



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FALLINGWATER THE 'PLACE' TO BE THIS SPRING

Uniontown, PA – Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater will host its biannual Fayette County Appreciation Day March 15.

In addition to free admission, residents can reserve tour spots and participate in hands-on, family-friendly activities throughout the Mill Run property. Tour guides will emphasize Fallingwater's history in Fayette County, including how many visitors' ancestors may have helped build the iconic house in the 1930s.

"It's extremely important to us to help pay back the citizens of this county who have seen this house grow from its first stone to the UNESCO World Heritage site it is today," Fallingwater Assistant Visitor Services Manager Chris Coan said.

Fallingwater's dedication to its community has earned it the title of February "Place" in the Fayette County Public Relations Initiative's Faces and Places series.

Between 2018 and 2019, about 3,000 residents attended county appreciation days, taking time to discover Fayette's beauty in their own backyards. County citizens continue to be involved in its preservation, operations and success, with many now serving as staff or volunteers at the house museum.

Designed by world-renowned American architect Frank Lloyd Wright in 1935, Fallingwater was constructed as a private residence and weekend home for Pittsburgh department store owner Edgar J. Kaufmann Sr. and his family.

Built directly atop a waterfall, the house is one of Wrights' most widely-acclaimed works, as it seamlessly blends art and nature in the picturesque Laurel Highlands. In addition to local workers, native sandstone and other materials quarried from the property were used in its construction.

"My favorite part of our Fayette County Day is watching the tapestry of people arriving who have never been here before, even though it's in their backyard," Coan said. "To see the wonder on their faces when they see this architectural masterpiece is worth everything to the staff at Fallingwater."

The Kaufmann family donated Fallingwater and its surrounding 469 acres to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in 1963. The property has since expanded to 5,100 acres known as the Bear Run Nature Reserve.

In July, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization designated Fallingwater a World Heritage site, along with seven other Wright-designed properties. Its inscription, "The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright," made it the first modern architecture designation in the United States.

"The UNESCO designation gives Fallingwater equal value to the Taj Mahal, the pyramids in Egypt, and so many other incredible places," Coan said. "That's reason enough to wander out this way and take in its majesty."

Commissioner Vince Vicites said we're lucky to have such a world-class tourism venue in Fayette County.

"It attracts several hundred thousand tourists every year from all over the world," Vicites said. "Residents should support Fallingwater events not only because it's a wonderful place to visit, but because it's part of the fabric of our Fayette County community."

Commissioner Chairman Dave Lohr said tourism is so important to the local economy.

"Fallingwater is a feature that's world-class. It's not just known locally, but nationally and internationally; you don't get a bigger reach than that," Lohr said. "When people come in to see Fallingwater, they often stay for a few days or longer and enjoy other things we have to offer. For example, a group of school teachers from New York came to Fayette County to see Fallingwater. They stayed for several days, which they packed with activities, as they visited other historic sites and took in some of the festivals that were happening locally."

Lohr encouraged residents to seek recreational and entertainment opportunities in their own backyards - and supporting Fallingwater's appreciation days is a great place to start.

"When you're looking for something to do, start by looking at home. We have so many great things to do in Fayette County. Fallingwater is just one example, but too often people overlook what's right in front of them," he said. "Fallingwater has architecture and artwork that is world-renowned. Supporting the site's events not only helps to keep a local attraction with international appeal staffed and maintained, but - by supporting the local economy - benefits everyone."

Commissioner Scott Dunn said Fallingwater has been called "the greatest example of American architecture," but it's also a window to how people lived in another era.

"Whether you're into history, art and architecture, or landscaping and nature, Fallingwater has something for everyone," Dunn said. "National Geographic Traveler put together a list of the world's greatest destinations called '50 Places of a Lifetime.' Fallingwater is on that list, and I think that says it all."

Dunn said residents should support Fallingwater's appreciation because county officials are working hard to promote Fayette - and word-of-mouth is the best marketing available.

"When Fayette County residents go to events at local venues, they tell their families, their friends, their coworkers - and it all helps to get the word out about what Fayette County has to offer," he said.

Advance reservations for Fayette County Appreciation Day tours are encouraged and can be made by calling 724-329-8501. Tours are typically held between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

“People should take advantage of this, because what they will see revealed in the woods of Fayette County is the work of a world-renowned architect and brilliant man,” Coan said.

A second 2020 Fayette County Appreciation Day will be offered in the fall. For more information, visit www.Fallingwater.org.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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