

Economic Development Insight

Staycation

By *Brianne Perigo*

Spring Break is just around the corner, and many Greene Countians have planned vacations outside of the county, the state or even the country. For those who have planned to stay within Greene County limits, it may be surprising to know our county has plenty to offer in the way of activities. Perhaps equally surprising is the fact that there is a term for such an idea.

According to Wikipedia, a staycation (or stay-cation, or stacation) is a recently-devised term used to describe "a period of time in which an individual or family stays at home and relaxes at home or takes day trips from their home to area attractions. Staycations have achieved high popularity in current hard economic times in which unemployment levels and gas prices are high. Common activities of a staycation include use of the backyard pool, visits to local parks and museums, and attendance at local festivals."

During my years as a student at Linton-Stockton, I have often approached breaks where my family wasn't planning a vacation to Florida, or Virginia, or anywhere outside of Greene County, and I would dread it. I would dread it because I didn't think there was anything fun to do here; therefore, I would spend the entire break hanging out with other friends who didn't go anywhere. We would sit around and watch TV and complain about how there's nothing to do and I know that opinion hasn't changed much in the 10 years I've been out of school.

GCEDC working with the Greene County Chamber Coalition recently introduced a project to the Greene County schools called the Perfect Day. Local 3rd and 4th grade students were encouraged to write a paper on their perfect day in Greene County with someone they think is famous or important. Some children chose Mayor Jones, and some chose their grandparents. In the paper the students were asked to tell us where they would take their visitor for breakfast, lunch and dinner and any other attraction in Greene County.

In one paper, a Linton 4th grader wrote, "We'll travel onto Jasonville to the Shakamak State Park where we will walk the Piankeshaw Trails. Here we are sure to work up another appetite! From here we'll head out to Hendricksville to visit an old, nostalgic building for lunch...Rosie's Diner." I was impressed with how this student went from one side of the county all the way over to the other. They ended up going to the Tulip Trestle (Viaduct), Walnut Grove Springs Water, and the WestGate@Crane Tech Park.

My career with Greene County Economic Development began in January 2008, and during the past 13 months, I have learned so much about the county that I've lived in almost my whole life. It's sad that I grew up with all of these wonderful opportunities and didn't take advantage of any of them. If you are like I was, and are dreading Spring Break because there's "nothing to do", please visit our website at www.gcedc.us/visitors and look at the brochure of activities in Greene County. They are categorized by arts & culture, commercial, historic, natural, and recreational. There's even a map showing a tour of Greene County, all of which is on paved roads.

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We need to promote our county from the inside out. How can we build the tourism industry if we don't even know what we have in our own backyard? If this 4th grade student can find creative ways to give a tour around the county; there's no reason why we can't do the same.

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