

Randolph
County
Tourism
Development
Authority

Annual Report 2023



Archdale
Asheboro
Franklinville
Liberty
Ramseur
Randleman
Seagrove
Staley
Trinity

Visit the *Heart*
of North Carolina





Message from Executive Director - Amber Scarlett

2023 Successes and Outlook

Reflecting on the past year fills me with gratitude for the dedicated partners who continually strive to provide the best possible experience for every visitor. I am privileged to collaborate with a community that fosters mutual learning and supports local businesses. Visitors are drawn to our area for an affordable and enriching experience that creates lasting memories for their families. Our attractions host events that are educational, inspiring, creative, and enjoyable.

In 2023, the Randolph County TDA proudly celebrated 25 years of destination marketing. This milestone empowered our team to flourish as new employees infused us with an invigorated spirit and passion for our mission. Our strong revenues allowed us to reinstate meaningful sponsorships for local events and partner organizations, responding to the evolving needs of our industry and the growth of our communities. We remained unwavering in our commitment to our core values, ensuring our messaging to visitors inspires them with the promise of affordable, family-friendly, memorable, and unique experiences.



Overview

The Randolph County Tourism Development Authority (Authority) is a public authority governed by the terms of special legislation granted by the N.C. General Assembly on July 28, 1997 as House Bill 337, An Act to Authorize Randolph County to Levy a Room Occupancy and Tourism Development Tax under the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. The current tax rate is set at five percent.



Mission

The mission of the Authority is to unify and lead the County in developing the Heart of North Carolina as a family-friendly, affordable, and strategically located destination serving the leisure and business travel, group tour, meeting, and sports and recreational tournament markets.

Vision

With a strong commitment to professional advocacy, we pledge to be a consistent, supportive, and accountable partner in marketing Randolph County as a destination by offering partners and stakeholders and communities enhanced exposure to visitor market opportunities.



Economic Impact Numbers:

- \$89.75 tax relief to each resident of Randolph County as a result of visitor spending
- State Tax Revenues: \$8.3 million
- Local Tax Revenues: \$5 million
- Total payroll generated by tourism industry in Randolph County: \$43.9 million
- More than 1,145 direct tourism jobs in our county



Visitor Spending:

Visitors spent \$189.50 million in 2023 (an increase of 6.1% from 2022 | \$178.63 million).

(This data is provided by an annual study commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.)

Occupancy Tax Revenues:

- Occupancy collections increased 3.7% compared to 2022
- ADR (average daily rate) increased 6.4% from 2022
- RevPAR (revenue per available room) increased 9.5% from 2022
- Demand for hotel rooms increased 3.4% when compared to 2022
- Revenues increased 9.1% when compared to 2022 as a whole.

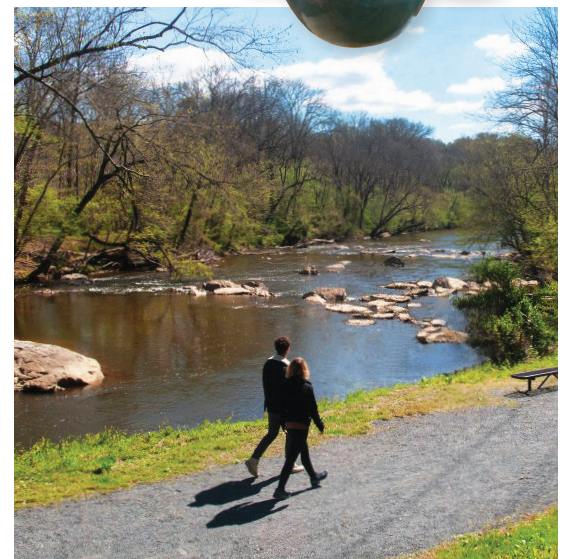
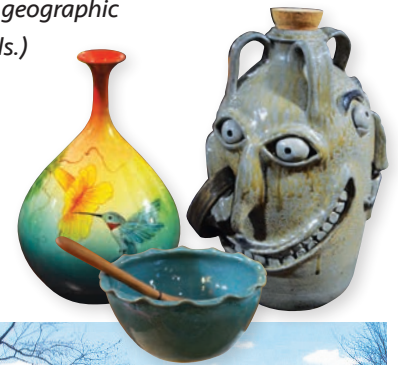
*(*This report analyzes a variety of tourism indicators and comparisons to previous years where applicable. While virtually every chain in the United States provides Smith Travel Research (STR) with data on almost all properties, there are still some hotels that do not submit data. However, every year STR examines listings and directories for information on hotels that do not participate. STR calls each hotel in the database every year to obtain "published" rates for multiple categories. Based on this information all hotels are grouped – those that report data and those that do not – into groupings based off price level and geographic proximity. They then estimate the non-respondents based on nearby hotels with similar price levels.)*



Historical Growth in Revenues:

Overall tax revenue distributions to the Authority for calendar year 2023 were: \$1,406,998 compared to 2022 revenues of \$1,283,123, an increase of 9.65%.

*(*Occupancy tax revenue reports are provided by Randolph County Finance Office)*



Destination Data –

30 attractions surveyed:

- 2023 Attendance #'s – **1,567,930** (10% increase from 2022)

Domestic Top States:

- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Virginia
- Ohio
- Illinois
- Pennsylvania
- Florida
- Michigan
- New York
- Indiana

Domestic NC Metro:

- Charlotte/Gastonia/Concord/Kannapolis
- Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill/Cary
- Hickory/Statesville/Salisbury
- Greensboro/Winston-Salem/High Point/Burlington
- Fayetteville/Lumberton/Laurinburg
- Wilmington/Southport

Requests from International Countries:

- Canada
- India
- United Kingdom

Top Visitor Requests:

- Heart of NC Travel Guide
- Seagrove Pottery
- North Carolina Zoo
- Deep River State Trail Map
- NC Aviation Museum
- Petty Family Attractions
- Linbrook Heritage Estate
- Victory Junction
- Kersey Valley Attractions
- Caraway Speedway

I-73/74 Visitor Centers Statistics:

- **Greeted: 109,353** for a 71% increase from 2022's 63,988 visitors greeted
- **Distribution of Heart of NC Travel Guides: 32,000** - compared to 30,500 in 2022 (an increase of 5%)
- **Distribution of NCDOT Road Maps: 33,750** - compared to 21,600 in 2022 (an increase of 56%)
- **Distribution of NC Travel Guides: 24,850** - compared to 14,400 in 2022 (an increase of 73%)
- **Domestic Guest Registries: 3,420** - compared to 5,316 in 2022 (a decrease of 35%)
- **International Guest Registries: 43** compared to 55 in 2022 (a decrease of 22%)
- **Events:**
 - National Travel & Tourism Week
 - Open House
 - Operation Thank You
 - 12 Days of Christmas



National Trail Day at the North Carolina Zoo



Attending the Great Trails State Conference



Kids Day at the Visitor Centers



Operation Thank You at the Visitor Centers

Social Media Review & Website –



Facebook – Heart of NC:

- **Total follows – 8,335; NEW follows: 1,700**
(an increase of 157% from 2022)
- **Page visits – 48,700**
(an increase of 47% from 2022)
- **Page reach – 7,405,522**
(an increase of 3,628% from 2022)

Instagram – Heart of NC:

- **Total follows – 3,508**
- **Profile visits – 5,900**
(an increase of 45% from 2022)
- **Profile reach – 79,356**
(an increase of 78% from 2022)

Facebook – Seagrove, Pottery Capital of the US:

- **Total follows – 4,458; NEW follows: 906**
(an increase of 175% from 2022)
- **Page visits – 10,335**
(an increase of 235% from 2022)
- **Page reach – 257,553**
(an increase of 175% from 2022)

Facebook – I-73/74 Visitor Centers:

- **Total follows – 1,908; NEW follows: 56**
(a decrease of 26% from 2022)
- **Page visits – 1,800**
(an increase of 67% from 2022)
- **Page reach – 17,392**
(a decrease of 35% from 2022)



Website Stats:

- **Number of Visits in 2023 – 167,684**
- **Page Views in 2023 – 489,420**

Top URLs & Pages:

- **Homepage – Heart of North Carolina Official Source of Randolph County Tourism**
- **Calendar Listings for the Heart of North Carolina**
- **Things to Do Seagrove Pottery | The Heart of North Carolina**
- **Seagrove, North Carolina | Heart of North Carolina | Randolph County**
- **Request a Free Travel Guide**
- **About Asheboro North Carolina | Heart of North Carolina | Randolph County**
- **Request a Free Travel Guide - Form Completed**
- **Things to Do – Parks & Recreation | The Heart of North Carolina**
- **Things to Do in The Heart of North Carolina**
- **Visitor Center Guest Registry**

Links from External Pages:

- **Google.com**
- **(not set)**
- **Eastads.simpli.fi**
- **LibertyAntiquesFestival.com**
- **NCZoo.org**
- **Facebook.com**
- **AsheboroNC.gov**
- **RICtoday**
- **M.Facebook.com**
- **3461**

Top Key Phrases:

- **Cities and Towns - Asheboro**
- **Things to Do - Seagrove Pottery**
- **Things to Do - Local Dining/Full Service/ Asheboro**
- **Cities and Towns - Randleman**
- **Cities and Towns - Seagrove**
- **Travel Tools - About Randolph County**
- **Cities and Towns - Archdale**
- **Cities and Towns - Trinity**
- **Things to Do - Liberty**
- **Cities and Towns - Liberty**

Public Relations –

Our Media Coverage in 2023:

- **Total placements (social media posts by media/influencers/content creators, broadcast, online, print, YouTube, email blasts): 331** (new metric this year)
- **Total estimated views across all platforms: 2.34 million** (excluding print)
- **43 Online Placements with estimated views of 1,442,000** (up from 539,000 in 2022)
- **10 Print Placements with total print readership of 5.6M** (up from 935k circulation in 2022)
- **Average Domain Authority: 57 with highest at 95**
- **TV segments: 4** (one national, one statewide, two local)
- **Media email blast inclusions: 12** (new metric)
- **Links back to HeartofNorthCarolina.com in online media: 14** (up from 7 in 2022-most stories sent readers back to the partner websites)
- **71 partners/small businesses featured** (up from 56 in 2022)
- **19 media hosted this year**

Social Media Generated By Media:

- **Social Posts from Media: 194** (up from 52) | **Social Shares of Media Stories: 52.9K** (up from 22.83K)
Facebook Live Views: 371K (new metric via Lisa Clapp hosting) | **Instagram Reel Reach: 1,127,000** (new metric)
YouTube Views: 1.09K (new metric) | **TikTok Plays: 398K** (new metric)

Media Highlights | Big Wins!

- International wins with publication of Tea with Seagrove Potters and our tea mavens in **Tea Time Magazine** and pottery scene showcased by **Montreal Gazette**.
- **Cookin' Cuttin' Up and Ceepin' It Reel** (FB influencer) Lisa Clapp hosted twice. Her first visit reached 8 million according to their social analytics.
- Significant stories in statewide outlets **Carolina Country, Our State, Richmond Magazine**.
- **Southern Living** online covered our The Table in print and spotlighted things to do in Seagrove online. Our Seagrove pottery reputation was also referenced in a **New York Times** piece we influenced. Canadian journalists visited our potters, as well.
- Teamed with Petty PR pro to secure 15 pieces of coverage for the Petty Sculpture installation in Randleman.
- **Weather Channel** segment on sustainable practices at the North Carolina Zoo.
- **Pumpkin Spice Tour** this fall resulted in a variety of social, YouTube posts with stories still in development.
- Hosted Canadian journalist and a freelancer for **Good Housekeeping** in cooperation with VisitNC.
- Media joined the TDA's **"See For Yourself Tour"** for the first time.

Consumer eBlasts:

- **"Holiday Fun"** targeting final weeks of December eblast | 45% open rate | 4,464 opens | 840 clicks from 211 people
- **"Fall Events"** eblast | 50.3% open rate | 5,042 opens | 583 clicks from 309 people



Exploring Downtown Asheboro - Pumpkin Spice Media Tour, Fall 2023

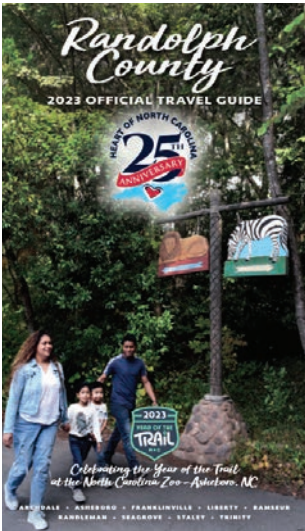


AJ Forest and Katie Saintsing of Our State Magazine experience Millstone Creek Orchards

Visual Advertising - (Over 210+ advertisements, both print & digital, designed and placed with a variety of advertisers for 2023 in addition to other print materials & photography)

Advertising Partners + Print & Digital:

- American Legion Tournament Program
- Chapel Hill Magazine
- Durham Magazine
- O'Henry Magazine
- The Heritage Guide
- Carolina Panthers Yearbook
- Chatham Magazine
- Family Travel Magazine
- Our State Magazine
- The Local Palate
- Carolina Traveler
- Courier-Tribune
- Military Families Magazine
- Raleigh Magazine
- The Randolph Hub
- DPAC & Tanger Playbill
- NC Travel Guide
- SAPA Pottery Program
- Triangle Weekender
- The Griffon 108



2023 Travel Guide Cover



Full Page Ads - Chapel Hill, Chatham, Durham, O'Henry, Our State Magazines



1/4 Page Ad - NC Travel Guide Ad



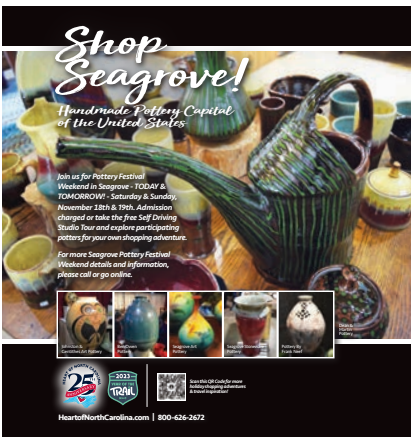
1/2 Page Ads - The Courier-Tribune & The Randolph Hub



1/4 Page Ad - Triangle Digital Partners



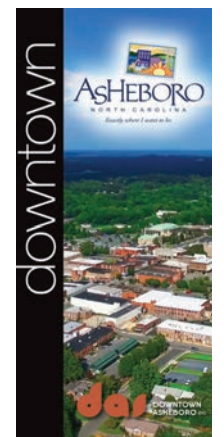
1/2 Page Ads - Carolina Country & Raleigh Magazine



1/2 & 1/4 Page Ads - The Courier-Tribune & The Randolph Hub



1/4 Page Ad - Family Travel Magazine



Downtown Asheboro Brochure



Randolph County - Children's Coloring, Trivia & Puzzle Brochure

Award Winners for 2023:



Hospitality Hero Award
- **David Caughron** -
Chairman - TDA Board of Directors



Mary Joan Pugh Excellence in Hospitality Award
- **Richard Petty** -

TDA Board of Directors:

- David Caughron, Chairman
- Rebecca Petty Moffitt, Vice Chairperson
- Luke Hollingsworth
- Leslie Brown
- Amy Struble
- Barbara Gallimore
- Ross Holt
- Shawn Patel
- Diane Villa



Meet Our Team:

- Amber Scarlett, Executive Director
- Amber Skeen, Director of Office Administration
- Melody Varner, Tourism Marketing Coordinator
- Wes Alexander, Digital Content Coordinator
- Doyle Craven, Tourism Services Coordinator
- Annette Cagle, Director of Visitor Services & Information
- Matthew Jarrett, Tourism Information Coordinator
- Christy Kiser, Tourism Information Coordinator
- Part-Time Travel Information Counselors:
Mark Burks, Sherry Burks, JoAnne Higgins, Shelly LaCoss,
Benita McNeill, Rea Richardson, & Carole Thorsen

Collaboration Team:

- Kenny Kidd, Liaison to the Board of County Commissioners
- Will Massie, Ex-Officio Finance Officer
- Susan Dosier, DK Communications Group
- Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Creative
- Mike Southard, Triad Hosting, Inc.



**Heart of North Carolina
Visitors Bureau**
500 Albemarle Rd, Asheboro 27203
800-626-2672
HeartofNorthCarolina.com



TDA staff takes a hayride at Millstone Creek Orchards



Visitor Center staff celebrates 100k visitors!



TDA staff holiday gathering