



Burke County Tourism Authority **MEDIA CONTACT:**

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Take Flight in Burke County

See the foothills and mountains of Western North Carolina from a new vantage point via Thermal Valley Hang Gliding. This instruction-based hang gliding experience offers tandem flights at altitudes from 1,500 to 5,000 feet. Based at the Foothills Regional Airport, Thermal Valley uses a glider towed by a light sport aircraft. Once at cruising height, the cable is released. Most flights last about 12-14 minutes.



www.ThermalValley.net



Fonta Flora Brewery is Attraction of the Year

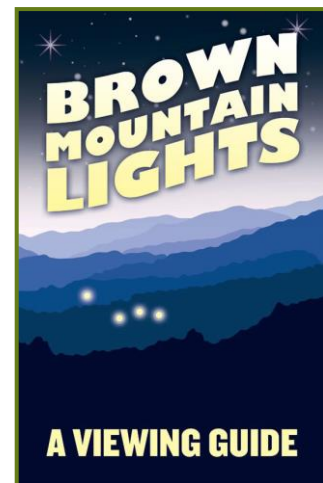
A brewery that became a national destination is the 2017 Burke County Attraction of the Year. Fonta Flora Brewery received the honor from the Burke County Tourism Development Authority. TDA executive director Ed Phillips said the brewery was chosen based on the number of visitors it draws to Burke County. The brewery won a gold medal at the 2014 Great American Beer Festival and captured a second gold medal at the 2015 festival.

www.FontaFlora.com

Official Brown Mountain Lights Viewing Guide

Visitors come to Morganton and Burke County from near and far for a chance to see the famous Brown Mountain Lights. Now there is an official guide to help them. The Burke County Tourism Development Authority has created the guide, which is available free of charge at the Burke County Visitors Center. Use the guide to enhance your chances of seeing the elusive lights that have appeared for centuries at irregular intervals near their namesake mountain in Burke County.

www.DiscoverBurkeCounty.com





Continuing the Family Legacy, Legally

If authenticity is a key to making moonshine, then Don Smith is in good shape with his new venture, South Mountain Distilling Company. Smith comes from a long line of moonshiners in the hills and hollers of Burke County and pours his family history into every bottle. The main difference is he does it legally. “It’s part of my family heritage and goes back at least four generations on the illegal side,” says Smith, who owns the distillery with his wife,

Dawn. “I actually found a newspaper article where my grandfather and great uncle got caught back in 1956.” South Mountain Distilling opened Jan. 1 in the eastern Burke County town of Rutherford College and hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

SouthMountainDistillery.com

Mag Says Morganton Transformation is Brewing

A transformation on tap in downtown Morganton has captured the attention of a national magazine. In its August cover story, *BeerAdvocate* touts the economic impact breweries have made in three Southern small towns. Morganton’s Fonta Flora Brewery is one of the prime examples cited in the article, and Fonta Flora’s head brewer and co-founder Todd Boera is featured on the cover. The article reveals how the arrival of craft breweries in places like Morganton has spurred vitality in the urban core of towns in the post-manufacturing South.



Hidden Jewel: Catawba Valley Wine Trail

Beautiful scenery and surprisingly good wines are uncorked on the Catawba Valley Wine Trail. Wine lovers are flocking to these five wineries located along Interstate 40 in the foothills of the Blue Ridge. Tasting rooms are open six days a week at most locations and feature Bordeaux style red wines & regional adaptations of sweeter whites.

www.CatawbaValleyWineTrail.com

Trail Documents Quest for Freedom

It was a journey of faith as the Waldensians ventured from the alpine valleys of Italy to a new life in America. Experience it all at the Waldensian Trail of Faith in Valdese. Learn their struggles, commemorate their sacrifices and celebrate the triumphs. The Trail of Faith is open weekdays year-round, with holiday lights from Thanksgiving to Christmas.



www.WaldensianTrailOfFaith.org