



**For Immediate Release:**

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## FULTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU LOOKS TO PROMOTE FULTON COUNTY

**January 26th 2017 (WAUSEON, OH)** “We have so much to offer guests right here in Fulton County,” states Jeanette Smith, President of the newly created Fulton County Visitor Board (FCVB). “The FCVB’s goal is to help people realize why they should visit Fulton County! From agri-tourism activities, history museums and town festivals to a state park, unique dining, campgrounds and hotels...Fulton County has so much to offer!” As the Sales and Marketing Director for Sauder Village, Smith knows firsthand that tourism is alive and well in Fulton County.

“Sauder Village is Ohio’s largest living-history destination, and each year, we welcome over 300,000 guests to the Sauder Village complex. “People from across the country and around the world are visiting Sauder Village and other destinations in our county and there’s great opportunity to welcome even more!”

Larry Burkholder, Fulton County Fair Board Member, shares similar thoughts about tourism in Fulton County. “In 2016, the Fulton County Fair was blessed with decent weather and record attendance with more than 294,771 people attending the Fair last year.” Burkholder notes that the Fairgrounds is utilized during nearly all of the summer months with events such as the State Line Gem and Mineral Show, Black Swamp Benefit Bazaar, Maumee Valley Tractor Pulls, National Threshers Annual Reunion, Crosley Automobile Club National Meet, Antique Motorcycle Club of America Show and Race, Midwest Geobash—Geocaching and much more! “All of the Fairgrounds events bring many out of town guests for overnight stays at the Holiday Inn Express,” states Miki Moon, General Manager of Holiday Inn Express and FCVB Board Member.

The FCVB was established by the Fulton County Commissioners in accordance with Ohio Revised Code. Funding for the organization stems from a 3% bed tax issued on lodging facilities throughout Fulton County. “With the construction of the Shared Services Complex, which includes a Welcome Center and a new space for the Fulton County Historical Society Museum, we saw an opportunity to formulate a Visitors Bureau to help promote Fulton County in a manner that hasn’t been possible in the past,” states Commissioner Bill Rufenacht. The Commissioners have appointed board members for the charter organization that include President Jeanette Smith (Sauder Village), Vice President Neil Toeppe (Swanton Chamber of Commerce), Secretary Miki Moon (Holiday Inn Express), Treasurer Lisa Walters (Winchesters Restaurant & Saloon), Rick Kazmierczak, (Swanecreek Township Trustee), Larry Burkholder (Fulton County Fair Board), Steve Van Sickle (Sauder Village/Heritage Inn) Bill Drummer (Wauseon Chamber) and Ad-Hoc members Toni Schindler (Fulton County Commissioners), and Matt Gilroy (Fulton County Economic Development).



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The mission of the FCVB is simple; to market our destinations to residents and visitors; thereby encouraging utilization of accommodations, retail outlets, restaurants, heritage sites, museums, entertainment and recreation venues for the community's economic benefit. The board has been diligently working on collecting lodging, attractions, events, and restaurant information to be used in tools such as webpages and brochures. They have recently launched a FCVB Webpage that features "Stay," "Eat," and "Play," at [www.fultoncountyoh.com/visitorsbureau](http://www.fultoncountyoh.com/visitorsbureau).

"For years, I've had guests ask me for information on other events going on throughout the county," states Steve Van Sickle, General Manager, Sauder Heritage Inn. "Historically there has never been a place where all of the information was gathered. I'm thrilled that we now have a county-wide events listing and a brochure that I can hand them. I am hoping it will help our guests stay that one extra day, or book again in the future as they enjoy exploring other parts of the county."

Featured on the Fulton County Website, the FCVB page offers information on area attractions, lodging and restaurant options, as well as an events calendar. The public is able to sign up to receive upcoming event notifications via email and/or text through the Notify Me system on the website. Additionally, the FCVB has been included in on Fulton County's new App in which one can simply click the icon and have quick access to the same information. The FCVB has also prepared a brochure that provides a high level view of lodging, restaurants and attractions that is available at various locations throughout Fulton County.

What's next for the FCVB? Smith states that goals for 2017 include the potential hiring of a paid staff person, strategic regional advertising promoting overnight stays in the county and aligning marketing efforts with that of the Fulton County Economic Development Corporation. The FCVB is scheduled to move into their new location at the Shared Services Complex upon completion of the project in late 2017. "Fulton County is truly a great place to live, work and visit. There are so many great attractions in Fulton County that we haven't mentioned, so make sure you download the Fulton County App, and visit the website frequently," Smith added. The website is available at [www.fultoncountyoh.com/visitorsbureau](http://www.fultoncountyoh.com/visitorsbureau). The App is available at no charge in the iTunes and Google Play Stores under Fulton County, OH. For more information, contact the Fulton County Commissioners office at 419-337-9255 or email [Jeanette.smith@saudivillage.org](mailto:Jeanette.smith@saudivillage.org).

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