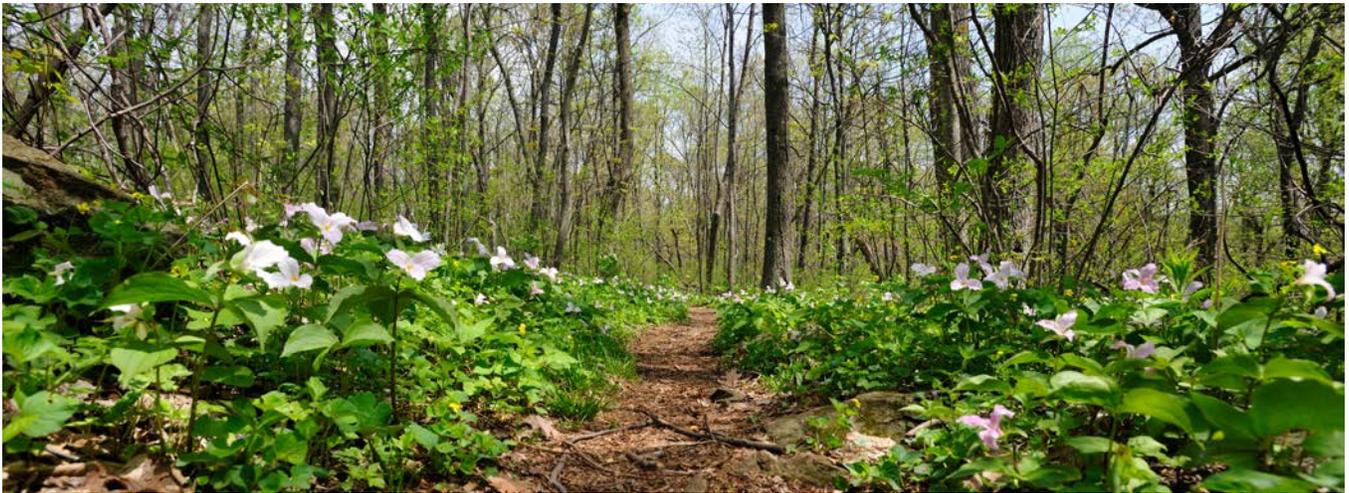




CENTRAL COUNTIES TOURISM NEWSLETTER

April 2021



E.D.'S CORNER: A Word From Chuck Thibeault

In the immortal words of John "Hannibal" Smith from The A-Team, "I love it when a plan comes together!" Several months ago, I received a call from Val at Heartwood Farm and Cidery. She had a vision for improving the visitor experience and extending the length of stay in town by adding "tiny homes" that she could rent out to couples wanting to spend some time with nature and explore more of Erin and the surrounding area. In going through the towns by-laws, she noticed that there weren't any provisions that would allow her farm to do that and she called me to see if I could find some examples of other places that were successful at adding overnight accommodations to their business model.

As it turned out, I did, and she happened to operate her businesses in the next community...[Read more.](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

**MEMBER NEED TO KNOW:
NOMINATIONS & AGM • P2**

**CCT'S TOURISM STORY
THROUGH DATA:
PART ONE • P3**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM &
RESPONSIBLE VISITATION
IN CENTRAL COUNTIES • P4**

**STAKEHOLDER SPOTLIGHT:
WINS & CELEBRATIONS • P5**

FUNDING & SUPPORT • P6

LEARNING & EVENTS • P7

INDUSTRY NEWS • P8

MEMBER NEED TO KNOW...

Call for CCT Board Member Nominations

Central Counties is seeking volunteers to sit on its Board of Directors to support the tourism interests of the region and advance our mission and vision. If you have a passion for the tourism industry and are interested in contributing your knowledge and experience to help build a strong tourism region, the Board of Directors invites you to submit your nomination for the available positions.

Deadline for Nominations is April 12, 2021. Please complete the nomination form available [here](#).



Central Counties Tourism invites you to save the date!

On June 23, 2021 Central Counties Tourism will host a Virtual AGM.

Save the date now and join us in June for engaging guest speakers, updates on our 2021-22 programs and more. Registration details to come.



Keep on Tagging!

We love connecting with you on social, and sharing with our followers. Be sure to tag the correct account so your message reaches the right audience.

For all things consumer tag [@visitydh](#).

For industry-focused news and events tag [@centralcountiestourism](#).



CCT'S TOURISM STORY THROUGH DATA

PART ONE: ANNUAL GROWTH (2018-2020)

As Tourism Professionals, at some point in our careers we have all been asked the same question, "How is Tourism doing?"

From an outsider's perspective, it sounds like a simple question. However, the answer is much more complex since tourism is a combination of several sectors all working together as one industry (i.e., accommodation, food and beverage services, recreation and entertainment, transportation, and travel services). Regardless of this, we have all answered the question to the best of our abilities.

The response is relative to the person answering the question: a hotel employee could refer to their occupancy as a measurement of success; a restaurant could compare their sales/profits to the previous year; or the number of tickets sold by an attraction or tour operator. But for a Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) like Central Counties Tourism representing the Durham, York, and Headwaters regions, this question is more difficult to answer because it needs to take all of the sectors into consideration and calculate an aggregated answer.

This article is the first part of a three-part series, where we will use data to tell the tourism story and answer the question "How is Tourism doing in RTO6?" In part one, we will look at annual visitation from 2018 - 2020, based on visitors travelling 60km or more from their homes, and spending the night in our region. [Continue reading here.](#)



Meta4 Gallery, Durham Region

The Power of Data. It's in the [Visitor Research Program](#).
Purchase the program for your business [here](#).



Sibbald Provincial Park, York Region



CCT Image Bank



Uxbridge Trails, Durham Region

Building Sustainable Tourism & Responsible Visitation in Central Counties

The Central Counties region is home to many parks and trails, including Uxbridge, the [Trail Capital of Canada](#) that has 220 kilometres of seasonally managed trails.

With the spring season on the horizon, trail visitation is going to be a popular activity again this year. Here are a few initiatives that our members and partners are implementing to highlight sustainable and responsible tourism for visitors.

[Know Your Invasive Species](#)

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) is making visitors aware of invasive plants lurking beneath the snow. These plants can look pretty and as a result are sometimes dug up and taken home by visitors to plant in their spring gardens causing damage to trails, as well as domination over native species in their own backyards.

[Helping to Build Sustainable Communities](#)

As many of Central Counties communities and their businesses host visitors coming to walk their trails, conservation is important. Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) through its Community Programs in York, Durham and Peel, aims to involve residents in natural and cultural heritage awareness, habitat creation and citizen science.

[Responsible Tourism Tips](#)

Our RTO9 partner, Ontario's Southwest has some good tips for fostering responsible tourism and visitation.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

RAISING THE BAR... AND A GLASS TO AWARD-WINNING WHISKEY

Congratulations to Last Straw Distillery for their Gold Medal wins at the 2021 Canadian Whisky Awards.

The York Region distillery, took home top awards for Best Corn Whisky and Best New Whisky (Straight Ontario Rye Cask Strength). Read more [here](#).



CANADA'S WONDERLAND CELEBRATES 40 YEARS WITH ZOOM TRIVIA EVENT

Since February, Canada's Wonderland has been celebrating its 40th anniversary by engaging its virtual visitors through Thursday Trivia Nights on Zoom. Trivia themes focus on the park's four decades of history, general pop culture, music and more. Up to 300 people have participated each night with the highlight being a virtual dance party during the music portion.

To boost the excitement, Canada's Wonderland has given away three VIP family experience packages as well as other door prizes such as t-shirts and sweaters.

See how Canada's Wonderland does it [here](#). On till April 15th!





FUNDING & SUPPORT

Recap! Small Business Support Grants - Open until March 31, 2021

You might be eligible - Ontario has several grant programs aimed at small businesses to help with the cost of personal protective equipment, property taxes, energy bills and extra support if you have to close or significantly restrict services because of provincial public health measures. Check to see if you're eligible and apply before March 31, 2021. Information is [here](#).

2021-22 CCT Partnership Opportunities Program

CCT has released the new Partnership Opportunities Program! The program includes modifications to address COVID-19 and business challenges in 2021 both financially and from a planning perspective. We anticipate that the need and popularity of the program will be greater than ever, but also recognize that planning windows will be shorter because of uncertainty surrounding the easing and tightening of business restrictions. As a result, we've increased the intake period dates to five (5) to provide you with flexibility in determining when and how your project moves forward. The next intake period deadline is May 15, 2021 for projects beginning June 1 - July 31. For more intake dates and application steps visit our website, [here](#).

Reconnect Festival and Event Program - Open for submissions

The Reconnect Festival and Event Program was developed to help festival and event organizers adapt to new public health measures with virtual, drive-through and other safe offerings. Examples of funded events include reverse holiday parades with drive-by static floats, drive-in music concerts and movies, walking trails and light shows. The 2021 Reconnect Festival and Event Program opens on March 17. More information [here](#).



LEARNING & EVENTS

Webinar: Destination Bike - Welcoming Cyclists in York Region

Date: April 12, 2:00pm - 3:00pm. Registration page with detailed event information is [here](#). The webinar will feature information about the cycle tourism market and how welcoming cyclists to your location can be beneficial.

LGBT+ Community Expected to Play a Big Role in Canada’s Tourism Recovery

Results from new national research indicate that 90% of Canadian LGBT+ travellers intend to travel domestically this year amidst international travel uncertainty. Canada’s LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Tourism HR Canada, offers a certificate program that teaches businesses how to become market ready, FREE only until March 31, 2021. [Webinar details and registration.](#)



Albion Hills, Headwaters Region



SBC Ontario Launches COVID-19 Economic Recovery Network Website

Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario has launched a new website www.sbcontario.ca to serve as a hub 54 Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centres throughout Ontario. Through funding from the Ontario Government under the Ontario Together Fund initiative, the site has been created to increase access and awareness of Small Business COVID Recovery services available to small businesses.

Snapshot - Destination Canada Travel Outlook

Key findings from the research that contains information on forecasted economic outcomes, a micro-economic outlook, a travel outlook and media consumption information is [here](#).

Survey - Culinary Tourism Alliance

The Culinary Tourism Alliance is seeking to gain a better understanding of the opportunities to grow culinary tourism in Canada. Please help them by completing this [6-minute anonymous survey](#). Survey respondents can enter a draw to win a Canadian taste of place prize.



Landman Garden & Bakery,
Headwaters Region