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# Tourism Economic Development Report

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An official publication of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau • [visitRaleigh.com](http://visitRaleigh.com)

APRIL 2015

## WAKE COUNTY CAPSULE

**Hotel occupancy tax collections were up 16.5 percent** for the calendar year beginning February 2015 compared to the same period of February 2014 and **prepared food and beverage tax collections were up 13 percent** during the same period.

## GROUP SALES

March was a busy month for the sales team. We were able to be in the presence of thousands of meeting professionals promoting our area for meetings and events. Jamie Rice, Regional Director of National Accounts represented Raleigh, N.C. in the VA, D.C., and MD area. Rice attended five tradeshows and events during the month of March. She participated in the Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPS) March education session, the Potomac Chapter of Meetings Professionals International (PMPI) E2 Session, IAEE D.C. Chapter Meeting, DMAI Destinations Showcase D.C., and the Destination & Travel Foundation Dinner. In our home state, Loretta Yingling, CMP, was a guest at the Raleigh Chamber Women's Leadership Conference (Raleigh) and the Society of Government Meeting Planners, North Carolina Chapter Meeting (Cary). She also participated in the Carolinas Chapter of Meeting Professionals International Education meeting. This event was hosted at Johnson and Wales University in Charlotte. Malinda Harrell, CMP, CASE, Associate Director of Sales, Nicole Robinson, Sales Coordinator and Tammy Jeffries, Assistant Director of Convention Services also attended the MPI-CC March meeting.

## SPORTS MARKETING

March highlights included the Mid-Atlantic Power League (MAPL) volleyball tournament, held March 6-7 at the Raleigh Convention Center. MAPL drew 156 teams spanning from New York to Georgia, generating 1,500 hotel room night and about \$500,000 in direct visitor spending. The USA Baseball National Training Complex in Cary was the site of three key events - The National High School Invitational, which brought together 16 of the top prep teams in America; the inaugural International Prospect Series; and the Division II Baseball Challenge hosted by Dowling College. A fourth event was cancelled due to inclement weather – the USA Baseball Irish Classic presented by the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance. Other March events included the Allscripts Tobacco Road Marathon and GNC Half-Marathon in Cary, the Butterfly Triangle Cary Cup Table Tennis Championship at the new Triangle Table Tennis Center in Morrisville, and the CIAA Softball Round-Up at the Walnut Creek Softball Complex in Raleigh. The GRSA Advisory Board held its quarterly meeting at PNC Arena. With Raleigh set to host the NCAA men's basketball tournament again in 2016, both the GRSA and NC State University sent representatives to Charlotte for this year's NCAA 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> rounds. NC State will serve as the official host in 2016, while the GRSA will coordinate the Local Organizing Committee.



## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

March was an incredibly busy month for media interactions! The Communications Department welcomed three top national food and travel journalists to the Raleigh area, Mar. 6-9, in partnership with The Umstead Hotel and Spa. This joint media tour included Hayley Phillips, assistant editor of Charleston, S.C.-based publication *The Local Palate*, John Mariani, a James Beard Award-winning food journalist and freelance writer and Meredith Bethune, a Washington, D.C.-based freelance writer, who frequently contributes to publications such as *Travel + Leisure*, *Saveur*, *New York Magazine* and many others. All three media enjoyed exploring the Raleigh area and were impressed with not only the attractions, retail and restaurant options but also the genuine hospitality of the people they met while exploring. Director of communications Ryan Smith also spent time last week with a freelance writer who was researching new restaurants in our area for an upcoming story in *Our State* magazine as well as Atlanta-based freelance writer and editor for Atlanta Custom Publishing, Allison Entrekin. Ryan Smith also attended a New York City media reception hosted by Visit NC where more than 65 travel/food/family/broadcast journalists attended to learn about story ideas, new developments and press tours from destinations around the state. Also you can read in *Oklahoma Magazine's* Mar. issue, where Raleigh was the featured travel destination with a story titled, "City of Oaks," and numerous Raleigh hospitality partners were featured.

## **SERVICES**

March was a heavy group arrival month for us, up 8.6% over the same month last year. Key convention center groups included NCTIES, NC Head Start, NC Reading and two new groups: one was the CVB and the RCC's first year of Data4Decision and the other was very unique Wizard World/ Comic Con. Both were very successful and we look forward to future years for each. We also had two groups at the NC State Fairgrounds, PLANET (National Landscape Competition hosted by NC State University and attracting collegiate horticulture teams from all over the US) and the annual NC First (Robotics Competition). But the RCC wasn't the only busy venue in Raleigh, as we serviced a strong number of events that are in-house to our hotels. Our department also represented GRCVB at North Hills' annual partner meeting where we presented the benefits of exposure to arriving groups and events, attended the quarterly Fayetteville Street District meeting, conducted a partnership meeting with DRA for alignment on plans for hosting large groups and events, hosted IBMA's lead staff for a planning visit, and attended the City of Raleigh's Vehicle Movement meeting (primarily focused on proposed plans for taxi zones nightlife hours for Fayetteville Street and Glenwood Avenue). Services assisted Sales with key site visits for prospects including Citizen Science and Land Trust Alliance. We have suspended our proactive visitor guide deliver service to our partners until GRCVB's new visitor guides have arrived and will reactivate it in May. In the interim, Linda Bonine will be assisting our department with arriving groups. We plan to resume the service by early summer.

## **MARKETING**

In Mar., the Marketing Department devoted [visitRaleigh.com](http://www.visitRaleigh.com)'s homepage content and interrelated Internet marketing tactics to a Foodie-focused tourism campaign; tactics first spotlighted Foodie "bites" (Mar. culinary events and deals for visitors) then shifted toward Apr. craft beer tourism experiences promoted under the campaign banners of Greater Raleigh Beer Month (<http://www.visitRaleigh.com/beermonth/>) and North Carolina Beer Month (<http://www.ncbeermonth.com>). On Mar. 3, the department hosted GRCVB's Wake County Beer Summit, a quarterly meeting of all area brewers, to finalize prep for Greater Raleigh Beer Month 2015



promotions and to discuss future marketing tactics. On Mar. 5, the department held a webinar meeting for area hospitality partners who were unable to attend Feb.'s Marketing Update Meeting yet wanted to review the meeting's content online. Director of marketing Jonathan Freeze, CDME, and senior marketing manager Derek Allman attended the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism, Mar. 8-10, in Pinehurst. On Mar. 11, Marketing Department staff met with staff of the North Carolina Museum of History for further planning of visitor promotions surrounding the museum's fall exhibit on the lifework of Billy Graham. Department staff furthered the planning and content development for the Bureau's Annual Meeting, to be held Aug. 27, 2015, at the Raleigh Convention Center. Department staff and Bureau leadership also reviewed and narrowed down finalists from among agencies/firms that had responded to the Bureau's recent request (RFP) for advertising and design services; finalist interviews are now set for late Apr. Director of marketing Jonathan Freeze, CDME, attended a talk on the "Economic Impact and Future of Sports and Leisure Tourism for Holly Springs," held Mar. 18 at the Holly Springs Cultural Center. On Mar. 19, the Marketing Department convened a Music Maniac Summit, to which all area live music venues and music industry leaders were invited; attendees of the summit at PNC Arena discussed the future scope of work for GRCVB's Live Music Advisory Committee as well as industry perspectives on the music marketing plans and tactics undertaken since 2013. On Mar. 24, the department hosted the quarterly meeting of the Cultural Presenters Forum at Art Bar; in addition, that afternoon, director of marketing Jonathan Freeze, CDME, presented to the Technology and Communications Committee of Raleigh City Council about an upcoming project in which GRCVB/Raleigh will be loaned Google Trekker equipment for local use in capturing off-road panoramic imagery. Under GRCVB's external advertising plan for the month of Mar., leisure-related placements appeared on Collinson Media/interfuse, shermanstravel.com and visitnc.com and in *Our State Good Food and Travels* e-blasts; GRSA-related placements appeared on sportscommissions.org and in *Sports Destination Management*, *Sports Events* and *Sports Travel* magazines; and meetings-related placements appeared in AENC's and MPI-CC's annual directories, in *ConventionSouth*, *Prevue* and *Smart Meetings* magazines, in *M&C* and *Prevue* magazine e-blasts and on AENC's and MPI's websites.



**VISITOR INDUSTRY STATISTICAL REPORT  
FEBRUARY 2015  
HOTEL OCCUPANCY PRODUCTION**

	<b>Chg. from Feb '14</b>	<b>Wake County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>United States</b>
Feb 2015 Occupancy %	+5.5%	71.1%	59%	62.3%
Feb 2015 ADR	+4.1%	\$93.73	\$88.72	\$116.55
Feb 2015 RevPar	+9.8%	\$66.68	\$52.35	\$72.60
2015 YTD Occupancy %	+5.4%	64.9%	54%	58.1%
2015 YTD ADR	+4.4%	\$92.82	\$86.80	\$115.00
2015 YTD RevPar	+10%	\$60.24	\$46.88	\$66.83

*Source: Smith Travel Research, Inc.-Stats lag by one month; Republication or other re-use of this data without the express written permission of STR is strictly prohibited.*

**AVIATION PRODUCTION**

*Source: Raleigh-Durham International Airport-Stats lag by one month and reflect Calendar Year 2014*

	<b>FEB 2015</b>	<b>2015 YTD</b>	<b>YTD% Change from 2014</b>
Passenger Enplanements	302,921	631,269	+3.3%
Passenger Deplanements	300,530	640,030	+3.1%

**RALEIGH CONVENTION CENTER INFORMATION**

<b>Activity by Year</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Total</b>
At RCC (Definite)	14	45	55	60	54	60	58	31	18	13	9	5	4	0	0		426
At RCC (Tentative)								3	21	16	11	8	5	2			66

*Above numbers are GRCVB assisted definite and tentative bookings for the RCC*

**GROUP SALES DEFINITE ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION**

	<b>March 2015</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>14/15 YTD Monthly Goal</b>	<b>Fiscal YTD +/- Variance</b>
Total Room Nights	5,054	66,623	85,167	-21.8%
Estimated Economic Impact	\$3,730,579	\$47,791,707	\$45,000,000	+6.2%
Number of Definite Bookings	32	189	135	+40%



**GROUP SALES TENTATIVE ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION**

	March 2015	YTD	14/15 YTD Monthly Goal	Fiscal YTD +/- Variance
Total Room Nights	53,572	542,795	254,628	+113.2%
Estimated Economic Impact	\$30,785,322	\$381,857,727	\$177,750,000	+114.8%
Number of Tentative Leads	76	679	414	+64.0%

**SPORTS MARKETING ASSISTED DEFINITE ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION**

	March 2015	YTD	14/15 YTD Monthly Goal	Fiscal YTD +/- Variance
Total Room Nights	6,243	99,930	78,604	+ 27%
Estimated Economic Impact	\$2,165,695	\$27,926,001	\$26,025,000	+ 7%
Number of Definite Bookings	11	54	56	- 3%

**VISITOR SERVICES PRODUCTION**

	March 2015	FY 14/15 YTD	YTD% Chg from 13/14
# of Groups Serviced	69	439	+8.6%
# of Visitor Information Center visitors	1,494	8,762	-11%
# of Visitor Inquiries	366	2,981	-15.0%

**VISITOR GUIDE DELIVERY SERVICE TO PARTNERS**

*This is a new service that we have begun as of October 2014*

	MAR 2015	2015 YTD	YTD % Chg from 13/14
Partners Serviced	13	228	**baseline #s for first year
Visitor Guides Delivered	1,900	24,425	**baseline #s for first year



**CONVENTION CENTER DEFINITE BOOKINGS**

<b>Group Name</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Total Room Nights</b>	<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>Est. Econ. Impact</b>
<b>Sports Convention Center Definite</b>				
<b>Sales Convention Center Definite</b>				
NC Funeral directors Association	5/11-14/15	160	150	\$118,791
American Institute of Graphic Arts	6/7-14/16	576	300	\$431,464
<b>TOTAL (A)</b>		<b>736</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>\$550,255</b>

**GROUP SALES/SPORTS MARKETING ASSISTED DEFINITE BOOKINGS**

USTA Southern Level 1A Tournament	3/27-29/15	1,045	742	\$207,005
Carolina Grand Slam Beach VB	5/15-16/15	50	100	\$14,950
NCHSAA Lacrosse State Champ.	5/23-24/15	150	1,000	\$107,350
NCHSAA Baseball State Champ.	6/5-7/15	1,305	2,000	\$429,195
NCHSAA Softball State Champ.	6/5-7/15	855	3,420	\$597,645
NCHSAA Women's Soccer Champ.	5/30-31/15	388	1,395	\$139,500
Cary Long Course Duathlon Series	5/15-16/15	400	500	\$104,600
Triangle Orthopedic Triathlon	4/24-25/15	650	1,000	\$194,350
BASF Smile Train Triathlon	6/27/15	400	500	\$72,100
Top Gun Super NIT	4/17-18/15	500	1,000	\$149,500
Top Gun Baseball NIT	9/11-12/15	500	1,000	\$149,500
<b>SPORTS TOTAL (B)</b>		<b>6,243</b>	<b>12,657</b>	<b>\$2,165,695</b>



ExpoNC, LLC	4/8-10/15	27	150	\$22,032
NC Council of Deliberation	4/8-13/15	580	500	\$435,148
Smith Wedding Block	4/10-12/15	80	125	\$48,684
Goodguys Rod & Custom Association	4/17-20/15	550	500	\$541,825
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.	5/5-6/15	10	35	\$25,189
Flowserve	5/17-20/15	75	35	\$29,049
National Board for Certified Counselors and Affiliates	5/27-31/15	550	220	\$214,432
Lulu Avenue	7/16-19/15	250	350	\$328,098
Terrell Family Reunion	7/23-27/15	200	125	\$118,473
Egerton/Egerton, Ellis, Strickland Family Reunion	7/24-26/15	70	75	\$57,402
American Heart Association	8/3-5/15	210	195	\$118,997
American Society of Civil Engineers	9/24-25/15	50	125	\$65,089
Ray Price Harley Davidson	9/24-27/15	325	300	\$244,133
Association Executives of North Carolina	10/4-6/15	23	100	\$48,758
Pamplin Historic Park	10/5-7/15	50	30	\$19,656
Boys and Girls Clubs	10/8-10/15	105	160	\$104,834
Shaw University	11/5-8/15	219	100	\$69,702
Shaw University	11/5-8/15	25	100	\$69,702
The Linux Foundation	5/15-20/16	480	400	\$439,720
<b>SALES TOTAL (C)</b>		<b>3,879</b>	<b>3,625</b>	<b>\$3,000,923</b>
<b>Total (A+B+C)</b>		<b>10,858</b>	<b>16,732</b>	<b>\$5,716,873</b>



**BIDS SUBMITTED FOR GROUP SALES/SPORTS MARKETING**

	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Total Room Nights</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Estimated Economic Impact</b>
<b>SPORTS MARKETING</b>				
<b>GROUP SALES</b>				
NC Council of Deliberation 2015	4/8-13/15	580	500	\$435,148
Achieve 300 Raleigh NC Blended Learning	4/27-28/15	5	40	\$15,588
Shaw University Graduation	5/7-10/15	120	250	\$111,518
Power Sector Sales Meeting	5/17-20/15	75	35	\$29,049
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage	5/20-21/15	50	60	\$27,092
Mocha Mind Agency	6/6-7/15	30	30	\$10,312
2015 Egerton, Ellis, Strickland Family Reunion	7/24-26/15	70	150	\$57,402
National Association of Biology Teachers - 2018	10/15-21/15	1,930	900	\$1,404,358
McDonald's Raleigh Region Fall ROA	11/7-10/15	365	350	\$156,597
Merz Pharmaceuticals 1650 Mid-Year POA Meeting	3/6-12/16	1,240	565	\$893,655
Printing Industries of America Technical Association	4/8-13/16	580	500	\$435,148
Laboratory Design Conference	4/10-14/16	300	150	\$130,316
Charmettes National Convention 2016	6/5-13/16	496	275	\$230,053
NC New Schools Project	6/26-30/16	1,550	900	\$673,329
Rotary District 7710 Annual District Conference 2017	4/7-8/17	10	25	\$35,410





Association of Computing Machinery MOD/PODS 2017	6/22-7/2/17	1,205	800	\$669,616
Epsilon Sigma Phi National Convention 2017	10/7-12/17	327	250	\$127,713
National Association of Biology Teachers - 2017	10/9-15/2017	1,930	900	\$1,386,791
NC Affordable Housing Conference	10/23-25/17	200	950	\$660,629
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>11,063</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>\$7,489,724</b>

#### SITE VISITS

Group Name	Total Room Nights	Total Attendance
<b>SPORTS MARKETING</b>		
Rock 'n' Roll Raleigh Marathon & ½ Marathon	5,500	12,000
<b>GROUP SALES</b>		
Citizen Science Association	1,600	1,200
Downtown Urban Design Conference	105	400
Land Trust Alliance	2,189	1,800
PAC World	300	500
Printing Industries of American Technical Conference 2016	290	350
<b>GROUP TOTAL</b>	<b>9,984</b>	<b>16,250</b>

#### TRADESHOWS & EVENTS

Event Name	Location (Dates)
<b>SPORTS MARKETING</b>	
GRSA Advisory Board Quarterly Meeting	Raleigh (March 4)
Mid-Atlantic Power League volleyball tournament	Raleigh (March 7-8)
Division II Baseball Challenge	Cary (March 14-17)
Tobacco Road Marathon & ½ Marathon	Cary (March 15)

NCAA Basketball Tournament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Round	Charlotte (March 19-20)
Butterfly Triangle Cary Cup Table Tennis	Morrisville (March 19-22)
CIAA Softball Round-Up	Raleigh (March 20-22)
USA Baseball National High School Invitational	Cary (March 25-28)
USA Baseball International Prospect Series	Cary (March 25-28)
North Carolina Sports Association Quarterly Meeting	Greenville, NC (March 31)
<b>GROUP SALES</b>	
Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPs) March Education Session	Washington, DC (March 10)
NC SGMP Chapter Meeting	Cary, NC (March 11)
Raleigh Chamber Women's Leadership Conference	Raleigh, NC (March 12)
Potomac Chapter, Meeting Planners International (PMPI) E2 Session	Rockville, MD (March 12)
IAEE DC Chapter March Meeting	Alexandria, VA (March 13)
MPI-CC Chapter Meeting	Charlotte, NC (March 17-18)
Destination & Travel Foundation Dinner	Washington, DC (March 24)
DMAI Destinations Showcase DC Trade Show	Washington, DC (March 25)



The DMO is accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of the Destination Marketing Association International, 2025 M Street, N.W., Ste. 500, Washington, D.C., 20036, U.S.A., Ph. 202.296.7888.