



A Travel Industry Publication from the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

Spring 2015

Kick off the Season at the 3rd Annual Tourism Summit

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is celebrating National Tourism Week 2015 by hosting the 3rd Annual OBX Tourism Summit on May 7, 2015 at Pamlico Jacks. Industry partners from all over Dare County will gather to learn about the latest marketing trends, network with local tourism colleagues as well as catch up on the current topics facing the Outer Banks hospitality and tourism industry. Sessions include tips for successful social media campaigns, developing relationships with bloggers and local industry updates and an update on the year long visitor profile results (results are

for fall, summer and winter). Keynote speaker Dave Serino, a 24-year veteran of travel and hospitality marketing, will discuss social media trends impacting today's tourism industry. Following the OBX Tourism Summit, national touring artists Greensky Bluegrass and Roadkill Ghost Choir take center stage at the Outer Banks Event Site for an after-party event called Soundside Live.



Presented by The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

“The waterside concert will bring visitors and music lovers to our area for the May 7th event, to celebrate our industry and just enjoy an evening as friends and neighbors on the Roanoke Sound,” said the Bureau’s Executive Director Lee Nettles. “We hope everyone will come out to the Event Site for what should be a fun night.”

For more information or to register, <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-obx-tourism-summit>

Outer Banks Visitors Bureau Launches Tumblr

VisitOuterBanks.tumblr.com had its soft unroll in February 2015, and has since been featured in the Outer Banks Voice and Virginian-Pilot news sources for outreach to locals for participation in content generation. “The Bureau chose Tumblr as the delivery platform because we felt that it had an easy-to-use, customizable interface, and worked well with other social channels for multi-media sharing of our generated content and those photos and videos curated from other OBX sources,” said Aaron Tuell, Public Relations Manager at the Bureau.

Bureau staff, the creative team behind Tumblr, has mapped out a weekly calendar template, with each day of the week dedicated to illustrating some pursuit or interest on the OBX, with an eye to inspire visitation all year, and showcasing the best of what’s happening now in Dare County. If you have any tips, or images to share, please email them wood@outerbanks.org.

Posts range from “Menu Monday’s” which feature the unique foods of the Outer Banks, to “Summer Sunday” to remind followers why they love the area and incorporates other social media channels, like Instagram, as well.

Follow us on Tumblr at <http://visitouterbanks.tumblr.com/>

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

2015 Tourism Summit • A Letter from the Tourism Board Chair • Executive Director’s Report
Calendar of Events • Statistics • 2015 Outer Banks Travel Guide • Grant Awards

VISION STATEMENT

The Board envisions a premier travel destination and year-round tourism economy that enhances the quality of life for visitors and residents while celebrating and sustaining the Outer Banks' vibrant natural, historic, and cultural offerings.

ABOUT THE BUREAU

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is the lead marketing and promotional agency for the destination and is funded by 1% of the occupancy tax and 1% of the prepared meals tax collected in Dare County.

2015 DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD

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OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU STAFF

Lee Nettles, Executive Director
Diane Bognich, Director of Administration
Aaron Tuell, Public Relations Manager
Lorrie Love, Tourism Sales and Events Manager
Amy Wood, Administrative Specialist/Board Clerk
Cheryl Hannant, Welcome Center Manager
Ginny Heinrich, Aycock Brown Supervisor
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Faye Lewis, Telephone Services Supervisor
Allison Wyant, Web Master
Matt Dubec, IT Manager and Graphic Designer
Curt DeYoung, Facilities Manager
Events and Marketing Assistant

The Business of Tourism is published by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, written and edited by Amy Wood. We welcome information pertaining to Dare County's tourism industry. Please send news or changes of address to:

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Letter from the Chairman



Tim Cafferty, Chairman
Dare County Tourism Board

As Chairman of the Dare County Tourism Board, the honor and responsibility of the position is not lost on me. Nor is the history of tourism on the Outer Banks.

My parents were among the first vacation rental managers on the Outer Banks. I have vivid memories of them running their vacation rental company from the front den of our house in Kitty Hawk. This was a time when rental properties were not available until Memorial Day, were shuttered for the year the week after

Labor Day, air conditioning was virtually unheard of, and cable television hook-up (meaning just the wire, folks had to bring their own TV) was an amenity to be proud of.

Marketing of the company consisted of running copies of a rental brochure on demand on the mimeograph machine and dropping it in the mail to anyone who would call. Oh, and when they called, they had to pay for it, because toll free numbers were never a consideration at that time.

I also have clear memories of the first "ambassador of tourism" for Dare County – Aycock Brown. I remember my father taking me to Mr. Aycock's office where I was mesmerized by all of the photos. Fishing parties, catches, and bathing beauties were his favorite subjects, and he diligently sent the photos around to newspapers, hoping that editors would see fit to print the pics and help promote visitation to the Outer Banks.

From the time my father located our family here more than 50 years ago, Dare County has grown into a premiere family destination. My relatively small vacation rental company boasts more than 250 different toll free telephone numbers for prospective renters to use, and we have a steely focus on visitor satisfaction so they will return year after year.

In terms of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, it is astounding for me to consider that in 2014 occupancy receipts in Dare County surpassed \$411,000,000, with 81% of that revenue coming from vacation rentals. Mr. Aycock's small office has been replaced with a terrific staff of professionals under the guidance of our Executive Director Lee Nettles.

Lee and his staff are constantly working on new ways to promote the Outer Banks while at the same time working time proven methods of success. Our bureau's social marketing is something specific to take pride in as we have more than 600,000 Facebook

Chair's letter continues on page 5

The Executive Director's Report

Dear Tourism Partners,

As we shake off these last days of winter (hopefully), I'm pleased to share with you some of the recent activity of the Visitors Bureau.

The reports within this newsletter reflect growth of 4% and 5% for occupancy and meals, respectively, when looking at 2014 compared to 2013. Again and again our industry has shown resiliency when faced with challenges, including among other things, this past year's visit from Hurricane Arthur leading into the 4th of July weekend. I'm always careful to point out, though, that the occupancy and meals reports don't necessarily reflect the experiences of an individual business, particularly since these figures only show revenue and not the increased costs a business may be experiencing.

This growth isn't by accident. It's due to the hard work of you, our travel partners. Meanwhile, the Visitors Bureau remains dedicated to promoting the Outer Banks aggressively and to attracting visitors to our area. This happens on many fronts: group sales to motorcoach tour operators and tour planners; media relations with travel writers; advertising online, in print, billboard and on television; social media and online interaction through email marketing, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and more recently, Tumblr. All of these marketing efforts are further supported by the outerbanks.org website and The Outer Banks Travel Guide. Collectively, the Visitors Bureau's programs are reaching several million people every single month.

Of particular note, we have recently started a television campaign, which will run from March 2nd – April 19th in the following markets: Raleigh/Durham, Greenville/New Bern/Washington, Richmond/Petersburg, Norfolk/Portsmouth/Newport News, and cable buys in the Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. areas. The new television creative expands upon the "Outer Banks Soul" branding campaign. In terms of social and online, we're excited to share that [Facebook.com/TheOuterBanks](https://www.facebook.com/TheOuterBanks) has passed 600,000 followers and our email

database subscribers have grown to more than 450,000. In short, the Bureau is well positioned in the ever-changing world of destination marketing.

We continue to support the growth of shoulder and off-season business through events, as well, helping to fund more than 30 events and promoting around 100 events over the last year. The Visitors Bureau, with the soon to re-open Event Site, is also taking a more active role in producing events itself. Elsewhere in the community, and beyond our work with events, the Tourism Board and Visitors Bureau are proactively addressing summer Saturday traffic with a "Get to the OBX Faster" initiative and providing leadership in the opposition to offshore drilling.

The strength of our industry rests not with any one segment, township or village, but rather, with the combined efforts of all. Together, we share a common purpose: To improve the quality of life for Dare County residents through tourism. Thank you for all you do to support tourism and our community.

Sincerely,

Lee Nettles
Executive Director
Outer Banks Visitors Bureau



Lee Nettles
Executive Director



District	Spring Break 2015	End of School Year 2015
Columbus, OH	April 3-10	May 28
Philadelphia, PA	April 1-3	June 17
Pittsburgh, PA	March 30 - April 3	June 08
Trenton, NJ	April 6-10	June 11
Newark, NJ	March 30- April 5	June 15
Baltimore, MD	April 3-10	June 15
Chevy Chase, MD	April 3-10	June 15
Washington, DC	April 13-17	June 18
Alexandria, VA	March 30-April 3	June 19
Arlington, VA	March 30-April 3	June 18
Fairfax, VA	March 30-April 6	June 19
Richmond, VA	April 6-10	June 12
Hampton, VA	April 6-10	June 15
Chesapeake, VA	April 6-10	June 11
Norfolk, VA	April 6-10	June 18
Portsmouth, VA	April 6-10	June 16
Virginia Beach, VA	April 6-10	June 18
Raleigh, NC	March 26-27	June 05
Durham, NC	March 30-April 3	June 11



Lorrie Love and Aaron Tuell at the American Bus Association Marketplace.

UPCOMING SALES AND MEDIA MISSIONS

April 13-17: North Carolina Sponsored Canadian Sales Mission in Montreal and Toronto, Canada.

May 13-15: Society of American Travel Writers, Norfolk, VA.

For more information on these missions, please contact Lorrie Love, love@outerbanks.org or Aaron Tuell, tuell@outerbanks.org



The Bureau's billboard on HWY 64 outside Creswell currently promotes Tumblr.

APRIL 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Good Friday	4
5 Easter	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Kill Devil Hills Historic Landmarks Open House	18 First Flight 5K Outer Banks Bike Week
19 Flying Pirate 1/2 Marathon Outer Banks Bike Week	20 Outer Banks Bike Week	21 Outer Banks Bike Week	22 Outer Banks Bike Week	23 Outer Banks Bike Week Dare County Tourism Board Meeting	24 Outer Banks Bike Week	25 Outer Banks Bike Week Duck and Wine Festival
26 Outer Banks Bike Week	27	28	29	30 ESA Mid-Atlantic Regional Surfing Championships		

MAY 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 ESA Mid-Atlantic Regional Surfing Championships Hatteras Island Storytelling Festival	2 ESA Mid-Atlantic Regional Surfing Championships Hatteras Island Storytelling Festival 4th Annual Run in the Sand-5K & 1 mile fun run 2nd Annual Outer Banks Duathlon
3 SA Mid-Atlantic Regional Surfing Championships Hatteras Island Storytelling Festival	4	5	6	7 OBX Tourism Summit	8	9 31st Annual Yuengling Nags Head Woods 5K
10	11	12	13	14	15 43rd Annual Hang Gliding Spectacular & Air Show	16 43rd Annual Hang Gliding Spectacular & Air Show SND Soccer Tournament
17 43rd Annual Hang Gliding Spectacular & Air Show SND Soccer Tournament	18 43rd Annual Hang Gliding Spectacular & Air Show	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day Shore Break 5K 2nd Annual Shallowbag Bay Shag Beach Music Festival	26	27	28 Atlantic Coast Catamaran Championship Dare County Tourism Board Meeting	29 Atlantic Coast Catamaran Championship Rock the Cape The Lost Colony Opening Night	30
31 Atlantic Coast Catamaran Championship OBX Brewfest Triple-S Invitational						

JUNE 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Triple-S Invitational	2 Triple-S Invitational	3 Triple-S Invitational	4 Triple-S Invitational	5 Triple-S Invitational	6 33rd Annual Rogallo Kite Festival
7 33rd Annual Rogallo Kite Festival	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Storm the Beach	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Dare County Tourism Board Meeting	26	27
28	29	30				

Dare County Tourism Board Grant Programs Support Community

The Dare County Tourism Board awarded three Short Term Restricted Fund grants at their December 2014, totaling of \$217,897. This grant program is designed to help Dare County non-profits and governmental organizations with projects such as highway beautification, beach and sound accesses, or hike/bike walk trails. The awards are disbursed on a matching basis, not to exceed 50% of the actual cost.

Grants awarded were:

- \$80,250 to the Town of Kill Devil Hills for a sidewalk extending from the Kill Devil Hills Fire Station to West Third Street.
- \$17,647 to the Town of Kitty Hawk for 16 additional parking spaces at the Lillian Street Beach Access.
- \$120,000 to the Town of Nags Head for Phase VII of the West Side Multi-Use Path. The path will run from Windjammer Road to Carolista Drive and connect to existing portions of the path.

In September 2014, The Dare County Tourism Board approved nine Event Grant requests (totaling \$76,000) from local municipalities and non-profits. Grants awarded were:

Group/Entity	Amount	Project
Beach Food Pantry	\$5,500.00	Holiday Chefs Challenge
Dare County Arts Council	\$5,500.00	Rock the Cape
Dare County Arts Council	\$8,000.00	Brewfest
Eastern Surfing Association	\$10,000.00	ESA Mid-Atlantic Regional Championships
Elizabethan Gardens	\$10,000.00	Daffodilly Fest: Big Bugs & Blooms
Hatteras Island Youth Education Fund	\$6,500.00	Shore Break 5k
OBX Storm	\$8,000.00	SND Soccer Tournament
Roanoke Island Historical Association	\$5,500.00	Haunted History
Sail NC	\$17,000.00	A-Class Championship/Catamaran Championship

“Events are great ways to get folks here during non-peak months, but also often serve as fundraisers for the local community,” said Lee Nettles, Executive Director of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau. “The Event Grant Program is a nice example of how tourism development and quality of life go hand in hand.”

Organizations wishing to apply for an Event Grant must complete the application four (4) months in advance of the event. For more information about the event grant, please visit: http://www.outerbanks.org/media/972768/event_grant_guidelines_2014_updated.pdf

A list of past grant recipients can be found at <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-grants>

To inquire about the grant programs offered by the Tourism Board, contact Diane Bognich, Director of Administration, at 252.473.2138 or bognich@outerbanks.org

followers. Our travel writers outreach program has been wildly successful, as have our other initiatives to attract off season tour bus business.

Our grant programs continue to enhance off season tourism promotion, and indeed enhance the quality of life on the Outer Banks with our funding go to assist with construction of sidewalks and bike paths, beach access areas, and most recently helping to keep Oregon Inlet open.

Construction on the event site in Nags Head is progressing well, and we look forward to Phase I of our improvements. They're to be complete in the next three months which will enhance the use and beauty of the site.

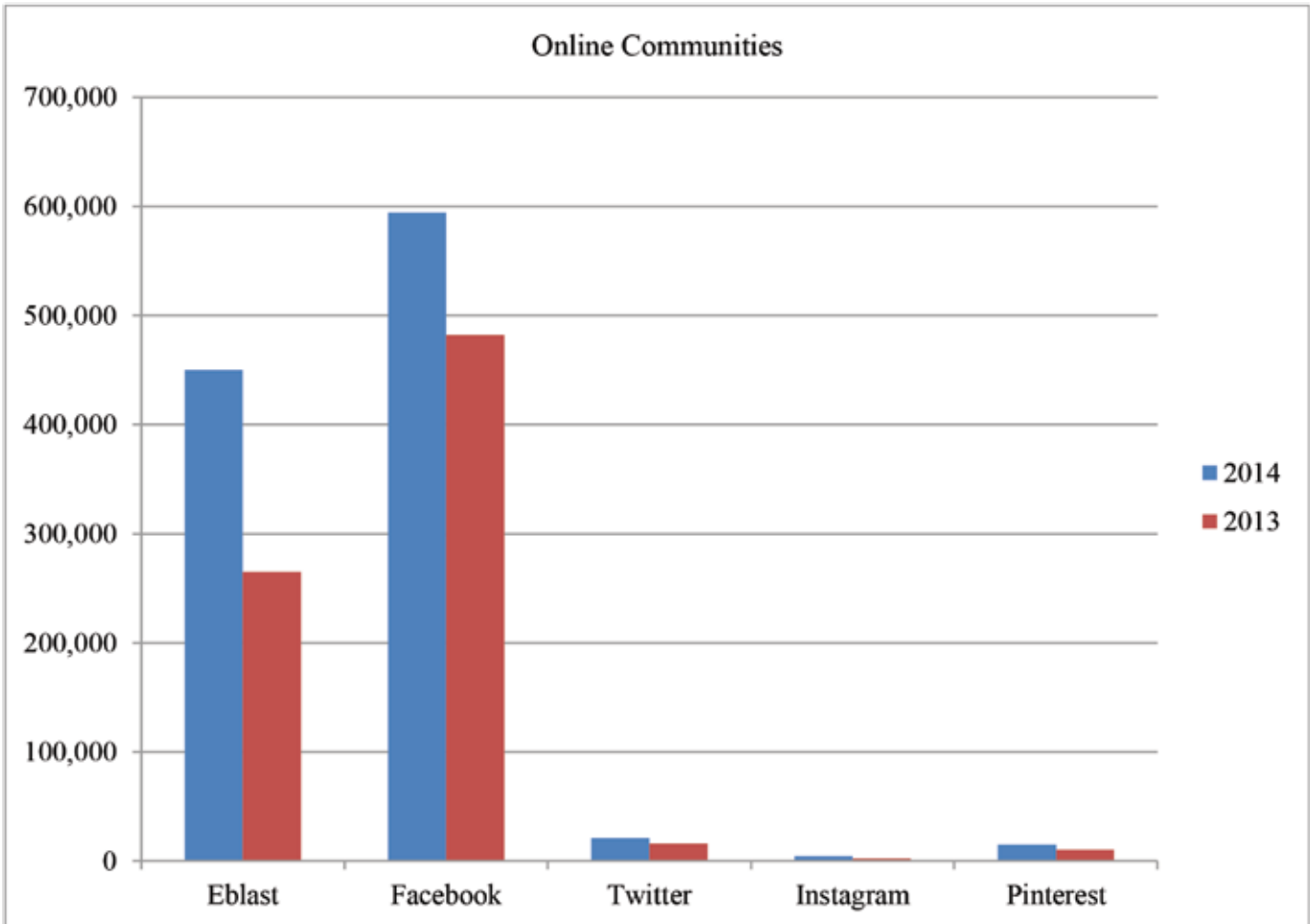
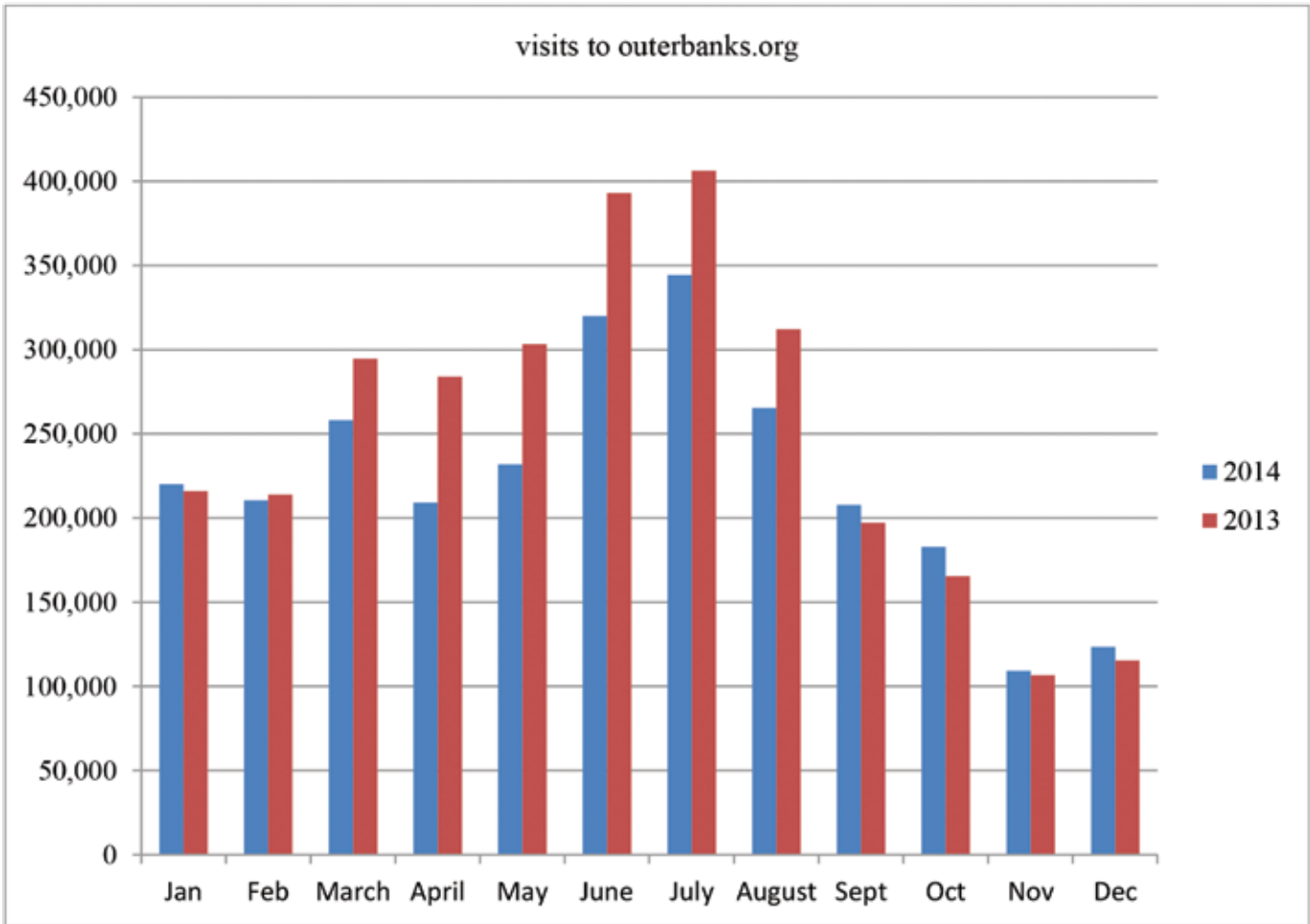
I look forward to being a good steward of this position and continuing to do my part to help make The Outer Banks a premiere vacation destination. Don't hesitate to let me know how I can help you in that effort.

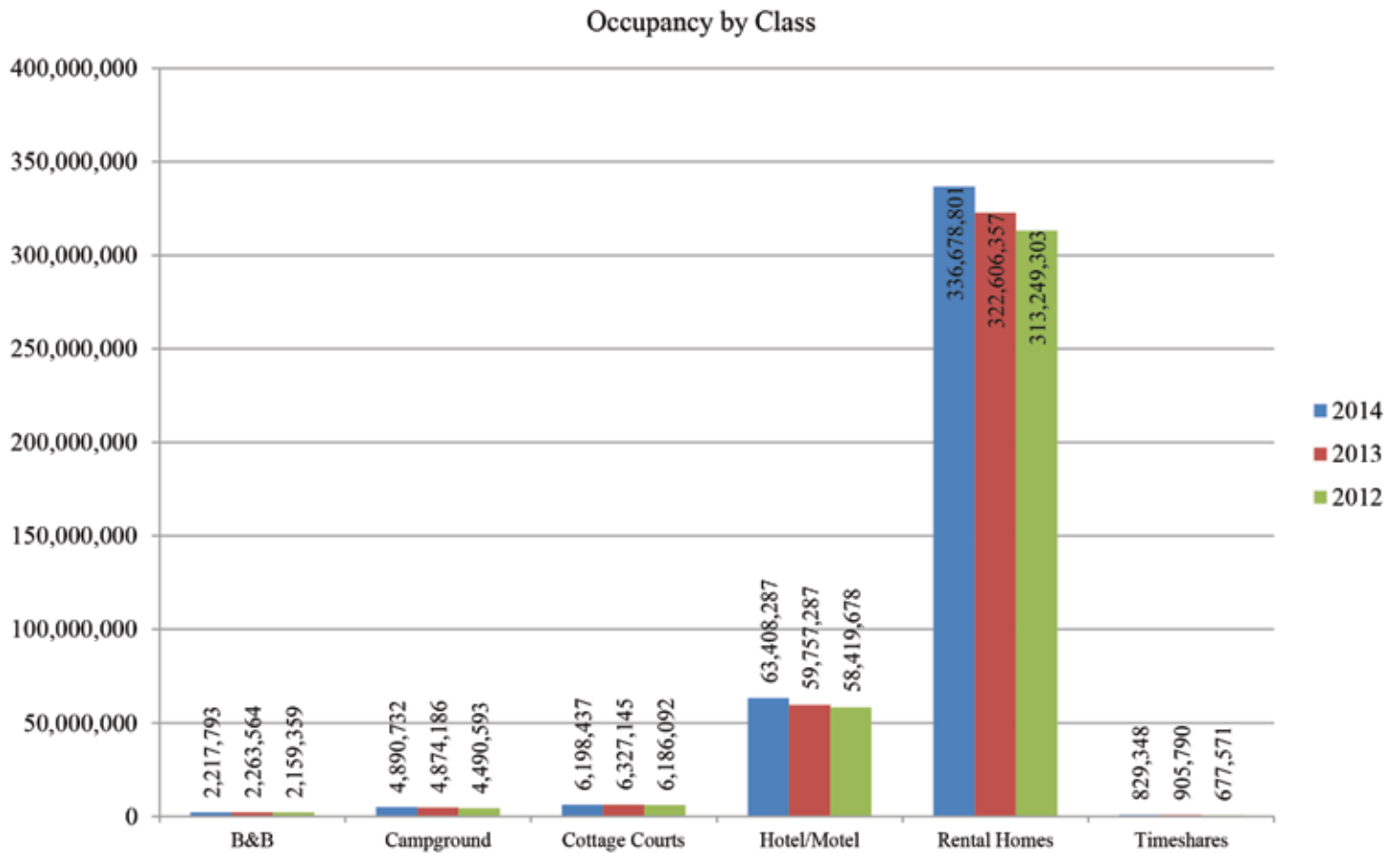
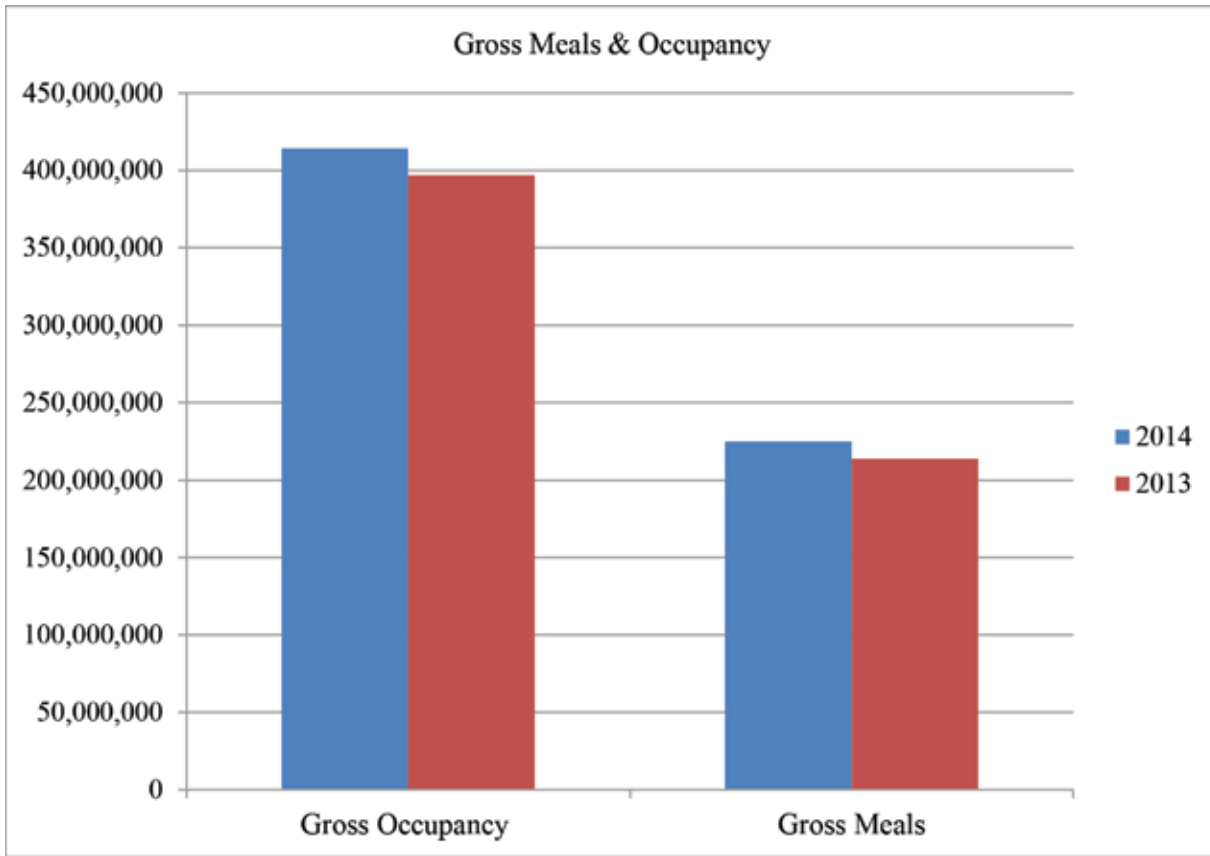
All the best from the beach!

Tim



Sail NC Class A Championship in 2014. The championships return to the Outer Banks in May 2015.





For complete details on meals and occupancy, please visit <http://www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-statistics/>

2015 Official Travel Guide Released

The 2015 Official Travel Guide is fresh off the presses! The guide, which underwent a transformation this year, is mailed to more than 300,000 people throughout the states and Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany.

“As a destination marketing organization, our main goal is to connect and inspire travelers to visit the Outer Banks. With that in mind, we created a guide full of passion, adventure and showcases our area,” said Dana Grimstead, project manager.

“The 2015 guide has taken all the information in previous guides and redesigned it to be more approachable to consumers. A clear, easy approach is the best approach,” said Executive Director Lee Nettles. Even the accommodation and restaurant listings have been redesigned for ease allowing the user to narrow choices based on need. The 2015 guide is also enlarged for ease of read, while still



remaining small enough to carry in a purse or glovebox as a ride along companion for travelers.

The cover helps the tone for the guide, helping potential, and returning visitors, with a glimpse of life on the Outer Banks by introducing local art. Emphasis is paid to locally owned shops, restaurants, galleries and accommodations, and to the natural beauty of the area.

For the first time in its 17 year history, the Travel Guide and the

Getaway Brochure and Decal share the same image, providing continuity for the visitors. For information on how to participate in the getaway program, or to receive additional stickers for your business, please contact Amy Wood, wood@outerbanks.org.

If you would like copies of the guide at your business, please contact Curt DeYoung, deyoung@outerbanks.org.

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