



## HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

- LHVB News
- Meetings and Events
- Partnership News
- Marketing News
- Public Relations News
- Web and Social Media Stats
- Group Tour News
- New LHVB Partners

## DON'T MISS OUR BI-WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER!

Make sure you're receiving LHVB's Partner e-newsletter, Happenings from LHVB. Hear about the bureau's latest marketing and educational opportunities, deadline reminders, special events, meeting dates, and more. If you're not hearing from us, please check your spam folder and be sure to add us to your safe sender list in your email, or contact us to sign up.

## CONNECT WITH THE LHVB ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



## LHVB NEWS

### Ann Nemanic Promoted to Executive Director!

The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau Board of Directors officially announced the promotion of Ann Nemanic to Executive Director in May.

"Ann brings with her a tremendous amount of experience and understanding of the role the LHVB plays in the economic vitality of our region," said Michael Langer, chairman of the LHVB Board of Directors and President of the Westmoreland Cultural Trust. "Furthermore, her work ethic and dedication to the tourism industry will provide strong leadership and continued growth for years to come. The LHVB board of directors is both excited for and confident in Ann's leadership."



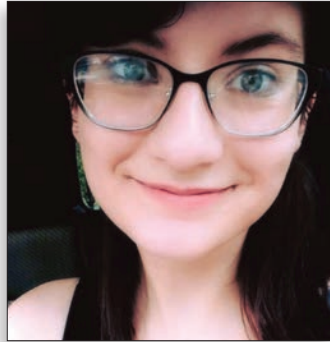
"I am both humbled by the confidence placed in me by the LHVB Board of Directors and thankful that I know so many of our regional partners and stakeholders who have entrusted the bureau to be an extension of their marketing efforts over the years," said Nemanic. "This is a journey we all share together and open communication will make the Laurel Highlands an even more enticing destination of choice. The Laurel Highlands is not only my home, but a place I love and I am proud to help continue its story as such a spectacular region of the Commonwealth."

Nemanic began her 30 year marketing career in radio as a copywriter and production director. After moving to Pennsylvania in 1991, she became Director of Sales and Marketing for the former historic Mountain View Inn. After 14 years with the property, Nemanic moved to destination marketing with the LHVB where she has served as Vice President of Partnership and Business Development since 2010. Under her leadership, the LHVB's partnership base has grown from 350 to more than 600.

Since moving to the region, Nemanic has been actively involved with several organizations. Currently, she serves as an ex-officio board member of the Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce, and an active board member of the Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Board, and the Allegheny Trail Alliance.

## Welcome, Sara Mitchell!

The bureau is delighted to welcome Sara Mitchell to our seasonal staff at the Ohiopyle Visitors Center. Sara is a rising senior at Seton Hill University majoring in Hospitality and Tourism. She is an avid photographer and many of her images captured around Ohiopyle and the Laurel Highlands are in postcard form for visitors to purchase. Her larger scale images can be seen in the hallways of Highlands Hospital in Connellsville. Sara recently interned at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art and will juggle her summertime with the LHVB and an internship with the Fayette County Cultural Trust.



## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- July 4 | Independence Day, office closed
- June 14 | Executive Committee Meeting
- July 12 | Executive Committee Meeting
- July 19 | Board of Directors Meeting
- August 9 | Executive Committee Meeting
- September 4 | Labor Day, office closed



## PARTNERSHIP NEWS

*Ann Nemanic, Executive Director*

**Did you know?** I've been appointed the Executive Director of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau. Surprise! Now that we've gotten that little bit of information out of the way, let me fill you in on a few things.

I'll always begin my portion of the newsletter with this very same question. Did you know? Why? Because I firmly believe each and every one of us in our spectacular region needs to discover something new. We become better storytellers, guest service representatives, servers, bloggers, raft guides, friends, and neighbors if we share from personal discovery. I can honestly tell you what Apple Pie Moonshine tastes like. Can you? I can tell you the view from Salisbury Viaduct on the Great Allegheny Passage can truly take your breath away. Can you? Discovery – make it a part of your life, and that of those you employ to provide the best visitor experience we can possibly offer.

I'm extremely proud to have inherited a staff of incredible talent and energy. Kristin, Jim, Jared, Anna, Sara, Georgia, Katie, Cassandra, Dolores, Rachel, Pat, Stacey, and Louise hit the ground running each and every day. Part-time or full-time, it doesn't matter. They love being a part of creating and sharing the message of the Laurel Highlands. The months ahead will be busy ones with new initiatives in our marketing pipeline. Red House Communications has done a brilliant job by providing us with a three year visionary plan. We've already begun discussing the 2018 Destination Guide and Summer 2017 has only just begun!

This is a journey we ALL share and open communication between us will make the Laurel Highlands an even more enticing destination of choice. So please, chat with our staff when they need help with a story idea for a journalist, provide an overnight room if a tour operator is visiting for a FAM, send us photos and tidbits of what's happening with your business or organization.

The Laurel Highlands story began almost 60 years ago and we are entering another chapter. I'm just the editor, YOU are the paragraphs that help to make us be a page turner.

Sharing some of the Laurel Highlands treasures with our I-70 Welcome Center Ambassadors.







# MARKETING NEWS

Kristin Ecker, Vice President of Marketing and Communications

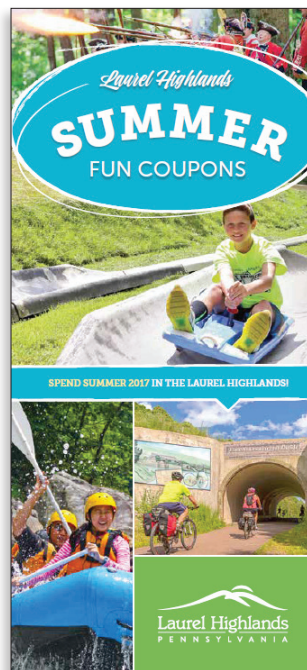
## Summer Marketing

Summer is just around the corner and the LHVB has partnered with Red House Communications of Pittsburgh to implement a fully-integrated marketing plan that kicked-off in May! Red House and the LHVB team have been working through the winter months to develop this comprehensive plan, focusing on target markets within a 200-mile radius of the region. The team has evaluated visitor data and consumer data to identify visitor opportunities that exist within these target areas and methods for uniquely branded campaigns. The marketing efforts cover various age groups, from millennials to boomers, families, groups, and individuals, and across a variety of mediums. By targeting these specific visitor personas, the LHVB will be able to offer customized messaging and experiences to users with a wide range of interests, using the very mediums that apply to their behavioral habits.

We all know that the Laurel Highlands offers experiences for all interests, and by further customizing our messaging, the better our marketing will be. Stay tuned for more details on our great summer marketing plans!

## Summer Fun Coupon Books

The 2017 Summer Fun Coupon Books are in, with more than 60 amazing coupon offers for the region's visitors! 25,000 coupon books have been printed and displayed in all LHVB racks in 81 locations throughout the region to better target our visitors. All coupons are also featured on laurelhighlands.org for online visitors. To request coupon books for distribution at your property, please contact Rachel Roehrig at 724-238-5661, ext. 101, or rroehrig@laurelhighlands.org.



# PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

Anna Weltz, Director of Public Relations

## Help Anna Share Your Story with Travel Journalists!

Anna will be hitting the road in mid-September for the annual MATPRA Media Marketplace in Winchester, Virginia, Sept. 12-14. During this event, she will represent our region, share story ideas with nearly 60 travel journalists and attend panel discussions and seminars. If you have news you would like her to share at this event, please contact Anna at (724) 238-5661, ext. 108, or email aweltz@laurelhighlands.org.

## Recent Press Visits

- Erin Gifford, Kidventurous
- Christine Koubek, Bethesda and Arlington Magazines
- Julie and Charles McCool, Fun in Fairfax and McCool Travels
- International group press tour partnership with VisitPittsburgh

## Top Media Opportunities

- Baltimore Sun
- Washingtonian
- Orbitz.com
- Long Weekends
- Blue Ridge Outdoors



THE BALTIMORE SUN



## LAUREL HIGHLANDS IN THE LIMELIGHT

January 1-April 30, 2017

A summary of press and media projects initiated or coordinated by the LHVB. Circulation, digital impressions, and publicity value figures provided by Cision media monitoring service.

More than \$222,000 in added value

&

Nearly 152 million in print distribution

127 stories



# WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

Jared Bundy, Director of Interactive Marketing

## SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE

(as of April 20, 2017)



Facebook Fans  
**54,000+**



Twitter Followers  
**11,000+**



YouTube Video Views  
**224,000+**



Instagram Followers  
**2,200+**



Pinterest Followers  
**700+**

## WEBSITE STATS (March - April 2017)

Compared to March - April 2016

### TOP VIEWED PAGES



- 8,642 Homepage
- 4,430 /things-to-do/events
- 4,182 /outdoors/ohiopyle
- 3,758 /things-to-do/our-seasons/spring/
- 3,563 /places-to-stay/cabins-campgrounds/
- 3,185 /deals
- 2,930 /places-to-stay/vacation-rentals
- 2,754 /things-to-do/history-heritage
- 2,527 /things-to-do/family-fun
- 2,236 /things-to-do/arts-culture



### TOP KEYWORDS

Laurel Highlands, Ohiopyle State Park, Ohiopyle, Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Laurel Highlands PA, Romantic Getaways in PA, Laurel Highlands Events

Website Traffic from Social Media increased **↑ 222%**

## FACEBOOK FOOTPRINT

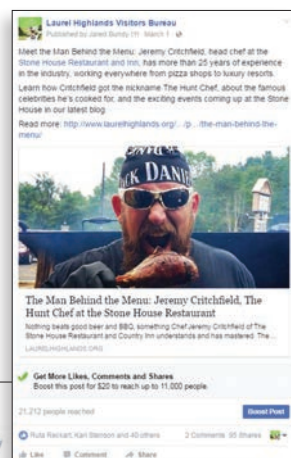
(Compared to previous 28 days)

Page Likes have increased **92%**

Page Views have increased **16%**

Actions on Page have increased **65%**

Top Facebook Post: The Hunt Chef blog, written by Cassandra Rupert, was the most liked and shared post of the spring!



Top Instagram Post: Stacey Magda's dog Jonesy was the star of #NationalPetDay



Save the Date - 2017  
Interactive Marketing Summit  
November 3, 2017

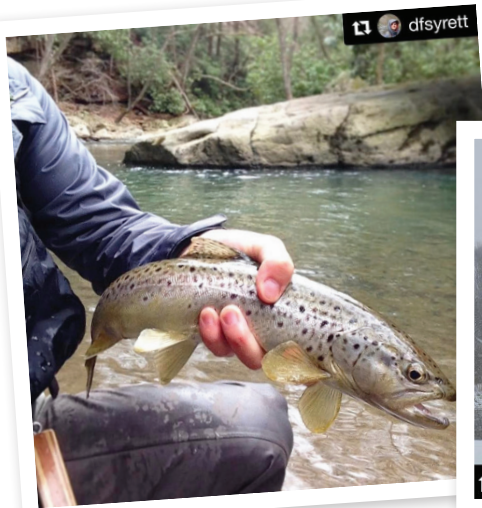
The 7th annual Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau

Interactive Marketing Summit will take place on Friday, Nov. 3, at the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College. Save the date for this all-day event focusing on the latest trends, techniques, and how-tos in digital marketing!



## Instagram Photo Contest Winners:

Visitors enter each week by tagging us and using #LaurelHighlands!







# GROUP TOUR NEWS

Stacey Magda, Group Tour Manager

## Strong Sales On The Show Circuit

Group sales continues to be busy on the road sharing all that the Laurel Highlands can offer groups of any interest including motorcoach, student, homeschool families, meeting planners, weddings and more!

## Student Homeschool Shows

CHEO: Teach Them Diligently and Christian Home Educators of Ohio | Sandusky, OH | 7,000 homeschool families | April 20-22, 2017

CHAP: Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania | Lancaster, PA | 5,000 homeschool families | June 2-3, 2017

## Tour and Travel Shows

Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting | Corning, NY 20 tour operators | June 20-23, 2017

## Growing Group business at Group Leader Shows

Share your information with the area's busiest group leaders at not one but TWO shows in the Fall of 2017! Participation for each show is \$100, contact Stacey Magda for contracts and more information.

Great Day! Group Leader Show | Independence, OH | September 29, 2017 | 300 group leaders

AAA Group Leader Show | Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort | September 5-6, 2017 | 175 group leaders



## Meet the Planners

On April 27, the Laurel Highlands and eight regional businesses hosted a luncheon to connect and share meeting and retreat options with 12 association planners from the Harrisburg area. This event is ongoing, and we will offer more opportunities to connect with these important planners in November 2017. Stay tuned for more details!

Quote from Planner:

*Thank you again for the invite to the Laurel Highlands Showcase and luncheon. It was such a great way to meet and chat with some of the area's representatives. And I thought I knew what was there!*

R. Keith McNally, Independent Meeting Planner



## Stay Tuned: Meet the Planners in Harrisburg Fall Luncheon

November 2017 | downtown Harrisburg | location to be decided

## Working Together to Promote Group Travel

On May 1, the Ramada Ligonier hosted the USS RICH Association Annual Reunion. This wonderful event brought together 70 shipmates and their families to recount the history and service of the ship and reunite and enjoy our wonderful region! This event also included planning collaboration from Ramada Ligonier, Fort Ligonier, Ligonier Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau!

## 2017 FIRST QUARTER GROUP TRAVEL IN REVIEW

1,700  
hotel rooms booked

210,880  
in hotel revenue



47  
bus groups



2,972  
senior and adult  
visitors



1,201  
student visitors

37 multi-day tours & 22 day trips



# WELCOME, NEW LHVB PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



## AdventureTRAC

Shane Dushack  
301 Locust Street  
Sutersville, PA 15083  
412-554-3829  
adventuretrac.org

For those seeking a customized outdoor experience, look to AdventureTRAC, a fresh approach to outfitting! AdventureTRAC is a mobile outfitter offering your own special spin on snowshoeing, hiking, biking, kayaking, and more. Whether you are looking for a team building experience or a personal guided tour, AdventureTRAC can provide it with exceptional equipment, a wealth of knowledge, and enthusiasm!



## The Diamond Theatre of Ligonier

Leigh Ann Rice-McCulty  
210 West Main Street  
Ligonier, PA 15658  
724-238-2929  
diamondtheatre.com

With one year of ownership under their theatrical belts, the McCulty family has proudly produced a variety of shows and in April they also started operating as a movie theatre with the only laser projector in the area. They also offer a limited number of luxurious electric reclining seats too. The Diamond Theatre of Ligonier continues to offer the Ligonier Valley community great family entertainment.



## Alpine Retreat

Juliann Brown  
244 Alpine Heights  
Champion, PA 15622  
412-401-2041  
Facebook: Alpine Retreat Bed and Breakfast

Alpine Retreat Bed and Breakfast is located in the heart of the Laurel Highlands close to ski resorts, golfing, attractions, state parks, and much more. Alpine Retreat offers four bedrooms and a suite with a private fireplace, game room, and bathroom. You can rent a room or book the entire house!



## Distinct Creative Agency

Chad Gutermuth  
114 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Greensburg, PA 15601  
724-834-3232  
distinctcreates.com

Based in downtown Greensburg, Distinct Creative Agency lends itself to the advertising world today, from traditional to digital media. If you are looking for an advertising agency to assist your rebrand, reinforce your message, or expand your consumer base, look no further than Distinct Creative in Greensburg!



## Arts Coalition of the Alleghenies

Rebecca Catelinet  
c/o PA Rural Arts Alliance  
P.O. Box 9  
Loretto, PA 15940  
814-472-3927  
artscoa.org

An organization currently comprising of 22 arts and cultural organizations from Bedford, Cambria, Indiana, and Somerset counties, the Arts Coalition mission is to promote and protect the arts in the community.



## Everyday Therapeutics Massage

Donna Lenzi  
111 East Church Street  
Ligonier, PA 15658  
724-238-2322  
everydaytherapeuticmassage.com

Based in historic Ligonier, Everyday Therapeutics Massage offers a great selection of massage and wellness techniques to suit all, Swedish massage, deep tissue massage, trigger point therapy, hot stone massage, reiki, and aromatauch techniques using DoTerra essential oils, just to name a few. Recently, ETM installed an infrared sauna!



## Body in Balance Healing Center

Tami Gingrow  
2113 County Line Road  
Champion, PA 15022  
412-999-3553  
bodyinbalancehc.com

Body in Balance Healing Center promotes wellness, mindfulness, and a holistic approach to health and happiness. Practicing in the heart of the beautiful Laurel Highlands, Body in Balance offers yoga, massage treatments, hiking, retreats, workshops, events, and many other activities tailored for individuals through to groups.



## Farmhouse at Spring's Pond

Shelley Riley  
183 Tub Run Road  
Confluence, PA 15424  
Facebook: Farmhouse at Spring's Pond

This gorgeous, fully-renovated farmhouse awaits you. Close to Confluence and Ohiopyle, this tranquil retreat offers three bedrooms, two fireplaces, a large front porch to relax on, 10 acres to explore and a stocked pond! Perfect for families or a friends reunion, or a romantic weekend away.





# WELCOME, NEW LHVb PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Sales Development Manager



## The Foundry

Zach Ellsworth  
6 Oliver Road, Suite 109  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
724-550-4363  
thefoundry.rocks

Opened in 2016, The Foundry embraces fine dining with a flair of creativity and a love of food! Located in Uniontown, The Foundry is open year-round, Wednesday through Sunday. They also offer catering service and a food truck!



## My Girls Deli and Catering

Chad Reichhold  
212 West Main Street  
Somerset, PA 15501  
814-444-6913  
mygirlsdelicatering.net

My Girls Deli and Catering is Somerset's latest catering company! The menu lists delicious gourmet sandwiches, homemade soups, and a fresh salad bar. Whether you dine in or take-out, My Girls Deli provides quality food and service. They also provide catering for special events.



## Henry Antiques and Flea Market

Rhonda Henry  
139 Trent Road  
Friedens, PA 15541  
814-701-1388  
Facebook: Henry Antiques and Flea Market

Rhonda Henry has always had a love of antiques, and in 2016, she decided to fulfill her dream. Located on her family's farmland, Henry's Antiques and Flea Market will be opening for their second season in May. If you enjoy browsing flea markets, pop over to Henry's Antiques, close to the Flight 93 Chapel, and see what treasures you can find.



## Silver Horse Coffee

Colin Frye  
3846 State Route 31  
Donegal, PA 15628  
724-593-7433  
silverhorsecoffee.com

If you are seeking good coffee, a latte or specialty tea, on your way up the mountain, make a stop at Silver Horse Coffee in Donegal. They serve up freshly brewed coffee, scrumptious pastry treats, and a great selection of teas, as well as friendly service and a warm welcoming coffee shop!



## Holiday Inn Express and Suites, Uniontown

Jenn Sheridan  
305 Mary Higginson Lane  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
724-437-9194  
holidayinnexpress.com

The new Holiday Inn Express and Suites in Uniontown is a perfect location to visit all the wonderful attractions in the Laurel Highlands, close to Penn State Fayette Campus, and not far from WVU. The hotel offers high speed internet, indoor salt water pool, 24-hour fitness center, and complimentary Express Start breakfast bar.



## Silver Penny Vintage Shop

Karen Temple  
3919 State Route 31  
Jones Mills, PA 15646  
724-593-2090  
Facebook: The Silver Penny

Silver Penny Vintage Shop is a delightful antiques and vintage wares shop displaying a vast assortment of furniture, glassware, crockery, and textiles. Open Thursday through Sunday, stop by this shop. You never know what might catch your eye!



## Mayapple Marketplace

Mary Lee Stotler  
101 West Main Street  
Stoystown, PA 15563  
814-893-5350  
Facebook: Mayapple Marketplace

Mayapple Marketplace has only just opened its door! A small general store with big dreams, located in Stoystown, their goal is to provide a well-stocked general store for the community and provide display space and guidance to local small business entrepreneurs starting out.



## The Village Moose

Sue Parker  
8051 Meadowridge Drive  
Seven Springs, PA 15622  
412-979-2491  
thevillagemoose.com

Welcome to The Village Moose, a two bedroom condo located in the Meadowridge community of The Villages at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. The Village Moose offers a fully-equipped kitchen, beautiful spa inspired master suite with whirlpool tub, and many more amenities.



120 East Main Street  
Ligonier, PA 15658

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## Headlines

Headlines is published quarterly.  
Please contact LHVB's Director of  
Public Relations, Anna Weltz,  
with questions or comments at  
[aweltz@laurelhighlands.org](mailto:aweltz@laurelhighlands.org).

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Langer, *Chairman*  
Westmoreland Cultural Trust

Tom Guiher  
Living Treasures  
Wild Animal Park

Eric Mauck, *Vice Chairman*  
Seven Springs Mountain Resort

Liz Diesel  
Glades Pike Winery

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Lladel Lichty  
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Ron Aldom  
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Andrea Cuda  
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Vicky Sheetz  
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