



Travel Partner News- Winter 2016

Room Occupancy Tax Collections

New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) September '15 collections were up 14.56% and October '15 was up 2.65%, as compared to the same month of the prior year. Fiscal year-to-date, July 2015–October 2015, New Hanover County gross ROT collections (1st 3%) are up 3.11% and calendar year-to-date are up 5.0%.

2016 Visit North Carolina 365 Conference

Mark your calendars to attend the 2016 Visit North Carolina 365 Conference (previously known as the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism) on March 13-15 at Harrah's Cherokee Resort in Cherokee. It's a great opportunity to network with more than 500 of the state's tourism industry leaders and gain insights into North Carolina's growing travel industry. The conference program will include signature keynote addresses, informative educational sessions, an issues forum, a preview of Visit NC's 2016-17 strategic marketing plan and co-op opportunities, and valuable interaction with peers and media partners. Online registration is now open. Standard registration rates end February 26. For more information and registration, visit www.visitnc365.com or contact Dana Grimstead: dana.grimstead@visitnc.com or 919-447-7761.

Rep. Ted Davis of Wilmington Receives Inaugural N.C. Tourism Champion Award

On December 18, Kim Hufham, President and CEO of the New Hanover County TDA, presented N.C. Rep. Ted Davis of Wilmington with an inaugural Tourism Champion Award from the N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition, the voice of North Carolina's tourism industry.

Davis, a Republican and an attorney in his third term in the House, was honored for his strong support of the state's travel and tourism industry, one of the main job-creation engines of North Carolina's economy. Among Rep. Davis's many responsibilities in the N.C. General Assembly, he chairs the Occupancy Tax Subcommittee of the House Finance Committee. In that role, Davis has significant influence on state policies governing the use of local lodging taxes and helps to ensure that their proceeds are used to promote the state's travel and tourism industry.

Hufham thanked Rep. Davis for his leadership and support of tourism. Prior to his election to the N.C. House, Davis served on the New Hanover County TDA Board of Directors as a County Commissioner representative.

Marketing Department

Online Advertising Opportunity

The Wilmington and Beaches Convention and Visitors Bureau is pleased to share a new online advertising opportunity for tourism industry partners on the official tourism website for New Hanover County – www.WilmingtonAndBeaches.com. With over 3.9 million page views annually and limited advertising inventory, this is your chance to secure your spot now! Industry partners will have the unique opportunity to promote their organizations to the "ready-to-buy" online audience that relies on www.WilmingtonandBeaches.com to make spending decisions about where to stay, what to do and where to dine when they visit Wilmington and our island beaches. Destination Travel Network (DTN) has partnered with Wilmington & Beaches CVB to manage this new, powerful online advertising program. Don't miss out on this opportunity to highlight your business and reach visitors who are researching and making their travel decisions online through the official tourism website for New Hanover County. Please contact Senior Marketing Manager Jackie Harlow at marketing@wilmingtonandbeaches.com if you would like more information and to be contacted by DTN.

2016 Official Visitor's Guide

The 2016 Official Visitors Guide, New Hanover County's official resource for visitor information, is now available for display with area merchants, attractions, lodging-partners, and tourism-related businesses. With information on accommodations, attractions, dining, shopping, tours, and outdoor activities, and NEW tear-out maps featuring Wilmington, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach and Wrightsville Beach, the guide makes planning easy for the visitors. The CVB distributes print copies of the guide each year to fulfill 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 is also posted on the CVB's website and the VisitNC.com website, the official source for state tourism visitor information. Bulk copies of the guide are also available for pick-up from the main Visitor Information Center at 505 Nutt Street. If you would like to display copies of the guide at your business, please contact Karen Warren, Visitor Information Center Manager at 910-332-8750 or visit@wilmingtonandbeaches.com. We will also be providing a bulk distribution day in March as we head into our busy season in central locations around Wilmington, Carolina, Kure and Wrightsville Beach where copies of the guide can be picked up. Information on the date and time of the distribution will be provided to our partners via email.

2016 Events for Calendar

The Wilmington and Beaches CVB needs your 2016 event information as soon as possible! Public events that meet the CVB's guidelines will be included on the CVB's online calendar of events, as well as on the VisitNC.com calendar. These calendars are used by visitors and the media. Please email or fax event name, date(s), time, location of event, brief description, and contact information (phone number, website) to Caitlin Mulholland, Marketing Assistant, via email: marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com or fax to 910-341-4029. Please don't miss out on this opportunity for free event publicity!

Spring Packages

The CVB is also seeking spring travel packages for promotion in e-specials and on websites. Packages and special rates submitted will be promoted by the CVB online leading up to the spring season, beginning in February. Send your spring packages to Caitlin Mulholland at marketingassist@wilmingtonandbeaches.com by February 5, 2016.

SALES DEPARTMENT

Jenna Davis Joins CVB Sales Team

The CVB is pleased to announce that Jenna Davis joined the CVB Sales team on January 4 to cover the Government and National Association markets. Jenna's prior experience includes sales positions with the Wilmington Hammerheads Soccer team and the Blockade Runner Resort.

Tradeshows and Meetings:

Religious Conference Management Association: Staff will attend the Emerge Conference in San Diego, CA on January 5-7, 2016. The conference consists of appointments and education sessions with individuals who are responsible for planning and/or managing meetings, tutorials, conferences, conventions, and assemblies for their religious organizations.

Association Executives of N.C.: Staff will attend the AENC bi-monthly meeting and luncheon on January 11, 2016 in Raleigh.

North Carolina Sports Association: Staff will attend the quarterly meeting in Asheville, NC on January 11, 2016.

Meeting Professionals International – Carolinas Chapter: Staff will attend the MPI Carolinas Chapter meeting in Cary, NC on January 14-15, 2016.

Meeting Professionals International – Georgia Chapter: Staff will attend the monthly meeting & networking luncheon for the Georgia Chapter of Meeting Professionals International held in Atlanta, GA on January 19, 2016.

Meeting Professionals International – Georgia Chapter: Staff will attend the Annual tradeshow, meeting & networking for the Georgia Chapter of Meeting Professionals International held in Atlanta, GA on March 15, 2016.

Meeting Professionals International – Carolinas Chapter: Staff will attend the MPI Carolinas Chapter meeting in Spartanburg, SC on March 17-18, 2016.

Association Executives of N.C.: Staff will attend the AENC bi-monthly meeting and luncheon on March 23, 2016 in Raleigh.

North Carolina Sports Association: Staff will attend the quarterly meeting in Pinehurst, NC on March 24, 2016.

PR DEPARTMENT

Hometown Tourist Website Updates

The CVB is updating its Hometown Tourist web page www.WilmingtonAndBeaches.com/hometown with 2016 information about attractions that are free and/or discounted to New Hanover County residents on designated dates throughout the year. If your attraction, tour or cruise offers **free days and/or discounts to New Hanover County residents**, please send us the 2016 dates for free and/or discounted admission and a detailed description. to: Connie Nelson, Communications/PR Director at cvbpr@wilmingtonandbeaches.com by **January 26, 2016**.

North Carolina Media Mission

The Wilmington and Beaches CVB will participate in Visit NC's Media Mission on January 26. More than 100 New York area consumer, lifestyle and travel trade media (print, broadcast and online) representatives have been invited to attend a media reception where each participating destination is showcased. More than 20 participating NC destinations will be showcased at the event.

STS Top 20 Event Nominations

Nomination forms for the Southeastern Tourism Society's Top 20 Events for October-November-December 2016 must be received by STS NO LATER THAN April 1, 2016. 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 downloaded and/or submitted online.

Wilmington Convention Center Calendar

Event/Organization	Date
<u>McGladrey Economic Forecast Breakfast</u>	January 07
Discover The Dinosaurs	January 09-10
Winter Bridal Expo	January 10
ACS Spring Home Show	February 19-21
Cape Fear Heart Ball	February 20
Nexstar National Talent Competition	February 26-28
Cape Fear Beer Festival	March 05
Cape Fear Wildlife Expo	March 18-20
Wilmington Biz Expo	March 30
Life Line Pregnancy Center Annual Fundraiser	March 31

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)