

# TIRED OF THE SAME

## There's more to the city than bars and restaurants

By **JODI PRIESLER**  
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When the weekend rolls around, many students are left wondering what to do. Maybe you are looking for a break from studying or just something to do besides going to the mall, hitting the bar scene, or going to the usual movie. Harrisburg has the answer. Whether you have money burning a hole in your pocket or a dollar to your name, Harrisburg offers an array of things to do.

For the money conscious, there are numerous parks and recreation areas throughout the city that are perfect for basking in the sun, taking a stroll or sitting and reading a book.

Italian Lake, located at Third and Division Streets has lush gardens, a fountain and plenty of ducks to keep you entertained. During the summer, Italian Lake hosts a concert series that has featured musical acts such as the Arcona Reel Band, Dixieland Express Band and Simple Gifts. There are also performances by string quartets, brass ensembles, and Dixieland style bands.

Throughout the year, the city of Harrisburg hosts several festivals and special events along Front Street. Some of the upcoming events include the Greater Harrisburg Arts Festival which will take place over Memorial Day weekend, the Harrisburg Shakespeare Festival and Kipona.

Front Street, which runs along the Susquehanna River, features many amenities. There is a paved walkway that runs from the route 83 bridge to Vaughn Street perfect for running, riding bicycle or a leisurely stroll. There are also benches and observation decks to enjoy the activities of the Susquehanna and artwork adorns various parts of the riverbank. Front Street is also home to River Front Park which hosts various events throughout the year.

The Susquehanna River is also home to City Island, a family-oriented park featuring a miniature golf course, railroad, carousel, arcade and batting cages. City

Island also offers a beach and swimming area, carriage rides, the RiverSide Village Park – featuring food concessions and shops – and the Pride of the Susquehanna Riverboat.

For sports enthusiasts, City Island is home to RiverSide Stadium, where the minor league baseball team, the Harrisburg Senators, will start their season in mid-April.

Further into Harrisburg is Reservoir Park, home of The National Civil War Museum and the Bandshell – an outdoor amphitheater. The museum is open for limited hours Tuesdays through Sundays and asserts that it is the only museum of its kind that portrays the entire story of the American Civil War from both the Union and Confederate perspectives without bias.

If it is culture you are looking for, look no further, Harrisburg has something for you. On the corner of Third and Market Streets is the Kunkel Building, home to the Susquehanna Art Museum. The museum features works from international and regional artists and offers workshops for all ages. Currently on display in SAM is “Motorcycles and Art” - works that celebrate intense personal passions for the road.

“That these two things [motorcycles and art] share any number of qualities is just the icing on the cake. They both propel people to strong emotions ranging from fear to delight.” said Rusty Baker, executive director of the SAM.

Across the street from the SAM is the Whitaker Center, featuring the Select Medical IMAX Theater, the Harsco Science Center and the Sunoco Performance Theater.

The IMAX Theater has the top of the line motion picture system that includes a screen over 10 times larger than conventional movie theaters and a sound system that will blow you out of your seat. Current shows include: “Bugs! 3D,” “Wild Chimpanzees” and “Coral Reef Adventure.”

The Harsco Science Center encompasses three floors that display over 240 interactive exhibits that explore the sciences. The Science Center is currently featuring “Wild Earth” a fully interactive motion-based simulator of an African safari.

If it is music, theater or dance you are looking for, the Sunoco Performance Theater is host to such performances as the Pacifica Quartet, “The Diary of Anne Frank” and the Peking Acrobats. The Center also has an in-house performance group, Theatre Harrisburg, which will perform Ira Levin’s “Deathtrap” in mid-April. For event calendars and showtimes call or visit the Whitaker Center box office or their website at [www.whitakercenter.org](http://www.whitakercenter.org).

The Whitaker Center is also sponsoring the CowParade Harrisburg 2004, which kicked off in mid-March and will conclude in June with an auction to benefit the center. The CowParade features over 100 full-sized cows, artfully designed and painted, for exhibition in Harrisburg and the surrounding area. The CowParade is comprised of original cow creations, designed by top regional artists, and guarantees to turn the Harrisburg area into “an exciting sidewalk display of ‘udderly’ unique, and captivating bovines.” One of PSH’s very own, Dr. Victor Viser, designed ‘Amoorica’ which will be auctioned off in June.

Another theater venue in Harrisburg is Open Stage of Harrisburg, located on Walnut Street next to Strawberry Square. Open Stage of Harrisburg is a non-profit regional theatre that aims at presenting thought-provoking plays and community-wide educational outreach programs. Upcoming shows include: “Burn This” by the Pulitzer Prize winning playwright, Lanford Wilson, and the popular “Vagina Monologues.” For more information on these and other shows visit [www.openstagehbg.com](http://www.openstagehbg.com).

History enthusiasts can check out the Fort Hunter Mansion and Park located at the north end of Front Street, where the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek merge. Fort Hunter was originally settled in 1725 by Benjamin Chambers, who later founded Chambersburg, Pa.

Today the facilities and grounds are open to the public for touring, rentals, and hiking. The Fort Hunter Conservancy offers 153 acres of wooded mountain land open to the public for day hiking. Historic structures on the grounds include: the Tavern House, which now houses offices of the Dauphin County Parks and

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photo by Jodi Preisler

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