NEWS RELEASE

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Local Tourism Industry partnering with Dauphin County Parks & Recreation to Clean Up at Wildwood Park during National Tourism Week 2019

HARRISBURG, PA (May 6, 2019) — Visit Hershey & Harrisburg (VHH) today announced it has partnered with the Dauphin County Parks & Recreation Department to host a **"Public Park Clean-Up Day"** on Thursday, May 9, 2019.
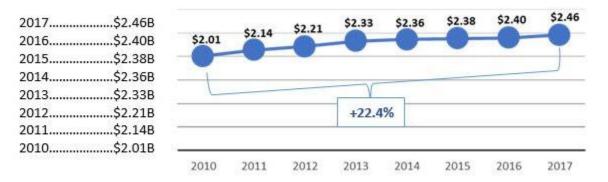
Tourism Picks Up in Dauphin County

VHH is organizing two volunteer work sessions for bureau staff and local tourism businesses to pick up litter and trash along Industrial Road and Wildwood Park in Harrisburg. The local tourism industry event entitled "**Tourism Picks Up in Dauphin County**" is in conjunction with **National Tourism Week** celebrated across the U.S. from May 5-11, 2019.

"We are hosting our local tourism industry partners for a day of camaraderie and community service during National Tourism Week," said VHH spokesperson Rick Dunlap. "But we are also coming together to celebrate the latest state tourism report showing Visitor Spending has increased for the seventh consecutive year in Dauphin County."

Visitor Spending in Dauphin County – 7-Year Trend (Billions)

Visitor Spending has reached a new high of **$2.46 Billion in Dauphin County** and the seven-year trend reflects a significant **increase of 22 percent**, according to the latest PA Tourism Economic Impact Report.

Year	Spending
2017	$2.46B
2016	$2.40B
2015	$2.38B
2014	$2.36B
2013	$2.33B
2012	$2.21B
2011	$2.14B
2010	$2.01B

Chart: $2.01 (2010), $2.14 (2011), $2.21 (2012), $2.33 (2013), $2.36 (2014), $2.38 (2015), $2.40 (2016), $2.46 (2017) — +22.4%

Visitor Spending by County in Pennsylvania 2017 (Billions)

The new report released by the PA Tourism Office in February 2019 ranks Dauphin County as the third largest single county in Pennsylvania for "Visitor Spending" and says the local tourism industry supports **20,000 jobs** in Dauphin County with over **$700 million in payrolls and salaries** each year.

County	Spending
Philadelphia County	$6.3 Billion
Allegheny County (Pittsburgh)	$6.14
Dauphin County (Hershey & Harrisburg)	**$2.46***
Monroe County (Pocono Mountains)	$2.30
Lancaster County	$2.14

Spending in Dauphin County by Category (Millions)

The state report reveals that visitors in Dauphin County spend nearly **$600 Million** on Recreation, making it the second largest category contributing to overall Visitor Spending in the county, according to Dunlap. **Transportation** is the top category followed by **Recreation**, **Food & Beverage**, **Lodging**, and **Retail**.

Category	Spending
Transportation	$613 Million
Recreation	$599
Food and Beverage	$478
Lodging	$400
Retail	$370

"Those results show us that our public parks, like Wildwood and the newly acquired Deitweiler Park, represent some of our greatest recreational opportunities in Dauphin County," said Dunlap. "So we are all out here today to do our part to preserve and maintain these wonderful natural assets in our county."

Dauphin County Public Parks Clean-Up Program

The idea of cleaning up at Wildwood came about when VHH contacted the County several months ago to see how they could host some type of volunteer event for the regional tourism partners during National Tourism Week, according to Dauphin County Board Chairman Jeff Haste.

"We directed them to our Public Parks Clean-Up Program," said Haste. "That program is designed for volunteers looking for ways to help our small park maintenance staff on everything from pulling invasive plant species, to planting trees, and picking up trash."

Dauphin County Parks & Recreation has approximately 1,000 acres to maintain in 10 different park locations, according to the Dauphin County Parks & Recreation website.

"The Public Parks Clean-Up Program is a great opportunity for individuals looking for ways to improve their community, or organizations like Visit Hershey & Harrisburg that are looking for team-building or community engagement opportunities," said Haste.

Dauphin County has volunteer work days on the second Saturday of each month at Wildwood Park and they will have a volunteer work day at Detweiler Park this year on Saturday, August 3, 2019.

Anyone who would like to know more about the Public Parks Clean-Up Program or other volunteer programs offered by Dauphin County, connect on Facebook @DauphinCountyParksRecreation.

ABOUT VISIT HERSHEY & HARRISBURG

Visit Hershey & Harrisburg is the official non-profit partnership-based Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) leading economic growth through destination sales, consumer marketing, public relations, and tourism development in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. The organization, accredited by Destinations International since 2010, is committed to actively marketing the tourism assets in the Hershey & Harrisburg Region to business and leisure travelers both domestic and international. The bureau also leads regional sales efforts to attract meeting and event organizers, sporting event producers, and group tour leaders. Our online media resource center includes Story Ideas, Regional Round-Ups, FAM Tour Itineraries, Media Policies, and an Image Gallery with high-resolution photos that can be easily reviewed and downloaded by media. VisitHersheyHarrisburg.org or 877-727-8573.

ABOUT DAUPHIN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

This Dauphin County department oversees and maintains a diverse inventory of natural areas, historic properties, and cultural assets including the 10 County Parks listed above. The department also produces a variety of diverse educational programs and special events including Maple Sugar Festival, Art In The Wild, Wetlands Festival, Fort Hunter Day, Dauphin County Music & Wine Festival, Cultural Fest, Dauphin County BrewFest, Dauphin County Jazz & Wine Festival, and more. Find more information at www.dauphincounty.org or call (717) 599-5188. Media can contact Amy Richards Harinath at arichards@dauphinc.org or (717) 780-6311.

ABOUT WILDWOOD PARK

Wildwood Park is located in the rolling hills of central Pennsylvania on the outskirts of downtown Harrisburg. Its 229 acres are a haven for countless species of flora and fauna centered around the 90-acre freshwater wetland. A popular three-mile loop trail encircles the park with side trails and boardwalks for a total of six miles of trails. Its attractive Olewine Nature Center features engaging exhibits on environmental education. Established in 1901, during the City Beautiful Movement, Wildwood was part of a nationwide effort to improve urban life. In 1976, the Dauphin County Commissioners assumed ownership of the property. Now managed by Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department, Wildwood Park is one of Pennsylvania's premier centers for environmental studies, educational opportunities and outdoor recreation. It is a cherished retreat for nature lovers, bird watchers and exercise enthusiasts. Wildwood Park was ranked #4 for "Things To Do in Harrisburg, PA" on TripAdvisor 2019.

Total Number of Dauphin County Parks: 10

Total Acres of Dauphin County Parks: 956

County Park Names + Acreage

1. Detweiler Park – 411 acres
2. Fort Hunter Park – 40 acres + Fort Hunter Conservancy – 154 acres
3. Henninger Farm Covered Bridge – 1 acre
4. Lykens Glen Park – 51 acres
5. Wiconisco Creek Park – 35 acres
6. Wildwood Park – 229 acres
7. Dauphin County Community Gardens – 8 acres
8. Sassafras Island – 15 acres
9. Fort Hunter "mountain" lot – 11.5 acres
10. Reed Township River Lot - .5 acres

Dauphin County Parks & Recreation Programming

- Dauphin County Parks & Recreation provides quality programming focused on:
    o Nature
    o History
    o Recreation
    o Special Programs (Festivals + Special Events)

- Dauphin County Parks & Recreation hosts more than 14 festivals throughout the season.
- Special programming provides important quality of life opportunities in Dauphin County.
- Programming results in 122,000 additional guests at Dauphin County parks annually.

Dauphin County Parks Visitation

- Detweiler Park – has approx. 1,500 visitors per month during May – September.
- Wildwood Park – has approx. 115,000 visitors annually.

Friends of Dauphin County Parks & Recreation

- Five 501c3 organizations help to support facilities and programs at Dauphin County Parks.

More Information + Media Contact

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