



Story Ideas:

“White Lightning” to “Lightning Fast”:

Explore the [Wilkes County](#) connection between moonshine and NASCAR. Wilkes County native [Junior Johnson](#) perfected his driving skills while hauling “white lightning” through the Brushy Mountains, inventing the “[bootleg turn](#)” in the process. Johnson was named the greatest NASCAR driver of all time by [Sports Illustrated](#), and was the subject of the groundbreaking article by Tom Wolfe, “[The Last American Hero.](#)” Today, you can visit [Copper Barrel Distillery](#), Wilkes County’s first legal moonshine distillery, and [Call Family Distillers](#), whose founders’ family tree includes the [Reverend Dan Call](#) (who taught [Jack Daniel](#) how to make whiskey), and the “[Uncatchable](#)” [Willie Clay Call](#), legendary moonshiner.



The soundtrack of our life:

Music is the very heart & soul of Wilkes County, as generations of traditional music continue to be passed down. Have a chance to interview music legends at world-famous [MerleFest](#), the four-day Americana music festival which draws over 80,000 each April. Explore historic downtown [Wilkesboro](#) during the more intimate [Carolina in the Fall Festival](#), presented by the [Kruger Brothers](#) in September.

Is history your thing?

At the [Wilkes Heritage Museum](#), learn about the Wilkes County connections to [Tom Dula](#), subject of the popular song [Hang Down Your Head](#), [Tom Dooley](#), and to [Daniel Boone](#), who had a home in Wilkes County.



[Chang & Eng](#), the original Siamese twins who were a worldwide phenomenon in the 1800s, settled in Wilkes County. A [candlelight ghost tour](#) of historic downtown Wilkesboro will illuminate the rich history and folklore of Wilkes. Trace the [Overmountain Victory Trail](#), which follows the route of assembly of the American Patriot army during the Revolutionary War, culminating at the site of the [Battle of Kings Mountain](#). Thomas Jefferson stated that the victory at Kings Mountain was the battle that “turned the tide of success” in the Revolutionary War. The trail covers over 200 miles in North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee, winding right through the heart of Wilkes County. [Whippoorwill Academy & Village](#) is a collection of

restored log cabins featuring historical museums, including the one-room schoolhouse that NC Poet Laureate James Larkin Pearson attended, as well as the breathtaking log cabin “Chapel of Peace.”



Love Locally Produced Libations?



There are over 40 wineries within an hour's drive of Wilkes County! Savor award-winning wines served with Southern hospitality, starting at romantic and stunningly picturesque [Raffaldini Vineyards](#). Step into the sunny Tuscan-style villa for a taste of "Chianti in the Carolinas." Also, be sure to try [Jones von Drehle](#), [Piccione Vineyards](#), [Roaring River Vineyards](#), and [Menarick Vineyard & Winery](#).

Locally sourced fruits & grains yield lush libations. [McRitchie](#)

[Winery & Ciderworks](#)

handcraft [hard ciders](#) from hand-selected heirloom cider apples picked at the peak of freshness from an orchard in Wilkes County's Brushy Mountains. [Call Family Distillers](#) produces their moonshine using a white corn meal from [Linney's Mill](#), in nearby Union Grove. Linney's is one of the last mills in NC that grind with water power from an adjacent stream. Every drop of spirits made at [Copper Barrel Distillery](#) is made in their stillhouse using grains from NC farms & mills and well water from the crystalline-rock aquifer.



Extreme sports more your speed?



Discover more than 45 miles of mountain biking trails, including [Warrior Creek Trail](#), rated one of the best trails in the U.S. Scale the heights rock-climbing the 600-foot granite cliff face at [Stone Mountain State Park](#). Soak in stunning scenery as you float above the Blue Ridge Mountains on a [paragliding adventure](#). Go [tubbing](#), that's right, [tubbing](#) (not tubing) down the Yadkin River in a galvanized washtub that holds 4 or more people.



Need More Ideas?

Check out [this video](#) to spark other story ideas, or [get in touch with us](#) and we'll help you brainstorm.

Jodi Tonsic, Wilkesboro TDA
jttonic@wilkescountytourism.com
336.838.3951 x.242



@WilkesNCTourism