



Travel Partner News - Fall 2015

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1. Room Occupancy Tax Collections Set New Benchmark for 4th Consecutive Year

New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) in May were up +3.79% and were up +6.89% in June, as compared to the same month of the prior year. Fiscal year-to-date (July 2014–June 2015) New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) are up +9.74% and calendar year-to-date (January–June 2015) are up +7.16%. New Hanover County ROT collections for fiscal year 2014/2015 set a new benchmark for the 4th consecutive year!

2. Save the Date, Sept. 17: Marketing Plan Industry Partner Presentation – RSVP by Sept. 10

Please save the date for the yearly presentation of the Wilmington and Beaches CVB Marketing Plan for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. **The presentation will take on a new format** as guest speakers join the CVB in presenting both the marketing plan recommendations and an overview of the coastal region visitor profile. Guest speakers will cover additional topics including: new tourism products as well as marketing opportunities for partner participation. Join us from 9:00am-11:00am on Thursday, September 17, 2015 at the New Hanover County Government Complex located at 230 Government Center Dr. Snacks will be provided. On-site parking is complimentary. Your response is needed NO LATER THAN CLOSE OF BUSINESS THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10. Please RSVP by September 10, 2015 to Jeanette Foster, 341-4030 (extension 111), or by email jfoster@wilmingtonandbeaches.com

3. Visitor Spending Increases in 2015, Breaks \$500 Million & Sets New Record

N. C. Governor Pat McCrory and Department of Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III recently announced that visitor spending rose in 97 of 100 North Carolina Counties during 2014. The "2014 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties" annual study was prepared for Visit NC by the U.S Travel Association. The study reveals that in the year 2014 the economic impact from domestic travel in New Hanover County was estimated at approximately \$507.9 million, representing a 6.33% increase over 2013 expenditures. New Hanover maintains its rank as number 8 among North Carolina's 100 counties in tourism expenditures. According to the study, in 2014 Travel and Tourism in New Hanover County provided more than 5,680 jobs and supported a payroll of \$113.27 million. Travel and Tourism also generated \$43.93 million in state and local tax receipts. Travel-generated state and local tax revenues saved each New Hanover County resident approximately \$202.45. To read the full press release, visit: www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/news-articles/press-releases/2014-visitor-impact-for-new-hanover-county/

4. Historic Wilmington named 'Best Al Fresco Dining Neighborhood', USA TODAY 10Best

In *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice awards for Food Favorites, Historic Wilmington took the #1 spot for Best Al Fresco Dining Neighborhood. 10Best teamed up with a panel of food travel experts to nominate 20 food-centric places and experiences; *USA Today* readers then voted online to determine the top 10 for each category. To read the article, visit www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-al-fresco-dining-neighborhood/

5. 2016 Official Visitor Guide Advertising

Time is running out! Sign up now and advertise in the upcoming 2016 Wilmington and Beaches Official Visitors Guide. **New this year will be tear-out maps** for visitors so we know they will be popular. Call or email ad sales representative Brenda Clark at 843-455-1176, Brenda@365degreetotalmarketing.com to reserve your spot in the guide today.

6. **Fall & Holiday Promotions & Events**

The Wilmington and Beaches CVB seeks information on fall and holiday special offers, promotions and events. Please send your information to Caitlin Mulholland at marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com for inclusion on the website, social media channels and in eSpecials. The CVB also needs your fall and holiday event information as soon as possible. Public events that meet the CVB's guidelines will be included on our online calendar of events, as well as on the VisitNC.com calendar. These calendars are used by visitors and the media. We will also use this information to update our holiday event brochure. You may email or fax event name, date(s), time, location of event, brief description, and contact information (phone number, website) to Caitlin Mulholland at marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com or fax to 910-341-4029. Please don't miss out on this opportunity for free event publicity!

7. **STS Top 20 Event Nomination Deadline**

Nomination forms for the Southeastern Tourism Society's Top 20 Events for April, May, June 2016 must be received by STS NO LATER THAN October 2, 2015. To nominate your event for STS Top 20 consideration, event organizers need to complete STS's **NEW** online form (http://southeasttourism.org/static/img/pdfs/Top20_Online_Submission.pdf) and submit a \$20 processing fee by their specified deadline. Instructions are on STS's Nomination form. Please note that STS recently changed its process and will only accept STS Top 20 Event nominations that are submitted online.

8. **Sales Department News & Activities:**

- **Association Executives of N.C.:** Sales staff will attend the AENC bi-monthly meeting and luncheon being held on September 11 in Raleigh.
- **North Carolina Sports Association:** Sales staff will attend the NC Sports Association Quarterly Meeting on September 17 in Cary, NC.
- **Meeting Professionals International – Carolinas Chapter:** The annual MPI Carolinas Chapter meeting & tradeshow will be held September 17-18, 2015 at the Sheraton Chapel Hill. Sales Staff will attend and have a booth.
- **SPORTS Institute:** Sales staff will attend Sports Institute in Shreveport LA, Oct 5-8. This is a tradeshow dedicated to sports, a market that has been showing a lot of potential in recent years.
- **AENC Annual Golf Outing:** Sales staff will sponsor a hole at the AENC Golf Outing on Oct 5. Historically this tournament attracts association executive and elected officials.
- **Meeting Professionals International – Georgia Chapter:** Sales staff will attend the monthly meeting & networking luncheon for the Georgia Chapter of Meeting Professionals International held in Atlanta on October 20, 2015.

9. **Services Department News & Activities:**

- **Coastal Carolina Harley Owners Group:** Providing visitor information September 10 -11.
- **International Biomarine Business Convention:** Providing visitor services October 12 – 13.
- **PPD Beach2 Battleship Iron Distance Triathlon:** Providing visitor services October 15.
- **Seasonal Visitor Information Centers:** The Wrightsville Beach VIC will close the end of September. The Pleasure Island VIC closes mid-October and the river booth closes at the end of October. Seasonal visitor information centers will re-open in April.

10. **PR Department Media Events:**

- **Visit NC In-state Media Event, Sept. 29:** The Wilmington and Beaches CVB will be among the destination marketing organizations participating in Visit NC's in-state media event to be held at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte. Invited media delegates include Charlotte-area media, select regional media and freelance journalists in print, broadcast and digital outlets. Connie Nelson, the CVB's PR Director, will represent Wilmington and the island beaches of Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville. Any questions or comments can be directed to Connie Nelson, Communications/Public Relations Director at 910-332-8751 or email cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com
- **SATW National Conference & Marketplace, Oct. 4-9:** Connie Nelson, Communications/PR Director, will attend the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) National Conference & Marketplace to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 4-9, 2015. The annual conference and media marketplace will be held in the U.S. this year. The national conference affords the CVB the opportunity to meet face-to-face with freelance journalists, editors and staff writers who write about travel destinations.

11. **Wilmington Convention Center Calendar**

Event/Organization	Date
Wilmington's Epicurean Evening	September 03
GWBJ Power Breakfast Series	September 15
2nd Annual She ROCKS Inc. Fundraiser Luncheon	September 17
Wilmington Fall Home Show	September 18
Pink Ribbon Luncheon	October 01
PPD Beach 2 Battleship	October 15

Is there something you'd like to see covered here? Let us know; please send your questions and comments to communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com. Should you have difficulty with the Newsletter, contact Michelle Starling at 910-332-8758, or at communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com.

Wilmington, N.C., Historic River District & Island Beaches (Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Wrightsville Beach)