MARKETING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST YEAR FOR THE TOWN OF SMITHFIELD.

Our mission is to attract and serve visitors to Johnston County to make an economic impact in our destinations. In 2016, visitors to Johnston County spent \$232.49 million staying in our hotels, visiting attractions, enjoying restaurants, shopping, as well as attending meetings, festivals and special events.

That's money that supports local small businesses!



In 2018, the JCVB team designed and printed 50,000 Visitors Guides with Ava's Home Town, Smithfield NC on the cover.

Top Far Right
NC Welcome Center Managers from across the state spend the day touring Johnston County with Sarah Campbell, visiting area attractions including a stop at the Ava Gardner Museum.

FAM TRIPS AND MEDIA PLACEMENTS

We love to show off our destinations in Johnston County and we did that for Smithfield several times:

- All (9) NC Welcome Center Managers toured the county and stops included Ava Gardner Museum and Carolina Premium Outlets
- Hosting travel writers to share what's happening in Smithfield: North American Travel Journalist Assn. (12), Travel Media Showcase (4), and VisitNC Canadian Fam (5), all toured the Ava Gardner Museum
- Media stories featuring Smithfield: *Metro Canadian Travel*, Sidebar for Ava Gardner Museum, *Tourisme Plus Online*, mention for Ava Gardner Museum, *Grey Area News*, Frank & Ava Weekend, *The Wilson Daily Times*, "Exhibit Explores Ava's Hemingway Connection", *Knoxville Daily Sun*, "Ava Gardner - Small Town Girl Goes Hollywood", *Triangle Tribune*, "34th Ham & Yam Festival", *MSN.com* "75 Attractions to see while Driving Across the Country (Ava Gardner Museum)", *Kathleen Walls Blog: AmericanRoads.net* Ava Gardner and Simple Twist featured, *Carolina Brew Scene*, "Double Barley wins Best of the East", *Leigh Hines Blog: 11 Food Festivals every Foodie Must Experience*"



- *USA Today*, "A Flavorful Gift from Each State", Lady Edison from JoCo Hams, *Auto Accessories Garage*, "55 Small Towns to Visit on a Road Trip" (Smithfield, NC)

SALES LEADS AND GROUP SERVICES

JCVB sent out to Smithfield hotels the following leads:

- Group services: Johnston Health 5K run - 600 bags, Triple S Alumni - 50 items for bags, Church Conference - 15 bags, Sleep Inn Mtg, 22 bags, Tarheel League Softball - 35 team bags, CPO Back to School Promotion - 100 bags, Johnston Community College - 350 bags, WFC Summer - 25 team bags, JCC Foundation Golf Tournament - 40 bags, Company D Army Group - 15 bags, Social Services Real World Event - 200 bags
- Smithfield/Selma Map Distribution - 20,616
- JCVB staff organizes the 301 Endless Yard Sale which has a great impact on local businesses for Smithfield hotels (200 rms)

SECTION 02

ADVERTISING & PUBLICITY

BEING A DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF OUR WORKPLAN IS MARKETING - HERE'S SOME OF WHAT WE DO FOR SMITHFIELD.

- The Beer, Wine, Shine Trail has a new App and our partners along the trail in Smithfield include hotel partners on the Sip & Stay Package
- Facebook live posts for the Ham & Yam Festival, and Ava Gardner Movie Weekend Event with Leigh Hines
- Social media support for Ava Gardner Museum, Smithfield Ham and Yam Festival, and Johnston County Hams on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- JCVB designed and installed the new Girlfriends Getaway billboards
- Homepage headers on johnstoncountync.org: Ava Gardner Museum, Johnston County Hams, Ham and Yam Festival
- Ad placements for Smithfield included: *Our State Magazine*, *Southern Living*, WRAL television, N & O Email blast, *Zoomer Magazine* for Canadian Snowbirds, Visit NC e-newsletter and travel deals, *NC Business Magazine*
- Top JCVB website listings: Johnston County Hams, (2nd) 1,777 visits, Ava Gardner Museum (3rd) 1,339 visits, Smithfield Parks & Recreation, (4th) 1,329 visits
- Top website pages: Shopping/Carolina Premium Outlet page #1 - 15,287 visits, Hotels/girlfriends package - 2,647 visits, Hotel/sip and stay package - 2,550 visits, Town of Smithfield Page - 1,623 visits
- Top website events for Smithfield: Ham and Yam - 958 hits, Smithfield Christmas Parade - 667 hits, and Smithfield Wine Walk - 515 hits



- Run 5k rack card to promote Smithfield Grinch Race (and others in the county - has been very well received)
- BLOGS featuring Smithfield: “Ava Gardner Museum Still Standing”, “JoCo BBQ for you, you and you”, “Smithfield Receives National Main Street Accreditation”, “Take a Bite of the Big Apple in the Smalltown South”
- Atlanta Magazine.com - “Civil War History Event”, Smithfield hotel offers
- Phillyvoice.com - “Ava Gardner: Experience the Life of Hollywood Legend”
- Ava Gardner Display case at the I-95 Welcome Center



- LGA Social Media Takeover - A Day in Smithfield
- New Girlfriend’s Getaway 4 x 9 Rack Brochure
- Ham & Yam Marketing Materials including print, digital, and banners, as well as a \$5,000 grant for marketing the festival
- Outside Kiosks for the Smithfield Community Park
- Press Releases sent out: “2018 Visitors Guide Features Ava Gardner”, “Natural Wonder Headlines 34th Ham & Yam”, “Hemingway’s Heroine Exhibit Opens”, “Victoria Price Holds Book Signing at Ava Gardner Museum”

Above Sarah Campbell installed two displays at the Welcome Centers to promote Smithfield, one for the Ava Gardner Museum and another for the Girlfriend’s Getaway Package.

Right Sample design of one of the billboards in place to promote shopping at the outlets and the Girlfriend’s Getaway Package.



SECTION 03

GRANTS

JCVB HAS A MATCHING MARKETING GRANT FOR FESTIVALS AND EVENTS WITH A BUDGET OF \$20,000. THE CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM HAS SUPPORTED SMITHFIELD AS WELL IN 2018.

- JCVB is a Smithfield/Selma Chamber sponsor at the \$5,500 Champion level and supports the Smithfield Ham & Yam Festival with a \$1,500 grant.
- Other \$500 Matching Marketing Grants for Smithfield Events: Neuse Little Theatre, Junior League Touch a Truck, Harbor Wine Walk, Ava & Frank Movie Weekend, St. Ann's International Food Festival, Tarheel League Girl's Softball Tournament, Johnston County Arts Council, Johnston County Heritage Center Ghost Walk. Total event grants awarded: \$5,500
- The Ava Gardner Museum received a \$30,000 grant for wall and roof repair, Johnston County Heritage Center received \$5,500 for Heritage Markers, and Smithfield Community Park received a \$12,500 grant for tennis court resurfacing.

OTHER STUFF

- Donna Bailey-Taylor serves on the Ava Gardner Museum Board and provides free design services: Ava Gardner Museum brochure, Ava & Frank Weekend marketing materials, Fundraising Brochure, and the Hemingway's Heroine Exhibit Design. She also designed at no charge the Heritage Center Moonshine Exhibit.
- Sarah Campbell served on the Partnership for Children Park Committee.



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AND ENGAGE
IN THE MARKETING PROGRAMS IN FY
2018-19, THE JCVB MARKETING PLAN IS
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
WWW.JOHNSTONCOUNTYNC.ORG**

Left
Jeremy Norris of Broadslab Distillery was chosen to be featured in the Visit NC National Advertising Campaign, "Firsts That Last".

PARTNER SUPPORT

JOHNSTON COUNTY HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

Members of the tourism industry can become members of the Hospitality Association for an annual fee of \$50.00. JCVB hosts educational seminars, networking opportunities and a community service project that benefits the Social Services, Angel Tree.



HOSPITALITY HEROES PROGRAM

Available to all staff of tourism industry businesses is an online, FREE, hospitality training course. The program introduces new hires to National, State, and Local tourism facts, reviews the programs and workplan of the JCVB and a customer service module.



2018-18 WEBSITE HITS

The official website for Johnston County Tourism provides listings for all tourism related businesses and events to showcase the county. The new CMS site was launched in July 2017 with Simpleview, Inc. Listing hits generated were 1,890,360 and Coupon Hits were 48,260.



STAFF AND BOARD

JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU STAFF

DONNA BAILEY-TAYLOR, PRESIDENT/CEO
ANGEL PHILLIPS, OFFICE MANAGER/VISITOR CENTER
ERIC DEAN, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER/WEBMASTER
ASHBY BRAME, MARKETING & PR MANAGER
SARAH CAMPBELL, SPORTS & LEISURE SALES MANAGER
TAYLOR LEE, PART-TIME SALES AND MARKETING ASSISTANT

JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY

SCOTTY HENLEY, CHAIRPERSON
RICK CHILDREY, VICE-CHAIRPERSON
LYNN DANIELS, SECRETARY
ERNIE BRAME, SPECIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE CHAIR
RICK HEILMAN, MARKETING COMMITTEE CHAIR
MATT ZAPP, SPORTS COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
CHERYL LANE
PAUL BOUCHER
RANDY CAPPS
KEITH BRINSON
CHAD McLAMB, EX-OFFICIO FINANCE

234 VENTURE DRIVE, SMITHFIELD, NC 27577
919-989-8687, INFO@JOHNSTONCOUNTYNC.ORG
WWW.JOHNSTONCOUNTYNC.ORG