

WINTER & HOLIDAY EVENTS

Carroll County Christmas Farmers Market

Saturdays thru Dec. 17 — 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Ag Center, Westminster
410-848-7748

33rd Mistletoe Mart

November 10 & 11 — 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
November 12 — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Church of the Ascension
Westminster
410-239-7217
410-848-3251

9th Annual Random House Book Fair

November 12 — 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Carroll Community College
410-386-8155

A Greater Gift/SERRV Holiday Overstock Sale

November 17-27
Mon-Sat — 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun — 1 to 5 p.m.
Brethren Service Center
New Windsor
410-635-8711

Pleasant Valley Train Display

November 19, 26, 27
December 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31
Various hours
Pleasant Valley Fire Hall
Westminster
410-751-0207

Westminster Toy Train Show

November 20 — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Ag Center, Westminster
410-848-4929

8th Annual Festival of Wreaths

Nov 30-Dec 4 — 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Carroll Arts Center
Westminster
410-848-7272

Farm Museum Holiday Tour

December 2 & 9 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
December 3 & 10 — 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
December 4 & 11 — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Carroll County Farm Museum
410-386-3880

Village Holiday Bazaar with Pancake Breakfast

December 3 — 7 to 11:30 a.m.
Breakfast until 10 a.m.
Carroll Lutheran Village
Westminster
410-848-0090

Nutcracker performed by the Westminster Ballet Theatre

December 18-20 — 7:30 to 10 p.m.
McDaniel College
WMC Alumni Hall
410-848-6048

CARROLL COUNTY VISITOR CENTER

210 East Main Street
Westminster, MD 21157
410-848-1388 • 1-800-272-1933
Monday – Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday & Most Holidays: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



CARROLL COUNTY OFFICE OF TOURISM

Administrative Office
224 N. Center Street, Room 100
Westminster, MD 21157
410-386-2983
Fax: 410-876-1560
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www.carrollcountytourism.org



TOURISM COUNCIL

OF CARROLL COUNTY, INC.
P.O. Box 2125
Westminster, MD 21158
www.tourismcouncilofcarrollcounty.org

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TOURISM COUNCIL OF CARROLL COUNTY, INC.

TOURISM

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WINTER 2005 P.O. Box 2125, Westminster, Maryland 21158

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TOURISM

Joanna

WINTER 2005 Carroll County Maryland

AGRITOURISM A GROWING ATTRACTION FOR VISITORS

Agritourism is a term that often draws puzzled looks. After all, tourism and agriculture, at first glance, seem like an odd couple. But they actually complement each other extremely well, and Carroll County has been a leader in taking advantage of the new crop of agritourism opportunities.

Agritourism is defined as any farm-related activity or an activity or product that finds its origin on a farm. Included in this group are “u-pick” farms, horseback riding, winery tours, microbrewery tours, Christmas tree farms, farmers’ markets, roadside stands, and agriculture-related events (think corn roast or corn mazes or flower festivals). In addition to the above categories, we could include scenic beauty, which is preserved by our local farmers through vistas with acres of crops, green rolling hills, and idyllic scenes with cows and red barns.

Although we all know that the business of farming is a far cry from the picturesque scene painted above, many of our local farmers are finding new ways to use their farms as alternative income sources. For instance, many farmers have converted their fields that are not necessarily suited for grain or feed crops into tree farms. Today you’ll find 15 tree farms listed in the *Christmas Trees and Holiday Greens in Carroll County, Maryland 2005* brochure. After surveying three of those farms, County Agriculture Manager Gabe



Zepp said, “Those three farms sold 6,500 Christmas trees last year at an average price of \$36, and they welcomed more than 18,000 people.” And the economic impact stretches beyond the farms as many of the visiting families also enjoy lunch or dinner in our local restaurants.

In recent years, corn mazes have grown in popularity, appealing to visitors young and old. After they finish winding through the fun labyrinth, they can purchase produce or pick a pumpkin from the field to take home. Last year, River Valley Ranch attracted 7,000 visitors to their corn maze and pumpkin patch.

In addition to down-on-the-farm activities, there are many seasonal events in our county that bring in thousands of visitors each fall. Several Carroll towns hold Fall Fest Days with the largest festival held at the Carroll County Farm Museum. This two-day event attracts approximately 6,500 people each year while the Halloween-themed Lineboro Haunted Hayride has an attendance of 7,500 visitors. The Steam Show Days, which showcases

antique farm equipment, draws 20,000 sightseers each year and the Maryland Wine Festival (with many of the grapes grown right here in Carroll County) attracts another 20,000 annually. And, of course, our very own 4-H/FFA Fair sees about 60,000 people pass through its gates.

And, while all these numbers in themselves are gratifying, keep in mind that these visitors and their families are creating wonderful memories that lead to annual traditions and repeat visits in the years ahead.

According to the Travel Industry of America 2004 report, “The most recent USDA survey shows that over 62 million Americans visited farms or were rural sightseers. On average, rural and farm visitors travel 80 miles and spend \$45 per visit.” With the stunning scenic beauty of our 46,000 preserved acres of farmland and our abundance of farm-related activities, Carroll County is uniquely positioned to welcome the surge in agritourism travelers. ◀

WHAT’S INSIDE

- First House of Worship Tour Set for December 30
- Holiday Decoration Contest
- Danele Shipley Arena is Newest Venue at Ag Center
- Council Wins Organization of Character Award

FIRST HOUSE OF WORSHIP TOUR SET FOR DECEMBER 30

The Tourism Council, in conjunction with the Shepherd's Staff and the Community Foundation of Carroll County, is in the final planning stages for the first annual House of Worship (HOW) Tour. This wonderful family event is planned as a fundraiser for the three not-for-profit organizations.

The tour of churches and the Strawbridge Shrine will take place on Friday, December 30, 2005 from 2:00 until 6:30 p.m. (In the event of bad weather, the HOW Tour will be held the following Sunday — January 8, 2006.) Immediately following the tour, a community holiday concert will be held at St. John Catholic Church in Westminster at 7:30 p.m. The participating churches are: St. John's Lutheran, Salem UMC, St. Mary's Evangelical Lutheran, St. John Catholic, St. Matthews UCC, St. Paul's UCC, Pipe Creek Friends Meeting, Shiloh UMC, St. Paul's UMC, Union Bridge Church of the Brethren, Union Bridge UMC, Pipe

Creek Brick UMC, Uniontown UMC, Middleburg UMC and the Strawbridge Shrine.

Each of the churches will feature different events and activities for adults and children. In addition to tours, there will be choir music, a puppet show, organ recitals, a living Nativity, children's craft projects, storytelling and refreshments. Of course, all of the churches will be decorated in their holiday finest for the tour.

Ticket prices for the HOW Tour are \$5 per person (including the concert), \$10 per family (including the concert), \$3 per child (16 & under), and \$5 for just the concert. Each HOW Tour ticket also includes one copy of Dean L. Minnich's donated limited-edition book, *Towns & Villages of Carroll County*.

This event is sure to become a cherished holiday tradition, so save the date — Friday, December 30 — for the inaugural House of Worship Tour. Tickets will be available at the Shepherd's Staff, the Community Foundation and The TownMall of Westminster or from members of the Tourism Council. For additional information, go to the Tourism Council's website at: www.tourismcouncilofcarrollcounty.org or call the Shepherd's Staff at 410-857-5944. ◀

HOLIDAY DECORATION CONTEST

So you think you can decorate? The Tourism Council is looking for the Carroll County business that has the best holiday decorations from November 1 to December 31 this 2005 holiday season. Readers of our newsletter may nominate their favorite business for a Readers Choice Award by sending us the name, address and phone number of the business ... AND a photo of the holiday decorations.

The information and picture should be sent to steve@woodsgain.com with the subject line reading Holiday

Decoration Contest. If you do not wish to email the information, it can be mailed to:

Holiday Decoration Contest

The Tourism Council of Carroll County Maryland
P.O. Box 2125
Westminster, MD 21158

All entries must be received by January 15, 2006 to be eligible. One local business will be selected based upon the winning number of votes it receives from our readers. Only one vote per person and the decision of the judges is final. ◀

TOURISM COUNCIL OF CARROLL COUNTY, INC.

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DANELE SHIPLEY ARENA IS NEWEST VENUE AT AG CENTER

Bull riders, trade shows, seniors, runners, cheerleaders, farmers and business leaders are just a few of the groups making themselves at home in the state-of-the-art Danele Shipley Memorial Arena at the Carroll County Agriculture Center. The high-tech facility, featuring wireless sound, has been designed to welcome a wide variety of events such as livestock, canine and equestrian outings, live music shows and entertainment events. The new facility is large enough for trade and home shows, fairs, circuses, and sporting exhibitions.

The arena was named in memory of Danele Shipley, a speech-language pathologist and hearing resource teacher at William Winchester Elementary School who died in 1995 at age 40. Her parents donated funds for the 60,658-square-foot facility in her name to commemorate her dedication to agriculture. The clear-span arena measures 150 by 350 feet with a 23-foot ceiling height and features a striking 33- by 126-foot vestibule, a full-service industrial-quality kitchen and bathrooms with showers. A show office is also available.

The following are some of the events already booked in the Shipley arena:

- CCFL Cheerleading Competition
Early November
- Bull Riding Winter Series
Saturday nights Jan-March '06
- Carroll Home Show
April 1 & 2 '06
- Relay for Life
May 19, '06
- Seniors on the Go Show
Sept. 7, '06

Also at home in the Carroll County Agriculture Center is the ever-popular Carroll County Farmers Market. This 34-year-old market offers local



produce, handcrafted items, live Christmas trees, wreaths, greens, jams and jellies. On Saturdays, in the spring, throughout the summer, and several weeks before the holidays, this site offers local farmers and artisans a place to sell their produce and wares.

The new arena is a welcome addition to the Ag Center, which features several other large show

buildings; the Burns Memorial Hall for meetings, dinners, receptions and parties; the Therapeutic Riding Barn; outdoor riding ring; and a covered amphitheater stage.

For more information about booking the facility, please contact General Manager Larry Collins at 410-848-6704. ◀

COUNCIL WINS ORGANIZATION OF CHARACTER AWARD

Carroll County Public Schools recently selected the Tourism Council as an Organization of Character. Each month CCPS highlights one of the unique character traits that is essential for success in school and also the business world. The council received the award for Helpfulness and Service to the county through its publication of the Carroll County visitor's guide — *Destination Carroll County*.

As volunteers in the county, the council promotes and supports the county's Office of Tourism. President Colleen Cole accepted the award at a luncheon held by the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce at the Best Western Hotel. ◀

