

The **A**rmstrong Beat



Newsletter of the Armstrong County Tourist Bureau

Summer 2011
Volume 5 • Issue 2

In This Issue

Tourism Working-But
Budget Cuts Remain
Newsletter Survey
Feature Members
Welcome New Members!
Tourism Matters
Member News
Website Stats
Get the Word Out
About Us

Feature Members

-Allegheny Ridge Corp.
-The River's Edge Canoe
and Kayak



Come. Play! Discover...
*The Heart of Western
Pennsylvania!*



**Armstrong County
Tourist Bureau**

125 Market Street
Kittanning PA 16201
724-543-4003
ArmstrongCounty.com

Tourism is Working in PA, but Budget Cuts Remain

Tourism is the 2nd largest industry in Pennsylvania AND it is the LARGEST industry in Armstrong County. It is a revenue generating industry for our state, but yet when the budget ax is raised we are one of the first to get cut! In 2009, the tourism industry generated \$32.9 billion for state's economy!! And now the Governors' 2011 budget for Tourism shows: \$3.2 million dollars for the PA State Tourism Office and Tourism Promotion Assistance Grants reduced to zero! \$3.2 million cannot market an entire state and \$0 does not support the individual county tourism agencies, such as ours. (See page 3 to read ACTB Board Secretary Neill Andritz's "Tourism Matters" article for the 'low-down' on tourism impacts in PA.)

But...do not despair! In March, Tourism Directors (myself included) from around the state met for the PACVB Spring Tourism Summit. Where we discussed how to come together as an industry to lobby and show legislators what we mean to this state. A Tourism Rally was held in the Capitol, where we as an industry, spoke of the impacts of Tourism. (Picture below.) Additionally, PA's First Lady-Mrs. Corbett spoke demonstrating her support for the tourism industry. During the conference, directors networked and put their heads together as to how to go about working in this tough economy. We are a creative group and are working to find new avenues for funding!

We need to stand together as an industry to show the Governor that we are working as one to foster economic development and encouraging visitors to explore what we have to offer here in PA (and Armstrong County)!

Help us celebrate National Tourism Week (May 7-15) by participating in our Open House on Friday, May 13th, 11-2. Members are free to promote their businesses by bringing displays, making sales, etc!

Please contact our office to sign up ASAP!!



Newsletter Survey-Changes in Delivery

Recently we asked our members to take a survey concerning their feelings on our quarterly newsletter. The Tourist Bureau is interested in seeing how many of our members would prefer a digital copy of our newsletter as opposed to a paper copy. Bulk mailing and postage is a huge cost to our office, as well as the staff time involved in assembling the newsletter itself!

Overall the survey showed that members find great value in the newsletter. Most of you seem responsive to the idea of a digital newsletter, however, a great number of members would still like to receive it in-hand. We know many of our members are utilizing the internet more and more, so a digital newsletter still seems to be desired. *At the last Board of Directors meeting, it was decided that those who wish to receive the newsletter electronically can do so and those who wish to receive it in hand, also have that option.*

The main concern with a digital copy was how to include inserts. Generally everyone agreed that they would be difficult to implement in digital form. Several suggested we simply replace the inserts with actual formatted ads within the newsletter.

So we will be devising a method as to how to assemble a cohesive digital copy and at the same time we will be collecting information from each member as to how they would like to receive their next newsletter. So look forward to hearing from us soon!! Thank you for all your help!



Allegheny Ridge Corporation

**Altoona Heritage Discovery Center
1421-1427 Twelfth Avenue
Post Office Box 348
Altoona, PA 16603**

T: 814.940.1922
F: 814.940.1423
www.alleghenyridge.org



Paddle, Pedal, Plan, and Trek the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway

Rivers are premier recreational resources. Celebrating their beauty and the cultural, natural, and historic resources found along their banks or within a stone's throw, the annual Stony-Kiski-Conemaugh Rivers Sojourn, June 2-5, 2011, offers adventurous camaraderie among beautiful scenery. In its twelfth year, this multi-day paddling event will follow the Stonycreek River (a 2011 nominated Pennsylvania River of the Year) and Kiski-Conemaugh Rivers on the edges of Somerset, Cambria, Indiana, Westmoreland and Armstrong counties.

Sojourners will experience part of the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway. After paddling sections of the first transportation corridor between the two cities, historic tales and accounts of river adventures will be shared. Registration information is available at www.conemaughvalleyconservancy.org. Deadline to register is May 21st.

Save the date for the 9th annual Greenway Bike Sojourn! Part bicycle ride, part trail-building program, this sojourn is like no other. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy hosts this multi-day annual event on July 19-24, 2011. The sojourn celebrates newly opened trails and promotes the completion of others to create regional trail systems. Participants not only enjoy rail-trails, but also influence local decision makers and gain a better appreciation of trail development. This year some trail segments follow the path of the historic Main Line Canal system and include the Roaring Run Recreation Area and Roaring Run Trail. For more details, a route map, training recommendations and other information, or to register for the event please visit www.railstotrails.org.

This summer unfolds an exciting planning project in the Kiskiminetas River corridor. Allegheny Ridge Corporation Main Line Canal Greenway's Kiski-Conemaugh coordinator is spearheading the Kiskiminetas Valley Greenway, Trail, and Downtown Connectivity Study. The resulting plan will provide Kiski Valley municipalities with opportunities to capitalize on historic resources and river and trail recreation for residential and business redevelopment. The plan will also help develop nearby recreation opportunities, promote bike and pedestrian travel, and reduce dependence on vehicular travel for current and future residents.

Neither snow, nor rain, nor dark of night has kept enthusiasts from traversing the Main Line Canal Greenway Geotrail (MLCG). As spring ambles into summer, let the journeys continue. Developed and launched in late 2009, this 21st century way to explore the 19th century heritage of the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway offers a new, unique way to experience the Greenway and bring focus to its various features.

Complete the geotrail; earn a commemorative MLCG trackable geocoin. To earn the coin, find at least four geocaches in each of the six greenway clusters. At each cache, there will be a code that must be recorded in the MLCG Logbook. Before heading out, download logbook at www.mainlinecanalgreenway.org/geotrail, where more information about the trail can be found. This grown up game of hide and seek provides incentive for geocachers, in Pennsylvania and worldwide, to learn something new. Some have discovered state parks. Others have learned bits of history and local lore. Geocaching, it's a good thing.

Being outdoors affords the best opportunity to enjoy the beauty and wonders of the Allegheny Ridge. An Italian poet, a British lay theologian, and an American author assert that nature is God's art; demanding reverence, it may be borrowed and used, but not owned. We are tenants.

We are also stewards. The predominant theme of the Main Line Canal Greenway is "making new connections between old neighbors™." By facilitating bike trails, establishing scenic byways, and promoting the use of the rivers for recreation, Allegheny Ridge Corporation is reconnecting communities to each other, to their heritage, and to environmentally sound riverfront opportunities and practices.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

**-Keystone Bait,
Tackle and Hardware**

**-Progressive Work-
shop of Armstrong
County**

The River's Edge Canoe and Kayak

Neill and Evelyn Andritz

3158 River Road
Leechburg, PA 15656
724-845-9501

www.the-rivers-edge.com



Spring has arrived at The River's Edge Canoe & Kayak as we prepare to embark on Season 5. Last year, proudly named StrongLand Chamber of Commerce "Business of the Year", we are not resting on our laurels! With a newly renovated outfitting store, we are excited to announce that we have now expanded our canoe and kayak rentals into a retail store with a full line of Emotion kayaks and SUP Boards with paddling gear from sprayskirts to water shoes, adding all those small essentials to your paddling experience. In addition to the Emotion kayaks, we are now a Jackson Kayak dealer and for canoe enthusiasts, we have added NuCanoe to our paddling family. We have a wide array of Aquabound and Bending Branches paddles, and our new Stohlquist Life Preservers are now in full stock. Stop in and check out our new inventory and don't forget we have a full service Bait and Tackle Shop for all of your fishing needs.

Once again The River's Edge will be participating in the Alle-Kiski-Connie Sojourn. Join us for a scenic river adventure; paddling through the Allegheny, Kiskiminetas, and Conemaugh Valleys. Share in the rich heritage of these unique waterways. For more information check out the StrongLand Chamber of Commerce website. The event is May 12-15, or paddlers can opt for the day paddle on Saturday. This is a great opportunity to join a great group of paddlers.

The River's Edge will also be hosting the 3rd Annual F.L.A.G. River Sojourn from Apollo to Leechburg to Freeport. Join us on Sunday, September 18, 2011 on the Kiski and Allegheny Rivers. Our adventure will begin launching in Apollo with a stop for lunch at the Addison House in Leechburg and finishing at the September By The River Festival in Freeport. For more details please visit www.flagpa.com and click on the calendar link.

Hope to see you on the water!!

Tourism Matters --Neill Andritz

For those of you who may not realize it Pennsylvania ranks fourth in the country in total visitors at 138 million people! In 2007 those visitors generated \$2.8 billion in state and municipal revenues. Tourism also is the second largest industry in PA with 400,000 employees who earn \$10.7 billion in wages and benefits yearly. Tourism accounts for over 6% of all jobs in the commonwealth. Each of the 4.9 million households in the Commonwealth of PA saves \$575 in taxes annually thanks to the taxes generated by the tourism industry.'

* Why does all this matter? Because recently the politicians in Harrisburg and the Governor's office have decided to do away with tourism funding. I know you are asking yourself the same question I am, "How do you get rid of something that actually makes the state money?". Unfortunately we must now call or email our senators, congressman, and the governor and ask this question of them. The politicians in Colorado made the same move a few years ago and they dropped from second in the country in visits to eleventh. The loss in tourism revenue was staggering! Be assured, we can expect the same results from the cuts that have been established. Only a politician could make a mistake like this. If one was to look at return on investment, the state gets ten dollars in return for every dollar spent, and this is a conservative estimate. Please get involved and let people know,

TOURISM MATTERS!

Member News...

The [Armstrong Trail](#) is Ready To Ride! The new Trail Map is here!! Pick up your updated Armstrong Trail map here in our office!

[Foxburg Wine Cellars](#) features entertainment, every Saturday and Sunday 2-5pm on the patio.
May 7 - Terry Dach & James Wellman, May 8 - Don Schiebel, May 14 - Angel Blue Band, May 15 - Gashouse Annie, May 21 - Tom Panei, May 22 - Max Schang Blues Duo, May 28 - Tim Lionelli, May 29 - Frank Parrish

[Divani Chocolate](#) will host a drop-off space for Clarion River Organics this summer. Clarion River Organics was started in 2009 by a group of 10 organic produce farms in the Sligo/Callensburg area. By being a drop-off point for CRO in the AC Valley area, Divani Chocolate hopes to promote healthy eating among the community members while encouraging the support of local farms. For more the whole story or more info visit www.DivaniChocolate.com

[Olsen Chiropractic](#) would like to introduce its new massage therapist, Valerie Smith. In honor of our new addition to the office, we will be doing a special from now through the month of May.

- \$24 for a half hour massage
- \$39 for an hour massage

Valerie offers a variety of services, so please call for more information and to make an appointment for your massage today! 724-548-1040

The [Armstrong Chamber of Commerce](#) is holding a Golf Outing on May 27th at [Lenape Heights Golf Course](#). To register your foursome, call 724-543-1305.

[United Way of Armstrong County](#) will hold a Golf Outing on August 5, 2011 at the [Kittanning Country Club](#). More info call 724-543-2610.

Website Stats

ArmstrongCounty.com

February 2011

Unique Visitors: 2963
No. of Visits: 4520
Hits: 329031

March 2011

Unique Visitors: 3584
No. of Visits: 5484
Hits: 368022

April 2011

Unique Visitors: 2682
No. of Visits: 3987
Hits: 301169

Average duration: 3.1 min



Armstrong County Tourist Bureau

125 Market Street
Kittanning PA 16201
724-543-4003 • armstrongcounty.com

PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Kittanning, PA
Permit No. 197

Address service requested

Board of Directors

Jack Bennett, Chairman
Ron Steffey, Vice-Chairman
Neill Andritz, Secretary
Pam Meade, Treasurer
Travis Lindsay
Connie Jerich
Melvin Check
Commissioner Rich Fink

Staff

Miranda Shoemaker, Director
Linda Pennington
Robert Milligan

Come. Play! Discover...

*The Heart of Western
Pennsylvania!*



**Armstrong County
Tourist Bureau**

125 Market Street
Kittanning PA 16201
724-543-4003

ArmstrongCounty.com

Need to get the Word Out?

We can help! (Members only benefits - contact us for details)

Newsletter Inserts - \$50 and 500 copies gets your message out to all Bureau members, all municipalities in Armstrong County, local elected officials, and many, many more businesses and organizations.

Display Window - Free for non-profits, \$25 for businesses. Available on a monthly basis - windows are LARGE, lighted, and carpeted.

Feature Member for Newsletter - FREE, just send us the info and a photo and we'll get you in - 2 members per issue are highlighted.

www.ArmstrongCounty.com

Calendar of Events - FREE, easy online submission.

Homepage News Items - FREE, send info and photo if possible. These typically run for 1-2 weeks.

Photo Gallery - FREE, easy online submission to the photo gallery.

Web Advertisements- A PENNY per impression

Need help with a Press Release or Flyer? We'll help you write it and get it sent to all regional media outlets - FREE!

About Our Organization

Established in 1963, the Armstrong County Tourist Bureau is the official tourism promotion agency for Armstrong County. Our mission is to promote tourism, tourism development, and the interests of the travel and hospitality industries of our region, thereby contributing to the economic growth and well-being of the area. The Armstrong County Tourist Bureau is a non-profit, membership organization.

Pittsburgh^{and}its Countryside