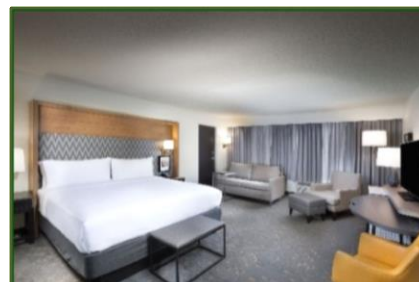


**PRESS RELEASE: 6.13.18** - Memphis couple wins prestigious TORCHBEARER AWARD from Holiday Inns

It's in picturesque western North Carolina that native Memphians, Ginny and Bryan Nearn, have a newly-renovated, full-service Holiday Inn. The Nearn's have owned the hotel for 30 years, and though it has been through several renovations, this was a complete, "back to the studs", clean slate, \$8,000,000 remodeling project that took over two years to complete. It is a hotel that combines the hospitality of Holiday Inns with the rustic flavor of North Carolina in the commercial areas but has a very contemporary, fresh design in the guest rooms. The guest rooms have multiple tech portals in each piece of furniture, a micro fridge amenity, and Smart 50" tvs, all to maximize customer satisfaction, which brought IHG (InterContinental Hotel Group, of which Holiday Inn is a brand) to recognize the Holiday Inn Asheville East with the most prestigious Torchbearer Award. The Nearn's' Holiday Inn is one of six in all of North America and South America to win the award for 2017, and one of two in the U.S. to receive it. The Torchbearer Award is based on guest survey comments, certain strict performance criteria, and the IHG inspection scores, and is the company's symbol of excellence.



The inception of The Woodfire Bar and Grill came with the renovation and has been met with great approval from locals and hotel guests. As per the name, most menu items are grilled, featuring local trout to local Hickory Farm beef. It has become a real asset to the hotel guests weary from travel who can relax in the Patio Room and look out over some of the outstanding gardens and waterfall. The bar serves local and national beers and a full cocktail menu.



“The Torchbearer has been a goal of ours for years” says Mr. Nearn, “and we are particularly proud of our staff who work hard daily to make the stay at our Holiday Inn Asheville East the best hotel experience of the guest’s trip and to exceed their expectations.” Pursuant to the goal, IHG named, in their “Best of the Best” Awards category, Dewaine Smith the #1 General Manager of the Year and Zuma Martinez the #1 Engineer of the Year Award in all Holiday Inns in North America and South America, for their exceptional expertise at the Nearn’s hotel. “They are truly deserving”, says Mr. Nearn, “and we are really pleased for them.”

The Holiday Inn East is located on Tunnel Road at Exit 55 off I-40, about an 8-hour drive from Memphis. It is a "pet friendly" hotel with a 2-acre walking nature trail enjoyed by four-legged guests as well as two-legged ones!

When you are planning a trip to the mountains, and specifically the unique city of Asheville, plan to visit the boutique Holiday Inn East...both are popular mountain destinations.