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937-548-5158 • [www.VisitDarkeCounty.org](http://www.VisitDarkeCounty.org)  
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**STATE TOURISM ORGANIZATION RECOGNIZES DARKE COUNTY EFFORTS**

DUBLIN, OH (October 11, 2012) – The Darke County Visitors Bureau was presented with two RUBY (Recognizing Uncommon Brilliance) Citations of Excellence Awards during the Ohio Travel Association's annual Conference on Tourism in Dublin, Ohio on October 11, 2012.

The first award presented to the bureau was in the Visitor Guide Category, with a budget of less than \$300,000.

"It is a huge honor to receive this award since our budget is less than half of most of our peers in this category," stated Deanna York, designer of the guide and executive director of the Darke County Visitors Bureau.

In designing the Official Visitors Guide for Darke County, two main objectives were set: 1.) solid messaging that would reflect that Darke County carries and delivers a spirited, urban-country vibe - keeping the messages clear, spirited and targeted, and 2.) strong emotional appeal - use of more imagery and storytelling throughout the guide to transport readers into the experience and content spoken in the piece.

"The Official Visitors Guide for Darke County was designed to resemble the look and feel of a lifestyle magazine. The cover titles invite readers to open the magazine and discover the urban-country spirit of Darke County," stated York, "When developing the layout and feel of the guide, one of the main ideas was to share the warm hospitality and smiling faces found in our community."

The 40,000 copies printed will be distributed over an 18 month period to individuals interested in discovering all that Darke County has to offer. The guides will be on display and available at tourist information centers, attractions, accommodations and restaurants across the State of Ohio. Local folks are encouraged to stop by the Visitors Bureau in downtown Greenville to pick up copies for family reunions, weddings or for visiting friends and family, or visit any one of the brochure racks located in attractions, accommodations and restaurants across Darke County. Guides are also available at local festivals and events, and by calling the bureau at (937) 548-5158 or via email at [info@visitdarkecounty.org](mailto:info@visitdarkecounty.org). Information and daily updates are also available on Facebook on the bureau's fan page, "Darke County Visitors Bureau."

The second award presented to the Darke County Visitors Bureau was in the Website Category, with a budget category of under \$300,000.

The objectives of the Darke County website were two-fold: 1.) to share and present all relevant and important information in the most appealing manner and 2.) make it as easy as possible for the visitor to quickly find, search for and retrieve the information to enjoy the online experience while on the website. Travelers searching for ideas on day trips, extended stays or relaxing getaway weekends in western Ohio will find a wealth of information and entertainment thanks to a redesign of **VisitDarkeCounty.org**, Darke County's travel and tourism website. Visitors will find a comprehensive online photo and video library showcasing Darke County in fabulous mid-western hospitality and small town charm. The website boasts a new "searchability" feature for visitors to browse the county's extensive database of calendar of events, dates, and other specific categories of interest; including a full host of shops, restaurants and accommodations.

"The new website captures the legendary spirit of Darke County and supports the bureau's mission to enhance the economic growth of Darke County through the promotion and development of tourism," stated Larry Boos, Chairman of the Darke County Visitors Bureau Board of Trustees.

The Darke County Visitors Bureau has been a member of The Ohio Travel Association for 15 years. In addition, Executive Director, Deanna York served on this state board for 2 terms, and holds the honor of 2011 graduate of the Ohio Tourism Leadership Academy.

To learn more about Darke County Tourism, go online to [VisitDarkeCounty.org](http://VisitDarkeCounty.org).

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