



96 Main Street, Suite B  
PO Box 852  
Stanardsville, VA 22973  
Phone (434) 985-6663  
Fax (434) 985-3414  
<http://eda.gcva.us>  
[eda@gcva.us](mailto:eda@gcva.us)

# Press Release

Contact: John Humphries, (434) 227-4646,  
[visitorcenter@gcva.us](mailto:visitorcenter@gcva.us)

Contact: Tony Williams, (434) 985-6663,  
[twilliams@gcva.us](mailto:twilliams@gcva.us)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**9 A.M. EDT, October 30, 2009**

## **NEW ERA OF TOURISM PROMOTION IN GREENE COUNTY, VA**

GREENE COUNTY, VA, OCTOBER 30, 2009: As visitors complete the autumn season in Greene by searching out the most beautiful fall colors that Virginia has to offer, Greene County is proud to present a new face of tourism. On Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 5 pm, the Greene County Tourism Council and Economic Development Authority (EDA) will celebrate the Grand Opening of the new Greene County Visitor Center. It will be a fun-filled day featuring the work of local artisans, live music, Miss Greene County, and a Shenandoah National Park ranger. From 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm historian and re-enactor Tom Pitz will be on site as Thomas Jefferson to give a taste of the Greene County of the past. An official ribbon cutting will occur at 12:30 pm. Locals and visitors alike are invited to come and enjoy the local arts and seasonal refreshments while exploring the new Visitor Center in the inviting yellow cottage next to the Blue Ridge Café on US Route 29 South in Ruckersville.

Tourism has become one of Virginia's largest industries. In 2008, tourism generated \$19.2 billion in revenue, supported 210,620 jobs and provided \$1.28 billion in state and local tax revenue. It was also a great revenue producer for Greene in 2008. Visitors spent over \$15 million in Greene County, which supported 213 jobs and generated over \$460,000 in local tax revenues.

The Governor of Virginia has recognized the great benefits tourism brings to the state, and the Greene County EDA is working to increase those benefits in Greene County. As the 'Gateway to the Blue Ridge' and the hub of Central Virginia's cultural, historic and scenic offerings, the County stands to benefit significantly from the growing trend of travelers looking to stay closer to home while still feeling like they're "getting away." Virginia is only a day's drive for nearly 60 percent of the U.S. population!

Studies indicate that Virginia gains \$7 for every \$1 of investment in tourism. The brand new Visitor Center on Route 29 is the EDA's first effort to expand Greene's visibility, increase tourism and begin to realize the 7-to-1 investment return potential of tourism promotion.

To capture online visitors as well as those that drive through the County, the Tourism Council is also releasing a brand new interactive Greene County tourism website ([www.ComeToGreene.com](http://www.ComeToGreene.com)) with guides to restaurants, antiques, B&Bs and more. ComeToGreene.com marks an important step in Greene County websites, helping to connect Greene into the 21<sup>st</sup> century virtual world.

Supporting all of these efforts is the Greene County Tourism Council. The Council is currently forging ahead with new leadership by Mrs. Margaret Ramsey, an Associate Broker with Charlotte Ramsey, Inc. Realtors. An active resident in the County for nearly twenty years, Mrs. Ramsey is excited by the changes being made that will help to increase public awareness of all that Greene has to offer. Mrs. Ramsey believes that "increased traffic, both online and with the new high traffic location of the Visitors Center, will cause travelers to choose to stay, eat and shop in all areas of Greene rather than just traveling through to one of our neighboring counties."

In the fall the Council was saddened by the resignation of Mr. Rob Murphy as a member and chair, who for years gave invaluable leadership and energy to the Council. Although Mr. Murphy will be greatly missed, long-time Greene resident and artisan Mr. John Pluta has been appointed to help fill his footprint. Mr. Pluta opened Noon Whistle Pottery on Main Street in Stanardsville with his wife Holly Horan in 2001 where they sell their own hand-crafted pottery and sculpture as well as the works of over 100 American artisans – many of whom are from Greene County and the surrounding area. Mr. Pluta is excited to be a part of the Tourism Council's efforts "to promote the area's huge potential as a valued destination for visitors." He sees "Stanardsville as the perfect small town destination for tourists seeking outdoor adventure and to base their visits to the National Park, Montpelier, local vineyards, Charlottesville and beyond."

The Greene County Visitor Center is currently open Wednesday through Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm and can be contacted at 434-227-4646 or [visitorcenter@gcva.us](mailto:visitorcenter@gcva.us).