



# The Village Current

An e-Newsletter of the  
Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce

The mission of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, through the efforts of our membership, shall be to contribute to the cultural, social and economic development, growth and sustainability of Blowing Rock while preserving the charm and character of the village.

## CONCIERGE 101: A Showcase of Fun Things to Do!

**con-cierge; kon-see-airzh;** 1. (esp. in France) a person who has charge of the entrance of a building and is often the owner's representative; door-keeper. 2. a member of a hotel staff in charge of special services for guests, as arranging for theater tickets or tours.



Concierge 101 in 2008.

Those who work in and around Blowing Rock are encouraged to attend the upcoming **"Concierge 101: A Showcase of Things to Do" Tuesday, May 26, 3:30pm to 6:00pm at the Hayes Performing Arts Center.** "We need for those folks who work the front lines with our visitors to know who's out there when a visitor asks what there is to do in our town," said Charles Hardin, Executive Director of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, one of the event's sponsors. "In a sense, we're all a concierge in a town with a lot of visitors, and we need to know how to answer the

questions they often have." The event will feature area outfitters, fishing companies, rafting guides, shopping, arts events, restaurants and the area's major attractions. Concierge 101 is like a crash course in all the fun things in our area. Participants will learn about everything from Tweetsie Railroad to area restaurants. Even the Blue Ridge Parkway's Rangers will be on hand to answer questions. Those in attendance find out quickly that the answer to the question of what there is to do is: LOTS. Attendees can also register for door prizes from many of the businesses featured at the

show and pick up coupons. Restaurants will offer samples of their fare, giving attendees a taste of the many kinds of dining that can be found in Blowing Rock. During the past events, nearly a hundred people stopped by the Hayes Performing Arts Center to attend the event. "I didn't realize there were so many things to choose from," said one attendee. "I learned something too. I didn't know that the Blowing Rock was made of a special kind of rock. That's cool." Even people who are old hands at the visitor services business found the event useful. "It was great to meet the people we work with," said Ken Cham from the Blowing Rock Visitors Center. All businesses are encouraged to send their front line employees to the event. It usually takes about an hour to see all the booths and chat with the businesses. Booths will be set up outside the Hayes Center and parking is plentiful.

## CONGRATS to Chetola Resort

Chetola Resort at Blowing Rock has been named Boone Area Business of the Year by the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce. Yeah, we know that's that OTHER Chamber in that

OTHER town, but we also like to give credit where credit is due. Chetola deserves it for their long history, outstanding business ethic, and support of not only the Blowing Rock community, but the

whole of Watauga County. For the record though, we'd like to point out that Chetola was the Blowing Rock Business of the Year for 2006. So, chew on that Boone Chamber! ;-)

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Friday,  
May 22, 2009

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### Calendar of Events.

- Tuesday, May 26, 3:30—6:00pm, Concierge 101, Hayes Center
- Wednesday, June 3, 8:00am, Chamber Board Meeting
- Saturday, June 6, 2:00pm Shriner's Parade, Main Street Blowing Rock
- Saturday, June 13, 10:00am—5:00pm, Art in the Park, American Legion Grounds
- Tuesday, June 16, 5:30pm—7pm, Business After Hours, Southmarke
- Saturday, June 20, 4:00 pm, Concert in the Park, Diana and Sarvis Ridge

Meet Your Board of Directors

**Tim Miller of *Blowing Rock Frameworks & Gallery***



*Tim Miller of Blowing Rock Frameworks & Gallery serves on the Board of Directors.*

Tim Miller, owner of Blowing Rock Frameworks and Gallery, located in the Food Lion Shopping Center, is in his second year of service with the Blowing Rock Chamber's Board of Directors. Tim returned to Watauga County, after growing up here, in 1994 to open the shop. "I developed an interest in art after traveling the world," he says. In his previous life, Tim worked for a major oil company and had the chance to visit every continent except

Antarctica. From this experience, he was inspired to open Blowing Rock Frameworks and Gallery. When asked about his goals regarding service to the community via the Chamber, he gives a simple answer, "I just want to keep Blowing Rock rolling." Tim is passionate about encouraging customers to BUY BLOWING ROCK FIRST. "Sometimes, things cost a little more – but that's fine," he says. Blowing Rock offers nearly everything we

need, from groceries to local original art. "Businesses in this town pay taxes here, and that money is going right back into our town. That is what is most important," he says. Tim can also be found as an active parent at Blowing Rock School, where both of his children are enrolled. Additionally, he serves on the Board of Directors for the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum.

**New Parking Facility to Open Soon!**

The new parking facility will be open to the public very soon. As we await this highly anticipated event, we would like to pass on that merchants in Blowing Rock's Central Business District have recently expressed concern over the parking issue in Downtown. Many business owners are concerned that, as the busy season approaches,

parking spaces on Main Street will be used by those who work in town, as opposed to shoppers. While this has been an age old problem, when the beautiful new parking facility is open, there is now a way to alleviate the problem. Merchants and employees, who take advantage of parking in the

new facility and then walking through the park, will leave spaces available for our welcome customers. Even on the five remaining Art in the Park days, when only the top of the facility will be in use, there will be nearly one hundred more spaces than we have now.

**Summer Events Update**

EVENTS Update: The **Concert in the Park** scheduled for May 17 was rescheduled due to the rain. The Cans and Pans Steel Drum Band of Ashe County High School will be back with us on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 4pm. We have our fingers crossed for more Caribbean-like weather that day. The season's first **Art in the Park** had a good morning despite the rain that settled in during

the afternoon. We had some fabulous winners: Award of Excellence went to Chad Brown, a potter from Ether, NC. Chad will be back with us June 13. This was Chad's first time at Art in the Park. Award of Distinction went to Vicki Love of Knoxville TN. Vicki makes leather clothing and bags. Honorable Mentions went to Jim Thoma, an Art in the Park favorite who makes

Shaker boxes and jeweler Deb Karash, who was new to the show. **Symphony by the Lake at Chetola** is scheduled for Friday, July 24. Tickets will go on sale soon and will be \$25.00 for Adults and \$8.00 for Children UNDER 12. Returning to the show will be the Charlotte Philharmonic.



*The Charlotte Philharmonic at the 2008 Symphony by the Lake (photo by Lonnie Webster)*

## What a Great Looking Town!

Greetings Fellow Merchant, Dining, and Lodging Members! I simply wanted to tell you all how proud you should be of the 'feast for the eyes' that you have been creating for our visitors in recent weeks. Now that those rainy, dreary days are behind us, it is evident that spring has surely sprung in Blowing Rock! As I drive around town this week, everywhere I look holds more beauty and surprises... the grounds of our 'mom and pop' lodging properties are looking fantastic with their manicured lawns and colorful blooming plants. Shop owners and restaurants are rolling out the red carpets to welcome our shoppers and diners with beautifully planted pots, swept sidewalks, creative window displays, new menu items, and sparkling clean entry ways! The park is as green and clean as ever, thanks to our town employees and garden club members. Soon our beautiful Main Street will be drenched in color when the lamp post baskets are hung! Just around the corner is the beginning of the season that we

dream of during the long, cold winter....soon we'll be chanting..."They're Baaaack"...and when they return to all of the beauty and charm of the lovely enclave that we call home, we must, more than ever before, let our visitors know how much we appreciate them. Every day, every encounter, every transaction, every customer must be told, "Thank you, we appreciate your business"! Sure, not everyone that enters your business will purchase something, maybe not on that particular visit, but you can still make them feel welcome by saying "Thanks for stopping in"... "Hope you enjoy the rest of your visit"... "Have a safe trip home"... "Please come see us again". We must seize every opportunity before us to welcome our visitors back and to ensure that they return again, and again, and again. The Business Support Committee will be contacting business owners to offer them the opportunity to have their business critiqued by "Secret Shoppers". Secret Shoppers is a great opportunity to find out where your employees may be falling short in the high

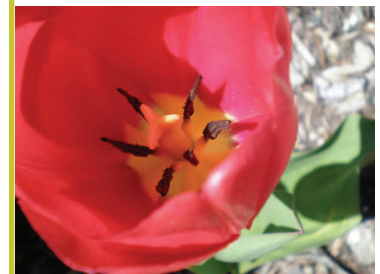
standard of customer service that you want to offer to your customers. We strongly urge you to take advantage of this service. More details on that to follow soon. Just a reminder of another business opportunity that is coming up in just a few weeks: Time is running out to get your business involved when The Shriners come to town! Tracy and Amanda are collecting door prize items for the ladies luncheon and coupons and special offers for the hundreds of gift bags that will welcome The Shriners to town. You can drop items at the Visitors Center and let them know how you would like to participate in the discount offers. Both are good advertising ops for our merchants! Yes, I said hundreds of gift bags! Can't wait for that Shriners Parade... Main St. will be ablaze with red-fezzed heads on those mini-cycles, how fun! Ok, get out there and make someone smile today, better yet...make yourself smile, just take a look around this beautiful town! My best to you all for a great Memorial Day weekend, Nancy Santay, Business Support Committee



*The Business Support Committee is committed to helping you with issues related to your business.*



*Both of these photos were taken right here in Blowing Rock by the TDA's Amanda Fife Lugenbell .*



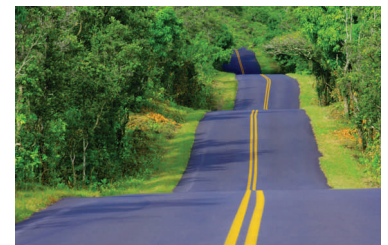
*My best to you all for a great Memorial Day weekend, Nancy Santay, Business Support Committee*

## Tourism Industry Updates!

North Carolina experienced an increase in domestic visitors in 2008. Governor Bev Perdue recently announced that those visitors spent a record \$16.9 in 2008, up 2.1% over 2007. According to the same Press Release from the Governor's Office, [read it HERE](#), tourism directly employs 190,000 people in

North Carolina and generates \$1.38 billion in state and local revenue. In another report AAA, expects travel to be up this Memorial Day over last year's. Citing the fact that gas prices are around half of what they were last year. They estimate that 32.4 million people will be taking a car trip of 50 or more miles from this weekend.

Read the AAA full report [HERE](#). In other travel related news, PGAV Destination Consulting reported the findings of a recent study which found that 70% of all visitors were more likely to visit an attraction that had adopted green practices. You can read the full report [HERE](#). (Reports gathered from the VISITNC Newslink, 5-13-09)



*Americans are hitting the road again — and traveling to North Carolina.*



**The Blowing Rock  
Chamber of Commerce**

*The Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce  
2009 Board of Directors*

Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce

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**Keep Up with Latest on Issues that  
Effect Your Business.**

**Links to help you Stay in The Know**

[US Chamber of Commerce](#)

[NC Chamber of Commerce](#)

[United States Senate](#)

[United States House of Representatives](#)

North Carolina General Assembly :

[Senate](#)

[House of Representatives](#)

**Officers**

- Rita Davis, President**  
*Wachovia Bank*
- Nancy Santay, Vice President**  
*Cabin Fever*
- Bill Hall, Past President**  
*Blowing Rock Realty*
- Linda Gilleland, Secretary**  
*Greystone Insurance*
- Margaret Holder, Treasurer**  
*Chetola Resort*

**Members of the Board**

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*Carolina Mountain Life Magazine*
- John Aldridge**  
*Individual Representative*
- Greg Clark**  
*Gregory Alan's*
- Dan Phillips**  
*Individual Representative*

**Tim Miller**

*Blowing Rock Frameworks & Gallery*

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**Doug Pegram**

*Village Real Estate*

**Cindy Milner**

*Bistro Roca*

**Dick Goosman**

*Meadowbrook Inn*

**Deborah McDowell**

*Mountianaire Inn*

**John Albright**

*Individual Representative*

**This Week in Photos**



*Say Cheese. If you have photos  
you'd like to share, please send  
them to  
[Stephanie@blowingrock.com](mailto:Stephanie@blowingrock.com).  
We're especially looking for  
photos from our Business Mem-  
bers in their Businesses!*

Bill Hall and Lynn Hill at the Chamber Picnic, May 12.



Chad Brown, of Ether, NC took home the Award of Excellence for his pottery at the May 16 Art in the Park.

