

Kent County & Greater Dover

DELAWARE
Convention and Visitors Bureau

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 1, 2008

**FOR INFO: Kimberly Bailey-Thomas, 302-734-8309 (Call for Photos)
Cindy Small, 302-734-1736**

What's New in Delaware's Capital Region

EXPANSIONS AT DOVER DOWNS HOTEL & CASINO; SEVERAL NEW HOTELS NOW OPEN/OPENING; ATTRACTIONS EXPANDING

DOVER, DE – New upscale restaurants, 700+ new hotel rooms, hot air balloon rides, an award winning spa and the addition of one of the world's tallest fiberglass statues are among the new attractions for visitors and groups to explore this summer in Delaware's Capital Region (Greater Dover, Delaware).

Dover Downs Hotel & Casino recently expanded to 500 rooms and new meeting space equaling 35,000 square feet including a ballroom, exhibition space and break-out rooms, making it Delaware's largest hotel. In addition, the hotel is now home to the award-winning Topper's Spa Salon, the Salon's first location in Delaware. Topper's is a full-service facility, and spa suites are available within the hotel.

The Hotel and Casino is nearing completion of a \$50+ million expansion called The Colonnade that includes the addition of three new restaurants – Doc McGrogan's Oyster Bar, Public House and Marabella's – as well as the soon-to-open Fire and Ice Lounge. Additional meeting space, slot machines and upscale retail shops round out the Hotel's new customer amenities.

Dover International Speedway, having hosted its first three NASCAR races of the year, expanded its offerings this year including a new "fan zone" featuring "Miles the Monster," one of the world's tallest fiberglass statues. The five-story statue affectionately dubbed "Miles", a replica of the trophy Sprint Cup NASCAR drivers receive when they win at Dover International Speedway, holds an actual racecar in the grip of his right hand, which is raised 46 feet into the air.

Harrington Raceway and Slots has recently completed its major renovation project, featuring four new restaurants – The Buffet, The Café, Bonz and Grab N' Go. The newly redesigned casino floor features an upscale ambiance, wider aisles and better lighting.

Other new additions this summer to Delaware's Capital Region include:

- Four new hotels have recently opened, including the Residence Inn by Marriott (302-677-0777), Country Inn & Suites (302-677-0505), Mainstay Suites (302-678-8383) and Sleep Inn (302-735-7770), all located in Dover, as well as the Best Western in Smyrna (302-659-3635).

-- more --

- Mainstay Suites in Dover has become Kent County's first hotel to "go green." Delaware has become the 12th state in the nation to adopt a "green hotel" initiative, a joint effort between the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and the Delaware Hotel Lodging Association (DHLA). The Delaware program is a voluntary, self-certifying program whereby hoteliers make a commitment to reduce their property's environmental impact. Participants are required to implement the optional linen service, recycling, water conservation, energy conservation and a green events package. Mainstay was awarded its certificate June 26.
- Opening this fall in Dover is the Hilton Garden Inn (302-674-3785). The full-service Hilton Garden Inn will feature a restaurant and more than 2,000 square feet of meeting space. This brings a total of more than 750 new hotel rooms to the area.
- The former Lakeside Inn, now a Super 8 franchise, is under new ownership and is undergoing major renovations (302-734-5701). Located on Silver Lake in Dover, the property will feature meeting space and lakeside event space for weddings, reunions and parties.
- Kent County Delaware Convention & Visitors Bureau (800-233-5368) has begun a reunions task force to focus on military, family and other reunion business. The CVB also announced that it has been awarded two grants, one that will be used to create a 4-minute video targeted at attracting the meetings market, and other for a marketing campaign targeted at the meetings and conference market. For a free information packet to plan your reunion, call 800-233-5368.
- Spences's Bazaar and Amish Market, which has served the Capital Region for 75 years on Tuesdays and Fridays, is now open on Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. (302-734-3441).
- Starship Enterprises, a hot air balloon business, has relocated to Delaware and now offers flights over the central Delmarva Peninsula including luscious fields, small towns and the Delaware countryside. (302-943-5481).
- Delaware's Old State House Museum, one of the country's oldest state houses and located on Dover's historic The Green, has reopened after two years of extensive renovations. The museum is open Tuesdays-Sundays for tours featuring free admission (302-739-4266).
- Several area museums have new exhibitions this year including the Biggs Museum of American Art. The newly installed Silver Study Room features the state's largest collection of Delaware Silver (302-674-2111).
- Due to the popularity of the historic cemetery lantern tours, the First State Heritage Park of Dover has expanded its tour schedule this summer. Tours are now available of Christ Church cemetery, Old Methodist Church cemetery and Presbyterian Churchyard cemetery. Lantern tours of Dover's historic The Green are also available. The cemetery tours uncover the symbolism of funerary art while hearing stories of statesmen, military heroes and even victims of a most heinous murder. Tours of The Green focus on poisonings, tragic love and the auctioning of slaves on the steps of the Old State House. (302-739-9194).

For more information to help plan a meeting, reunion or conference, call Kent County Tourism Convention and Visitors Bureau, 800-233-5368 or visit www.visitdover.com.

###