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De-stress with Fresh Air and Find Your Fun with Outdoor Activities

As temperatures rise and our backdrop turns lush green, take the opportunity to get outside, take a deep breath of fresh air and enjoy some outdoor activities. Most of us are connected on a daily basis to our cell phones, laptops and iPods, just to name a few electronic devices, all necessary for communication and production in today's workplace.

Richard Louv has won attention around the world by identifying a problem called "Nature Deficit Disorder". Nature Deficit Disorder is not a medical condition; it describes our lack of a relationship to the environment. He explains how it hurts our children, our families, our communities, and our environment. Luckily, the cure starts in our own backyards. www.education.com

Lisa Johnson, VP Public Relations from Blue Mountain Health Systems agrees that it is healthy to spend time outdoors "By taking advantage of the outdoor activities that the county has to offer can only improve the health and well-being of the residents in our area. Men, women and children can benefit both physically and mentally by participating in outdoor activities. She encourages by saying "Weight loss, cardiac and pulmonary health as well as mental clarity are byproducts of just enjoying the wonderful outdoor activities we have here in Carbon County".

Think about it, thousands of people flock to the "Pocono Mountains" i.e. Carbon County to enjoy day trips, weekend get-a-ways and extended stays offering a multitude of outdoor activities and adventure. Whitewater rafting, skirmish, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, kayaking, or a simple stroll along the river attracts tourists to our area to experience the outdoors, to disconnect and de-stress.

Jerry McAward, President of NE PA Kayak School and Jim Thorpe River Adventures experiences the rewards outdoor activity has to offer "Everyone in business knows that point where they feel depleted, wiped out, and overwhelmed. There's that point where we recognize wow, I'm not at my best." He goes on to encourage "It is well-known how important it can be to walk away from a project for a little while, when we experience that block in energy and creativity. Most people would agree that a day outside, walking a trail, riding a bike, or kayaking a lake or river is healthy for us in a number of ways. There is that immediate 'I needed this day' reaction felt deep inside ourselves." Jerry closes by saying "The health benefits - physical and psycho-emotional - of getting outside are undisputed. There is a very quick and easy treatment for *Nature Deficit Disorder*... and we're living in it. Make the time to heal, refresh, and restore yourself...just look out your window."

As we tie it all together, outdoor team building activities are also available right in our backyard. Tricia Matsko, from Blue Mountain Resort explains "It has been proven that team building activities are the *most effective* way to reduce stress, ensure group focus, improve attitudes and get your group to learn how to work together toward team goals. She goes on to say "So, if you wonder why teambuilding is important, an outdoor adventure with Blue Mountain Resort will improve attitudes and reduce stress, your group will share a lot of laughter and smiles, and everyone will leave with the 3R's... renewed, refreshed and ready to work! Whether a

group is looking for a day to focus on improving a particular facet of performance in the office or a day of truly getting to know each member of their team, they can accomplish it all here while having fun and enjoying the outdoors and breathtaking views.”

As a resident, I encourage you to be the spokesperson for our beautiful county by experiencing the great outdoors, and then share your passion about where you live... I sure do! I challenge you to “Find Your Fun” during the spring season, get outside and take the opportunity to de-stress, enjoy the environment and take a step towards healthy living.

In closing, at the Carbon Chamber and Economic Development Corporation, it is our privilege to serve our residents and the business community by continually marketing the great outdoor activities and services this county has to offer.