2020 County Tourism Grant Chats Scheduled!

Join the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau and learn what you need to know about your county’s 2020 Tourism Grant Program. We encourage anyone interested in applying for a tourism grant to attend this FREE meeting.

Reservations are required and can be made by contacting Rachel at rroehrig@laurelhighlands.org or 724-238-5661, ext. 101. Deadline to RSVP is September 24. Please indicate your county when calling.

- 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 1 – Westmoreland County Tourism Grant Chat, Christ our Shepherd Center, Greensburg
- 2 p.m., Tuesday, October 1 – Fayette County Tourism Grant Chat, Penn-State Fayette, Room 116, Eberly Corporate Training Center
- 2 p.m., Wednesday, October 2 – Somerset County Tourism Grant Chat, Somerset Country Club

Grant forms will be available online October 1, at laurelhighlands.org/grants. Applications are due November 12.

Fallingwater Honored with UNESCO World Heritage Designation

It’s official! The World Heritage Committee has inscribed Frank Lloyd Wright’s masterpiece, Fallingwater, and seven other works by Wright, to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List.

Inaugurated in 1973, UNESCO’s site list includes famed locations such as Yellowstone National Park, India’s Taj Mahal, the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador, Victoria Falls in southern Africa, Machu Picchu in Peru, and the Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route in Bethlehem, West Bank.

“Congratulations to the entire team at Fallingwater, past and present,” said Ann Nemanic, Executive Director, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau. “The UNESCO World Heritage inscription for the collection of eight Frank Lloyd Wright buildings affirms that the architectural and creative mind of Wright is something to be eternally recognized. Since 1964, when Fallingwater first opened to the public, Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands has been a destination for those seeking to tour his remarkable work. Since that time, three Wright designed homes have become a part of the magnificent landscape of our region. We anticipate continued growth in visitation and certainly extend a warm welcome to those UNESCO travelers who now have one more remarkable property to check off their World Heritage list.”

Save the Date: LHVB Annual Dinner | October 8, 2019

Laurelhills News

Executive Director’s Message

All General News

Marketing News

Group Tour News

Public Relations News

New LHVB Partners
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Empty nester: chapter 2. As my only child heads back for her sophomore year of college, I once again find myself reflecting on the changes and cycles in life. Trying to cram as much into a short eight-week summer break that included a full-time summer job for Hannah was challenging. I ask myself “Did we do enough together? Did we make some good, fun memories as a family unit? Is this our last summer before career internships become a must?”

I understand completely about those last-minute reservations that are so prevalent in our industry. Those spur of the moment, impulse travel decisions aren’t unique to the Laurel Highlands. This “trend” continually pops up in my feeds. But honestly, it is the new normal. For our partners, I understand the frustration that can bring. Forecasting, staffing, and purchasing supplies all revolve on knowing when visitors are coming. Yes, they ARE coming; just the window of booking is so much shorter. We adjust as best we can and add that element of patience to our vocabulary.

We must always remember our visitors have choices. We have the full menu of exactly what they need and want for autumn in the region. Spectacular fall foliage, festivals, farm markets, events, cozy cabins and vacation rentals, stargazing, and the launch of our new Laurel Highlands Pour Tour. A simple smile or a kind word goes a long way when someone is waiting on the phone to chat or in a long line for curly fries at a festival.

When time is limited, our job is to fill it with memories - good memories. Those moments trigger return visits, Instagram photos, social media posts, and the infamous word-of-mouth advertising we all covet. As the daylight hours dwindle, let us turn over our fall leaves to a season robust with a warm Laurel Highlands welcome!

MARKETING NEWS

Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing and Project Management

Summer Wrap-Up!

As we say goodbye to summer and welcome fall, let us share with you some of the highlights of the LHVB’s marketing efforts and campaigns aimed at driving visitors into our region. Year three of the marketing plan put in place by Red House Communications in 2017 comes with an expansion of our media mix in target markets.

The LHVB’s continual initiatives ran throughout the summer, including TV commercials on Comcast cable stations, billboards, select print placements, plus an expansive digital footprint. Our digital initiatives spanned social media, native advertising, banner ads and retargeting, video pre-roll, search engine marketing, podcasts, internet radio and streaming ads on Hulu. These placements successfully drove traffic to the LHVB website, where guests find the ultimate stockpile of travel information for the Laurel Highlands, including booking rates and availability, a robust events calendar, coupons, and a wealth of information on things to experience.

In addition to our traditional campaigns, the LHVB ran a targeted campaign in downtown Washington, D.C., throughout June and July with the theme of #BestWeekendEver. This targeted campaign was focused on residents in the D.C. metro area and used outdoor recreation opportunities as the focal point to entice a Laurel Highlands escape. The #BestWeekendEver campaign included metro rail bus wraps, poster panels on rail car interiors, five billboards from Breezewood to Somerset on I-76, print features in publications such as USA Today Travel Edition and Northern Virginia Magazine and six radio stations in and around the D.C. area. This campaign targeted millions of people in the mid-Atlantic, and resulted in an average of 100% increase in web traffic from Maryland, Virginia, and the D.C. market.

Look for a continuation of the #BestWeekendEver campaign messaging as we launch fall and winter initiatives!

Explore the New Laurel Highlands Pour Tour

From moonshine, rye whiskey, and IPAs to cider, mead, and fruit wines, get a taste for southwestern Pennsylvania on the new Laurel Highlands Pour Tour!

Developed by the LHVB in partnership with the region’s craft beverage leaders, the new trail showcases the region’s rich heritage, agricultural diversity and entrepreneurial spirit. The Laurel Highlands Pour Tour is an inclusive effort to collectively promote the region’s craft beverage industry including wineries, breweries, distilleries, meaderies, and cideries.

“The lore and legacy of distilled spirits and craft beverages run deep in the Laurel Highlands,” said Ann Nemanic, Executive Director of the LHVB. “Today’s industry has blossomed from those deep-seated roots, providing visitors with authentic experiences and tastes they won’t find in any other region. Our Laurel Highlands Pour Tour weaves together history, exceptional landscape, and entrepreneurship into a trail of flavorful destinations.”

Pour Tour passports can be ordered online, by calling 724.238.5661, or picked up at the LHVB’s administrative offices, visitor information centers, 84 brochure racks, and participating locations.

As an incentivized visitation program, participants will receive a passport to start a journey along the trail. After visiting a participating site and purchasing a beverage, the visitor will receive a sticker to place in their passport. Prizes will be awarded by a tiered system, each requiring a certain amount of stickers. Participants who complete the entire trail will also be entered into a chance to win a grand prize beverage-themed Laurel Highlands getaway valued at $1,000.

Once complete, passports can be verified by visiting or mailing to LHVB offices in Ligonier. Passports will be returned to participants.

For more information on the Laurel Highlands Pour Tour, visit lpourtour.com. Participants are encouraged to use #LHPourTour on their social media posts while exploring the Laurel Highlands Pour Tour.
MARKETING NEWS

Jared Bundy, Director of Digital Marketing

Social Media Audience
(as of July 22, 2019)

- **63,000+** Likes
- **12,500+** Followers
- **7,200+** Followers
- **250,000+** Monthly Video Views
- **40,000+** Monthly Viewers

Top Organic Keywords
Laurel Highlands, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Ohiopyle State Park, Ohiopyle, Steelers Training Camp, Ohio Pyle, Laurel Highlands Trail, Ohiopyle PA, Pittsburgh Steelers Training Camp, Laurel Highlands Trail Map, Laurel Highlands Photo Contest, Steelers Training Camp 2019, Frank Lloyd Wright

Top Summer Pages
(April 22-July 22, 2019) pageviews

- Ohiopyle 27,673
- Homepage 18,675
- Events 13,658
- Arts & Culture 11,882
- Family Fun 11,383
- Things to Do 8,616
- Steelers Training Camp 6,694
- Destination Guide 6,162
- Outdoors 6,061
- Cabins & Campgrounds 6,037

Top Posts:

- **28 Can’t Miss Festivals in the Laurel Highlands in 2019**
  - Pageviews 97
  - Clicks 94

- **4th of July Celebrations in the Laurel Highlands**
  - Pageviews 97
  - Clicks 92

- **Independence Day Celebration at Seven Springs Mountain Resort**
  - Pageviews 97
  - Clicks 88

Top Performing Content: Use #LaurelHighlands when you post

Podcast: Subscribe to Laurel Highlands Happenings, our monthly podcast hosted by LHVB’s own Louise Bates that showcases partners, events, and our region with a different theme each episode. Subscribe on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

Top Blogs: Guides and Tours were the top performing blog posts during these three months. The “28 Can’t Miss Festivals of 2019” blog had the most pageviews, followed by “4th of July Celebrations in the Laurel Highlands,” “A Guide to Visiting Fallingwater,” and our “Steelers Training Camp Guide.”

Top Facebook Posts:

- This post announcing the opening of Mäntylä at Polymath Park reached 15,000 people, generating 1,300 clicks.
- This link to the new Westmoreland County-Opoly Game reached 12,000 people and was shared 31 times!

Top Instagram Post:

This stunning overlook of Ohiopyle was liked 718 times!
MARKETING NEWS
Jared Bundy, Director of Digital Marketing

Get Your Tickets: Marketing Summit 2019
Join LHVB partners to learn the latest trends in digital marketing from industry professionals and leaders in digital marketing. The 9th Annual Marketing Summit will be held Friday, Nov. 8, from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College.

Speakers include an Emmy award-winning journalist, influencers, and marketing professionals from RedShift, 1st Team Advertising, Soup’s Marketing, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and MeaningfulLife, LLC.
Tickets: laurelhighlands.org/summit

New Pages: Filming Locations and Speakers Bureau
Fresh off the success of our weddings and meetings pages, we’ve developed two more resources for new markets.
Our film page hopes to showcase the Laurel Highlands as an ideal place for location scouts and directors to use when they shoot their next film or show. It highlights a number of locations and local experts: laurelhighlands.org/about-us/film

The speakers bureau page makes it easy to request a Laurel Highlands staff member to speak at your next event or conference. Simply fill out the form and request one of our experts: laurelhighlands.org/about-us/speakers-bureau

PUBLIC RELATIONS NEWS
Anna Weltz, Director of Public Relations and Community Outreach

Recent and Upcoming Press Visits
- Lindsay Sutton, Trinity Media Group, United Kingdom, Daily Mail
- Jeremy Jones, Discover the Burgh
- Karyn Locke, Sand and Snow
- Amy Brecount-White, Bethesda and Arlington magazines
- Jim Cheney, Uncovering PA
- Bob Batz, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
- Amanda Emmerling, Toddling Traveler

Top Media Opportunities
- “Satisfy your food, beverage or cultural craving on a Mid-Atlantic trail,” Washington Post, print and online; Subsequent pick-up in nine publications throughout the country
  - Fred Rogers Trail: Latrobe, Idlewild & SoakZone, Valley Dairy Restaurant
- “Beyond Your Backyard: Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands,” PBS, online, and distributed to PBS stations
- “Pennsylvania plans day of kind acts to honor Mister Rogers,” Associated Press, distributed to 435 outlets; includes content from Laurel Highlands stops on Fred Rogers Trail
- “Six Western Pennsylvania Road Trips,” Ohio Magazine
- “Whiskey Makes Comeback at West Overton Village,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Frederick, MD Media Exchange
In mid-July, the LHVB and Seven Springs Mountain Resort co-hosted a group of bloggers from Frederick, Maryland. Known by their local DMO, the Fans of Frederick enjoyed a fun-filled weekend exploring a sampling of what the Laurel Highlands has to offer. Experiences included adventure and relaxation at Seven Springs, exploring downtown Ligonier and Fort Ligonier, hiking at Laurel Summit State Park, dinner at the new Oak Lodge Café, and touring Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater.

Laurel Highlands in the Spotlight
A summary of press and media projects initiated or coordinated by the LHVB.
Circulation, digital impressions, and publicity value figures provided by Cision media monitoring service.

- 531 STORIES
- More than $1.7 million in added value
- More than 770 million in digital reach
- More than 4.6 million in print circulation

April 1-June 30, 2019
Group Travel is Bright in the Laurel Highlands!
Our summer momentum continues into the fall! Successes include a second public tour, high-level interest in multi-day and day tours to the region, return on follow-ups from summer travel shows, a two-page feature in Group Tour Magazine’s June edition, and a successful return to Travel Alliance Partners TAP Dance, where we were featured in their Dream Destinations publication. Our region is buzzing with opportunity and group travel experiences and we are ready to continue sharing our beautiful backyard. Stay tuned for announcements on 2020 opportunities, including group co-op marketing opportunities, Heartland Travel Showcase details, FAM planning, education sessions, and more!

Tour and Travel Shows: Group Leader Shows
AAA East Central Travel Show | Pittsburgh, PA | August 20-21, 2019
Great Day! Tours Travel Show | Independence, OH | September 19-20, 2019
Spotlight Mid-Atlantic with MARS | Gaithersburg, MD | October 31 - November 2, 2019

Laurel Highlands Scenic Tours Continue to Please!
Over the past six months, our tourism marketing efforts have expanded into specialized projects that highlight unique travel experiences in the Laurel Highlands. Among these efforts are our Laurel Highlands Scenic Tours. There is a first-time for everything and in this case, two public tours invite the public to board a motorcoach and take the scenic route to explore a custom-designed day in the Laurel Highlands featuring wellness and agricultural highlights. As previously shared, our May 19 Wellness Tour was a huge success. To round out the year, we welcomed another sold-out crowd on August 24 for Rustic Retreat: Farm-to-Table Tour that made stops at Scenic View at Laurel Hill State Park, Moo Echo Dairy, Somerset Historical Center, Brantview Farms Maple, and Faranda Farms. We look forward to expanding these opportunities in 2020 with fresh concepts!

Destination: Greater Pittsburgh FAM Connects Operators with the Laurel Highlands!
The LHVB hosted five tour operators from Pennsylvania, Ontario, and Indiana, July 31-August 1. Our visit featured two days of touring exploring 12 sites on a busy familiarization tour. A sincere thanks to all partnering sites for your outstanding hospitality and dedication to the group travel market. Please stay tuned for domestic and international FAM opportunities in 2020!

SAVE THE DATES: End of Year Opportunities You Won’t Want to Miss
Contact Stacey at smagda@laurelhighlands.org for more information.
Meet the Planners: Fall Harrisburg Luncheon | November 14 | Harvest Grille and Wine Bar, 2625 Brindle Drive, Harrisburg, PA
This opportunity includes an afternoon of networking with meeting planners. Cost is $50 per partner and includes informational table, networking opportunity, and lunch. Participating partners are encouraged to bring a giveaway item for raffle.
Growing Groups: A Group Travel Education Session | November 21 | Aaron’s Building, 139 N. Pittsburgh Street, Connellsville, PA
Let’s dig into group travel. Together we will discuss and discover the best way to tap into more group bookings by developing your group travel product, how to reach more groups, to learn best practices, and more. Session to feature: discussion panel, unique breakout sessions, and lunch!

2019 GROUP TRAVEL IN REVIEW: SECOND QUARTER TRACKING

- 2,038 hotel rooms booked
- $252,712 in hotel revenue booked
- 949 bus groups
- 12,203 senior and adult visitors
- 23,117 student visitors
### WELCOME, NEW LHVB MARKETING PARTNERS!

**Louise Bates, Director of Partnership Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Aaron’s Building</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fayette County Skylights Festival</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kim Robson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kris Schemm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>139 N. Pittsburgh St.</td>
<td>Fayette County Fairgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connellsville, PA 15425</td>
<td>132 Pechin Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(724) 628-8968</td>
<td>Dunbar, PA 15431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aaronsbuilding.com</td>
<td>(412) 414-0492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fayettecountyskylights.com</td>
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</tbody>
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This beautifully-restored building in downtown Connellsville offers the perfect location for a wedding or special event.

This fall, enjoy a new and unique festival in our region! Fayette County Skylights Festival — September 7 at the Fayette County Fairgrounds. Live music, food trucks, family fun activities, and launch of lanterns at dusk!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>All Saints Craft Brewing Company</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hampton Inn &amp; Suites New Stanton</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jeff Guidos</strong></td>
<td><strong>Heather Bianchi</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1602 US Route 119</td>
<td>120 North Rachel Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greensburg, PA 15601</td>
<td>New Stanton, PA 15672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(724) 289-1202</td>
<td>(724) 755-4260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allsaintscraftbrewing.com</td>
<td>hamptoninn3.hilton.com/en/hotels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Located in Greensburg, All Saints offers a great selection of craft beers alongside seasonal specialties. Enjoy food trucks and live music during the weekends.

Hampton Inn & Suites New Stanton opened their doors this July. The beautiful new hotel is perfectly located for exploration of the Laurel Highlands! Free Wi-Fi and breakfast are included in the stay.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Crooked Creek Distillery</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hansley’s Pub &amp; Grille</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meredith Baldock &amp; Dave Baustert</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jennifer Graham</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 S. Water Street</td>
<td>1867 Route 30 West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Newton, PA 15089</td>
<td>Ligonier, PA 15658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(724) 633-2043</td>
<td>(724) 441-4179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crookedcreekdistillery.com</td>
<td>hansleyspub.com</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crooked Creek Distillery overlooks the Youghiogheny River and is very close to the GAP trailhead. Stop by and sample their crafted moonshine, vodka, and gin!

Hansley’s Pub & Grille is back, serving delicious pub grub, alongside your favorite beverage. Enjoy the outdoor deck during the warmer months.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Downtown Greensburg Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hummingbird Guest Nest II</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jessica Hickey</strong></td>
<td><strong>Charles Smithburger</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greensburg, PA 15601</td>
<td>105 Blaine Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(724) 787-1566</td>
<td>Ohiopyle, PA 15470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>downtowngreensburgpa.us</td>
<td>(724) 329-5301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From events, places to visit, and things to do, as well the history and culture of the city, the Downtown Greensburg Project promotes all things Greensburg.

Perfectly located in Ohiopyle, Hummingbird Guest Nest II sleeps up to 12 guests. Enjoy the evenings relaxing on the porch or toasting s’mores by the fire pit. Close to many Laurel Highlands attractions.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Fairfield Inn &amp; Suites by Marriott Somerset</strong></th>
<th><strong>Johnson’s Log Home &amp; Timber Frame Show at Seven Springs Mountain Resort</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tom Lear</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eric Johnson</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117 Tollgate Road</td>
<td>518-618-1195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset, PA 15501</td>
<td>loghomeshows.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(814) 701-2829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriott.com/hotels/travel/ibess-fairfield-inn-and-suites-somerset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opened in 2018, the Fairfield Inn & Suites is the newest hotel at the turnpike intersection at Somerset, offering comfort, exceptional service, free Wi-Fi, and free breakfast to guests.

Johnson’s Log Home & Timber Frame Show returns to Seven Springs Mountain Resort, November 15-17. Explore more about log homes, enjoy demonstrations, attend seminars, and learn more about building your very own log home!
WELCOME, NEW LHVB MARKETING PARTNERS!

Louise Bates, Director of Partnership Development

King's Family Restaurant – Somerset
Alisha Merico
1180 North Center Avenue
Somerset, PA 15501
(814) 445-5311
kingsfamily.com

Stop by King’s Family Restaurant for some good wholesome food! Offering such classics as meatloaf, freshly-made burgers, and turkey dinners.

RV Leaders
Tricia DeLisle
555 Edna Road
Adamsburg, PA 15611
(724) 523-0405
rvleaders.com

Coming soon! RV Leaders located in Adamsburg, will be offering a fantastic selection of campers and trailers to purchase.

Lost Bear Cabin
Keith Sacchini
756 Kuhntown Road
Somerset, PA 15501
lostbearcabin.com

This outstanding luxury vacation rental is just waiting for you to experience. It sleeps up to 13 with six bedrooms, five bathrooms, a rec room, and more.

Sundance Vacation Rental
Jeannine Scigliano
165 Fern Mountain Road
Somerset, PA 15501
(305) 394-2295

This stunning vacation home is located close to Seven Springs Mountain Resort and sleeps up to 16. The spacious house features six bedrooms, four bathrooms, and a large outdoor seating area.

North Belle Vernon Community Bank Park
Leanna Book
720 Graham Street
North Belle Vernon, PA 15012
(724) 929-6930
nbvpark.com

North Belle Vernon Community Bank Park offers the community multiple sporting venues for youth and adults alike, events throughout the year.

Sweetlane Chocolate Shop
Eric & Wanda Mikula
113 Grant Avenue
Vandergrift, PA 15690
(724) 568-2961
sweetlanechocolate.com

Step back in time to the 50s and embrace hand-dipped chocolates, ice cream sundaes, and milkshakes, all served from the original shop’s soda fountain shop!

Painting with a Twist
Judy Ridilla
1020-1 Towne Square Drive
Greensburg, PA 15601
(724) 221-6527
paintingwithatwist.com/Greensburg

A great place to have some fun with a few pals! Sign up for a class or book a painting party. Painting supplies and canvas included, just bring a bottle to sip while you paint.

Tattiebogle Ciderworks
Curt Henry
175 Ankleay Hill Road
Acme, PA 15610
(724) 424-2437
tattiebogleciderworks.com

Tattiebogle Ciderworks hopes to open their doors this fall! Located in Acme, Tattiebogle will be serving craft cider using only the finest juice from no-spray heirloom trees and select Pennsylvania orchards.

Pleasant Valley Golf Club
Kim Robson
440 Pleasant Valley Road
Connellsville, PA 15425
(724) 628-6360
pleasantvalleygolf.com

Now open to the public, Pleasant Valley Golf Club offers an 18-hole golf course to enjoy plus a bar and restaurant with a banquet hall.

The Line Boutique
Robyn Tedesco
207 3rd Street
Irwin, PA 15642
(724) 515-2392
thelineboutique.com

The Line Boutique offers a fabulous selection of contemporary, stylish clothes, accessories, and beauty products for the modern woman. Discover their unique boutique in downtown Irwin!
Headlines is published quarterly. Please contact LHVB’s Director of Public Relations, Anna Weltz, with questions or comments at aweltz@laurelhighlands.org.
120 East Main Street, Ligonier, PA 15658 | RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED