

## 2007 USCA National Rally – Lodging Information

As previously reported, the USCA national rally for 2007 will be held at the Grandfather Campground, at the base of Grandfather Mountain, near Boone, NC. For those who don't camp, we offer information on other lodging facilities in the area.

Boone is in the Appalachian Mountains of Northwest, NC, approximately 55 miles west of I-77, 45 miles north of I-40 (at Hickory, NC), and 50 miles east of I-26 (at Johnson City, TN). It's also less than 10 miles from several access points to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The **Grandfather Campground** is on NC Hwy 105, about 10 miles southwest of Boone, near the Foscoe community. Primary lodging and attraction areas are Boone, Banner Elk, and Blowing Rock.

Home to Appalachian State University, **Boone**, with a population of about 14,000, is the area's commercial center. Within a mile or two of the intersection of NC 105 and US 321/221, there are many motels, hotels, and restaurants. There are also a Wal-Mart and several auto parts stores, pharmacies, grocery stores, a hospital, etc. Lodging in this area is 8 to 11 miles from the campground. Hwy 105 between Boone and Grandfather Campground is 2-lane. Although the pavement is somewhat rough in several places, the curves are gentle, and this route should be an easy ride after dark.

**Banner Elk** is a village of less than 1,000, and is only 6 miles or so from the rally site. With a small shopping center about 3 miles south of the campground on Hwy 105, then restaurants and lodging in the village itself, 3 miles northwest of 105 on Tynecastle Hwy (NC 184), this is another short and easy ride.

**Blowing Rock** (pop. 1,500) is southeast of Boone on US 321/221. Lodging in this area is about 15 miles from the rally site on the easy roads, but going over the mountain on the twisties will save about 4 of those miles. 105 back to Boone, then 321/221 (4 lanes) to Blowing Rock is easy; the twisties are pretty challenging.

Another area of note is the very small **Valle Crucis**. Home to the Mast General Store, one of the region's top attractions, Valle Crucis does not have any motels, but does offer some attractive bed-and-breakfasts. Valle Crucis is 2 miles north of Hwy 105, between the campground and Boone. The intersection is well-marked, and there is a stoplight.

The closest lodging to the rally site is the **Smoketree Lodge**, only 1 mile south on 105, between the campground and the turn-off to Banner Elk. Manager Amy Burnette is offering a 10% discount to rally attendees. Just mention the "USCA" when registering. There is no restaurant on site, but all rooms have furnished kitchenettes.

The nearest pet-friendly property is the **Best Western Mountain Lodge in Banner Elk**. Please see the listing for more details.

### **About the lodging listings –**

Properties are listed in increasing order of distance from the rally site, with separate listings for hotels/motels and for B&Bs.

There are also two major resorts in the area, Hound Ears Club ([www.houndears.com](http://www.houndears.com)), off 105 near the rally site, and Chetola ([www.chetola.com](http://www.chetola.com)), in Blowing Rock. They are not listed due to their higher rates, but either would be convenient.

This is a tourist area, so most properties will have pools, refrigerators in the rooms, and other amenities. Some properties are non-smoking only. At least one property, the Willow Valley Resort, is not air-conditioned, but offers tennis and golf. Some properties have restaurants on site. Many properties offer cabin and cottage rentals.

We didn't have enough space here for much detail, so please check further into the properties of interest.

I've driven past each of these properties, but have not inspected them, so I'd encourage anyone with Internet access to use their favorite search engine to find independent reviews.

Also, most properties will have separate rates for weeknights (Sun – Thur) and for weekends (Fri & Sat).

Rates and discounts were those available from various sources at list compilation (January, 2007). Please contact properties directly for current and accurate information.