



VIEWS & VISIONS

A publication of Bowles Rice LLP

Summer 2019



The American Spirit Lives Here

Jeff Kotula, President
Washington County Chamber of Commerce
Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency

Jeff M. Kotula serves as President of the 1,100-member Washington County Chamber of Commerce, the largest in the county and the second largest chamber in Southwestern Pennsylvania. In this capacity, he serves as both the chamber President and as Director of Economic Development for Washington County through a public/private partnership with the Washington County Board of Commissioners. To further coordinate economic development efforts among the organizations, Kotula also serves as President of the Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency, which partnered with the chamber in 2013.

In Washington County, located in the heart of Southwestern Pennsylvania, the spirit of America is alive and well! It was celebrated recently with the kickoff to the 2019 tourism season during National Travel & Tourism Week from May 5 through 11.

In conjunction, the Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency (WCTPA) debuted a new marketing campaign for Washington County titled ***The American Spirit Lives Here.*** The focus of the initiative is to combine the many components of the county's local tourism industry together and provide an overarching message that illustrates a complete focus of the county's broad appeal.

At the launch event, we debuted our new slogan and commercial while highlighting the importance of authenticity in the advertising campaign. Washington County has a great story to tell as the home of some of the country's finest historical, entertainment and cultural attractions. The launch presentation outlined our continued partnerships with local tourism assets, such as the



The Whiskey Rebellion Festival, a history unique to Washington County, features period reenactments, exhibitions and demonstrations and heritage music, food and frontier art.



Washington County Heritage Alliance, the Montour Trail Council, PONY Baseball & Softball, as well as attractions like The Meadows Casino Racetrack Hotel, Tanger Outlets, the Washington Wild Things and our county's two agricultural fairs.

We want to ensure ***The American Spirit Lives Here*** campaign tells *our* story and authentically captures the essence of what it means to visit Washington County. Our goal is to leave folks with a positive sense of the many diverse opportunities our county holds. Highlighting this diversity has been an ongoing priority of the WCTPA and this new initiative strives to take those efforts to new heights.

The importance of authenticity was a familiar refrain during the launch event, and Chase McClain, WCTPA Director of Marketing, provided some insight on the development of this campaign and on identifying local student Temperance Scott as the new voice of Washington County. "The narrative of Washington County is one of historical significance, modern ingenuity and collective community celebration, and who better to tell that story than one of our own young residents," McClain said.

In addition to our tourism partners, a number of local business and political leaders also attended the kick-off to our tourism season and announcement of the ***The American Spirit Lives Here*** marketing campaign, including the Washington County Board of Commissioners.

Board Chairman Larry Maggi offered his comments on the campaign and the overall



Image 1: The National Road Festival takes place on a 300-mile stretch of Route 40 where an authentic wagon train travels from Somerset to Washington County.



Image 2: The Washington Wild Things is a professional baseball team based in Washington, PA. **Image 3:** The Montour Trail, the nation's longest suburban rail-trail, runs 60-plus miles on a railbed that served the region's coal mining industry.



The American Spirit Lives Here truly symbolizes the wide-ranging appeal of our varied tourism assets. However, in a more literal sense, it also embodies both our heritage and our future.

The Whiskey Rebellion was born in Washington County and the uprising marked a turning point in American history. We remember these whiskey rebels each year during the Whiskey Rebellion Festival, held annually over the second week of July. If you like whiskey – and let's face it, who doesn't? – the Whiskey Rebellion Festival is a great chance to learn about an important time in the formation of our federal government and, as a bonus, sample some great whiskey. While you are here, take a trip around the county to visit some of our highly regarded craft distilleries, wineries and micro-breweries.

As you can see, Washington County embraces our unparalleled diversity of tourism options and truly has something for everyone, whether you enjoy gaming at the casino; biking, kayaking and other outdoor pursuits; shopping at the outlets or our many specialty shops; or spending a weekend experiencing the heritage sites. Washington County's attractions stretch, quite literally, from the dawn of humanity 19,000 years ago at the Meadowcroft Rockshelter & Historic Village to the birth of our nation and the Whiskey Rebellion, all the way to the industrial revolution in the Mon Valley and the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum – Washington County has it all! ▾

importance of tourism to the Washington County economy. Chairman Maggi expressed his excitement, saying "I am eager for everyone to get a chance to see this new marketing campaign. This is a perfect fit for Washington County because the American spirit truly does live here." He also touched on the economic impact of the tourism industry and how important it is for the Washington County economy. "According to our most recently available data, tourism accounted for over \$700 million in direct visitor spending and supports more than 6,000 jobs in the county," said Maggi.

For a calendar of upcoming events and to view the new **The American Spirit Lives Here** commercial, visit: www.VisitWashingtonCountyPA.com.