



Roane

A L L I A N C E

A Unified Drive. A United Force.

2018 Annual Report

ABOUT THE ROANE ALLIANCE

2018-2019 Roane Alliance Board of Directors

- Dr. Chris Whaley, Chairman
- Sharon Templeton, Vice Chair
- Jerry Stephens, Secretary
- George Wilson, Treasurer
- Dr. Julian Ahler
- Kendall Bear
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- Candace Vannasdale
- David Webb
- Ron Woody
- Bill Young



Pam May, Interim President/CEO

The Roane Alliance was formed in 2001.

As an umbrella organization, the Alliance brings together the Roane Industrial Development Board (IDB), Visitors Bureau, and Chamber under one roof. Per the bylaws its purpose is “to develop, recommend, and direct plans, policies and actions that improve the economic well-being of the community and those activities and services which support economic growth and improve the quality of life of the community’s members; to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among present businesses and citizens; to help spawn expansions of local industry and businesses; and to foster an open community among all groups in the county concerned with economic development.”

The Alliance is primarily the marketing organization for Roane County, promoting its assets to numerous targets, most of which are identified based on location, demographics, industry, etc. The majority of paid advertising is outside Roane, targeting key markets identified by us or our partners as having interest in our location or assets. The Chamber, however, communicates mostly inside Roane to encourage shopping local, specifically promoting its members. Each of the partner organizations work within the county to help municipalities, organizations, existing businesses and individuals increase economic prosperity in Roane.

Learn more:
roanealliance.org/about



THE ROANE ALLIANCE MISSION:

To create an environment and unified voice that promotes:

- job creation
- economic development
- enhanced quality of life
- education & workforce development

Roane County has a Joint Economic and Community Development (JECD) board.

Established in 2001 by an interlocal agreement between the county and its municipalities, its purpose is to encourage all segments of the local community to communicate about economic development issues. The Alliance administers the JECD, as well as other programs that affect the county’s ability to qualify for state grants, like ThreeStar.

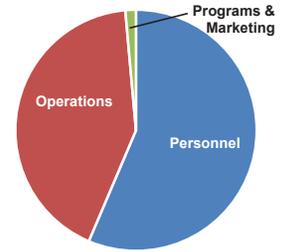


Without this board in place, local governments can not qualify for any state grants. The JECD, along with the Alliance board meets once a quarter.

The Alliance and its partners each have a budget and a board.

The Alliance budget is funded through contributions, the Gala and rent from each of the three partner organizations – Industrial Development Board (IDB), Visitors Bureau and Chamber. The primary function of the Alliance is to serve as the umbrella organization over the partners, creating a team that works together to help increase economic prosperity for the county. The Alliance budget provides funds for the personnel and operating expenses needed to manage the team. The Roane Alliance Board directs the Visitors Bureau’s tourism program, while the IDB and Chamber both have their own boards of directors.

Funding for the IDB and Visitors Bureau is determined by the county, while the Chamber is funded through membership dues and non-dues revenue such as funds raised from the annual banquet. Every partner’s budget provides for not only the personnel and operating expenses, but also the marketing and programming necessary for that partner to accomplish its mission, which in turn helps to accomplish the overall mission of the Alliance. Pie charts showing the budget breakdown of each partner are provided in this report.



Roane Alliance Budget Breakdown

2018 Roane Alliance Contributors

- City of Harriman
- City of Kingston
- City of Oak Ridge
- City of Rockwood
- East Tennessee Economic Council
- EnergySolutions
- Kyker Funeral Homes
- Oak Ridge Utility District
- The Omni Family of Services
- Roane County Board of Education
- Roane Medical Center
- Rockwood Electric Utility
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology - Harriman
- UCOR
- UT Battelle/ ORNL

Thanks to Our Gala Sponsors

Title **EnergySolutions & The Omni Family of Services**

Gold **ORUD - Rick Cox Construction - Youth Opportunity Investments - Roane State Community College - UT-Battelle**

Silver **Coldwell Banker Jim Henry & Associates - Designsensory - Earl Duff Subaru Jerry Duncan Ford Lincoln/Duncan Family Automotive Group - Roane Central Utility District - Roane Medical Center - SimplyBank. - Teijin Carbon America - TVA UCOR - United Community Bank**



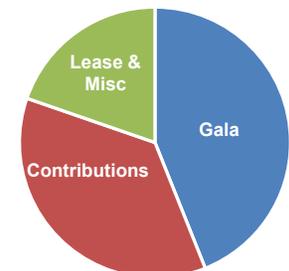
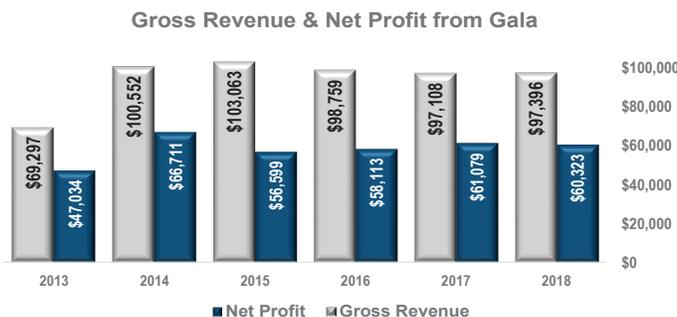
Cary Parten, Office Manager

Roane Alliance Gala raises funds for economic development.

Businesses and residents came out to celebrate Roane County’s successes while raising funds to continue the county’s economic development program, which is administered by the Roane Alliance. Held since 2002, following the formation of the Alliance, the funds make up at least 35% of the total Alliance annual budget. This year saw not only the highest ticket sales, but also one of the most attended. Net profit was \$60,323, only \$750 less than 2017, attributed to a few increases in expenses.

Thank you to host Volkswagen Group of America (for the 5th year in a row) and to all the sponsors, donors and volunteers who made it such a success this year and every year.

Because of the funds raised, the Alliance can continue the county’s economic development programs and continue its mission to increase economic prosperity for every citizen.



Roane Alliance Funding Sources

MARKETING IN ROANE COUNTY

Roane Alliance Marketing Partners



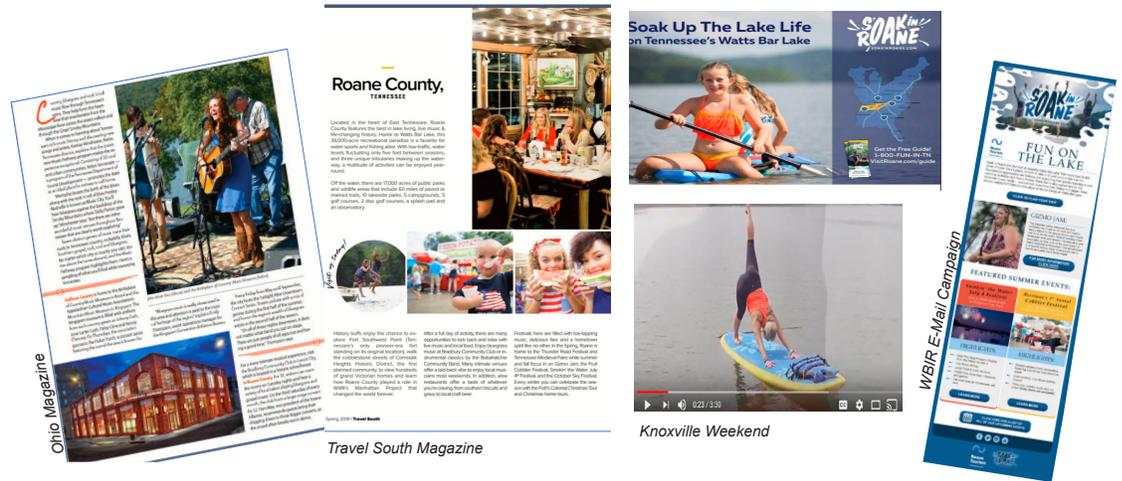
Sam Ledford, Marketing & Tourism Coordinator

By 2018, the Alliance had a full arsenal of new collateral.

Whether we were recruiting visitors, site consultants, retirees, businesses or industries, we had the marketing materials needed to showcase Roane County, and all designed to work together, promoting the assets that make Roane unique - Watts Bar Lake, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Roane State Community College and Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Manhattan Project; and what makes it special - 450+ events every year, historic landmarks and venues, and more.

This allowed us to extend our brand even more by taking advantage of last-minute opportunities. Through our partnership with Retire TN, we were offered a feature in *Ohio Magazine* and were thrilled they included Bradbury Community Club, John Muir Fest and our live music scene. We were also featured in a full-page editorial in *Travel South Magazine*, along with a half-page ad that showcased Watts Bar Lake in time for summer planning.

In May, we were well prepared for a TVA-led site visit that resulted in a second visit with the company's CEO. Per TVA feedback and subsequent contact with the company, we learned in late 2018 that Jones Road would be their choice. Despite a hold on the company's decision due to distribution, this site has been on TVA and the State's radar as one of the prime marketable locations in Tennessee, and we are confident it is just a matter of time before we plan a groundbreaking for Jones Road.



Promoting Roane County is one of the key functions of the Roane Alliance.

Everything we do involves marketing and PR, but we have to use our dollars wisely in order to reach our target markets. One ad alone could eat up half of the tourism or IDB marketing budget.

Partnering with other like-minded organizations has become one of the most cost-effective ways we can increase our marketing. By building relationships with these partners we have been able to do much more to increase our reach, and all within our budget. Roane County has been represented at some of the largest trade and travel shows, advertised and/or been written about in nationally-recognized travel and economic development magazines, had brochures distributed nationally and at the Tennessee Welcome Centers, and had access to valuable data and cutting-edge design capabilities, allowing us to be not only better prepared but to stand out as a top destination for industry and retail, recreation and fun, and retirement.

Several of these organizations offer grants that can also help maximize product development such as the Jones Road site in RRBTP or the K-25 Overlook & Visitor Center remodel. We also partner locally as well, leveraging our dollars with municipalities and event directors to help increase advertising to bring visitors into our county and to our local events.



Visitors continue to soak in Roane.

The Alliance partnered with local media to reach visitors within a day's drive during the summer. Email campaigns were sent to 10,000 WBIR subscribers promoting not only Watts Bar Lake (WBL), but also specific events such as Gizmo Jam, Smokin' the Water and Hooray for Harriman. Fox 43's *Knoxville Weekend* featured WBL in a 30-minute television episode about lake life in East Tennessee. Bunch Marine provided the boat that allowed us to show the producer and host WBL first-hand and what makes it the top lake in the area.

In the summer, Roane Tourism held a Soak in Roane (SIR) scavenger hunt, encouraging people to visit fun locations all over the county and in our cities. The campaign was promoted on social media, with quite a few families joining the fun. By getting out and soaking in Roane, those who completed the hunt told tales of how much they learned about the county. On Labor Day the contest ended with a total of 37 prizes awarded. We hope they will become visitor ambassadors by sharing how they soaked in Roane last summer.



Another fun way the Alliance promoted the new tourism brand – provided SIR swim caps for each of the athletes in the Storm the Fort Triathlon. Each year we look at new ways to keep the brand fresh, and the swim caps looked amazing as they raced across the water.

We continue to increase our digital advertising, and still advertise in magazines, when cost-effective. In addition, we share posts about local festivals and businesses, and with a reach of more than 1/2 million people, we are confident we are helping get the word out about Roane County.

TDTD Marketing Grant Awards



Soak in Roane marketing sponsorship offered to local events.

In 2018, the Visitors Bureau wanted to extend the highly-successful Soak in Roane (SIR) brand to help promote Roane's top events. By offering an SIR Marketing Sponsorship to those events

already bringing visitors into the county, we were able to not only leverage our marketing dollars with theirs, but to also leverage the state's tourism marketing dollars as well. We have taken advantage of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) marketing grant for years, always looking for projects that qualify so we can do even more. This was one of those projects, allowing us to continue our efforts despite a budget cut.

Festivals, sporting events, and tournaments qualified for sponsorship dollars by providing details on attendance, where their visitors were coming from, and also when possible, where they were staying and how much they spend. This shows the return on investment (ROI) and helps in determining how to maximize marketing dollars for the next year. It is all about combining forces to maximize marketing efforts, reach and in the end, economic impact for Roane County.

In 2018, there were 2,093 participants attending seven SIR sponsored sporting events, yielding an estimated economic impact of \$300,000, or an ROI of \$15.76 per \$1 spent. There were additional fishing and recreational events held which also contributed greatly to our economy – and all because of the assets we offer. Most events are one day, however, we do give more consideration for multi-day events when planning sponsorships because of the increased impact.

Marketing By the Numbers

1,268,300
magazines distributed with Roane ad or article

1,159,969
social media impressions about Roane attractions & events

10,000
digital ad impressions

2,493
professional photos

1,474
social media posts

232
attractions & restaurants featured on VisitRoane.com

839
member listings on RoaneChamber.com

761
events listed at VisitRoane.com/events or RoaneChamber.com

153
newsletters sent

13
shows represented (travel, retire, industry)

12
social media pages

12
hrs of professional video

8
print ads

5
websites

2
kiosks

1
television show

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & WORKFORCE



IDB Budget Breakdown

2018-2019 Roane Industrial Development Board of Directors

Jim Palmer, Chair

David Webb, Vice Chair

James Owens, Treasurer

Quentin Craig

Teddy Haywood

Joe Heckman

Bob Kite

Jeff Nichols

Tommy Thompson



Justin Snow, Director of Economic Development

IDB fosters economic development.

The IDB remains committed to recruiting new companies while also serving and assisting existing industries with expansion efforts, workforce needs and any other situations where guidance and assistance is needed. The creation of jobs and increased capital investment benefits Roane's citizens through increased economic prosperity. Nearly 80% of all new jobs come from existing industries and companies.

In 2018, 51 industries were visited to learn how the Alliance could help. In fact, since the new ECD director began nearly 2 years ago, more than 80 have been visited. One expansion project that came from those visits is Precise Industrial Coatings in Rockwood's Roane County Industrial Park (RCIP). In 2017, the IDB helped in their purchase of adjacent land so they could double the footprint of their existing building.

In addition, the Alliance contacts every industry each year to learn how many jobs were created or lost since net job growth is one of the best ways to gauge how well the year ended. In 2018, Roane County experienced the 5th straight year of positive job growth with 383 net jobs in our industries - a 68% increase over 2017 and one of the largest net job growths in over a decade. Additionally, in spite of Roane County's population remaining flat over the last five year, there has been a total net increase of 1,117 jobs.

Roane also had the lowest unemployment since 2004, and was within 0.1% of the national average.

"The Roane Alliance has been very responsive to RFI's, working with my department on projects and prospective companies visiting the east Tennessee region. Their work and the information they provide makes the process easier as we work with prospects in hopes of bringing them to Tennessee."

*Gary Human
Regional Director, East
State of TN ECD*

The IDB was busy with prospect activity.

Fifty-six requests for information (RFI) were received, with an average number of 238 jobs per prospect. Out of those 56 RFI's, Roane County qualified for around half of the total projects received. From those prospects, we had nine site visits.

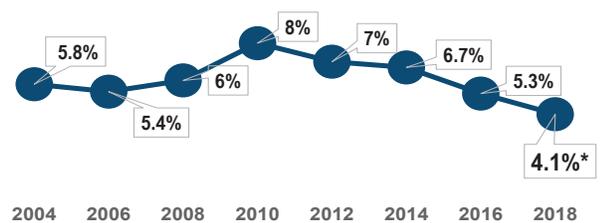
Another exciting trend we saw was the number of prospects received directly from relationships fostered with local developers, contractors and commercial real estate firms. Where the majority of industrial project leads once came from TVA or the state's Economic & Community Development (TNECD) agency, we saw leads coming directly to us.

One of the reasons for the increase in site visits is the Jones Road Site in Roane Regional Business & Technology Park (RRBTP). In order to be more competitive with flatter areas of the state, the site was graded, resulting in 11 flat, pad ready acres. This created a lot of buzz and prospect activity for the site.

Net Job Growth in Roane County



Roane Unemployment Rates (all-time low) 2004 - 2018*



*Represents average annual unemployment rate



Allen Lutz, Education & Workforce Development Specialist

The Education Matters program continues to help students succeed.

2018 was a 'record year' for Roane's Tennessee Scholars (TS). A record 143 students were recognized, the largest number of graduates to date, and the highest percentage of a graduating class at 30.6%. This was a 12% increase from the prior year's class, that held the previous record number of 132 graduates. The number of seniors graduating each year as scholars has almost doubled since the year the program began - 2007, with 73 Tennessee Scholars. To date, 1,321 have graduated as a Tennessee Scholar.

The annual High School Career Day, held since 2009 in the spring, has annually reached around 460 Roane County 11th graders from all five high schools. And in 2018, Roane County Schools requested a similar career day be held for 8th grade students from the five middle schools. So the Alliance coordinated an All Middle Schools Career Day in the fall, providing the opportunity for younger students to learn about career opportunities, educational requirements, and employer expectations directly from our businesses. By providing this information at an earlier age, students can work to be better prepared for the career they choose, increasing their chance of success.

2018-2019 Industrial Liaison Committee

Ron Berry, Chairman

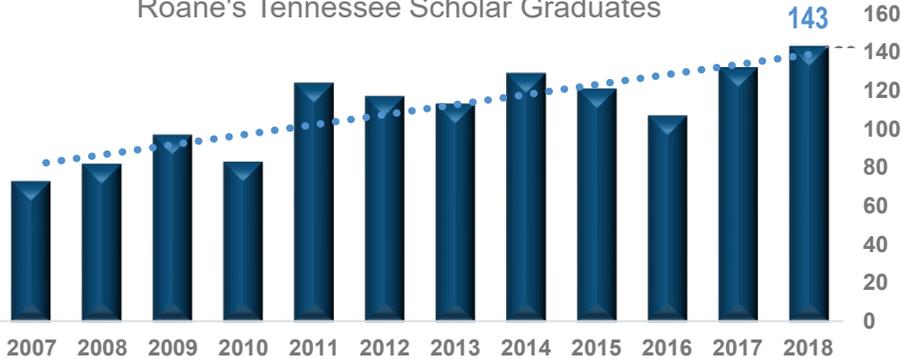
David Bell

Peggy Collier

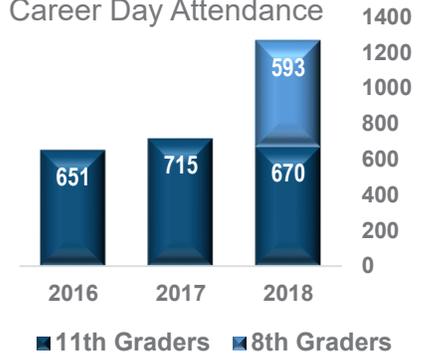
Mike Hooks

Junior Hendrickson

Roane's Tennessee Scholar Graduates



Career Day Attendance



Workforce has been a top focus at Alliance for some time.

The Alliance, through its Education Matters program, has been working to address workforce issues locally for years. Working with our local businesses and educational institutions, workshops and programs are planned for the year that can help train future and current employees. One of the most important programs and a significant part of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program in Roane County, is Educators in the Workplace (EIW). Since 2009, EIW has seen many Roane high school teachers visit local industry during the summers to learn first-hand the needs of our industries. In 2016, every high school teacher participated, visiting five businesses during the school year – a first. And in 2018, the EIW program expanded to middle school educators, which led to every middle school teacher visiting five businesses as well. These 'all teacher visits' in Roane were reportedly the first in the state. The Alliance also coordinates visits with local businesses to allow teachers to bring their students into the workplace. Over the years, this has built strong relationships between educators and businesses, with more teachers this year coordinating directly with representatives to bring students into a business.

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) has been connecting Roane businesses with educators since 2015 to help meet workforce needs and prepare our future workforce. By coordinating visits between local businesses and teachers, strong relationships have been built between educators and businesses, with more teachers this year coordinating directly with representatives to bring students into a business.

In 2018, 470 people attended professional development training (PDT) conducted by the Alliance. Workshops such as Time Management, Active Shooter Preparedness Training and Communications were just a few of the 35 workshops offered, and are an important part of increasing the quality and effectiveness of our workforce. Most of the workshops are free to Chamber members or Roane County Employers' Association members. In addition, the Tennessee Small Business Development Center offered several free seminars on starting a business and marketing, while the new Ignite Great Managers Workshop series offered five monthly sessions at a discount for human resource and operational managers. The Alliance also participated in the first Tennessee Talent Pipeline Academy, a new state-wide workforce initiative. In this 2-day workshop counties learned how the U.S. Chamber's demand-driven approach can help close the skills gap.

VISITORS BUREAU



Visitors Bureau Budget Breakdown



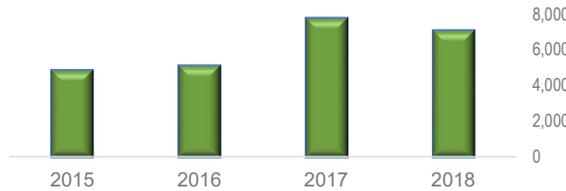
Alix Riter, Visitor Services

Retire Roane program seeing more and more interest in Roane.

In 2018 leads increased 42% over 2017, with 4,693 requests for information (RFI) just from prospective retirees. The Alliance responds to all requests, providing visitor guides, relocation packages, maps, or details about specific attractions and events. Information is sent first by email, or by direct mail if email is unavailable to save costs.

The Alliance sends out quarterly or seasonal email newsletters promoting upcoming events and things to do in Roane. In 2018, 25% of our total leads came from travel shows such as Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel; AAA Great Expectations Expo and the Chicago Travel & Adventure Show. From those, we sent an introduction email to 1,212 contacts. Less than 10% opted out of future emails, which is less than the national average. By partnering, we were able to build our database of potential visitors at a minimal cost. Our newsletter sent to retirees has an open rate of 29.6%, above the national average of 20%, and an above average click thru rate (CTR) of 6.3% (2% is the average).

Leads & Requests for Information



RetireRoane.com provides information important to retirees - like how livable our communities are. Visits to this site increased 44% over 2017 and is the 3rd most visited page for the entire tourism site. Roane County is one of 22 counties chosen to be in the Retire Tennessee program so Roane is also included on RetireTennessee.org. In 2018, their web page views tripled, while Roane's page more than doubled.

In 2018, we also chose not to renew our print ad in the Tennessee Vacation Guide. As the cost went up (it was our most expensive ad), the leads were going down. We made a choice to spend the money where we saw better results - in digital media, with also an increased focus on retirees. Total leads received were 7,054 as compared to 7,741 the previous year. However, despite not being in the state's vacation guide, we saw a less than 9% decrease and felt the leads we did receive were more qualified.

Roane awarded Seal of Approval from AARC.

The American Association of Retirement Communities (AARC) awarded Roane County a Seal of Approval during their annual conference in November. Communities are recognized when they show a commitment to working to attract retirees and "demonstrate a strong commitment to making their community a top destination through lifestyle programming, amenity development, communication and education," per AARC Chair Rachel Baker.



From l-r: Melanie Beauchamp, Ramay Winchester, Pam May, Rachel Baker

The Alliance continues to track top states for RFI's, and they are pretty comparable to those states marketed by the state. A requirement for being in the Retire Tennessee (RT) program, is to attend at least one of the seven to nine Ideal Living shows yearly. These shows cater to affluent retirees making plans to retire within the next five years. To date, the Alliance has attended shows in New York, New Jersey, and last year in Chicago - which had the most attendance ever to date at a RT booth. Connecticut is one of the newer state's Tennessee is recruiting and those shows have been successful, so it isn't surprising to see this state in the top 10 states for RFIs. Out of the top 10 states requesting information, those in blue are heavily recruited by the state.

2018 Roane Tourism Commission Committee

Ron Berry, Chairman

David Bell

Todd Fink

Junior Hendrickson

Renee Kelley
(Replaced Steve Kelley)

Top 10 States Requesting Information:

- Illinois
- New York
- Ohio
- New Jersey
- California
- Pennsylvania
- Florida
- Michigan
- Connecticut
- Indiana



Visitors provide one of the largest impacts to Roane County's economy.

Tourism is the 2nd largest industry in Tennessee, and one of the largest economic drivers for Roane County. \$69.82M was spent by visitors in Roane, per the latest report from the U.S. Travel Association, an increase of \$2.33M. This impacts every Roane resident by decreasing every household's tax bill by \$353, because of the \$7.89M in taxes generated by visitors. In the last three years, an average 485 people had jobs in the hospitality industry in Roane, with around 70 new jobs being created since 2013.

Lodging tax is also an economic driver for our cities and county but has been declining slightly in recent years, seeing the largest decrease this year of 11%. This tax is not included in visitor spending or the sales tax totals above. There are several factors driving this trend – age of our local motels (most are 30+ years); extended stays at campgrounds (more than 30 days is tax exempt); and leakage, specifically lakeside lodging options in surrounding counties popular with fishermen.

Since the County and Kingston City collections are the only basis of funding for the county's tourism program, the Roane County Visitors Bureau sponsors fishing and sporting events each year to bring in visitors – and though some are staying outside the county, many stay in our older hotels. In addition, we sponsor some of our larger or premier annual events because they also contribute to the county's economy by bringing in vendors and festival workers who spend the night and bring in visitors from outside the county. One such event, the Tennessee Medieval Faire, saw an 11% increase in attendance with visitors coming from multiple surrounding states.

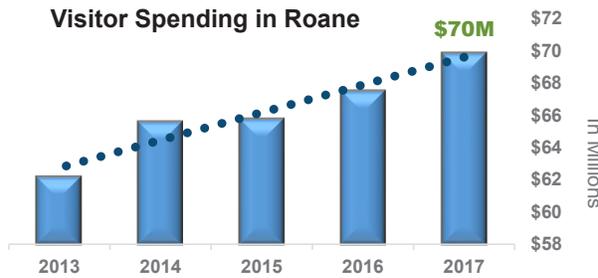
K-25 Overlook becoming a hub for Manhattan Project and recreation.



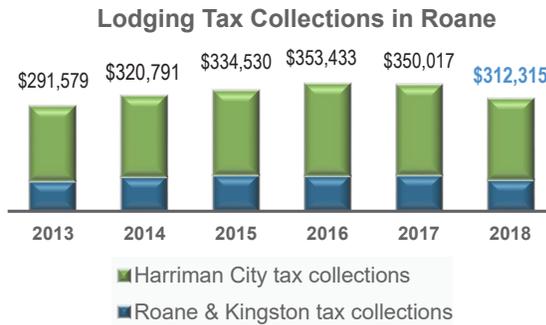
Artist rendering, subject to change.

In 2018, one of the primary projects for the Visitors Bureau was organizing the remodel of the K-25 Overlook. John McCormick, President of Bionomics, purchased the overlook in 2017, with plans to preserve its history and surrounding land and turn it into a place visitors and residents could enjoy. With his vision and the design expertise of Designsensory, the Overlook has tripled in size and will be reopening in 2019 as an Oak Ridge recreational hub and visitor center for the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MAPR).

Highlighting Roane County, the overlook will provide a historical timeline and list of MAPR sites that visitors can access. There will also be a map of recreational assets around the overlook. With the added space, the overlook now can provide a gathering place for visitors to come and hear from area experts, such as rangers from the National Park System. Future plans include a Happy Valley trail system that will allow visitors to see the remnants of what once was a boomtown of 15,000 known as Happy Valley, while walking or biking the grounds.



Source: Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, U.S. Travel Association



39,000 ACRES
on Watts Bar Lake



16,000 ACRES
of parks and wildlife areas



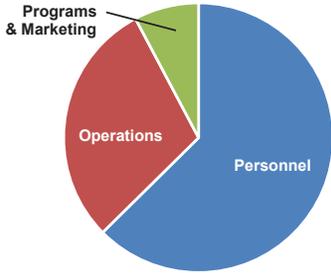
700 MILES
of lakeshore



450+ EVENTS
to enjoy every year

ROANE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Budget Breakdown



Teresa Jackson, Member Services Coordinator

Chamber membership increased 4% over the previous year.

In 2018, the year ended with 407 members as compared to 393 in 2017. Membership totals are trending upwards, though slightly, always hovering anywhere from 350 to 450, with the highest totals following a membership drive in 2015.

The Roane Chamber has been around more than 60 years and that range has always been pretty consistent per records. Chamber revenue comes from new members, renewals and non-dues revenue with the majority of that being the Banquet. In 2018, total revenue was down slightly over the previous year but new member revenue increased 23%.

By the Numbers

20

Ribbon Cuttings/Grand Openings/Open Houses

12

Lunch & Learns & Workshops

12

Roane County Employers Association (RCEA) Meetings

11

Ambassador Meetings

10

Chamber Board Meetings

9

Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) Classes

8

Business Networking Breakfasts

4

Pop Up Parties

3

"After Hours" Events

1

Day on the Hill Awards Banquet

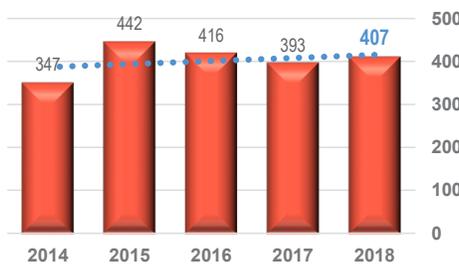
Membership Orientation

Annual Joint

Membership Coffee

10

Roane Chamber Members



Chamber Dues Revenue



Chamber Annual Business Awards held at new Roane event center.

The Chamber's Annual Banquet was held at the brand new NOAH's Event Venue in Kingston, which was a celebration in itself. For the 2nd year in a row, Leadership Roane County held their graduation in conjunction with the banquet, and it was a packed house. With 255 guests attending, it was the largest banquet crowd on record.

The Chamber awarded their annual business awards, honoring Humble Bee Flowers & Gifts as Business of the Year; Becky Ruppe, City of Rockwood, for Woman of the Year; Tori May, Coldwell Banker Jim Henry & Associates, for Ambassador of the Year; Rebecca Schwepfinger, City of Harriman, for the Paul E. Goldberg Young Professional Award; and the Paul Cowell Distinguished Service award went to Kathy Parks, Signature Healthcare of Rockwood & Roane County Health Council. Outgoing board member Fran Puckett was also recognized and given a plaque for her years of service.

Title sponsor for the banquet was Coldwell Banker Jim Henry & Associates, and Gold sponsors were Centrus, CNS Y-12, Express Employment Professionals, Oak Ridge Utility District, Regions Bank, Roane State Community College, UCOR, and UT Battelle. Humble Bee provided table decorations for the event, and Blue Bell provided ice cream.



From l-r: Kathy Parks, Becky Ruppe, Tori May, Tammi Cribbs and Rebecca Schwepfinger



Courtney Briley, Chamber Programs Coordinator

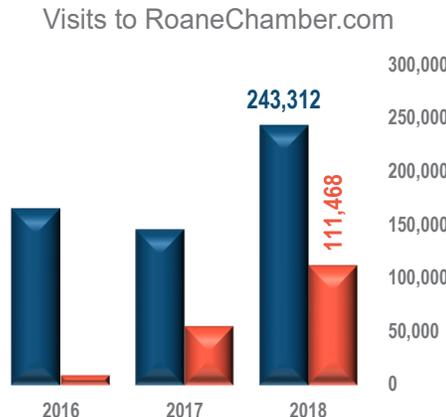
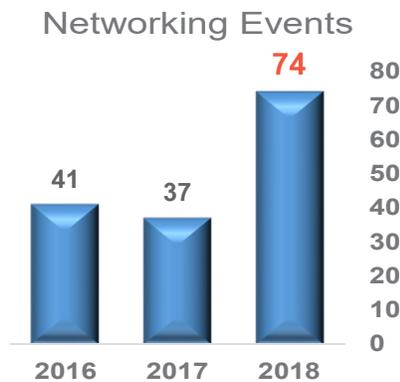
Membership has its perks.

In 2018, the Chamber seemed to hit its stride, not only with more members renewing and an increase in new memberships over previous years, but also seeing those members take more advantage of their benefits and come out in support of other members.

There were twice the number of networking events held this year, and even more importantly, the number of members attending also increased – by 59%, with 1,560 attending throughout the year. Connecting with other members who are not only potential customers, but also could be an invaluable partner to help grow your business, is one of the biggest benefits members can enjoy. Workshops are

another benefit – and this year, those increased as well, averaging three a month. Cash Mobs became Pop-Up Parties, encouraging people to shop local at a group of Chamber businesses within close proximity to each other. Virtual businesses could also join in, creating an exciting shopping experience for residents and a lot of buzz for our downtowns. In this year's 'Shop Where Your Heart Is' Campaign, shoppers recorded they spent \$168,365 total in the participating shops - close to \$7,000 more than last year.

Traffic to the Chamber's website was also directed at members, with nearly 1/2 of the people visiting looking at member information. With web traffic increasing 67% in 2018, member pages were the target, more than doubling over last year. All members receive at least one online listing but can be listed in additional relevant categories for free to increase member exposure. Members can post coupons, hot deals, job openings and special events any time, providing a web presence for those who need one, but more importantly, access to helpful tools needed for success.



Chamber Ambassadors 50 strong.

The Chamber's Ambassador Program provides a platform for local leaders and anyone wanting to be involved to help the local business community. This group of volunteers grew to 50 by the end of 2018, offering their time, energy and passion to make Roane County a better place through outreach and special events. Led by Leadership Team Chair Tori May, the "giving back" events definitely fulfilled that mission – by helping with renovations at the Boys & Girls Club of Harriman, recognizing local law enforcement at "An Evening of Honor" event and holding a fundraiser for the Greenwood School Education Foundation.

From supporting businesses at grand openings and ribbon cuttings to organizing special events, this energized group has become a catalyst for the Chamber's mission and are always willing to help fellow members be successful.



2018 Roane Chamber Board of Directors

- Marilyn Calfee, Chair
- Gary Aytes
- Eric Bacon
- Chris Barton
- Buddy Bowers
- Angela Dougal
- Joe Eskridge
- Lynn Farnham, Treasurer
- Sarah Harrison
- Sean Hensley
- Charlene Hipsher
- Chris Marsalis
- Kathy May-Martin
- Jude Miller
- Kathy Parks
- Dana Peterka, Chair Elect
- Al Reardon
- Rick Ross
- Becky Ruppe
- Ken Tobin
- Danice Turpin



WHERE TO FIND US



RoaneAlliance.org

VisitRoane.com

SoakInRoane.com

RoaneChamber.com

RoaneECD.com

EducationMatters2Roane.org

RetireRoane.com



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To our stakeholders:

Much of the work the Alliance does is behind the scenes or promoted outside the county, making it a challenge for residents to really know what we do or who we are. So, I hope you will take the time to read through this report, learning about each of the Alliance partners and programs, while also learning more about the staff.

2018 will always be remembered as a year of change for the Alliance, and the outcomes of those changes are yet to be known. One thing that will remain the same – the Alliance will continue to support and promote Roane County. And I can assure you as much as we accomplished in 2018, we have even more planned for 2019:

- New marketing campaigns to take industrial and retiree recruiting to the next level;
- Consistent welcome and wayfinding signs throughout Roane to increase navigation for our visitors and residents;
- Outreach using a new database that identifies moving or expanding businesses to help in recruiting industry and retail;
- ECD workshop planned for commissioners and partners;
- Visit and document recreational assets to better promote;
- Provide motels PILOT information that could help with capital improvements; and
- Bring a new Women's Executive Program to Roane.

For the past 18 years, the Alliance staff has worked to make Roane a better place – whether by bringing in visitors who spend money, and maybe even retire here; improving available land to be more marketable to the next big industry; helping local business and industry to ensure growth; or creating opportunities for local businesses to be successful. Most of what the Alliance does revolves around marketing Roane County's assets – our location and accessibility to I-40 and I-75, recreational resources and quality of life, education and workforce opportunities, technological advances, or our world-changing history.

Our efforts in 2018 undoubtedly had an impact. 7,054 people requested information, while 8,094 people subscribed to our monthly and quarterly emails; 61,905 people engaged with the content on our social media pages as evidenced by 12,193 likes. We reached more than 552,000 people; and nearly 112,000 visited our websites, viewing more than 333,000 pages – 77,770 of which were events on our calendars.

Building relationships is an important step in accomplishing our mission, and we can't carry out our vision without the support of our community. Our door is always open to anyone looking to learn more about what we do. If you'd like to get involved, call our office or stop by. After all, we should be your resource for all things Roane County. Let us show you what our visitors already know – there really is no place like Roane.

Interim President/CEO