



## Travel Partner News- Spring 2015

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### 1. Room Occupancy Tax Collections

December 2014 New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) were up 17.54% as compared to the same month of the prior year. Fiscal year-to-date (July 2014–December 2014), New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) are up 11.91% and calendar year-to-date (January 2014–December 2014) are up 10.90%. This year end increase marks the fourth consecutive benchmark year for New Hanover County ROT.

### 2. Spring Special Offers, Rates & Travel Packages

The CVB continues to seek information on spring special offers, special rates and travel packages for promotion in e-specials and on websites. The offers submitted will be promoted by the CVB online during the spring season. Send your spring special offers to Caitlin Mulholland at [marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com) by March 14, 2015.

### 3. Partner Photos Needed

The CVB is seeking images from our industry partners to use for promotions and website partner profiles. Up to eight images can be submitted for partner profiles on [WilmingtonAndBeaches.com](http://WilmingtonAndBeaches.com) and these images may also be featured in specific promotions on our website and in other online promotions. Suggested images include interior and exterior views of accommodations, attractions, restaurant and shopping partners and event images from event organizers. Please email your images to [marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com) as soon as possible.

In your email, please include:

- Company name
- Your name
- Your contact phone number
- High-res images in JPG format
  - Preferably around 500 pixels (horizontal images are also preferable)
- Caption and/or description for the image

**Please Note:**

**Any images submitted to the WBCVB automatically transfers the rights to utilize those images and no photographer credit can be given.**

#### **4. New Website Pages**

New content and expanded Things to Do pages were recently launched on WilmingtonAndBeaches.com to add more content on the top things to see and do that visitors are searching on the website. These pages provide in-depth round-up style information on topics and categories that visitors are most interested in including history, outdoor activities, arts and culture, midtown activities and more. Links to some of the new pages are below:

- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/wilmington-history>
- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/artscultureilm/>
- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/Wilm-outdoors/>
- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/midtownilm/>
- <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/48itinerary/>

#### **5. America's Best Riverfront Banners**

This spring, banners showcasing Wilmington's recent designation of America's Best Riverfront in USA TODAY's 10Best Readers' Choice travel awards will be hung along the Riverwalk. These banners will help spread the word about this prestigious accolade to visitors. Downloadable "Best American Riverfront" posters can be accessed at [www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/hometown](http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/hometown).

#### **6. What's New Information**

For information on new industry happenings in Wilmington and our beaches, including new breweries, recent accolades, new area hotels and more, visit our What's New roundup page. This information is updated frequently, so feel free to check back often as new announcements are added. <http://www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/whats-new/>

- <http://www.visitcarolinabeachnc.com/what's%20new/>
- <http://www.visitkurebeachnc.com/what's%20new/>
- <http://www.visitwrightsvillebeachnc.com/what's%20new/>

#### **7. STS Top 20 Event Nominations**

Nomination forms for the Southeastern Tourism Society's Top 20 Events for October, November, December 2015 must be received by STS no later than April 3, 2015. To nominate your event for STS Top 20 consideration, event organizers need to print out and complete the online questionnaire ([www.southeasttourism.org/upload\\_images/file/top20forms.pdf](http://www.southeasttourism.org/upload_images/file/top20forms.pdf)) and mail 2 copies, along with supporting materials, and a \$20 processing fee to be received by STS by their firm deadline April 3, 2015. Instructions and address are on the Nomination form. Please also send a copy to Michelle Starling, Communications Assistant, at Fax: 910-341-4029 or via email: [communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:communications@wilmingtonandbeaches.com).

#### **8. N.C. Media Missions**

Wilmington and Beaches CVB Communications/PR Director Connie Nelson will be among the destination representatives participating in two upcoming VisitNC Media Missions: New York City on March 19 (rescheduled from January event cancellation) and Atlanta on April 21. VisitNC media events create an opportunity for destinations across the state to promote their brands and corresponding story angles directly to key editors, writers, producers and travel bloggers where their headquarters are based.

#### **9. SAVE THE DATE: National Travel and Tourism Week & Travel Rally Breakfast**

Mark your calendar for the CVB's 2nd Annual Travel Rally Breakfast on Tuesday, May 5, 2015. The breakfast will kick off National Travel & Tourism Week, May 2-10, the U.S. Travel Association's ongoing advocacy and awareness campaign. Watch for an invitation to the Travel Rally Breakfast which will arrive via email in the coming weeks with details of the program and venue. As in years past, the CVB will distribute ribbons to hotels and attractions in late April, along with instructions on how to access/print NTW posters. In addition, our four visitor information centers will distribute small souvenirs to visitors who stop in during National Travel & Tourism Week. For more information about National Travel & Tourism Week, visit <http://www.ustravel.org/marketing/national-travel-and-tourism-week> or email Connie Nelson, Communications/PR Director, at [cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com).

#### **10. SATW Eastern Chapter Conference & Marketplace**

Connie Nelson, Communications/PR Director, will attend the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) Eastern Chapter Conference & Marketplace to be held in Portsmouth, Virginia on May 13-15, 2015. The annual chapter conference and media marketplace affords the CVB the opportunity to meet face-to-face with dozens of freelance journalists who write about East Coast travel destinations.

#### **11. Hospitality Workshops/Seminars**

Create Magic in your Hospitality/Tourism Business

The hospitality industry is invited to attend a free seminar on April 29, 2015 from 1-4pm. The seminar will be presented by John Formica, "Ex-Disney Guy" at Cape Fear Community College's North Campus in the McKeithan Center. John Formica is "America's Customer Service Coach" with over 25 years of experience in the hospitality and service industry. The seminar is free and open to all hospitality and tourism related businesses; pre-registration is required. This year's seminar is sponsored by Cape Fear Community College, the Wilmington Area Hospitality Association and the Wilmington and Beaches CVB. For additional information or registration go to [www.cfcc.edu/sbc](http://www.cfcc.edu/sbc)

#### **12. Carolina Recycling Association Annual Meeting**

Sales staff will be manning a booth at this year's annual meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC. This year's meeting will be held on March 24-25, 2015 and attracts around 750 attendees. Next year's meeting will be held here in Wilmington, NC.

#### **13. National Association of Sports Commissions Trade Show**

Sales Staff will attend the NASC (National Association of Sports Commissions) Trade Show in Milwaukee, WI on April 27-30, 2015. They will meet with sports events rights holders during pre-scheduled appointments and attend educational sessions. As part of the North Carolina Sports Association, the CVB will also host a client event that week to meet additional potential buyers one on one.

#### **14. North Carolina Sports Association Meeting**

Sales staff will attend the NCSA 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter meeting in Greenville, NC on March 31, 2015. They will meet with sports and hospitality industry representatives who devote time, energy and resources to the development of sports tourism.

#### **15. Meeting Professional International**

Sales staff will attend the MPI-CC in Charlotte, NC on March 17-18, 2015. The meeting will be held at Johnson and Wales Culinary School and consists of meeting planners, suppliers from North and South Carolina. The focus of the meeting will be on trends in food and beverage.

#### **16. WilmingtonBiz Conference & Expo**

On March 25, 2015, CVB associates will man a booth at the WilmingtonBiz Conference & Expo. The day includes a keynote lunch, an Expo Hall packed with companies in a range of industries, seminars on numerous topics of interest to business people and an after hours event in the late afternoon and into the evening. Admission is \$5. The event is from 11:30am to 7pm.

#### **17. Small Cruise Ships to Visit Wrightsville Beach**

Three American Cruise Line (ACL) ships will dock at the Bridge Tender Marina in Wrightsville Beach this spring, weather permitting: *Glory* (April 28, Arrives 8am with up to 50 passengers); *Independence* (May 4, Arrives 7:30am with up to 100 passengers) and *American Star* (May 26, Arrives at 8:30am with up to 100 passengers). Each cruise has arranged shore excursions for its passengers, who will also have free time to shop, dine, and explore the destination. The CVB's services department will provide visitor information. Cruise schedules are subject to change without notice.

#### **18. Services Department Attending Several Functions**

The Services Department will be attending several functions and passing along visitor information regarding our area. See a full list below. Any questions should be directed to Muriel Pearson at her email address: [services@wilmingtonandbeaches.com](mailto:services@wilmingtonandbeaches.com) or you can call her directly 910-341-4030 x 122.

- March 1<sup>st</sup>: The Perfect Wedding Show held at Holiday Inn Resort.
- March 11<sup>th</sup>: Seymour Johnson AFB Travel Show
- May 16<sup>th</sup>: Travel Expo, Camp Lejeune
- May 17<sup>th</sup>: Travel Expo, Cherry Point Marine Base

### 19. Satellite Visitor Information Center's will Open for the Season

**Riverfront Booth** will open April 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>. Hours are: April, May, September and October 9am-4:30pm daily and June, July and August they are open 9:30am-5pm daily.

**Pleasure Island Visitor Center** will extend its hours beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>. They will open on Saturday 9am-4pm and Sunday 1pm-4pm. They are open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm throughout the year.

**Wrightsville Beach Visitor Center** will open daily from April 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>. Hours will be Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am-2pm, Thursday 10am-3pm, Friday, Saturday 9am-3pm and Sunday 1pm-4pm.

### 20. Small Business for Film

In 2014, a group of concerned small business owners who see the positive impact that film generates for business in North Carolina established an online forum, [www.smallbusinessforfilm.com](http://www.smallbusinessforfilm.com). Small Business for Film was established in response to a concern that there may be legislators that do not realize the impact that the film industry has on small business throughout the state. If your business benefits from a strong film industry, you may be interested in learning more about the efforts of small business owners who support the cause of preserving an incentive that attracts the film/television industry which generates revenue and creates thousands of small business jobs in our state. To learn more about how you can help raise awareness of this issue, visit [www.smallbusinessforfilm.com](http://www.smallbusinessforfilm.com). Last year, the New Hanover County Tourism Development Authority also passed a resolution to support film incentives because tourism and tourism-related businesses benefit from a strong film industry.

### 21. Wilmington Convention Center Calendar

Event/Organization	Date
LINE PREGNANCY 30TH ANNUAL GALA	March 5
Cape Fear Beer Fest	March 7
GWBJ Power Breakfast Series	March 12
War on the Shore National Championship	March 14
Cape Fear Wildlife Expo	March 20
Wilmington Biz Expo	March 25
Port City Gymnastics	March 27
A Century of Service for the Wilmington Rotary Club	March 28
EyeCon: One Tree Hill Reunion	March 29
Wilmington Fashion Week	April 2-4
Azalea Queen's Coronation	April 8
JDRF Hope Gala	May 16

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

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