

Blackwater Falls State Park Begins Online Ticket Sales for Popular Sled Run

Early Reservations Advised as Tickets Are Expected to Sell Out Quickly

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The eagerly awaited sled run at Blackwater Falls State Park is set to kick off its winter season, and enthusiasts can now secure advance tickets conveniently through the official website wvstateparks.com. In past years, tickets have gone quickly, so advanced reservations are strongly recommended.

"The sled run remains a cherished attraction among West Virginia's state parks, and we're thrilled to extend a warm welcome to all for yet another season of exhilarating winter activities and family bonding," said Brad Reed, Chief of West Virginia State Parks. "Given the enormous popularity of our sled run, which for many has become an annual family tradition, and the rapid sell-out of tickets in the past, we strongly encourage everyone to reserve their tickets online well ahead of time this year. This way, they can plan their visits and fully savor the winter wonders Blackwater Falls offers."

Operating from December 23 to March 5, 2024, Wednesdays through Sundays (weather permitting), the sled run will also observe extended hours during the holiday week between Christmas and New Year's, as well as on Martin Luther King Jr. and Presidents' Day. Any updates to the season schedule will be promptly shared on West Virginia State Parks' official website and social media channels.

For the 2023 season, session tickets are priced at \$28 for weekdays and \$33 for weekends and holidays. Each session spans two hours and is available at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 4 p.m. on weekdays, with an additional 7 p.m. session

on Fridays, Saturdays and holiday Sundays.

Guests are requested to arrive at least 20 minutes before their scheduled session for a mandatory safety briefing. Adequate winter attire, including snow-protective outerwear, is strongly recommended. The park will provide sleds and all necessary equipment.

The quarter-mile sled run is equipped with illuminating lights for nighttime sledding and features a convenient magic carpet that easily transports riders and their sleds back to the hilltop. Guests and spectators alike can enjoy the cozy atmosphere of the recently refurbished warming hut and patio equipped with an enticing selection of warm beverages, snacks, and retail items for sale.

For those seeking alternative winter adventures, Blackwater Falls State Park also offers cross-country skis and snowshoes for rent. For detailed information regarding the sled run or to secure your tickets in advance, please visit wvstateparks.com/blackwater-falls-sled-run.

About West Virginia State Parks
West Virginia's state parks and forests are the vacation destination of choice for more than 7 million people each year. Made up of 36 parks, 9 forests and three rail trails, the West Virginia State Parks system provides endless opportunities for family fun and adventure. Make memories that last forever. Book your adventure at www.wvstateparks.com.

West Virginia State Parks is managed by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, a division of the West Virginia Department of Commerce.

DHHR's BCSE Announces New Electronic Payment Method

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), Bureau for Child Support Enforcement (BCSE) today announced a new electronic payment method for child support using SmartPay.

Child support payers and employers are able to make a one-time or recurring electronic bank draft payment with no fees or a one-time debit or credit card payment at wv.smartchildsupport.com or by calling 1-855-303-0094. The electronic payment method utilized previously, PayConnexion, is no longer available.

"This secure SmartPay method will make it easier and more convenient for parents to fulfill their child support obligations," said Garrett Jacobs, BCSE Commissioner. "The upgrade is part of BCSE's commitment to ensuring the well-being of children and simplifying the child support process."

Parents and employers who choose to pay by mail may continue to do so using a check or money order along with a payment coupon for parents or a Wage Assignment Transmittal for employers to: Bureau for Child Support Enforcement, PO Box 247, Charleston, WV 25321.

For more information on DHHR's Bureau for Child Support Enforcement, visit dhhr.wv.gov/bcse. To view and apply for career opportunities to support West Virginia families, visit dhhr.wv.gov/Pages/Career-Opportunities.aspx.

Local History Celebrated in Town of Davis

Twenty-two new historic signs, featuring high-quality images from the past, have recently been erected in the Tucker County, WV Town of Davis. The signs were officially unveiled on October 6, 2023, when a festive crowd of several dozen people met at 3:00 PM at the Davis Town Hall.

A brief talk about the history behind the signs was followed by a walking tour of William Avenue -- which has twelve of the new signs. Participants enjoyed pointing out historic images -- including long-gone relatives and friends. Mary Quattro pointed out photos of her grandmother and aunts in the sign illustrating the Davis Lunch Restaurant and Jim's Bar. Mary herself is pictured dressed as a 5-year-old princess in the 4th of July float.

Tour participant Pete Barner's family appears on two signs in front of the old Shop and Save. Both grandfathers and his parents are shown. Pete, as a fifth grader, is mentioned in a story about the Coketon "Colored School," which he attended.

The tour ended with cake and lemonade -- and for some people, a meal at Sirianni's. Judy Rodd, the Director of Friends of Blackwater, which organized the event, said: "There were wonderful reminiscences on the walking tour. There was also great enjoyment by people hearing some local history for the first time. It

was a nice mix."

Local residents and history experts researched and fact-checked the images and text on the new signs, which are professionally built to National Park Service standards.

In addition to the William Avenue signs, there are five signs in what is now Davis's Riverfront Park, featuring images of the huge sawmill complex that was located there. An additional four signs are in Blackwater Falls State Park, just across the Blackwater River from Davis. These signs also illustrate important industries of Davis at the turn of the last century: the pulp mill, the tannery, and the sawmill. They can be accessed by entering the Park on the road to the right, just after the Davis Bridge on Route 32.

For a complete guide to the sign display, pick up a brochure at the Davis Visitors Center -- or go to Friends of Blackwater's website, in the section on "Heritage," at: <https://www.saveblackwater.org/davis-business-signs>.

Support for this historic interpretation project has been provided by the donors to Friends of Blackwater, and by the West Virginia Humanities Council, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations do not necessarily represent those of the WVHC or the NEH.

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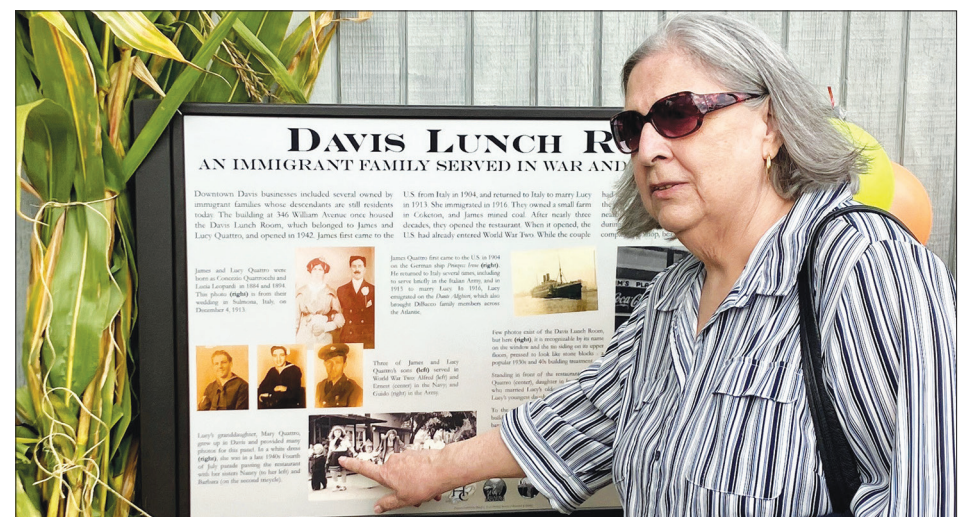
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Jeanette Ware explaining Tekavec parents.



Judy Rodd with Verzi's saloon sign at East West Printing.



Mary Quattro explaining Davis Lunch building sign.

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