

# TODAY Tourism

## CELEBRATE SPRING AND RING IN THE NEW MUSEUM SEASON

### BELL AND HISTORY DAYS – APRIL 10 AND 11, 2010

**B**ell and History Days, the annual opening weekend for local museums and historic sites, features numerous activities throughout the City of Frederick and Frederick County. Listen for bells to sound all over the county at 10 a.m. on Saturday, then explore the museums of your choice, ride a motorized trolley for a guided tour of historic Frederick, and partake of the many opportunities to get better acquainted with the area's history. Special programming in Downtown Frederick will recognize several notable milestones in the city's history:

#### 65th Anniversary – Helen L. Smith's Design of the City of Frederick Seal

Frederick's clustered spires have been the iconic representation of the city since 1863 when John Greenleaf Whittier wrote, "The clustered spires of Frederick stand, green-walled by the hills of Maryland." In 1935, famed Frederick artist Helen L. Smith created the city seal featuring the spires, affirming the importance of these bell towers. Frederick City Hall, the Hood College Museum, and several other locations will display artwork by Helen L. Smith.

#### 20th Anniversary – Downtown Frederick Partnership

Throughout Downtown Frederick, peer into merchant windows and doorways to learn more about the past residents of downtown's beautiful historic buildings. Inquire within as some shops and restaurants will have additional history to share. Founded in 1990, the Downtown Frederick Partnership is charged with enhancing, promoting and preserving the vitality of Downtown Frederick.

*Continued on page 3*



## WORK BEGINS ON NEW VISITOR CENTER

**W**ork is underway on the restoration of the circa 1900 brick warehouse that will serve as the new Frederick Visitor Center. Rockwell Construction Co. of Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, was awarded the contract in late 2009 and will complete the project by the end of this year. Meanwhile, production of a new multi-screen orientation video and design of planned exhibits for the center are nearing completion. Exhibit fabrication will be completed this year, with installation slated to begin as the building renovation concludes.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To say that the past few winter months have been a challenge is an understatement of epic proportions. We will likely look back on this winter and tell our children of the great "Snowmageddon" of '09 and the "Snowverkill" of '10. Yet for tourism, despite the challenges of the blizzards, this is an exciting time that equals or exceeds the hype of the snowfall in every way.

The first exciting event was the opening of the new East Street gateway. Just a few months ago the ribbon was finally cut on this long-anticipated project. Its importance to tourism cannot be overestimated. This new gateway will allow a free flow of traffic to the historic district and simplify bus traffic to the Patrick Street/East Street area. It has already been a boon to those drivers who regularly sat in traffic on Market Street. In the future it will speed tourists to the historic district parking decks and our new visitor center.

While we are thinking of the visitor center there is great news on that front as well. As many of you may have already noted, work is moving forward after many months of delay. Footers are going in and interior demolition is nearly complete. Soon the new floors will be poured and then interior work can move ahead at full speed. The snow has not been much of a factor since the current work is mainly taking place inside. If all goes well, the construction will end in December and exhibits will begin. Look for a ribbon cutting during our Bell and History Days celebration in 2011. As if these two events were not enough, the City's new wayfinding signs will be going in soon to direct our visitors to the destinations that make Frederick a great place to visit.

Now I know that there is still much concern over local and state budgets, but the improvements that we are seeing in the tourism infrastructure in our community may be the very best remedy for our budget woes. Tourism returns money to the economy more quickly than any other revenue source. It brings in sales taxes, keeps jobs in place, and sustains economic vitality. So, while we are still shaking off the cold of a momentous winter and a scary budget outlook, the current outlook for tourism is nothing short of ... HOT, HOT, HOT ... and that is good for all of us.

— George Wunderlich



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SUSAN TRAIL  
Monocacy National Battlefield

The Tourism Council is a non-profit organization.  
Membership is open to all parties interested in  
undertaking a joint effort to promote the growth of travel  
to Frederick County, MD.

TOURISM COUNCIL  
OF FREDERICK COUNTY, INC.  
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Continued from page 1

### **African American Milestones – 140th Anniversary of the 15th Amendment, 55th Anniversary of Rosa Parks**

The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibited the denial of voting rights based on race, color, or previous status as a slave. Rosa Parks' 1955 refusal to give up her seat on a bus to a white man catalyzed civil rights activity in the 20th century. While these milestones were nationally significant, they reverberated here in Frederick County. Several programs – including walking tours departing from the Roger Brooke Taney House, special exhibits, and an appearance by Harriet Tubman at Rose Hill Manor Park – will highlight aspects of African American history.

Bell and History Days conclude at 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 11 with a hand bell festival concert at the Basilica of the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg. This spectacular, free concert will feature nearly 100 ringers from eight local hand bell choirs.

#### *At a Glance*

- *Bell and History Days programs will take place on Saturday, April 10, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., with a few locations also open on Sunday, April 11.*
- *More than 25 locations are featured. All events are free of charge.*
- *A Passport to History program encourages multiple museum visits, and those that collect at least four passport stamps may compete for a prize drawing.*
- *A comprehensive Bell and History Days guide is available at the Frederick Visitor Center, 19 East Church Street, Frederick.*
- *For more information, call Liz Shatto, Coordinator of the Frederick Historic Sites Consortium, at 301-600-4042.*



Downtown Frederick turned white when the region was blanketed by approximately 50 inches of snow in February. Residents enjoyed an unusual treat—skiing down Market Street!

#### **BYWAY BITS**

With three newly named designees last fall, Maryland now has more nationally designated byways per mile than any other state in the country. New members to the America's Byways collection include Historic Charles Street (Baltimore), Harriet Tubman All-American Road (Eastern Shore), and Religious Freedom (in lower Southern Maryland).



In other news close to home, Catoctin Mountain National Scenic Byway was recently renamed Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway and now extends to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to the north and Monticello, Virginia, to the south. The Historic National Road runs through Frederick County via MD 144, US40, and US40Alt and is designated as an All-American Road by the National Scenic Byways Program, under the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration.

Tourism's Scenic Byway and Special Projects Manager Chris Haugh has been serving on the planning committee for the Preserving the Historic Road conference, to be hosted in Washington, DC, September 9-12. Four days of educational sessions, special events, and field workshops will provide participants with the latest best practices, theories, and methods for the identification, preservation, and management of historic roads. One of these mobile workshops will center on Maryland and the Historic National Road, and another will focus on Virginia and the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway. As a member of the Board of Directors for the Maryland National Road Association, Haugh is helping to plan the route and host the session. To learn more about the conference, visit [historicroads.org](http://historicroads.org).

## SPRING FAM TOUR

Thursday, May 13, 2010  
8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tourism Council lodging members along with docents and staff of the Historic Sites Consortium are invited to participate in a full day of training with a focus on the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area. Attendees should park at the Harry Grove Baseball Stadium. The Tourism Council will provide transportation and lunch. Space for the training is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please register with Tiffany Ahalt (tahalt@fredco-md.net) no later than April 30.

## MUSEUMS AT THE MALL



On Saturday, March 27, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., Frederick County museums and historic sites will showcase their programs at the Francis Scott Key Mall in Frederick. Shoppers of all ages will enjoy interactive displays, hands-on activities, and the opportunity to gather information about local sites. Last year, approximately 1200 people were served directly by this event, which is sponsored by the Frederick Historic Sites Consortium.

## FIRST WAYFINDING SIGNS UNVEILED



On March 12, officials from the City of Frederick, Downtown Frederick Partnership, and the Tourism Council of Frederick County unveiled a set of prototype wayfinding signs to kick off the installation and final phase of a multi-year effort to improve the ability of City residents and visitors to find the many cultural and historic attractions in Frederick. The unveiled signs included examples of vehicular, parking, and pedestrian signage, as well as an example of the new kiosk design.

The fabrication and installation of a comprehensive wayfinding system is a critical component of the community's efforts to promote, preserve, and enhance the vitality of Downtown Frederick and Frederick overall. The new signage will market the wealth of experiences to be found in the community, and old and out-of-date signs will be removed.

Installation of the entire signage system is now underway and will continue for the next several months.

## ABA MARKETPLACE WRAP-UP

Hosts from Maryland, DC, and Virginia welcomed more than 3,200 American Bus Association (ABA) delegates to the 2010 Marketplace at the Gaylord National Resort at National Harbor. Because the event was such a success, the capital region will likely see an increase in group travel over the next few years. Frederick County Tourism Council members have already booked business for this year and next, laying the groundwork for future tours to the area.

Special thanks to the volunteers who represented Frederick County at the Marketplace: Jennifer Alcorn – Marriott Hotels; Taunya Roberts - Hampton Inn & Suites; Stephanie Miller – The Weinberg Center for the Arts; Tim Ryan - Delaplaine Visual Arts Center; Paige Marchette and Donald Hauver – The Best Western; Robert Burton, Susan Rosenvold, and Tracey McIntire – National Museum of Civil War Medicine; Lucia Simmons – Linganore Winecellars; and a representative from Flying Dog Brewery.

Frederick County hosted 46 tour operators on two different pre-Show Familiarization tours: a Hallowed Grounds tour and Immerse Yourself tour.

Shown at right are (top photo) tour operators with “Mamie Eisenhower” at Cozy Restaurant and (bottom photo) Richard Marks of Fantastic Tours & Travel (New York) with Cozy Restaurant manager Vickie Grinder. To learn more about opportunities in the group tour market, please contact Tiffany Ahalt at 301-600-4050.





## FREDERICK RESTAURANT WEEK— A DELECTABLE SUCCESS

In late January, nearly 100 enthusiastic Frederick restaurant fans packed into the Weinberg Center’s lobby to nibble on shrimp, paella, sweets, and braised rabbit made to order at the first Frederick Restaurant Week kickoff celebration. With samples flowing from some of the participating restaurants, the details of Frederick’s inaugural Restaurant Week were unveiled—and soon reservations began pouring in for the 20-plus restaurants featured during Frederick Restaurant Week, March 8 through 14.

A collaborative project of the Downtown Frederick Partnership and the Tourism Council of Frederick County with local restaurants, Frederick Restaurant Week showcased the area as a culinary and dining destination. Chefs offered special menus at fixed prices: \$15.10 and \$20.10 for a two- and three-course lunch, respectively; and \$30.10 for a three-course dinner.

“Frederick area restaurants are producing some exceptional, unique dishes,” says John Fieseler, Tourism Council Executive Director. “It was the perfect opportunity to feature this culinary treasure in the heart of mid-Maryland.” Most participating restaurants for the 2010 event were located in Downtown Frederick. “Since meals are priced to offer a savings to the diner, it was a great time to try something new,” says Kara Norman, Executive Director of the Downtown Frederick Partnership.

While there had been discussions in previous years about hosting a Frederick Restaurant Week, the timing seemed perfect for 2010. “Vot Chef Bryan Voltaggio’s recent success on *Top Chef Season 6* has helped to shine a national spotlight on Frederick,” says Fieseler. Voltaggio went head-to-head with his brother Michael, also a Frederick native, in the show’s final episode as they vied for the Top Chef title. Bryan Voltaggio came in second to his brother, bolstering the public’s awareness of Frederick as a dining destination.

Participating restaurants for the weeklong event had to be members of the Tourism Council of Frederick County or investors in the Downtown Frederick Partnership.

Frederick Restaurant Week was promoted through a new web site (FrederickRestaurantWeek.com), advertising, media releases, and an aggressive social media campaign. Many complementary activities were also offered during the week. “It was a great week not just for our restaurants, but for everyone downtown,” says Norman, adding that plans are already underway for Frederick Restaurant Week 2011.

*Special thanks to Frederick Restaurant Week sponsors: Dempsey Uniform & Linen Supply, The Gazette, FoodPro, Frederick Magazine, Jean Peterson Design, Key 103, and Orases.*

### EVENTS ON THE MOVE

This year brings date changes for many traditional events in Frederick County. Some events and festivals, which historically are held on a certain weekend each year, have made the move to a different weekend. In the Street, Downtown Frederick’s popular outdoor festival, will be held on September 11 rather than the first Saturday of October. Several holiday events have changed dates as well.

Many of the changes are the result of organizations working together and scheduling events cooperatively for the greatest positive impact to our area. Check Tourism’s Calendar of Events and online calendar for the most current information.



### New Times for Walking Tours

See Historic Downtown Frederick like you’ve never seen it before!

Saturdays at 11 a.m.  
(April 17-October)

Sundays at 1:30 p.m.  
(April 17-October)

Tours depart from the Frederick Visitor Center at 19 East Church Street. For general information, contact the Visitor Center at 301-600-2888. For group tickets, contact [eseagraves@hsfcinfo.org](mailto:eseagraves@hsfcinfo.org) or call 301-663-1188. Walking tour tickets: \$7-adult, \$6-senior, and \$5-children 6-12. Admission to Museum of Frederick County History included with ticket purchase.

### SAVE THE DATE!

The Tourism Council’s Spring Social will be held on Wednesday, May 19, from 5 ‘til 7 p.m. at ThorpeWood in Thurmont. More details coming soon.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – JOY DERR AWARD

The Frederick Historic Sites Consortium is accepting nominations for the Joy Reese Derr Award for Outstanding Museum-Community Relations. Named for a former Tourism Council president and the Consortium's first chair, this award recognizes exceptional advancement in one or more aspects of the public dimension of museum work. Institutional progress in such areas as education, interpretation, public relations, visitor services, outreach, community partnerships, and use of print, electronic, and social media will be considered.

Any Frederick County museum or historic site that is an active participant in the Frederick Historic Sites Consortium is eligible for nomination, and self-nominations are encouraged. Nominations are due on or before May 3, and the award will be announced at the annual Docent Recognition Party in June (details to come). For a copy of the call for nominations, please contact Liz Shatto, Consortium Coordinator, at 301-600-4042 or lshatto@fredco-md.net.

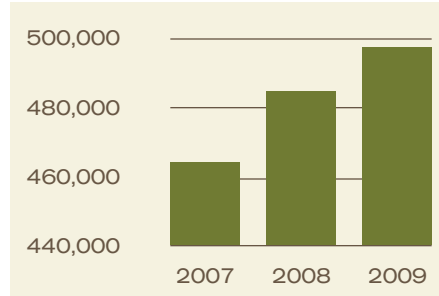
## MASON DIXON DISCOVERY CENTER CLOSED

The State of Maryland's budget difficulties have resulted in the closing of many of the state-operated Welcome Centers, including the Mason Dixon Discovery Center on US15 in Emmitsburg. The Tourism Council of Frederick County is joining with the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership in discussions with Maryland Tourism and State Highway officials to explore the possibility of a public-private partnership to reopen the facility.

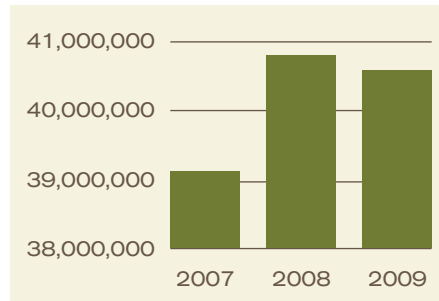
## HOTEL RECAP 2009

A record number of hotel room nights were utilized by guests in Frederick County hotels in calendar year 2009, despite the soft economy. The recession did continue to put downward pressure on room rates, however. Almost a half-million room nights were rented at an average rate of \$81.88, down from \$84.04 in 2008. On the plus side, the occupancy rate for hotels in the county rose from 63.9 percent in 2008 to 65.4 percent in 2009. As a result, Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) remained almost flat from 2008 at \$53.52. Total revenue for the market was \$40,648,773, down 0.4 percent from 2008.

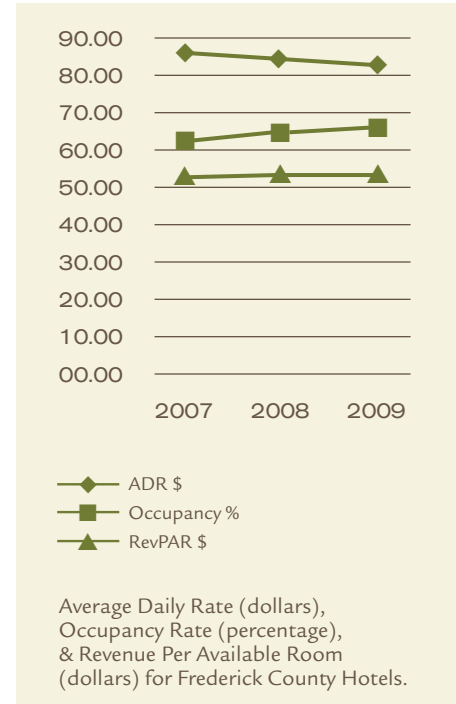
### DEMAND (ROOM NIGHTS)



### REVENUE (DOLLARS)



### RATES, OCCUPANCY & RevPAR

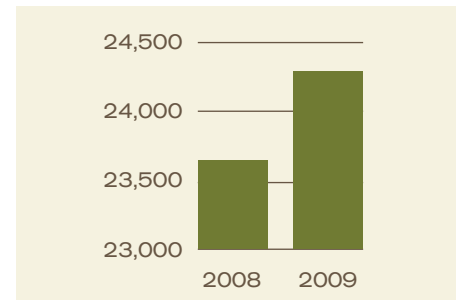


### Visitor Center and Website Statistics 2009

Calendar year 2009 brought 24,250 visitors to the Frederick Visitor Center on East Church Street, up from 23,661 in 2008. A total of 1,704 Downtown Frederick Gift Cards were sold at the center last year, with a combined value of \$87,035.

There were 785,786 page views on the Tourism Council's website (fredericktourism.org), and the average length of time on the site was almost four minutes. Top pages viewed included the online Calendar of Events and What to See and Do.

### VISITORS TO FREDERICK VISITOR CENTER



## EMPLOYEE NEWS

In anticipation of the new Visitor Center on East Street, the Frederick County Visitor Center has seen major changes the past several months. A mock-up of the proposed visitor services desk was installed so the Visitor Center staff could get a feel of the additional features of the design. Two computer stations with Internet accessibility were added to the front desk so staff can easily look up answers for questions not directly related to Frederick County. Each computer has point-of-sale capabilities, which enables all staff to process retail items and keep track of inventory.

In addition to these changes, there have been recent staff changes as well. Janet Houck, Supervisor of the Visitor Center for 23+ years, decided to retire. Janet, who has a wealth of knowledge about Frederick County and the Tourism Council, has agreed to stay on as a consultant. Her day-to-day interaction with visitors and staff is greatly missed.

As in many organizations, when a dedicated employee leaves, two employees are hired to replace that individual. With the new Visitor Center in mind, staffing was reorganized to include two Visitor Services Managers and three Visitor Center Hosts. Robyn Hildebrand, Visitor Services Manager, oversees retail sales, visitor statistics, and leads from publication advertisements. Lori Paddy, Visitor Services Manager, maintains bulk mailing requests for our publications, inventory of member brochures, and website calendar of events. Tom Croft, a Frederick County resident for 20-plus years, will share his knowledge as Visitor Center Host. Dave Pearson and Peggy Alley, already familiar faces at the Visitor Center, will stay on as Hosts.



Tom Croft



Robyn Hildebrand



Lori Paddy

*Visitor Center hours of operation are now 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Adding 30 minutes at the end of the day will better serve travelers arriving in town later in the afternoon.*



At her retirement event, Janet Houck was recognized as "Supervisor Emerita of Visitor Services with the Tourism Council of Frederick County." This title is presented to a woman who is retired but retains an honorary title with the company. The honor is never an automatic one but rather a recognition of dedication and exceptional service.

## KUDOS!

Winners of the Peter H. Plamondon Professional Development Scholarship include **Devra Boesh**, President of the Middletown Valley Historical Society; **Karen Harding**, Director of the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; and **Rebecca O'Leary**, Curator of the Brunswick Railroad Museum. The award supports participation of local museum staff or volunteers in the annual Small Museum Association conference.

**The Green Country Inn and Diner** in Brunswick was one of the first local businesses to receive the Frederick County Source Reduction Award in recognition of wise waste management practices.

**Cindy Ecker**, manager of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill state parks, received the Maryland Parks Service's Edmund Prince Award, named for Maryland's first park ranger and presented to those who distinguish themselves in this role.

Congratulations to the **Frederick Residence Inn by Marriott** upon their recent grand reopening following an extensive renovation.

## BE AN AMBASSADOR FOR FREDERICK COUNTY

Sign up now for spring classes!

Looking for an easy way for your staff, volunteers, or docents to learn more about Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG) and Frederick County tourism? Participate in the JTHG Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) Training this spring. At this half-day session, you'll learn not only about JTHG but also about the importance of customer service at every level of your business—from front line staff to sales and marketing.

Several Tourism Council members have already become official CTAs, including the Marriott Hotels, Frederick Visitor Center, National Museum of Civil War Medicine, The Best Western, and Hampton Inn & Suites. To learn more about the CTA program and to view a schedule of upcoming classes visit [ctanetwork.com](http://ctanetwork.com) or contact Tiffany Ahalt at 301-600-4050.



Tourism Council of  
Frederick County, Inc.

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Frederick, MD 21701

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MARYLAND

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PATSY ENSMINGER  
Operations Manager

CHRIS HAUGH  
Scenic Byway &  
Special Projects Manager

MICHELLE KERSHNER  
Grants & Communication Specialist

ELIZABETH SHATTO  
Historic Sites Coordinator

TIFFANY AHALT  
Tourism Marketing Manager

• **VISITOR CENTER STAFF** •

JANET HOUCK  
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ROBYN HILDEBRAND  
LORI PADDY  
Visitor Services Managers

DAVID PEARSON  
PEGGY ALLEY  
TOM CROFT  
Visitor Center Hosts

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

**Brunswick Crossing / Pleasants  
Development**

24012 Frederick Road  
Clarksburg, MD 20871  
301-428-0800  
brunswickcrossing.com  
Contact: Christina L. May

**Captain Scrubby & The  
Squeegees Window Cleaning**

12605 Keymar Road  
Keymar, MD 21757  
443-536-3106  
Contact: David Stambaugh

**The Frederick Basket Company**

12 N. East Street, Everedy Square  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-696-9345  
frederickbasket.com  
Contact: Vicki Moore

**Harley-Davidson of Frederick**

5722 Urbana Pike  
Frederick, MD 21704  
301-694-8177  
hdoffrederick.com  
Contact: Heather Bailey

**Milano Salon & Spa**

3512 Worthington Boulevard  
Frederick, MD 21704  
301-874-2828  
milanosalonurbana.com  
Contact: Laila Shouhayib

**Monocacy Crossing**

4424-A Urbana Pike  
Frederick, MD 21704  
301-846-4204  
monocacycrossing.com  
Contact: Kelly Regan

**Resthaven Memorial Gardens**

9501 Catocin Mountain Highway  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-898-7177  
resthaven.us  
Contact: Richard F. Cody

**ShadowLand Laser Adventures**

5500 Buckeystown Pike  
Frederick, MD 21704  
301-696-5555  
shadowlandadventures.com  
Contact: Randall Briggs

**The John Hanson National  
Memorial Association**

2455 Ballenger Creek Pike  
Adamstown, MD 21710  
301-874-0235  
JohnHansonMemorial.org  
Contact: Peter Michael

**Whiskey Creek Golf Club**

4804 Whiskey Court  
Ijamsville, MD 21754  
301-694-2900  
whiskeycreekgolf.com  
Contact: Scott Wisnom