



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Walworth County Visitors Bureau

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VISITOR SPENDING IN WALWORTH COUNTY UP \$15.3 MILLION IN 2017

Walworth County, WI (May 4, 2018) - The Walworth County Visitors Bureau is excited to report that 2017 marks the 9th year for Walworth County as the 6th largest contributing county in terms of direct visitor spending throughout the state of Wisconsin. In actual visitor dollars spent, that is an increase of \$15.3 million, and a 2.88% increase, in tourism spending in Walworth County from 2016 to 2017. What makes this ranking impressive is the fact that Walworth County does not have a major city, sports team, or state government buildings located within its borders. The only counties in the state to precede Walworth County in ranking are: Milwaukee, Dane, Sauk, Waukesha, and Brown.

“We are blessed to be situated between four major metropolitan areas - Milwaukee, Madison, Rockford, and Chicago. It is obvious to those that have chosen Walworth County as our home why visitors love our area - the natural beauty, the lakes, the trails, the abundance of recreational activities and entertainment, and especially the people who work within our tourism industry to make it great. As tourism and visitor spending continue to grow, the staff of the Walworth County Visitors Bureau will be here to make sure the traveler has the information they need to have the best possible experience in the Lake Geneva area and beyond.” said Kathy Seeberg, Executive Director of the Walworth County Visitors Bureau.

For the travelers that helped Wisconsin achieve a \$631 million increase in tourism economic impact in 2017, it's all about the fun and memories. For the state's tourism industry, it's big business. And for taxpayers and residents, it's all about jobs and tax revenue those visitors generate. A study conducted by Tourism Economics shows the impact of tourism on the state's economy reached \$20.6 billion in 2017, an increase of 3.2% from the previous year and a nearly 40% increase since 2011. This makes seven straight years that Wisconsin has seen growth in the tourism economy.

“It's a tremendous credit to the tourism industry in all 72 counties and the work they do to create fun vacation experiences, market their destinations, and provide great customer service that makes travelers want to return to Wisconsin each year,” Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett said.

Research shows that tourism advertising goes beyond just promoting vacations; it also positively influences the state's overall image as a great place to live, find a job, open a business, attend college or retire.

Klett added, "We've found success in marketing Wisconsin under the brand of fun and our tourism industry is leveraging the brand in their own advertising efforts. These results let us know that what we are doing is working and that investing in tourism not only benefits the economy, it also influences the way people think about Wisconsin."

Walworth County is located in southeastern Wisconsin, and includes some of the most breathtaking lands in the state. Rolling hills, spring-fed lakes, tranquil woodlands, picturesque farms and quaint small towns make it a top tourist destination for thousands of Americans each year. Just 90 miles from Chicago and 40 miles from Milwaukee, Walworth County offers an abundance of outdoor recreation, shopping, dining, cultural events and entertainment, and lodging to fit virtually every budget.

The Walworth County Visitors Bureau is a non-profit, 501(c) 6 organization, located at 2375 East Geneva Street in Delavan, WI. With more than 300 members and growing, the Walworth County Visitors Bureau is the official destination marketing organization for Walworth County, and its purpose is to market Walworth County as the destination of choice for group and leisure travel, thereby increasing the economic impact of tourism. The Walworth County Visitors Bureau is a Certified Destination Marketing Organization, as declared by the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus. The Bureau's Travel Information Center is open seven days a week from 8:30am to 4:30pm. For additional information call 262-728-6000 or go to www.VisitWalworthCounty.com.

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