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Photos available upon request

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## **KENT COUNTY TOURISM ANNOUNCES 9-11 TRIBUTE & PARTNERSHIP WITH THE USO FOR THE 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AMISH COUNTRY BIKE TOUR**

DOVER, DE – Don't forget your helmet, and bring your patriotic spirit to the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Amish Country Bike Tour, presented by Kent County Tourism. Delaware's premier cycling event falls on September 11<sup>th</sup> this year. Just before a sea of cyclists embark on an exciting ride through the beautiful back-roads of Kent County, they will pause for a 9-11 tribute and a "blessing of the bikes" ceremony.

Dover is a patriotic place. Not only is it where this nation was started, but it is also home to the Dover Air Force Base. This year's bike tour will highlight our friends from USO Delaware, as we encourage cyclists and community members to salute our troops by donating cases of bottled water, phone cards, or monetary contributions. As part of the "Tourism Gives Back" initiative, proceeds from the Amish Country Bike Tour will also support the Central Delaware YMCA, the Amish School House Education Program, and now the USO. Donations will be collected the day of the event or can be dropped off prior to the event at the Kent County Tourism office, 435 North DuPont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901.

"The USO partnership is a wonderful addition to our "Tourism Gives Back" initiative, and it's particularly fitting since the bike tour falls on September 11<sup>th</sup> this year. It's an opportunity to remember our fallen heroes and show our appreciation to those who continue to serve our country," said Linda Kurtz, Director of Public Relations and Special Events for Kent County Tourism.

"USO Delaware is extremely proud that the Amish Bike Tour has decided to honor our Military Heroes and their families during this year's events. The USO is on duty around the world to be the welcoming arms of every American citizen to our military personnel. We couldn't accomplish our wide variety of programs and services without the on-going support of individuals, organizations and companies. It is truly a community effort and honor to take care of our military personnel's needs," said Joan Cote, Director of USO Delaware.

Annually, the bike tour attracts between 1200 and 1500 cyclists of all ages and abilities. There are several routes including 15, 25, 50, 62, and 100- mile loops, plus a separate 25-mile competitive race through the flatlands of Amish Country in west Kent County. Registration begins at 7:00 a.m. on Legislative Mall in historic downtown Dover. The 9-11 tribute and "blessing of the bikes" ceremony begins at 8:00 a.m. with cyclists pedaling off by 8:15 a.m. This is the official start of the race, but cyclists may begin any time between 7 and 10 a.m. Participants will enjoy an after-tour party from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Leg Mall complete with live music, family-fun activities, and a BBQ lunch. New this year, there will be non-stop entertainment at all four rest stops. Back by popular demand, home-baked pies will be served once again at our most famous rest stop, the Amish School House.

Save money by registering now at [www.visitdover.com/events](http://www.visitdover.com/events) or call 800-233- 5368! Registration, which includes bike tour map, goodie bag, up to four food and rest stops, after-tour party, and catered picnic lunch is:

- **Now through August 25:** \$35/adults; \$15 ages 5-16; under 5, free;
- **August 26 - September 9:** \$50/adults; \$20 ages 5-16; under 5, free;
- **September 10-11:** \$75/adults; \$25 ages 5-16; under 5, free; and
- **Family rate:** \$75 for 1 adult and up to children 16 and under; family rate only available for those who pre-register.

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