



*Commissioner DiFrancesco has been an ardent supporter of the county's many natural and cultural assets, including the county's own Wildwood Lake Sanctuary, shown here. The Commissioners hope to revamp the county website to showcase some of these hidden treasures.*

## Commissioners answer call to upgrade emergency communications system

The Dauphin County Commissioners recently gave the green light to a three-year plan to upgrade and improve the county's emergency communications system. This system includes everything from remote tower sites to the radios police officers use at the scene of a crime. Putting the system in place came only after the commissioners sought the expert advice and input of police, fire and emergency medical service crews.

"Hurricane Katrina taught the country what could happen if we aren't adequately prepared to handle an emergency," said Commissioner Jeff Haste. "Our communications system is the key to responding effectively to emergencies, and its importance cannot be overlooked."

"We want to enable police, firefighters and other emergency responders in the county to communicate with each other through a much simpler system, and

that will save lives," said Commissioner Nick DiFrancesco. "Right now, the system is riddled with dead spots, where a firefighter trapped in a burning building or a police officer asking for back-up cannot get signal. The county-wide network will be stronger and more effective, and outside agencies will be able to tie in more quickly and easily."

"As we commemorate the fifth anniversary of 9-11, we are vividly reminded of the importance of communications when it comes to saving lives," said Commissioner George Hartwick III. "Terrorist attacks and natural disasters graphically illustrate the need to keep first-responders connected to each other and to people in trouble."

*To find out more about the emergency communications project, log onto [www.dauphincounty.org](http://www.dauphincounty.org) and look for the "emergency communications upgrade" link under Emergency Management Agency (EMA).*

Commissioners Office  
2 South Second Street, 4th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

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## Dauphin County Aims to Brighten Business Climate

By Commissioner George Hartwick III



We have always been proud of Dauphin County's remarkably low unemployment rate, which is now hovering at around four percent. But the simple fact remains: we can do better. Our county has remarkable advantages, thanks to its strategic location, transportation infrastructure and workforce that is second to none. It's time to use those advantages. To that end, the talented members who comprise the county's newly constituted Business Climate/Workforce Development Task Force settled on a number of outstanding recommendations, including:

- Apply for a \$150,000 Industry Partnership Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry with support from the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to bring together county faith-based and community development programs that have a workforce development component in a consortium to establish efficiencies and economies of scale.
- Formalize ties between Dauphin DCED, the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, Harrisburg Mayor's Office of Economic

Development and a point person to serve as the point of contact for Workforce Development within the County. Workforce development and economic development must be linked.

- Focus on young people and link them to both job opportunities and quality of life in the region. We recommend that it start at the senior high school level and include an electronic communication mechanism to stay in touch with high school graduates as they continue their education and careers.
- Continue the work of this subcommittee of this Task Force to develop a Legacy Structure of Economic Development for Dauphin County with regional implications and/or economies of scale to save tax dollars where possible that could be properly researched and implemented beginning in 2007, along with specific goals listed below.

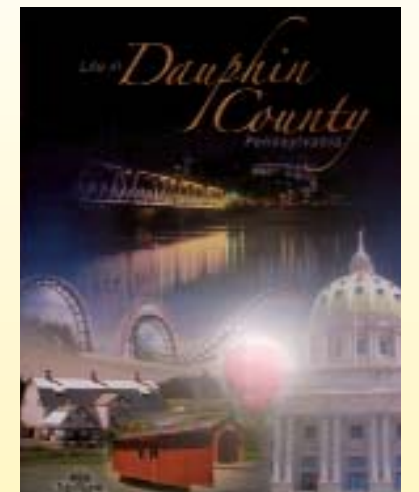
**We are going to work aggressively on these recommendations through 2007 to make Dauphin County a better place to live and raise a family.**

Dauphin County is preparing a colorful new update of our popular Door into Dauphin County book, which has flown off our shelves. If you would like to reserve an advance copy of the new Life in Dauphin County book, scheduled to appear in January 2007, please send us your address below. Get it before we run out!

Yes, please reserve me a copy.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_



Send to Dauphin County Commissioners, 2 S. Second Street, 4th floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101

## Real Estate/Infrastructure Task Force Hits the Roads

By Jeff Haste

The Real Estate/Infrastructure Task Force worked for several months on devising ways to improve Dauphin County's transportation system for commerce and private use. To that end, our task force came up with several recommendations that we are aggressively working on, including:

- Promoting best practices to alleviate congestion;
- Coordinating land development planning to ensure transportation issues are minimized. Development doesn't have to mean traffic problems;
- Studying the need for dedicated travel lanes;
- Revamping the county website to include user profiles, so that the system would target them to the information they may need, and to do a better job in marketing economic development;
- Having the ability to access necessary documentation, from the Recorder of Deeds office, on-line;
- Formulating a template for local government on how to proceed with public/private partnerships.

Giving local governments a template like this will provide direction to officials who are new to government, as well as educate them on the process of working together to foster appropriate development. Too often, the development process can be rushed and the result can be disappointing to residents. This template, increased access to county information on the website, and the move to coordinating transportation needs and development will help improve the quality of life for all Dauphin County residents.



*Commissioner Hartwick presided over the ribbon-cutting of a new Coldwell Banker office on Front Street in Susquehanna Township. The ribbon-cutting is one of many that illustrate the vitality and growth of the region in recent years, broadening services and the tax base and improving the quality of life for us all.*



*Commissioners Hartwick, Haste and DiFrancesco (left to right) all take notes during budget hearings, trying to root out spending excesses and operating inefficiencies. Since the Commissioners took office, they have stabilized the county's finances through bold cost-cutting, strong management, smarter investing and the pursuit of outside revenue sources, helping county taxpayers struggling to pay their tax bills.*

*Jeff Haste does a Fox 43 interview on the county's affordable housing program, which allows first-time homebuyers who meet certain income guidelines to receive help with their down payment. For additional information on the program and its eligibility guidelines, please call (717) 780-6250.*



## Try Dauphin County for Free

**You've finally caught up on housework, homework and the dozens of other tasks on your "to-do" list. Now you want to do something fun, and, hopefully, free.**

Try these exciting, enriching, **no-cost** activities in Dauphin County this fall and winter:

- **The Dauphin County Library System.** Escape the pressures of real-life through the pages of a book, surf the Internet, rent a DVD or CD, or take part in some of the library's many free programs at one of their nine branches.
- **Fort Hunter Park.** This historic site along the Susquehanna River, dating back to the French and Indian War, is a gracious monument to days gone by. The Victorian-era mansion, restored barn, church, stable, and tavern house illustrate the genteel life of the 1800s. The Mansion is decked out for the holidays in fragrant holiday greenery, and the barn hosts a toy train exhibit, frequent craft shows and a holiday shop.
- **Wildwood Lake Sanctuary.** Stroll through this scenic wetland to look for rare birds, delicate flowers, and an array of amphibians and animals. Many guided tours are available. Stop in the Olewine Nature Center for a souvenir, view the exhibits or talk with a naturalist.
- **The Capitol Building.** This magnificent building, now a full century old, still inspires oohs and aahs, no matter how often you have looked up into the color-splashed Rotunda and stately House and Senate chambers.
- **State Museum.** This museum is a hidden gem, depicting Pennsylvania's fascinating history, and has a special new children's section.
- **Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art.** The galleries and trails are free in this rustic Millersburg site, honoring one of Dauphin County's own, Ned Smith, hailed as one of the greatest nature artists of all time.
- **Art Association of Harrisburg.** See local talent on display in paintings and photographs, in this scenic Front Street location.
- **Chocolate World.** This cocoa-scented ride through the chocolate-making process is newly renovated and better than ever.

With gas prices soaring and temperatures dropping, day trips close to home are more appealing than ever. Come see what Dauphin County has to offer right here in our own backyard.

## Quality of Life is Focus of Task Force

By Nick DiFrancesco

We have a great quality of life here in Dauphin County, but that doesn't mean we can't make it better. Gallery Walk, Restaurant Row, the many new movie theaters and stores in the area –all combine to make the county a culturally rich spot to relax and unwind. We also need to do a better job of telling people everything that Dauphin County has to offer. Our Quality of Life Task Force devised some excellent recommendations to help us achieve these worthy goals. Here are some of the recommendations that were made:

- Develop a county events campaign to highlight special events taking place on any given week in Dauphin County.
- Form a Dauphin County Sports and Entertainment Commission. This Commission would work on bringing many different sporting competitions into Dauphin County. Ideas given were golf tournaments, fishing tournaments, double-header basketball games, etc. that would give Dauphin County exposure and attract tourism.
- Revamp the county website to provide more information and links on tourism venues throughout Dauphin County. The idea is to make this information more easily accessible, perhaps with the help of a forward-thinking tool like a "virtual concierge."

We have taken a giant leap forward by overhauling our website, with the results to be unveiled soon. In this day and age, we must think creatively and innovatively about how people access information and communicate ideas. The web is a precious resource that we hope to tap into and utilize for better public education, promotion and dialogue. My fellow commissioners and I truly believe we have only scratched the surface of what can be done to promote tourism and the enviable quality of life that exists here in Dauphin County. We intend to work hard during the course of the next year to put these recommendations to work!