

Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau  
**IT ALL STARTS WITH A VISIT**  
2015 Annual Report



[visitgahanna](http://visitgahanna.com)



## IT ALL STARTS WITH A VISIT

Whether someone comes to Gahanna for a leisure visit or conference, to shop for a new home, or to look for a new business location...*it all starts with a visit.*



## OUR MISSION

The Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau (“Visit Gahanna”) is a 501(c)(6) destination marketing organization funded by a portion of the lodging tax dollars that are generated by overnight visitors to Gahanna’s four hotels. The mission of Visit Gahanna is to promote Gahanna as a vibrant destination by connecting the people and places of our community, which contributes to economic prosperity.

# PARTNERING WITH VISIT GAHANNA = ECONOMIC IMPACT



**Ava Misseldine** (*Owner, Koko Tea Salon & Bakery*)  
“It is not an understatement to say the only reason Koko is in Gahanna is because of the GCVB. We already had a place picked out in Westerville and were going to sign the lease the day I stopped in the GCVB on a lark. The staff there was so incredibly kind and helpful that we knew we needed to stay in Gahanna instead. It has been an enormously beneficial partnership from the beginning. The GCVB team is genuinely interested in making Koko succeed. The only thing they are lacking in is self-promotion. No one knows how amazing they are! Gahanna is truly enriched by being home to the professional, creative and results-driven staff at the GCVB.”



**Barbara Drobnick** (*Owner and Creator, Honey Grove Botanicals*)  
“As a small business in Gahanna, I greatly appreciate all that the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau has done to make the public aware that we are here and what we have to offer. Advertising in traditional mediums can be an expensive, hit or miss (mostly miss) gamble. The team at the GCVB gets this and has been an invaluable source of word of mouth marketing that I can never repay. The GCVB is very receptive to suggestions and requests from us. When my phone rings and the caller ID reads GCVB, I can’t wait to hear what fun, new project they have to get the word out about my business. I never hesitate to recommend to other business owners to connect with the GCVB. Any business or organization is lucky to have them on their team.”



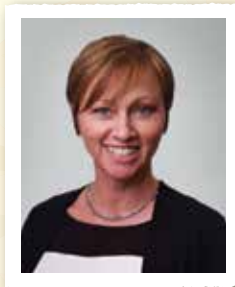
**Val Jorgensen** (*Farmer and Owner, Jorgensen Farms*)  
“I personally want to thank the Gahanna CVB for offering so many opportunities for Jorgensen Farms to partner with them over the past year. Rowan Evans (Jorgensen Farms Community Liaison) and I have frequently commented to each other about how hard working, creative, energetic and responsive the Gahanna CVB staff is when it comes to getting the news out to people about what Gahanna has to offer visitors! Our partnership with the Gahanna CVB on the Herbal Trail is just one way that we appreciate their exceptional energy and hard work. As we move into the 2016 season, we look forward to continuing our relationship and making it another great year!”



**Joe Alexander** (*Director of Pagoda University, an annual meeting of international Mercedes-Benz vintage car enthusiasts*)  
“Gahanna offers great hotel accommodations, many fine dining options, free parking, shopping and a welcoming, small-town feel. Working with the Gahanna CVB was easy and very accommodating for our group. They provided visitor information packets that were very helpful to our guests. Many visitors chose to stay longer than the three-day event—some even a full week—to take in additional sightseeing and history in the area. We are already looking forward to our next event here!”



**Holly Schaffner** (*Owner, Mrs. Turbo's Cookies*)  
“We chose Gahanna for Mrs. Turbo’s Cookies because of the amazing community and welcoming atmosphere. We live in Gahanna and our child goes to school here, so it was only natural that we open our business here as well. An integral part of our support has come from the Gahanna Convention and Visitors Bureau. The team there has been incredibly helpful not only to grow our business but to build relationships in the community. They will continue to be an important part of our team and growth. The willingness to help and support each other is a trait that a lot of communities don’t have and is why we chose Gahanna. In turn, we want to help support Gahanna’s continued growth with our success... and yummy treats of course!!”



**Karen Gray** (*Executive Director of Adult Education, Ohio Dominican University*)  
“I have enjoyed becoming more involved in Gahanna through my role at Ohio Dominican University. Our participation in the recent Holiday Lights Celebration allowed us to engage directly with residents and attendees, to share information about our university, and to learn more about the city itself. After becoming empty nesters, my husband and I decided to relocate. Although I had been to Gahanna before, my work with the Gahanna CVB led me to see the city in a new light – as a new destination with great places to eat and fun places to explore. We visited cities in the Central Ohio area and decided to move to Gahanna, where we can enjoy restaurants and shops in walking distance, in a safe and warm community.”

# 2015 BY THE NUMBERS

## Marketing Results

- 2015 CVB lodging tax collections: **7.8%↑**
- **15,000** Visitor Guides distributed in 2015
- Media Leads: **8,137** (31.1%↑)
- Group Tour Leads:
  - “Ohio Has It” Cooperative: **305**
  - Experience Columbus Group Tour Council: **268**
  - Heartland Travel Showcase: **30**
  - American Bus Association Marketplace: **27**
- **20** Tours/Groups Hosted (11%↑)
- **\$100,000+** invested by Visit Gahanna in marketing and promotional efforts
- Expanded advertising into national and international markets
- Paid advertisement print impressions: **11.1+ million** (300+%↑)
- Experienced an **87%** increase in visits to the *DiscoverGahanna.com* blog, which highlights local businesses and offers insider tips and first-person reviews
- **\$130,000+** reinvested by Visit Gahanna into Gahanna businesses
- Through its partnership with *Experience Columbus*, Visit Gahanna hosted two classes for the national “Certified Tourism Ambassador” program at Gahanna locations, welcoming **34** new tourism ambassadors for Gahanna and generating exposure for local businesses.

## Achievements

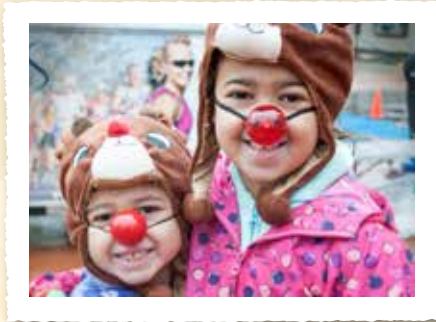
- Recognized by industry peers for excellence and creativity in marketing efforts:
  - MIDDY Awards, presented by the Ohio Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus
    - **First Place** – Brochure (Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival Partnership Opportunities)
    - **First Place** – 2014 Annual Report (The Power of One Voice)
    - **First Place** – Promotional Video (Visit Gahanna/ Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival)
    - **First Place** – Social Media Campaign (Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival)
    - **First Place** – Website ([creeksidebluesandjazz.com](http://creeksidebluesandjazz.com))
    - **Second Place** – Website ([visitgahanna.com](http://visitgahanna.com))
  - RUBY Awards (Recognizing Uncommon Brilliance), presented by the Ohio Travel Association at the Ohio Conference on Tourism
    - **First Place** – Brochure (Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival Partnership Opportunities)
    - **First Place** – 2014 Annual Report (The Power of One Voice)
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    - **First Place** – Website ([creeksidebluesandjazz.com](http://creeksidebluesandjazz.com))
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    - **Second Place** – Promotional Video (Visit Gahanna/ Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival)



# 2015 SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS



↑208% *VisitGahanna.com*  
website



↑87% *DiscoverGahanna.com*  
blog



 ↑113% *@VisitGahanna*



 ↑118% *@VisitGahanna*



 ↑12% *@VisitGahanna*



 ↑43% *@VisitGahanna*



↑68% *CreeksideBluesandJazz.com*  
website



 ↑14% *@CreeksideBluesandJazz*



 ↑23% *@CreeksideBlues*

# 2015 SIGNATURE EVENTS BY THE NUMBERS

## Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival

- Record Sunday attendance
- Record **\$90,000** in partnership support (14.8%↑)
- **27** national, regional and local businesses financially supported the event (58.9%↑ in number of financial sponsors)
- **88%** retention of returning financial festival partners
- **26** national, regional and local businesses provided in-kind donations and partnerships (100% retention in participation)
- Donated **\$15,500+** to Gahanna service/nonprofit organizations (10.1%↑)
- Generated award-winning social media campaign with **#2015CBJF**
- Created award-winning interactive website, *creeksidebluesandjazz.com*
- **20** televised stories with total Nielsen audience of **911,000+**
- Total calculated publicity value of TV, radio and print coverage: **\$89,000+**
- Total online impressions: **9.1+ million**
- Total print impressions: **4.3+ million** (53.5%↑)
- CBJF volunteers: **711**



## Holiday Lights Celebration

- **\$19,100** in sponsorship support raised
- Created new format for Holiday Lights Celebration, expanding the event from a 40-minute parade to 4.5 hours of interactive holiday activities and generating significant increase in customer traffic for Gahanna businesses
- More than **50** businesses, organizations, school groups and churches participated in the kickoff event
- **15** downtown businesses held "open houses" offering complimentary treats and activities
- **15** televised stories with total Nielsen audience of **813,000+**
- Total calculated publicity value of TV coverage: **\$51,000+**
- Total print and online impressions: **1.3 million** (0% change)
- Runners registered for Santa Run 5K: **337** (5%↑)
- Cities/Zip Codes represented by runners: **69**  
(92% of participants from outside of Gahanna)
- Character Breakfast attendees: **377** (4.4%↑)
- Cities/Zip Codes represented by Breakfast attendees: **24**
- Gingerbread House Contest entries: **17**
- Holiday Lights volunteers: **100**



# THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 EVENT SPONSORS



Gahanna Rotary



Alert Public Safety Solutions • Art Garden Studio • Chase Bank • Chrysalis Health • City BBQ  
City of Gahanna • Columbus Academy • Columbus Blues Alliance • Columbus Children's Theatre • Custom Air  
Event & Exhibit Management Co. • Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce • Gahanna Kiwanis • George Parker & Associates  
GLHS Community Art Program • Hanawalt Exteriors • Inner Harmony Health & Wellness • Jazz Arts Group  
Kya's Krusade • Lil Kickers Indoor Sports • Local Cantina • Lowes Home Improvement – Polaris • Metcalf Design & Printing  
Mifflin Township Division of Fire • Mitchell Lock • Music Go Round • Niagara Bottling, LLC • Shane Ewald, City Attorney  
Old Bag of Nails Pub • Pro-Tech Appearance Supplies • Schneider Insurance • SOH Productions • Sound Perfection of Ohio  
Suburban Steel • This Week Community Newspapers • Thrifty Car Rental • Watershed Distillery • Young Chef's Academy

**visitgahanna**



167 Mill Street, Gahanna, Ohio 43230 • 614.418.9114 • Fax: 614.418.9122 • [visitgahanna.com](http://visitgahanna.com)



**VISIT GAHANNA STAFF**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Laurie Jadwin, CTA</b><br><i>Executive Director</i>                     | <b>Susan Peters, CTA</b><br><i>Business &amp; Events Manager</i> |
| <b>Mary Szymkowiak, CTA</b><br><i>Communications &amp; Tourism Manager</i> | <b>Pam Brown, CTA</b><br><i>Operations Administrator</i>         |
|  | <b>Rachel Flenner, CTA</b><br><i>Events Administrator</i>        |

**2015 VISIT GAHANNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**OFFICERS**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Michael Tamarkin</b><br>President<br><i>Prudential Financial Services</i> | <b>Kelley Foster, CTA</b><br>Vice President<br><i>General Manager<br/>SpringHill Suites and<br/>TownePlace Suites<br/>Gahanna/Columbus Airport</i> |
| <b>Bobbie Burba, CTA</b><br>Treasurer<br><i>Gahanna Planning Commission</i>  |  |

**DIRECTORS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Troy Euton</b><br><i>Director, Dept. of Parks &amp; Recreation<br/>City of Gahanna</i> | <b>Ryan Jolley</b><br><i>Gahanna City Council Representative</i>   |
| <b>Jeff Conklin</b><br><i>Gahanna Lincoln High School</i>                                 | <b>Anthony Jones</b><br><i>Director, Dept. of Development<br/>City of Gahanna</i>                        |
| <b>Richard Conover, CTA</b><br><i>Aflac</i>   | <b>Ann Leak</b><br><i>Senior Vice President<br/>Benchmark Bank</i>                                       |
| <b>Amy Evans, CTA</b><br><i>Director, Olde Gahanna Community Partnership</i>              | <b>Brian Timm, CTA</b><br><i>Director, Corporate Partnerships<br/>Greater Columbus Sports Commission</i> |