

RALEIGH, N.C. – In partnership with [Visit North Carolina](#), NASCAR drivers hit the track at Charlotte Motor Speedway this weekend with a display of support for [Count On Me NC](#), a public health initiative to curb the spread of COVID-19.

In Saturday's Xfinity [Drive for the Cure 250](#), the No. 74 Chevrolet Camaro driven by [Gray Gaulding](#) for Standout Management Group will be wrapped entirely in Count On Me NC vinyl with a "Keep Your Distance" message on the bumper. Sunday's [Bank of America 400 Roval](#) will see campaign branding on the No. 43 car driven by [Bubba Wallace](#) for [Richard Petty Motorsports](#) and Gaulding's No. 27 Panini Motorsports car. Off the track, the Richard Petty Motorsports hauler will feature a pledge card with the King's signature; pit crews will wear Count On Me NC masks; and the animated 30-second [Count On Me NC spot](#) starring campaign mascot Sunny will be seen on the NBC Sports livestream.

Visit NC Director Wit Tuttell sees the NASCAR sponsorships as a natural fit for building support for Count On Me NC, a free program led by the [N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association](#) in partnership with the [N.C. Department of Health and Human Services](#) and [NC State Extension](#). The initiative trains businesses to operate as safely as possible and signal their commitment while enlisting consumers to wear masks, wash their hands and wait at a distance while in public.

"Like Krispy Kreme and Cheerwine, NASCAR has deep roots in North Carolina," Tuttell said. "Even without tuning in on race day, residents connect to a colorful history with moonshine running, legendary homegrown drivers such as Richard Petty and Junior Johnson, and experiences at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte and race shops throughout Cabarrus County and the surrounding region. With motorsports contributing \$6 billion to the state economy, these partnerships make perfect sense as a way to engage people in the Count On Me NC mission."

The NASCAR partnerships are the latest in Visit NC's Count On Me NC campaign, which launched with a print ad featuring commitment badges signed by rival basketball coaches Roy Williams at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Mike Krzyzewski at Duke University. Sponsorship of the International Bluegrass Music Association's virtual World of Bluegrass festival in Raleigh featured a banjo-laced version of the campaign jingle by [Hank, Pattie and the Current](#). In September, Richard Petty's grandson [Thad Moffitt](#) displayed Count On Me NC branding at an ARCA Menards race in Memphis, Tenn.

Tuttell said the support from the NASCAR teams and drivers has been uncommonly generous with Petty and others using personal time to create Count On Me NC video content for posting across social media platforms through the end of the year.

"Richard Petty has even given us permission to create a version of Sunny, the campaign's animated mascot, in his likeness," Tuttell said. "I look forward to seeing Sunny in shades and a Stetson with a message that supports a cause that Petty and the other drivers take seriously. They understand that in the fight against COVID-19, masks, handwashing and social distancing make the same kind of sense as tire checks, refueling and mechanical adjustments during a race. We appreciate their willingness to use their influence and encourage followers to help North Carolina outpace the spread of COVID-19."

About Count On Me NC:

[Count On Me NC](#) is a public health initiative designed to help businesses operate as safely as

possible and signal their commitment to best practices, and to enlist consumers to do their part to curb the spread of COVID-19. A collaboration led by the [**N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association**](#) in partnership with [**Visit North Carolina**](#), the [**N.C. Department of Health and Human Services**](#) and [**NC State Extension**](#), the initiative centers on evidence-based training with specific guidance for sanitation and service that goes beyond the stringent health requirements that were in place before the pandemic. Participation is voluntary and free of charge, and training is available in English and Spanish. Thousands of hotels, restaurants, attractions and other businesses display the sea-green Count On Me NC logo that signifies completion of the training.
[**CountOnMeNC.org**](#)

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