

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Anna Smathers, Communications Manager

828.452.0152 ext. 205

anna@visitncsmokies.com



www.visitNCsmokies.com

Haywood County's Homegrown Picks for 2014

Haywood County, NC – If you're looking for a few fresh topics for 2014, we suggest keeping a close eye on Haywood County, NC. The 2013 launch of the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority's **Homegrown in Haywood** branding was not just about establishing a fresh new image for the local tourism industry but enhancing the authentic experiences available within the county. The launch brought together several partnerships and ideas that will continue to make Haywood County a "must-visit" in 2014 and beyond. Here are Haywood County's Homegrown Picks for 2014:

Take a Fresh Visit to an Agrepreneurial Community

If you're looking for a fresh new experience that is not only educational but also fun, try visiting a local farm! The quickly growing agritourism market is thriving in Haywood County with countless ways to explore this bountiful area. The organization, **Buy Haywood**, is the only county-specific agritourism initiative in Western North Carolina and works diligently to introduce high-quality farm products to community-minded consumers. **Buy Haywood** creates and distributes a free Agritourism Guide each year of working farms, produce stands, markets, and activities. The guide offers a first-hand experience of the colorful and diverse agripreneurial communities in and around Maggie Valley, Waynesville, Canton, Clyde, and Lake Junaluska. You will also find many Haywood County restaurants and craft breweries have committed to strongly support these farmers and producers by incorporating locally grown and produced products on a regular basis. They also combine efforts to create several events throughout the year, like the annual *Mélange of the Mountains Culinary Weekend*, to showcase the county's unique culinary partnerships. From innovative farmers and producers to chefs with a gourmet twist on sustainability, the special relationships and influences built through agritourism in Haywood County are among the best you will find North Carolina. To learn more about Buy Haywood visit www.buyhaywood.com.

A Fresh Trail of Tunes:

It's no secret that Haywood County is a heritage hotspot with a long-standing history of mountain music, bluegrass, and traditional folk dance. On any given weekend, you can

find a rich array of traditional music across the county, from performances by Raymond Fairchild at the Maggie Valley Opry House to the Friday night jam sessions along the banks of the Pigeon River at Canton's Pickin' in the Park. Or you may just catch a performance by Balsam Range, Haywood's native bluegrass band and winner of two International Bluegrass Music Awards, or learn the ropes of traditional folk dance at Waynesville's Mountain Street Dance, often featuring dance calls by the legendary Joe Sam Queen. The deep music roots of the North Carolina Smokies continue to provide both inspiration and platforms to develop these fine arts. This has notably earned Haywood County a prime spot on the **Blue Ridge Music Trails**. A growing project of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, the **Blue Ridge Music Trails** guide travelers to the many public settings in which original mountain folk music and dance thrive today. The trail makes it easy to find authentic regional folk music, meet musicians, see traditional dancing, and in many cases take part in the festivities for a first-hand experience of the area's rich music heritage. As part of the trail, signage to designate the county's many musical highlights are planned throughout towns of Haywood County in 2014. To learn more about the **Blue Ridge Music Trail** and view Haywood's current listings, visit www.blueridgemusic.org.

Are You Ready For Your Close Up, Haywood County?

After much planning and developing, the **Haywood County Film Commission** has officially been revived, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Haywood County TDA and Advantage West. The TDA is currently working with Advantage West in Asheville, NC who has been supplying information on Haywood County when presented with location requests for TV and film. Since 2010, the NC Film Tax Incentive has fueled three strong years for film and television productions in the state. Production companies that spend at least \$250,000 in North Carolina are eligible to receive a refundable tax credit of 25% of in state spending for labor, goods and services (Information provided by Advantage West EDC). In 2013, North Carolina as a whole had 5,700 production days, \$254 million in spending and 25,000 job opportunities. The TDA is currently securing a database for production companies to use of locations, support services, and local crews throughout Maggie Valley, Waynesville, Canton, Clyde and Lake Junaluska. The area has been featured in several past productions, including Cold Mountain, My Fellow Americans, Hillbilly Blood, American Pickers, What's in the Barn, and The Motorhead Traveler. The opportunity to bring more productions to the beautiful NC Smokies is strong and 2014 will be the year to grow this opportunity. To learn more about the **Haywood County Film Commission** visit www.haywoodcountytourismdevelopment.com.

A Unique Heritage Tour

Have you ever wondered what those colorful wooden squares are on the sides of buildings and barns throughout Haywood County? You are actually looking at piece of Haywood County heritage and one of the many stops on the quickly growing **Haywood County Quilt Trails** project. The Haywood County is working diligently to grow the trail into a special tourism experience unique to Haywood County. The **Haywood County Quilt Trails** project helps Haywood County tell it's history by featuring colorful

and meaningful quilt squares installed on barns, public buildings, and shops throughout Waynesville, Maggie Valley, Canton and Clyde. Quilts represent a much-loved symbol of comfort, family, and heritage, which make the squares a perfect way to tell the story of Haywood County. From 2013 to 2014, the number of blocks has grown from it's original 24 to almost 50, as they are being added, designed, and installed at a rapid rate. Word of the Quilt Trail is spreading quickly and both local and regional support is helping draw more attention to this great project. In 2014, an informational placque will be placed in downtown Waynesville, courtesy of the Blue Ridge National Heritage area, which will explain the HCQT. To learn more about the **Haywood County Quilt Trails** project visit www.haywoodquilttrails.org.

Along with it's picturesque beauty, Haywood County offers year round activities and events centered around our five homegrown initiatives: Food, Heritage, Music, Art and the Outdoors. No matter what you choose, we guarantee it will always be Fresh From the North Carolina Smokies! For more information visit www.visitncsmokies.com or contact the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority at 800-334-9036.

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