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March 12, 2015

*Below: ode to dirty dancing, sand in your shoes, spring is coming!, raise a pint or two, ribbit, meat and sweet.*

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## Take a Road Trip to Lake Lure

Lake Lure is a magnificent, amenity-filled area that has attracted families for generations. Start with the natural beauty, the amazing climate and the endless amenities. Then, throw in the creative folks who're drawn there, and the proximity to Asheville for more arts, culture and dining. It's one unbeatable combination, and as a result, there are those who simply can't bear to leave.

We spoke with two couples who've put down roots at Rumbling Bald Resort, overlooking Lake Lure. Learn what made all the difference to them (and gather insider tips for your own road trip getaway).

Learn more.

**Where in the Carolina World are you?**

Grab a cup of Joe and take your morning stroll where the sand meets the sea. Miles of sandy beaches and gently rolling surf are all yours for the admiring. Carolina folks know our beaches are something special. Visit once, and you'll know why this stretch of prime oceanfront attracts waterbabies from all over.

Note: Like what you see? Your early April Compass eNews will have a road trip that offers insider tips for making the most of your journey to this magical, family-loving destination.

[Where are you?](#)

**Carolina Home Grown**

## Don't be a Shrub Snob

by Robert F. Polomski, Ph.D.  
Horticulturist/Lecturer • Clemson University

Along with robins,  
border forsythia  
(*Forsythia  
xintermedia*) is also  
considered a harbinger  
of Spring. Although  
this deciduous shrub,  
which can grow 7 to 10  
ft. tall and 10 to 12 ft.  
wide, hails from China  
and Korea, it's been  
used in the South for so long that many folks assume it's a born-  
and-raised native of the South. In fact, some folks renamed it  
"yellow bells" for its stupendous display of bright yellow flowers  
that appear along its arching branches in early to mid-March.

Others belittle the border forsythia and consider it to be a prosaic  
shrub that's only for plain folks. Also, they complain that it's a "two  
week wonder" because the entire shrub tends to fade away in the  
landscape after its explosive floral display in early Spring. I accept  
the opinion of these shrub snobs, but I don't agree with them. When  
this easy-to-grow, relatively pest-free shrub blooms, it takes me to  
my happy place: Ol' Man Winter's gone and Spring has finally  
arrived.

Plant this spring-flowering shrub on steep slopes or banks, or  
interplant it among other shrubs and flowers. I prefer to use border  
forsythia as an informal screen, while friends of mine have pruned it  
into formal hedges. If you have full sun and well-drained soil, you  
can grow forsythia.

Despite its disappearance after flowering, expect a colorful return in  
the fall when the forsythia leaves turn a decent burgundy and  
purple color. While the falling leaves signal the onset of Winter, the  
plump flower buds that remain remind me of the beauty that awaits  
me in early Spring.

*Learn more about Carolina gardening from Dr. Polomski's new  
book, [Carolinas Month by Month Gardening](#).  
Available wherever books are sold.*

### Carolina Animals at Risk SC Wildlife Federation

*Note: A new feature will share information about Carolinas  
endangered animals. Some are cuddly, others – not so much. All  
are important and the Wildlife Federations of both Carolinas are  
working hard to raise awareness of these important creature  
assets. Enjoy!*

## Good times ahead

Hello Tony,

Hope all's well in Columbia. Here, daffodils are blooming. We're in docksiders, planning garden projects and summer escapes.

Add some fresh adventures to your life! Let a Carolina adventure nurture your soul. To get preferred dates, it's time to plan spring/summer vacation tours.

Read on ... about restaurants, inns, festivals, special events and a few quirky ideas to amuse and intrigue:

A "Road Trip" to Lake Lure promises good times and great views and a fabulous resort;

Carolina garden favorite that means it's spring;

Pubs and grub – award-winning style of the pint-lifting variety;

Carolina animals at risk – cuddling and not-so-cuddly critters that need our support;

The quintessential southern mash-up – meat and sweet.

We're all looking for good times and happy to see construction projects all across the Carolinas. You'll find jobs, low taxes and great home prices. Click to: [Retirement Living & Real Estate Tips](#). Use the 350 pages at [CarolinaLiving.com](#) as your resource for Carolina facts 'n fun that lead to stories 'n memories!

All the Best,

Leyla & Patrick Mason  
Co-Founders,

The **Pine Barrens Tree Frog** (*Hyla andersonii*) has suffered from loss of habitat due to development and fire suppression in the sandhills region of SC. In addition, use of herbicides in power line cuts is thought to have negative effects.

On-going conservation efforts include controlled burns to keep an open character to the seepage bogs that these frogs need. Also, the SC Department of Natural Resources Heritage Trust protected a gas line right-

of-way where the frogs were found in Kershaw County.

Hopefully, measures like these will continue to occur in the future so that the pine barrens treefrog remains an important part of the eco-system in South Carolina.

*Submitted by Hilda Flamholtz, SC Master Naturalist & Palmetto Pro Birder  
Photo by Nathan Shepard*

## Coasterphobic?

### Feel the Sting

*Here's what the website says about Carowinds newest attraction – Fury 325, the world's tallest and fastest giga coaster.*

"Riders begin their adventure on one of three 32-passenger, open-air trains to the peak height of 325 feet and drop a dramatic 81 degrees.

Then like an angry hornet chasing its target, riders race into a massive 190-foot tall barrel turn and a high speed S-curve reaching

speeds of up to 95 miles per hour.

Just above the front entrance, riders experience an astonishing 91 degree overbanked horseshoe turn, and then take a sharp dive underneath a pedestrian bridge, swarming at full force into the back half of the ride, through a high speed banked curve, camel back hill and an intense double helix maneuver.

Most rides would be done by now, but know this is North America's longest steel coaster. The ride finishes by racing through two more high speed camel back hills before hitting the brake run. Get ready! Fury 325 does not let up during its three-minute and 25-second ride along 6,602 feet of steel – it's full throttle all the way and impossible not to feel this ride's penetrating sting."

Carowinds (just South of Charlotte) opens to the public for the 2015 season on Saturday, March 28. [www.Carowinds.com](#)



Learn more about [Charlotte](#).

PS: Tony, what tickles your vacation fantasy? Blue Ridge waterfalls, sunrise beach walks, breathtaking golf, cruising the lake, or shopping for that perfect something? Share your vacation questions, favorite restaurants, best parks and entertainment venues with our editor, [Kathy Pettit](#). We'll pass along your experiences!

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## The New Guide is Here.

**Updated town information, six fun new Carolina Adventures, and one heck of a good-looking water story. Order yours today.**

[Click here](#) for the official hold-in-your-hand Guide to Carolina lifestyle fun and adventure trips, plus real estate tips, tax & cost-of-living advantages, retirement opportunities and town profiles.

Just share your dream goals and we'll help lead you to smart Carolina life and times.

## Facebook

**It's all about the pub – and the grub.**

We're not talking about the old stand-bys you used to sneak out of Dad's refrigerator. Nope, the beer being brewed in the Carolinas is the stuff awards are made of – and given for.

## Pubs and Grub

### Heading toward the Outer Banks?

*Put these two stops on your to-do itinerary.*

**Weeping Radish Eco-Farm and Brewery** in Grandy (on the Outer Banks) made an appearance on Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives, where its authentic Reubens and decadent cheesy baked potato soup wowed Guy Fieri.

It's the oldest Microbrewery in North Carolina, and features great beer, super pub food and a charming little gift store. Be sure to try the Black Radish, featured in the Guide to Beer Judging, as the example of a classic dark lager beer and recently chosen online as "One of 50 beers to drink before you die." While there, try their liverwurst, a 2011 Good Foods Award Recipient.

**Outer Banks Brewing Station** is the first wind-powered brewery in the United States, and was the first business to produce wind power on the Outer Banks. Located in Kill Devil Hills, they craft award-winning brews, and received a Bronze Medal at The 2012 World Beer Cup 2012 for Vitis Reductus Weisse, a German Style Sour Ale.

When next we visit, we'll be trying the lemongrass wheat beer – yum!

### More about brewskies

*April is North Carolina beer month, and for the third year in a row they're making it appealing to schedule a trip to the old north state.*

*They've got great activities lined up. More than 90 breweries – from the mountains to the coast – are participating, ranging from decades-old, award-winning brewhouses to newbies on the block, eager to make a name for their batches.*

*It's a month-long celebration offering dozens of beer-inspired festivals, tastings, dinners, special discounts, travel deals, giveaways and more. You can be certain that by the time april comes to a close, you'll have an even better appreciation for north carolina's thriving beer scenes.*

*Get the details at [www.ncbeermmonth.com](http://www.ncbeermmonth.com).*

## Carolina Cuisine

Let's pause and salute our hard-working brewmasters. Salute! When you wanna try something different – dare we say a bit edgy – try one of the microbrews being crafted and consumed in the Carolinas. Always in moderation, of course. What's your favorite craft beer? Plz [share](#).

### It'll make you squeal!

Southerners know that pork products rule. What's more, homemade jams are the pride of many a southern cook. And so, put them together and you've got the makings of a true classic – [Bacon Jam](#).

We found this culinary creation at [Dogwood Southern Table and Bar](#), in Charlotte.

Take time to look through the recipe for some Charlotte hometown ingredient suggestions.

### Heading your way twice a month

- Let's Take a Road Trip!
- Carolina Famous Faces
- Insider Attractions
- [eNewsletter Archives](#).

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*Compiled by Katherine O. Pettit • Designed by Ann Dolin*

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