



HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

- LHVB News
- Marketing News
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- Public Relations News
- Group Tour News
- New LHVB Partners

DON'T MISS OUR BI-WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER!

Make sure you're receiving LHVB's Partner e-newsletter, Happenings from LHVB. Hear about the bureau's latest marketing and educational opportunities, deadline reminders, special events, meeting dates, and more. If you're not hearing from us, please check your spam folder and be sure to add us to your safe sender list in your email, or contact us to sign up.

CONNECT WITH THE LHVB ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



LHVB NEWS



Laurel Highlands to Host Highly Sought-After Media Marketplace Event in 2018

The LHVB and Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort are proud announce that the region will play host to the 15th annual Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations (MATPRA) Media Marketplace, Sept. 25-27, 2018! This event will bring more than 100 travel journalists and tourism marketing representatives to the Laurel Highlands for a three-day, two-night conference. Local tours will be offered to attendees before, during and after the conference, resulting in increased exposure for the region's tourism assets.

"The Laurel Highlands is filled to the brim with unique stories and the opportunity to host the 2018 MATPRA Media Marketplace allows our region the opportunity to showcase and plant story ideas with the incredible talent attending this event," said Ann Nemanic, Executive Director of the LHVB. "We have already begun the planning process with our partnering host, Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort, for an experience beyond compare. Customized tours to our main attractions and hidden gems are just a singular aspect of what attendees will have in store when they arrive."

MATPRA is a cohesive unit of regional tourism partners encompassing Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C. and West Virginia. The alliance works together serve travel journalists in order to promote the Mid-Atlantic region as a travel destination.

2018 County Tourism Grant Chats Scheduled!

Join the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau to learn what you need to know about your county's 2018 Tourism Grant Program. We encourage anyone interested in applying for a tourism grant to attend this FREE meeting.

Reservations are required and can be made by contacting Rachel at roehrig@laurelhighlands.org or 724-238-5661, ext. 101. Deadline to RSVP is **September 25**. Please indicate your county when calling.

- Tuesday, October 3 – Westmoreland County Tourism Grant Chat, Westmoreland County Community College, Commissioners Hall, Room 2112
- Wednesday, October 4 – Fayette County Tourism Grant Chat, Penn-State Fayette, Room 116, Eberly Corporate Training Center
- Thursday, October 5 – Somerset County Tourism Grant Chat, Somerset Country Club

Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the grant chat held 9-11 a.m. Light refreshments will be available at each session.

Grant applications will be available online at www.laurelhighlands.org/grants on Oct. 9. Completed applications will be due Nov. 17, 2017.



Meet Allyson!

The LHVB is pleased to introduce Allyson Null, newly-hired Marketing Communications Coordinator, to the marketing team. Allyson is a recent graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a dual major in Journalism and Public Relations, and Communications Media, as well as a minor in French. Aside from her exceptional writing capabilities, Allyson brings an array of skills to the department including photography and photo editing, radio production, video production and graphic design. In addition, Allyson completed an internship with the Cambria County Convention and Visitors Bureau in 2016, giving her an excellent foundation of knowledge for the industry and understanding of tourism promotion for the area. Allyson will offer support to the marketing department for a variety of needs, but will primarily serve as a content creator for marketing needs. This means writing blogs, content for the website and social media, destination guide editorials and more! Please welcome Allyson to the staff at anull@laurelhighlands.org.



Interactive Marketing Summit | November 3, 2017

Register today for LHVB's 7th annual Interactive Marketing Summit to be held 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Friday, Nov. 3, at the Fred Rogers Center on the Saint Vincent College campus. The Summit is perfect for everyone from small business owners to marketing professionals who want to learn about the latest trends and techniques in digital marketing from industry leaders!

The cost to attend is \$50 for LHVB Partners or \$75 for non-LHVB Partners, and includes breakfast and lunch. Registration and more information about the event is available online at: laurelhighlands.org/summit.

Space is limited, so register today! Help spread the word on Twitter and Instagram by using #LHsummit.



LHVB Annual Dinner | October 25, 2017

Join fellow tourism partners, the LHVB Board of Directors and staff for the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau Annual Dinner at The Barn at Ligonier Valley, located just off Route 30 in Ligonier. The striking craftsmanship and rustic ambiance of The Barn at Ligonier Valley and the region's stunning fall foliage will provide a beautiful backdrop as we celebrate tourism and partnership.

The highlight of the evening will include presentations of our *Tourism Trailblazer of the Year* and *Tourism Employee of the Year*. Invitations will be arriving in your mailbox in September. We look forward to seeing all of you on October 25!



MARKETING NEWS

Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing

Fall Marketing

Fall is on its way and the LHVB will be launching targeted digital campaigns with help from Red House Communications. These targeted digital efforts are the start of the implementation of a three-year marketing strategy developed by Red House, which has identified opportunities with different generations, locations and interests that the LHVB can target to drive traffic and increase overnight stays. Alongside traditional media placements such as TV commercials on WTAE and KDKA, billboards and print co-op ads, the enhanced digital placements, include social media advertisements, native content advertising, weather-triggered banner ads, video pre-roll ads and more! All of these initiatives allow the LHVB to better target different users in different places with different interests with unique, customized ads developed with each in mind. Once we have caught their attention, visitors will be directed to unique landing pages on laurelhighlands.org with additional customized content, allowing the LHVB to get visitors directly to partner information.



2018 Destination Guide

The LHVB team is hard at work on the 2018 Destination Guide! The guide is the LHVB's primary fulfillment tool with 175,000 copies printed and distributed annually. Distribution points include 85 regional brochure racks, consumer shows, visitor inquiries, PA Welcome Centers, and PA Turnpike rest areas - just to mention a few! Each guide features unique content, partner listings, a bound-in map, coupons and more! The LHVB also prints and distributes 25,000 additional maps, which are available to partners at no cost. The guide will be printed and ready for distribution in December, so don't miss your chance to advertise today. **All artwork is due September 29.** Contact Louise Bates at lbates@laurelhighlands.org or visit us online at laurelhighlands.org/DGads for additional information on how you can participate today!



Website Update The LHVB is working with its web development company, Simpleview, on a redesign for laurelhighlands.org! The redesign will take aim at enhancing the user experience when they visit the site by streamlining the content into easy-to-find options. This will allow visitors to quickly find the visitor information they are seeking to help them plan their trips and navigate throughout the Laurel Highlands. The redesign will also incorporate high-quality imagery and video of the region. LHVB's marketing staff expects the new site to launch in the winter of 2018. Stay tuned!



PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Ann Nemanic, Executive Director

Did you know? This time of year is my favorite. Many get energized when the calendar rolls over to a new year, but when I see school supplies lining the shelves, I get excited. I always loved back-to-school shopping with my mom. I remember the fun of cleaning out my closet and buying a new pair of sneakers, the anticipation of seeing my friends after a long summer, wrapping my books in paper grocery bags and decorating each one with my new set of markers. But above all, it was about learning something new. I'm a perpetual learner.

How do you help yourself, or your staff, learn about the Laurel Highlands? Perhaps you can take a page out of my book and start an *In the Field Day*. Many years ago someone asked me, "How do you know so much about this area? You're not from here." A true statement and probably, all the more reason I needed to learn what was in my own backyard. I'm doing the same with your LHVB staff. Each month we are taking roughly five hours out of the office to discover the Laurel Highlands as a group. One staffer takes the lead and plans a mystery trip. Everyone has a colorful journal to record their thoughts, jot down facts, all to be used for their own work-use. Taking a tour, talking to a partner, asking questions will make each of them a better blogger, tour planner, escort, writer, and visitor information specialist. And, the best part might be learning something new about each other. Who knew Jared would pet a snake or Kristin felt comfortable behind the wheel of a race car!

Learning has also been a part of the process for our incoming LHVB board members. During an orientation on August 23, seven board members were introduced to the inner workings of the Bureau. We welcome Stephen Clark, National Park Service; Clinton Piper, Fallingwater; Monte Hansen, Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort; Ken Bisbee, Ohiopyle State Park; Michael Simons, Spring Hill Suites Latrobe-Pittsburgh; Alicia Henry, Westmoreland Industrial Development Corporation; and Bryan Perry, Allegheny Trail Alliance. We look to their leadership and knowledge to advance our organization over the next year.

Another learning opportunity will come in early October for all tourism businesses in the Laurel Highlands when we host our annual grant chats in each of our three counties. These two-hour workshops will provide helpful information on the tourism grant programs in each county. Most criteria will remain the same, but it is always helpful to join us to see if there is something you might have missed, or to pick up a pointer on how to improve your application. If you are unable to join us, all content will be uploaded to laurelhighlands.org.

Sharpen your pencils class! There's something new to discover this season in this magnificent destination we call home.



MEETINGS AND EVENTS

September 19 | Partner Orientation

October 11 | Executive Board Meeting

October 25 | LHVB Board Meeting

October 25 | LHVB Annual Dinner

November 2 | Executive Board Meeting

November 3 | Interactive Marketing Summit

Please note the LHVB administrative offices will be closed on the following dates:

November 10 | Veteran's Day, office closed

November 23-24 | Thanksgiving holidays, office closed



WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

Jared Bundy, Director of Interactive Marketing

SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE

(as of July 24, 2017)



Facebook Fans

56,000+



Twitter Followers

11,500+



YouTube Video Views

226,000+



Instagram Followers

2,500+



Pinterest Followers

700+

TOP PAGES (June 2017)



- 10,128 /outdoors/ohiopyle
- 8,771 Homepage
- 5,628 /things-to-do/events
- 5,406 /outdoors/water-sports/ohiopyle-adventure/
- 4,559 /things-to-do/our-seasons/summer/
- 4,237 /places-to-stay/cabins-campgrounds/
- 3,548 /things-to-do/family-fun/
- 2,835 /things-to-do
- 2,686 /outdoors/water-sports/ohiopyle-rafting
- 2,563 /outdoors-water-sports

FACEBOOK FOOTPRINT

(Compared to previous 28 days)

Page likes have increased by **660**

Actions on page have increased **26%**

Video views have increased

124%



TOP KEYWORDS

Laurel Highlands, Ohiopyle State Park, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Ohiopyle, Laurel Highlands PA, Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, Ligonier Days, Idlewild Park, Laurel Highlands Trail

WEB VISITS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

June-July 2017

(Compared to June-July 2016)

Overall:

↑ 87%
increase

Facebook: 83% increase
Pinterest: >100% increase
Instagram: >500% increase
LinkedIn: >300% increase



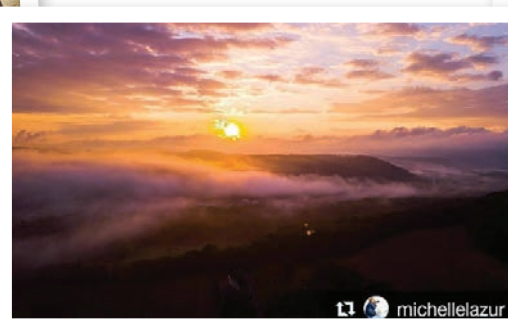
Top Facebook Post: This post featuring a new partner, the Carriage House on Slope Hill, reached more than 10,000 people and received more than 1,000 clicks.

Top Instagram Post: Our picture of Meadow Run in June became the most-liked photo we've shared on Instagram.



Instagram Photo Contest Winners:

Enter each week by tagging us and using #LaurelHighlands.





PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

Anna Weltz, Director of Public Relations

Recent Press Visits

- Paris Wolfe, News Herald and Morning Journal
- Cherie Hicks, Altoona Mirror
- Sandra Block, Kiplinger's Personal Finance
- Nedra McDaniel, Adventure Mom
- Anietra Hamper, Planetware.com

Top Media Opportunities

- Chicago Tribune
- Kiplinger's Personal Finance
- The New York Times
- Northern Virginia Magazine
- Thrillist
- USA Today



LAUREL HIGHLANDS IN THE LIMELIGHT

May 1-July 24, 2017

A summary of press and media projects initiated or coordinated by the LHVB. Circulation, digital impressions, and publicity value figures provided by Cision media monitoring service.

More than **\$903,000** in added value

& Nearly **386 million** in total reach

186 stories

Chicago Tribune

THRILLIST

USA TODAY

The New York Times



GROUP TOUR NEWS

Stacey Magda, Director of Sales

Growing Group Business at Group Leader Shows

Share your information with the area's busiest group leaders at not one but TWO shows in the fall 2016! Participation for each show is \$100, contact Stacey Magda for contracts and more information.

AAA Group Leader Show | Nemaquin Woodlands Resort | September 5-6, 2017 | 175 group leaders

Great Day! Group Leader Show | Independence, OH | September 29, 2017 | 300 group leaders

Welcoming Groups to the Laurel Highlands

Lion's Club Annual Convention | Seven Springs Mountain Resort | May 18-21, 2017 | 500 visitors

The LHVB worked with the Lion's Club to provide tour itineraries, step on guide services, welcome bags and an onsite regional information table to keep attendees in the know about what to see and do in the Laurel Highlands!



Alpha Association | Ramada Greensburg Hotel and Convention Center | May 31-June 4 2017 | 130 visitors

A Liners Owners Club | Mountain Pines Campground | July 26-31, 2017 | 120 visitors

Millie's Tour | Holiday Inn Express and Suites Donegal | August 21-23, 2017 | 46 visitors

Save the Date: Meet the Planners in Harrisburg Fall Luncheon

November 2017 | downtown Harrisburg | location to be decided

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to connect with association and meeting planners in the Harrisburg area! The afternoon will kick off with a marketplace showcasing you, our Laurel Highlands venues and event spaces. For more information on how to be involved contact Stacey Magda at smagda@laurelhighlands.org or 724-238-5661 x 111.

Heartland Travel Showcase 2018 | Buffalo, NY | February 15-18, 2018

Don't miss the chance to be a part of the Laurel Highlands line-up at the Heartland Travel Showcase! This year a team of Laurel Highlands representatives will hit the road traveling on a motorcoach conducting sales calls en route to Buffalo prior to arriving to educational and networking sessions, and finally prescheduled appointment with qualified tour operators and companies. The greater Buffalo area will be a strong market for us! I hope you'll take advantage of this excellent opportunity to share your group tour, service or property.

Contact Stacey Magda at smagda@laurelhighlands.org or at 724-238-5661 x 111 for more information.

2016 GROUP TRAVEL IN REVIEW

6,725 hotel rooms booked

\$833,900 in hotel revenue

192 multi-day tours & **259** day trips

451 bus groups

16,724 senior and adult visitors

13,158 student visitors



WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



B & L Wine Cellars

Rich Lamm
900 Broad Street
Johnstown, PA 15906
814-536-2259
bandlwinecellars.com

With two locations in the Johnstown area, a great selection of award-winning wines, live music on weekends, and fun activities like art classes, this winery is a happening place!



Fort Allen Antique Farm Equipment Association

Chris Johnston
911 Porter Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15601
724-694-2538
Facebook: Fort Allen Antique Farm Equipment Association Inc

For more than 50 years, Fort Allen Antique Farm Equipment Association has been preserving and restoring old farm equipment. They also volunteer their time to educate the public about traditional farming methods with farm equipment demonstrations and displays at many festivals and special events throughout the year. They also open their forge every Thursday evening and welcome everyone from beginners to experienced blacksmiths to use the facility.



The Carriage House on Slope Hill

Gladys Laick
4184 Slope Hill Road
Mount Pleasant, PA 15666
724-244-5457
Facebook: The Carriage House on Slope Hill

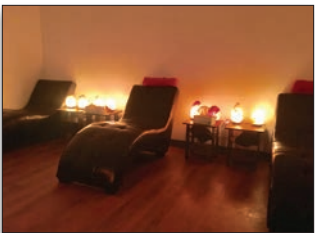
The Carriage House on Slope Hill is a charming vacation rental. All the comforts of home, situated in a beautiful cottage garden with water features, quaint playhouse and play area for youngsters, outstanding view of the ridges and only a short drive to many Laurel Highlands attractions.



Fury Brewing Company

Tom Jenkins, Ryan Slicker, Stephan Hoffer
13380 Route 30
North Huntingdon, PA 15642
724-826-5162
furybrewingcompany.com

Located conveniently on Route 30 East, close to Irwin, Fury Brewing Company offers a friendly welcome to their tap room featuring a large variety of craft beers, brewed with locally sourced ingredients. Drop by and sample a beer or two, you won't be disappointed!



Cherry Tree Integrative Health Center

Alexandra Kampert
655 Cherry Tree Lane
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-439-4600
Facebook: Cherry Tree Integrative Health Center

Recently opened in Uniontown, Cherry Tree Integrative Health Center offers alternative therapies including salt room halo therapy, vichy shower body massage, and infrared sauna, as well as healing classes and events.



Greenawalt Furniture

Lionel and Eileen Greenawalt
1816 Greensburg Pike
West Newton, PA 15089
724-446-7001
greenawaltfurniture.com

This family-owned business offers a large selection of American-made furniture with styles ranging from mission, rustic, reclaimed, and painted for dining room, living room and bedroom furniture. They also stock outdoor furniture, accents and upholstery.



Copper Kettle Guest House

Elizabeth Svonavec
3003 Kingwood Road
Rockwood, PA 15557
814-926-2779
blshayloft.com/lodging.html

This beautifully renovated 19th century guest house offers four bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a loft offering additional sleeping or living space for four, fully equipped kitchen, a large yard with patio and grill, seating and fire pit. The property also offers a one room "honeymoon suite" guest house complete with a wood burner.



LPS Strength and Meditation

Laura Santore
30 E Main Street
Suite 200
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-557-9206
lpsstrengthandmeditation.com

Located in downtown Uniontown, LPS offer classes to suit all ages and abilities from beginner yoga and gentle yoga flow to hot power yoga. LPS also offers a full menu of massage and body treatments designed to focus on a holistic approach - balanced harmony, strength and wellness.



WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



Maple Leaf Outfitters LLC

Douglas Koscianski
P.O. Box 86
Meyersdale, PA, 15552
814-701-8080

Located in Meyersdale, the newly opened Maple Leaf Outfitters will provide shuttle and guide services to those trekking the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail and cyclists experiencing the Great Allegheny Passage.



Ruvo's Italian Restaurant

Anthony Ruvo
510 West Crawford Avenue
Connellsville, PA 15425
724-320-5059
Facebook: Ruvo's Italian Restaurant

Ruvo's Italian Restaurant prides itself on freshly, home cooked Italian dishes and a warm welcome as soon as you open the door! Located in downtown Connellsville, very close to the GAP, Ruvo's is cyclist-friendly, providing parking for bikes and water bottle refills.



River Town Program

Cathy McCollom
65 W Main Street
Uniontown, PA 15401
814-521-3520
monrivertowns.com

Established in 2012, River Town Program works in partnership with local communities to recognize the river as an economic and community asset. River Town Program connects municipalities to the growing outdoor recreational market.



Saint Vincent Basilica

Teri Pomerleau and
Sharon Bogusz
300 Fraser Purchase Road
Latrobe, PA 15650
724-539-8629
basilicaparishstv.org

Since 1846, Saint Vincent Basilica has been under the spiritual guidance and leadership of the Benedictine monks and uniquely connected with the Saint Vincent de Paul monastic and academic communities. The Basilica currently offers guided tours and invites all for an "up close and personal" tour of the Basilica.



Route 30 Antiques

Rachel Foor and Connie Jandik
9106 Lincoln Highway
Central City, PA 15926
814 754 4710
Facebook: Rt 30 Antiques

This long standing family antiques business is located on Route 30, only eight miles east of Flight 93 National Memorial. With two floors to explore, Route 30 Antiques offers a great collection of primitives, advertising, furniture, stoneware, glassware and military items.



Western PA Region Chapter - Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA)

Molly Detwiler
P.O. Box 882
Latrobe, PA 15650
westernparegion.org

Established in 1950, the Western PA Region Chapter offers membership to those that are interested in, or have ownership of any make, model or year of American or foreign automobile that is over 25 years of age. The chapter offers an annual car show in September at Legion-Keener Park in Latrobe, picnics, tours and monthly meetings as well as many other benefits.



120 East Main Street
Ligonier, PA 15658

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS PRESORTED
U.S. POSTAGE
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Greensburg, PA 15601
Permit No. 88

Headlines

Headlines is published quarterly.
Please contact LHVB's Director of
Public Relations, Anna Weltz,
with questions or comments at
aweltz@laurelhighlands.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Langer, <i>Chairman</i> Westmoreland Cultural Trust	Monte Hansen Nemacolin Woodlands Resort
Eric Mauck, <i>Vice Chairman</i> Seven Springs Mountain Resort	Alicia Henry Westmoreland County Commissioners' Appointee
Dave Kahley, <i>Treasurer</i> The Progress Fund	Lladel Lichty Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial
Muriel Nuttall, <i>Secretary</i> Fayette County Commissioners' Appointee	Liz McCarty Laurel Highlands River Tours & Outdoor Center
Ron Aldom Somerset County Commissioners' Appointee	Bryan Perry Allegheny Trail Alliance
Laura Argenbright Mountain Playhouse	Clinton Piper Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater
Ken Bisbee Ohiopyle State Park	Vicky Sheetz Park Inn by Radisson Uniontown
Stephen Clark National Park Service	Michael Simons SpringHill Suites Latrobe-Pittsburgh
Liz Diesel Glades Pike Winery	
Tom Guiher Living Treasures Wild Animal Park	

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