

First City News

Downtown Connellsville

Downtown Connellsville is an initiative of the Fayette County Cultural Trust

www.DowntownConnellsville.org

Spring 2021

Downtown Funding Available

Downtown Connellsville is grateful for the donations we receive from businesses and private individuals. Those donations are put back into our designated downtown district.



The Fayette County Cultural Trust, through the Downtown Connellsville reimbursement program, is offering up to \$100 in CORONAVIRUS prevention supplies to businesses that are located in the designated Downtown Connellsville area. If your business would like to get a refund of up to \$100, please mail a copy of your receipts to the Fayette County Cultural Trust, 139 West Crawford Avenue, Connellsville, PA 15425. Please include your business name, phone number and email address. Refunds are on a first come, first served basis. Receipts must be from 2021.

Downtown Connellsville will match up to \$250 in new downtown business signs. The sign must be located on the business and be approved by the city's Health and Code Enforcement Officer.

Downtown Connellsville will match up to \$1000 in facade work. This may include new lighting, paint, windows or door.



The Fayette County Cultural Trust's Downtown Connellsville Initiative recently received a 2020 Townie Award for a mural project located at 400 West Crawford Avenue.

Presented by the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, the project was honored in the Public Space Improvement category with the "Connellsville Public Art - Leading the Way" Award.

The Fayette County Cultural Trust is a nonprofit organization with a mission to enrich our area's quality of life by promoting its cultural, artistic, historic and natural assets; as well as creating partnerships to revitalize communities and further economic development.

As the only statewide nonprofit dedicated solely to revitalizing the Commonwealth's core communities, the Pennsylvania Downtown Center provides outreach, technical assistance and educational services.

The Townie-winning murals are located on the former Italian Social Club. The project was funded in partnership through the Fayette County Cultural Trust, the Allegheny Foundation, and the late Michael Prestia's estate.

Pittsburgh Artist Jeremy Raymer completed the murals in 2019, transforming the previously blank building into a colorful tribute to Connellsville's storied past.





New Laurel Highlands Visitors Center Opens in Connellsville on April 17th.

The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau in conjunction with Fayette County and the city will be opening a new visitors center to be located at Yough River Park in the building that once housed a snack bar. Ann Nemanic, Executive Director of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau is looking for “Connellsville Ambassadors” who will be available to greet visitors as they come through Connellsville. This job will pay \$11 per hour. The visitors center will be open starting on weekends, then as the year progresses, July & August it will be open 7 days a week. The center will close for the year on October 31. If interested in applying please email Ann Nemanic at anemanic@golaurelhighlands.com with your resume. They are seeking 3 - 5 individuals who can be flexible with dates and times.



Businesses: The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau is offering FREE space for businesses that have rack cards. This space is limited to professionally made rack cards and they are seeking at least 100 to start. The Downtown Connellsville initiative has made two rack cards to be placed at the visitors center. One lists Connellsville restaurants and another lists all the overnight lodging facilities located in the city.



The City of Connellsville has formulated a proposal to create a City of Connellsville diversity and inclusion board. This board will help to ensure that everyone is welcomed within its borders, and that the City will educate, protect and preserve the rights, freedoms, safety, and security of all its residents and visitors; and, the City Council of the City of Connellsville desires to create an advisory body that is charged by the City Council to promote diversity and inclusion for all its residents, including, without limitation, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and national origin.

The scope of the Connellsville Diversity and Inclusion Board will consist of the three tenets and functions of (1) Education and Promotion, (2) Ambassadorship, and (3) Provision of Feedback to the City Council.

The Connellsville Diversity and Inclusion Board shall be comprised of seven (7) persons, which number shall include the Mayor (or the Mayor's designee), during such Mayor's term of office, and such other persons who shall be appointed by the City Council, including at least one representative of the Connellsville Police Department. Members of the board, except the Mayor (or the Mayor's designee), shall serve terms of three (3) years; provided, however, that the initial board members shall be appointed as follows: two (2) initial board members shall be appointed for a term of one (1) year, two (2) initial board members shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years, and two (2) initial board members shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years. City officials and employees shall not be disqualified from appointment to the Board, unless disqualified or incompatible under applicable law.



Ann Nemanic
Executive Director
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau



www.GoLaurelHighlands.com

Did you know that the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau is Fayette County's designated tourism promotion agency? The Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau works to enhance the economic growth and quality of life for the area by serving its community as a collaborative leader in the promotion and development of the region as a preferred destination. The LHVB grant program is to increase visitation, enhance the visitor experience, and increase overnight stays in Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland counties. A percentage of each county's room tax is allocated to a grant program specifically established to support the county's tourism assets. If you are interested in finding out more about the grants please contact Georgia Robinsky, Grant Administrator, at grobinsky@golaurelhighlands.com or 724-238-5661 ext. 115.



What makes an Ambassador to the Laurel Highlands?

A few years ago the Fayette County Cultural Trust started the Laurel Highlands Ambassador's program. We pledged to do my best to make a tourist feel good about visiting the Laurel Highlands and putting a sense of pride in our area that would even make a Debbie Downer smile.

A positive visitor experience is critical to increase the number of visitors to our city, how much they spend and, most importantly, their desire to come back. The Laurel Highlands Ambassador Program was developed to foster a destination-wide culture of quality service, knowledge of history, nature and welcoming citizens.

Due to COVID we had to suspend our program at the Connellsville Canteen, but we hope to be back up and running in the coming year.

Our goal is to put tourists at ease, make them smile and solve a problem if we can. Hotel and lodging staff get paid to be helpful and friendly to tourists. And tourists expect that. The Fayette County Cultural Trust does it for the love of tourism. The Laurel Highlands Ambassador Program is planning to expand our Ambassador program to include food-service workers, shop owners and anyone that may come in contact with tourists to our area. Everybody wins when the tourist has a good experience!

A great ambassador is one who is very passionate about what they are selling. You have to be down to earth, honest with those you are talking to, be able to converse in conversation with a diverse group of people, and have a passion for helping others to find the best experiences in the Laurel Highlands.

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Downtown Connellsville Welcomes New Downtown Liaison

Connellsville, PA, Feb. 1, 2021 – Starting on February 1st, Sharon A. Joseph will serve as the Downtown Connellsville Liaison for the Fayette County Cultural Trust. Sharon will be available to help Downtown Connellsville business owners optimize their growth potential and marketing opportunities through social media and search engines. She will be available to connect people to job opportunities in the designated downtown area and help to market the available storefronts.



This is a great opportunity for those downtown businesses to be able to get some help navigating through advertising opportunities, maximizing the internet, and creating partnerships to help businesses succeed.

The Fayette County Cultural Trust is grateful to the Neighborhood Partnership Program for providing this opportunity for business owners. Sharon, who now resides in Connellsville, will be using her extensive Wall Street business management background, coaching and consulting experience, to help businesses grow their bottom line, and implement pre-determined strategies to develop and connect the Downtown Connellsville geographic area to the greater Laurel Highlands tourism family.