

September 26, 2018

To: Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

From: Stephanie Pace Brown

Subject: President's Report of August Activities

This month's recap reports a wide variety of strategic initiatives to drive overnight visitation to the destination. Occupancy was down in July (2.4%) and up in August (2.6%). Both calendar YTD and the past 12 months posted flat occupancy, absorbing an increase in supply of almost seven percent.

AUGUST METRICS: BY THE NUMBERS

- During August, the sales team posted 1,194 personal contacts (up 21%). August sales activities generated 82 sales leads (up 30%) and 53 convention bookings (up 61%), representing 7,488 rooms (down 24%). Two months into the fiscal year, year-to-date bookings are up 44 percent and room nights represented are down 13 percent.
- CVB sales leads generated 41 group events in August (up 32%), with revenue of \$1,277,991 (down 12%). The services team assisted 43 groups (up 39%).
- The PR team landed 28 significant placements in August (down 44%), with 45 media touchpoints (down 38%). The publicity value of print and broadcast placements totaled \$1,439,448 with reach of over 3 million. Online placements added \$67,786 in value and reach of over 85 million.
- ExploreAsheville.com attracted 464,119 visits (up 12%), including 323,188 to the mobile site (up 18%). Our Facebook fan base grew by 1,824 (up 40%) and video views totaled 152,917 (up 37%).
- Online hotel reservations totaled 146 room nights (up 66%) with total room revenue of \$24,531 (up 68%).
- The Asheville Visitor Center welcomed 21,252 visitors (down 12%), and the Pack Square Park Visitor Pavilion welcomed 1,017 visitors (down 20%).

HOTEL & AIRPORT RESULTS

- Buncombe County Finance reported lodging sales totaling \$41,686,137 in July, an increase of 8 percent.
- Smith Travel Research reported hotel occupancy of 81.7 percent during July (down 2.4%). The average daily room rate was \$163.59 (up 0.1%), and RevPAR (revenue per available room) was \$133.65 (down 2.2%). Room demand increased 3.7 percent with 199,162 rooms sold.

- Passengers at the Asheville Regional Airport increased 10.6 percent to total 111,664 in August.

IN THE COMMUNITY

- Stephanie participated in the AIR executive committee and board meetings, the airport board meeting, and the Asheville Area Riverfront Redevelopment Commission meeting. She gave a tourism update presentation for the AIR membership meeting.
- Stephanie attended the Economic Bruncheon celebrating women leaders in WNC.
- Stephanie attended the NC Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting in Charlotte.
- Stephanie and Dodie participated in Asheville Culinary Event board meetings.
- Stephanie hosted her counterpart from Greenville, SC, Chris Stone for an exchange.
- Nine staff members attended Leadership Asheville's Breakfast Buzz series on Equity
- Staff participated in the United Way Back Pack Drive.
- Dodie participated in the Blue Ridge Mountain Host board meeting.
- CVB staff attended Sweet Dreams Full Plates Kick-Off Party.
- Dianna attended August Civic Center Commission meeting.
- Glenn Cox hosted the American Craft Week gathering.
- Glenn attended a "thank you" luncheon at the Doubletree for his work in workforce recruitment and retention.
- As Board Chair of the Black Mountain Center for the Arts, Glenn attended the organization's Board Meeting.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Advertising: An expansive late summer/early fall "Harvest" campaign launched at the beginning of August and runs through the end of September. This campaign includes broadcast television in the following markets: Atlanta, Raleigh, Nashville, Cincinnati, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, and Washington D.C. and is complemented by streaming video ads in other core markets as well as a national TV buy with the Travel Channel, HGTV and the Smithsonian Channel. The campaign also includes strong digital presence through display banners, sponsored content, retargeting, paid search, and social media advertising. Traditional and online radio (Pandora, Spotify, iHeart radio) will extend the Asheville footprint by serving as a platform to keep Asheville top-of-mind and providing event driven messaging with specific reasons to visit. Print advertising is being used for inspirational messaging and includes insertions in National Geographic Traveler, Magnolia Journal (new), Travel + Leisure, and Atlanta Magazine. As of September 11, 5,435,172 digital impressions have been delivered and garnered 168,402 clicks.

A digital campaign to ensure demand for fall is launching in mid-September and runs through mid-October. The two-pronged strategic approach aims to: 1) re-engage with those who have been exposed to Harvest advertising but have not booked yet and 2) prospecting new audience by broadening our geographic footprint and excluding those exposed to Harvest advertising. The marketing team began planning for the holiday season. A "Falliday" and Holiday campaign seeks to creatively position and differentiate the pre-Thanksgiving holiday season from the traditional holiday period and creative assets are in development. Falliday components will run from October 22-November 18 and Holiday will start November 20th and run through December 23rd.

Asheville By Design, the 30-minute special highlighting Asheville via the partnership with National Geographic Travel, will premiere on National Geographic Channel on September 20 at 6:30pm.

Paid Search: Paid search in August generated over 96k site visits from Google and Bing combined. Bounce rate continues to improve year-over-year from 57.4 percent in 2017 to 41.8 percent in 2018. Additionally, there has been year-over-year improvement in the average pages per visit up from 2.47 in 2017 to 3.27 in 2018. Paid search efforts in August generated 300 email signups and 850 visitor guide requests.

General Media Relations: The PR team logged 45 media touchpoints, initiated 49 targeted pitches and hosted 3 media on the ground in Asheville in August. The supported site visits included media representing *Food & Wine*, *Andrew Harper*, and *Southern Living*. Story support also included *Nylon*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *FoodNetwork.com*, *October Magazine*, and *NationalGeographic.com*. Asheville imagery and assistance were also provided to *TrailBlazer Magazine*, *HGTV*, *AskMen.com*, and *Groups Today*, among others.

In August, the team also provided destination insight and strategy support to two partner organizations (East Fork Pottery and Holiday Inn Asheville-Biltmore East) planning FAM media trips for fall.

Explore Asheville was invited to meet directly with Meredith Publishing's Birmingham office for the company's first-ever Travel Summit. During the event, PR Manager Landis Taylor was provided insights about *Southern Living* subscribers' interests and pitch Asheville news to the publication's editor and associate editor during a one-on-one meeting. PR Specialist Sarah Lowery worked with sales staff on a *Groups Today* request for information, quotes, and photos for an upcoming feature spotlighting Asheville as the "Best Emerging Destination," as voted by readers.

Significant Placements:

1. *AFAR* – "The Best Fall Getaways in the United States"
2. *CNN Travel* – "Fine Dining at America's Biggest Home"
3. *Food & Wine* – "The 40 Most Important Restaurants of the Past 40 Years"
4. *Goop* – "The Four Most Underrated American Food Cities"
5. *Mic* – "From Tomato Jam to Okra Fries, Asheville's Chefs Are Redefining Appalachian Food With Global Flavors"
6. *NYLON* – "What to Do in Asheville in 72, No, Make That 96 Hours"
7. *NYLON* – "7 Places to Go Before Summer Ends"
8. *October Magazine* – "In Asheville, a Brewery Is Only As Good As Its Food"
9. *Sunseeker* – "Mountainous Meals"
10. *WSLS 'Daytime Blue Ridge'* – "Daytime Destinations, Asheville's Summer of Glass"
11. *Reader's Digest* – "The Most Majestic Mountain Towns in America"
12. *AJC.com* – "Here's How to Spend 36 Hours in Asheville"
13. *AJC.com* – "Biltmore Estates, Everything to Know Before Your First Visit"
14. *MSN.com* – "12 U.S. Destinations for the Perfect Last-Minute Summer Vacation"
15. *MSN.com* – "50 Small Towns You Should Visit This Fall"
16. *Outside Magazine* – "Pouring It On"
17. *TripAdvisor Vacation Rentals* – "15 Best U.S. Cities for Hiking & Outdoor Adventure"
18. *TripAdvisor Vacation Rentals* – "Move Over Summer, 15 Great USA Cities for Fall Foliage"
19. *TripsToDiscover.com* – "How to Spend 48 Hours in Asheville, North Carolina"
20. *TravelPulse.com* – "Chihuly at Biltmore, Glass Among the Mountains"
21. *Leisure Group Travel* – "North Carolina's Mountain Playground"

22. *Dupont Registry Tampa Bay – “Head for the Hills”*
23. *Moon Travel Guides – “7 Best Asheville Restaurants & Breweries”*
24. *The Yums – “Rhubarb in Asheville, Acclaimed Chef Using Local Produce”*

Fall Marketing Efforts: The Explore Asheville PR Team crafted a fall press release in August with a fall color report and focus on the news in Asheville this autumn. The release was distributed via PR Newswire and picked up 299 times with a potential audience of 82.8 million. The potential audience stat received a big boost via a *Yahoo! Finance* pick-up of the release. It was also distributed via MailChimp to 773 subscribers and media friends of Explore Asheville.

Content Development Projects: The content team continued work on several projects in the month of July and coordinated the creation of new photo assets and coordination of fall messaging with the PR team. A photo shoot was coordinated to capture fresh photo content, including scenes in Downtown, Biltmore Village and West Asheville and activities such as ziplining and live music. Work progressed on a dedicated plan to create new neighborhood content. A list of internal criteria was outlined to guide the project’s development and outlined the first of a series of videos—this one focused on Black Mountain.

Zach King Content: Early August saw the deployment of several content pieces surrounding the Zach King short film, “A Whole Latte Trouble”—as detailed in the July recap. To date, the content has reached nearly 5.9 million views across Zach King’s channels, with 962K views on the full-length YouTube video. On Explore Asheville channels, the original video, teaser and “Magical Viewing Parties” videos have reached 145K views.

ExploreAsheville.com Editorial Content:

- During the month of August, 19 new pieces of editorial content were added to the website: 10 new hiking trails, the fall forecast and news release, a story about local apple picking, information on waterfall safety, four “things to do this weekend” posts, and updated round-up of fan-favorite coffee shops, and an updated page about Biltmore Estate.
- The most popular blog and story content this month was 50 Things to do in Asheville, which received 39,990 new pageviews, followed by the Chihuly Exhibit photo tour blog post, which received 9,007 pageviews.

Social Media Stats:

Facebook:

Visit Asheville page

- August saw 1,824 daily new likes to Facebook for a total of 276,593.
- There were 34 new Facebook posts added to the Visit Asheville page in the month of August.
- The most popular unpaid Facebook post during the month was a post with behind-the-scenes photos to tease the National Geographic documentary. It has reached 39,188 people organically, generating 1,278 total reactions, and 118 comments. This was also the most engaging post of the month; it engaged 8 percent of the 39,188 users reached.
- The most popular paid Facebook post during the month of August was a post with the Zach King video that also teased a book giveaway contest. The post has reached 112,457 people (69,380 organically), generating 2,167 reactions.

Foodtopia page

- August saw 32 daily new likes to the Foodtopia page for a total of 25,147 likes.
- There were 4 new Facebook posts added to the Foodtopia page in the month of August.
- The most popular post — a post congratulating Katie Button on an accolade in Food & Wine — reached 2,749 people, generating 61 reactions.

Video:

- There were 13,119 new, organic YouTube views in August. The most popular video by organic views this month was Return Again, which received 1,657 non-paid views. The Fall Time Lapse came in second with 1,251 new views.
- Across all our video platforms, there were 152,917 non-advertising views, with the majority coming from Facebook.

Pinterest:

- The combined fan total for our two accounts now totals 4,930. Foodtopia accounts for 1,403 of those. Visit Asheville – 3,527.

Instagram:

- Our VisitAsheville account has 49,481 followers.
- There were 16 new posts in August. The most popular was a drone photo of downtown Asheville with the Bowen Bridge in the foreground. It received 3,140 engagements (likes and comments).

Twitter:

- Across all three accounts we have a total of 30,421 followers. The most popular account continues to be Foodtopia, which has 14,675 followers. We continue to provide a mix of proactive response to travel inquiries and pushes of website and Instagram content.

Asheville Traveler E-newsletter:

- Subscribers: We have 122,721 active subscribers.
- Opens/Click-throughs: In August, our monthly Asheville Traveler e-newsletter went out to 121,354 subscribers. It had an overall open rate of 17.5 percent and a click-through rate of 3.5 percent.

Google Partnership Program: The marketing team officially kicked off the Google DMO Partnership Program with Miles this month, orienting to the Google travel ecosystem and reviewing early results from a consumer behavior analysis that revealed top search queries and their results. The full results of the audit were presented in early September and are under review by the team in preparation for content creation later this month.

ExploreAsheville.com: Website user sessions in August increased 12 percent compared to last year, although organic traffic was down 8 percent year-over-year in August. The loss can be accounted for in the Home Page, Events Calendar, and Things to Do pages because of algorithm changes that display Google destination panels and Google travel planner above the search results, bringing DMO content below the fold on mobile. Simpleview SEO team has seen this trend beginning in April across the board with all their clients. Also contributing to the year-over-year difference in traffic is the impact of increased searches around the solar eclipse in late summer of 2017. Social traffic was up 113 percent year-over-year in August. Referral traffic was up 14 percent YOY and traffic from eNewsletter clicks was up 13 percent YOY in August. Display advertising traffic was up 137% year-over-year in August.

ExploreAsheville.com continues to outperform industry averages with 24 percent more total pages per visit, 32 percent longer visit duration, 31 percent more organic pages per visit, and 41 percent longer organic visit duration as compared to industry average in the month of August.

Website Improvements – SEO and CRO: In August, Simpleview and Explore Asheville staff continue to work on efforts to improve site conversion rates based on established goals and KPIs. Several pages continue to perform particularly well in driving organic traffic.

Online Reservations: There were 83 orders for 146 room nights in August with a total of \$24,530 in booking revenue and \$1,107 in commission. The top 5 states for room nights booked in August were North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Ohio and South Carolina.

August 2018	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Booking Rev	\$24,531	\$14,634	67.63%	\$43,022	\$36,273	18.61%
Commission	\$1,107.82	\$613.62	80.54%	\$2,036.70	\$1,679.02	21.30%
Orders	83	54	53.70%	163	140	16.43%
Room Nights	146	88	65.91%	255	213	19.72%

Visitor Guide: Advertising sales have exceeded \$306k. Another \$70k in sales are committed to, but not yet contracted. In August, a photoshoot was conducted to capture imagery for the Visitor Guide. Explore Asheville is in the process of editing and exporting the business listings to the publisher, SagaCity.

There were 3,010 requests for the Official Asheville Travel Guide in August, a 22 percent increase over last year. Year-to-date, there have been 5,722 travel guide requests.

GROUP SALES & SERVICES UPDATE

Group sales reported 53 definite group bookings representing a 61 percent increase from the prior August. Of these group bookings, 19 were meetings & conventions, 30 were group tour and four were weddings. The combined total definite room nights in August were 7,488 room nights a 24 percent decrease over the prior year. The estimated revenue for leads turned definite in August was \$1,428,284 representing a 53 percent decrease. Actualized revenue was \$1,277,991 a 12 percent decrease from the prior year.

Eighty-two sales leads (60 for meeting/conventions, 12 weddings and ten for motorcoach) representing 22,354 room nights were distributed to Buncombe County accommodations in August 2018. This represents an increase of 30 percent in number of sales leads issued and a 4 percent increase in room nights represented. Person-to-person outreach totaled 1,194 contacts in August as compared to 988 the prior year, representing a 21 percent increase. Indirect outreach totaled 9,514 contacts compared to 3,333 the prior August representing an increase of 185 percent.

Sales Calls/Missions/FAMS:

- Tina Porter attended Connect Corporate Marketplace in Salt Lake City and conducted 36 one-on-one appointments with planners. Tina attended networking receptions, educational events and participated in North Carolina Sports Association’s client event at Top Golf, with more than 30 sports rights holders attending. One RFP for 1,000 room nights was received.
- Shawn Boone traveled to Chicago in advance of the American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting and Tradeshow for sales calls and to host a client event. Seven Chicago based sales calls were completed. A client event at Ravinia Festival for six Chicago

clients and their guests was also held. A tweet from the CVB was picked up during the event and a group photo with caption reading *Explore Asheville is having a great night at #Ravinia. We love our Chicago Clients* flashed twice across the jumbo screens—an extra bonus.

- Shawn also traveled to Atlanta and completed eight sales calls. Two RFPs were received totaling 798 rooms during this trip.
- Connie Holliday attended Meeting Professionals International's Sunshine Education Summit, a cooperative effort between four MPI Florida Chapters) in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, with 115 planners attending and appointments with 22 planners, more than half stating they had never considered Asheville as a meeting destination before. Connie attended networking events, meals and educational functions during this multi-day event. In addition, she conducted five outside sales calls prior to the start of the Summit. In total seven leads for Asheville were uncovered representing 3,055 room night with almost half with 2019 needs. A follow up post on LinkedIn had 340 views.

American Society of Association Executives Activities: Tina Porter and Shawn Boone attended the American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting & Expo "ASAE" held August in Chicago. Accents on Asheville and Renaissance Asheville Hotel also participated. In the continuing effort to place Asheville in a larger consideration set, the CVB co-sponsored the Chuck Fazio HeadShot LOUNGE with the ASAE Foundation.

Expo: The CVB partnered with Raleigh CVB to create a NC beer themed booth, complete with local beers served. The booth backdrop spanned 10 x 20 feet and portrayed two outdoor settings, one unique to each destination. Pub tables, Edison lights and outdoor games rounded out the theme. More than 250 planners stopped by the booth, with four RFPs totaling 940 room nights received on-site. This is the most client activation we've had since attending ASAE. In addition, the show was the most highly attended in recent history. Approximately 63 percent of attendees were classified as buyers and 37 percent as suppliers (2:1 ratio). The CVB capitalized on social media opportunities placing high-visibility posts on Twitter and LinkedIn (generated 978 views) before and during the event. An advance e-blast was also sent to 1757 registered attendees (27 percent open rate). Staff also participated in industry networking events. A post-trade show email was sent to 564 planners who came by the booth (27 percent open rate).

ASAE Foundation Leadership Lounge featuring Chuck Fazio's HeadShot LOUNGE: The CVB partnered with the ASAE Foundation and Chuck Fazio to host the Lounge, a popular stop for executives throughout the meeting. An advance mailer was sent by ASAE Foundation to approximately 2200 past attendees to promote the event. A total of 401 planners came through the Lounge where they were introduced to Asheville as a meetings destination using on-site marketing materials, video presentation, branded items, inclusion in printed on-site guide, hosted receptions and more. Tina staffed the Lounge.

CVB Sponsors Conference Direct "CD" FAM Event: The CVB partnered with Crowne Plaza Tennis & Golf Resort during the Resort's hosting of a regional CD FAM. Approximately 25 CD planners primarily from North and South Carolina attended the multiple day event. The CVB presented an overview of Asheville during a sponsored breakfast and promoted the *Have More Fun on Us* meeting incentive program and the extensive complimentary services offered by the Bureau. Kathryn Dewey (NC territory) and Connie Holliday (SC territory) made some excellent contacts while attending the networking functions associated with the meeting/FAM.

CVB Sponsors Meeting Professional International's webinar Technology: Fab or New Normal: The CVB received logo placement in advance materials with click through, and logo is embedded in webinar placed on MPI archive. Dianna Pierce was provided talk time at the

beginning of the webinar supplement with a slide presentation. Contact information for the 34 attendees was received.

Site Visits/Bookings/Leads: Ten independent site visits were hosted in August with business for all future years: 2021 NC Alpha Delta Kappa State Meeting – 100 room nights; 2018 Metro Mayors Conference – 85 rooms; 2019 Family Life Development Fall Conference – 145 rooms; 2019 Global Financial Summit – 264 rooms; 2019 Grace Baptist Church – 65 rooms; 2019 Turnabout Management – 244 rooms; Future Lennox Corporation Meeting – 350 rooms; NorthStar Marriage Retreat – 120 room nights; 2019 Helms Briscoe; 2019-2020 Collette Tours 28-part series – 1655 rooms; 2019 AIA South Atlantic Region Conference – 965 rooms; Kathryn Dewey hosted leadership from the Association of Executives of North Carolina “AENC” for a two-day site visit. The purpose of the trip was to acquaint them to the meeting opportunities available here. As part of the visit she organized an industry partner reception (15 partners attended) and site visits of AENC member properties. AENC posted images and content to their AENC Facebook page.

A sample of August confirmed bookings include:

- 2019 NAPA Mid-Year Meeting – 668 rooms
- 2019 Recovery of Biological Products XVII – 125 rooms
- 2019 SWANA Quad State – 510 rooms
- 2020 National Leaders Conference – 1,168 rooms
- 2019-2020 Collette Vacations – 1,655 room nights
- 2019 US Tours – 240 rooms
- 2018 NC Works Commission – 45 rooms
- 2018 The Great Smoky Mountain Grapple – 220 rooms
- 2018 US Probate Officers – 60 rooms
- 2018 Bob Lew Park October Events (3) – 1,050 rooms
- 2019 National Asphalt Pavement Association – 668 rooms
- 2018 AdvoCare Executive Retreat – 24 rooms

A total of 25 wedding guide requests were fulfilled in August as compared to 22 last year.

Group Sales Communications

- An update of the online Meeting Planner Guide was finalized, and three new banners were designed for trade events.

Media Coverage

- It was announced that Asheville was voted the “Best Emerging Destination” in the *Groups Today* Readers' Choice Awards and as a result there will be a dedicated piece of editorial in an upcoming print issue. The CVB provided extensive information to the writer of the piece.

Mass Communications

- An invitation to apply for the upcoming Asheville 48-Hour Experience dates was sent to 6,003 meeting planner clients. Open rate: 21 percent; Click to Open rate: 24 percent
- A pre-show email was sent to 1,757 registered attendees of the ASAE Annual Trade Show. Open rate: 27 percent; Click to Open rate: 13 percent
- A post-show email was also sent to 564 contacts collected at the ASAE Annual Trade Show. Open rate: 27 percent; Click to Open rate: 20 percent.

Departmental Activities

- Participated in Visitor Center Volunteer orientation

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Tourism Product Development Efforts:

The 2018 grant cycle is underway and applicants submitted Phase II applications on August 29. The nine organizations participating in Phase II are Asheville Museum of Science, Buncombe County Recreation Services, Center for Craft, Creativity & Design, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation, LEAF Community Arts, North Carolina Arboretum Society, River Front Development Group, Sidewalk Coconut Collective, and Wild Food Foundation.

Disbursement requests were received and are in review for Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, the City of Asheville, and the Asheville Art Museum.

Partner Engagement:

Explore Asheville CVB 101 Orientation: The Public Affairs team hosted the August CVB 101 orientation with 12 industry partners in attendance, including staff from the FIRC Group, Wai Mauna Asheville SUP Tours, Sunburst Chef and Farmer, North Carolina Stage Company, The Chariot Company, Asheville Emporium, Organic Growers School, and City Real Estate.

CVB 101 Orientations “On the Road”: Two additional targeted orientations were held in August for members of the Asheville Area Arts Council at the Refinery in the South Slope and for industry partners in Black Mountain at the Black Mountain Center for the Arts.

BCTDA 2018 Annual Meeting: Planning is underway for the BCTDA Annual Meeting to be held on September 19, from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. at The Omni Grove Park Inn’s new Sealy Pavilion. The leadership team will present the CVB’s annual report of destination sales and marketing initiatives, program highlights and strategic insights from the past year. The keynote will be provided by Andrew Nelson of National Geographic Traveler who will share a preview of the “Asheville by Design” show that is scheduled to air on NatGeo Channel the following day. The community support element of the event will include a drive for socks to be donated to charity.

New Partners: Brit created nine new partner accounts in August: The Asheville Kitchen, Asheville Rooftop Bar Tours, Historic Cotton Mill Studios, SERENITY + SCOTT Apothecary, Tracey Morgan Gallery, Focal Point Coworking, Awakening the Spirit Healing Arts and Bodywork Therapy, One World Brewing West, and plēb urban winery. The Public Affairs team continues to reach out to qualified partners to submit information for a listing as well as service the partners who request listings. Additionally, Brit maintains regularly scheduled communications to music venue partners to ensure they are submitting their events to the Live Music Calendar.

Projects & Community Outreach: Pat is wrapping up the Wayfinding Assessment project with MERJE. Additionally, Pat is working with MERJE and Geograph on the signage package for the new Coxe Avenue garage and will coordinate a meeting in September with Geograph in Asheville with our county staff partners.

Brit continues working with SagaCity, preparing partner listing content for the 2019 Official Asheville Visitor Guide and organizing a proofing process with marketing staff.

Pat and Brit worked on the Annual Report and the meeting presentation files in preparation for the BCTDA Annual Meeting.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INITIATIVES

Building: Emory Electric installed an electrical monitoring device in the building in late July. After monitoring for a couple weeks, Emory reported back to us and building owner, Martin Lewis, that whatever caused the electrical surges earlier in the year is no longer present. With that information, staff felt comfortable enough to reinstall the AV equipment that had been damaged and begin the claims process for losses with Frankenmuth Insurance Company.

Administration: Megan Howard tendered her resignation as Marketing and PR Assistant. Glenn managed the termination procedures necessary for her departure. Her final day was Friday, August 10. On August 17, Glenn met with new college intern Meshelle Macias for onboarding into Workday. On August 21, Glenn met with Kathryn Dewey to determine her benefit electives and onboard her into the various carriers and on August 31 Glenn met with Connie Holliday for the same onboarding conversation. Stephanie and Glenn met with Drew Pollick of Craft HR Solutions to plan for the Hogan Assessment retreat scheduled for September 14.

CVB101: Glenn worked with Stephanie, Pat, and Brit to take the monthly CVB101 workshop to Black Mountain. Glenn arranged for meeting space at the Black Mountain Center for the Arts. Prior to the August 21 meeting, Glenn met twice with June Vengoechea and Stephanie Wilder, leaders in the local retail network, to develop a means of attracting more tourism partners to the meeting, especially those who currently do not have a listing on ExploreAsheville.com. On Black Mountain standards, the meeting was a success with 21 current and potential partners in attendance.

2019 Festivals and Cultural Events Grant Program: The 2019 F&CE application deadline was August 31. During the month of August Glenn met with the Organic Growers School, Leicester Artists Studio Tour, Southern Highland Craft Guild and the Asheville Symphony to discuss their application or the broader grant programs. The BCTDA received applications from 15 nonprofits for 18 different events totaling \$78,500 in requests with a combined budget total of over \$1 million and a combined total of just under 100,000 attendees.