



▶ *Muscle*
The Chamber
Division



▶ *Vision*
The Economic Development
Division



▶ *Flavor*
The Tourism
Division



▶ *Spirit*
The Downtown Development
Division

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Special Tourism Edition

Alliance All Access

*Cultivating a Positive Climate
for
Hardin County Prosperity*



The "Go-To"
Organization

Targeting Group Travel

The Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance and The Inn at Ohio Northern University recently joined more than 200 representatives from museums, attractions, hotels, and visitors bureaus from throughout the Midwest at Heartland Travel Showcase in Toledo, Ohio. Heartland Travel Showcase is the Midwest's largest motor coach marketplace and features the region's top destinations and attractions for group tours.

Joining forces with other states and provinces attracts more tour operators and offers selling opportunities difficult to develop without a collective effort. States and provinces represented at this year's marketplace at the SeaGate Convention Centre included Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Ontario, Canada.

Tourism representatives met one-on-one with tour operators who book packaged travel. The tour operators are looking for itinerary ideas that they can incorporate into future motorcoach tours they offer to their clients.

According to a recent study by the American Bus Association, groups traveling by bus spent \$13.6 billion

in 2012, and another study says that number is likely to grow. Ninety-two percent of tour operators reported having more customers in 2013, said U.S. Tour Operators Association in a study released in December. When a motorcoach rolls into town, it generates revenue for restaurants, hotels, museums, attractions, shops, and more. A recent study by *Group Tour Magazine* says one motorcoach generates at least 23 hotel rooms booked, 46 tickets sold, and 46 meals served.

The Alliance hopes to attract more groups to Hardin County promoting local business.

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Alliance Prepares New 5-Year Strategic Plan

The Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance is preparing a new five-year strategic plan for years 2015 - 2019. Over the next several months, leading up to 2015, the Alliance is taking proactive measures to prepare for new growth, jobs and investment opportunities to advance Hardin County's economy. In preparation, we are developing a strategic roadmap and a set of business priorities to cultivate, promote and advocate for a prosperous business and agriculture climate, to strengthen the local economy and to improve the quality of life, making Hardin County a great place to live, work and prosper!

On April 11, 2014, the Alliance Strategic Planning Committee kicked-off the first meeting to refine the organizations vision, mission and core values and

developed a set of goals and objectives for the five-year period. We had over 40 members in attendance, which included Alliance members, board leadership and staff, as well as business leaders representing diverse industries and communities throughout Hardin County.

We look forward to having you review the strategic plan and seek your input. It's important that diverse voices are heard during the planning process, as your participation and leadership is vital for the long-term success in building a model community in Northwest, Ohio.

This summer we plan to host an Alliance Membership Summit to seek your input in building a successful strategic plan. We also plan to distribute an online membership survey to obtain



Jacqueline Fitzgerald
Director

important feedback regarding the Alliance organization and community needs. We will share more details on both as they become available.

If you would like to become more involved in this process, we need your help. Please contact Jacqueline Fitzgerald at 419-673-4131 for further details.



Think Fresh - Think Local

Think Farmers Market

Ada Farmers Market, opened on May 1 and will be held every Thursday in the Community Health Professional's Parking lot from 4pm-7pm. Contact Deb Curlis at 419-634-7443 for more information.

Hardin Memorial Hospital will host a Farmers Market on Saturdays and Wednesdays. Saturday from 10am-1pm, opening day will be May 3 and Wednesdays from 11:30am-3:30pm will start on June 11. For more information contact public relations at 419-675-8137.

Scioto Valley Produce Auction is open every Tuesday and Friday, at 18715 County Road 200, Mt. Victory, OH. Tuesday auctions begin at 1:00pm and include produce, plants and flowers in season. Friday auctions begin at 12:30pm and include hay, straw and fire wood followed by produce and plants. Baked goods will be available on Fridays May through October.

No-cost Confidential Service for Small Business

The Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance partners with higher education. We continue to focus on this by meeting with college and university representatives in our region. One such partnership is with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Rhodes State College located in Lima, Ohio.

We recently met with Matthew Kinkley, Director, Workforce, Economic Development and Continuing Education and Kathy Keller, Director and Business Advisor to plan our direction for this year.

The Ohio Small Business Development Centers provide individual, confidential counseling and training programs for small businesses. The no-cost, confidential service links resources of higher education with resources of federal, state and local governments as well as the private sector.

The SBDC operates in cooperation with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Ohio Development Assistance Services and Rhodes State College.

The service area includes Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Paulding, Putnam and Van Wert Counties. This unique public/private partnership offers clients one-stop access to federal, state and local small business assistance programs and provides counseling and training to new and existing businesses.

The Small Business Development Center can help in developing a business plan and can address related business issues and concerns. The SBDC will help its clients design an action plan in areas of finance, organization, marketing and/or management assistance. Examples include: business plan development, business plan analysis, financial planning, budgeting assistance, record keeping procedures, market analysis, financial requirements, cash flow analysis, break-even analysis and education programs. Each client is served by trained counselors who have earned their Certified Business Advisor® certification from the Ohio Development Assistance Services and The University of Toledo.

SBDC assistance is tailored to the local community and the needs of individual clients. Each center develops its services in cooperation with local Small Business Administration (SBA) district offices to ensure statewide coordination with other available resources. The District 3 SBDC works in partnership with the Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance to assist Hardin County businesses with start up and expansion issues.

In addition to one-on-one counseling, the SBDC offers group training classes ranging from Writing a Business Plan, Cash Flow Projections, QuickBooks® training and business finance courses.



John Holm

Director of Economic Development

In many cases, the SBDC incorporates the expertise of local professionals to help deliver the training courses. Kathy Keller, Director of the Small Business Development Center at Rhodes State College states, "Through on-going relationships with our local partners such as the Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance, the SBDC assists small business owners in our communities start and expand enterprises to build strong communities."

For additional information, contact the Alliance or The Small Business Development Center at Rhodes State College at 419-995-8184.

Hardin County's Traveling Brochure Rack

The Alliance is now offering a Traveling Brochure Rack that you can set up at your festivals and events.

If you would like to have the display at your next Hardin County function, please contact us at 419-674-6480 or alliance@hardinohio.org

Planning Summer Fun

With all the talk of summer fun, we thought you might need help when company is coming from out of town. Some visitors are interested in day trips, while you are at work. We can provide them with maps of the county and various brochures.

In our literature rack, we have individual brochures for: Mt. Victory, Kenton and the Hardin County Amish. The Kenton brochure is a self-guided tour of Kenton's Historic downtown and residential area. Seventeen different places/things are listed. There is a map and pictures.

The Amish brochure has been revised several times over the years and it features the simple life of the old order Amish and some locations of various made Amish products. The township and county roads are well marked.

Mt. Victory's brochure features

antique shops and historic buildings. Twenty-two places or landmarks are highlighted on the self-guided brochure of their historic district that includes pictures for each landmark that is featured.

Sometimes, people are history buffs and love to drive around the countryside. In Hardin County we have 16 historical markers. Our office can provide you with a list and addresses.

Another brochure has been designed for a 20 mile easy terrain ride for bicyclists who thoroughly enjoy riding in the Amish country side. The tour is designed to start in downtown Kenton and is perfect not only for bicyclists, but also for cars, antique cars, or runners.

If you don't have time to stop at our office as you prepare for your out of town guests or maybe a reunion, visit our web site:



Annetta Shirk

Director of Chamber & Tourism

www.hardinohio.org and under the Tourism tab you will find lots of information including ideas for more tours in our county.



Summer Suggestions for the Kids



Wondering how to entertain the kids this summer? Here's a couple suggestions to help pass the time during the hot summer months in Hardin County.

- Go bowling at **Hillcrest Lanes** in Kenton, (419) 675-6214
- Visit the county's outdoor **swimming pools** in Ada, Kenton and Forest
- Stop by the **Hardin County Museums** 419-673-7147: open Tuesday -Friday, 1-4 pm
- Spend time at one of the county's many **parks**
- Check out the events at the **Hardin County Family YMCA** (419) 673-6131
- Go fishing at **Veterans Memorial Park's Boy Scout Lake, Saulisberry Park's France Lake** or **Victory Lakes** in Mt. Victory
- Visit the county's **Farmers Markets**
- Check out your local **libraries** and their summer reading programs
- Walk thru **Lawrence Woods State Nature Preserve**, located off Township Road 190 between State Route 292 and County Road 155.
- Introduce the kids to golf by playing at **Veterans Memorial Park Golf Club** (419) 674-4573
- When all else fails, get the tent out and **camp** in your own backyard.

Hardin County Parks & Recreation

Ada

Ada War Memorial Park - picnic area, playground, tennis courts, soccer fields, ball fields, all weather track, basketball court, outdoor swimming pool & sand volleyball court.

Ada Railroad Park - located in downtown Ada at the Historic Railroad Depot, this park features beautiful landscape and benches.

Alger

Alger Village Park – shelter houses, ball fields, soccer fields & playground

Dunkirk

Dunkirk Community Park - ball fields, soccer fields, basketball court, playground & shelter house

Forest

Gormley Park - this well shaded park includes a log cabin built in 1903 and a small pond, in addition it has a shelter house, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, horseshoe pits, baseball fields, walking path, playground & an outdoor Swimming Pool.

Kenton

Boy Scout Lake at Veterans Memorial Park District - park includes fishing, playground, basketball court & shelter houses, walking track and a dog park/run.

France Lake at Saulisberry Park this lake is a great place for fishing and camping. Also includes a playground area & shelter house.

Gene Autry Mural & Park - mural commemorates Gene Autry's visit to Kenton in 1938 and production of the Gene Autry Repeating Cap Pistols made by the former Kenton Hardware Company. Area includes Western themed garden with benches and picnic table.

Home Run Memorial Park - ball fields, walking track & shelter houses

Kenton Outdoor Swimming Pool - pool with slide & a raindrop

City Parks

Pioneer Park - playground

Glendale Park - playground plus county's only skateboard ramps

Jerry Cross Community Park - Coming soon!

Wharton Street Park - basketball court & playground. Coming soon a dog park!

Murray Park (formally Cherry Street Park) - basketball courts &

playground, and Splash Pad!

Mount Victory

Henry Martin Mural & Park - the mural and gazebo were styled to fit the town's history tied to the railroad.

Mount Victory Village Park – ball fields, shelter houses, walking track & playground
Victory Lakes - fishing

Roundhead

Roundhead/MacDonald Park – shelter with picnic tables, walking track, playground, ball fields

Ohio Northern University

Disc Golf Course - 18 hole Frisbee golf course

"Green Monster" - 2.5 mile walking track

Remington Walk - this outdoor display features twelve cast bronze statues by noted artists Frederic Remington, Charles Russell and James Fraser.



Splash Pad a big hit at Murray Park, formally Cherry Street Park

Anthem Clients Can Keep Current Group Health Plan

As a result of new guidance from the federal government about the Affordable Care Act (ACA), some Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield clients who renewed their existing plan at the end of 2013 will be able to renew their current group health plan for another year. This gives these companies more time to understand how health care reform will work for them and their employees before having to move to an ACA-compliant plan. And it is the best option if they want to keep offering their employees their existing benefits and the ability to stay with their favorite doctors and hospitals.

Anthem will send information about this option to the companies who are eligible for this extension of their pre-ACA health insurance plans in their renewal packet. Renewing will be simple for companies who want to stay on their current health insurance plan...As long as they pay their new premium, their coverage will continue for another year. It's that

simple. Please note that ACA rules require the elimination of pre-existing condition clauses at renewal.

Eligible companies will also have the option to switch to an ACA-compliant off-Exchange or SHOP Exchange plan if they wish. Please note that some ACA-compliant plan options may have a different

network of doctors and different pharmacy benefits than existing plans. And once a company moves from their current pre-ACA plan to an ACA-compliant plan, per ACA rules, they will not have the option to switch back to their current plan later.

If you have any questions, please contact your broker or Anthem rep.

Each month, thousands of Ohio employers meet minutes from work to share safety and accident prevention information.

Are you one of them?

BWC sponsors 81 safety councils across Ohio to provide local forums for education, networking and resource sharing.



Enroll by July 31 to earn a rebate on your workers' compensation premium. For more information call 419-673-4131 or email alliance@hardinohio.org.

Ohio | Bureau of Workers' Compensation



Buy Local First Summer Contest

The Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance will be host a Buy Local First Hardin County Summer Contest, June 14 to August 14. We are currently seeking businesses to partner with on this initiative to encourage people to shop local this summer.

Any Hardin County business may participate. Businesses would need to display the Buy Local First Hardin County sign and donate a gift certificate from your business. Gift certificate must be a minimum of \$20.

For more information on partnering with the Alliance on this Buy Local First Summer Contest, please contact the Alliance at 419-673-4131 or alliance@hardinohio.org.

New Members

DDS Lawn Service

Derek Snider, Owner, Operator
9877 Township Rd. 120
Kenton, 567-674-5592
www.ddslawnservice.com

Friends Business Source

Garrett Fleming,
Account Manager
2300 Bright Road
Findlay, 800-427-1704
www.friendsoffice.com



Fastenal

Jason McBride, Gen Manager
924 E. Columbus St.
Kenton, 419-673-1630
www.fastenal.com

Wholesaler of industrial and construction supplies with over 2600 stores nationwide. Product categories include fasteners, material handling, office products, safety, tools, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, chemicals and paints, janitorial, hydraulics and pneumatics, power, transmission, welding, abrasives, cutting tools and raw materials. We use our flexibility and resources to meet customer demand.

Lewis Construction

Bill Lewis, Owner
5313 CR 130
Huntsville, 937-686-9900
www.lewisconstructionohio.com

Lewis Construction is a remodeling, new home and commercial construction company, in business for 28 years. We have our own in house design so you can see your finished product before it is built. A virtual tour is available to our customers. Our goal is to provide top quality construction at a reasonable rate. We give a personal touch to all of our projects.

Ambassadors Attend Events



Cali Clabaugh, Annalyn, Jordyn and Harper Dakin and Oliver Sneary dig into the ground as part of the groundbreaking ceremonies at the new Jerry Cross Community Park Wednesday. The park, which will concentrate on preschool-aged children, is located on the site of the old Hardin County Jail on ground donated by the county to the City of Kenton. Organizer David Dakin (center) said the park will feature a playground and shelterhouse with plans for a basketball court for young people planned in the future. Local contributions have raised \$45,000 of the \$60,000 for the project, said Dakin. Work is to begin on the playground Saturday with the park slated to open in two weeks.



The City of Kenton was recognized as a Tree City USA in the Northwest Ohio awards ceremony co-hosted Wednesday by the City of Kenton, the Village of Mount Victory and their Tree Commissions. This is the 16th time the Kenton community has been honored with the nationally recognized award. The awards were presented to the Tree City USA communities by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry at the Abundant Life Assembly of God Church in Kenton. Fifty-five of northwest Ohio's communities are Tree Cities, and Ohio Northern University is a Tree Campus USA. All were recognized for their achievements at the awards ceremony.



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Events In Hardin County

May 26 – Memorial Day Car Show & Petroliana
June 1 – Family Fun Day & Car Show
June 28 – Kenton Kids Day
July 4 – Freedom Celebration
July 11-13 – Forest's Tree Town Festival
August 7-9 – Lincoln Highway Buy-Way
Yard Sales
August 8-9 – Ada's F & M Picnic
August 10 – Immaculate Conception Church
Summer Festival
September 2-7 – Hardin County Fair
September 20 – Ada Harvest & Herb Fest

Visit the Alliance's
Calendar of Events
www.hardinohio.org



Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance Golf Scramble 2013

Friday, August 8
8:30 am
Veteran's Memorial
Park Golf Club