



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2025

GOOD FUN, GOOD FRIENDS FOUND IN FAIRCHANCE

Uniontown, PA – Fairchance Borough isn't big, but what it lacks in size, it makes up for with an attitude of neighborly kindness and a slew of community events and activities.

A town of roughly 2,000 people, Fairchance is located at the western base of Chestnut Ridge, about seven miles from Uniontown and 19 miles from Morgantown, West Virginia. In fact, one explanation for Fairchance's name comes from its location. The borough was founded in the 1780s and incorporated in 1899, a time before cars. It was said that if travelers reached the town by mid-afternoon, they had a "fair chance" of making it to Uniontown before nightfall.

A second explanation involves industrialist Fidelio Oliphant applying for a bank loan and explaining that he could pay it back if he were given a "fair chance." Lifelong resident Dean Whitmarsh said most Fairchance residents lean toward the location story.

Whitmarsh owns the Dean C. Whitmarsh Funeral Home, and like many residents of the small borough, is deeply involved in the community. A 50-year member of the Fairchance Volunteer Fire Department, he has served as an EMT/paramedic with the local ambulance service and has been a member of the Fairchance First Baptist Church all his life. He said it's a town where many people are related; and even if they're not, they feel as though they are.

"We just feel like we're all related as a family," he said. "It's quiet and peaceful here. There are beautiful mountains, four seasons."

Whitmarsh said Fairchance residents tend to go by the Golden Rule, treating each other as they would like to be treated.

"Everyone seems to live by that, taking care of each other as neighbors and loving thy neighbor as thy self," he said. "It's always been that way, since I've been a child."

That peace and quiet is one thing that drew Rich Walters to the town in 1995, along with the many amenities and activities Fairchance has to offer.

"It's a small town, and it has everything anybody could need," Walters said, noting there is a post office, school, grocery store, pharmacy, senior center and playground. "There's a lot to offer right there in one area."

Swaney's Roller Rink is one of the few of its kind left in the area, and Walters said though the rink is reserved mostly for private parties, "they're packed every weekend."

Walters is president of the Fairchance Baseball/Softball Youth League, which hosted the Pennsylvania Little League Baseball 10- and 12-year-old Division Championship Tournament this past summer.

"We had a great atmosphere," Walters said.

A parade was held to welcome the visiting teams and families, who also enjoyed a banquet at the Collier Volunteer Fire Department. Walters said the tournament also happened to coincide with a car show sponsored by Fairchance's own fire department.

Walters said the teams enjoyed the hospitality Fairchance offered during the weeklong tournament.

"Some of the coaches were messaging me after they left, saying how much they enjoyed Fayette County and Fairchance, and how well they were welcomed and accepted."

One of those welcoming elements was a sign put up for just that purpose. Route 857 runs through the town, and last year, Walters came up with the idea to install a sign at the intersection of Route 857 and Elm Street, welcoming people to the borough. He said he took it upon himself to get backing from the Fairchance Exchange Club, a local civic organization, as well as to obtain approval from the borough and permission from property owners and PennDOT.

"The sign was donated by (Fayette County CTI) students, and they actually put the sign up," Walters said. "This year, we just added the tournament sign below it. It really dressed it up."

When Walters was seeking permission for the welcome sign, one of the people he contacted was Greg Hice, president of the Fairchance Exchange Club. Hice has lived in Fairchance for "about 12 or 13 years now" and can attest to how much there is to do. He said the Exchange Club is involved in a great deal of it.

"It's a national organization. It was formed for Americanism and child abuse prevention, but we do a lot more than that," Hice explained. "The Fairchance chapter has been here since, I want to say the 1940s."

Hice said the organization pays for, installs and maintains the borough's Christmas lights each year; puts flags along the streets for patriotic occasions; and participates in the Halloween parade, judging costumes and handing out 400 treats.

The club also has installed memorial benches at Fairchance Park, upgraded local veteran Alfred L. Wilson's gravesite at Maple Grove Cemetery, and has headed up the youth fishing derby for the past four years.

In addition, the club provides four \$1,000 scholarships to Albert Gallatin High School seniors each year.

"Every bit of the money that we raise goes back into the community, basically," Hice said.

Along with the events the Exchange Club sponsors or takes part in, “a lot goes on up at the fire department, different events and fundraisers. There’s the youth league, the pond, the walking trail there’s definitely always something to do.”

To learn more about Fairchance, visit www.fairchanceborough.com or follow “Fairchance Exchange Club” on Facebook. To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettecountypa.org.

###

This communication is part of the Fayette County PR Initiative, which is funded through the Fayette County Local Share Account (LSA) and Hotel Tax Grants in cooperation with the Fayette County Board of Commissioners, Fayette Chamber of Commerce, The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette, The Redstone Foundation and other partners. This funding has been designated for the continued promotion and marketing of Fayette County, PA.

For more information, contact Kristi Kassimer Harper, Public Relations Specialist, at 724-437-4571, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info or Jamie Rankin, Journalist, at 724-437-4571, jamierankin13@gmail.com.