

# LAUREL HIGHLANDS VISITORS BUREAU ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014 FISCAL YEAR



Laurel Highlands  
PENNSYLVANIA



## Table of Contents

2	Greetings
3	Partnership
4	Partnership
5	Marketing
6	Marketing
7	Group Marketing
8	Public Relations
9	Financials
10	Financials
11	Grant Programs
12	Grant Programs
13	Board of Directors & LHV B Staff
14	LHV B News

## Acknowledgements

### FAYETTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

Al Ambrosini, *Chairman*  
Vince Zapotosky  
Angela Zimmerlink

### SOMERSET COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

John P. Vatauvuk, *Chairman*  
Pamela A. Tokar-Ickes  
Joe Betta

### WESTMORELAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

Charles Anderson, *Chairman*  
Tyler Courtney  
Ted Kopas

Dear Fellow LHV B Partner,

I am thrilled for the many successes that the bureau achieved for our tourism partners during the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year. The LHV B Board of Directors and I are committed to growing the region's tourism industry and to do so, we have again increased the bureau's overall promotional budget. This increase allowed the LHV B team to expand existing marketing campaigns and implement new marketing initiatives – all with the goal of increasing brand awareness of the region as a travel destination which ultimately drives more visitors to your businesses.



One of the primary highlights of the past year was the complete revision of our website. The new laurelhighlands.org is a responsive website allowing visitors the ability to view the site from any device without distortion. This new site also gives our partners access to the extranet which allows the flexibility to our partners to make their own updates and changes to their individual property listings. Thus far, the website statistics have grown significantly over the same period last year and continue to exceed expectations year after year.

This past year we hired Breanna Smith as a member of our marketing team. Breanna comes to us with a Bachelor of Science degree from Rochester Institute of Technology with a major in marketing and minor in advertising, public relations and web design and development.

I am proud to serve as your Board Chair and I look forward to leading this great organization for another year as we continue to work together to increase tourism and help grow the economies of the counties that comprise the Laurel Highlands.

Sincerely,

Andrea Cuda, *Chairperson, LHV B Board of Directors*



## Mission Statement

The mission of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau is to promote tourism, tourism development, and the interests of the travel and hospitality industries in the Laurel Highlands region generally comprising Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland Counties, thereby contributing to the economic growth and quality of life of the area.

Dear Partners of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau:

I am both proud and delighted to share with you the LHVB 2013-2014 Annual Report. Through prudent fiscal management, we have devoted more dollars to marketing initiatives during the fiscal year covered by this report than in prior years while closely scrutinizing other operating expenses. As a result, we have ended the year with a positive bottom line which will enable us to utilize those funds for additional marketing initiatives in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Fiscal stewardship is a team effort, and although we are categorized as a non-profit, each of us operates with an entrepreneurial spirit in order to maximize the effectiveness of our resources.



Our primary source of revenue, the "room tax," has increased over the prior year once again. The nearly \$82,000 increase translates to \$2,733,333 in increased lodging revenue in the Laurel Highlands and validates the effectiveness of our marketing initiatives that are designed to attract visitors from outside our region. The room tax collected in each of the three counties that we represent, Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland, provides funding for our operations as well as for the tourism grants that are awarded annually in those counties. In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, grants totaled \$1,154,467. The most significant fact regarding the room tax is that it is not a tax on the residents of the Laurel Highlands since more than 95% of the tax is paid by visitors who reside outside of the region.

A few months ago, we released our state-of-the-art website that has been completely redesigned to make it more visitor and partner-friendly. In technical terms the new website is a "responsive" website which means that it can be viewed using any type of PC, laptop, tablet or smart phone without any distortion due to the size of the viewing screen. Along with the new release, our partners have been given the ability to directly edit their information on the website through the "extranet" which enables them to add, remove or update content, photos and videos, subject to our review. The extranet greatly facilitates our partners' ability to ensure that their information on our website is kept current. Our website and social media statistics which are cited later in this report have been great.

The LHVB had the privilege in late May to host the members of the PA House Tourism and Recreation Committee. Joining Majority Chair, Jerry Stern, and Minority Chair, Thaddeus Kirkland, and twelve other members of the committee were approximately twenty guests comprised of their staff and family members. A whirlwind tour of the Laurel Highlands over a three-day period included a number of properties and attractions along with dinners at Nemaocolin Woodland Resort and Seven Springs Mountain Resort and lunch at Latrobe Country Club where the group was honored by a visit by Arnold Palmer who greeted and welcomed them to the Laurel Highlands.

The mission of the LHVB is to attract visitors to the region, and we pledge to do so with professionalism and enthusiasm. We are able accomplish our mission because our partners are constantly striving to make the visitors' experience a memorable one. By serving our partners and visitors, we aspire to provide for the economic growth and well-being of the Laurel Highlands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronald W. Virag".

Ronald W. Virag, *President & CEO*  
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau

This fiscal year saw some major changes for any tourism business interested in working with the LHVB. For 55 years the LHVB was considered a membership model. With care and consideration during the 2013-2014 fiscal year, plans were put in place to migrate to a partnership based model. This change allowed our 'partners' to all be on a level dues structure. No more tiers, no more dues based on number of restaurant seats, no more disparity between lodging entities. Everyone pays the same and everyone receives the same benefits. Those basic benefits include a Destination Guide Listing, individual webpage presence, brochure distribution, yearlong educational opportunities, and ever-expanding social media exposure. In addition, Rachel Roehrig was appointed to Partnership Sales Coordinator. Alongside Vice President of Partnership Development, Ann Nemanic, LHVB has a solid staff to continue growth among partnership and expand opportunities to our current partnership base.

### Autumn Tourism After Hours – September 2013

Held at the temporary location of the Westmoreland Museum of American Art, @Art30 provided the perfect canvas to honor our 2013 Photo Contest winners. Twelve photographs were selected as the very best in depicting our region. The evening included a tour of the museum, awards, refreshments by The Supper Club and networking with LHVB Board Members and fellow LHVB Partners.

### LHVB Annual Dinner – October 2013

Hosted at the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College, this is the single largest event for networking among our partners. The evening featured a trio of speakers from the Commonwealth – Representative Jerry Stern, Diane McGraw with the Pennsylvania Travel, Tourism & Film Office, and President and CEO of PATT, Rob Fulton. The evening also included honoring our Champions of Tourism:

- Olga Herbert, Tourism Trailblazer of the Year
- Judy Pletcher, Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year
- Louise Tilsy-Bates, Tourism Employee of the year

### Interactive Marketing Summit – November 2013

More than 100 participants attended the Bureau's third annual Interactive Marketing Summit, which was held at the Fred Rogers Center on the campus of Saint Vincent College in November, 2013. The LHVB marketing department coordinates this annual event as a way to expose our partners to the latest trends in the ever-changing world of Interactive Marketing. The LHVB welcomed three phenomenal speakers, presenting on hot topics including SEO, Google Analytics, and Social Media Marketing. Presentations from the event and more information can be found at: [www.laurelhighlands.org/summit](http://www.laurelhighlands.org/summit).

### Grant Writing Workshop – November 2013

This intense four hour workshop gave insight into grant writing on all levels, including Tourism Grants available in Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland counties. Highlights included seeing an actual grant application, the importance of follow-up and a panel discussion with members of the Review Committees in each of the three counties.

### Breakfast with the Bureau – February 2014

LHVB staff hosted breakfast meetings in each of our three counties during the 2014 winter to highlight the new [laurelhighlands.org](http://laurelhighlands.org) which would be launched in April. Attending partners learned how the new site would be visitor-focused, and saw how their individual listings would be expanded. Web advertising opportunities were shared and partners were encouraged to utilize the extranet to update their information. More than 250 partners were in attendance.

### GAP Hospitality Summit – April 2014

The LHVB and VisitPittsburgh co-hosted a day-long summit along the Great Allegheny Passage for our respective tourism-based trail businesses. The summit included panel discussions, keynote speakers, a focus on social media, and a Power Point presentation on the natural beauty of the trail.

### Meet & Greet – April 2014

The Bureau was happy to host a special Meet & Greet event for the new Ohiopyle Park Manager, Ken Bisbee, in early spring. Ken provided an update on the new Visitors Center, changes to the boat launch for the outfitters, his personal background, and visitation for the park's future.

### Annual Backyard Tour – May 2014

How do you have a “Doggone Good time” in the Laurel Highlands? You join us aboard a motorcoach for our yearly Backyard Tour. A “dog-themed-tour” helped our partners and their front-line staff see the region from a visitors’ point of view. This yearly tour is geared to help them answer “What is there to do around here?”. Visits included: Riverside Bakery, Glamping at Campbell Farm, On-Point Outfitters, Confluence House Catering, Confluence Cyclery, Great Allegheny Passage, Jager Dog Park, Summer Smiles Honey Farm and Green Gables Restaurant.

### Social Media 101 –Quarterly

Held four times during the year, these free workshops conducted by LHVb’s Marketing team aid members in developing their skills for platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

### Beyond Your Front Door

This free, in-depth two-hour training session provides the tools for LHVb partners to educate their front-line staff on the diversity of our region, key attractions, and how to navigate our scenic by-ways. A modified one-hour version was launched for speaking engagements to community service organizations.



### CONSUMER SHOWS

America’s Largest RV & Camping Show  
Hershey, PA, September 2013

Fabulous Food Show  
Cleveland, OH, November 2013

AAA Great Vacation Expo  
Columbus, OH, January 2014

Allegheny Sport, Travel & Outdoor Show  
Monroeville, PA, February 2014

Adventures in Travel Expo  
Washington, D.C., February 2014

NY Times Travel Show  
New York, NY, February 2014

International Women’s Show  
Novi, MI, May 2014

### EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Welcome Jim Hamerski to LHVb Team! A new, friendly face has the LHVb Brochure Rack System stocked and looking sharp. LHVb’s Brochure Distribution Coordinator, Jim Hamerski, joined our team in July 2014. In addition to servicing the LHVb’s 86 racks throughout the region, Jim manages the warehouse and distributes partner brochures to PA Welcome Centers, regional Information Centers, and to fellow LHVb partners. Jim lives in Latrobe with his wife Beth and their son. Reach Jim by email at [warehouse@laurelhighlands.org](mailto:warehouse@laurelhighlands.org).

*Photo captions left to right: 2013 LHVb After Hours at the WMAA, 2014 Annual Backyard Tour, 2013 Annual Dinner, 2014 Breakfast With the Bureau Presentations*

# MARKETING

With campaigns focused on and featuring each of our four seasons and the unique experiences that accompany them, the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau consistently manages a year-round campaign in our target markets to increase overall awareness and attract overnight stays to our region. Seasonal campaigns within the 2013-2014 fiscal year spanned across a variety of media outlets including TV, radio, print, billboards and online.

## TARGET MARKETS

Cleveland, OH | Columbus, OH | Pittsburgh, PA | Baltimore, MD | Washington, D.C.

### LHVB's radio station campaign included:

Pittsburgh: WDVE | 3WS | KISS 96.1 | Y108 | STAR 100.7 | Q 92.9 | BOB 96.9 | PANDORA Internet Radio  
Washington, D.C.: DC101 | 97.1 WASH-FM | 98.7 WMZQ | PANDORA Internet Radio

### LHVB's TV branding campaign included:

96 monthly, 15-second commercial spots, airing within the first 2 weeks of every month, on WTAE in Pittsburgh. The goal of the campaign is to brand the Laurel Highlands on a consistent, year-round basis, as the premier, four-season destination just a short drive from Pittsburgh, our #1 market.



LHVB also ran a targeted Cable TV campaign with Comcast for the summer months in 2014, from May-July. The campaign was targeted to females as household decision makers for travel. A sampling of channels in the lineup included ABC Family, HGTV, Food Network, and TLC, as well as a few premium placements on ROOT during the Pittsburgh Pirates games.



### Artwork from LHVB's 2013-2014 Outdoor Billboard Campaign:



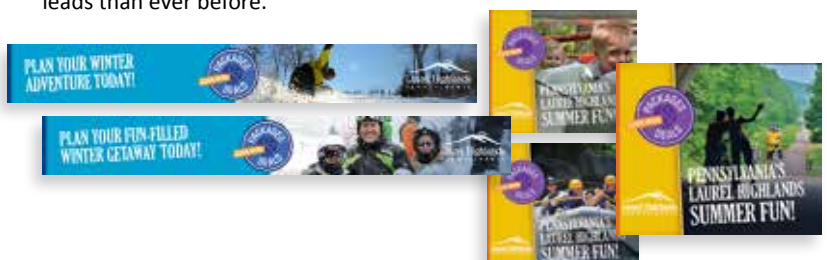
### Co-op Advertising

Fall Festivals Newspaper Advertising Campaign



### Online Banner Advertising

LHVB's seasonal online banner ad campaigns were linked to unique landing pages on laurelhighlands.org featuring information related to each ad topic. Not only were these online banner ads circulating in all of LHVB's target geographic markets, they were also using behavior targeting technology to direct the online ads to the most relevant sites for our target audience, resulting in more qualified leads than ever before.



## NEW and Improved www.laurelhighlands.org

The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau officially launched the new laurelhighlands.org on April 2, 2014. Simpleview, the company that manages the LHVB's CRM database and specializes in the creation of DMO websites, built, developed, and designed the new website.

Utilizing cutting-edge technology, the new laurelhighlands.org has a responsive website design, meaning the site provides an optimal viewing experience across a much wider range of devices from desktops to mobile phones to electronic tablets of all sizes.

The new website project facilitated many significant improvements to key features of the website, including its integration with the LHVB CRM, as well as the incorporation of additional advancements in technology, increased reporting, social media integration, superior device display compatibility, interactive features and maps, a brand new Laurel Highlands blog and media gallery, enhanced partner listings, events, and deals, and much more.



TOTAL WEB TRAFFIC	FY 13-14	FY 12-13
Total Visitors	508,385	389,274
Unique Visitors	423,788	321,265
Page Views	1,900,262	1,452,374

**OVERALL TRAFFIC INCREASE 31%**



### LHV Partner Extranet:

With the launch of the new laurelhighlands.org in April 2014, the LHV Partner Extranet has allowed LHV partners the ability to update their web listing on laurelhighlands.org, add new photos & videos, update featured amenities, showcase social media accounts, upload events, and post special packages and coupons!

The LHV Extranet gives LHV Partners 24/7 access to their web presence on laurelhighlands.org.

### SEO - Search Engine Optimization

Successfully optimizing our website allows laurelhighlands.org to rank very high in organic search engine results.



### SEM - Search Engine Marketing

SEM facilitates our paid search engine ads to appear high in search results based on keywords.



### Social Media Marketing

The LHVB marketing staff maintains multiple social media platforms as a way to regularly interact with consumers, reaching out to our thousands of followers daily.



#### SOCIAL MEDIA STATS (AS OF JUNE, 2014)

Facebook	22,509 fans	275% increase since June 2013
Twitter	6,229 followers	60% increase since June 2013
YouTube	35,514 video views	24% increase since June 2012
Pinterest	390 followers	46% increase since June 2013
Instagram	475 followers	150% increase since summer 2013

# GROUP MARKETING

## Group Tour Coordinator

2013 started a new and welcomed era for group tour and travel in the Laurel Highlands. With the addition of the Group Tour Coordinator, updates on the group section of our website became an immediate priority. Being able to connect with our partners, seeking new and creative opportunities is a necessary part of our program and this is a primary focus moving forward.

## Tour Product Development

It became a major component to our programming to meet one-on-one with our partners and learn what 'the experience' will be when a group visits our service providers. Having dedicated the time and having conducted many community meetings, it allowed us to build a 'Menu of Opportunity' to add to the website, giving a tour planner an idea of what their tour might include. We encourage everyone to update us frequently to better serve you!

## TOUR AND TRAVEL:

### Tradeshows | Sales Trips | FAMS | Informational Sessions

#### August

- Participated in D:GP Sales Blitz through PA and parts of VA
- Attended [Linda Mauzy] Ontario Motorcoach Association's (OMCA) Board of Directors meeting as a Supplier Council representative
- Attended Destinations NY Tour Company and Group Leader Show

#### September

- Attended Going on Faith Conference
- Hosted a KALEO and Friends FAM
- Attended Virginia and North Carolina Motorcoach Associations' Conference

#### November

- Attended Ontario Motorcoach Association
- Attended the MPMPI and PATT Meeting for the Small Meetings Market

#### January

- Attended the American Bus Association (ABA) Convention

#### February

- Represented the region at the National Tour Association (NTA) Convention

#### March

- Attended Heartland Travel Showcase with LHVB group partners
- Hosted site visit for Mid-Atlantic Receptive Service

#### April

- Conducted an informational/educational session "The World of Group Tour"

#### May

- Welcomed Sisters on the Fly, a unique group of ladies who camp

#### June

- Attended Travel Alliance Partners 'Dance'/Conference (TAP)
- Attended PBA Annual Summer Meeting and Sales Retreat
- Participated in PATT's Group Tour Sales Mission to the New England states.

## 2014 Group Tour Program

97 LHVB Members opted into this year's Group Tour Program. This includes a listing in the Group Tour Destination Planner as well as on the Group segment of our website. The Group Tour Program has also been enhanced by adding Social Media elements in 2013.



### GROUP PLANNER GUIDE

Distribution  
1,500

With all of the travel shows attended, appointments, calls to the office, arranged site visits, and relationship built, we pass along the requests for family reunions, tour groups, faith-based, recreational, whatever the request to those who partner in the group tour program.

It is important to note that we work with tour companies, motorcycle groups, car clubs, and camping groups and have a wide range of opportunity to share with every age group in mind.

We are excited to announce that moving forward we are looking carefully at opportunities for sports travel and family groups that follow. Outdoor recreation is indeed a positive but we are seeking any travel that brings a multitude of indoor sports, recreation of all types, and competitions that our partners are able and willing to host.



# PUBLIC RELATIONS

## Toronto Media Mission - October 2013

The LHVB joined the Pennsylvania State Tourism Office, Tierney Communications and other PA DMOs for a media mission targeting Toronto's top-level journalists. Story ideas were shared with the Toronto Star, Toronto Sun, and TravelWeek as well as some of the city's most popular bloggers.

## Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference and Press Tours

The LHVB was pleased to be a sponsor for the Travel Media Association of Canada's Annual Conference when it was held in Pittsburgh at the end of May, 2014. The LHVB also coordinated and hosted 30 journalists for pre and post conference press tours.

## Press Visits

- Travelchannel.com, Mom's guidetotravel.com, Tawanna Browne-Smith
- Mother Earth News, Hobby Farm, John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist
- Jim Weaver, New York Trend, NYC
- Kathleen Ganster, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Views and Voices
- Steve Habel, CyberGolf.com
- Main Line Today, Marilyn Odesser Torpey
- Deutschland radio Kultur, Michaela Wieser, German equivalent of NPR
- North Hills Monthly, Vanessa Orr
- Group Travel Leader, Brian Jewell
- ABC 23 Johnstown Film Crew

## Press Highlights

- New York Trend.com, Historic Carousel and Coasters Still Thrill Riders at Western PA Park
- New York Trend.com, Mr. Rogers is Remembered at an Educational Center that Bears his Name
- New York Trend (print), GolfWiz.com, New Hotel offers a chance to play golf where Arnold Palmer learned his game
- The Huffington Post, Ten Reasons to Love Pennsylvania (3 LH sites landed on the list!)
- Tribune Review, Television series explores the Laurel Highlands
- Tribune Review, Laurel Highlands Attractions to be featured on Travel Show
- Tribune Review, Businesses receive tourism grants from Laurel Highlands bureau
- MSN Travel, On yer bike! The very best bike routes
- Lonely Planet Guidebook New York & The Mid-Atlantic's 27 Amazing Road Trips – Pittsburgh & The Laurel Highlands (2014)
- Pennsylvania Outdoor Adventure Guide, Cover 2014
- Pennsylvania Magazine – Exploring Ligonier
- Pennsylvania Magazine – Zipping Along
- North Hills Monthly, Nemaacolin Woodlands Resort Provides an Escape from Winter Blues
- ABC 23 Johnstown, Kaleidoscope Series featuring Laurel Highlands partners
- TribLive.com, Season for brilliant leaves extended by fortuitous weather in Western Pennsylvania
- TribLive.com, Ligonier based visitors bureau announces photo contest winners
- Ligonier Echo, Ligonier based visitors bureau announces photo contest winners
- TribLive.com, Amateurs snap Laurel Highlands' treasures for 10th annual photo contest
- Daily American, \$320K in local grants to be doled out
- Meyersdale New Republic, 51 Somerset County Tourism Organizations and Businesses Receive Financial Boost
- Triblive.com, Fayette benefits from tourist dollars, Learn and Lunch told
- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, A newsmaker you should know: Businesswoman honored for attracting tourism to Laurel Highlands
- York Dispatch, Climate has Olympics on thin ice
- Tribune Review, Tourism grants total \$382,000
- Latrobe Bulletin, Tourism grants give area organizations boost
- Mount Pleasant Journal, County tourism grants total \$382,000
- Mother Earth News.com, Eco-Tourism in the Laurel Highlands: By Bike, by Boat On Foot
- Mother Earth News.com, Mountain High in the Laurel Highlands
- NBC4 Washington, Plan Your Fall Foliage Covered Bridge Route
- New England Antiques Journal, The Little Known Gem: Frank Lloyd Wright's Kentuck Knob in PA
- New York Trend, NYC, When George Washington Wore A "Red Coat" And Fought For The British
- Tribune Review, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau recognizes champions of tourism
- Tribune Review, Mount Pleasant Area to be promoted as group tour destination
- Daily American.com, Laurel Highlands Top 10
- Tribune Review, Visitors Bureau Nominates Fallingwater for '8th Wonder of the World' Contest
- KDKA-TV, Hidden Valley May Be Bought By Seven Springs
- Snocountry.com, Pennsylvania's Seven Springs Acquires Neighboring Hidden Valley
- Tribune Review, Highlands Fling In Westmoreland, autumn dances
- Daily American Online, Visitors bureau honor three women
- Main Line Today – Hit Up High Society in the Laurel Highlands
- Pennsylvania Meetings + Events – Gardens & Galleries
- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette – When it comes to attracting tourists, the entire region works together
- Uncoveringpa.com, Celebrating Pennsylvania's Rural Heritage by visiting the Somerset Historical Center
- Daily American – Legislators tour Laurel Highlands touting tourism
- Herald-Standard – LHVB awards tourism grants
- The Maritime Examiner, How I love Nemaacolin, let-me –count-the-ways (with apologies to E. B. Browning)

### Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2014

#### ASSETS

##### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$808,948
Cash - restricted	729,591
Room tax receivables	415,714
Accounts receivable	4,314
Prepaid expenses	37,291

Total current assets 1,995,858

Fixed assets and software, net of accumulated depreciation & amortization 168,927

**Total Assets** \$2,164,785

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

##### CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$88,764
Accrued liabilities	23,645
Room tax payable	95,646
Grants payable	274,250
Deferred revenue	359,945

**Total Current Liabilities** 842,250

##### NET ASSETS

Unrestricted, board designated	620,005
Unrestricted and undesignated	702,530

**Total Net Assets** 1,322,535

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets** \$2,164,785

Included in Restricted Cash is all Deferred Revenue for the counties' tourism grant programs, whether already awarded and yet to be paid or held to be awarded in future periods.

## Statement of Activities for Year-Ended June 30, 2014

### UNRESTRICTED REVENUE

State and local grants	\$23,114
Room tax	2,311,791
Partnership dues	102,249
Co-op programs/advertising	90,188
Publication ad sales	165,770
Interest	2,941
Miscellaneous income	23,248
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>2,719,301</b>

### EXPENSES

Administrative expense	636,135
Office expense	29,045
Advertising	581,358
Printing	163,543
Postage	32,214
Travel & entertainment	63,895
Promotion & public relations	121,285
Professional services	19,023
Lease expense	41,606
Depreciation & amortization	34,729
Pass-through grant expense	23,114
County grant programs	877,600
Contributions	150
Miscellaneous	29,416
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,653,113</b>
Change in unrestricted net assets	66,188
Net Assets, unrestricted, beginning of year	1,256,347
<b>Net Assets, unrestricted, end of year</b>	<b>\$1,322,535</b>

Through agreements with the Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland County Commissioners, a portion of the room tax dollars collected each month is specifically designated for a Tourism Grant Fund in each county. A Tourism Grant Committee has been instituted in each county to establish the grant criteria, review applications, select recipients and present grant awards.

### Fayette County

#### TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM CRITERIA

Grants may be awarded to any non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose primary place of business is in Fayette County and whose mission is directly related to tourism and tourism development. Grants may be awarded in the following four project categories: Marketing and Advertising Programs, Capital Projects, Operational Expenses and Tourism Education.

#### 13-14 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Chris Plummer, *General Manager, Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort*
- Sean Sypolt, *Private Industry Council*
- Nancy Henry, *Susan McCarthy Public Relations*
- Donald Robinson, *A&I Fire Extinguishers*
- Ron Virag, *President & CEO, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau*

### Somerset County

#### TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM CRITERIA

Grants may be awarded to any tourism-related business or organization (non-profit or for-profit) located within Somerset County. Grants may be awarded in the following two project categories: Marketing and Advertising Programs and Capital Projects.

#### 13-14 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Commissioner Pamela Tokar-Ickes
- George Coyle, *General Manager, Somerset Med Services*
- Lee Murdy, *Miller Equipment*
- Eric Mauck, *CEO, Seven Springs Mountain Resort*
- Ron Virag, *President & CEO, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau*

### Westmoreland County

#### TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM CRITERIA

Grants may be awarded to any tourism-related business or organization (non-profit or for-profit) located within Westmoreland County. Grants may be awarded in the following two project categories: Marketing and Advertising Programs and Capital Projects.

#### 13-14 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Commissioner Charles Anderson
- Commissioner Tyler Courtney
- Vince Fontana, *President of Vince Building Company*
- Andrea Cuda, *Co-Owner, Ramada Inn, Ligonier*
- Ron Virag, *President & CEO, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau*

### Fayette County Tourism Grant Recipients

Allegheny Trail Alliance/Regional Trail Corporation	\$20,000
Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation (BARC)	\$5,000
Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation (BARC)	\$4,000
Carnegie Free Library of Connellsville	\$7,000
Carnegie Free Library of Connellsville	\$9,000
Christian Family and Children's Center	\$2,000
Community Foundation of Fayette County	\$3,000
Community Foundation of Fayette County	\$4,000
Community Foundation of Fayette County—Tourism Education	\$2,500
Connellsville Area Historical Society	\$5,000
Connellsville Area Historical Society	\$5,000
Connellsville Area Historical Society	\$1,500
Dunbar Historical Society	\$7,000
Dunbar Historical Society	\$2,000
Dunbar Historical Society	\$2,000
Fay-Penn Economic Development Council	\$15,000
Fayette County Agricultural Improvement Association, Inc.	\$15,000
Fayette County Agricultural Improvement Association, Inc.	\$12,000
Fayette County Cultural Trust	\$17,000
Fayette County Cultural Trust	\$10,000
Fayette County Historical Society	\$9,000
Fayette County Historical Society	\$6,000
Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater	\$40,000
Friends of Ohiopyle State Park (FOO)	\$8,000
Highlands Hospital	\$19,500
Jumonville Christian Camp & Retreat Center	\$3,000
Laurel Hill Development Corporation	\$25,000
Light and Life Ministries	\$4,500
Monongahela River, Rail, and Transportation Museum	\$2,000
Monongahela River, Rail, and Transportation Museum	\$1,000
National Road Heritage Corridor	\$7,000
National Road Heritage Corridor	\$4,000
National Road Heritage Corridor	\$2,000
Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette (PIC)	\$18,000
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Connellsville	\$50,000
Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great	\$7,500
State Theatre Center for the Arts	\$10,000
State Theatre Center for the Arts	\$10,000
Redstone Foundation/Fayette County Television	\$19,000
Redstone Foundation	\$10,000
Touchstone Center for Crafts	\$9,000
Touchstone Center for Crafts	\$4,000
Touchstone Center for Crafts	\$4,000
Trail Town Program/The Progress Fund	\$10,000
Uniontown Public Library	\$7,000
Yough River Trail Council/Regional Trail Corporation	\$15,000
<b>TOTAL GRANT DISPURSEMENT</b>	<b>\$452,500</b>

## Somerset County Tourism Grant Recipients

Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA)	\$18,000
Benscreek Canoe Club	\$7,000
Buffer Creek Sporting Clays, Inc.	\$4,000
Casselman River Watershed Association Inc.	\$2,000
Comfort Inn Somerset	\$5,000
Confluence Cyclery	\$1,500
ConfluenceHouseB&BandCateringServices,LLCMarketing	\$2,000
Confluence Tourism Association	\$5,000
Confluence Tourism Association	\$2,500
Coon Hollow Cabin	\$560
EagleNest Vacation Rental	\$500
Faranda Farm	\$4,000
Flight 93 Memorial Chapel	\$3,000
Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial	\$15,000
Georgian Inn of Somerset	\$9,000
Gingerbread House Bed and Breakfast	\$1,500
Haunted Hayloft	\$6,000
Highland Farms Guest House	\$2,000
Horizon View Farms	\$2,000
Hostel on Main	\$9,000
Husky Haven Campground	\$650
Huston's Haunted Hollow	\$3,600
Jäger and Friends Dog Park – Wings of Change	\$700
Laurel Arts	\$2,500
Laurel Highlands Heritage Festivals Co-op	\$5,000
Laurel Highlands Snowmobile Club, Inc.	\$2,000
Meyersdale Area Historical Society	\$14,568
Meyersdale Area Historical Society	\$3,500
Meyersdale Area Merchants Association	\$4,000
Morguen Toole Company	\$5,000
Mountain Playhouse	\$12,000
National Road Chainsaw Carving Festival	\$1,500
Oakhurst Tea Room, Inc.	\$2,500
Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers Association	\$1,839
Pioneer Park Campground	\$1,000
Posey Corners Campground	\$2,000
Ripples On The Water	\$2,000
Ripples On The Water	\$2,000
Rockwood Area Merchants Association	\$10,400
Rockwood Area Merchants Association	\$750
Rockwood Area Merchants Association	\$3,000
Seven Springs Mountain Resort	\$35,000
Sister's Café	\$1,500
Sister's Café	\$825
Somerset County Chamber of Commerce	\$14,000
Somerset County Farmers Market	\$2,500
Somerset County Maple Producers Association	\$1,000
Somerset County Rails to Trails Association	\$10,000
Somerset County Sportsmen League	\$1,500
Somerset Historical Center	\$10,000
Somerset Interchange Lodging Association	\$28,000
Somerset, Inc.	\$7,500
Springs Historical Society	\$2,500
Stonycreek Shooting Center, Inc.	\$5,000
Stonycreek/Quemahoning Initiative (SQI)	\$8,000
The Parker House	\$4,000
Trail Town Program	\$7,000
Welcome to Shanksville	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL GRANT DISPURSEMENT</b>	<b>\$319,392</b>

## Westmoreland County Tourism Grant Recipients

Arnold Palmer Regional Airport	\$25,000
Braddock Trail Chapter (NSDAR)	\$7,000
Bushy Run Battlefield	\$1,000
Caddie Shak	\$5,000
Campbell House Bed and Breakfast	\$1,500
Chef Dato's Table	\$3,500
Christian Family & Children's Center	\$2,000
Christmas in the Mountains	\$3,600
Compass Inn Museum	\$4,000
Days Inn Donegal	\$7,500
Derry Railroad Days	\$250
Escape to Donegal	\$4,500
Family Festivals Association	\$7,000
Festa Italiana di Vandergrift	\$5000
Fort Ligonier	\$13,000
Fort Ligonier Days	\$15,000
Freeport Theatre Festival	\$1,500
Geyer Performing Arts	\$2,000
Historic Scottsdale	\$4,000
Great Allegheny Passage (Allegheny Trail Alliance)	\$8,025
Greater Monessen Historical Society	\$2,000
Greenhouse Winery	\$2,000
Hillside Orchards	\$4,000
Historic Hanna's Town (Westmoreland County Historical Society)	\$7,000
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Donegal	\$2,000
Idlewild & SoakZone	\$5,000
Idlewild & SoakZone	\$25,000
Latrobe Art Center and Café	\$1,500
Latrobe Community Revitalization Program	\$1,000
Latshaw Productions & Marketing Inc.	\$10,000
Laurel Highlands Heritage Festivals	\$4,000
Laurel Highlands Snowmobile Club	\$750
Ligonier Country Market	\$1,000
Ligonier Theatre   Valley Players of Ligonier	\$2,000
Ligonier Valley Chamber of Commerce	\$3,700
Ligonier Valley Railroad Museum	\$1,000
Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor	\$4,000
Living Treasures Animal Park	\$2,000
Living Treasures Animal Park	\$4,000
Love Receptive Tours	\$3,500
Miracle League of Western Pennsylvania	\$8,000
Mount Pleasant Glass & Ethnic Festival	\$4,000
Mount Pleasant Glass Museum	\$2,000
Mount Pleasant Glass Museum	\$2,500
Mountain Watershed Association	\$10,000
Northview Inn Bed and Breakfast	\$1,000
Overly's Country Christmas	\$3,000
Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers Association	\$2,000
Palace Theatre (Westmoreland Cultural Trust)	\$25,000
Ramada Ligonier	\$12,000
Robertshaw Country House Bed and Breakfast	\$5,000
Saint Vincent College	\$4,000
Scottsdale Fall Festival	\$2,000
Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier (SAMA)	\$3,000
Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier (SAMA)	\$3,000
Auxilliary	\$750
Southwestern Pennsylvania Council for the Arts, Inc.	\$500
Springhill Suites by Marriott Pittsburgh-Latrobe	\$8000
Stage Right	\$5,000
Supper Club	\$1,000
Trail Town Program (Progress Fund)	\$7,000
The Trailside	\$1,000
West Newton Station (Regional Trail Corporation)	\$12,000
West Overton Museums	\$4,000
West Overton Museums	\$5,800
Westmoreland Agricultural Fair	\$5,000
Westmoreland Arts & Heritage Festival	\$12,000
Westmoreland Choral Society	\$500
Westmoreland Heritage	\$20,000
Westmoreland Museum of American Art	\$12,500
Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra	\$4,000
Youngwood Historical & Railroad Association, Inc.	\$500
<b>TOTAL GRANT DISPURSEMENT</b>	<b>\$382,575</b>

# ABOUT LHVB

## LHVB Staff

2013-2014

Ronald W. Virag  
*President & CEO*

Nadine Yanarella  
*Vice-President & CFO*

Julie Donovan  
*Vice-President - Public Relations*

Ann Nemanic  
*Vice-President - Partnership Development*

Linda Mauzy  
*Vice-President - Group Travel*

Kristin Ecker  
*Vice-President - Marketing*

Michele Wisnesck  
*Interactive Marketing Manager*

Breanna Smith  
*Marketing Coordinator*

Katie Showalter  
*Administrative Coordinator*

Rachel Roehrig  
*Partnership Sales Coordinator*

Stacey Magda  
*Group Tour Coordinator*

Jim Hamerski  
*Brochure Distribution Coordinator*

Dolores M. Love  
*Information Counselor - Ohiopyle*

Patricia Nicholson  
*Information Counselor - Ohiopyle*

Cesar Alviar  
*Information Counselor - Ohiopyle*

## Board of Directors

2013-2014

Andrea Cuda, Chairman  
Westmoreland County  
Commissioners' Appointee

Eric Mauck, Vice Chairman  
Seven Springs Mountain Resort

Michael Langer, Treasurer  
Westmoreland Cultural Trust

Chris Plummer, Secretary  
Nemacolin Woodlands Resort

Ron Aldom  
Somerset County  
Commissioners' Appointee

Linda McKenna Boxx  
Allegheny Trail Alliance

Zachary Costelnock  
Hidden Valley Resort

Janis Dofner  
Levi Deal Mansion B & B

Dave Kahley  
Progress Fund - Trail Town Program

Susan McCarthy  
McCarthy Public Relations

Joel Means  
Ohiopyle Trading Post

Pam Miller  
Pine Grill Restaurant

Gabe Monzo  
Arnold Palmer Regional Airport

Muriel Nuttall  
Fayette County  
Commissioners' Appointee

Judy Pletcher  
Rockwood Mill Shoppes &  
Opera House

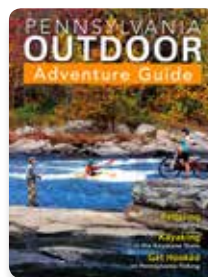
Bill Ross  
Inne at Watson's Choice

Reneé Seifert  
Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater

Dave Stoner  
Family Festivals Association, Inc.

## Laurel Highlands Featured on Cover of PA Outdoor Adventure Guide

The Laurel Highlands [Ohiopyle State Park] was selected by DCED for the cover of the new Pennsylvania Outdoor Adventure Guide that was unveiled in March, 2014. The LHVB coordinated the photo shoot with Commonwealth Media Services and Wilderness Voyageurs, who provided the models and gear.



## LHVB Hosts Legislative FAM Tour

The LHVB hosted Chairman Jerry Stern and 14 members of the Pennsylvania House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee along with their guests and staff for a familiarization tour of the Laurel Highlands at the end of May, 2014. Advocacy is crucial for advancing the Laurel Highlands' and Pennsylvania's tourism industry. These representatives are our allies and advocates and we greatly appreciate their efforts on the region's behalf.



### Breanna Smith, Marketing Coordinator

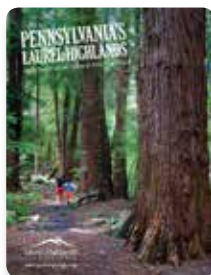
The LHVB team is pleased to have welcomed Breanna Smith as our new Marketing Coordinator in May, 2014. A Laurel Highlands resident, Breanna is a Rochester Institute of Technology graduate who received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing with a minor in Advertising/Public Relations and Web Design/Development. She completed marketing internships with the National Aviary and Kennametal. Breanna's technology skills and marketing support are a huge asset to our organization. As partner liaison for many of the LHVB's marketing opportunities, you will all come to know Breanna well!

## Publications



### SUMMER FUN COUPON BOOK

Distribution 25,000



### DESTINATION GUIDE

Distribution 200,000



### PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Distribution 550



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Seasonal Distribution 13,000



### HEADLINES NEWSLETTER

Distribution 1,000



Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau  
120 East Main Street | Ligonier, PA 15658  
(TF) 800.333.5661 (P) 724.238.5661  
[www.laurelhighlands.org](http://www.laurelhighlands.org)

