

# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Lakemont Park On-Track With New Features For Spring 2019 Opening**

**ALTOONA, PA**– The Lakemont Partnership today reported to the Blair County Commissioners that Lakemont Park is on-track to reopen in time for Memorial Day 2019. The new Lakemont Park will step away from theme park entertainment and return to its roots as a community gathering center featuring outdoor recreation and special events in addition to popular amusements and the water play area. “When the gates to Lakemont Park re-open, entry will be free and there will be something for everyone to enjoy,” said co-owner and developer Ralph Albarano.

Across the US, small town theme parks have closed their doors as America’s taste for entertainment evolved away from the traditional amusements. “Lakemont Park, approaching its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, is one of the oldest amusement parks in the country, which speaks to the multi-generational commitment of the people in our area to keep our park alive,” said Andrea Devorris Cohen, whose family co-owns Lakemont Park.

Importantly, the re-invention of Lakemont Park was guided by community input. “We went directly to the people to get their ideas and opinions on what the new Lakemont Park should be,” said park manager Melissa Vyborny. In the spring, meetings were held with dozens of community leaders and organizations, soliciting their thoughts on how the new Lakemont Park could best address community needs. Over the summer, focus groups were conducted across multiple segments of the community including seniors, teens, millennials, moms with young children and Penn State Altoona students, providing important direction for the transformation of the park.

The new Lakemont Park will feature several new amenities including:

- New regulation-size mini golf course with water features
- Kid’s mini golf course with woodland theme designed by local artist Michael Allison
- Newly themed children’s water play area
- New paddle boats
- Walking trail map designed in partnership with PA WalkWorks
- Four new basketball courts, which will be the new home for the Central Blair Recreation Commission’s (CBRC) Men’s Summer Basketball League
- Two new sand volleyball courts
- State-of-the-art Go Karts
- A children’s play area
- A large green area for open play, programs, and events, including concerts, cultural events, movie nights and open theatre

To make way for the new, many of the older amusements have been removed. However, the most popular of the older features will be returning with enhancements and renovations, including:

- Favorite rides, such as the Skyliner Roller Coaster and Leap the Dips, the world's oldest roller coaster
- Lil' Leaper Kid's Roller Coaster
- C.P. Huntington Train
- 4x4 Mini Monster Trucks
- Tin Lizzy Antique Autos
- Waterslides
- Pool
- Six pavilions, for family reunions and company picnics
- Concession stands, offering healthier choices along with park food favorites

“Anyone looking for a location for a concert, fundraising event, basketball and volleyball tournaments, summer camps or clinics, we hope Lakemont Park can be your venue. We also will be upgrading our restrooms and adding parking for over 100 cars within the park grounds,” said Cohen.

While entry to the Park will be free, guests can pay as they go for the amenities they use. Season passes will be available to make the Park affordable for multiple visits. “We want the community to come to the park for an ice cream cone and a walk through the park on a summer evening. Families can buy individual ride tickets so that each child can select an activity to do, ensuring it's an affordable place to go,” noted Vyborny.

Lakemont Park wants to form partnerships with organizations to use the conveniently located and newly renovated space for a wide variety of outdoor events and activities. Organizers are encouraged to call the Park office to discuss ideas at 814-949-7275.

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#### ABOUT LAKEMONT PARK

Lakemont Park, located in Altoona Pennsylvania, has been a center of community activity since it opened as a trolley park in 1894. It is the home of the world's oldest surviving wooden rollercoaster, the Leap-The-Dips, which was added to the list of National Historic Landmarks in 1996 by the National Park Service. The park hosts a state-recognized holiday light show, Holiday Lights on the Lake, from mid-November to January.