



# GO WEST

With I-40 reopened,  
Tennessee destinations  
are again easy to reach

*By Lockie Hunter  
WNC Parent contributor*

Now that Interstate 40 has reopened after a large rockslide in October, it is easy to explore the cities along its path. From soaring waterfalls to top-notch aquariums, the wonders across the mountains await your family.

## Chattanooga

The Chattanooga area boasts parks, caverns and mountains just waiting to be explored. The city is also home to the world-class **Tennessee Aquarium**.

Traveling on both land and water, the Ducks are a great way to discover the city.

"The **Chattanooga Ducks** is an historical and ecological tour of downtown Chattanooga and the waterfront on an authentic restored WWII amphibious landing craft," says Ducks owner Alex Moyers.

Six miles from downtown Chattanooga, **Rock City** is perched atop Lookout Mountain. Featuring caves to explore, a 4,100-foot walking trail and towering rock formations, Rock City is also home to special summer shows including Birds of Prey Shows and music weekends. "Come see hawks soaring in the

All aboard! Enjoy a vintage  
train ride at the Tennessee  
Valley Railroad in Chattanooga.



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO WNC PARENT

**Ruby Falls' new "adventure above the rest" includes suspended walkways.**

sky," says Meagan Jolley, PR manager for Rock City and Ruby Falls. "Enjoy this rare opportunity to witness these powerful and majestic birds up close."

Home to the nation's tallest and deepest waterfall open to the public, **Ruby Falls** now boasts a "new adventure above the rest" with a never-before-seen view of the Scenic City from the tree tops at Ruby Falls.

"The Ruby Falls ZIPstream Aerial Adventure is the first experience of its type to hit Tennessee," says Jolley. "The challenge is made up of suspended obstacle courses built in trees that include ladders, nets, walkways, bridges, tunnels and ziplines."

Hop aboard a vintage train at the

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### MORE INFORMATION

Visitors' Bureaus

- ◆ Knoxville, [knoxville.org](http://knoxville.org)
- ◆ Chattanooga, [chattanoogaofun.com](http://chattanoogaofun.com)
- ◆ Pigeon Forge, [pigeonforgevisitorcenter.com](http://pigeonforgevisitorcenter.com)
- ◆ Gatlinburg, [gatlinburg.com](http://gatlinburg.com)

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[www.ncarboretum.org](http://www.ncarboretum.org)



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## GO WEST

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**Tennessee Valley Railroad.** Offering daily rides on restored vintage rail coaches pulled by a steam locomotive or a WWII-era diesel locomotive, each round trip passes twice through a pre-Civil War Missionary Ridge tunnel.

End your day with an evening stroll at **Coolidge Park.** Featuring a hand-carved carousel and interactive play fountain, this park has plenty of room to let off steam before dining at one of the restaurants that rim it.

## Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge

From the thrill of whitewater rafting down the Pigeon River to panning for gems, Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge offer many opportunities for family fun in the Great Smoky Mountains.

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# UPCLOSE & Personal



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Many adults experience problems that could benefit from the expertise of a mental health professional. These problems include:

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- Difficulties with completion of work in school
- Excessive amounts of time spent on homework completion (homework often with tears)
- Successful homework completion but the student does not turn in their assignments
- Difficulties making progress in a specific academic skill area, such as reading, math or writing
- Difficulties – usually first reported by teachers – with basic information processing
- Feelings of low self-esteem because of difficulties in school
- Problems making and keeping friends
- Significant conflict in the home between a child and his or her parent

These and other problem areas are not uncommon among students who range in age from pre-K to high school. Our staff of therapists and assessors can provide you with clarification of the issues involved, recommendations for home and school and therapeutic interventions to help address the difficulties these students experience.



**Blue Ridge Orthodontics**  
**Dr. Luke Roberts**  
*Bringing smiles to Asheville since 2007*  
**2 Walden Ridge Dr # 50, Asheville, NC 28803 •**  
**Phone (828) 687-0872**  
**[www.blueridgeorthodontics.com](http://www.blueridgeorthodontics.com)**

Three years ago, Dr. Roberts came home to the Carolinas, inspired to use his profession to help change lives for the better. "In my field, smiles change lives," says Roberts, "I see it happen every day."

As a child, Dr. Roberts grew up going on medical mission trips with his family in the Dominican Republic. While there, he witnessed the life-changing results of cleft lip and palate repair and was inspired to go into a profession where improving smiles changes lives. Since setting up his practice in South Asheville, Roberts has been a two time winner of both the WNC Parent Award for "Best Orthodontist" and the "Best of Asheville-Orthodontist" voted on by the U.S. Commerce Association. Additionally, he is one of only two Board certified orthodontists in Asheville.

His office, Blue Ridge Orthodontics, is committed to excellent customer service and the highest standards of clinical excellence. "We run on time, and we treat people the way we'd like to be treated," says Roberts. From a warm smile and a hello as you walk in from office manager, Heather Hensley, and treatment coordinator, Nikki Willet, to the depth of care and precision offered by orthodontic assistants, Sara Rogers and Jessie McClure, Blue Ridge Orthodontics is a place that strives to make each and every patient feel like part of the family. "I can't say enough about Dr. Roberts and his staff. They are the best at helping their patients, deciding what's best, and achieving the best results. Very happy to be working with them," says Heidi, a patient of Dr. Roberts. Shannon, the mom of another patient, said, "Dr. Roberts and his staff have been wonderful--They are knowledgeable, helpful and friendly. Our experience has been great!"

Dr. Roberts provides high tech orthodontics for both kids and adults. From traditional clear and metal braces to Invisalign, Invisalign Teen, and lingual braces that are actually behind the teeth, Roberts offers a variety of options so that each patient can receive optimal, personalized results. Traci Burnette says, "Dr. Roberts and staff are amazing! Four of us see him on a regular basis...always patient and takes time to explain everything and always flexible with appointments."

Roberts, who on the weekends can be found making his own barbeque, cycling the streets, or tinkering with model airplanes, says that Asheville has been the perfect place to live and work. "I love seeing my patients out and about, whether at Ingles or on the basketball court," says Roberts. "That always makes me smile!"

247842-600

# GO WEST

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Find your favorite dinosaur at the Dinosaur Walk Museum in Pigeon Forge.

A prehistoric adventure awaits your family at Pigeon Forge's **Dinosaur Walk Museum**. Not mere fossils or bones, the museum features life-size sculptures of your favorite great beasts. The sculptures, created by some of the world's greatest paleo-artists, are meticulously constructed and some took more than a decade to build.

Come to Pigeon Forge's **WonderWorks** and experience its 120 interactive adventures from the Space Lab to Bubble Zone. Defy gravity in the Inversion Tunnel or challenge yourself on the indoor rock climbing wall. Discover why the building itself is upside down as you continue your exploration. Cap the evening with a Hoot N' Holler family dinner show, located inside WonderWorks, or



Enjoy the climbing wall at the new Nantahala Outdoor Center's Great Outpost in Gatlinburg.

secure tickets to the "Wonders of Magic" show.

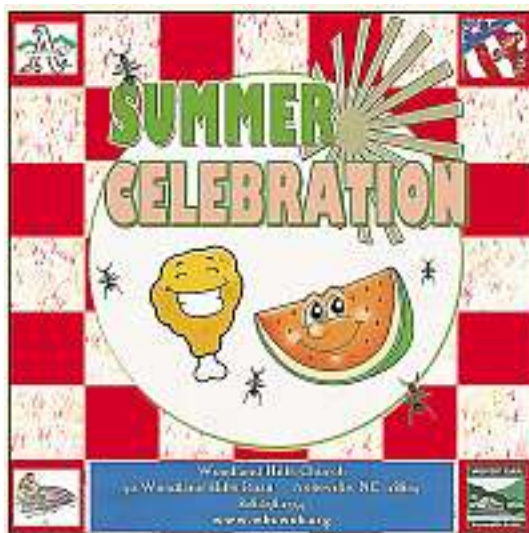
Visit the largest eco-tourist bird park in the Southeast at **Parrot Mountain and Gardens**. See magpies, toucans and other birds amid lush tropical gardens. You can even pet baby birds in the nursery and watch as they are hand-fed.

Mine your own gems at the **Pigeon Forge Gem Mine** then have them polished and mounted into jewelry.

Nearby Gatlinburg is home to the new **Nantahala Outdoor Center's Great Outpost**, loaded with fun, interactive elements for both adults and kids. "The 25-foot indoor climbing wall is a major feature, and we

have climbing harnesses and shoes for both kids and adults," says Barbara Rodichok of NOC. Book whitewater rafting trips on the nearby Pigeon River. Choose from thrilling Class III-IV whitewater on the Upper Pigeon or a family float on the lower section. "The Upper Pigeon is the perfect recommendation for families with tweens," adds Rodichok. "The whitewater is splashy, and the nearly-continuous rapids keep everyone interested."

The **Ober Gatlinburg Aerial Tram** affords great views while climbing to the top of the ski resort. The ski resort is home to an amusement park, hosting an alpine slide, indoor skating rink and more. Get-





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## SUMMER CELEBRATION of FAMILY!

<p><b>Fun! Free!</b> <b>Family Nights</b> June 16<sup>th</sup> &amp; July 14<sup>th</sup> <b>Community Suppers</b> at Lake Louise Shelter 5:00 - 7:00 P.M. <b>FOOD</b> Face Painting Crafts for the Kids</p>	 <p><b>Saddle Ridge</b> <b>YBB/Kids Camp</b> Ages 3 - 6<sup>th</sup> grade <b>June 21 - 25</b> 9:00 A.M. - 12 Noon Call 828.553.2254 to register</p>	<p><b>Kids Camp @ Lake Louise</b> <b>July 19 - 23</b> <b>9:00 A.M. - 12 Noon</b> <b>Games, Crafts, Stories</b> <b>and LUNCH!</b>  <b>ALL FREE</b> <b>for kids 5 - 11</b></p>
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ting there is half the fun.

Rainy day? Head to one of Gatlinburg's many indoor diversions on the main strip. The **Ripley's** franchise is well-represented in Gatlinburg, and families can enjoy the aquarium, the haunted adventures and the **Believe It or Not Museum**. Get your picture taken in the bright orange General Lee at **Cooter's Place** or pose with the stars at the **Hollywood Wax Museum**. Get lost at the **Amazing Mirror Maze**, spooked at the **Mysterious Mansion** or shake it up at **Earthquake the Ride**.

## Knoxville

"No matter what you're looking to explore — history, the arts, sports or nature — Knoxville has something for the entire family," says Tyler Lewelling, Knoxville public relations manager.

Enjoy a 90-minute journey along the Tennessee River on the **Three Rivers Rambler** train. Passing scenic farmland, historic quarries, and Knoxville's first settlement area, the trip is educational and fun.

The **East Tennessee Discovery Center** is a children's hands-on science center and planetarium. Exhibits are divided into life, physical and earth sciences. Step inside a space shuttle or watch bees making honey. Public planetarium shows are offered each afternoon Tuesday through Saturday and explore "the sky tonight."

Keep the focus on science with a trip to the zoo.

"**Knoxville Zoo** is home to over 800 ani-



The Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville is the only facility of its kind dedicated to all levels of women's basketball in the world.

mals," notes Tina Rolan, assistant director of marketing for the zoo. Visitors can explore the zoo's exhibits including the Boyd Family Red Panda Village, Grasslands Africa, an African elephant preserve, Penguin Rock, Chimp Ridge, Gorilla Valley and more.

Have a sports nut in the family?

"The **Women's Basketball Hall of Fame** is an international museum dedicated to preserving the history of women's basketball," says Karen Tucker, director of basketball relations, programs and communications. The 32,00-square-foot mu-



Learn about red pandas, above, at the Boyd Family Red Panda Village at Knoxville Zoo. George, at left, is the first baby chimpanzee born at the zoo in 20 years.

seum on the Tennessee River "operates under the mission to 'Honor the Past, Celebrate the Present and Promote the Future.'"

**Ijams Nature Center** is only three miles from downtown Knoxville. The nonprofit, 175-acre wildlife refuge has trails, ponds, a lake, and a river boardwalk to explore with the entire family," notes naturalist Stephen Lyn Bales. "Peaceful and lush, spend an hour or a day."

*Lockie Hunter is a freelance writer in Asheville. Contact her at [lockie@lockie-hunter.com](mailto:lockie@lockie-hunter.com).*

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