

on the go

**2024 Berks
Fiddle Fest**

**Best Cruise Lines
for Solo Travelers**



**July
August
2024**

PERIODICAL

In This Issue



6 Berks Fiddle Fest

Don't miss this year's Fiddle Festival - live music, delicious food, and lots of family-friendly fun

12 Cruise Lines for Solo Travelers

More travelers are booking cruise vacations just for themselves and cruise lines are taking notice

16 Potter County, "God's Country"

From history to shopping to outdoor activities, a trip to Potter County is worth the journey north



Departments

- 2 PRESIDENT'S NOTE
- 4 CLUB UPDATE
- 11 ASK ED
- 18 ON THE ROAD
- 20 CAR CARE MONTH

On The Go

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Cover

The Friends of Fleetwood Parks, in conjunction with Berks Fiddle Fest, are proud to announce that the Fiddle Fest is coming to Fleetwood Park September 2024. Bring your instruments to jam or just sit back and enjoy the great music. Save the date for this popular family outing. More on page 6.

NOTICE - SPECIAL OFFICE HOURS:

Our office will be closed for the following observances - *Thursday, July 4 Independence Day; Monday, September 2 Labor Day*

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President's Note

Peter J. Armstrong
President/CEO

“...transportation solutions
must meet the public’s freedom
to choose...”

Can/Will Transportation Tech Keep Up with Vehicle Tech?

July has a sort of weird “transitional” vibe. Children who began summer vacation only a month or so ago are already bored. Grads are beginning to feel the pangs of responsibility and the realization that they now need to figure out how to make their way in the real world. And the retail scene begins the annual shift from “Welcome to Summer” displays to back-to-school layouts.

A different but just as irrepressible transition is advancing just as sure as the historic double brood cicada burst from their crispy little exoskeletons out west recently. I’m speaking of the transitional evolution of vehicle technologies and the advanced transportation systems that will be necessary to get the best out of that technology. Whether we like it or not - sort of like how some feel about the cicada’s cacophonous love song - high tech transportation is on the wing to a roadway near you. One thing is for sure - you can’t get away from the need for good infrastructure, whether you drive a VW bug or a Genesis G90.

Short- and long-term transportation solutions must meet the public’s freedom to choose the transportation mode that works for them. The best highway system is one that promotes efficiency and reduces congestion, allows for personal choice of when, where and how travelers want to get from Point A to Point B, and helps to reduce crash injuries and death.

AAA has long played a strong role in advocating for roadway safety for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and first responders. This would include taking the lead in advocating for the creation of the Interstate Highway System in 1956, fighting for Move Over laws in all fifty states, developing preeminent novice-to-senior driver education programs and the AAA School Safety Patrol program, speaking out on impaired and distracted driving and demanding stronger seat belt legislation.

On May 21, 2024, Jake Nelson, Director of Traffic Safety Advocacy and Research for AAA, testified before the Senate Subcommittee regarding the current state of traffic safety in the U.S.

Titled “Examining the Roadway Safety Crisis and Highlighting Community Solutions”, the hearing was convened by U.S. Senator Gary Peters (D-Mich.), Chair of the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, Maritime, Freight and Ports. The hearing examined the causes of the roadway safety crisis, including unique risks to pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists, and how Congress can support a holistic approach to roadway safety.

Improving safety on the highways involves a blending of safer systems, safer vehicle technology and safer roadway users, a point made by the U.S. DOT Beyond Traffic “blue paper” as posted at www.dot.gov/beyondtraffic. The document discusses the need for a 21st century transportation system for the U.S. to remain economically competitive in today’s world scene.

Most would agree, perhaps yourself included, that our bridges, highways and transit systems need to be brought up to an adequate state that will support ever evolving technology and connectivity. It’s a transition that, while costly, is necessary to support smart cities and smarter transportation.

The idea of autonomous vehicles - those that can navigate without human intervention - is no longer confined to an imaginative mind. Love them or hate them, there are a lot of folks working on transitioning AVs into the current roadsharer landscape.

At some point, as “horse-and-buggy” was to Ford’s Model T, so will be today’s vehicles to the transportation modes of the future. Are you ready? Advanced vehicle and roadway tech are singing someone’s love song.

Put Down That Phone - It's (Now) the Law

On Wednesday, June 5, 2024, Governor Josh Shapiro signed into law Senate Bill 37 banning the use of handheld cellphones while driving. Known as Act 18 of 2024, the new law pairs with a previous law that prohibits texting while driving.

Under the new law, drivers may only use handsfree phone connection technology. Except for some specific exemptions such as making emergency calls, Act 18 of 2024 prohibits the driver's manual use of interactive mobile devices. "Use of an interactive mobile device" includes the following:

Using at least one hand to hold, or supporting with another part of the body, an interactive mobile device;

Dialing or answering an interactive mobile device by pressing more than a single button;

Reaching for an interactive mobile device in a manner that requires a driver to maneuver so that the driver is no longer in a seated driving position, restrained by a seat belt.

The new legislation is the culmination of years of hard work led by Senator Rosemary Brown.

"After more than a decade of dedicated work to enact this legislation, the passage of Senate Bill 37 marks a monumental victory for Pennsylvania", said Senator Brown. "As this bill is signed into law, I am filled with gratitude for those who helped me along this process, and I know this measure will protect drivers, prevent crashes and save lives. This bill is more than legislation - it is a reminder of the power of perseverance and the impact we can have when we prioritize public safety."

Act 18 of 2024 is also known as the Paul Miller, Jr. Law. 21-year-old Paul lost his life in 2010 when his vehicle was struck by a truck driver who was reaching for their phone while driving and crossed a highway median. Since

then, his parents, Paul and Eileen Miller, have worked tirelessly to prevent this tragedy from affecting other families.

"When Paul passed away, when, unfortunately, two Dunmore state troopers came knocking on my door to tell me that my son was killed, I did not know it was distracted driving at the time." She continued, "This is for every family that is in Pennsylvania that doesn't have to have two state troopers knocking on their door to tell them that their loved one was killed by something so preventable as distracted driving."

"Limiting distractions while behind the wheel makes Pennsylvania's roadways safer for everyone," said Colonel Christopher Paris, Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police. "Eliminating the handling of cell phones while driving will certainly reduce the number of crashes and save lives."

Also at the event, PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll said, "In 2023, there were over eleven thousand crashes in Pennsylvania that involved a distracted driver. Driving requires one hundred percent of your attention one hundred percent of the time, and this bill - which I was proud to support as Minority Chair of the House Transportation Committee - is an important step forward in discouraging distracted driving and keeping everyone safe on the road."

Distracted driving - including the use of wireless devices such as cell phones - contributes in a large way to motor vehicle crashes every day in the U.S. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that 3,308 people perished in distracted driver-related crashes in

2022.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety describes three types of distractions that cause a driver to take some portion of their attention away from the driving task:

Visual - these distractions cause the driver to take their eyes off the roadway, where dangers can pop up instantly and the driver would need to take immediate action to avoid a crash.

Manual - this is something that will cause the driver to take one hand from the steering wheel, rendering the driver unable to take an evasive steering maneuver in an emergency.

Cognitive - includes anything that takes the driver's mind off the task of driving, causing significant and often deadly delays in reaction time to a driving emergency.

Act 18 of 2024 is a step in the right direction, but there's still work to be done to help keep roadway users safe from distracted drivers. Even handsfree cell



service in cars can cause all three types of driver distraction.

You can read more about the press event at pa.gov/en/governor/newsroom/2024-press-releases. You can also read the text of the new law at legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo. There's more information about Pennsylvania's texting-while-driving ban at penndot.pa.gov/TravelInPA.

Learn more about the danger of all forms of distracted driving at exchange.aaa.com under the Safety tab. Check out the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety research project, *Effectiveness of Distracted Driving Countermeasures: A Review of the Literature*, at aaafoundation.org.

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berks fiddle fest



*A Berks festival favorite
comes to Fleetwood Park*

The annual Berks Fiddle Fest will be held on Sunday, September 15th, 2024 at the Fleetwood Community Park located at 334 West Main Street in Fleetwood, PA. This year we have partnered with the Friends of the Fleetwood Parks, a 501(c) 3 organization, with the mission of raising funds to improve and maintain amenities in the Fleetwood parks for community enjoyment. This means that all profits from the Berks Fiddle Fest will go directly to this wonderful organization to help fulfill its mission.

A suggested \$5.00 donation will get you an entire day of entertainment and much more. The gates open at 9:00 am with main stage activities starting at 10:00am. The day starts with our traditional worship service followed by a variety of Americana musical bands until 1:00pm. This is followed by our all-ages fiddle competition, which is the main attraction of the Fiddle Fest and something you don't want to miss!

Our stage line-up this year features a Meadowood Music student showcase, the Keystone Fiddlers, Crow Hill Bluegrass Band, the Get Reels playing Irish American Music, the Kutztown Pipe Band playing bagpipes at our 1:00pm salute to veterans, and we end the entire event with a closing concert by Big Valley Bluegrass.

The main stage is not the only area providing music filling the air at the Fiddle Fest. There is the Open Mic area with emcee Noah Gibney, a fiddle workshop featuring Addyson Teal of the band Fig for a Kiss, our first-ever Scottish F.I.R.E. Fiddle Competition qualifier, The Dirty



Photos credit LIVE-ART by C. Claytor



Rotten Parrots roving around the grounds playing music, and a lot of local musicians joining together in jam groups all around the park. You are more than welcome to bring an instrument and join the jams or simply listen and enjoy!

Speaking of music, we have a Martin acoustic guitar raffle with tickets available at the festival. The winner will

“...bring an instrument and join the jams...”

be announced at the end of the day and you could win!

Don't worry about eating and drinking - you won't go hungry or thirsty at the Fiddle Fest! Food and drink will be available to purchase. Hot dogs, burgers and drinks by the Friends of the Fleetwood Parks, barbecued food by Freddy Bears Smokin' Hot BBQ, hand-dipped ice

cream by Pops Malt Shoppe, baked goods from the Fleetwood library organization, and the Fleetwood Community Theatre Group will have fresh baked apple dumplings. What a feast!

Another one of the keystone features of the Fiddle Fest is our crafter area. With 50-plus crafters and vendors featuring hand-made and musical items, you will want to browse the crafter area to find a treasure to take home. This year we are featuring a new area for young crafters, 18 years of age and under, to display and sell their work. You will want to see what these young crafters can do and support them.

We invite you to bring lawn chairs and blankets and be part of both the experience and tradition of fiddle music and fiddle festivals in Berks County! We look forward to having you at the Fleetwood Community Park on Sunday, Sept 15th for the Berks Fiddle Fest!

For more info, email us berksfiddlefest@gmail.com or find and contact us on Facebook.



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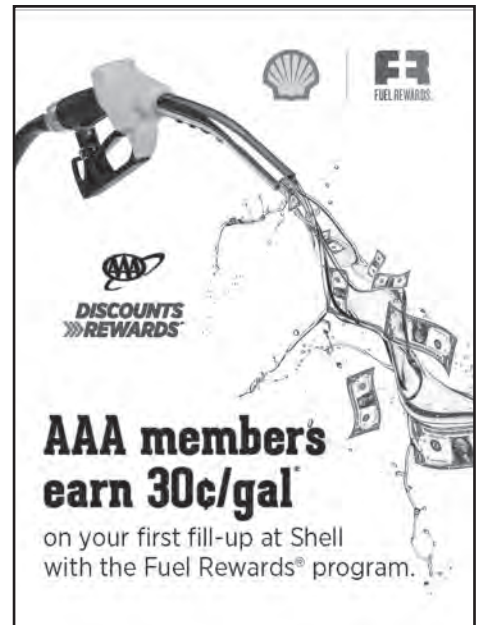
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If Only It Were The Case...

Dear Ask Ed:

I've been in the auto repair business for decades and have seen a lot of changes in vehicles and how to repair them. Just as advanced engineering has changed the look and function of today's modern vehicles, so have the tools and techniques mechanics must use to diagnose issues and perform a correct repair.

The reason I'm writing to you is because the general public doesn't seem to understand how auto technology works and what it can and cannot do to diagnose a "noise", an "odd smell", or other customer-reported driving issue.

I recently had a customer bring a vehicle to me with the MIL on. I talked about the issue with the customer who then basically insisted that I simply plug in my scan tool and fix the problem then and there.

Maybe you can dedicate a future Ask Ed article about this? I'm sure the public would like to know more about their vehicles and the process to repair them, and I know we auto techs would appreciate a better-informed customer.

Thanks for your time.

Ben J.

Dear Ben,

As an automotive tech with more than 40 years of experience, I have also had my share of customers who benefited from a calm and thoughtful explanation of the sometimes complicated "detective" work we need to undertake to correctly diagnose and address an issue. In a world of instant food, instant connections, and instant gratification, it may seem unreasonable to our customers that we cannot

instantly identify and repair a problem with their vehicle.

When addressing this with a customer, it is helpful to compare auto repair to health care. When we visit our doctor, we are typically presenting a symptom – an ache, a cough, a condition, etc. The physician may start the diagnosis process with an x-ray, a blood work-up, or other test. Medical technology has certainly seen amazing advances in the past several decades, but that doesn't mean that additional information isn't required beyond the initial testing. In addition, the physician/technician must know how to interpret the test – what is that



AskEd@aaardgberks.com

shadow on the scan? What does a certain glucose level mean?

It's much the same in the automotive repair world. Yes, we have scan tools to help us narrow down the source of a problem, but the initial scan tool readings are not the whole story. A scan tool, code reader or multimeter is used to interface with, diagnose, and at times reprogram vehicle control modules. A seasoned mechanic knows

how to interpret the tool readings and may enlist industry guides such as ALLDATA, Identifix and Mitchell1 to understand the issue. He will also take into consideration the clues provided by the customer, industry technical service bulletins that might apply, his own observations while performing a road test, and his own

experience and senses (sight, smell, touch and hearing).

While the path to revealing and remedying the cause of an automotive issue is often not a short or straight one, the challenge is something that we seasoned mechanics often enjoy and take a measure of pride in.

I hope this information is helpful. Thanks for writing in. Happy motoring!

Ed

Contact Ed with your automotive question either by email at AskEd@aaardgberks.com or by writing to him at AAA Reading-Berks, 920 Van Reed Road, Wyomissing, PA



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best cruise lines for solo travelers



With plenty of ways to mingle with other passengers (or enjoy some quality alone time), going on a cruise alone is the perfect getaway for solo and single travelers. However, you'll need to do your research before booking since cruising solo can get expensive. Some cruise lines charge single supplements, which means you'll pay extra when traveling alone and staying in a room that's usually meant for two people.

Luckily, as solo cruising has become more popular, certain cruise lines have started to cater to the needs of guests traveling alone and even offer cabins specifically designed for solo cruisers. Read on to discover the best cruise lines for solo travelers.

1. Holland America Cruise Line

Single cabins: Yes

Solo travel perks: Single Partners Program

Known for having some of the best customer service in the industry, it should come as no surprise that Holland America Line is dedicated to providing an exceptional experience to solo travelers onboard their fleet of ships.

The line's newest ships—*Rotterdam*, *Koningsdam* and *Nieuw Statendam*—have twelve single staterooms perfect for solo travelers. Each of these rooms is approximately 127-172 square feet and equipped with full-size and modern amenities. Plus, every single cabin boasts an ocean view, so you can enjoy the scenery during your voyage.

Holland America Line also does a great job at creating an atmosphere of camaraderie on their ships. The Single Partners Program, offered on most voyages, puts on

activities, cocktail parties and mixers for singles and solo travelers to mingle during the cruise. Whether you enjoy exercise classes, wine tastings or trivia, you're sure to meet other travelers with similar interests through this program.

2. Silversea Cruise Line

Single cabins: No

Solo travel perks: Low single supplements

Smaller cruise lines are great for solo travelers since you'll see familiar faces throughout your journey, which can make it easier to strike up conversations and form connections with fellow travelers.

One of the best small cruise lines for solo travelers is Silversea Cruise Line. While they don't offer single cabins, they have extremely low single supplements of just 25 percent on certain voyages. For reference, most cruise lines have single supplements that are 50 percent to 100 percent of the fare, so Silversea's rate is very affordable in comparison.

At the beginning of your voyage, there will be a champagne Welcome Reception which serves as the perfect opportunity to mingle with other solo travelers. During certain journeys, Gentlemen Hosts will be available aboard to welcome solo guests.



3. Royal Caribbean

Single cabins: Yes

Solo travel perks: Solo traveler meet-ups

Royal Caribbean offers studio staterooms on certain ships that are perfect for solo travelers and adult cruisers. When you book one of these rooms, you can avoid paying the typical single supplement fee. These rooms range from 101 square feet to 199 square feet, and you can choose from an inside stateroom, a virtual balcony stateroom or an ocean-view stateroom with a balcony.

Studio staterooms are available on the following ships in their fleet: *Anthem of the Seas*[®], *Brilliance of the Seas*[®], *Quantum of the Seas*[®], *Harmony of the Seas*[®], *Spectrum of the Seas*[®], and *Ovation of the Seas*[®].

Once onboard, Royal Caribbean offers a ton of on-board activities, shows and dining experiences that make it ideal for solo travelers. Plus, they often have meet-ups for solo travelers looking to make friends while onboard.

4. Azamara Cruise Line

Single cabins: No

Solo travel perks: Special rates as low as 25-50% off stateroom fares and gatherings for solo travelers

Azamara Cruise Line operates a fleet of mid-sized ships that journey to destinations all over the world. The cruise line is known for its Destination Immersion[®] experiences that feature intimate ships, access to smaller ports that other cruise ships can't visit and longer stays at ports.

Azamara provides special rates for solo travelers as low as 25-50 percent off stateroom fares. Additionally, they offer thoughtfully created activities and gatherings for solo travelers to socialize with each other onboard.

5. Cunard Cruise Line

Single cabins: Yes

Solo travel perks: Group dining, coffee chats and cocktail parties for solo travelers

Cunard is among the best luxury cruise lines, and it's a great option for solo travelers looking for upscale service, socialization opportunities and elegant staterooms. The cruise line offers single staterooms aboard their *Queen Mary 2*[®], *Queen Victoria*[®] and *Queen Elizabeth*[®] ships. During your time aboard, you'll enjoy 24-hour room service, luxury toiletries and a complimentary bottle of sparkling wine.

The cruise line is also known for its delicious culinary options and for going out of the way to ensure solo travelers have an enjoyable dining experience. While you can always choose to dine solo, they also provide the option to dine with fellow travelers at a shared table. Solo travelers can also attend coffee chats and cocktail parties to socialize with other guests.

6. Viking River Cruises

Single cabins: No

Solo travel perks: Special solo traveler fares

If you're looking to embark on a solo river cruise in

Europe, look no further than Viking River Cruises. The cruise line is known for its immersive journeys sailing through the world's greatest rivers while offering world-class accommodation, incredible customer service and unique cultural events along the way.

While Viking doesn't have single cabins, they will occasionally offer special solo traveler fares. Plus, you can check for other discounts available for the cruises you're interested in to save money on your travels.

7. Seabourn Cruise Line

Single cabins: No

Solo travel perks: Special offers for solo travelers on select voyages

Prefer to feel like you're on a private yacht instead of a cruise ship? The small-ship cruise line, Seabourn provides an intimate experience complete with personalized service, optional shore excursions and entertainment options.

The cruise line offers a discounted single supplement, beginning at just 10% more than current fares for certain voyages and suite categories. The discount is available for cruises to Alaska, Greece, Iceland, Greenland and more.

8. Oceania Cruise Line

Single cabins: Yes

Solo travel perks: Social events and group dining tables

From friendly crew members to social events, The Oceania Cruise Line goes above and beyond to make solo travelers feel at home on their ships. Solo cruisers can attend cocktail parties or opt into group dining to meet other guests onboard. The small ships are also easy to navigate and provide a relaxing atmosphere.

With solo staterooms available aboard the *Vista*[®], *Regatta*[®], *Insignia*[®], *Nautica*[®] and *Sirena*[®] ships, you don't have to worry about solo supplements driving the price up. The accommodations feature private verandas or ocean-view windows as well as many amenities to keep you comfortable during your voyage.

9. Celebrity Cruises

Single cabins: Yes

Solo travel perks: Hosted social events

Celebrity Cruises is another popular cruise line for solo travelers, offering social events to help solo cruisers make new friends. Their itineraries, such as their Bali, Malaysia and Thailand itineraries, are some of the best cruises for solo travelers looking for excitement and adventure.

Celebrity's solo cruise cabins are available on the *Celebrity Edge*[®], *Celebrity Apex*[®], *Celebrity Beyond*[™] and *Celebrity Ascent*[™] ships. Solo travelers can choose between an ocean-view room with a veranda and an inside stateroom. All of the solo rooms come with the same products and services as the regular staterooms.

Consult a AAA Travel Agent to learn more at AAA.com.

Recent DOT Airline Refund Ruling

On April 24, 2024, the Department of Transportation issued a final rule requiring automatic refunds to consumers when a carrier, whether foreign or U.S. based, either cancels or makes a significant change to a scheduled flight to, from, or within the United States and the consumer is not offered or rejects alternative transportation and travel credits, vouchers, or other compensation.

The ruling's purpose is to make it easier for passengers to get a refund under certain conditions such as when an airline cancels or significantly changes a flight, causes a significant delay checking passenger bags, or fails to provide ancillary services purchased by the passenger.

Here are some of the highlights of this ruling. The DOT's press releases announcing the final ruling can be found at www.transportation.gov.

A canceled flight is one that was published in a carrier's Computer Reservation System at the time of the ticket sale but not operated by the carrier. Airlines are to provide refunds due to flight cancellations irrespective of the reason for the cancellation.

A significant flight itinerary change is defined as when:

(1) The passenger is scheduled by the carrier to depart from the origination airport three hours or more (for domestic itineraries) or six hours or more (international itineraries) earlier or later than the original scheduled departure time;

(2) the passenger is scheduled by the carrier to depart from a different origination airport or arrive at a different destination airport;

(3) the passenger is scheduled to travel on an itinerary with more connection points than that of the original itinerary;

(4) the passenger is downgraded to a lower class of service;

(5) the passenger with a disability is scheduled to travel through one or more connecting airports that differ from the original itinerary or is scheduled to travel on a substitute aircraft that results in one or more accessibility features needed by the passenger being unavailable.

The rule also requires all airlines to provide prompt notifications to consumers affected by canceled or significantly changed flights of their right to a refund of the ticket and ancillary fees due to airline-initiated cancellations or significant changes, any offer of alternative transportation or travel credit, vouchers, or other compensation in lieu of a refund, and airline policies on refunds and rebooking when consumers do not respond to carriers' offers of alternative transportation or travel credit, vouchers, or other compensation in lieu of a refund.

Airlines must automatically issue refunds without passengers having to explicitly request a refund. The carriers may also set a reasonable deadline for a consumer to accept or reject a significant change to a flight or an offer of alternative transportation following a significant change or a cancellation.

Airlines and tickets agents who are the merchants of record are also required to refund baggage fees paid when the baggage is delayed.

(1) For domestic itineraries, the refund due when an airline fails to deliver the checked bag within 12 hours of the consumer's flight arriving at the gate and the consumer has filed a Mishandled Baggage Report

(2) For international itineraries where the flight duration of the segment between the U.S. and a point in a foreign country is 12 hours or less, a refund of baggage fee is due when the airline fails to deliver the checked bag within 15 hours of the consumer's flight arriving at the gate and the consumer has filed a Mishandled Baggage Report.

(3) For international itineraries where the flight duration of the segment between the U.S. and a point in a foreign country was over 12 hours, a refund of baggage fee is due when the airline fails to deliver the checked bag within 30 hours of the consumer's flight arriving at the gate and the consumer has filed a Mishandled Baggage Report.



Consumers can feel confident that they will not have to struggle to obtain an airline refund, and also that refunds will be more timely. Under these new regulations, consumers will also be provided upfront information about all costs associated with baggage, change, and cancellation fees.

Even with these added layers of protection, consumers should still consider purchasing travel insurance. This protects trip investments should the consumer encounter unexpected delays and incur costs for hotels, meals, etc.

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Destinations & Diversions

Potter County, “God’s Country”

Did you know that Pennsylvania has its own Grand Canyon? Also known as Pine Creek Gorge, the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania, located in Potter County, is over 1,400 feet deep, 47 miles long and a mile wide. Visitors are treated to a lovely vista from the East Rim at Leonard Harrison State Park. A bit more rugged is the overlook from the west rim in Colton Point State Park. More information on both state parks is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources site, dcnr.pa.gov.

Potter County has so much more to offer! If you plan to check it out, make sure you allow yourself a lot of time to look around. You might catch sight of an elk or two. In fact, Potter County is known as Elk Country. So much so that the Game Commission and DCNR are working to provide safe public viewing sites where wildlife enthusiasts can park and enjoy alternatives to viewing elk along the area’s roadways.

For more fauna appreciation, check out the Sinnemahoning State Park – 1,910 acres of steep valleys and wooded forest straddling Cameron and Potter Counties. The park is long and narrow, following the First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek. Abundant wildlife calling this area home include bald eagles, coyotes, elk and bobcats.

Fishing aficionados should bring their tackle and appetites for fresh fish to the Rainbow Paradise Trout Farm in the heart of Potter County at 1660 E. 2nd Street (Route 6), Coudersport.

No fishing license is required to catch & keep or catch & release on the nine acres of fishing waters. Rainbow, brook, brown, tiger and golden trout are ready to test your fishing skills. Forgot your rod and reel? No worries!

Bait and rod rentals are available. Get more details at rainbowparadisetrout-farm.com.

If you are a history buff, make an effort to visit Austin Dam Park. This dam, also known as the Bayless Dam, was built in 1909 and served the Bayless Pulp and Paper Mill. Its total capacity is listed as 200,000,000 US gallons – the largest dam of its type in the Commonwealth at the time.

The Bayless Pulp and Paper Mill was Austin’s largest industry and major employer. While those who lived in the area were no doubt thankful for the opportunity to earn a wage in a remote area, history shows that some folks questioned the dam’s stability. That misgiving soon became reality.



Check out the 72nd Woodsmen Show August 2, 3 and 4, 2024 at Cherry Springs State Park, Galeton, PA. Ax throw, two-man cross cut, two-man log roll, horse pulls, more!

On September 30, 1911, torrential rains coupled with the dam’s inferior construction resulted in it giving way, sending more than 400 million gallons of water into town and taking more than seventy-eight lives along an eight-mile stretch of destruction and devastation. Learn more about this disaster at pawilds.com/asset/austin-dam.

For those who appreciate one-of-a-kind items, you may want to add The Artisan Center at 227 N. Main Street, Coudersport, to your Potter County visitation itinerary. You’re certain to find a little Potter County keepsake to take home with you at journey’s end.

You’ll find a fetching array of artisans at the Center, including gourd art, fine art paintings and photography, hand-thrown pottery, fiber art, glass art, jewelry and more. The artisans live in and around Potter County or have a “significant local connection”, according to pottercountyartisancenter.com. Artists are featured as Star of the Month, which brings us to another and perhaps the most spectacular attribute of Potter County you surely won’t want to miss.

Due to its exceptionally dark skies, Cherry Springs State Park, 4629 Cherry Springs Road, Coudersport, offers one of the best locations on our side of the country for astronomers – professional and amateur alike. So much so that in 2000 the DCNR named Cherry Springs its first Dark Sky Park.

What makes Cherry Springs so wonderfully magic for stargazers? For one thing, the stargazing field is on the top of a 2,300-foot high mountain and offers a 360-degree view of the night sky. The surrounding area is undeveloped and nearby communities are in the valleys, shielding any light that might affect the park. Lighting inside the park is shielded and all white light has been converted to red.

In addition, the park is located at 41.6501 degrees north, 77.8164 degrees west – providing an incredible view of the nucleus of the Milky Way.

You can find star charts and maps, star gazer guides and sky and telescope website podcasts at dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/FindAPark/CherrySpringsStatePark/Pages/Stargazing.

Potter County and its rich history, verdant flora and prolific wildlife invite you to explore and enjoy.

Five Ways to Save on a Summer Move

If you're considering a move, summer may very well be the best time. Even with some of the weather-related challenges, summer generally means more flexible schedules and a much wider selection of homes and apartments. Even with all these added bonuses, though, it's important to find ways to save money during your summer move. Planning ahead and staying organized can help you save big. Here are a few tips that can help.

1. Get some help

Moving on your own might seem like a great cost-saving measure. However, a moving company can actually address costs you might not have expected and ensure you're making all the right decisions. It's important, then, that you hire only the very best moving company, one that is up front with pricing and can work with you to create the right moving strategy.

2. Pick the right time

Usually, you want to plan for a mid-month move. Since most leases turn over at either the beginning or end of the month, moving smack dab in the middle will help you save a pretty penny. Plus, moving companies won't be as booked with other clients.

3. Plan ahead

No matter where you're moving, it's always important to plan ahead before any summer move. The more leeway you give yourself, the more you can spread out certain expenses. For instance, you can buy higher quality boxes or labels, or you can have extra time to save up funds for a moving company. Part of planning ahead is making sure you stow away essential supplies.

4. Get organized

Just as planning ahead is essential for a cost-effective move, so too is staying organized. On the big day of the move, make sure every box is labeled properly and you have a list for every box or item. Some people will go as far as creating a map of their new home with their belongings indicated.

5. Have a yard sale

The fewer items you have, the more affordable your move will be. Plus, you can expect the process to require much less space or time. Summer is already an excellent time to have a yard sale, and selling a few items can put money back into your pocket. Plus, dealing with less clutter can reduce stress and anxiety during your big move.



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Fast on the Freeway Can Lead to Fury on the Street

Raising speed limits on highways could lead to more crashes on nearby roads, according to new research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. This "spillover effect" creates unintended safety hazards for local communities that might not be involved in the decision-making process to raise the posted speed limit on a nearby highway. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, speeding is a significant safety concern, contributing to almost one-third of road fatalities in the past twenty years.

AAA Foundation researchers investigated whether changes to posted speed limits on interstate highways could cause drivers to adopt risky speeding behaviors on local streets. The study looked at crash data before and after speed limit increases on interstates in Georgia, Michigan, and Oregon. Hot spot analyses were conducted on roads within a one-mile radius of interstates. Researchers found many instances where speed-related crashes increased on nearby roads following the interstate speed limit change, suggesting that drivers exiting the highway continued their faster tendencies.

"Increasing posted speed limits on freeways may improve traffic flow but could also lead to safety concerns in adjacent communities once speeding drivers proceed to neighboring roadways," said Dr. David Yang, president and executive director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. "Local streets around our homes are designed for slower speeds and diverse road users such as pedestrians and cyclists—not for speeding drivers."

AAA recommends a multi-pronged approach to combat speeding behavior:

- Education - Public awareness campaigns focused on riskiest drivers.
- Technology - Equitably placed automated speed enforcement and screening tools.
- Road Design - Narrower lanes, speed humps, roadway landscaping, and curb extensions.

By taking a proactive approach, transportation officials can create safer road networks for all communities. The AAA Foundation's research reinforces the importance of the Safe System Approach (SSA). The SSA is a strategic way of leveraging the engineering and behavioral countermeasures proven effective at preventing traffic crashes and the injuries that can result from them. Read more about the USDOT's SSA plan at transportation.gov/NRSS/SafeSystem. Explore the Foundation's guide for implementing the SSA in your community at aaafoundation.org.

"This research has uncovered an unintended but potentially lethal consequence of raising highway speed limits," said Jake Nelson, AAA's director of traffic safety advocacy. "With the U.S. near a record-high traffic death toll, road authorities can use these findings and an effective tool to pinpoint lifesaving solutions to help ensure that we all get home safely each day."

Previous speeding research by the AAA Foundation found that raising posted highway speed limits is associated with increased crash frequencies in some situations. At the same time, changes in travel times were small in response to both raised and lowered speed limits.

KEY FINDINGS



CRASH RISKS RISE

The research identified a rise in concentrations of crash clusters or "hot spots" on some local roads following interstate speed limit increases.



NEW TOOLS SAVE

The study utilized a spatial analysis method to pinpoint high-risk areas. This tool can help transportation agencies identify potential speeding problems before more crashes occur.



COLLABORATION IS KEY

The research encourages coordination between state and local transportation departments to make a more concerted effort to engage with impacted communities.

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