

DESTINATION DOOR COUNTY

AUGUST 2024

Community Outreach & Destination Alignment

The Door County Trail Initiative continues to move forward with the formation of a 501c3 status to support trail development in Door County supported by DDC Community Engagement Manager. The Door County Trail Initiative was formally accepted into the UW-Platteville student Engineering program. Student work will begin in September on proposed design of the Bayshore Trail.

Six **accessibility mini-grants** have been awarded since this new DDC program was **launched** in late July. The following organizations have received grants: DC Laundromat, Midsummer's Music, Renard's Artisan Cheese, Door County Escapes, LLC, County of Door and the Lodgings at Pioneer Lane. There is no deadline to apply, but a limited number of grants are available in 2024. There's a special **info sheet available** and all applications are handled **online** through DDC.

The DDC team along with the Administrator from the Door County Tourism Zone met with 3 municipalities in August (Town of Gibraltar, Town of Baileys Harbor, Village of Forestville) and provided updates on DDC related programming, receiving positive feedback and support.

DDC attended 5 events in August with a special DDC information booth with visitor info and DDC related programming info. The events included Egg Harbor's Farmer's Market, Door County Festival of Fine Arts, Sturgeon Bay's Harmony by the Bay, Ephraim's Bondemarked and Sister Bay Marina Fest.

Sustainable Development

Our sixth round of **Community Investment Fund** grant awards were **announced on August 8, 2024**, and included five impactful community projects which received a total of \$256,190, including:

- New accessible bathrooms and concessions with running water, which will provide the Kolberg Athletic Club greater offerings and accommodations for baseball games, sports camps and community events in Southern Door (\$100,000)
- A new pedestrian trail in North Ephraim, which will provide a safer route for foot traffic within the village of Ephraim and between neighboring communities (\$50,000)
- Support for the Door County Historical Society to reconstruct the barn and summer kitchen at Eagle Bluff Lighthouse, enhancing historical accuracy and increasing visitor engagement at this iconic site (\$50,000)
- Support for the Door County YMCA to purchase and install a new swim meet timing system and displays at their Sturgeon Bay aquatic center, increasing opportunities to host more swim meets that bring in swimmers from throughout the state of Wisconsin (\$50,000)
- Creation of new outdoor exhibits on the Belgian Heritage Center's campus that will help visitors learn about the history, buildings and cemetery found at the site (\$6,190)

Any 501c3, 501c6 or local unit of government interested in applying for a Community Investment Fund grant is encouraged to reach out to the Door County Community Foundation to schedule an appointment to discuss their idea and begin preparing an application. The next grant application deadline is **Monday September 23, 2024**.

A compiled list of every grant that has been awarded through this program is available at DoorCounty.com/CIF.



Sustainable Development

In collaboration with Door County’s Community Business Associations, and to align with the Door County [Destination Stewardship Plan](#), DDC piloted a new “green” initiative at Sturgeon Bay’s Harmony By The Bay on August 21, and followed it up with a booth at Sister Bay’s Marina Fest on August 31. The new initiative aims to provide free water to festival and event attendees using compostable cups with the intention of minimizing single use plastic bottles. At Marina Fest, DDC staff and volunteers dispensed over 4,400 ounces of water into 400 compostable cups and 59 reusable water bottles, saving 265 single use plastic bottles from going into a landfill. DDC is also scheduled to set up a water station booth at Autumnfest in Baileys Harbor, Harvest Fest in Sturgeon Bay and Fall Fest in Sister Bay, and the initiative will expand in 2025 to better support the environment at more community-based festivals and events throughout Door County.



Values Based Marketing

PAID MEDIA GENERAL LEISURE OVERVIEW

In August, our paid media efforts drove 5.8 million impressions and 98K clicks to DoorCounty.com. Year-to-date, we’ve totaled 56.3 million impressions and 788K clicks.

2025 DRAFT PAGE IS LIVE!

Toward the end of August, we were able to go live with our 2025 Draft landing page. This page will serve two important purposes. First, the content has been thoughtfully curated and designed for SEO purposes to help ensure we are driving high-intent traffic to our site to explore lodging and activities available before, during and after the Draft. Second, we’ll utilize this page as more details and promotional opportunities for partners become available. www.DoorCounty.com/Draft



FALL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AUGUST 5th

The launch of the fall ‘feelings’ campaign included the use of fall imagery, Art in the Door winning artwork and illustrations layered with geo- and interest-based targeting to drive site traffic, site engagement and Book Direct referrals.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Sitewide, URL clicks totaled 119K (up 2.5% YoY) and impressions totaled 6.3 million (up 15.3% YoY). While we saw YoY increases this month, zero-click searches (user’s search shows a result that directly answers the query on the search engine results page) continue to impact all search results. We are in the process of optimizing our ‘/newsletter’ pages by adding maps to top-performing pages and including a newsletter CTA (call-to-action) on top landing pages to assist with page rankings.

SEM (Search Engine Marketing)

Shifting the SEM campaigns to the Max Conversions bid strategy continues to prove effective, as both the General Leisure and Near-Me campaigns experienced significant YoY growth in booking widget submissions, +247% YoY and +655% YoY, respectively.

Organic Social

We’re working through numbers, but we saw an increase in engagement on all of our visitor channels MoM. TikTok saw the largest increase with a 593% increase. We purchased a social cellphone and gave all staff and community coordinators the number. This has helped tremendously in staff capturing not only partner facing content, but also visitor content.

Values Based Marketing

TRAVEL WISCONSIN CO-OP ADVERTISING

We teamed up with Travel Wisconsin for a Milwaukee out-of-home co-op campaign. The ‘Wonders of Wisconsin’ billboard campaign ran from July 8 to August 4 in Milwaukee, capitalizing on large events in the area during that time. Eagle Tower was one of the featured ‘wonders’. By leveraging a shared investment with the state, we were able to maximize brand reach and visibility receiving over 1 million impressions.

Additionally, we took advantage of the value-add bus wrap opportunity which ran concurrently with the billboard campaign garnering additional impressions and brand awareness.



MIDWEST LIVING ROAD RALLY

Door County hosted the Midwest Living Road Rally team August 29-30 as part of their 4-day driving tour of Wisconsin. The Road Rally included Door County, Milwaukee, and Lake Geneva. They captured photos and social content throughout their planned itinerary which included kayaking, a visit to Cana Island, Sturgeon Bay art galleries, and more. The featured article will be available in print and digitally in the spring of 2025.

AUGUST PRESS TRIP

We hosted 8 journalists from both the USA and Canada on an arts/outdoor recreation themed press trip, August 25 -28. Journalists experienced shows at Fishstock, Northern Sky, and Peninsula Players. They also enjoyed exploring with Door County Adventure Rafting and gallery stops at Popelka Trenchard, M.Anderson, Capparet, and Edgewood. Coordinators from Baileys Harbor, Fish Creek, and Egg Harbor were able to join while journalists were in their communities.

Partner Services

In preparation for the printing of the 2025 Official Door County Destination Guide, throughout the month of August DDC staff worked to notify all partners that participated in the 2024 guide and make sure they had received a [contract](#) for the 2025 edition. Beginning this year, only electronic contracts were available, so there was some additional support needed to walk some partners through the new contract process. Additional outreach was also made to new partners and organizations to alert them of the advertising opportunities available in the 2025 Official Door County Destination Guide.

DDC staff collaborated and worked to produce our [August partner newsletter](#), which deployed via email on August 2. This monthly electronic newsletter, which provides and shares a variety of information about the organization and what’s happening in the tourism industry, is one of DDC’s many ongoing efforts to encourage greater community engagement and understanding.

SAVE THE DATE

- SEPT 14 DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN PRESENTATION DURING BOOKMOBILE, BOOKS & BOOYAH EVENT
10 AM @ BELGIAN HERITAGE CENTER, BRUSSELS
- SEPT 28 LEAVE NO TRACE EDUCATION SESSION FOR VISITORS & RESIDENTS
11:30 AM @ HERITAGE VILLAGE (CROSSROADS AT BIG CREEK), STURGEON BAY
- OCT 26 LEAVE NO TRACE EDUCATION SESSION FOR LOCAL LAND MANAGERS
12:00 PM @ WHITE CEDAR NATURE CENTER, PENINSULA STATE PARK
- OCT 29 DDC 2024 ANNUAL GATHERING EVENT
NORTHERN HAUS, SISTER BAY
- NOV 7 LEAVE NO TRACE VIRTUAL EDUCATION SESSION FOR BUSINESSES
8:30 AM VIA ZOOM, INTERNET

Stay in the know!
Subscribe to DDC’s
partner newsletter.



<https://bit.ly/ddcnews>