



Supporting Local This Summer

By Chris Schutte

Vice President of Destination Marketing + Communications

Greater Springfield Partnership

As we begin to emerge from our post-pandemic cocoons (fingers crossed!), it is more important than ever for us to support our local businesses, local events, and local organizations. The struggles of small businesses and restaurants during the time of COVID-19 have been well-documented, in heartbreaking detail. And just because the masks are off doesn't mean that the challenges are over.

But wait...there is some good news! We all have an opportunity to pitch in and help just by doing things that are actually fun!

The Springfield Farmers Market is officially open for the season and our local farmers and artisans can't wait to sell you some fresh, local produce, meats and baked goods each Saturday morning.

IndieCraft, with eight bands and twelve breweries, is back on June 11 and 12 at Mother Stewart's Brewing Company. You can help the cause by drinking a pint, or two. Sign me up!

The Summer Arts Festival – albeit in an abbreviated form – will be welcoming audiences back in July where dropping a couple bucks in the hat can make a real difference.

And the Champion City Kings are hitting the field at Carleton Davidson Stadium providing a great brand of family entertainment, and some pretty great baseball, to boot.

The list of events including Wake the Lake and MustardFEST, to CultureFest and concerts at the Clark State Performing Arts Center goes on, and on. The common thread is that you can help our community just by attending these great events and leaving just a few of your hard-earned dollars behind.

If you're looking for another easy way to help our local merchants, you will want to download the new Greater Springfield Discovery Pass: Sip.Shop.Dine. (discover.greaterspringfield.com). The digital pass works just like an app on your phone but is instantly delivered to you via text and email with no apps to download.

A click on the link adds the icon to your phone's home screen and you can then begin "checking in" at downtown businesses and unlocking exclusive discounts. Once you reach 15 check-ins, you receive a custom-branded pair of pint glasses from Champion City Guide + Supply.

As you continue to use the Sip.Shop.Dine pass you qualify for even more prizes sponsored by the Greater Springfield Partnership including monthly and Grand Prize drawings for items including an Apple Watch, 65" Smart TV and custom excursion packages. More than 500 users are currently registered and collecting discounts at 30 downtown merchants. The promotion runs through October, then will come back at Thanksgiving as part of Holiday in the City.

This is all a long way of saying that we can all do our part just by returning to our regular activities in a safe, and respectful manner. Keep in mind as we venture back out in the world that this endeavor will likely require some measure of patience as we all figure out where a mask may still be preferred, how many of us can safely engage in an enclosed space and how we graciously navigate the yet unseen bumps in the new road.

In the meantime, lets enjoy summer, enjoy friends and family, enjoy our great local events, and do what we can to support the local businesses that help make Springfield a unique place to call home!