

# DESTINATION DOOR COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 2024

## Community Outreach & Destination Alignment

We published our third [Tourism News & Insights newspaper section](#) of the year, which was distributed to every household in the September 13, 2024 issue of the Peninsula Pulse newspaper. We also shared the [digital version](#) on our social channels.

Our first Door County Destination Stewardship Plan [outreach event](#) was held on September 14 in conjunction with the Belgian Heritage Center at their Southern Door location. Local elected officials were invited by email and phone call.

The first of three DDC sponsored [Leave No Trace education sessions](#) was held on Sept. 28th in partnership with the Door County Historical Society at their Heritage Village location. Attendance was light but the training went well.

DDC staff attended 5 events in September with a DDC information booth. The events included the Jacksonport Farmers Market (9/10), Sturgeon Bay's Harmony by the Bay (9/11), Autumnfest in Baileys Harbor (9/14), the Baileys Harbor Farm Market (9/15) and Destination Sturgeon Bay's Harvest Fest (9/21). DDC staff also gave public presentations to the Rotary Club of Sturgeon Bay, the Third Avenue Discussion Group in Sturgeon Bay and at the Belgian Heritage Center in Southern Door.

DDC was a sponsor of the Door County Economic Development Corporation's [Workforce Development Conference](#) on September 20, with key staff attending the event as well.

Following up on a grant DDC wrote to help with the Bayshore Trail creation, students from the UW Platteville program were in Gibraltar working on design for portions of the Bayshore Trail. A final presentation is set for Dec. at a Gibraltar Town meeting.

Seven [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 (2) and the Lodgings at Pioneer Lane. There's a special [info sheet available](#) and all applications are handled [online](#) through DDC.

## Sustainable Development

We presented ceremonial big checks from our [Community Investment Fund](#) to recent grant recipients including the Village of Ephraim, the Door County Historical Society and the Björklunden campus of Lawrence University in Baileys Harbor. We also got an update from the Sturgeon Bay School District, which received a grant award to help fund the installation of a new ADA accessible playground with serenity areas at Sunrise School, and they anticipate their project will be completed by mid-October. A list of every grant that has been awarded through this program is available at [DoorCounty.com/CIF](https://DoorCounty.com/CIF).



Above: recent Community Investment Fund ceremonial big check presentations and project update pictures.

## Sustainable Development

In collaboration with Door County’s Community Business Associations, Destination Door County is supporting the [Annual Winter Gear drive](#) to provide warm winter outerwear for Door County children. We are working with our business partners and schools to expand our collection reach to deliver more winter coats. This drive runs through December, with several drop off locations throughout the county.

Destination Door County’s new water initiative made a splash at [Destination Sturgeon Bay’s Harvest Fest](#) on Saturday September 21. With the warm temperatures and sunny skies, our visitors sure brought their thirst! Thanks to the help of our volunteer, Karen Berndt, Sue was able to dispense almost 400 cups of water (in compostable cups), fill 40 water bottles and save more than 230 plastic water bottles from the landfill. Thank you to the Door County Compost Initiative for composting our cups! We also brought our water station to Baileys Harbor’s Autumnfest on September 14, and will be at Pumpkin Patch in Egg Harbor and at Fall Fest in Sister Bay in October.



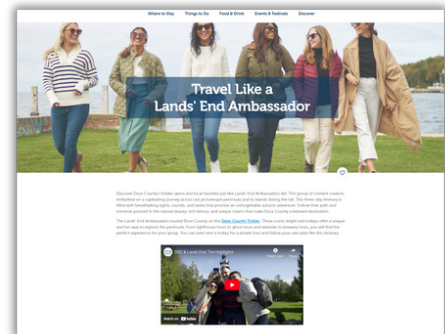
## Values Based Marketing

### PAID MEDIA GENERAL LEISURE OVERVIEW

In September, our paid media efforts drove 5 million impressions and 89.7K clicks to DoorCounty.com. Year-to-date, we’ve totaled 60.9 million impressions and 870K clicks.

### Lands’ End Fall Itinerary and Video

We utilized the content we captured during our 2023 Lands’ End partnership to highlight Door County this fall through a [Lands’ End Ambassador-inspired](#) itinerary and video to drive users to learn more and encourage fall bookings. This was distributed via our monthly eNewsletter and shared via social channels.



### 2024-2025 Winter Guide

The latest Winter Guide became available Sept 23rd. Our visitor information staff will oversee guide requests and mailings, distribution within the county and offer the guide to visitors at our welcome center. The guide serves as an inspirational piece to encourage winter visitation and an informational piece for visitors looking for business hours/availability, activity ideas, and more. [View Online.](#)

### SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Sitewide, URL clicks totaled 92.3K (up .1% YoY) and impressions totaled 5.4 million (up 21.8% YoY). While we saw YoY increases this month, Google AI overview expansion is leading to an overall decrease in clicks but an increase in impressions. These AI Overviews are effective at serving top-of-funnel intent and focus on delivering information versus prompting clicks into the website. We continue to explore opportunities to ensure visibility for DoorCounty.com.

### Parks Challenge - Meta

September proved to be a standout month for the campaign, achieving its highest CTR to date at 1.03%. This success is due to refined targeting to layer in household income and frequent travelers who are interested in outdoor activities.





## Values Based Marketing

### Monthly eNewsletters

September’s email open rate across three email sends (monthly, winter guide announcement, winter guide follow up) was well above the industry average (20%) reaching 36%. We continue to segment our monthly newsletter deployments into three engagement groups to monitor and nurture low/unengaged leads.

This year, to follow up with subscribers who engaged with the Winter Guide announcement, we deployed an automated email that featured winter-specific content, including email-exclusive content. Email engagement saw a 65% open rate and 10% click-through rate for this campaign (industry average is 2.5%).

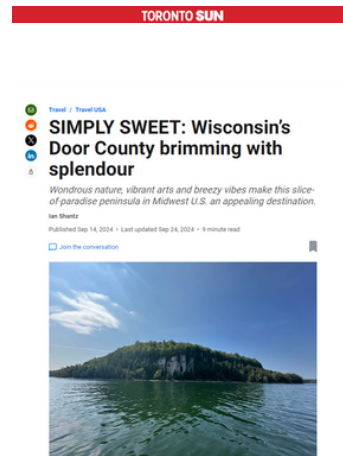


### Organic Social

This month we saw an engagement rate of 4.3% between Facebook and Instagram. The best post on Facebook this month was a fall festival post that had 34K impressions and was shared 168 times. For Instagram our “National Coffee Day” post did very well with 29k views, 295 shares, 224 saves, 20k impressions, and 1,535 likes. As we build our TikTok up its interesting to see that male vs. female user is almost half and half.

We hosted Denver-based content creator @theamandabittner in September. She shared with her 133k followers a weekend in Door County that included kayaking, a fish boil, lighthouses, and all the gorgeous scenery in Door County.

### Media Hits



It was a great month for large media hits. The Experience Wisconsin and Toronto Sun articles were a result of our press trip program. The writers were here in May and August of this year. The New York Times piece was fun because the writer had visited Door County many times. The article was also shared on NYT’s social pages as well.

## SAVE THE DATE

- 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  
[DOORCOUNTY.COM/RSVP](https://doorcounty.com/rsvp)
- 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.



DoorCounty.com/rsvp