

tourism tidbits

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 7 FEBRUARY 2010



NEW HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM WEB SITE NOW LIVE

Explore Revamped VisitNCsmokies.com

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority launched a fully redesigned and revamped Web site on February 24 at www.VisitNCsmokies.com. The site features more photography and video of the area than the previous versions and includes an electronic edition of the TDA's Visitors Guide.

Along with a clean design, the new site features a blog, with excerpts of recent posts appearing on the homepage, than enables the content



to remain fresh. The main sections of the site are "Where to Stay," "What to Do," "Places to See," and "Where to Eat." New sections will feature information about weddings and child-friendly activities in Haywood County.

The site now has the capability to post text or banner ads; the TDA will soon be distributing rate cards for the various Web site sponsorship opportunities. There's plenty of great content, organized in a user-friendly and easily navigable design, to explore.

FACEBOOK FUN FACTS

- Facebook now has more than 400 million users worldwide and more than 100 million in the U.S.
- Users age 35-54 now account for the largest group of users at 29.0%
- The largest growth segment is users 55 years and up, having grown 922.7% since January 2009. Projections are that there will be more than 1 billion Facebook users by 2011.

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SHERRY WARREN TO ATTEND DMAI'S VISITORS CENTERS SHIRTSLEEVES

Destination Marketing Association International's Shirtsleeves remains a must-attend event for visitor services professionals. Harness the power of human connections! Recommended by 100 percent of attendees for the past two years, attendees tackle key visitor center issues through interactive discussion and education sessions, while making valuable connections with colleagues from around the globe. Courses include the following:

- The Visitor Center Climate: Finding Your Forward Momentum. Panelists will highlight strategies for successful sponsorships and partnerships, and overcoming today's unique challenges to increase tourism and your bottom line.
- The Community Connection. Successful tourism is a result of strong community relationships. Learn to translate the important roles that DMOs and local stakeholders play to your destination visitors.
- Current Traveler Behavior & Decision-Making. Case studies will illustrate how destinations can become proactive destination influencers, expanded destination concierge service providers, and brand-driven, self-sufficient entities.
- Future Directions for Visitor Centers and Services. Interactive breakout discussions will focus on destination brand interpretation and design, VIC operational funding opportunities, services, marketing, and sales. Recommendations for future visitor center and services sustainability will result.

MANDATORY HCTDA GRANT WORKSHOP SET FOR APRIL 8 AT 9:30 AM

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority will be hosting a funding workshop on April 8, 2010, beginning 9:30 a.m. at Lake Junaluska's Bethea Welcome Center.

Anyone interested in applying for 2010 HCTDA 3- and 1-percent funding **MUST ATTEND** the workshop. No applications will be considered if applicant did not attend this workshop.

The session will cover new funding guidelines, new application forms and process, and any new post-event requirements. Co-op advertising opportunities for 2010-11 will be discussed and available at the workshop.

You will receive more information about the workshop as the date approaches.

3-PERCENT TIMELINE FOR 2010

(Funds to be spent between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011)

- **MARCH 31, 2010:** HCTDA will publicize the start of the funding process in The Mountaineer and the Smoky Mountain News.
- **April 8, 2010:** Mandatory Funding Workshop for all who are interested in submitting funding applications. You must attend this workshop in order for your application to be considered for funding.

• **April 30, 2010:** 3-percent applications must be submitted to the HCTDA office by 5 p.m.

• **May 19, 2010:** Annual Budget Forum, at which the HCTDA board will consider requests for funding. The Budget Forum Meeting will be held at the Justice Center in the third-floor board meeting room at 3:30 p.m. If you wish to speak, please sign up between 3 and 3:30 p.m. You will be limited to three minutes.

• **May 26, 2010:** The HCTDA budget will be reviewed and adopted to include the approved funding requests.

1-PERCENT TIMELINE FOR 2010

(Funds to be spent between July 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011)

• **MARCH 31, 2010:** HCTDA will publicize the start of the funding process in The Mountaineer and the Smoky Mountain News.

• **April 8, 2010:** Mandatory Funding Workshop for all who are interested in submitting funding applications. You must attend this workshop in order for your application to be considered for funding.

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TDA HIRES YOUNG STRATEGIES FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

The TDA has hired Young Strategies to conduct research designed to provide a profile of 2009 visitor inquiries and the resulting conversion, visitor activities and economic impact for future planning.

A comprehensive review of the TDA organization, including funding, staff, expenditures and overall organizational structure, with comparisons to other similar organizations, will also be conducted.

The inquiry research project will start with an online survey to document inquiry profile, perceptions, spending and behavior patterns of those who inquired in 2009 that provided an email address.

Survey Response Data to include, along with additional information, the following:

- Profile of current and most likely potential visitors;
- Rank order of sources of information leading to trip;
- First time vs. repeat visit statistics;

- Visitor spending statistics (including specific trip and daily expenditures for lodging, food, transportation, shopping, & attractions);
- Rank order of visitor interests and activities;
- Satisfaction ratings with categories of product (dining, lodging, attractions, shopping, etc.);
- Most effective outreach messages and methods.

The results of the survey responses will be presented at the HCTDA Board retreat.

TDA, TOMBRAS WINS ADDY AWARDS

The ADDY® Awards is the advertising industry's largest and most representative competition, attracting over 50,000 entries every year in local ADDY® competitions.

The HCTDA and Tombras won several Addy's including: Silver Addy in the Mixed-Media, National Consumer category for the Haywood Journey print ad campaign; Bronze Addy's in the Photography category Haywood Journey photo campaign and waterfall, BRP Sunset (mountain biking) and The Swag (Sunrise).

HAYWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTNERS WITH TDA FOR INTERACTIVE SYMPOSIUM

On April 15, The Tombras Group Interactive Director will be giving a Symposium at the Hi-Tech Center, about the interactive and social media revolution, the effects it's having on marketing, communications and how it's shaping the future of reaching consumers. All types of businesses are welcome and will find the information presented very helpful for their future. As we approach the date of the event we will notify everyone of the time. Space will be limited, so we will be accepting RSVP's on a first-come basis.



Where the Sun Rises on the Smokies

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