

The Official Newsletter of the Laurel Highlands Tourism Indus



HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

- · LHVB News
- Partnership News
- · Marketing News
- · Web and Social Media Stats
- · Meetings and Events
- 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 OUTLETS!











LHVB NEWS

Welcome, Jared!

Please give a warm welcome to the newest member of the LHVB team, Jared Bundy, the new Director of Interactive Marketing! In his role, Jared will oversee the bureau's website, social media accounts, digital marketing initiatives, and customer relationship management system.

Jared most recently served as Digital Marketing Specialist at Saint Vincent College, where his duties included digital marketing, social media management, and search engine optimization. Currently, Jared teaches a communication class at Saint Vincent. He holds a Bachelor's degree in communication from Saint Vincent and a master's in business administration from California University of



Pennsylvania. Be sure to follow Jared on Twitter @jared LHVB or contact him via email at jbundy@laurelhighlands.org.

A lifelong resident of the Laurel Highlands, Jared has fond childhood memories of going to Jennerstown Speedway for weekend races, attending concerts and special events at Greensburg's Palace Theatre, working at Idlewild & Soak Zone, and learning to ski at Hidden Valley Resort. He and his wife Anne look forward to sharing those experiences and creating new memories in the Laurel Highlands with their one-year-old son Ryker.

Best Wishes to Michele!

While leaving the LHVB after six years was a difficult decision for Michele to make, she is taking a big step in her career as Associate Marketing Manager at Seton Hill University. We wish Michele the best of luck as she embarks on her new role. We can't wait to see what she will accomplish next!

Introducing the New and Improved LHVB Extranet

Log in to the new LHVB Extranet, and check out exciting new features! This tool gives you the ability to update your web listing on laurelhighlands.org, add new photos and videos, update featured amenities, showcase your social media accounts, submit events, and post special packages and coupons. If you have the URL for the previous extranet bookmarked or saved somewhere, please replace it with the new one: https://laurel.extranet.simpleviewcrm.com.

NEW FEATURES: You can now view some of the benefits you've received by being an LHVB marketing partner and request our materials, including the Destination Guide, Regional Maps, and seasonal Calendar of Events!

Another new feature is the "Post Board" where you can post to a board seen by all Extranet users, other LHVB marketing partners. Feel free to post business information, company news, job openings, questions, etc. that you would like to share with the LHVB community.

Tourism Grant Reporting Deadlines Approaching!

If your organization or business was the recipient of a 2016 Tourism Grant, don't forget your final reports are due very soon.

- Somerset County, April 30, 2017
- Westmoreland County, April 30, 2017
- Fayette County, May 31, 2017

Please visit www.laurelhighlands.org/grants to access your county's final reporting form and requirements.



PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Ann Nemanic, Vice President of Partnership and Business Development

All Aboard!

Oh, the things you will see and discover when you come aboard the LHVB Backyard Tour Bus! It's time to LEARN what's in your own backyard. Join us May 3 for a full day of discovery as our motorcoach travels and explores points of interest in Somerset County. We want to help your front-line employees answer the question "What is there to do in the Laurel Highlands?" The answer? PLENTY! Past participants know that Ann Nemanic keeps things a bit of a mystery, so the only clue here is the theme of the tour "LESSONS LEARNED." Lunch and dinner are included, snacks and goodies too. Cost: \$45 per person. RSVP to Ann to hold your seat by sending an email to anemanic@laurelhighlands.org.

Brochure Program

It's time to secure your spot in the LHVB brochure racks for the upcoming fiscal year. Our 81 racks are found throughout our region and reach into Indiana and Cambria counties as well. Placed in strategic locations like hotels, restaurants, key attractions, and chambers of commerce, the racks provide visitors and locals with information on attractions, restaurants, campgrounds, events, and lodging options. This prominent form of marketing is popular and in high-demand. Ten-thousand brochures are needed for a full year and the investment is \$1,000. Seasonal event spots are also available. If you are interested in further information, please contact Ann Nemanic at 724-238-5661, ext. 103, or anemanic@laurelhighlands.org

Laurel Highlands Happenings | WCNS 1480

Did you know that the LHVB hosts a monthly radio talk show? The first Saturday of each month at 9 a.m., Laurel Highlands Happenings airs on WCNS 1480. This 30-minute program features three LHVB partners who chat with Louise Bates about their business, offerings, projects, and more. The show can also be streamed live at www.1480wcns.com. And the best part, it's FREE and FUN!

Perhaps consider advertising your business on air? You will receive three commercials during the 30-minute show, as well as featured mentions in the promo leading up to the show, plus mentions on our Partners of the Laurel Highlands Facebook page. The cost? Only \$50! This is a monthly advertising opportunity. Limited slots available on air. First come, first served... Interested? Contact Louise on lbates@laurelhighlands.org.





2017 Laurel Highlands Destination Guide

The 2017 Laurel Highlands Destination Guide is now available and currently in distribution. This year's edition presents stunning imagery, and a reorganized flow of listings identifiable by county, designed to help visitors better plan their trip to the 3,000 square mile Laurel Highlands.

The 2017 edition features themed content with related travel ideas and suggested stops. Many of the content sections include helpful links back to relevant content on laurelhighlands.org. An easy-to-read, tear-out map with key Laurel Highlands sites has proven to be popular and has been repeated for 2017. These maps are also available individually for distribution, and can be found in LHVB racks also!

What's most important is how the LHVB distributes the guide. Here are just a few key distribution points:

- 175,000 in Circulation
- · Primary Fulfillment Piece to Potential Visitors and Residents
- PA Welcome Centers
- PA Visitors Centers (PA Turnpike)
- 81 Regional Brochure Racks
- · Arnold Palmer Regional Airport
- Visit Pittsburgh Welcome Centers
- · Laurel Highlands Visitors Centers
- LHVB Partners

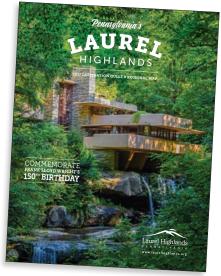
Order your supply of guides and/or maps today! A copy of the beautiful new guide along with an order form has been mailed to you. Just fill out and send back to us. Or, please contact Rachel Roehrig at rroehrig@laurelhighlands.org, 724-238-5661, ext. 101, to request a shipment of guides.



The Laurel Highlands will be wrapping up winter campaigns in March, and encouraging visitors, viewers, and listeners to THINK SPRING! Messaging encourages the audience to plan a trip at laurelhighlands.org, where they can find information, events calendar, deals and packages, and more. Be sure to submit your events and packages to ensure your property is included on these high-traffic pages on laurelhighlands.org. A consistent brand message will play throughout 2017, with continued TV placements on WTAE and KDKA in Pittsburgh, airing 15 second TV commercial spots. Look for the Laurel Highlands spots during your favorite news broadcast!

The Laurel Highlands will be hitting the airwaves throughout 2017 with 15 and 30 second spots airing on KISS 96.1, BOB 96.9, and Wish 99.7 in Pittsburgh throughout the spring.

Stay & Play! You may have noticed this call to action on the Laurel Highlands billboards, located on I-76 EB Irwin, I-76 EB Donegal, and I-76 WB Somerset. This messaging will evolve throughout the seasons to feature exciting calls to action to passers-by and visitors to the region.



2017 Photo Contest Now Open!

A picture is worth a thousand words and maybe even up to \$500! The LHVB's 13th annual photo contest is now open. We are in search of the region's best photos featuring people, nature, places, and altered images. Top images, which will be published in the bureau's 2018 Destination Guide and displayed in special exhibits at high-profile locations in the Laurel Highlands. Winning photos may also be featured on the bureau's award-winning website, billboards, and more.

BONUS OPPORTUNITY! New for 2017!

This year, we have added a "Bonus Special Interest Category" option. Participants are asked to enter their best photos from your favorite breweries, distilleries and wineries in the Laurel Highlands. One winner will be selected from this "bonus special interest" category and will be awarded \$100!

First place in each of the four primary categories will receive \$500, second place \$200, and third place \$100. Only photos taken in the Laurel Highlands (Pennsylvania's Fayette, Somerset, or Westmoreland counties) will be eligible. Deadline for submissions is August 25, 2017. For complete details and to upload photos for consideration, please visit www.laurelhighlands.org/photo-contest or call 724-238-5661.



SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE

(as of October 2016)



Facebook Fans 53,000+



Twitter Followers 11,000+



Youtube Video Views 223,000+



Instagram Followers 1,900+



Pinterest Followers 600+

WEBSITE STATS*

TOP VIEWED PAGES



22,313 /things-to-do/our-seasons/winter

16,153 Homepage

14,063 /outdoors/winter-sports

10,137 /outdoors/ohiopyle

/deals/romantic-packages 8,423

/things-to-do/events 8.358

/things-to-do/arts-culture/frank-lloyd-wright 7.383

/outdoors/winter-sports/snow-tubing 7,187 6,860 /places-to-stay/cabins-campgrounds

6,708 /things-to-do/arts-culture Mobile Traffic Increase

16.5% Web Traffic Increase

64% Paid Search Traffic



329,916 unique page views

FACEBOOK FOOTPRINT*-

89,000

average daily impressions

57,000 average daily reach

OVER 800+ average daily engaged users



*December - February 2017 compared to December - February 2016



Instagram Photo Contest

Each week, LHVB selects their favorite photo of the Laurel Highlands and features it across social media, awarding the photographer with some LHVB swag. Use #LaurelHighlands to be sure your photos show up when people are searching Instagram for these amazing photos of our area.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

April 12 | LHVB Executive Committee Meeting

April 19 | LHVB Board Meeting

April 25 | Partnership Orientation, 9-11 a.m., LHVB Conference Room, FREE

May 3 | Annual Backyard Tour

May 7-13 | National Tourism Week

May 10 | LHVB Executive Committee Meeting

May 29 | Memorial Day, office closed

Save the Date - 2017 Interactive Marketing Summit | November 3, 2017

PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

Anna Weltz, Director of Public Relations

Celebrating the Revival of Laurel Mountain Ski Area with Our Partners in Tourism

On January 19, Kristin Ecker and Anna Weltz were invited to attend a celebration in honor of the reopening of Laurel Mountain, hosted by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and our tourism partners at Seven Springs. This exciting event welcomed more than 100 guests and included speeches from DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn, Seven Springs Chairman Robert Nutting, Senator Pat Stefano, and Representatives Mike Reese and Carl Metzgar.

Secretary Dunn said Laurel's reopening will "pump new vitality into area snow sports. It will bring new visitors and customers. It also helps prove that our state parks are a tremendous boon to local economies."



Anna spoke at the event on behalf of the region's tourism community, sharing tourism's impact on the economy, and how the revival will strengthen our region's reputation as a strong, recognizable, and desirable destination for winter recreation. She thanked the DCNR, Seven Springs, the Nutting family, and local legislators for their investment and support of tourism in the Laurel Highlands.

Once again, congratulations to the DCNR, the Seven Springs team, and the Nutting family on a job well done!

Recent Press Visits

- Jess Daddio, Blue Ridge Outdoors
- Laura Watilo-Blake, Long Weekends Magazine and Far Flung Travels
- Nedra McDaniel, Adventure Mom
- Jeremy Jones, Discover the Burgh
- Keryn Means, Walking On Travels
- Andrew Der, Destinations magazine
- Mary Jo Tarallo, snowsports industry publicist

LAUREL HIGHLANDS IN THE LIMELIGHT

October 23-December 31, 2016

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

25,000 in digital value

3 Million digital impressions **23** stories

& Nearly 900,000 in print distribution

Top Media Opportunities

- Winter Bucket List, Blue Ridge Outdoors
- All Downhill from Here, Baltimore Magazine
- 8 Ways to Put the Fun Back in Winter, Susquehanna Life Magazine
- Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands Offers so Much, The Morning Journal





NEW! Inspiration Guide 2017

This beautiful new marketing piece is a compilation of the best itineraries featured in the monthly e-mail blast, "Group Inspired." The Inspiration Guide is loaded with fresh itineraries and travel inspiring images, we are thrilled to share creative options with tour operators, receptive operators, and planners.



Tour and Travel Shows and Sales Missions

American Bus Association Annual Meeting, Cleveland, OH | January 13-16, 2017 | 46 appointments

The Laurel Highlands is top of mind with tour operators from around the United States and Canada! While meeting with these decision makers, Stacey Magda was able to introduce new tours ideas, nurture existing business, and share the excitement that the Laurel Highlands was featured on the 2016 season of "The Bachelorette." At least a dozen operators noticed our properties in the Hollywood limelight!



Heartland Travel Showcase, Pigeon Forge, TN | March 2-5, 2017 | 31 appointments | 9 regional booths

Sales Mission en route to Heartland | Maryland and Virginia | March 2, 2017 | 5 high-quality sales calls



Bridal Shows

The Bridal Experience at The Fez | Aliquippa, PA | 230 brides



Cavanaugh's Bride Show at the Wyndham Grand Downtown | Pittsburgh, PA | 400 brides

Cavanaugh's Westmoreland Bride Show at Ferrante's Lakeview | Greensburg, PA | 200 brides

The Bridal Showcase at David L. Lawrence Convention Center | Pittsburgh, PA | 800 brides

Student Shows

Pennsylvania Association of Middle Level Education, State College, PA | February 26-28, 2017 | 250 educators

Save the Date: Meet the Planners in Harrisburg

April 27, 2017 | downtown Harrisburg | The Millworks

Don't miss the 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 at smagda@laurelhighlands.org or 724-238-5661, ext. 111.

Growing Group Business at Group Leader Shows

Share your information with the area's busiest group leaders at two shows in the fall of 2017! Participation for each show is \$100. Contact Stacey Magda for contracts and more information.

Great Day! Group Leader Show | Independence, OH | September 29, 2017 | 250 group leaders

AAA Group Leader Show | Nemacolin Woodlands Resort | September 5-6, 2017 | 200 group leaders

Investing in our Future: Homeschoolers are Huge in Group Travel

Get your information in the hands of thousands of homeschool families this spring and summer! Space is limited, so please contact Stacey today to learn how you can be involved!

Student Shows: \$100 per show

Christian Homeschool Educators of Ohio, Sandusky, OH | April 20-22, 2017

Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania, Lancaster, PA | June 2-3, 2017

WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



Bar Nine Jamey Henry 9 Mount Pleasant Road Greensburg, PA 15601 724-420-5467 barninegbg.com

Bar Nine is Greensburg's newest gastro pub, located within walking distance from downtown. Opened in summer 2016, Bar Nine offers a contemporary style bar and dining area, specializing in craft cocktails and beers and a unique food selection. They offer late night hours on weekends for night owls and outside dining in the warmer months.



The Dusty Attic James Kimmel 1266 Pittsburgh Road (Route 51 South) Uniontown, PA 15041 724-437-1230 Facebook: Dusty Attic

The Dusty Attic has been proudly serving customers in the Uniontown area since 1999. Recently relocated to Route 51 southbound, the shop continues to offer a marvelous selection of collectibles, vintage wares, primitives, and antiques at reasonable prices. There are two large floors to explore, friendly, helpful staff, and easy parking right outside the shop.



Community Arts Center of Cambria County

Angela Godin, Executive Director 1217 Menoher Boulevard Johnstown, PA 15905 814-255-6515 caccc.org

CACCC hosts art classes, workshops, exhibitions, programs and events throughout the year, plus rental space for special events. The Art Center also welcomes visitors to their historic Stutzman Log House with galleries featured on the first floor.



End of the Road Antiques
Irene Kepple
183 Columbia Avenue
Vandergrift, PA 15690
724-567-5317

Facebook: The End of the Road Antiques

When you walk into the End of the Road Antiques, it's like entering Aladdin's Cave. The shop will captivate any lovers of antiques! Every room is chock-full with a staggering assortment of primitives, vintage wares, collectibles, and antiques.



Confluence Guest Rentals

Pamela Kruse 115 Ross Street Confluence, PA 15424 724-329-4973 Facebook: Confluence Guest Rentals

Situated on the river front, Confluence Guest Rentals provides instant access to the Great Allegheny Passage trail for the enjoyment of hikers and bikers. Recently remodeled, the property accommodates up to six guests comfortably, providing all the necessary comforts of home. The rental includes parking and is in walking distance of the town of Confluence and only a 15 minute drive from Ohiopyle State Park.

lanni's Pizza at Locus Grove Inn

Paula Johns 5733 Route 982 New Derry, PA 15671 724-694-5360 iannispizzeria.com



Ianni's Pizzeria

Paula Johns 5 Freeport Street Delmont, PA 15626 724-468-0002 iannispizzeria.com

Ianni's has been around for over 90 years! They began wood fired pizzas in 2003 and they have not looked back. It all started in 1927 at the first location in New Derry and have since opened a second location in Delmont. At both

pizzerias, you are guaranteed mouth-watering pizzas!



WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



Laurel Hideaway Shari DeNardo 758 Kuhntown Road Somerset, PA 15501 724-986-5127

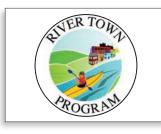
Laurel Hideaway is a luxurious vacation home situated close to Seven Springs and Hidden Valley. An outstanding log house surrounded by 40 acres of private land you are promised a peaceful mountain retreat. Laurel Hideaway offers six bedrooms and four bathrooms with wonderful amenities, including a large wrap around porch and a hot tub.



Rock City Shuttles

Steven Kobus 125 Rockdale Road Rockwood PA 15557 814-926-6253 rockcityshuttles.com

If you're wanting to bike just one particular section of the Great Allegheny Passage you can do just that with Rock City Shuttles. Established in 2016, this shuttle service offers you the opportunity to bike from three different locations on the trail. They will bus you and your bike to the destination and you can cycle back in your own time!



McCollom Development Strategies

Cathy McCollom 716 Oden Street Confluence PA 15424 412-720-8208 mccollomds.com

This dynamic organization, McCollom Development Strategies, LLC does a wonderful job assisting our local communities to embrace and develop outdoor recreational tourism alongside the culture and heritage of our region. Focusing on building a strong local economy for the future.



Rustic Ridge at Fern Mountain

Shari DeNardo 673 Camp Run Road Somerset, PA 15501 724-986-5127

If you're searching for a serene mountaintop setting, Rustic Ridge has that and more. This vacation rental offers amazing views at a tranquil setting with accommodations for up to 20 people, plus luxurious living space, wonderful amenities, and a great location.



Redwood at Fern Mountain Shari DeNardo 175 Fern Mountain Road Somerset, PA 15501 724-986-5127

This magnificent mountain retreat offers six bedrooms, with the capacity to sleep 18. Located close to the ski resorts, hiking trails and all that the Laurel Highlands offers, this vacation rental checks all the boxes.



Sanctus Spa and Salon Tara Dulkis 5048 State Route 982 Latrobe, PA 15650

724-539-8303 sanctusspa.com

This gorgeous log cabin spa and salon is a truly welcoming retreat. The team at Sanctus offer massages, hair styling, manicures, pedicures, and more. You couldn't be in better hands to be pampered. Let the pampering begin!

WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



SCORE – Westmoreland County

Chairman: David Vale 300 Fraser Purchase Road Latrobe, PA 15650 724-539-7505 westmoreland.score.org

SCORE – Westmoreland County is a non-profit organization that provides guidance for existing and new businesses offering free confidential counselling and mentoring. Workshops are scheduled on a regular basis at the Saint Vincent College campus.



Windswept Events

Adam Ghrist 4371 Route 30 Latrobe, PA 15650 724-539-1009 windswept.com

Windswept is your one-stop-shop for special event rentals in the Laurel Highlands. From tents, tables, chairs, tablecloths, and crockery, they have everything you require for the party or wedding of your desire! Don't hesitate to contact them to discuss your party requirements.



Second Nature

Doug and Julia Crytzer 132 S. Pennsylvania Avenue Greensburg, PA 15601 724-219-3559 Facebook: Second Nature

Second Nature embodies the craft and artisan movement. Located in downtown Greensburg, this shop showcases a mix of local and national artists with a wonderful display of custom made furniture mingled with ceramics, paintings, accessories, and jewelry.



Winslow Winery

Greg and Lindsay Winslow
42 Pine Lane
Perryopolis, PA 15473
724-880-3474
winslowwinery.com

Opened in 2015, Winslow Winery offers visitors an extensive selection of wines to sample and purchase. The winery, located in Perryopolis, invites you to drop by the tasting room at weekends. On warmer days, enjoy the patio with a glass of wine overlooking the vineyard.



Whistling Duck Furniture

Cindi Contie 140 Grant Avenue Vandergrift, PA 15690 724-361-2020 whistlingduckfurniture.com

Whistling Duck Furniture sells an impressive collection of unique furniture, a blend of rustic and contemporary elegance, all created from reclaimed wood. The shop also sells custom pieces, a varied mix of hand crafted home décor, paintings, ceramics, and shelves and wine racks made from repurposed wood.



Yellow Bridge Brewing

Ian Staab
2266 Route 66
Delmont, PA 15626
724-300-3922
Yellowbridgebrewing.com

If you are connoisseur of craft beers, you need to swing by the latest brewery to open in the Laurel Highlands – Yellow Bridge Brewing. Conveniently located right on Route 66 in Delmont, the brewery offers a good assortment of IPAs, stouts, ales, and ciders, plus food trucks and live music on weekends.



120 East Main Street Ligonier, PA 15658

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS PRESORTED
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
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, Chairman Westmoreland Cultural Trust

Eric Mauck, *Vice Chairman* Seven Springs Mountain Resort

Dave Kahley, *Treasurer* The Progress Fund Trail Town Program

Muriel Nuttal, Secretary
Fayette County
Commissioners' Appointee

Ron Aldom Somerset County Commissioners' Appointee

Laura Argenbright Mountain Playhouse

Andrea Cuda Westmoreland County Commissioners' Appointee

Tom Guiher Living Treasures Wild Animal Park Liz Diesel Glades Pike Winery

Lladel Lichty Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial

Ashli Mazer-Workman Nemacolin Woodlands Resort

Susan McCarthy McCarthy Public Relations

Liz McCarty Laurel Highlands River Tours & Outdoor Center

Vicky Sheetz Park Inn by Radisson Uniontown

Roy Young Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater

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