

BUTLER COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

PRESS KIT 2009



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BUTLER COUNTY TOURISM AT A GLANCE

Butler County Visitors Bureau

Contact Information:

- Executive Director: Mark Hecquet
- Address: 8750 Union Centre Blvd., West Chester, OH 45069
- Phone: 513.860.4194 or 888.462.2282
- Official Web Site: www.destinationbutlercounty.com

Communities:

- Fairfield
- Hamilton
- Middletown
- Oxford
- Shandon/Okeana
- West Chester

Mega New Attractions Now Open:

- **Wake Nation Cincinnati** – the only cable wakeboarding park within 600 miles
- **EnterTRAINment Junction** – world's largest train-themed family fun center
- **IKEA** – first Ohio location to host the iconic Swedish furnishing retailer
- **Museum of Ancient Sculpture** – first ancient sculpture museum in the world
- **Savannah Center** – one of the largest conference and event centers in the area

Major Attractions:

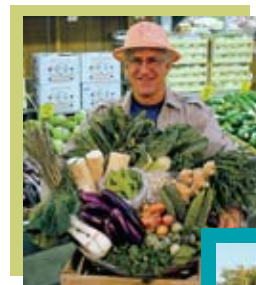
- BeauVerre/Riordan Studio
- Butler County Metroparks
- Canal Museum
- Fitton Center for the Creative Arts
- Frontgate Outlet Center
- Governor Bebb Preserve
- Hamilton-Fairfield Symphony Orchestra
- Jungle Jim's International Market
- Lane Hooven House
- McGuffey Museum
- Miami University Art Museum
- Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park
- Sports & Adventure
- Voice of America Park
- Wake Nation Cincinnati
- EnterTRAINment Junction

Activities:

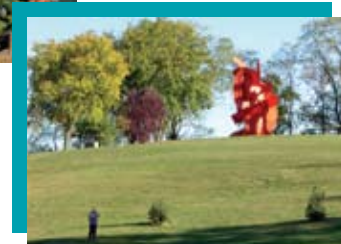
- Boating and Fishing
- Camping
- Golfing
- Hiking and Biking
- Raceway
- Shopping
- Skate Park
- Swimming

Special Events:

- Art Walk
- Butler County Fair
- Dog Fest
- Got Art! Walk
- Great Miami River Days
- MidFirst Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival
- Ice Fest
- Kite Fest
- Light Up Middletown
- Middfest International
- Pyramid Hill Holiday in Lights
- Union Centre Boulevard Bash
- USA Wakeboarding Championships
- Weekend of Fire at Jungle Jim's International Market



Jungle Jim's
International
Market



Pyramid Hill
Sculpture Park



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BUTLER COUNTY

A TURNING POINT IN AMERICAN HISTORY

The area's first non-native settlers came in 1791 with the construction of Ft. Hamilton off the banks of the Great Miami River. Prosperity followed for the next century due to the proximity to the river, and the Miami and Erie canals opening the Ohio frontier.

Both industry and population exploded in Hamilton and Middletown. These centers for commerce and industry led to the formation of Butler County on March 24, 1803. The land was formerly party of Hamilton County. The county was named after **General Richard Butler**, an officer in the American Revolutionary War. Afterward, Congress put him in charge of Indians in the Northwest Territory.

Later, American Indians resisted the Ohio occupation by the United States. General Butler left Fort Hamilton (Hamilton, Ohio) as second in command in an expedition led by General Arthur St. Clair. On November 4, 1791, Chief Little Turtle and scores of Indian fighters ambushed the army and killed 600 people in the Battle of the Wabash, also known as St. Clair's Defeat. This was the greatest loss the U.S. Army suffered against the Indians – far worse than Custer's Last Stand.

Throughout Butler County's history, many fascinating stories and personalities emerged. These are just some of the interesting people and tales:

William Holmes McGuffey was the author of McGuffey's Eclectic Reader originally published in 1836. The McGuffey Readers sold approximately 122 million copies in the 19th Century – second only to the Bible at the time. He began writing the popular books in 1834 at his home in Oxford, Ohio while a professor at Miami University. He lived at the home from 1826-1836. It is now the William Holmes McGuffey Museum and national historic landmark.

John Cleves Symmes, Jr. was the Father of the Hollow Earth Theory or Theory of Concentric Spheres. He fought most of his life to get federal funding to prove it. Instead he was ridiculed. But there were times when the mainstream scientific community lent some interest thus credibility. He was buried in a cemetery in Hamilton, Ohio. The cemetery has since been moved, but strangely, not John Cleves Symmes, Jr. He still rests in what is now a neighborhood park. His tombstone looks like a monument and has a stone Earth at its peak. The Earth is hollow.

Joseph Henry Nuxhall, native of Hamilton, Ohio, was the youngest player ever to appear in a major baseball game in the modern era. He played for the Cincinnati Reds in 1944 at only 15 years old. The Ol' Lefthander still holds Reds' pitching records and went on to become a famous broadcaster for the Reds. His trademark radio signoff, "This is the old lefthander, rounding third and heading for home" is displayed outside the Reds' stadium along with his statue. He died in 2007 and was buried in Rose Hill Burial Park in Fairfield Township.



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BUTLER COUNTY TOURISM AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

For immediate and thorough commentary about any Butler County tourism sites and events, call 888.462.2282 and ask for Mark Hecquet or Christy Harp.

Mark Hecquet

Executive Director

Butler County Visitors Bureau

Extension 103 or mhecquet@butlercountyvb.com

Mark became the first Executive Director of the new Butler County Visitors Bureau in August 2006. He is developing strategies to enhance Butler County as a tourism destination. In addition, Mark is responsible for long term planning, finance and policy development and oversees all operations of the organization. Previously, he produced sports events credited with an economic impact of \$10 million and more than 9,000 hotel room nights in less than a four-year period, including U.S. Olympic Trials in Archery, AAU national championships in girls' basketball, and the USAT duathlon national championships. Mark graduated from the University of Kentucky with a B.S. in business administration and a Master's degree in sports management. Mark resides with his family in West Chester.

Christy Harp

Director of Marketing

Butler County Visitors Bureau

Extension 109 or charp@butlercountyvb.com

Christy identifies and created marketing opportunities and develops short and long-term marketing strategies with the objective of attracting business groups for extended stays and enhancing the image of Butler County as a destination. Previously, Christy managed the creation and production of a visitors guide, developed e-newsletters, and managed and developed an advertising grant program. Christy graduated from Xavier University with a B.A. in Communication Arts, with an emphasis in public relations. She resides in Cincinnati.



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BUTLER COUNTY TOURISM

CREATIVE NEW STORIES

Butler County July Weather Prediction Says 100% Chance for Rainbows in the Sky

Middletown hosts the 7th Annual MidFirst Ohio Challenge, a full festival featuring sanctioned hot air balloon competition events from July 17-19, 2020. It features professional skydivers, tethered hot air balloon rides, airplane and helicopter rides.

Is the World Flat? How About Hollow?

Genealogy tourism brings folks to odd places to learn about under-publicized stories and get a glimpse of the unique lives of the world's semi-famous. In Hamilton, Ohio, people pay homage to the monument left to honor the Father of Hollow Earth Theory.

Three's Company

Three Butler County men ignored naysayers and moved forward with separate dreams. Because of their fearlessness in the face of adversity, Butler County is home to the world's largest train-theme family entertainment center, the first wakeboarding cable park in the Midwest, and the world's first ancient sculpture museum.

Middletown is the Center of the Stained Glass World of Art

Seeing a piece of art behind museum glass just doesn't cut it anymore. People want to see it made and learn about the process. BeauVerre Riordan Stained Glass Company meets that demand. The highly regarded stained glass company serves clients around the world. Some projects have gone to fascinating places.

The Voice of America Comes from Butler County

Look at cable TV and realize there are many narrow and deep interests, especially when it comes to the genre of heritage tourism. Voice of America Park is rich in history as it served as a beacon of freedom spreading the news across the globe during WWII. Now the park is a new tourism destination for outdoor enthusiasts, dog lovers, as well as historians. It also attracts those seeking soothing orchestra music dancing over the water, an enormous kite festival, and inland lake with boat rentals plus much more.

Foodies Don't Eat to Live – They Live to Eat!

Having elegant restaurants and down-home eateries isn't enough in these days of experiential tourism demands. People want to fill their plate with a blend of delectable new foods but also want the experience of learning how to make it. There's no place around that has the ingredients for world-wide recipes as well as a cooking school to teach how to make it than Jungle Jim's International Market.

Un-Boring Meeting Spaces are High in Demand

It isn't enough to just have a meeting at an upscale facility anymore, although Butler County does feature one of the newest and largest elegant and state-of-the-art places to meet in the area – Savannah Center. But when organizations meet, they also want some off-site, off-the-wall break-outs to spark ingenuity. In Butler County, they have a choice between EnterTRAINment Junction, Pyramid Hill, Fairfield Community Arts Center, Fitton Center for Creative Arts, the Oscar Event Center, or Marcum Conference Center. And that's just for starters.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOATLESS WATER SKIING IN FAIRFIELD, OHIO

Ohio Water Skiers Innovate in Bad Economy and Lose the Boat
at New Butler County "Green" Island Oasis for Water Sports

Fairfield, Ohio – Month Day, 2009 – Butler County, Ohio tourism is gaining a reputation for producing Ohio's most innovative new attractions two-years-running. They may not have a natural lake or use a boat but that isn't stopping water skiers and wake boarders from enjoying their water sports.

The 2009 inaugural season of Wake Nation Cincinnati is waking the nation to a new form of water fun. Grab a cable and take a spin around a three acre island gliding atop the water. The pulley system is designed to circulate among six 30-foot towers allowing complete freedom for wakeboarders, skiers and kneeboarders to do just about anything they want while covering the 12-acre man-made lake, complete with its own island oasis.

"If you are within 600 miles of Cincinnati, you won't find anything like this," said Mark Hecquet, Executive Director of the Butler County Visitors Bureau. "Gone are the noise, dangers and pollution of motor boats and in is the fun from novice to expert level navigating jumps and obstacles."

Cable wakeboarding is one of the most rapidly growing sports in the U.S., although it only has six such parks. Beginners find it easy to learn and advance at their own pace. They can even sign up for lessons. Participants must be at least 10 years old. Wakeboarding is similar to snowboarding only the person is towed on water.

"Experienced wakeboarders find that it is easier than ever to get airborne," said Hecquet. "There are plenty of grind rails, table tops and kickers for a good challenge."

No fear. There's more than wakeboarding and water skiing going on at Wake Nation. It also invites riders to slalom, trick ski, kneeboard or wakeskate. Even intermediate to experienced riders can sign up to learn new tricks and jumps.

-MORE-



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The USA Wakeboarding National Championships will be hosted by Wake Nation in July 2009. Thousands of spectators from around the country are expected to come to Butler County for this event.

Wake Nation Cincinnati is located at 201 Joe Nuxhall Way at Joyce Park in Fairfield, Ohio. It is open daily from June through October from 10 a.m. to dark. Cable passes may be purchased for as little as one hour for \$20 or all-day for \$35, as well as several increments in between. The complex includes a full concession stand, locker room and pro shop providing everything needed from wakeboards or waterskates to wet suits and life vests.

Butler County's recent and ongoing population explosion created unprecedented demand for new substantial recreation and entertainment.

The Butler County Visitors Bureau and community met that demand by adding mega attractions for the enjoyment of travelers near and far. In addition to this year's opening of Wake Nation, Butler County has also opened the following in the past year: EnterTRAINment Junction – the world's largest train-theme family entertainment center, Museum of Ancient Sculpture at Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park – the world's first ancient sculpture museum, IKEA – the popular Swedish home furnishing retailer's first store in Ohio, and Savannah Center – one of the area's largest and perhaps most beautiful and modern conference and event centers.

Besides new super attractions, Butler County has always been a destination designed for you – whoever you may be. It is still true to its agricultural roots and offers agritourism. Foodie hot spots include the internationally renowned madcap grocer – Jungle Jim's – and everything from trendy restaurants to unique eateries. Lodging includes major hotels to bed and breakfasts and charming inns. There are also chick shopping adventures, arts and museum, parks and outdoor recreational activities, and one-of-a-kind festivals and events.

"Mixing new attractions with the existing destinations allows us to create a fun-packed day or week for just about any interests," said Christy Harp, Director of Marketing for the Butler County Visitors Bureau. "We are progressive and timeless."

Butler County is conveniently located off I-75 between Cincinnati and Dayton near Indiana and Kentucky. To plan a trip to see its variety of attractions, visit www.destinationbutlercounty.com or call 888-462-2282 for an official 2009 Butler County Visitors Guide.

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AVAILABLE PHOTOGRAPHY

We cordially invite you to come see what's new(s) in Butler County, Ohio.



Innovative Mega Attractions



Variety of Meeting and Lodging



Record-Breaking Attractions



Artistic & Historic Wonders



Unique Shopping



Foodie Delights



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To request photography, contact
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