



PRESS RELEASE

October 15th, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE TO INCLUDE FORESTVILLE, WI IN NATIONWIDE TRAVELING EXHIBITION SHOWCASING PLACES OF INNOVATION IN RURAL AMERICA

The Smithsonian was looking for 'sparks'—ideas that led to innovation or inventions that changed a town for the better. Early this summer they solicited for applications for a new traveling exhibit featuring places of innovation in rural America, the program is aptly named *Spark! Places of Innovation*. The very small community of Forestville, Wisconsin was selected as one of those places of innovation.

The Door County Economic Development Corporation nominated the small community in Southern Door County for their work done in the cherry industry—an industry that changed the face of the county making it famous for its beautiful fragrant blossoms in spring, tart cherries in summer, and bountiful value-added products that support hundreds of jobs and bolster a thriving tourism economy.

"I immediately realized that being part of a national exhibit that traveled the country could be a good tool to attract investment in a community, so I started researching the roots, literally, to our cherry industry and found there were several ties to the Forestville area", reported Julie Schmelzer, the Director of Business Development who submitted the application.

Highlighted in the exhibit will be the early research into growing fruit trees on limestone, and the impact that crop then made on Door County; the unique cherry dehydration process and research on sports drinks being done at the Cherry De Lite factory; and the *Cherry Pitter* designed by Mark Schlise.

The exhibition will travel across the country from 2023 to 2029 through the Smithsonian's *Museum on Mainstreet* program. The program is a partnership of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and state humanities councils nationwide.

The Door County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) is a public/private partnership dedicated to improving the economic vitality of the county and its residents. Founded in 1989, DCEDC has been successful in helping existing businesses create and retain thousands of jobs through a myriad of programs and initiatives. Additionally, DCEDC places strong emphasis on fostering entrepreneurial instincts in county residents as well as those who vacation in Door County.

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