



## Spring Newsletter 2019

Brought to you by the  
Hot Springs Tourism Association

### 2019 Schedule of Events Happening in Hot Springs!

We are looking forward to an exciting **2019 Tourist Season!** Below is a list of events that are currently scheduled for this year.



*Dates and times are subject to change. Check ahead for any cancellations or rescheduling of events prior to arrival.*

April 6	<b><u>Opening of Homegrown &amp; Handmade Market</u></b>
April 26,27,& 28	<b><u>Appalachian TrailFest</u></b>
May 3,4,& 5	<b><u>22nd Annual French Broad River Festival</u></b>
May 18	<b><u>Vintage BMW Gathering</u></b>
June 15	<b><u>Bluff Mountain Music Festival</u></b>
June 28,29,& 30	<b><u>Concerned Bikers Association Rally</u></b>
July 6	<b><u>Independence Day Fireworks</u></b>
July 11,12,13 & 14	<b><u>Wild Goose Festival</u></b>
October 12	<b><u>BBQ for BOOKS by Friends of the HS Library</u></b>
December TBA	<b><u>Christmas Parade &amp; Light the Night</u></b>
December TBA	<b><u>Spring Creek Christmas Bazaar</u></b>

Events and Live Music are posted on our [\*\*Online Events Calendar\*\*](#)

**The Latest Exhibit at  
Rural Heritage Museum  
February thru August 31**

**"A Fountain of Youth in the  
Southern Highlands:  
A History of Hot Springs, NC"**

The staff at the Mars Hill University has created an outstanding museum exhibit featuring the colorful, 241 years of Hot Springs often forgotten past. You won't want to miss this!

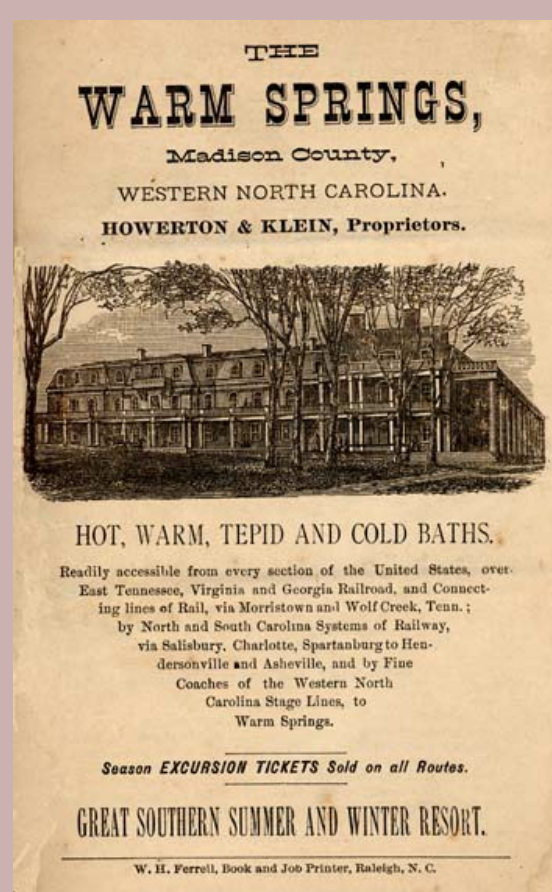
**Free and open to the public.**

Open daily, except Mondays, from 11 to 5 pm. Located in the rock built **Rural Heritage Museum** on the University

Campus at:

80 Cascade Street,  
downtown Mars Hill,

(828) 689-1651



**New On Our Website**

**Biking Info is Now Here!**

This spring we are happy to have upgraded the Associations website to include an exciting new page called:

**Cycling and Off-Road Biking**

Thanks to the Madison County TDA and Bill Downey for compiling this collection of biking routes. We know you and your bicycle-riding guests will just love this additional information.



Photo by Rose Pritchett

**Recalling 'Songcatcher', a Film that Touches Hot Springs History**

An enjoyable read for a relaxed day- musings about the musical heritage of Madison County and how it was reflected in the movie 'Songcatcher'. Beautifully written by Jim Hickey. **Read the Blog Post on our Website**



## 2019 Appalachian TrailFest

Hot Springs welcomes this seasons thru-hikers making their way 2,190 foot miles to Maine. Celebrating the **Appalachian National Scenic Trail**, the first festival of the season is happening downtown Hot Springs on the weekend of April 26, 27 and 28th.

### 2019 Schedule of Events:

#### Friday, April 26

**12 - 5pm** Thru-hiker welcome, orientation & registration at the Big Tent, Alpine Court

**5 - 7pm** Spaghetti Dinner sponsored by and benefiting the Madison County Group Home Location: TBA

**7 PM** - "An Evening with Grandma Gatewood; Pioneer Appalachian Trail Thru-Hiker". Actress Anne Van Curen will bring Grandma Gatewood to life and tell the inspiring story of the woman who at age 67 became the first woman to solo thru-hike the Appalachian Trail. Sponsor: Madison County Libraries

#### Saturday, April 27

**10 - 5 PM** Thru-hiker welcome, orientation & registration at the Alpine Court

Ongoing give-aways, Duck sales, food, gear and information vendors. Silent auction.

AT Videos at the Hot Springs Welcome Center.

**10 - 5 PM** Music at the Big Tent

10:00 Butter Holler String Band

11:00 Peter and Susie Gott

12:00 Roy Hurley

1:00 Hiker Cook-off Contest at the Big Tent

2:00 Richard Thornburgh String Band

3:00 Ron Neill and "The Neills"

4:00 Mark Shane

**5:15 PM** Duck Race on bridge at Spring Creek. First Prize \$100, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize of \$50

**6:00 PM** Free Hiker Feed at Laughing Heart Hostel with music by Mark Shane.

#### Sunday, April 28

**8 - 10 AM** \$5.00 Pancake Breakfast Location: TBA

**10 AM** Area churches welcome AT hikers and guests to their services.

**Look for Updates to TrailFest Schedule on our Website**

## Rich Mountain Fire Tower Automobile Access OPENS April 2nd.

The USFS has been working hard to manage the forest around the tower. After extensive repair and redesign, the tower is soon open and the view is incredible. On a clear day you can see Asheville, NC, Greenville, TN and

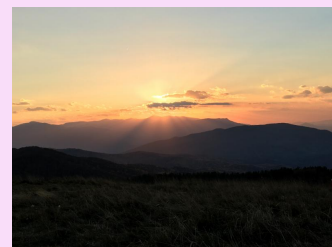


Photo by Tonia Norwood

even Hot Springs tucked down in the valley. It's a trip worth making again and again. For the hiker in you, the AT trail to the mountain-top is 2.4 miles. [Learn More About the Fire Tower](#)

## Homegrown & Handmade Market

### Opening Saturday, April 6th



Starting again for another year is the spring opening of the local outdoor market on the lawn of the **Alpine Court**. Every **Saturday** into October, from **10am til 2pm**, the lawn is filled with vendors of every type selling beautiful handmade crafts, art, jewelry, tinctures & tonics. Find some delicious organic fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, and garden plants while supplies last.

Also, Vendors Take Note: Vendors of all types will be able to set-up for daytime sales on the lawn of the **Hot Springs Rafting Company** every day of the week for a small fee. Check-In with rafting office staff upon arrival.

## Get ready for the 22nd Annual..... FRENCH BROAD RIVER FESTIVAL.....May 3, 4, & 5

Three days of outdoor music, river racing events, and an amazing amount more. The part outdoor adventure, part music festival includes whitewater and mountain bike races, hiking excursions, kid's village, camping on-site, and some great musical acts on multiple stages.



Photo by Elizabeth Gullum

The Festival takes place at the Hot Springs Resort & Spa campground on the French Broad River, surrounded by Pisgah National Forest and near the historic downtown Hot Springs.

Music and entertainment include a few surprises such as a juggling fire show, kid's parade, trapeze artists, fireworks, late night acoustic jams, and watch out for flying marshmallows.

On Saturday, be a part of the biggest mass-start whitewater raft race in the Southeast. The race begins in Barnard, North Carolina, and ends in beautiful Hot Springs. During the 9 mile race, you will experience Class 1-4 whitewater excitement, as well as bumping boats, crazy people, and a lot of heckling.

There are plenty of food vendors or you can dine out in one of Hot Springs restaurants. See lots of outdoor gear and win some of it in the raffle and silent auction.

Over the years, The French Broad River Festival has donated over \$200,000 to designated local charities such as Manna Food Bank, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of WNC, Eliada Home, Homeward Bound of Asheville, and American Whitewater.

## Hot Springs Welcome Center UPDATES:



This year we are already preparing for another busy tourist season. During last year's 2018 Tourist Season our staff documented over 15,000 visitors at the Welcome Center.

Over the past few months, the Welcome Center has had some needed maintenance, including a fresh coat of paint inside & outside.

## Welcome Center Visitor Comments

We at the Welcome Center get a chance to meet some of the most interesting people. Folks come from all over the world to explore our mountain region. I'd like to share some of these remarks with you.

- R.H. "Very nice & friendly. Great Place."
- T.F. "Interesting place. Love all the history."
- J.D. "A quiet haven for a weary soul."
- D.W. "Beautiful, informative & quaint."
- S & TD. "Fascinating history"

*The mission of **The Welcome Center** is to promote local businesses, events and area attractions of Hot Springs to all visitors and guests of town. We are located in the heart of downtown at **106 Bridge Street**, across from the Post Office. The Welcome Center is operated in part by the Hot Springs Tourism Association with support from the Town of Hot Springs and the Madison County Tourism Development Authority.*

[Learn More at HotSpringsNC.org](http://HotSpringsNC.org)

**Hot Springs Welcome Center**  
106 Bridge St  
828.622.9932  
[hotspringsnc.org](http://hotspringsnc.org)

Written by:  
Scott Zalewski, HSTA Vice President

**Give us a call today!**

STAY CONNECTED

