

Leonard Veillette
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News Release: Two Fall Festivals, College Football, Fresh Farm Harvest and the County Fair Make Nash County a Fall Destination.

Taking the kid's to a working farm is Fall fun in Nash County. The Fisher Farm opens it's doors for visitors to view the "fruits" of the Fall harvest including pumpkins, gourds, Indian corn and Fall squash. Children can visit various farm animals and maybe even get to ride on a farm cart. The Fisher Farm is open through November.

Every Saturday morning and Friday afternoons the expanded Nash Area Farmer's market showcases the vegetable and flower harvest of area farmers as well as fresh baked goods, handmade crafts, homemade jellies, jams and roasted coffee. Variety every visit based on availability. Check for special events in two market halls.

Surrounding the third weekend of September (16th-19th), thousands gather for the three-day Down East Viking Football Classic when Elizabeth City State University takes on Chowan University. Football's the game but fun and entertainment are special parts of the fun. On Saturday tailgates will be far and wide in the new Rocky Mount Sports Complex beginning early in the morning and continuing throughout the day. The Viking Football Classic is a busy three days with fashion shows, a golf tournament and of course remaking old collegiate friendships.

The area's largest carnival is October 12th-17th featuring dozens of rides, exhibits, games and that great "Fair Food." From tilt-a-whirls and Ferris wheels to racing pigs and local school bands, a full week of activities can be found. With different events held every night, the Rocky Mount Fair is fun for all ages day or night.

October is Festival month in Nash County with two of the largest events in Eastern North Carolina. The first weekend always brings The Pumpkin Festival to Spring Hope (October 2nd & October 3rd). Thousands gather to celebrate the Fall growing season. The Festival begins with a parade with theme floats, local marching bands and celebrities. A special attraction is the crowning of the Pumpkin Queen. A nip in the air welcomes the aroma of Southern foods – barbecue, hotdogs, hamburgers and plenty of sweet tea and desserts. Homemade crafts are displayed for sale on both sides of Main Street. This annual event has a little something for everyone.

The very next weekend it's Rocky Mount's turn with the Downeast Festival (October 9th & 10th). This is a two-day event featuring local and national music performances, dancers, crafts, and down-home cooking. Exhibits and lots of homemade crafts assure hours of fun. On Saturday, October 9th Rocky Mount hosts the second annual Eastern Carolina BBQ Throw Down is a cooking contest with chicken, pork ribs, plus pork & beef brisket. A Kansas City Barbecue Society sanctioned event, this is an opportunity to see professionals cook, then watch as the judges sample the delicious barbecue to select the champion. To finish the evening, you can sample a plate or maybe a sandwich of Eastern NC delicious barbecue washed down with sweet tea. Once you've sampled "Good ole' Eastern NC home-cooked barbecue" straight off the grill, you'll be hooked.

Of course there is always something new at the Imperial Centre in downtown Rocky Mount. Experience exciting space travel and laser light shows in the digital planetarium to more down to earth creatures in the Children's Museum & Science Centers Eastern NC Coastal living marsh. "Inside Africa" is an astounding exhibit showing an in-depth view of Africa. This exhibit includes exhibitions of an African plain, village, crafts and a sobering view of below decks in a slave ship. An expanded "Elements of Life, Diversity in the Carolinas and Save Our Planet" is based on exhibits that demonstrate how people affect the earth. The Cummins Planetarium has a full schedule of daily digital video and laser shows. In September "Stars of the Pharaohs" is the main show. Call 252 972 1167 for schedules and ticket information. The Art Center always has thought provoking exhibits in ten galleries including the permanent collection and exhibitions of regional and national artists. The Theatre is performing "Having Our Say" September 18th-26th. Information at 252-972-1441.

The Dunn Center at North Carolina College has performances and exhibits at the Minges Auditorium and Hines Gallery. For information call 252 985 5197 or go to www.ncwc.edu/Arts/DunnCenter.

On September 12th Nash Arts presents Mary Selvidge in concert. October offers a range of lively productions including a locally written play "Writers Café", a Womanless Beauty Pageant and ends with a haunting "Haunted by the Arts" Ghost Walk. Times and ticket information at 252 459 4734 or nasharts.org.

It's easy to see that Nash County is the place to be in September and October. Visit and enjoy the events as well as good old "Southern Hospitality." For more information visit www.rockymounttravel.com or call the Nash County Visitors Bureau at 1-800-849-6825.