WHAT TOURISM DOES FOR SMITHFIELD
Our mission is to attract and serve visitors to Johnston County to make an economic impact in our destinations. In 2016, visitors to Johnston County spent $232.49 million staying in our hotels, visiting attractions, enjoying restaurants, shopping, as well as attending meetings, festivals and special events. 

That’s money that supports local small businesses!

In 2018, the JCVB team designed and printed 50,000 Visitors Guides with Ava’s Home Town, Smithfield NC on the cover.
We love to show off our destinations in Johnston County and we did that for Smithfield several times:

- All (9) NC Welcome Center Managers toured the county and stops included Ava Gardner Museum and Carolina Premium Outlets
- Hosting travel writers to share what’s happening in Smithfield: North American Travel Journalist Assn. (12), Travel Media Showcase (4), and VisitNC Canadian Fam (5), all toured the Ava Gardner Museum
- USA Today, “A Flavorful Gift from Each State”, Lady Edison from JoCo Hams, Auto Accessories Garage, “55 Small Towns to Visit on a Road Trip” (Smithfield, NC)

SALES LEADS AND GROUP SERVICES

JCVB sent out to Smithfield hotels the following leads:

- Smithfield/Selma Map Distribution - 20,616
- JCVB staff organizes the 301 Endless Yard Sale which has a great impact on local businesses for Smithfield hotels (200 rms)
The Beer, Wine, Shine Trail has a new App and our partners along the trail in Smithfield include hotel partners on the Sip & Stay Package

Facebook live posts for the Ham & Yam Festival, and Ava Gardner Movie Weekend Event with Leigh Hines

Social media support for Ava Gardner Museum, Smithfield Ham and Yam Festival, and Johnston County Hams on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

JCVB designed and installed the new Girlfriends Getaway billboards

Homepage headers on johnstoncountync.org: Ava Gardner Museum, Johnston County Hams, Ham and Yam Festival

Ad placements for Smithfield included: *Our State Magazine, Southern Living, WRAL television, N & O Email blast, Zoomer Magazine* for Canadian Snowbirds, *Visit NC e-newsletter and travel deals, NC Business Magazine*

Top JCVB website listings: Johnston County Hams, (2nd) 1,777 visits, Ava Gardner Museum (3rd) 1,339 visits, Smithfield Parks & Recreation, (4th) 1,329 visits


Top website events for Smithfield: Ham and Yam - 958 hits, Smithfield Christmas Parade - 667 hits, and Smithfield Wine Walk - 515 hits
- Run 5k rack card to promote Smithfield Grinch Race (and others in the county - has been very well received)
- Atlanta Magazine.com - “Civil War History Event”, Smithfield hotel offers
- Phillyvoice.com - “Ava Gardner: Experience the Life of Hollywood Legend”
- Ava Gardner Display case at the I-95 Welcome Center
- LGA Social Media Takeover - A Day in Smithfield
- New Girlfriend’s Getaway 4 x 9 Rack Brochure
- Ham & Yam Marketing Materials including print, digital, and banners, as well as a $5,000 grant for marketing the festival
- Outside Kiosks for the Smithfield Community Park

Above
Sarah Campbell installed two displays at the Welcome Centers to promote Smithfield, one for the Ava Gardner Museum and another for the Girlfriend’s Getaway Package.

Right
Sample design of one of the billboards in place to promote shopping at the outlets and the Girlfriend’s Getaway Package.
GRANTS

JCVB HAS A MATCHING MARKETING GRANT FOR FESTIVALS AND EVENTS WITH A BUDGET OF $20,000. THE CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM HAS SUPPORTED SMITHFIELD AS WELL IN 2018.

• JCVB is a Smithfield/Selma Chamber sponsor at the $5,500 Champion level and supports the Smithfield Ham & Yam Festival with a $1,500 grant.

• Other $500 Matching Marketing Grants for Smithfield Events: Neuse Little Theatre, Junior League Touch a Truck, Harbor Wine Walk, Ava & Frank Movie Weekend, St. Ann’s International Food Festival, Tarheel League Girl’s Softball Tournament, Johnston County Arts Council, Johnston County Heritage Center Ghost Walk. Total event grants awarded: $5,500

• The Ava Gardner Museum received a $30,000 grant for wall and roof repair, Johnston County Heritage Center received $5,500 for Heritage Markers, and Smithfield Community Park received a $12,500 grant for tennis court resurfacing.

OTHER STUFF

• Donna Bailey-Taylor serves on the Ava Gardner Museum Board and provides free design services: Ava Gardner Museum brochure, Ava & Frank Weekend marketing materials, Fundraising Brochure, and the Hemingway’s Heroine Exhibit Design. She also designed at no charge the Heritage Center Moonshine Exhibit.

• Sarah Campbell served on the Partnership for Children Park Committee.
Members of the tourism industry can become members of the Hospitality Association for an annual fee of $50.00. JCVB hosts educational seminars, networking opportunities and a community service project that benefits the Social Services, Angel Tree.

Available to all staff of tourism industry businesses is an online, FREE, hospitality training course. The program introduces new hires to National, State, and Local tourism facts, reviews the programs and workplan of the JCVB and a customer service module.

The official website for Johnston County Tourism provides listings for all tourism related businesses and events to showcase the county. The new CMS site was launched in July 2017 with Simpleview, Inc. Listing hits generated were 1,890,360 and Coupon Hits were 48,260.
STAFF AND BOARD

JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU STAFF

Donna Bailey-Taylor, President/CEO
Angel Phillips, Office Manager/Visitor Center
Eric Dean, Communications Manager/Webmaster
Ashby Brame, Marketing & PR Manager
Sarah Campbell, Sports & Leisure Sales Manager
Taylor Lee, Part-time Sales and Marketing Assistant

JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY

Scotty Henley, Chairperson
Rick Childrey, Vice-Chairperson
Lynn Daniels, Secretary
Ernie Brame, Special Project Committee Chair
Rick Heilman, Marketing Committee Chair
Matt Zapp, Sports Council Representative
Cheryl Lane
Paul Boucher
Randy Capps
Keith Brinson
Chad McLamb, Ex-Officio Finance

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