



TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY
TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Quarterly Report FY24 - Q3





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I. ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS



BOARD & STAFF

A new year brought a new board of directors, with Lauren Wise joining as the City of Brevard representative, Nory LeBrun as a member-at-large, and Dionne Hodgson as an accommodations owner/operator. It also marked the beginning of the term for new Chair, Dee Dee Perkins, and Vice Chair, Jessica Whitmire.

In February, the board held their annual strategic planning meeting, which was facilitated by Chris Cavanaugh of Magellan Strategy Group. This served as an opportunity to take the time for a deeper dive into important topics with strategic conversation to guide the organization over the next two years. Topics covered were: 1) Financial Overview, 2) Marketing, 3) Ecusta Trail, 4) Affordable Workforce Housing, 5) Committees, 6) Visitor Center, 7) Local TCTDA Brand.

The discussion on “Local TCTDA Brand” included a review of a report on visitor sentiment in Transylvania County that was completed in 2023 and presented to the board in December. The board noted the importance of understanding how locals feel about tourism and the need to take this information into consideration when making decisions about the direction of the organization. This report is included as an attachment to this quarterly report.

At their February meeting, the board passed a new Ecusta Trail Funding commitment to replace the prior one that provided local matching funds of \$1M for a grant of \$10M or more. The need for a new commitment was determined at a prior meeting where it was determined that the need for funds that are not covered by the large grants is greater than the need for local matching funds. This new pledge is a similar commitment, but allows for funding “toward any expenditures related to development of and access to the Ecusta Trail and related amenities in Transylvania County”.

In March, Executive Director Clark Lovelace and Mark Johnson from Market Connections attended the 2024 Visit NC Tourism Conference in Greenville, NC. This served as an opportunity to connect with other tourism industry professionals, attend media roundtables, gain insights from workshops, hear from state leaders like Governor Roy Cooper, and more.



BOARD MEMBERS

Dee Dee Perkins, **Chair** Interested Individual

Jessica Whitmire, **Vice Chair** Town of Rosman Appointee

Lauren Wise City of Brevard Appointee

Nory LeBrun Member-at-large

Dana Antonuccio Accommodations Owner/Operator

Isaac Allen Interested Individual

Dionne Hodgson Accommodations Owner/Operator

Larry Chapman Transylvania County Appointee

Madeline Magin Member-at-large

MARKETING

Dee Dee Perkins, **Chair** Board

Dana Antonuccio Board

Dionne Hodgson Board

Nory LeBrun Board

Layton Parker Community

TRANSYLVANIA ALWAYS

Jessica Whitmire, **Chair** Board

Lauren Wise Board

Dionne Hodgson Board

Eric Caldwell Community

Grant Bullard Community

Mandi Bentley Community

Kate Hayes Community

DESTINATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Madeline Magin, **Chair** Board

Dee Dee Perkins Board

Jessica Whitmire Board

Nicole Bentley Community

Melanie Spreen Community

Aaron Baker Community

Jeffrey Adams Community

GRANTS

Isaac Allen, **Chair** Board

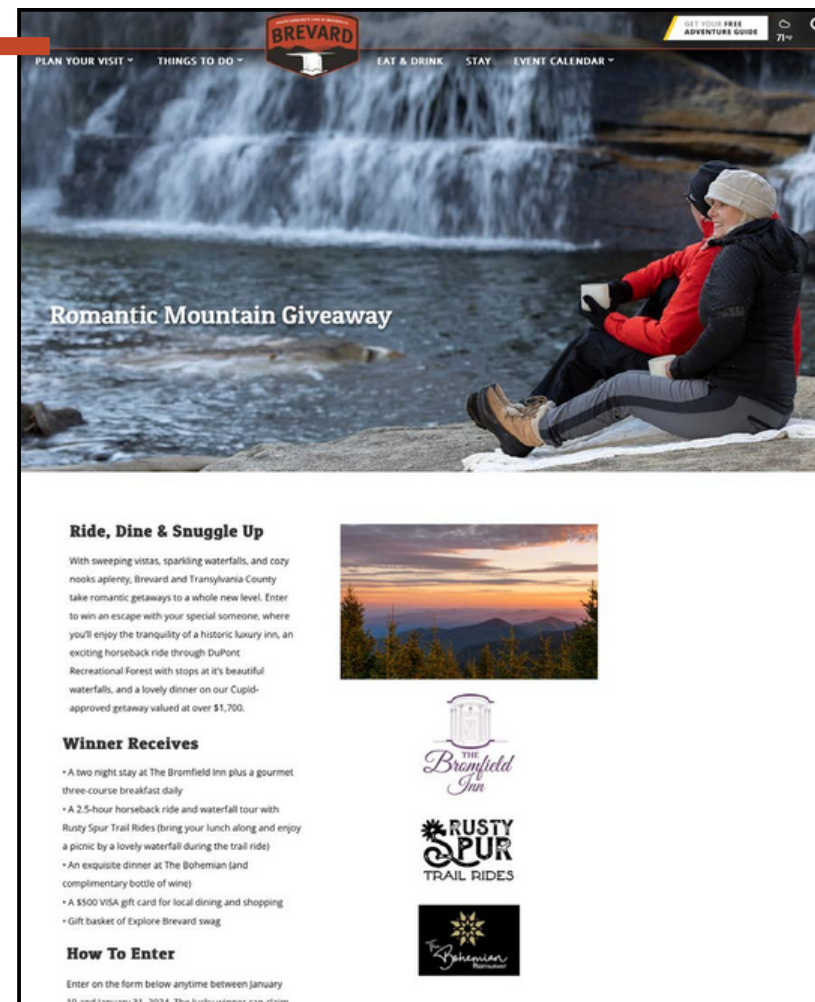
Dana Antonuccio Board

Larry Chapman Board

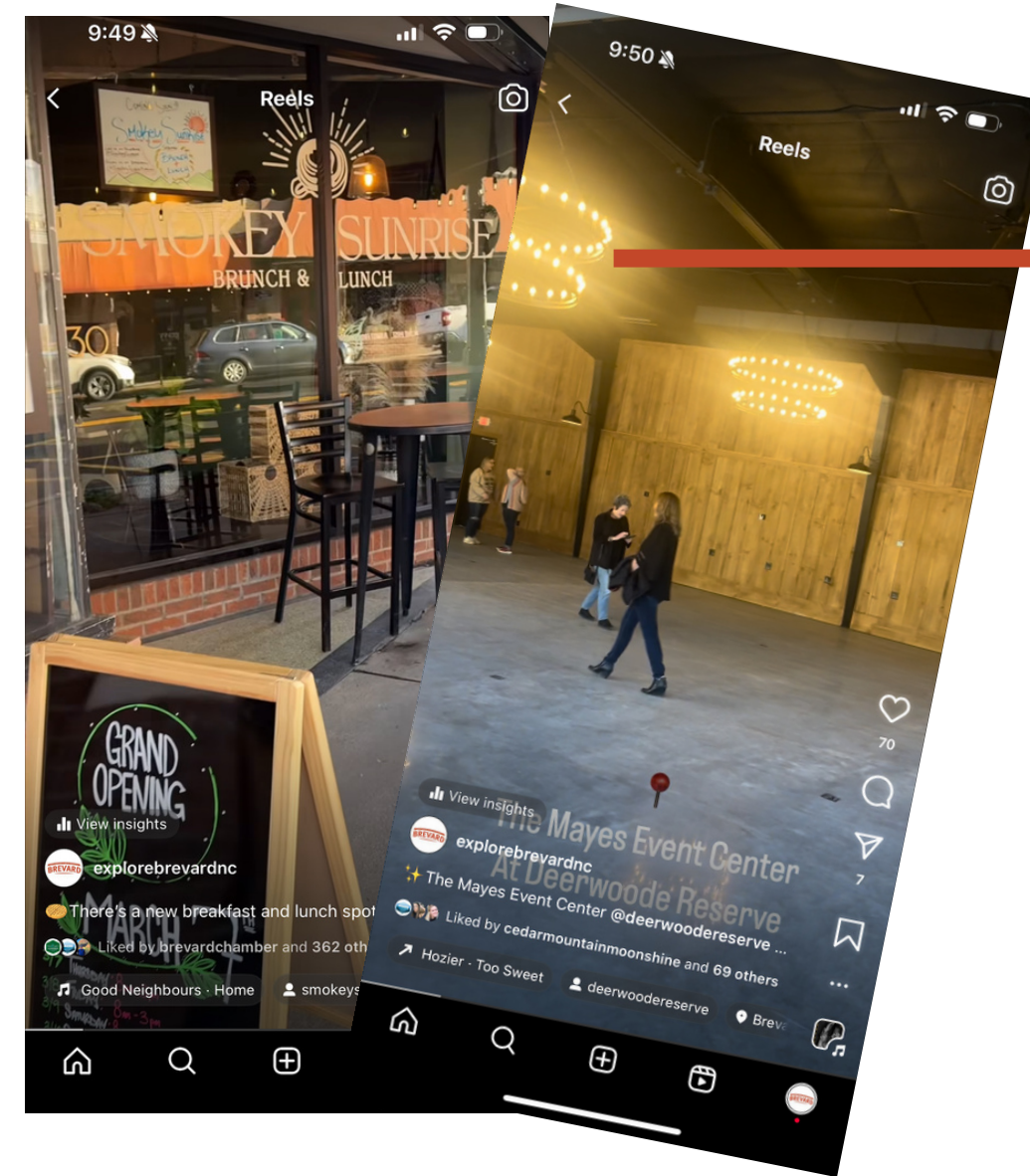
PARTNER SUPPORT



Website ads on ExploreBrevard.com pages were given a refreshing update to their layout moving forward. Designed to appear more integrated into the overall aesthetic of the webpage, studies show this advertising approach is more effective and looks more authentic. It also requires less of our tourism partners to produce, making it more accessible to those with less access to design and marketing tools.



A Romantic Mountain Giveaway' spotlighted Brevard and Transylvania County as premier winter destinations for couples, enticing visitors to explorebrevard.com. Held from January 10 to January 31, the sweepstakes featured enticing experiences provided by local tourism partners. Collaborating with Romantic Asheville, various digital platforms, TCTDA E-newsletters, and social media channels, the campaign garnered remarkable engagement. The response surpassed expectations, with 10,169 entries, exceeding the previous record by 545 entries. ExploreBrevard.com experienced a surge in traffic, recording 14,837 sweepstakes landing page sessions and attracting 13,404 unique users in January, making it the most visited page. Additionally, the entry form yielded 7,403 new email subscribers.



Our marketing efforts on social media center around highlighting the diverse array of experiences and events in our area. This often includes offerings by our esteemed tourism partners. By featuring their attractions, accommodations, and services, we not only enrich our content but also strengthen our partnerships and provide added value to our audience.

An astounding number of partners requesting to advertise in our spring print co-op advertising in both Blue Ridge Outdoors and WNC Magazine led us to modify our contract with both publishers and run double pages in each to include twice as many tourism partners.

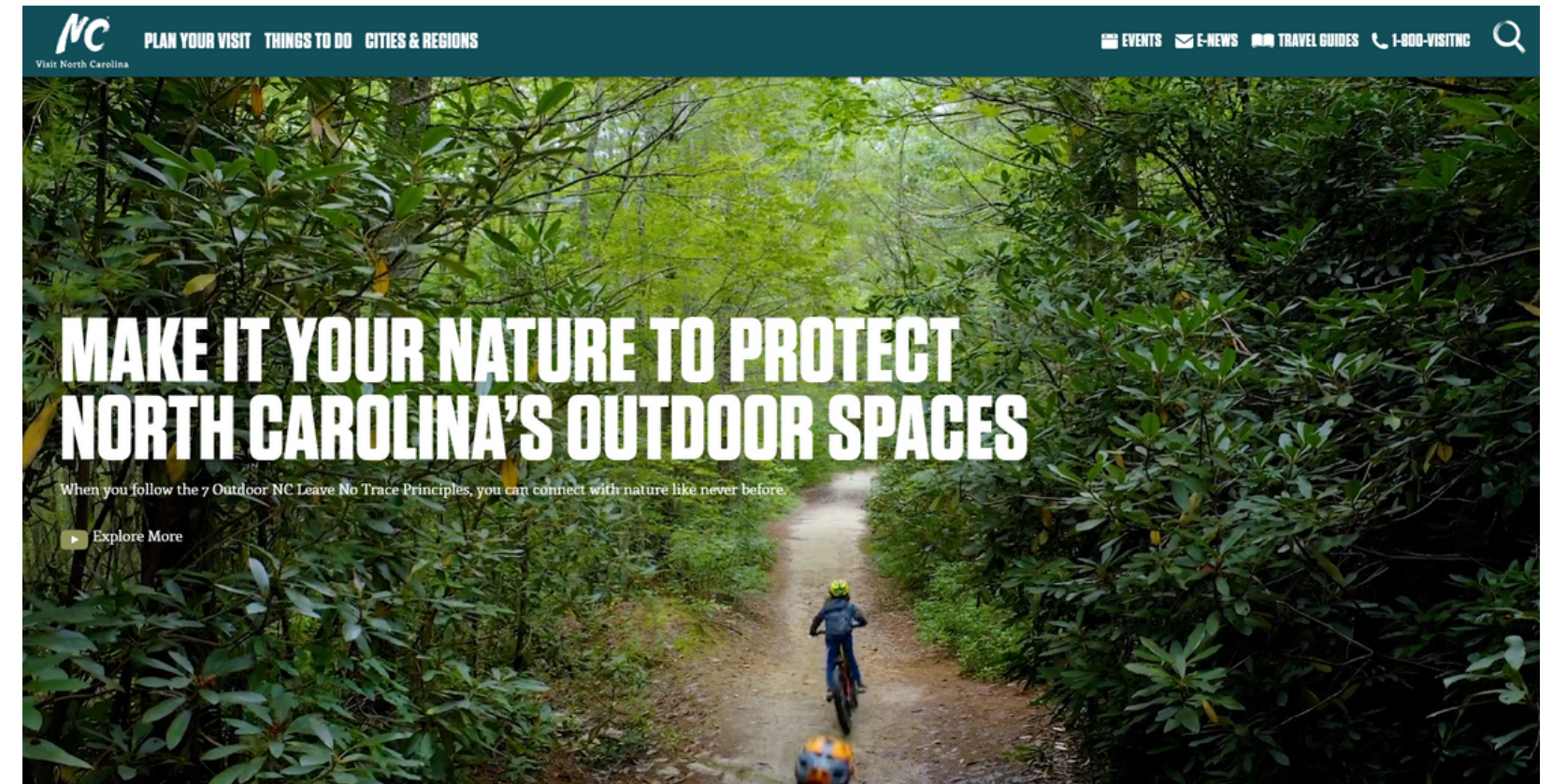


TRANSYLVANIA ALWAYS

The TCTDA is pleased to be selected to participate in a pilot program of Outdoor NC, a Visit NC initiative, which focuses on destination stewardship, responsible travel, and sustainable tourism. As one of 15 counties in the state in this pilot program, the TDA has begun work this quarter on the “Trail Town Stewardship Designation” with the guidance of program coordinator, Bobby Chappell. Various required activities range from identifying accessible outdoor spaces to educating visitors on best practices to be responsible, respectable, and prepared travelers to the outdoors. The culmination of these valuable resources will be included in the specialized “Outdoor NC Trail Town Visitor Guide”, as well as made available on our own Explore Brevard website in the coming months.

Leave It Better and Be Waterfall Wise campaigns are gearing up for their annual spring push before the rush of summer visitors to our public lands. While last year’s campaign was a significant one with updated approaches and new materials, this year we will continue the momentum from the successes of those efforts with only a few additions to freshen up what is already a lively educational campaign. Leave It Better’s beloved mascot, Trashquatch, did become a little more famous this quarter, as a children’s book about How Trashsquatch Came to Be was published about him by a local advocate with funding support from the TCTDA.

Also at the January TAC meeting, MountainTrue’s French Broad Paddle Trail Manager, Jack Henderson, gave a quarterly report on the developments to the French Broad’s Strategic Master Plan and their involvement with the Rosman Riverfront Park project. Clark Lovelace wrote a letter of support to the NC Attorney General on behalf of the TCTDA regarding the Rosman Riverfront Park Project to accompany the Town of Rosman’s application for the Environmental Enhancement Grant as submitted by the Land of Sky Regional Council.



TRANSYLVANIA ALWAYS CONTINUED

PROJECT FUNDING

Projects that are aligned with the mission of the TCTDA's Transylvania Always initiative, which is to be a leader in the effort to take care of Transylvania County's natural resources in order to create a safe and enjoyable user experience and ensure that these assets are here for future generations. Funding for Q2 is listed below.

Q2

- **The Pisgah Conservancy: "Estatoe Trail Improvement Project (& Pisgah Project Day)" \$43,270**
 - Phase one of the Estatoe Trail renovation, a section of the trail located in Pisgah National Forest, addresses longstanding safety concerns by replacing 110' of deteriorated boardwalk with three durable 16' fiberglass bridges and 62' of improved trail tread. This vital project, supported by Pisgah Project Day, aims to enhance safety and sustainability on the trail, with the TDA serving as the lead sponsor.
- **MountainTrue: "French Broad River Stewardship & Enhancement" \$4,000**
 - To better respond to woody debris blockages and garbage removal, this partnership with Henderson County TDA provides the heavy equipment necessary to tend to our French Broad River's narrow corridors and steep banks in our headwaters with the help of a jon boat, trailer, various saws, and other equipment.
- **Headwaters Outfitters: "French Broad River Clean-up/Paddling Film Fest World Tour" \$1,000**
 - The 33rd annual volunteer event to clean up the French Broad River, bringing out thousands of pounds of trash from the water and its banks, making a cleaner and safer experience for its users and inhabitants.



Total FY23 funding: \$89,121.52



DESTINATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The Destination Infrastructure Committee (DIC) is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the infrastructure and resources of Transylvania County as a tourism destination. This committee was created following the success of the Transylvania Always initiative and committee.

This quarter, the DIC has remained in continued conversations with the City of Brevard as they advocate for the need for improved bike rack and signage infrastructure with the intent to assist in the funding of projects that address these concerns. A current City project that is taking shape for the Estatooe Trail will soon present the DIC with a grant request for signage support.

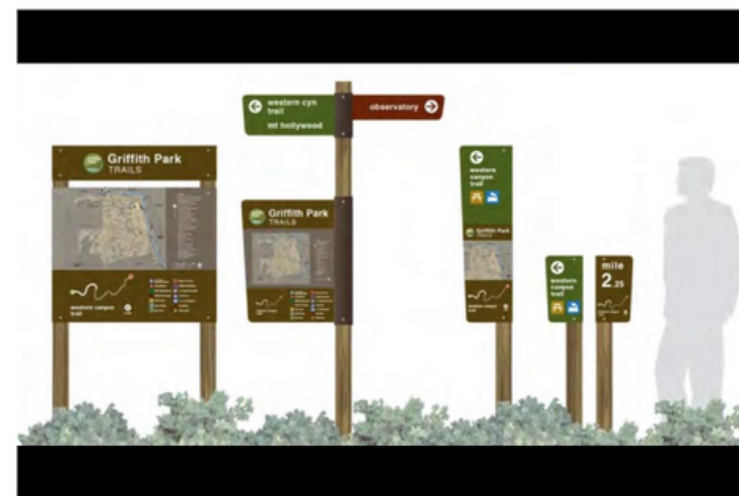
After speaking in support of the Rosman Riverfront Park Master Plan at the Town of Rosman's December Board of Aldermen meeting, Clark Lovelace and Virginia Watkins have been in close discussion with Kayla DiCristina, Regional Planner for Land of Sky, on the plan's three phases while developing a framework toward TCTDA Destination Infrastructure grant support.

PROJECT FUNDING

Projects that make a substantial impact on the tourism infrastructure of the destination, with cycling, downtown Brevard, entryways to our public lands, arts, music, and outlying communities being identified as priorities. These are typically brick-and-mortar projects. This quarter, various preliminary planning meetings have taken place for several new destination infrastructure projects that will be requesting funds in the near future, however, no funding occurred.

Total FY23 funding: \$30,605.85

Bicycle/Pedestrian Signage For the Greenway:



TOURISM MARKETING

PROJECT FUNDING

Projects that are designed to generate overnight visitation and/or add significant value to the visitor experience. Strong preference is given to efforts that impact traditionally slower periods of visitation. These projects are often events but can also be programs or other initiatives. Funding for Q2 is listed below.

Q2

- **Blue Ridge Bicycle Club: “WNC Flyer- 20th Year” \$2,000**
 - This charity bicycle event, in its 20th year, is known for providing a safe experience for riders of all skill levels. This year’s anniversary year, and the club’s 50th year, will target encouraging more youth riders for the next generation of cyclists.
- **Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS): “Wilderness Skills Institute” \$4,999**
 - Hosted at the Cradle of Forestry, this award-winning, free, 2-week wilderness stewardship training program empowers and certifies agency staff and partners across the region in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and Appalachian Trail Conservancy.
- **Transylvania Heritage Museum: “Spring Marketing Campaign”\$4,999**
 - A three-month marketing and promotional push of cultural and historical events done by the museum, such as the Appalachian Folk Festival and Mountain Legacies Exhibit.
- **Appalachian Region Porsche Club of America: “Luft Wasser Porsche Celebration in Brevard” \$1,065**
 - An annual Porsche celebration and charity car show that brings 200+ vehicles for display and over 1,000 attendees to downtown Brevard in the shoulder month of April.
- **Heart of Brevard: “Annual Program & Marketing Request” \$16,000**
 - A comprehensive marketing and promotion plan for their four main events of the year: White Squirrel Weekend (with plans to celebrate its 20th anniversary), Plein Air Festival, Halloweenfest, and Light Up the Night.
- **Conserving Carolina: “Upper French Broad Riverfest” \$4,300**
 - 9th annual celebration of the French Broad River at Rosman’s Champion Park, designed to promote the enjoyment of our natural resources while educating on the role our river plays with the addition of a series of lectures, field trips and service days leading up to the festival.



Total FY23 funding: \$61,673.00

II. MARKETING



MARKETING OVERVIEW

For the third quarter of 2024, Explore Brevard's winter marketing strategies were implemented through targeted seasonal campaigns with messaging and tactics increasingly aimed at closer-in-drive markets, niche adventurers, and culture/lifestyle markets. Tactics focused on extended stay and mid-week opportunities while reaching toward younger audiences seeking wellness, romance, and the ability to work remotely.

Winter Marketing Strategies:

- Because occupancy tends to drop this time of year, special campaigns were created to bolster seasonal interest and visitation. TCTDA's print advertising expenditures are higher during this quarter to enhance frequency, deepen penetration in select markets, reach specific demographics and niche audiences, and highlight unique seasonal offerings.
- Focused more on close-in drive markets, especially those in a 200-mile radius: ATL, RAL, CLT, KNX, COL, NSH, Triad, Upstate, and more.
- Continued recapture of Brevard's iconic brand imagery: waterfalls, trails, wellness opportunities, and attractions.
- Highlighted downtown and other unique communities within Transylvania County to showcase their shopping, dining, breweries, and music opportunities, featuring a range of arts and cultural experiences for regional visitors as well as day-trippers.
- Incorporated new brand positions: wellness, romance, sustainability, authentic small town, and activities unique to the area.
- Strengthened digital campaigns with new seasonal creative and reached new geo/demo targets (Canada and more). Strong, responsive seasonal campaigns and a winter sweepstakes sparked advance interest in current and upcoming shoulder seasons.
- Continued positioning Explore Brevard for new earned media/PR opportunities through media missions, FAM tours, pitches, and queries.



ADVERTISING: DIGITAL

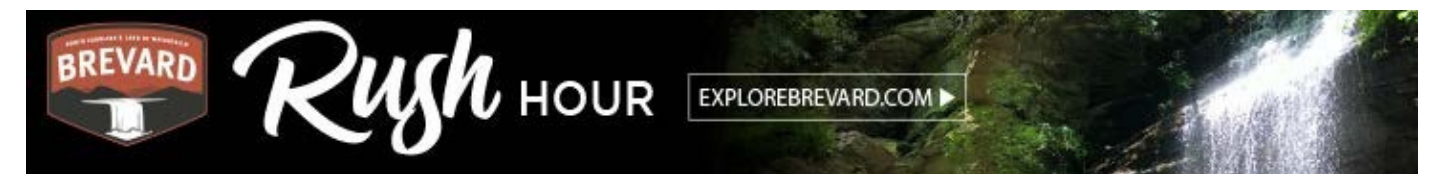
During the third quarter, Explore Brevard aimed new winter messaging at closer geographic markets to drive traffic with a higher likelihood of seasonal visitation. Seasonal digital campaigns highlighted downtown Brevard, arts and culture, music, breweries, and a range of outdoor adventure opportunities unique to the season. Audiences were targeted based on demographics, points of origin, habits, and niche interests.

Digital ads were launched across multiple platforms, including programmatic display, native, keyword search, pre-roll, Facebook, and more. Ads retargeted those already familiar with the brand while prospecting for new viewers. Third-quarter digital outlets also included YouTube, Blue Ridge Parkway Association, Blue Ridge Outdoors, Romantic Asheville, Pink Bike, AccuWeather, Our State featured E-newsletters, SingleTracks, and Visit NC partner co-op digital programs.

Media One's Facebook advertising targeted audiences across designated areas, as well as new national and international markets, including NC, SC, AL, FL, OH, VA, TN, GA, TX, DC, NY, GA, TN, KY, Canada, and more.

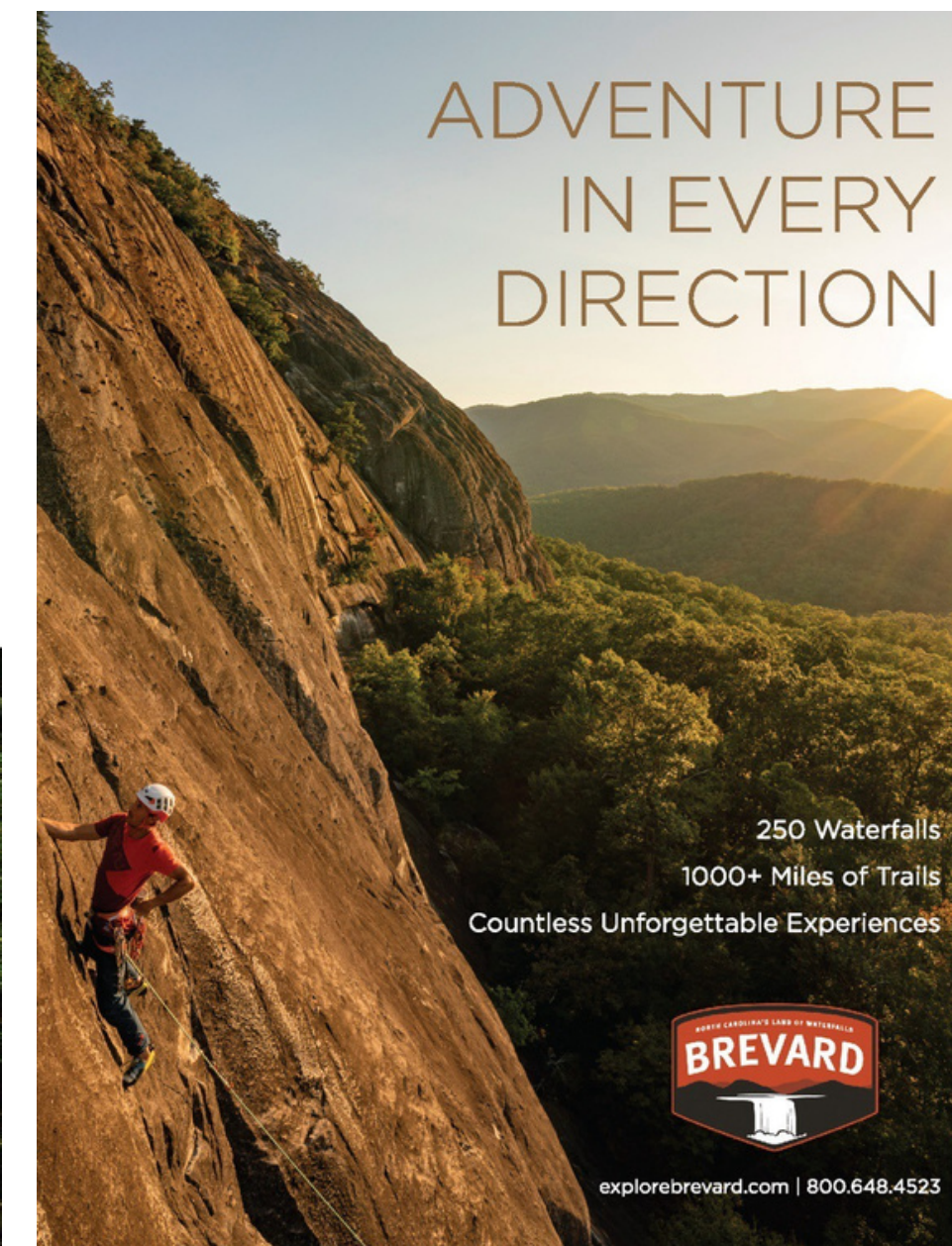
For the third quarter, traffic to the website was up 47.4% compared to last year. MediaOne Facebook ads had 2,517,452 impressions and resulted in 10,437 sessions to the website (up 13.1%).

Digital presence of web page ads was strengthened to enhance traffic for partners who advertise through TCTDA's Partner Marketing Program.



ADVERTISING: PRINT

In the third quarter, print placements supplemented the larger digital marketing campaign and were targeted more toward regional or local markets. Print placements included two Our State full-page ads, a national Food & Travel cover and advertorial in their winter edition, and Outside Magazine. An additional print placement, part of TCTDA's Partner Marketing Program, included partner co-op ads in double-truck, full-page spreads in Blue Ridge Outdoors and WNC Magazine.



ADVERTISING: BROADCAST

Explore Brevard's: 30 second "Be Cool" TV spots ran in several markets during the third quarter, including Charlotte, Greensboro, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Charleston, Columbia, Nashville, and Knoxville on targeted cable channels as well as CBS Sunday Morning in Charlotte and the Upstate. Various videos were also utilized on YouTube, digital, and pre-roll platforms as well as through social media advertising. "Live read" radio ads were utilized on WESC radio in the Upstate, promoting Brevard and Transylvania County as a fun winter experience in mild winter temperatures.

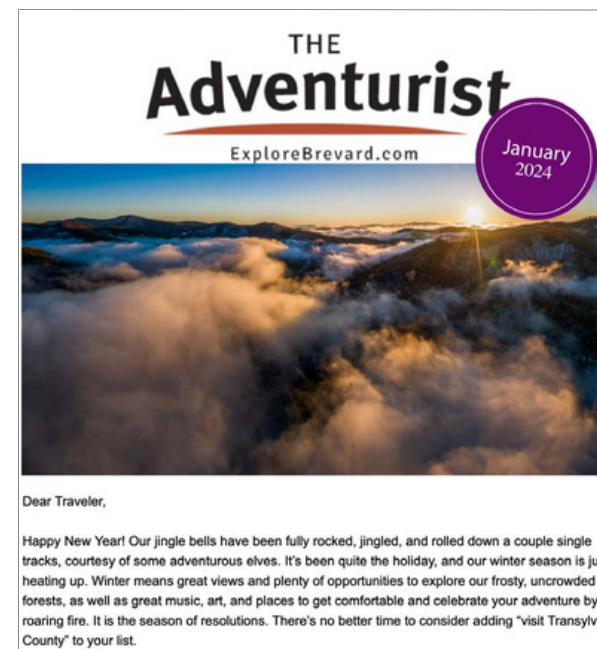
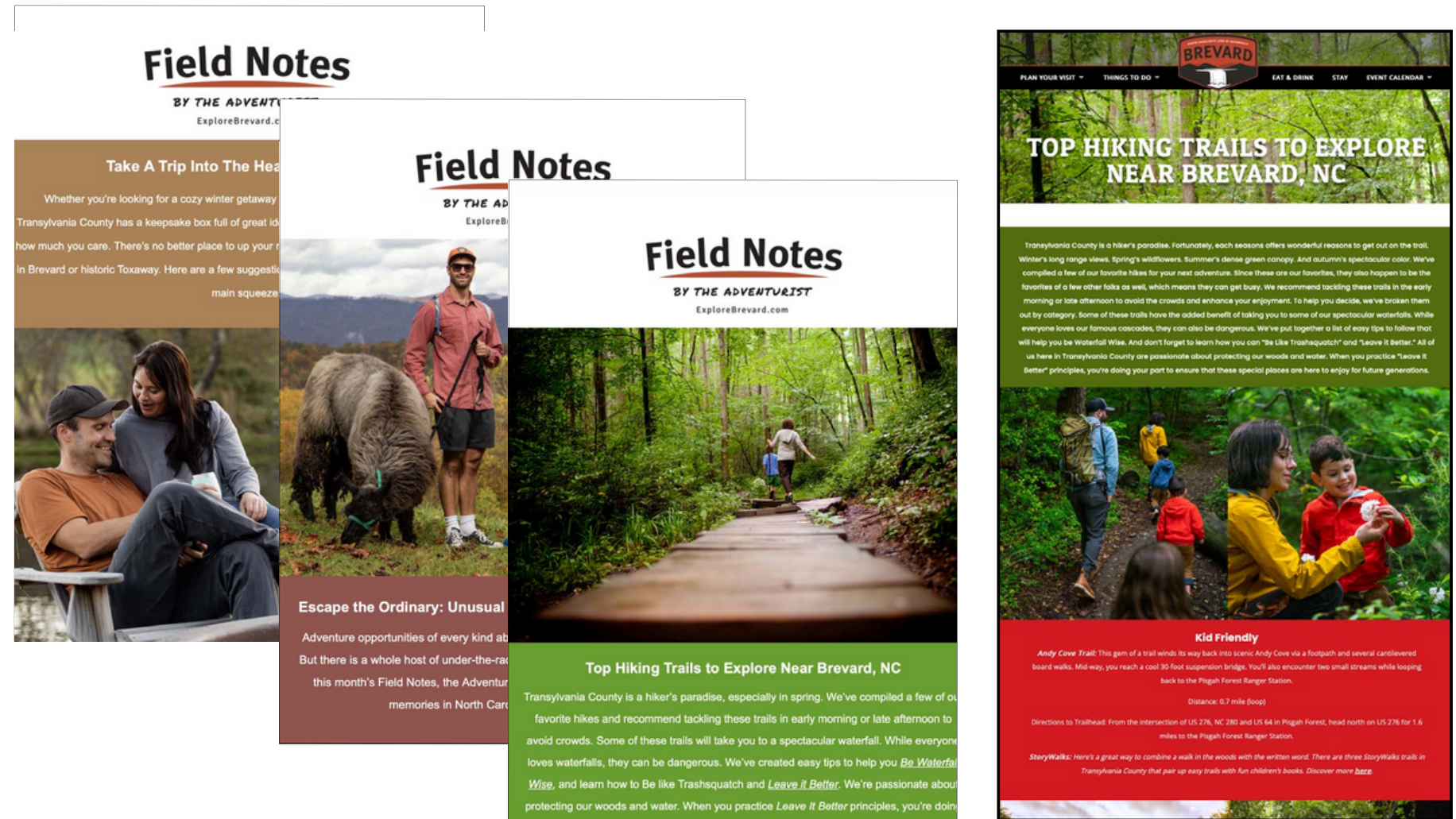


E-BLASTS & BLOGS

During the third quarter, TCTDA’s Field Notes e-blast format was updated with a new layout incorporating more photos. Three Field Notes were distributed to approximately 38,000 opt-in subscribers, an increase of 24%. In January, “Take A Trip Into The Heart Of Romance” highlighted romantic getaway ideas in Brevard and Transylvania County, while also spotlighting the Winter Romantic Getaway Sweepstakes. February’s Field Notes, “Escape the Ordinary: Unusual Outdoor Experiences and Stays” focused on the outdoors and accommodations. In March, “Top Hiking Trails to Explore Near Brevard, NC” focused on several hiking trails, ranging from kid-friendly to difficult.

The Adventurist, Explore Brevard’s signature e-newsletter was distributed at the end of each month, highlighting top events of interest for the following month, and inviting visitors to enjoy the unique offerings of the area.

Three blogs were posted on explorebrevard.com in the third quarter. Each blog captured Field Notes content for that particular month and transitioned it to a featured blog section on explorebrevard.com.



NEW WEBSITE FEATURES

TCTDA staff and Market Connections work together to update the Explore Brevard website with more relevant content and features. Third-quarter website updates included the following:

- Continued updates and new blogs
- Creation of a winter sweepstakes landing page and pop-up
- Creation of a spring landing page



Spring Visitor Guide

It's beginning to look a lot like springtime. Transylvania County is warming up, budding out and turning over a new (green) leaf as we bid a fond farewell to winter and welcome a new season. No matter whether you're deep in the forests or standing on the sidewalks in the heart of downtown Brevard, you can enjoy all the spring has to offer from bright flowers to bold adventures and just about everything in between. This spring will be unforgettable. Don't miss it.

[View the Guide](#)



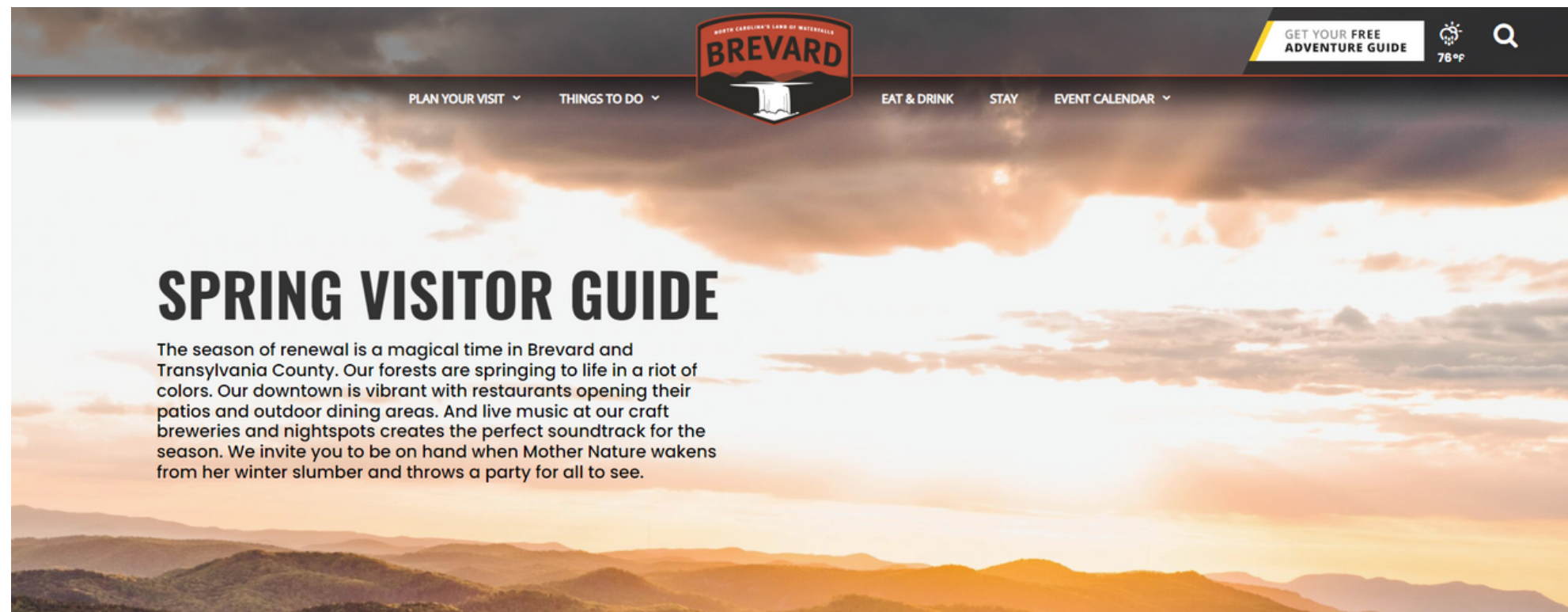
ADVENTURE GUIDE + Waterfall Map



BREVARD

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PLAN YOUR VISIT ▾ THINGS TO DO ▾  GET YOUR FREE ADVENTURE GUIDE 76°F 

EAT & DRINK STAY EVENT CALENDAR ▾

SPRING VISITOR GUIDE

The season of renewal is a magical time in Brevard and Transylvania County. Our forests are springing to life in a riot of colors. Our downtown is vibrant with restaurants opening their patios and outdoor dining areas. And live music at our craft breweries and nightspots creates the perfect soundtrack for the season. We invite you to be on hand when Mother Nature awakens from her winter slumber and throws a party for all to see.



Stop by our Visitor Center today for your 2024 map!

Transylvania County Points of Interest Map

Regional + Downtown Brevard Maps



BILLBOARDS AND SIGNAGE

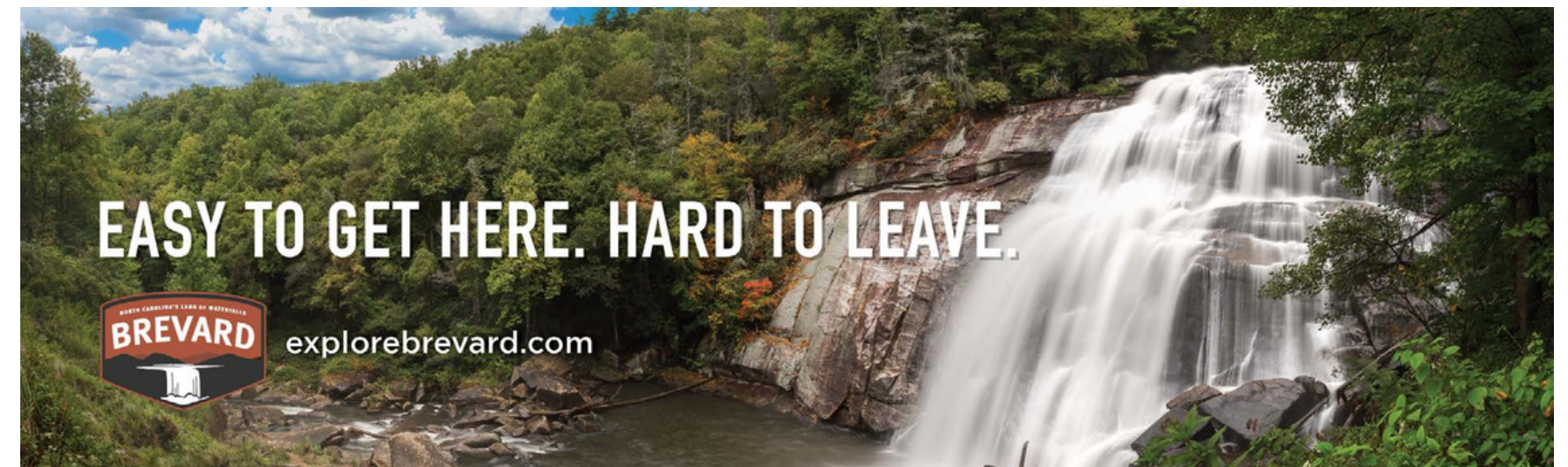
Explore Brevard advertised on four targeted billboards in the region during the third quarter. Large seasonal billboard vinyls are currently placed on I-40, coming west from Hickory; I-85 near the 74 turn-off toward Asheville, and I-26 at the Asheville Airport, which serves as a directional board. They are strategically placed to raise brand awareness and attract travelers to Transylvania County and Brevard in the future.

All three large boards displayed fall/winter imagery during the second quarter and part of the third quarter. These three billboards are annual placements with the creative changing twice yearly in fall and spring. The spring/summer billboards were installed in March.

Brevard and Transylvania's local brand board continues to welcome visitors and residents alike on 280 near the Transylvania County line. This billboard, strategically placed to remind travelers of the county's iconic assets, can be changed out seasonally. During the second and beginning of third quarter, it featured Rainbow Falls. In March, it was updated with a new cycling image for Spring.



1-85



1-26



1-40



PUBLIC RELATIONS

During the third quarter, Brevard and Transylvania County enjoyed continuing press inquiries, media and FAM interest, and explored earned media opportunities that have resulted in excellent press showcasing the area. TCTDA continues to engage journalists who tell our area's story.

TCTDA and Market Connections staff participated in Visit NC's Annual 365 Tourism Marketing Conference in Greenville, NC, networking with VNC and DMO representatives from across the state as well as regional and national media representatives.

OUR STATE

TCTDA worked with writer Robin Sutton Anders to research and tour Greystone Inn for a special feature on unique historic homes in North Carolina in the upcoming July 2024 edition.

VISIT NORTH CAROLINA MEDIA ROUNDTABLE

In March, Mark Johnson of Market Connections represented Explore Brevard at a roundtable discussion with regional journalists including WRAL, Our State, UNC-TV/NC Weekend, National Geographic, and Wander Woman Magazine to pitch unique stories from Transylvania for upcoming publications/broadcasts.

MEREDITH/DOTDASH PUBLISHING

Market Connections Mark Johnson and TCTDA's Mollie Gordon joined Meredith Publishing to present Explore Brevard at the Visit NC Travel Guide Virtual Roadshow. This initiative allows local DMO's to pitch stories for editorial and image inclusion into the state's annual (large) travel guide (print and online).

ADVENTURE ELEVATE FAM TOUR

The international Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), Adventure ELEVATE North American conference will be held in Asheville in June 2024. Along with Visit NC, TCTDA will host five select journalists, who are attending the conference, as they participate in "challenging" adventures in Transylvania County. Market Connections and TCTDA worked this quarter to coordinate details for this exciting FAM.

AMY WHITE - FREELANCE WRITER

As a result of the earlier DC Media Mission with Visit NC, we are continuing to work with Amy White, a national travel and eco writer, to plan a visit to Transylvania County in tandem with Adventure ELEVATE. Amy writes for National Geographic, Garden & Gun, and Sierra.

INFLUENCERS

Market Connections and TCTDA staff are in process of vetting current requests and setting guidelines for influencer selections and funding.

ARTICLES & TV COVERAGE

FOOD & TRAVEL MAGAZINE

What started as a paid (remnant) advertising opportunity in this national magazine, culminated additionally in an outstanding feature article and imagery provided by Explore Brevard. Food & Travel was so pleased with the submission that they made Transylvania County the cover of the magazine.

WSPA -TV'S LET'S EAT SEGMENT

We coordinated an exclusive for the "Let's Eat" segment with Christine Scarpelli of WSPA's 7 News. After we provided several recommendations, Christine selected Quixote Fine Cuisine to be featured in the segment, reflecting Brevard's diverse culinary landscape.

WORLD ATLAS

The publication released "8 Best Small Towns in North Carolina for Outdoor Enthusiasts", a January feature that included Brevard as one of the eight towns.

FOX CAROLINA'S ACCESS CAROLINA & WLOS-TV

White Squirrel Day was featured on FOX Carolina and WLOS-TV, highlighting Pisgah Penny's predictions on the arrival of spring and the winner of the Super Bowl.

SPEAKING OF TRAVEL PODCAST

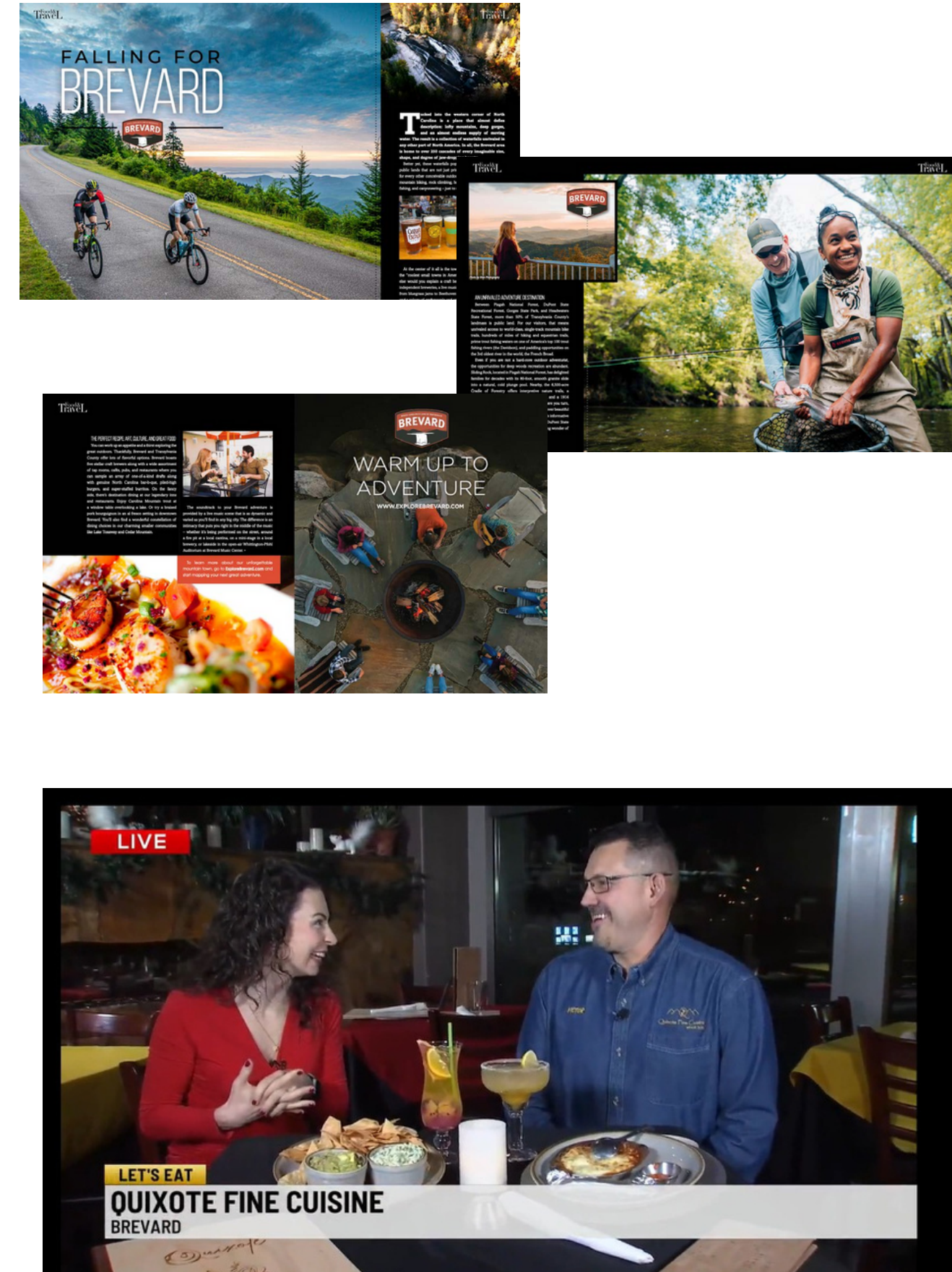
TCTDA Executive Director, Clark Lovelace, appeared on Marilyn Ball's SPEAKING OF TRAVEL PODCAST, alongside Outdoor NC's Amanda Baker. They discussed the Outdoor NC initiative and sustainability efforts in our community.

TRANSYLVANIA TIMES

An article was published on the arrival of the new Adventure Guides & Points of Interest Maps as well as Brevard being nominated, and subsequently placing, in USA TODAY's 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards for Best Small Towns in the South.

The Laurel Of Asheville

"This April In Transylvania County: Pisgah Projects, Art Market & More" submitted by TCTDA's Mollie Gordon, was included in The Laurel of Asheville, featuring events throughout the county in April.



ARTICLES & TV COVERAGE (CONTINUED)

MONEY

Money highlighted Brevard in a round-up of “The 50 Best Places to Live in the U.S.”

BACKROAD PORTFOLIO

Cycling in Transylvania County received a prominent feature in a BACKROAD Portfolio spread titled “THE MOUNTAINS ARE CALLING Appalachia summons cyclists to her rugged backroads and hills.” Our stunning imagery was on full display, spanning multiple pages.



Forks Area Trail System
Woodlawn Road (between Deepstep Road and FS-662)
Clarks Hill, South Carolina 29821
Located in the Long Cane Ranger District of Sumter National Forest, Forks Area Trail System combines high speed sections with plenty of mileage, making it a favorite among experienced cyclists. It's also great for beginners, since the trails contain very few technical features. The system consists of six individual loops including Brown Wave, Skinny, Great Wall, Deep Step, Big Rock, and Tower. In 2010 the Forks Area Trail System gained recognition by hosting the annual IMBA World Mountain Bike Summit. Learn more at sorbacsra.org/Trails/FATS.htm.

Aska Adventure Area
101-199 Shady Falls Road
Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513
Steep climbs and challenging downhill fill 17 miles of trails at Aska Adventure area in North Georgia. Cyclists can experience a range of technical rock and root systems, cross streams, and dip into lakeshores bordering national forest lands. The trails, which ascend nearly 3,200 feet and range in length from 1 to 5.5 miles, are divided into sections and offer expansive views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Learn more at askaadventure.com.

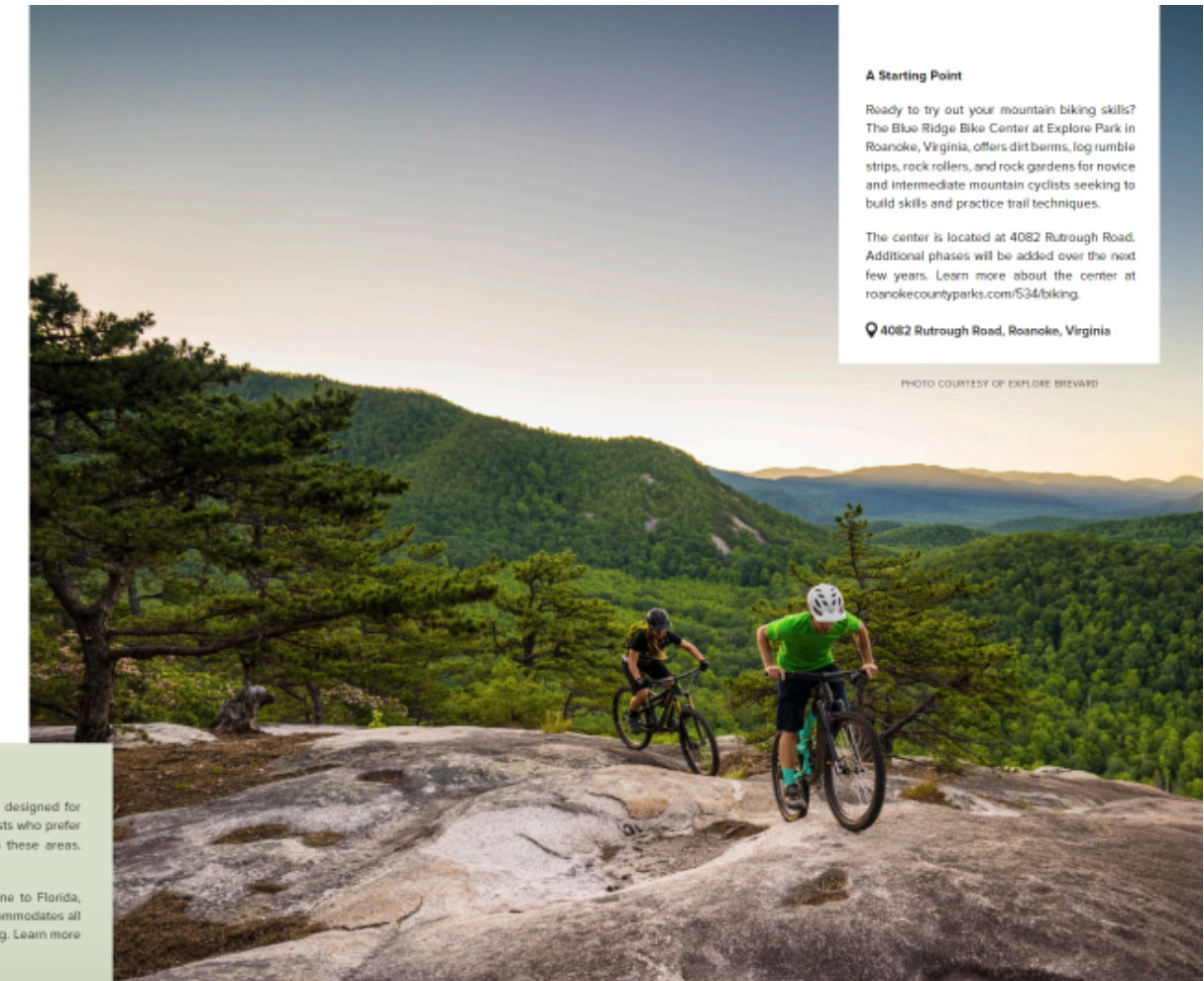
Visit these websites to learn about additional mountain bike trails across the Southeast.
AllTrails – alltrails.com
Trailforks – trailforks.com
Mountain Bike Reviews Forum – mtbr.com
Southeastern Cycling – sodiebred.com

Parkways and Greenways

The Blue Ridge Parkway offers 469 miles of leisure roads designed for motor vehicles, so there are no designated bike lanes. Cyclists who prefer paved roads to mountain trails should exercise caution in these areas. Visit blueridgeparkway.org to map out your options.

The East Coast Greenway stretches 3,000 miles from Maine to Florida, connecting 450 cities and towns across fifteen states. It accommodates all ages and offers a safe place for cycling, walking, and running. Learn more at greenway.org.

Brevard, North Carolina
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF EXPLORE BREVARD
Known as the "Spring Capital of the South," Brevard offers plenty of dining opportunities for mountain bikers.



A Starting Point

Ready to try out your mountain biking skills? The Blue Ridge Bike Center at Explore Park in Roanoke, Virginia, offers dirt berms, log rumble strips, rock rollers, and rock gardens for novice and intermediate mountain cyclists seeking to build skills and practice trail techniques.

The center is located at 4082 Rutrough Road. Additional phases will be added over the next few years. Learn more about the center at roanokecountyparks.com/534/biking.

4082 Rutrough Road, Roanoke, Virginia

PHOTO COURTESY OF EXPLORE BREVARD

USA TODAY 10 BEST READERS' CHOICE AWARDS BEST SMALL TOWNS IN THE SOUTH

Brevard was nominated for USA TODAY's 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards in the category of Best Small Towns in the South. To boost our chances, we launched a campaign utilizing website pop-ups, press releases, social media, and e-blasts to encourage daily voting. Our efforts aimed to highlight Brevard's charm and appeal to a wider audience. As the voting period progressed, we maintained momentum and successfully secured a place in the top 10.



Dear **Brevard** enthusiasts,

We need your vote and help to win! **Brevard** has been nominated for **USA TODAY**'s 10 BEST Readers' Choice Awards for Best Small Town in the South.

Voting ends on April 1 and it is very easy. Please show your love for **Brevard** by taking 30 seconds to vote for our incredible town.



[VOTE HERE!](#)

You can vote daily, so bookmark the page and push **us** to the top!
Thanks in advance for voting **us** as the Best Small Town in the South!

- The Explore **Brevard** Team

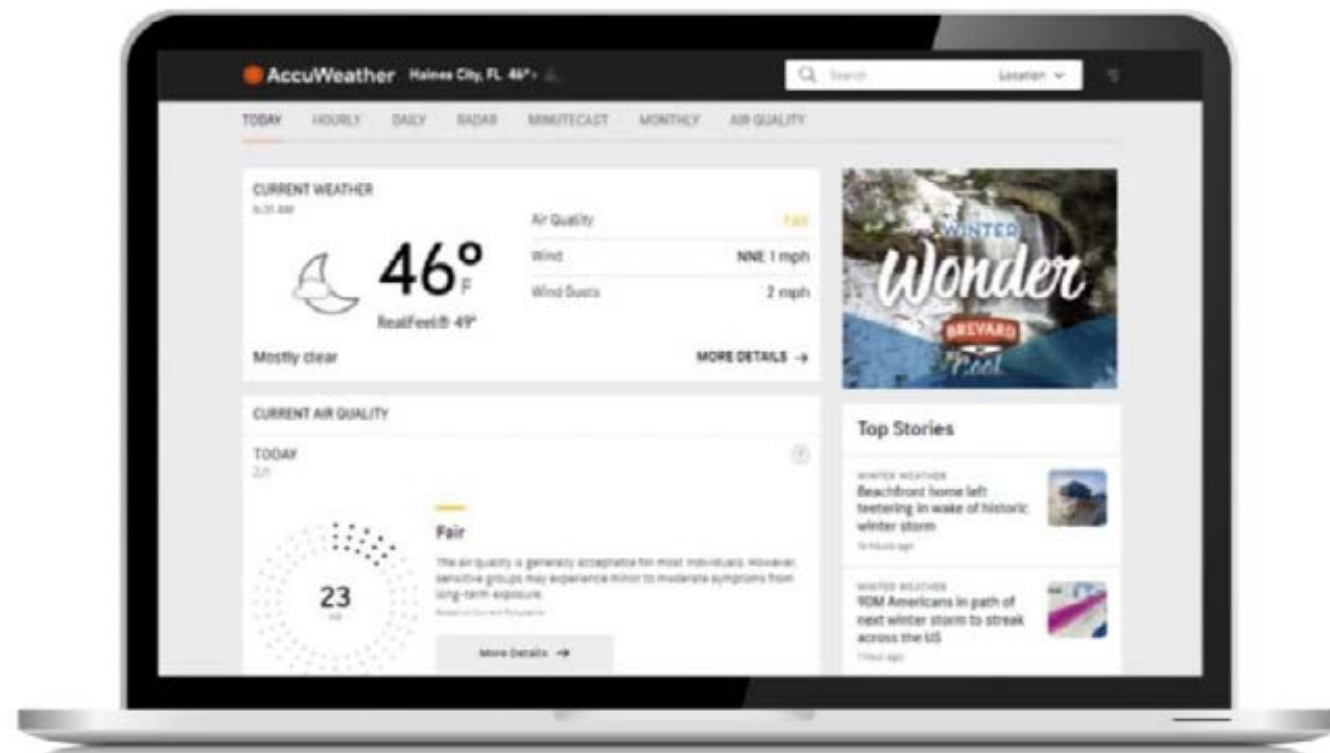
OTHER 3RD QUARTER MARKETING INITIATIVES

ADVENTURE GUIDE & REGIONAL MAP

During the third quarter of FY 24, Explore Brevard's annual, multi-page Adventure Guide and Regional Map were completed and distributed in February. This year, 90,000 Adventure Guides and 50,000 Point of Interest Maps were printed.

ACCUWEATHER ADVERTISEMENTS

The primary goal of the marketing campaign was to leverage AccuWeather's real-time weather data to target potential visitors during favorable weather conditions and entice them to visit Brevard, NC.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a crucial part of Explore Brevard's larger marketing strategy. Our key social media platforms include Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. Live video and reels are often utilized through these formats, Through Explore Brevard's active and popular social media accounts, we can engage a younger audience that often uses these platforms to make decisions on where they travel and visit.

FACEBOOK

METRICS

FOLLOWERS: 18.3k

REACH THIS QUARTER: 1M

TOP PERFORMING POST: 9.9K Reach (Non-boosted/paid)

This reel (video) post was shared from user-generated content (UGC) and is of a winter hike to Hooker Falls.

INSTAGRAM

METRICS

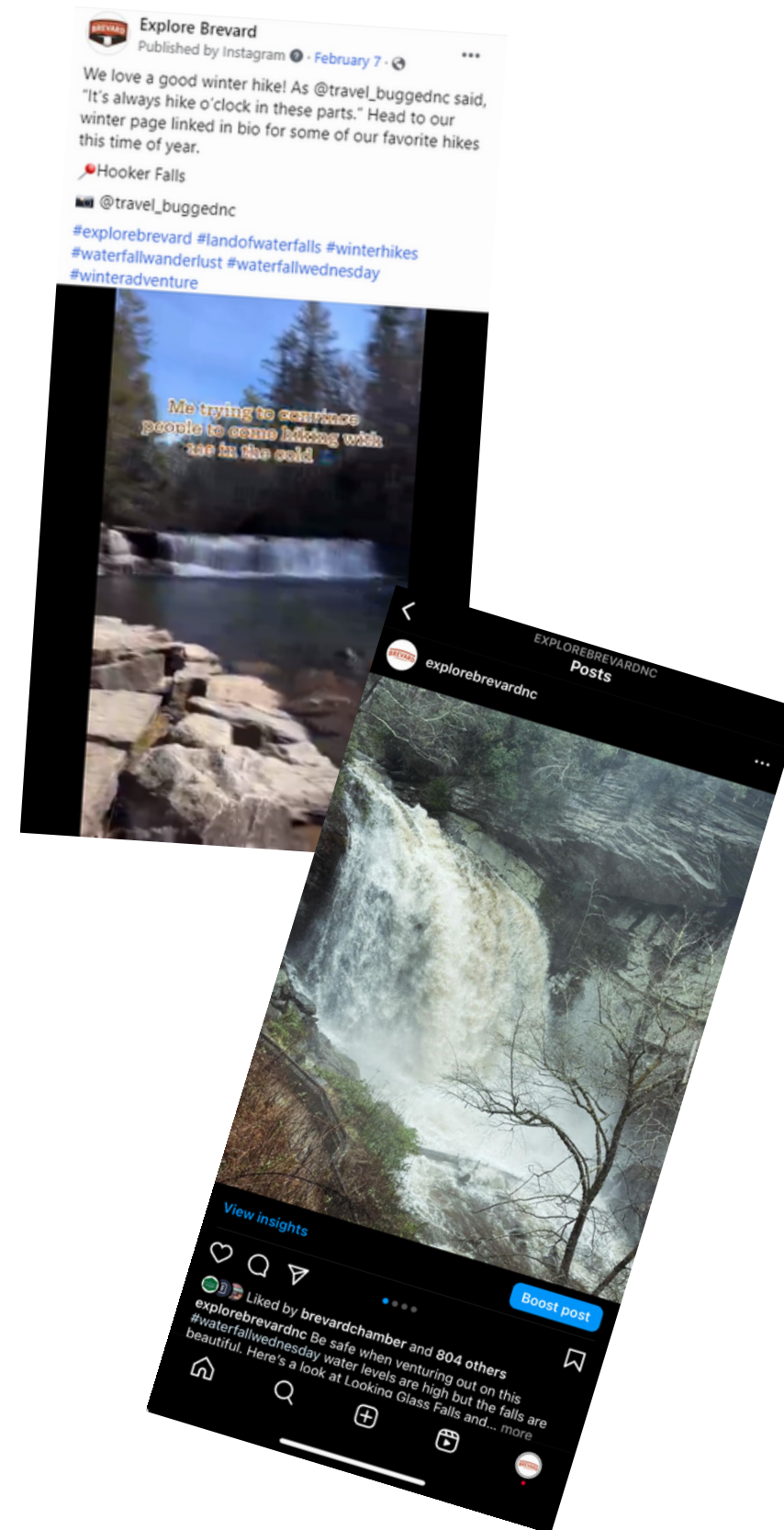
FOLLOWERS: 21k

REACH THIS QUARTER: 42.9K

TOP PERFORMING POST: 6.9K Reach (Non-boosted/paid)

This post utilized user-generated content (UGC) and was about waterfall safety following heavy rain in the area. It featured overflowing Looking Glass Falls and Sliding Rock.

On Facebook and Instagram, reach represents the number of unique users who see your post or page.



YOUTUBE

METRICS

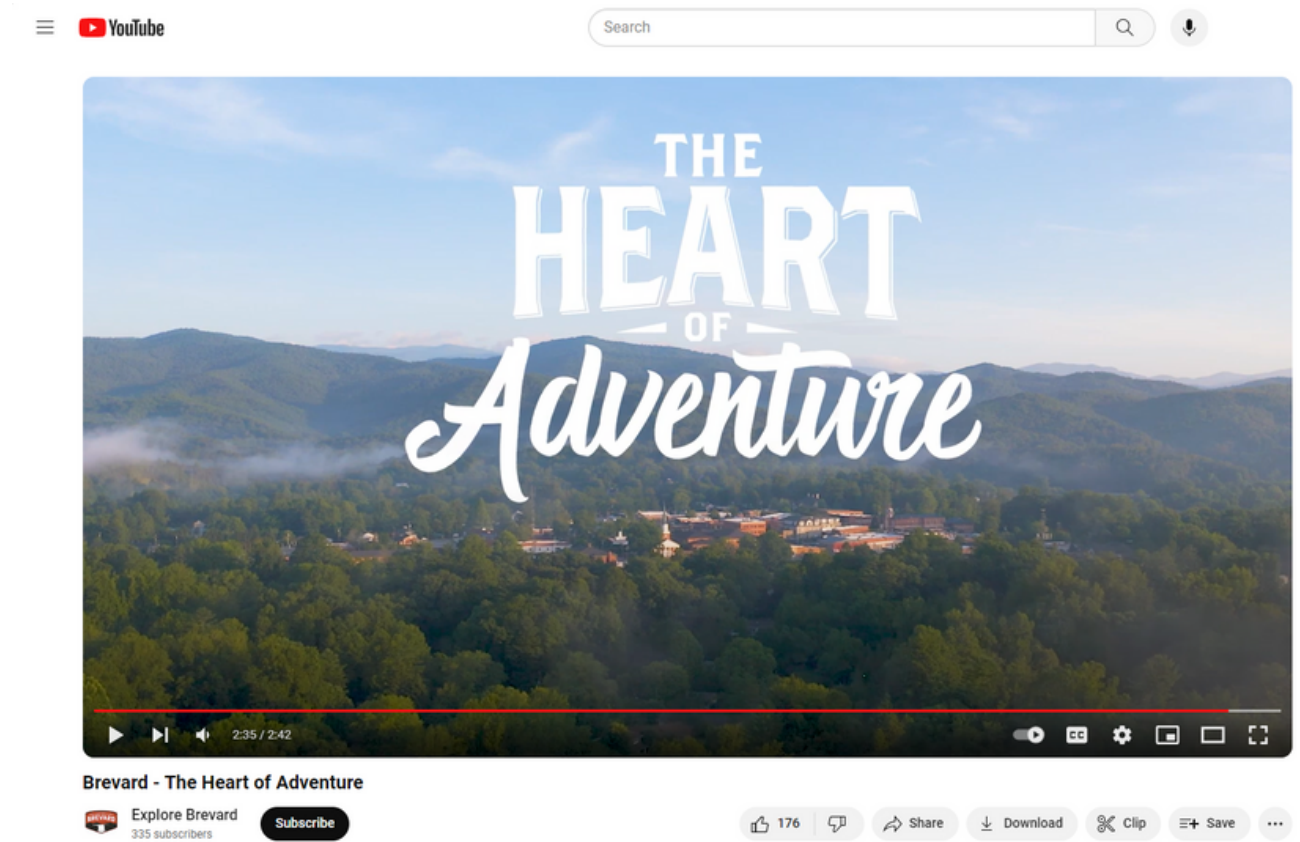
SUBSCRIBERS: 333

VIDEOS: 69

TOP PERFORMING VIDEO: 15.5k Views

This quarter's top performing video was "Brevard, NC - The Heart of Adventure"

On YouTube, a view is counted on when a user watches a video for a minimum of 30 seconds



III. MEDIAONE DIGITAL REPORT





Quarterly Report: January - March 2024



1

Traffic Overview

Overall traffic to the website up 47.4% compared to last year, with MediaOne, Facebook, and Visit NC traffic driving the increase over last year.

2

Top Pages

Top pages were lodging, biking, waterfalls, and romantic sweepstakes.

3

Organic Traffic

Organic traffic is down 11.5% compared to last year. Some of MediaOne's clients that are similar to Brevard are down on average 17% compared to last year.





Google Search

Clicks

3,915



Native Content Activation

Clicks

8,011



Facebook/IG

Impressions

2,517,452



YouTube

Video views

54,905



Display - Prospecting & Retargeting

Impressions

669,997



CTV

***No buy this quarter**

Video completed

0



Pre-Roll Video

Video completed

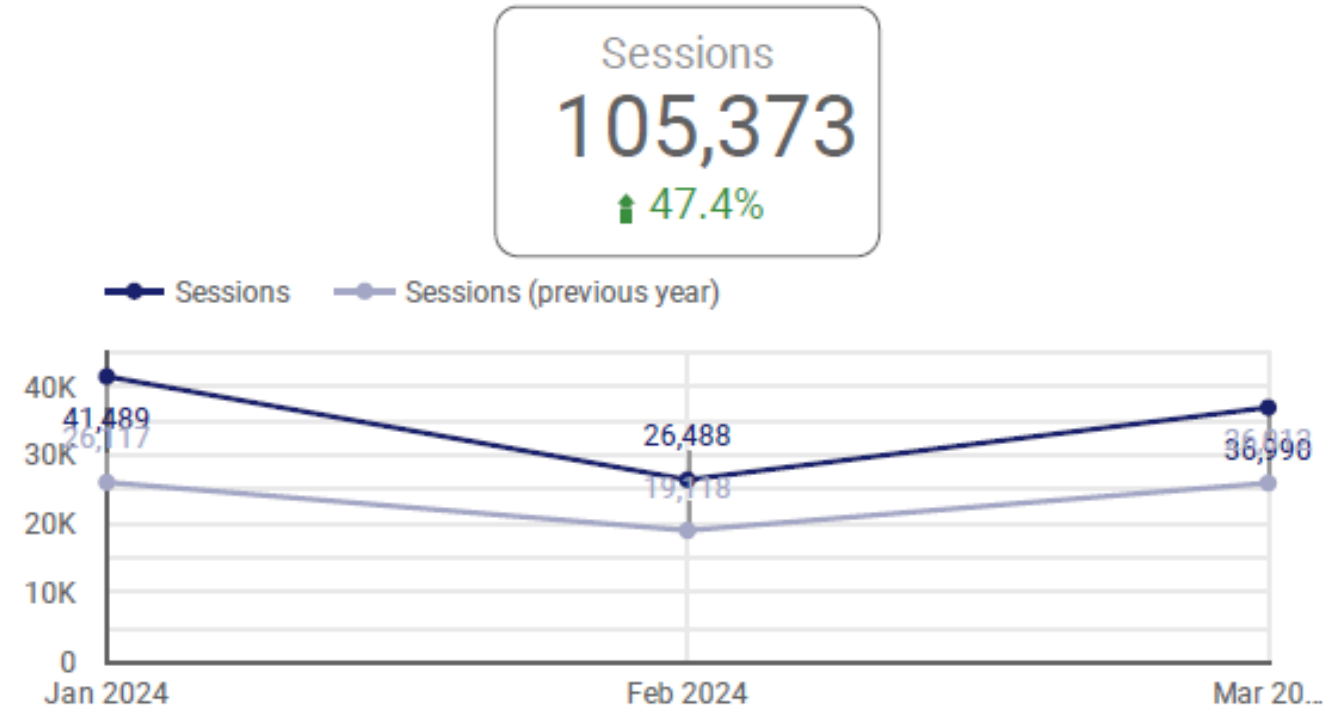
161,431

Pacing Details:

- Increases in delivery metrics were realized for Google, Content Activation, Facebook, YouTube, and Pre-Roll only. Display impressions were down compared to last quarter, but clicks were up.
- Facebook/IG ads had a large increase in impressions due to the sweepstakes that ran in Q1.
- CTV was not active this quarter but will run in April.



Traffic to the Website



Top Sources of Traffic

	Session source / medium	Sessions	% Δ
1.	google / organic	20,169	-13.0% ↓
2.	(direct) / (none)	18,715	55.2% ↑
3.	MediaOne / display	13,602	306.6% ↑
4.	MediaOne / native	12,840	194.8% ↑
5.	MediaOne / facebook	10,438	13.1% ↑
6.	romanticasheville.com / referral	5,238	-1.2% ↓
7.	MediaOne / google	4,144	31.8% ↑
8.	m.facebook.com / referral	2,750	616.1% ↑
9.	storage.googleapis.com / referral	2,040	-
10.	visitnc.com / referral	1,968	25.6% ↑
11.	contestgirl.com / referral	1,482	-
12.	bing / organic	1,285	-4.9% ↓
13.	accuweather.com / referral	1,015	-
14.	hs_email / email	712	-20.3% ↓
15.	RomanticAsheville.com / referral	631	-
16.	(not set)	604	58.5% ↑
17.	duckduckgo / organic	564	-14.7% ↓
18.	yahoo / organic	561	-8.3% ↓
19.	sweepsadvantage.com / referral	457	-
	Grand total	105,373	47.4% ↑

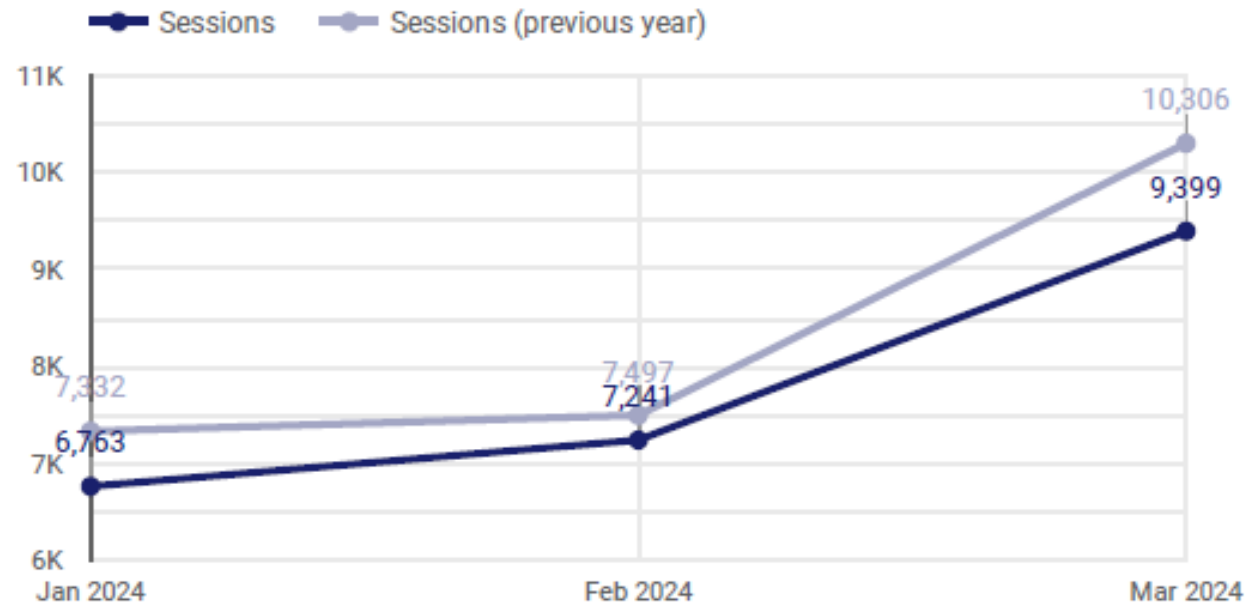
Top Visited Pages

	Page path	Views	% Δ
1.	/	39,685	99.3% ↑
2.	/business-categories/lodging/	19,964	86.6% ↑
3.	/the-great-outdoors/biking/	19,675	2,250.7% ↑
4.	/romantic-sweepstakes/	19,369	-
5.	/think-outside-winter-sweepstakes-thank-you/	18,234	31.9% ↑
6.	/the-great-outdoors/waterfalls/	17,225	53.8% ↑
7.	/business-categories/eat-drink/	11,619	16.7% ↑
8.	/festivals-events/	9,335	7.7% ↑
9.	/artsand-culture/downtown-brevard/	7,871	244.0% ↑
	Grand total	332,862	53.6% ↑



Organic traffic overview:

Sessions
22,919
 ↓ -11.5%



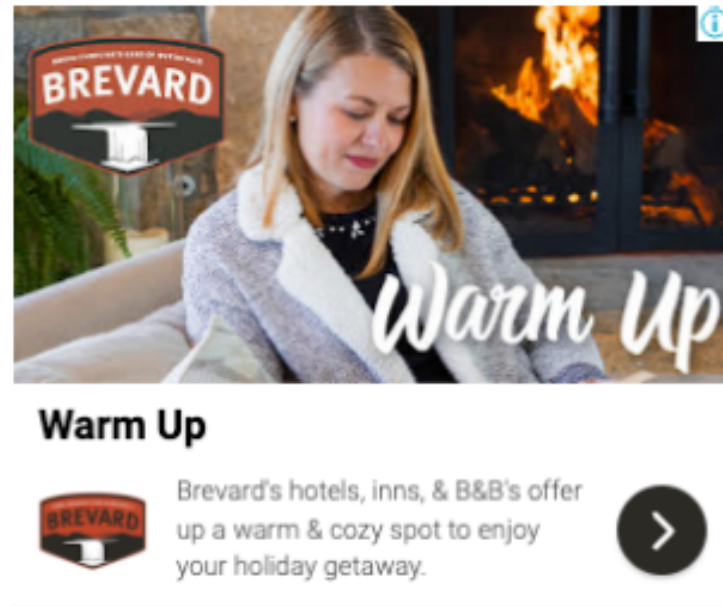
	Query	Impressions	Clicks	Site CTR	Average Position
1.	brevard nc	44.4K	1,943	4.38%	4.75
2.	brevard	26K	531	2.04%	3.97
3.	brevard north carolina	9.7K	393	4.07%	4.59
4.	downtown brevard nc	780	229	29.36%	2.5
5.	brevard waterfalls	832	219	26.32%	1.69
6.	explore brevard	357	170	47.62%	1.04
7.	downtown brevard	588	159	27.04%	2.52
8.	brevard, nc	3.3K	156	4.68%	3.55
9.	waterfalls near brevard nc	534	143	26.78%	1.43
10.	brevard nc waterfalls	530	135	25.47%	1.73
11.	things to do in brevard nc	3.3K	126	3.87%	7.26
12.	brevard nc restaurants	2.3K	126	5.47%	3.05
13.	waterfalls brevard nc	282	118	41.84%	1.57
14.	cedar mountain nc	1.9K	118	6.31%	3.35
15.	brevard restaurants	2.4K	114	4.74%	3.11
16.	brevard, north carolina	4.4K	112	2.53%	5
17.	brevard nc events	363	104	28.65%	1.93
18.	white squirrel festival 2024	1.2K	85	7.31%	5.76
19.	waterfalls in brevard nc	270	79	29.26%	1.98
20.	cedar mountain	2.5K	77	3.05%	6.66
21.	visit brevard nc	116	69	59.48%	1
22.	brevard downtown	197	65	32.99%	2.91
23.	restaurants in brevard nc	1.9K	57	3.01%	3.39
24.	brevard nc downtown	211	55	26.07%	3.24
25.	restaurants brevard nc	2.7K	55	2.04%	3.47

Keyword Rankings:

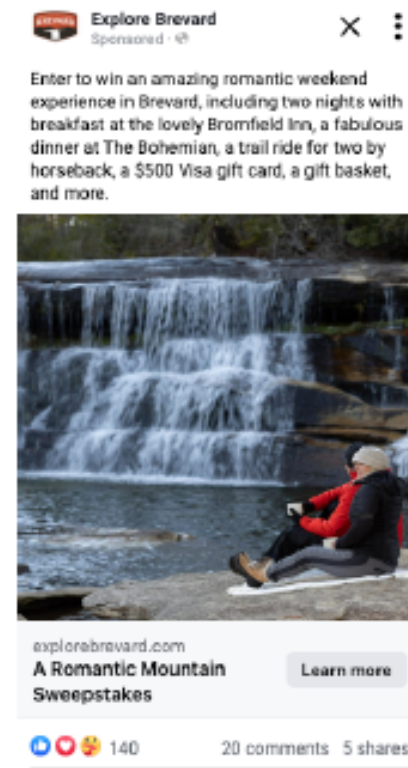
Query	Average Position
brevard	4
brevard nc	4.7
brevard waterfalls	1.7



Top Native Ad:



Top Meta Ads:



Top Display Ads:



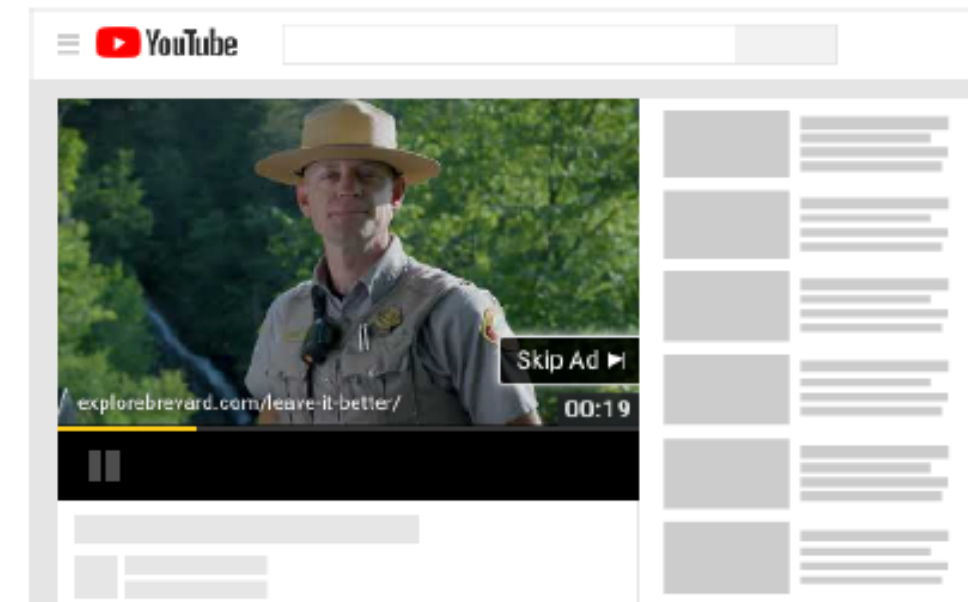
Top Pre-roll Ad:

Be Cool



Top YouTube Ad:

Kevin



*Top digital ads based on a combination of CTR and post-click performance on the website.
*Top video ads based on completion rate.



IV. VISITOR REPORTS & INSIGHTS



Key Insights

Zartico reports through March tell us the following about visitors to Transylvania County:

Spending:

- Visitors spent an average of \$177 per visit. This is about half of the state average. We assume much of this is due to our high number of day trippers.
- Top expenditure categories were (in order): Accommodations, Food, Retail

Origins:

- North Carolina was the state of origin for 29% of our visitors. The top origin counties for in-state visitors were (in order): Mecklenburg, Wake, Union, Gaston, and New Hanover.
- Out-of-state visitors accounted for 71% of total visits, with top origin states (in order): Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama.
- The top origin markets for out-of-state visitors were (in order): Greenville (SC), Atlanta (GA), Columbia (SC), Tampa-St Pete (FL), and Orlando (FL).

Short Term Rental Data (as of February, 2024)

*Data is provided by AirDNA. They are "scraping" data via a new third party and have realized that some listings were being counted twice because of duplicate listings on VRBO and AirBNB. This report reflects the new data, including the prior year comparison. Both "Available Units" and "Occupancy" will be noticeably lower than prior reports.

Annual

	Available Units	Occupancy	ADR
Twelve-month period ending March, 2024	1,200	50%	\$269
Twelve-month period ending March, 2023	1,103	52%	\$273
% Change	9%	-4%	-1%

Monthly

Available Units	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY 23/24	1,261	1,245	1,252	1,338	1,336	1,245	1,138	956	1,120			
FY 22/23	1,227	1,178	1,163	1,201	1,202	1,135	1,044	862	971			
% Change	3%	6%	8%	11%	11%	10%	9%	11%	15%			
Occupancy	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY 23/24	70%	55%	50%	64%	48%	41%	24%	37%	45%			
FY 22/23	73%	58%	50%	64%	49%	44%	28%	34%	44%			
% Change	-4%	-5%	0%	0%	-2%	-7%	-14%	9%	2%			
ADR	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY 23/24	\$291	\$277	\$268	\$269	\$271	\$274	252	239	253			
FY 22/23	\$288	\$281	\$276	\$276	\$279	\$285	262	255	248			
% Change	1%	-1%	-3%	-3%	-3%	-4%	-4%	-6%	2%			

TOURISM TRENDS & INSIGHTS

With almost all visits to our destination being recreational travel, we have a high degree of seasonality, with much heavier visitation in summer and fall and much lighter visitation in winter. This year was no exception. Additionally, the post-pandemic trend of a minor drop in occupancy tax proceeds following a doubling during the pandemic continues. Through February, proceeds are down a little under 1% versus the prior year and 4% versus FY22. That said, many in WNC are reporting reductions of 10% or more over the prior two years, so our drop has been less dramatic.

Looking ahead, there are varying opinions on what the next year will bring for the tourism industry. During a meeting of tourism directors at the Visit NC Tourism Conference in March, the room was asked what level of occupancy tax proceeds they were budgeting for FY25. About a quarter of the hands were raised for an increase, a quarter for a decrease, and about half for no change.

In the immediate future, the “busy season” is about to begin. Tourism owners/operators have made it through the lean winter months and are gearing up for busier times. The TCTDA will continue to push hard with our promotion to get visitors here now and then adjust that messaging in the summer months when demand often outpaces supply.

