

Travel Partner News- Summer (June, July & August)2014

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1. Room Occupancy Tax Collections

New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) in April 2014 were up 15.37% as compared to the same month of the prior year. Fiscal year-to-date, July 2013–April 2014, New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) are up 5.13% and calendar year-to-date are up 5.94%.

2. CVB Launches New Campaign #spreadtheWilm

The CVB is excited to announce a new campaign, #spreadtheWilm, which was unveiled on May 6 during National Tourism Week. The community-wide marketing initiative harnesses the love residents have for Wilmington and our beaches in an effort to encourage their family and friends to visit and in turn helps support local businesses and the local economy. As a valued partner of the CVB you can help promote the campaign by:

1. Visiting our [spreadtheWilm website](#) to access more information about the campaign
2. Sharing what you love about Wilmington and our beaches via [social media](#) with #spreadtheWilm to help showcase our area to your family and friends
3. Watching and sharing the [spreadtheWilm Video](#) featuring well-known locals
4. Promoting #spreadtheWilm in your business using the [Community Toolkit](#) which contains printable signage, social media resources and more.
5. Ordering #spreadtheWilm staff buttons and stickers to hand out at your business location

We hope that you will help us spread the word about this exciting new campaign to support local businesses and attract visitors to our area. We look forward to spreading the Wilm with you!

3. Help Us To SpreadtheWilm on June 30, 2014: Hashtag #spreadtheWilm Day

Last week Wilmington City Council proclaimed June 30th as "Hashtag #spreadtheWilm Day," in conjunction with National Social Media Day. June 30 is a day designated to recognize today's digital revolution and the importance of Social Media in marketing our destination. The CVB needs your help on June 30th to make this a success! Here's how you can promote your business and help us to #spreadtheWilm: Take pictures showcasing your business—interior shots, exterior shots, views from balconies, tour groups, visitors, exhibits, cuisine, etc.—and post them to Twitter, FaceBook, Instagram, Pinterest, etc. In your caption/message be sure to **include #spreadtheWilm**. Including the hashtag (#spreadtheWilm) will ensure that your pictures pull through to the Social Moments feed on the destination homepage, giving your business added exposure! In its first 30 days the Social Moments gallery received over 12,000 page views. Of course we hope you will hashtag all Wilmington & Beaches images each time you post them, and especially on June 30th as we make an industry statement with "Hashtag #spreadtheWilm Day." For more information on the #spreadtheWilm campaign, visit <http://portcitydaily.com/2014/06/19/spreadthewilm-loading-up-instagram-twitter-with-local-allure/> & www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/press-releases/wilmington-city-council-proclaims-june-30-2014-hashtag-spreadthewilm-day-in/

4. Reserve Space in the 2015 Official Visitor's Guide

Reserve your ad space now in the 2015 Visitors Guide, the area's official publication for visitor information. With information on accommodations, attractions, dining, shopping, tours, and outdoor activities, the guide makes planning easy for visitors. Based on your feedback, this year's ads will include QR codes that link to a coupon or deal being offered by participating advertisers. Other new additions this year include a refreshed design, shopping feature page and more. The CVB distributes 175,000 printed copies of the guide each year to visitor inquiries generated from advertising, telephone and the website and to walk-in visitors to our Visitor Information Centers. A digital edition of the Visitors Guide including partner advertisements is also posted on the CVB's website and the VisitNC.com website, the official tourism website for North Carolina. The digital edition features an interactive page-turning capability as well as the ability to link your ad to your business website. Great Southern Publishers (GSP)/365 Degree Total Marketing is the CVB's official publisher of the guide. To purchase ad space, please contact GSP Visitor Guide Project Manager Brenda Clark at 843-455-1176 or Brenda@greatsouthernpublishers.com.

5. Time To Restock Official Visitor Guides And Guide Maps

With the summer season upon us, it's a good time to inventory and restock your supply of 2014 Official Visitors Guides and Guide Maps. These tools are essential for visitors in our area with lots of useful information on Wilmington and the Beaches. If you need more guides, they can be ordered and picked up at the CVB's main visitor information center office, 505 Nutt Street-Unit A, Wilmington. Please contact Visitor Information Center Manager Karen Warren at 910-332-8750 or email her at visit@wilmingtonandbeaches.com with your visitors guide and guide map needs.

6. STS Top 20 Event Nominations

Nomination forms for the Southeastern Tourism Society's Top 20 Events for January, February, March 2015 must be received by STS no later than July 6, 2014. 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) and mail 2 copies, along with supporting materials, and a \$20 processing fee to be received by STS by their firm deadline July 6, 2014. Instructions and new 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.

7. PRSA Travel & Tourism Annual Conference & Media Marketplace, Tampa, FL

On June 8-11, 2014, the Wilmington and Beaches CVB Communications/PR Director attended the PRSA Travel & Tourism section Annual Conference & Media Marketplace in Tampa, FL. This event offered educational sessions and the opportunity to promote Wilmington & Beaches during a media event attended by top-tier media, freelance journalists and travel bloggers based in the Southeastern U.S.

8. FAM Tours

-In early May, the CVB partnered with the NC Division of Tourism to host a Hollywood East-theme familiarization (FAM) tour for media. Participating journalists represented the following media outlets: Sun Media (Canada), ELLE Canada, The Daily Meal and TripFilms.com.
-On June 8-9, the CVB partnered with the NC Division of Tourism to host a group tour/media FAM tour for Canadian journalists and tour operators/packagegers who were in the state to cover the U.S. Open. Participating tour operator/packagegers who visited our destination include Merit Golf Vacations and Voyages Gendron. Participating journalists were on assignment for the following Canadian publications: Score Golf, Toronto Sun/Sun Media, Quebecor Media Inc. (QMI), among others.

9. North Carolina Sports Association Meeting

On June 6th 2014, the Sales Department hosted the quarterly North Carolina Sports Association Meeting in Wilmington, NC at the Beau Rivage Golf and Resort. Sales Staff met with sports planners to bring additional sporting events to the area.

10. Small Cruise Ships to Visit Wrightsville Beach

Blount Small Ship Adventure Cruises will dock two ships at the Bridge Tender Marina in Wrightsville Beach this summer, weather permitting. The *Grand Mariner* arrived on June 13th, 2014 at 1pm and the *Grande Caribe* will arrive July 6th, 2014 at 1pm. Each cruise line 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.

11. Collaborate Marketplace

The sales staff attended the Collaborate Marketplace tradeshow in Portland, Oregon on June 12-14, 2014. Through pre-set appointments they met with qualified corporate meeting planners that can bring business to our destination.

12. Connect Marketplace and Connect Sports

In August, sales staff will attend both Connect Marketplace and Connect Sports in Orlando, FL from the 21st to the 23rd. Both events are produced by Collinson Media & Events, a senior leader in the travel and tourism industry. For more information on the sports event, visit connectsports.com/marketplace.

13. CVB To Attend Raleigh Media Event

The Wilmington and Beaches CVB will be among the destination marketing organizations participating in the N.C. Division of Tourism's media event to be held at the Nature Research Center in Raleigh on August 12, 2014. Invited media delegates include in-state media, select regional media and national freelance journalists. 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

14. Carolina Wedding Guide – Summer Bridal Expo

On Sunday, July 13th, 2014 the Services Department will be distributing wedding planning and visitor information at this expo, which will take place in the Wilmington Convention Center from 12pm-3pm.

15. Wilmington Convention Center Calendar

Event Name	Date
GWBJ Power Breakfast Series	June 10
NPC Gold's Classic	June 14
NC Bar Association 116 th Annual Banquet	June 21
Civil Rights Act Legacy Luncheon-50 th Anniversary	July 02
Summer Bridal Expo	July 13
50+ Coastal Lifestyles Expo	August 1

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)