

For Immediate Release

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### **Canton Stark County Convention & Visitors' Bureau**

(STARK COUNTY) The Mission of the Canton Stark County Convention & Visitors Bureau is to attract, orient and serve visitors and to educate local residents and initiate projects and programs that promote and grow tourism. The Bureau (CVB) was founded in 1980 and is primarily funded by a countywide lodging tax. It consists three departments (Convention, Tourism, and Sports Marketing) and employs seven full-time staff. The CVB has promoted Stark County as "America's Playing Field" and as "Ohio's Golf Capital". The sports arm of the Bureau has hosted the Ohio High School Athletic Association State Football Championships for the past sixteen years, and has brought sports events as diverse as baseball, boccie, karate, darts, billiards, and swimming and diving championships to the area. The conventions hosted by the Bureau have ranged from military reunions and business meetings to prestigious organizations like the Ohio Society of Association Executives and the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. The CVB's tourism efforts extend beyond motorcoach tracking to front line training and local awareness programs.

The Bureau has won numerous marketing, advertising, and promotional awards presented by various tourism-related associations in which the staff is active. These groups include the International Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (IACVB), the Ohio Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (OACVB), the National Tour Association (NTA), the American Bus Association (ABA), the Ohio Society of Association Executives (OSAE), and Meeting Professionals International (MPI).

Bureau staffers today serve on boards and committees as diverse as the Western Reserve Tourism Council and the Ohio and Erie Canalway Marketing Committee, all with an eye to increasing tourism in Ohio and in Stark County.

The Bureau strategic plan and subsequent individual and departmental goals have been structured to assist all facets of Stark County tourism. Many program components are used to achieve the Bureau's goals: advertising, newsletters, websites, calendars, guides, partnerships, seminars, familiarization tours, local awareness campaigns, speaking engagements, press releases, a Tourist Information Center next to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, a Visitor Information Center located in the Akron-Canton Regional Airport, and the 530 AM tourist information radio station along Interstate 77.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau will strive in the future, as in the past, to promote the many attractions, sports arenas, and meeting venues that Stark County has to offer, and will continue to seek the day visitors and overnight tourists who wish to explore the quaint shops of Amish country, experience the exhilaration of an authentic canal boat ride, examine the nooks and crannies of Underground Railroad stopovers, or extract all the thrills that professional football has to offer. The CVB's job is to help make folks happy. You can't ask for a better job than that!

The Bureau is a department of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, a 501(c)6 organization, and is located at 222 Market Avenue North, Canton, OH 44702. The phone number is 1-800-533-4302 or 330-454-1439 and the website is [www.cantonstarkcvb.com](http://www.cantonstarkcvb.com).

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