

A photograph of two hikers from behind, walking on a dirt trail in a mountainous area. The hiker on the left wears an orange backpack and a yellow bandana, while the hiker on the right wears a grey backpack and a yellow cap. The trail is surrounded by green grass and shrubs, with rolling hills and mountains in the background under a blue sky with white clouds.

HAYWOOD COUNTY TDA

A photograph of a scenic view of the Western NC Mountains. The foreground is filled with green foliage and shrubs. In the background, there are rolling green hills and mountains under a blue sky with some clouds.

Partner Program Guide

Published May 6, 2025

— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background Information

Meet the HCTDA Staff	1
HCTDA Board of Directors	2
Mission & Vision Statement	3
Partner Newsletter	3
Partner Social Media	3

Marketing & Public Relations

Business Listing on VisitHaywood.com	4
Event Listing on VisitHaywood.com	4
Visit Haywood Visitor Guide	5
Advertising & Marketing	5
Consumer Newsletter	6
Social Media	6
Public Relations	7

Industry Development

Grant Programs	8
Networking Opportunities	8
Events & Campaigns	9

Welcome Center

Literature Displays	10
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WELCOME

At the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA), creating strong partnerships with local tourism-related businesses and organizations is at the heart of everything we do. We believe that the success of the Visit Haywood brand depends not just on our efforts, but on the collective energy, creativity, and commitment of our local partners. You are the storytellers, the innovators, and the faces that greet visitors with the charm and authenticity that define Haywood County.

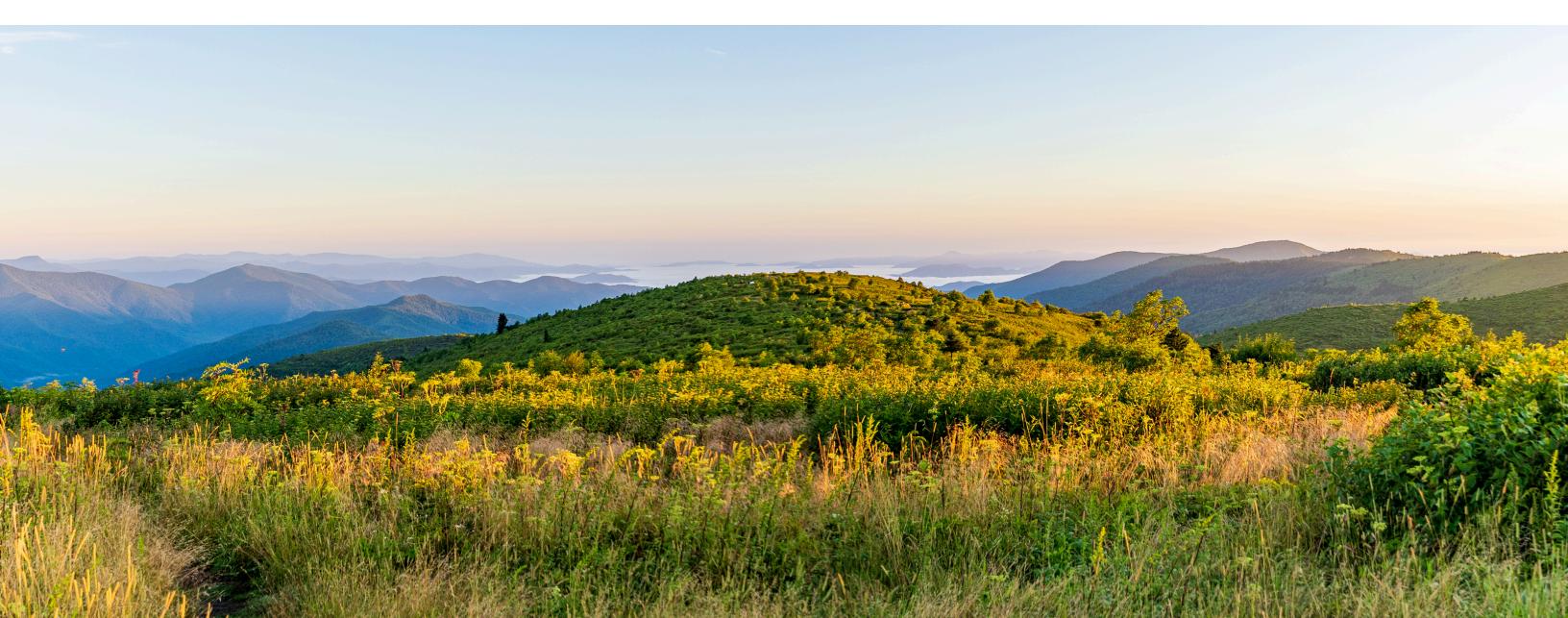
While the HCTDA constructs and maintains the framework of the Visit Haywood brand, our partners bring it to life. Each unique accommodation, shop, restaurant or brewery, trail guide, gallery, festival, and farm stand adds unique dimension to the visitor experience. It's your offerings that keep guests returning—again and again—to invest not just in a vacation, but in Haywood County's people, culture, and future.

Tourism is a powerful engine for long-term economic stability and community vitality. In Haywood County, the visitor economy supports jobs, fortifies small businesses, and increases quality of place for residents and visitors alike. Visitor spending reduces the tax burden on Haywood County residents each year by \$900 per household and 60% of visitor spending in Haywood County went to locally owned and operated businesses. That's why collaboration between the HCTDA and local partners isn't just beneficial—it's essential.

This booklet serves as a guide to the many opportunities available to you through partnership with the HCTDA. Whether you're a long-standing fixture in the community or just getting started, there's a place for you in this growing network of collaborative local partners.

We are committed to forging reciprocal, lasting relationships that uplift every piece of Haywood County. Together, we can work to ensure that Haywood continues to thrive as a destination—and as a community—for generations to come.

Welcome aboard. We're glad you're here.



MEET THE HCTDA STAFF



Corrina Ruffieux
Executive Director
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Hayley Printz
Administrative Assistant
Hayley@VisitHaywood.com



Ashley Rice
Marketing Manager
Ashley@VisitHaywood.com



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Marketing Coordinator
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Joya Darville
Welcome Center Representative
Joya@VisitHaywood.com



Mark Ferguson
Welcome Center Representative
Mark@VisitHaywood.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Owens, Chair

Mayor Pro-Tem, Maggie Valley
Category: Town of Maggie Valley

Dr. Shelley White, Vice Chair

Haywood Community College
Category: Town of Clyde

Mike Huber, Treasurer

Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center
Category: 20 Lodging Units or More

Bridget Shaughnessy

Mast General Store
Category: Tourism Related Business

Jeff Hillis

Buffalo Creek Vacations
Category: 20 Lodging Units or Less

Scot Blair

The Scotsman Public House
Category: Tourism Related Business

Gail Mull

Mayor Pro-Tem, Canton
Category: Town of Canton

Chuck Dickson

Mayor Pro-Tem, Waynesville
Category: Town of Waynesville

Chad King

The Yellow House B&B
Category: 20 Lodging Units or Less

Jeremy Boone

Springdale Resort
Category: 20 Lodging Units or Less

Angie Frisbee

Route 19 Inn
Category: 20 Lodging Units or More

Natalie Hawkins

Vacasa Vacation Rentals
Category: 20 Lodging Units or More

Ex-Officio Members:

Kristian Owen

Haywood County Director of Finance

Hannah White

Haywood County Economic Development Manager

Jennifer Best

Haywood County Commissioner

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tourism plays a vital role in Haywood County's economy, and Visit Haywood is committed to helping tourism-related businesses succeed. Funded by local occupancy tax, our efforts include free-to-you high-impact marketing, advertising, public relations, and more.

Our work uplifts Haywood County's local businesses and nonprofits—with emphasis on those that are small and independently owned—largely at no cost. Our promotions help connect visitors to the area's shops, restaurants, events, attractions, and accommodations.

As a partner, your business benefits from increased visibility through a listing on VisitHaywood.com, access to exclusive marketing opportunities, and tools for continued growth.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA) drives community and economic prosperity as a strategic leader of the destination. By fostering collaboration and destination stewardship, we strive to make Haywood County an unrivaled place to live, work, and play.

VISION STATEMENT

Haywood County will be renowned as the authentic destination in the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge Mountains, offering diverse, year-round experiences while preserving our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

PARTNER NEWSLETTER

The HCTDA distributes a partner e-newsletter to keep our local tourism community informed and connected. These emails feature updates on upcoming events, marketing campaign opportunities, current tourism trends, industry news, educational workshops, networking opportunities, and exclusive insights. The newsletter is sent to a wide range of tourism stakeholders, including hotels, shops, restaurants, Welcome Center volunteers, local government officials, HCTDA board members, and other engaged members of the community.

If you'd like to receive these updates, you can sign up at HaywoodTDA.com

PARTNER SOCIAL MEDIA

The HCTDA has created a dedicated Facebook page specifically for tourism partners and local stakeholders. This page serves as a direct line of communication for sharing important announcements, upcoming partner events, promotional opportunities, staff recognition, and more.

To follow our page, visit: Facebook.com/HaywoodCountyTDA

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

VISITHAYWOOD.COM

VisitHaywood.com is the official tourism information website for Haywood County. Haywood County accommodations, restaurants, and attractions can be listed on the website free of charge to qualifying tourism-related businesses. Each listing pairs business information with eye-catching photos, and a link to the business's website. This directory of local shops, attractions, and experiences aims to inspire visitation, increase foot traffic, and boost visibility for partners.

Business Listing on VisitHaywood.com

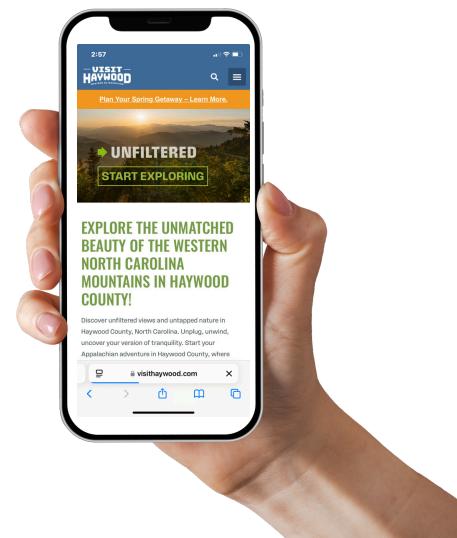
Being listed on VisitHaywood.com provides additional exposure for your business. An average of 41,000 unique users visit the website each month. A business listing on VisitHaywood.com increases your own website's search engine optimization (SEO), maximizing your chances of getting in front of new visitors.

Criteria for business listing: bit.ly/website-listing-guidelines

Criteria for lodging listing: bit.ly/lodging-listing-guidelines

Contact:

Alycin Ray, Marketing Coordinator, Alycin@VisitHaywood.com



Event Listing on VisitHaywood.com

For the benefit of our partners, visitors, and community, Visit Haywood maintains a calendar of local events on our website. Businesses are encouraged to submit their own events to the contact below to consideration of inclusion. Only events which meet the inclusion guidelines will be listed.

The events calendar is a versatile tool for visitor experience, engagement, and brand awareness. Select events may be promoted on social media channels or included in PR pitches. Qualifying events are submitted to VisitNC.com for a listing on the state tourism events calendar. Additionally, Welcome Center staff utilize this calendar to inform visitors about upcoming events. Submit your events as far in advance as possible, providing all necessary information as specified in the inclusion guidelines linked below.

Criteria for event listing: bit.ly/event-listing-guidelines

Contact:

Alycin Ray, Marketing Coordinator, Alycin@VisitHaywood.com

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

VISIT HAYWOOD VISITOR GUIDE

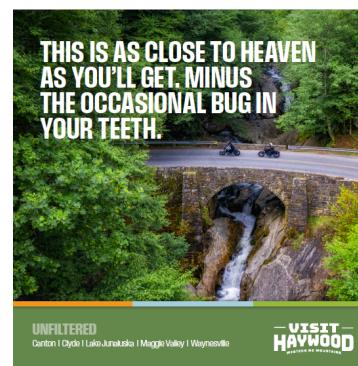
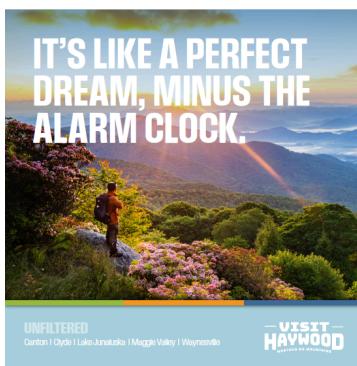
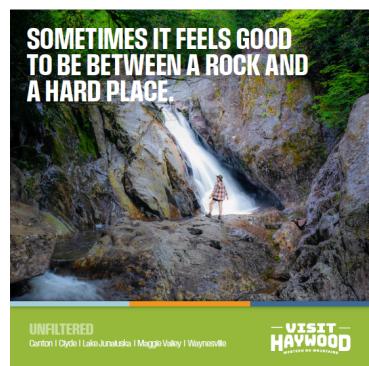
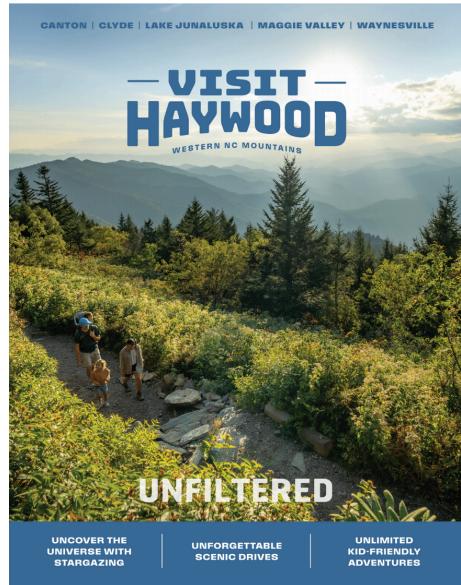
This magazine-style fulfillment piece helps visitors plan their trips to Haywood County and Western North Carolina. It features local attractions, restaurants, and accommodations.

Approximately 50,000 Visitor Guides are distributed each year through state and local visitor centers, local displays, and via direct mail. Printed copies are available in any quantity at no cost for you to display and share with your guests. We encourage all local businesses to keep copies on hand and help promote all that our county has to offer.

To obtain copies, come to the Visit Haywood Welcome Center at 91 N Lakeshore Dr, Lake Junaluska.

To ensure your business is considered during the annual Visitor Guide update process, please make sure your listing is up to date on our website. Being listed online increases your chances of being included or even featured in the printed guide—offering valuable added exposure.

For questions regarding qualification to be included, or to purchase Visitor Guide ad space, contact Ashley Rice, Marketing Manager, Ashley@VisitHaywood.com



ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Visit Haywood's marketing and advertising strategies are guided by visitor research. If you'd like to align your business with these efforts, you can explore the brand guidelines, key messaging, target audiences, and markets used in our campaigns, available at: haywoodtda.com/haywood-county-advertising

Contact:

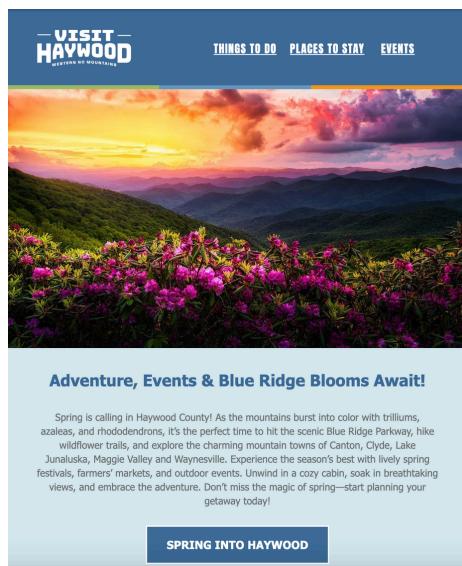
Ashley Rice, Marketing Manager, Ashley@VisitHaywood.com

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONSUMER NEWSLETTER

An e-newsletter is distributed twice a month to past and potential visitors, keeping them informed about upcoming events, seasonal activities, and travel ideas across Haywood County and its mountain towns. Designed to inspire future trips and help travelers stay connected, the newsletter offers a glimpse into all the county has to offer year-round.

To subscribe to the consumer newsletter, go to: VisitHaywood.com/email



VISIT HAYWOOD
VISIT HAYWOOD
VISIT HAYWOOD

THINGS TO DO PLACES TO STAY EVENTS

Adventure, Events & Blue Ridge Blooms Await!

Spring is calling in Haywood County! As the mountains burst into color with trilliums, azaleas, and rhododendrons, it's the perfect time to hit the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway, hike wildflower trails, and explore the charming mountain towns of Canton, Clyde, Lake Junaluska, Maggie Valley and Waynesville. Experience the season's best with lively spring festivals, farmers' markets, and outdoor events. Unwind in a cozy cabin, soak in breathtaking views, and embrace the adventure. Don't miss the magic of spring—start planning your getaway today!

SPRING INTO HAYWOOD

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HAYWOOD



FAT BURGER MONTH

Stretchy pants recommended—because from **March 15 to April 6**, Haywood's juiciest burgers take center stage! Explore mouthwatering creations from local restaurants in Canton, Maggie Valley, and Waynesville, featuring towering patties, farm-fresh ingredients, and all the toppings you crave. Try 6 out of 14 burgers and score a **FREE Fat Burger Month t-shirt!** Don't miss this delicious celebration in the heart of the Western NC Mountains.

DIG IN!

UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

Celebrate spring in Haywood County with vibrant markets, festivals, and events! Shop handmade goods at the **Cotton Tail Market**, then enjoy fresh local produce as the **Haywood Historic Farmers Market** returns in April, and the **Mill Town Market** in May. Experience thrilling auto-shows at **Mini-Truckin Nationals** and **Thunder in the Smokies** in Maggie Valley. Immerse yourself in mountain traditions at the **Appalachian Heritage Festival** in Waynesville, and welcome the season's bounty at the **Berries & Blooms Festival** at Ten Acre Garden.

SEE ALL EVENTS



WHAT'S YOUR HAYWOOD

Take the "What's Your Haywood" quiz [online](#) or in our new **Visit Haywood Visitor Guide** on page 52 to discover the perfect itinerary for your next trip to Haywood County, NC! Whether you're a **Memory-Maker**, **Adventure Seeker**, **Nature-Lover** or **Fun Foodie**, our guide takes you to four online itineraries packed with exciting activities to help you make the most of your visit. From scenic outdoor adventures to charming small-town experiences, this quiz will match you with the best way to explore all that Haywood County has to offer.

TAKE THE QUIZ

FREE VISITORS GUIDE!

Instantly download our digital visitor guide or simply fill out the form on our website to have a complimentary travel guide mailed to your address.

MAIL ME A COPY

DIGITAL VERSION



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media plays a vital role in Visit Haywood's marketing strategy, with consistent posts designed to engage and inspire both visitors and locals. With nearly 165,000 followers, our platforms offer powerful reach and visibility.

Local businesses are encouraged to align their efforts by tagging @VisitHaywood on Facebook and Instagram to boost exposure through cross-promotion.

Follow us to stay connected for shareable seasonal content, promotions, and campaign updates:

Facebook: [Facebook.com/VisitHaywood](https://www.facebook.com/VisitHaywood)

Instagram: [@VisitHaywood](https://www.instagram.com/VisitHaywood)

Contact:

Amie Newsome, Social Media & Content Manager, Amie@VisitHaywood.com

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Visit Haywood partners with local businesses to host travel writers, journalists, bloggers, and content creators — offering an excellent opportunity to gain visibility through social media, blogs, print publications, and features on Visit Haywood's platforms.

When the media shares a positive experience about your business, it often resonates differently than traditional advertising. It's an impactful way to reach new audiences and build credibility.

If you're open to hosting travel media—or already have plans to do so independently—please let us know. Otherwise, we'll be in touch as relevant opportunities arise.

Contact:

Amie Newsome, Social Media & Content Manager, Amie@VisitHaywood.com



INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

GRANT PROGRAMS

Each year, the HCTDA supports local initiatives that celebrate and promote the unique cultural, historical, and recreational experiences that Haywood County has to offer. These initiatives are expected to boost local tourism year-round, generate overnight stays, and provide significant economic benefit to the community, while improving the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The HCTDA offers three (3) different grant programs: Legacy Event Sponsorship, Tourism Capital Grant, and Tourism Promotion Grant (which includes three sub-categories: Advertising, Market Research, and Events). The grant programs open in early spring and awards are determined in May. The HCTDA may open a 2nd round of grants in the fall, if funding is available. Detailed information on the grant programs, requirements, and timelines can be found at haywoodtda.com/grants.

If you have a tourism-related event or project, keep an eye out on our website and newsletters for the announcements of when the grant programs open.

Contact:

Hayley Printz, Administrative Assistant, Hayley@VisitHaywood.com



NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Mountain Mornings is a networking event hosted by the HCTDA, designed exclusively for tourism-related businesses. These casual meet-ups offer a space to connect with fellow industry partners, share ideas, and collaborate on shaping the future of tourism in Haywood County. We rotate Mountain Mornings events throughout the county to ensure all areas have a chance to participate and host.

If you're interested in hosting a future Mountain Mornings or have suggestions for topics or locations, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact:

Amie Newsome, Social Media & Content Manager, Amie@VisitHaywood.com

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

EVENTS & CAMPAIGNS

The HCTDA manages several campaigns and events throughout the year. These events present valuable opportunities for local businesses to participate in a variety of ways—including offering themed specials and promotions, sponsoring, becoming a vendor, and more.

Participating in these events not only strengthens your connection to the community and showcases our “Better Together” motto, but also provides added exposure through HCTDA’s marketing and publicity efforts. It’s a great way to promote your business and reach a wider audience through event-based advertising and promotion.

- **Ice Festival Weekend** (January/February) - The Visit Haywood Ice Festival Weekend is a multi-day, cross-county event that occurs during Haywood County’s off-peak season to encourage overnight visitation, boost spending at local businesses, and highlight the winter season. More information about Ice Festival Weekend can be found at VisitHaywood.com/IceFest.
- **Fat Burger Month** (March) – Fat Burger Month is a culinary campaign that highlights specially-curated burgers at participating local Haywood County restaurants to encourage residents and visitors to dine local and try restaurants they have never been to. For more information, visit FatBurgerMonth.com.
- **National Travel & Tourism Week** (May) - National Travel & Tourism Week (NTTW) is an annual tradition that highlights travel’s essential role in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and enhancing quality of life. NTTW celebrations vary by year. Visit Haywood may host an event for industry partners or produce workshops to share knowledge on tourism, advertising and marketing, and how to leverage our resources to help your business.
- **Gift of Haywood** (November/December) - Originally developed as a “Haywood Strong” campaign to encourage local spending after Hurricane Helene and providing proceeds to help small business recovery, Gift of Haywood has shifted to a shop local campaign, spotlighting Haywood County small business and encouraging shopping local during the holiday season. For more information, visit GiftHaywood.com.

When the HCTDA is not producing and managing events and campaigns, we are promoting community tourism-related events through our grants program and marketing efforts.

Contact:

Hayley Printz, Administrative Assistant, Hayley@VisitHaywood.com



WELCOME CENTER

WELCOME CENTER

Visit Haywood operates a Welcome Center year-round Monday-Saturday 9 AM-5 PM at 91 N Lakeshore Dr., Lake Junaluska. Our team is dedicated to making visitors feel welcome, answering their questions, and providing information and resources to help them make the most of their visit to Haywood County.

The Welcome Center sells a variety of merchandise and maps, while featuring some locally-sourced items to promote small Haywood County businesses.

Literature Displays at the Visit Haywood Welcome Center

The Visit Haywood Welcome Center is a key marketing tool for reaching guests who are visiting or planning to visit the area. Tourism partners are encouraged to share their promotional materials with the Welcome Center to be displayed in the display racks or on the bulletin board. The primary focus is on tourism-related businesses located in Haywood County, with a secondary focus on day-trip options in nearby counties for visitors staying in local accommodations.

If you would like to display brochures for your business or flyers for your event, bring your materials to the Welcome Center to be reviewed and approved by our representatives.

Criteria for Literature Display: bit.ly/welcome-center-display-guidelines

Contact:

Mark Ferguson, Welcome Center Representative, Mark@VisitHaywood.com
Joya Darville, Welcome Center Representative, Joya@VisitHaywood.com

Or call 828-944-0761.





— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES?

Contact Hayley Printz at Hayley@VisitHaywood.com or 828.944.0761