

## Discover Durham's Christmas Cheer



The staff at Discover Durham donned Santa hats and walked behind a truck showing a video of all the fun that can be had in Durham.

This is the first time Discover Durham participated in the parade, but it will not be the last.

Discover Durham CEO Susan Amey says the organization plans to continue spreading holiday cheer, joy, and positive messages about Durham in future parades.

## NC is Off to the (Political) Races

Candidate filing for North Carolina's 2024 elections closed on Friday, December 15.

Click [here to view a list of candidates filed for office](#) in the 2024 election. North Carolina will hold its primary election on March 5, 2024, and general election on Nov. 5, 2024.

NCTIA will have analysis of state races in next week's e-newsletter.

## Travel Council of NC Founder Dies at 96

John Phillips, the last surviving founder of the Travel Council of North Carolina, died on December 3, 2023 at the age of 96 in Raleigh.

The Travel Council of North Carolina, which later became NCTIA, was founded in 1955 by Governor Luther Hodges.

NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena attributes the creation of the Travel Council of North Carolina to the work of Phillips, Hugh Morton, Bill Hensley, and other notable North Carolina promoters.

John was a past president of the Travel Council of North Carolina and continued to serve on the board for many years.

"John was the last surviving founding member of what is now NCTIA and his legacy will be creating a foundation for one of the most powerful associations representing the state's tourism industry," Chelena said. "Our \$33 billion tourism industry today is built on the shoulders of John and other industry visionaries."

John's work spanned several decades in sales and marketing, including an early career as a sales representative for *Our State Magazine*, which gave him the opportunity to visit all 100 counties of the state. Phillips would go on to establish a travel agency in Raleigh.

"John always greeted you with a smile when attending NCTIA events," said Chelena. "He was our historian for many years, always ready to offer a story about our triumphs and challenges. Tough times or not, John was there to help guide us through. We will miss him greatly."

John is survived by his daughter, Catherine P. Winslow, son, John D Phillips, Jr. and wife Ronni, grandchildren, Chase and John Winslow, Danielle Phillips Swope, and Dalton Phillips; four great-grandchildren, Rosemary and Oliver Strokus Winslow, Sawyer and soon to be born, Harper Winslow. He is also survived by his sister, Anne R. Phillips.

A service celebrating Phillips' life will be held on Friday, January 19, 2024 at 1:00 pm at Hayes Barton United Methodist Church.

[Click to read John's obituary.](#)

