KEITH SPANGLER OF SUMMERSVILLE CVB SPEAKS TO NEW RIVER BUSINESS CLASS

[Summersville, W.Va.] “Tourism is the third largest industry in our state,” says Keith Spangler of the Summerville Convention and Visitors Bureau. “Every dollar spent in Nicholas County turns over 14 times in our community including lodging, gas, groceries, outdoor gear and more,”

Spangler recently spoke on tourism and the new Civil War Trail Signs project to an Introduction to Business class on the Nicholas County Campus of New River Community and Technical College in Summersville, W. Va. He was invited to make the presentation by instructor Gary M. Wilcox.
“Nicholas County provides lots of opportunities for tourists including rafting, swimming, fishing, hiking, camping, rock climbing and more,” Spangler says. Many of the tourists will experience our state for the first time, and some of them will return to start a new business or retire here,” he adds.

Spangler says our state is in a unique location since we are only a six- to eight-hour drive from the major U.S. urban population centers.

Spangler also spoke about the Hatfield and McCoy Trail in southern West Virginia, where a new industry has sprung up, ATV trail riding. He says it is booming, and more motels and restaurants are needed in the area to accommodate the more than 30,000 tourists that visit every year.

“Nicholas County needs an ATV trail system in the county. It would bring in many more tourist dollars and create many jobs.” Spangler says.

He notes that another fast growing tourism business is agricultural tourism, where tourists pay local farm owners to help them with the daily chores on the farm. He says that the downside to tourism is that most of it is seasonable, lasting only six months out the year.

Spangler also announced to the class that the new Civil Wars Trails Sign program has come to Nicholas County. New plaques have been installed at the courthouse, Carnifax Ferry and Kessler’s Cross Lanes.

The Civil War Trails program uses maps, a website and a national magazine to direct tourists to Civil War sites throughout the state including Nicholas County. Spangler says that the new plaques and the national exposure should bring in many more tourists to our area.

Spangler took questions from the business class and encouraged them to get job experience working in the tourism industry or start a new tourism business.

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