



Corning's Gaffer District

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Corning's Gaffer District Announces 2010 Glass Festival

Corning, NY - November 17, 2009 - Corning's Gaffer District is pleased to unveil a major addition to its 2010 event calendar - the first annual GlassFest.

For the sixth time since 1976, Corning was host to the Glass Art Society's international conference in the summer of 2009. During this event, glass enthusiasts and artists from around the globe converged in Corning for a four-day celebration of glass that included technical demonstrations, artist exhibits, and lectures from world-renown members of the international glass community.

The extraordinary conference was also celebrated by local and regional visitors, as well as business owners throughout various public elements of the conference. Given the prominence of glass in the history of Corning, a glass-themed festival is unanimously welcomed to debut as a new event in May 2010.

The timing of the event could not be better. In May 2009 during the height of national economic instability, Corning hosted the Ladies Professional Golf Association Corning Classic for the final time, a tradition that has brought not only spectators from around the country but over a million dollars to our local economy for more than thirty years. The introduction of GlassFest will provide a platform for our downtown and regional businesses to kick off the summer season and capitalize on the anticipated large influx of consumers. The opportunity that GlassFest represents is enormous, and long anticipated, by many fans of the Crystal City's history of glass worldwide.

Officials at Corning's Gaffer District are also capitalizing on an opportunity to reposition the summer art festival - and celebrate the heritage of the crystal city. Since 1992, Corning has served as a unique backdrop for a juried two-day summer celebration of the arts. For more than fifteen years, we've been pleased to continue the tradition of our summer art festival, making many changes along the way. Although the 2009 event was considered a moderate success, numerous challenges for the future of the event, such as rising costs and variable participation from visiting artists has provided an opportunity to reposition the event and reallocate resources to support a celebration of glass.

The potential for a positive impact on the community is substantial. Peggy Coleman, President of the Steuben County Conference and Visitors Bureau, notes, *"When people hear Glass, they immediately think Corning, America's Crystal City. If the GlassFest simply matches the attendance of past Festivals of Art, it will bring upwards of \$1Million. By embracing our glass heritage I believe attendance will far surpass art festival figures."*

The GlassFest event takes place May 27-30, 2010 and celebrates what is easily the most well-known piece of our city's history. From outdoor glassblowing demonstrations and neon displays to glass artists and local exhibits, this event truly captures the essence of Corning in a four-day event.

The glass festival boasts strong support from community partners such as the Corning Museum of Glass, Rockwell Museum of Western Art, the Steuben County Conference and Visitors Bureau and 171 Cedar Arts Center, all of which contribute to our synergetic approach of promoting the growth of Corning and the Gaffer District.

The event kicks off with a celebration at the Corning Museum of Glass on Thursday, May 27th, 2010. The event will take place during one of the museum's annual 2300 degrees events.

More information, including a complete event itinerary, will be available in the spring of 2010. Please refer to www.gafferdistrict.com for the most up-to-date information. Direct questions to Mike Melaro at (607) 937-6292 x108 or email mike@gafferdistrict.com.

Corning's Gaffer District

Corning's Gaffer District is a historic downtown business district with restaurants, retail, local art and world-class museums. The culture and uniqueness of our historic downtown is reflected in local architecture and restoration along with the events and promotions held throughout our annual events calendar. For more information, please visit www.gafferdistrict.com.

For More Information

Please contact Mike Melaro, Director of Marketing & Communications at (607) 937-6292 x108 or email mike@gafferdistrict.com