

Hidden Splendor

By JoAnn Greco

Discover Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley

Rolling hills unfold into sweeping carpets of rich farmland and surround historic towns. But don't let the tranquil atmosphere fool you: Cumberland Valley, Pennsylvania, offers a dynamic mix of town and country, with lively downtown districts and miles of hiking trails and streams. ➔

Hiker overlooking Waggoner's Gap

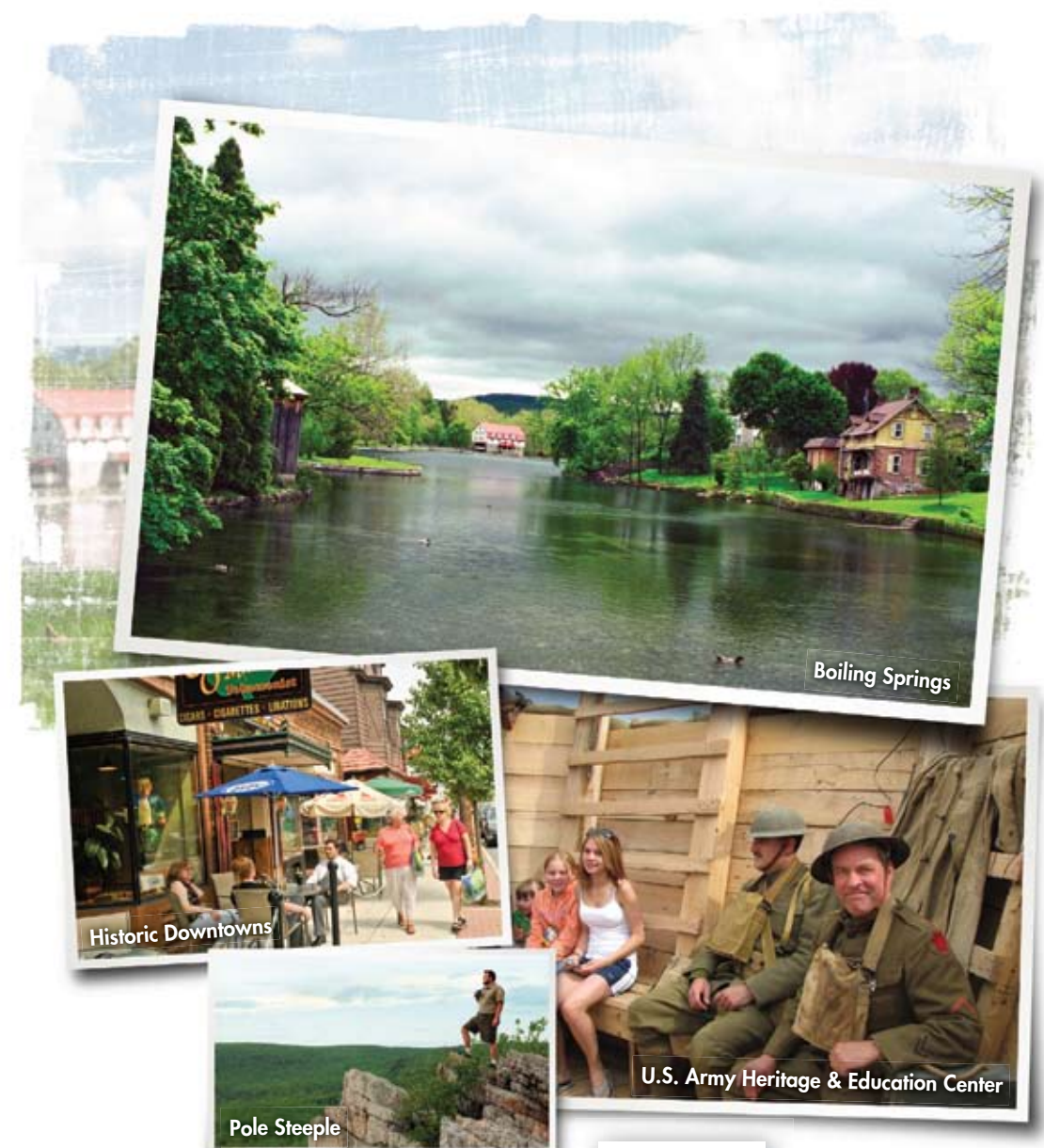
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Located just across the Susquehanna River from the state capital of Harrisburg, Cumberland is a hidden gem except to those in the know.

Like Alex Futter, for instance. As a teenager living with his car-free parents in a Bronx apartment, Futter, 58, could only dream of owning Chargers and Mustangs. As an adult, he assembled a collection of classic cars and started making pilgrimages to the massive auto shows held in Carlisle, the valley's county seat.

Tired of scrambling for a place to stay, he decided to buy a second home there. "Location was everything," Futter laughs. His house is a

mere hundred feet from Carlisle Fairgrounds, where dealers and collectors mingle.

Even with so much automobile action to keep him busy, Futter relishes the lack of hustle and bustle. "It's like I'm a million miles from New York," he says. Actually, Carlisle is less than 200 miles away from the Big Apple — and closer still to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Getting around is easy, with Harrisburg International Airport just 40 minutes from Carlisle, and the many major interstates that connect in Cumberland.

Aside from the car show, the valley has a lot more under its hood, from top-notch historical

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Cumberland Valley is located in the middle of the number one visited region in Pennsylvania and within a 2-3 hour drive of Philadelphia, New York City, Baltimore and Washington D.C.

Cumberland Valley



Appalachian Trail Museum

attractions to its scenic state parks. Towns like Carlisle, New Cumberland, and Camp Hill tempt residents and visitors with bookstores, cafes, and boutiques. “You can work, play, and live in the same place here,” says Kirk Stoner, Cumberland County’s director of planning. “But you’re never far away from world-class trout streams and 15,000 acres of preserved farmland.”

The valley’s 1,550 farms offer more than just scenic views — think fresh fruits and veggies, which can be sampled at the local farmers’ markets or at events like the New Cumberland Apple Festival.

You can also hike, bike, and kayak the valley’s thousands of acres of parks. In Pine Grove Furnace State Park, hikers rejoice at the midpoint of the 2,181-mile Appalachian Trail, which stretches from Georgia to Maine. Within Pine Grove you’ll also find the Appalachian Trail Museum, located in a 200-year-old grist mill and showcasing the history of the trail.

The valley’s history reaches back to the 1700s. “We’ve played a pivotal role in American history,

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU

since before the Revolutionary War through the Civil War, when Carlisle was shelled,” says Linda Witmer, executive director of the Cumberland County Historical Society. “A lot of roads met here and put us in the middle of everything.”

For an overview, start at the society’s award-winning museum, where exhibits stretch across 18 galleries, featuring everything from local textiles to military artifacts ranging from the French and Indian War to Vietnam.

After a day touring the valley, an entertaining evening awaits. In Carlisle, find restaurants serving Belgian beers and frites, and traditional Japanese fare. Afterward, see a live show at the art deco Carlisle Theatre.

In nearby Boiling Springs, Allenberry Resort Inn and Playhouse stages musical theater classics. And the taverns of New Cumberland and Camp Hill are certain to have an open-mic night or local band on the roster. “There’s just so much variety here,” Stoner says. “Each town has a different feel and a distinct set of assets.”

Education Epicenter

Cumberland’s top schools train future leaders.

Cumberland Valley boasts six institutions of higher education, including Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, Central Pennsylvania College, Messiah College, and Penn State Dickinson School of Law. But two of the valley’s prominent schools find their home in Carlisle.



Dickinson College

The U.S. Army War College, which moved to its present location near Carlisle in 1951, has trained top military leadership in strategic command since the early 20th century. Students conduct research and learn about the latest in military technology.

Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, founded Dickinson College in 1783. Today the liberal arts school stays true to Rush’s innovative vision with global study-abroad programs, a sustainability program (complete with a college farm that supplies food for the dining hall), and hands-on learning opportunities.

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The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania that supports the development of and programs at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center. The Foundation is seeking corporate and private support to expand public exhibit galleries and education program capacity at the Center.





New Cumberland's downtown revitalization

Center Point

By JoAnn Greco

For industry, from art and agriculture — to Amazon

When stained-glass artist PJ Heyman learned that a brick church dating to 1875 was for sale in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, the opportunity was, she says, “too good to resist.”

As the area becomes increasingly urban, though, its almost 1,550 farms remain fertile. Agriculture is one of the county’s top

industries, cashing in on \$100 million per year — and producing seasonal crops from apples to strawberries, and from peppers to zucchini. According to Kirk Stoner, Cumberland County’s planning director, about 10 percent of the region’s 156,000 acres are protected from encroaching development. “We also realize that these farmers can’t exist in a vacuum,” Stoner says. “So, we’re working on local food initiatives and establishing farmers’ markets.”

The valley, meanwhile, has thrived as a center for transportation and logistics, according to Omar Shute, executive director of the Cumberland Area Economic Development Corp. The valley sits at the nexus of several important highway routes: I-81, I-76, I-83, and PA Route 581. “We benefit from a strategic locale with

Before long, her own glass-making efforts cooled as she nurtured her new creation: Village Artisans Gallery. Today, the church’s big white doors open to reveal tall windows and yellow heart-pine floors. Inside you’ll find wrought iron works, wearables, ceramics, carvings, and more — all made by some 200 craftspeople, most of them local.

Adaptive reuse projects like Heyman’s are part of Cumberland Valley’s recent downtown revitalization projects. In Carlisle, for example, traffic lanes were downsized to encourage strollers and window shoppers. And on the western bank of the Susquehanna River, three towns — Wormleysburg, Lemoyne, and Camp Hill — partnered to fill their downtowns with activities and spur waterfront development.

Top 10 Employers

- Federal Government
- Highmark Blue Shield
- Giant Food Stores LLC
- State Government
- Holy Spirit Hospital
- Cumberland County
- Excel Inc.
- Cumberland Valley School District
- Wal-Mart
- Fry Communications Inc.

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Boiling Springs agriculture

great highway access and infrastructure,” he says. More than 40 percent of the U.S. population and 60 percent of Canada’s population are within a 500-mile radius.

Drawn by the accessible location, big box and online retailers like Office Depot and Amazon have each secured roughly 1 million square feet of warehouse space in the region. In fact, Cumberland is one of the largest distribution hubs in the nation, with about 50 million total square feet of warehouse space.

One of the valley’s top employers, Giant Food Stores, chose Cumberland for its corporate headquarters, distribution center, and grocery chain. Both Giant and Rite Aid Corporation cite the area’s educational institutions, combined with the relatively low unemployment and affordable housing, as reasons they chose the valley.

But critical to the mix of some 6,000 businesses that employ approximately 120,000 people are niche outfits like American Mint, a distributor of collectibles and coins that’s been in the area since the late 1990s and has grown its local workforce to about 70 employees.

This spring, the company plans to relocate its office and distribution facilities in Mechanicsburg’s Rossmoyne Business Center to a larger site in the same office park.

To help the company move, the county allotted \$1 million in Recovery Zone Facility Bonds, and the Mechanicsburg Area School Board recently approved a five-year tax-relief schedule. But ultimately, the decision to expand hinged on the area’s unique attributes, according to Frank Koeffler, American Mint’s vice president of operations.

“We’ve grown to depend on the workforce here. They’re loyal and have been with us a long time,” Koeffler says, “We looked at a couple of different places that were offering incentives, but we realized that this location is ideal for reaching the Northeast corridor.”

Turns out that even the most niche businesses are recognizing what the distribution companies are already capitalizing on — Cumberland Valley’s location in the center of highway transportation in the Mid-Atlantic states makes it easier than ever to find a prime address in a prime location.

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Yellow Breeches Creek

Simple Pleasures

By JoAnn Greco

... in Cumberland Valley

What do car collectors, craftspeople, history buffs, and hikers all have in common?

They know that in Cumberland Valley, there's more than meets the eye, from quaint downtown districts to acres of outdoor fun.

With three state parks, two state forests, and more than 200 miles of trails, the area doesn't lack in natural resources. To take it all in, enjoy some of the world's best fly-fishing at Yellow Breeches Creek and Le Tort Spring Run, bike along routes once traversed by rail cars, and join ambitious hikers making their way along the Appalachian Trail.

"I've lived here for most of my life," says Linda Witmer, executive director of Cumberland County Historical Society. "I swam in the lakes when I was a small child. The culture and the history are wonderful, but when I lived elsewhere briefly, I really missed the trees and the mountains."

Jason Zimmerman, park manager of

Pine Grove Furnace State Park, is a hiker himself and reserves a special fondness for intrepid nature lovers. "Everybody has a great story," he says. "They all have a trail name that's been given to them based on their quirky characteristics — and they're all so full of energy!"

More so, perhaps, after they indulge in the sugary tradition of eating an entire half gallon of ice cream from Pine Grove Furnace General Store to mark their success at reaching the halfway point of the 2,181-mile Appalachian Trail, which stretches from Georgia to Maine.

Best in Show

Equally as energetic are the thousands of car-lovers that gather at Carlisle Events auto shows. Held on the 150-acre Carlisle Fairgrounds, annual themed shows feature everything from "Performance & Style," devoted to tricked-out custom compacts, to "Corvettes at Carlisle," the world's largest Corvette show. The 10 shows attract international collectors and bring \$97 million to the local economy — not bad for an organization that started with one event in

1974. Car enthusiasts also won't want to miss Williams Grove Speedway, home to racing events every weekend March through October.

Hikers and hot-rodders aren't the only ones that flock to Cumberland, though. History buffs come to learn more about the valley's role in the French and Indian War, Revolutionary War, and Civil War. They also discover the area's lesser-known stories.

Take Carlisle Barracks. Established in 1757, it's the second-oldest military post continuously occupied by the Army. Today, visitors can tour the base's historic buildings and learn about its transformation to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in the late 1800s.

At the barracks, don't miss the Hessian Powder Magazine, a Revolutionary War storage facility for explosives; a small cemetery just inside the visitor entrance; and a structure built by Indian School students in 1887, named for that school's most famous student, Olympian Jim Thorpe.

Today, the Jim Thorpe building serves as a gym for officers who attend the U.S. Army War College, as well as staff, faculty, and their families. Also on Carlisle Barracks, the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) features a large collection of items, such as

uniforms, weapons, equipment, and insignias, related to the history of the U.S. Army. This collection is the basis for USAHEC's exhibits that showcase ordinary soldiers' stories. Outside, on the Army Heritage Trail, annual living-history events bring those stories to life. And don't forget to check out the center's many workshops and lectures.

Getting Crafty

If shopping is your favorite pastime, there's plenty more on tap. Five major shopping regions cluster along a portion of the Rt 15 ByWay of the Arts, which winds through central Pennsylvania. In addition, the towns of Boiling Springs, New Cumberland, Shippensburg, Carlisle, Mechanicsburg, and Lemoyne offer up their own galleries and boutiques.

In Boiling Springs, Gay Foltz maintains a studio at Village Artisans Gallery. Foltz achieved national recognition when HGTV featured one of her wood carvings in a 2005 episode of *That's Clever*. "Fine crafts and arts are flourishing in the Cumberland Valley," says PJ Heyman, the gallery's owner. "It's the right place for me."

And with so much to explore, after one visit, you might agree.

Below: Gay Foltz, Village Artisans Gallery



Corvettes at Carlisle

PHOTOS (THIS PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM): COURTESY OF THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY VISITORS BUREAU, COURTESY OF ARTISANS GALLERY; (OPPOSITE PAGE) COURTESY OF MICHAEL GARLAND



H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center

2012 Events Calendar

Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center, Shippensburg, April 4, luhrscenter.com

Army Heritage Days at USAHEC May 19-20, carlisle.army.mil/ahec

Foundry Day Arts & Crafts Festival Boiling Springs, June 2, boilingsprings.org

Plein Air Camp Hill Competition and Arts Festival June 5-10, pleinaircamphill.org

Appalachian Trail Festival Pine Grove Furnace State Park, June 10, atmuseum.org

Jubilee Day Mechanicsburg, June 21, mechanicsburgchamber.org

March to Destiny Shippensburg, June 22-24, marchtodestiny.org

Shippensburg Corn Festival August 25, cornfestival.net



McLain Celtic Festival Carlisle, September 1, historicalsociety.com

USAHEC Living History Event September 28-30, carlisle.army.mil/ahec

New Cumberland Apple Festival September 29, newcumberlandpa.com

M&T Bank Harvest of the Arts Carlisle, September 29, harvestofthearts.com

Pennsboro Pumpkin Fest Enola, October 6-7, pennsboropumpkinfest.com

Fall Furnace Fest Pine Grove Furnace State Park, October 20-21, dcnr.state.pa.us

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Living History

By Ivy Lamb

Tour Cumberland's combative past.

From getting caught in the middle of the French and Indian War, to being shelled by Confederates during the Civil War, Carlisle has seen its share of action. Want to learn more? Then lace up your walking shoes! These self-guided tours highlight the rich history of Cumberland Valley:

Augmented Reality Tour of the Civil War in Carlisle uses cutting-edge technology to enhance your tour, through streaming text, images, audio, and video. Just download the app to your GPS-enabled smart phone or tablet to see historic sites as they appeared during the Civil War.

Carlisle Barracks features more than 100 historic buildings. Take a tour of the country's second-oldest post continuously occupied by the Army, and the Carlisle Industrial Indian School.

The Army Heritage Trail at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) uses exhibits to transport visitors through military history from the Revolutionary War to the present day. Explore a Civil War winter camp with reconstructed cabins — one of 14 stops along the mile-long trail.

18th-Century Architecture in Carlisle Tour boasts a remarkable 17 buildings, since many homes built during the 1800s were destroyed. The tour includes the haunted home of a wealthy merchant, and a former tavern called "Sign of the Turk."

Carlisle's Old Public Graveyard Tour features notable grave markers

from the 18th and 19th centuries, and the final resting place of 750 veterans from the Revolutionary through the Korean wars. Among the interred is John Bannister Gibson, chief justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court (1827-1851), who played the violin and made his own dentures.

For more historic guided and self-guided tours, log on to visitcumberlandvalley.com.



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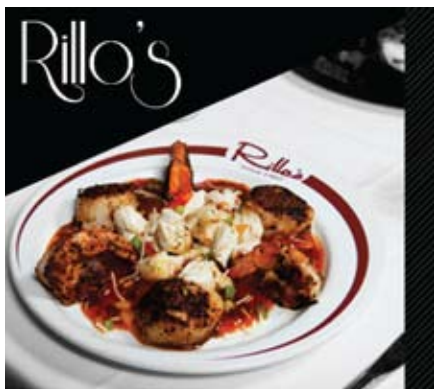
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Did You Know?

Fun facts about the valley

By Ivy Lamb



On Pointe

Thanks to founding artistic director Marcia Dale Weary, one of the nation's top ballet schools trains dancers in Cumberland Valley. Since its founding in 1955, more than 20,000 students have studied at the **Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet (cpyb.org)**, and alumni have joined legendary companies such as American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, and New York City Ballet.

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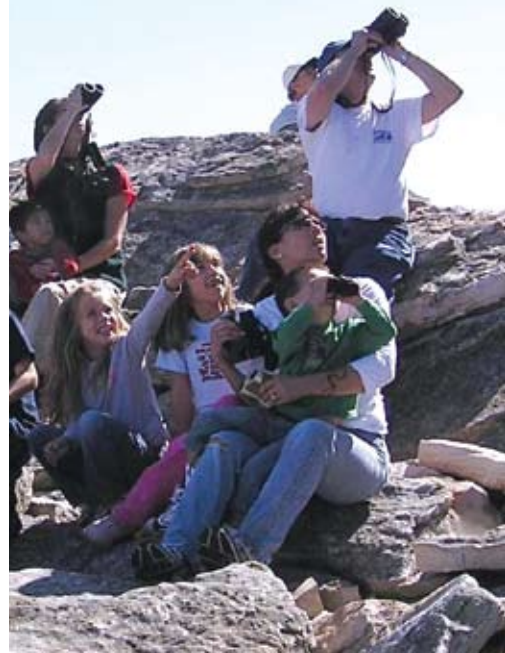
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Raptor Ridge

On a small, scenic gap in the **Kittatinny Ridge**, bird-watchers gather every year to count migrating hawks. Experts and enthusiasts have used **Waggoner's Gap** to study raptors since the 1930s. In 2001, 20 surrounding acres were deemed to Audubon Pennsylvania as a protected hawk watch. waggap.com



Great Gourds

In 1994, curious farmer Ben Bear discovered a way to clean and decorate hard-shelled gourds. Today his Carlisle farm, **Meadowbrooke Gourds**, is the world's largest gourd-crafting company. In 2009, Meadowbrooke gained national fame when it was featured on Discovery Channel's *Dirty Jobs*. gourdshop.com