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Cultural Passions Run Deep in Virginia

-Travelers seeking a brush with authenticity find it in Wayne Henderson and Virginia's Crooked Road-

Media Only

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RICHMOND, Va. – Wayne Henderson grew up in the mountains of Southwest Virginia, where the sounds of traditional country music are a way of life, and a personal passion for him. His ability to transform wood into masterful acoustic guitars caught the eyes and ears of Eric Clapton. Ten years later, between jam sessions, concert dates at Carnegie Hall and delivering mail, Henderson finally finished building Clapton's guitar – and the legend was born.

Henderson, now a master luthier, has given up life as a mail man and puts all his energy into crafting guitars. Although the waiting list for “a Henderson” is measured in years, he is as humble and grounded as ever. His passion doesn't end with building guitars. He performs across the country and thrills serious bluegrass fans each June at the Wayne C. Henderson Music Festival at Grayson Highlands State Park.

“My passion is certainly seeing a piece of wood come together and hear what I can hear come out of it,” explains Henderson. “When I play music, it's like, I think, wonderful therapy. I can't think of much of anything that makes you feel any better.”

Musical therapy like Henderson's lives along The Crooked Road, Virginia's Heritage Music Trail – one of Virginia's a rich, cultural heritage destinations where visitors enjoy a brush with authenticity.

Travelers who crave something real, meaningful and pure are finding their way to Virginia. The Old Dominion's cultural traditions are as diverse and beautiful as the people who keep them alive – from the hollers of Appalachia to the tobacco barns of Southern Virginia to the crab shacks of the Chesapeake Bay.

These are the places where visitors can touch, feel, see and be something extraordinary, even if only for a moment. Places like historic Jackson Ward in downtown Richmond, where legends such as Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Lena Horn and Cab Calloway performed and legendary soul food entices visitors today.

On Virginia's Eastern Shore, adventurous travelers dive head first into their obsession for seafood on the Life as a Waterman tour. Learn everything there is to know about crabbing from fishermen on Tangier Island whose families have been crabbing since the 1600's.

~ more ~



NEWS

Visitors will see the culture of tobacco in Southern Virginia, from the mansions of Millionaires Row in Danville to the Prizery, a historic tobacco warehouse transformed into a performing arts center in South Boston. The Prizery's tobacco heritage exhibit offers an honest examination of the role tobacco played in Virginia's earliest years.

Ready for a brush with authenticity? Go to Portraits of Passion on www.Virginia.org to watch Wayne Henderson build a guitar and start planning trip to Virginia.

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Note to media:

The *Virginia Travel Stories* series is part of the [Live Passionately - Virginia is for Lovers campaign](#). The Virginia Tourism Corporation will highlight Virginians like Wayne Henderson who embody the spirit of *Live Passionately*. *Live Passionately* is less about a vacation and more about a lifestyle, with savvy travelers choosing to visit Virginia to live out their passions for wine, music, heritage, outdoor adventure and other fulfilling experiences that make Virginia one of the top destinations in the country.

Video and downloadable images of Wayne Henderson and this feature in Word and PDF format are available for media use at www.vatravelstories.com.