

**Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Receives \$10,000 Grant
from the Virginia Tourism Corporation**

“50 Years of Love” Program Marketing Fund

*~Grant fund established to help celebrate 50th anniversary of the
“Virginia is for Lovers” tourism slogan~*

CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND (February 28, 2019) -- Today, Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce announced that it has received a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) “50 Years of Love” grant fund. “50 Years of Love” is part of VTC’s efforts to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the *Virginia is for Lovers* tourism slogan, which was created in 1969 by Richmond-based advertising agency Martin & Woltz.

The Chamber partnered with Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, Chincoteague Center, Museum of Chincoteague Island, Historic Main Street Merchants Association, Chincoteague Island Arts Organization, GSB Media, NASA & Virginia Space Flight Academy, Maui Jack’s, Chincoteague Island KOA, island restaurants and retail shops to develop a summer filled with additional reasons to LOVE Chincoteague Island. While Chincoteague’s focus will be June 21-August 10, activities planned with fellow grant recipients Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission and Cape Charles Main Street will extend the fun well into November as visitors and residents enjoy events from the Maryland line to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Classic car shows, classic movies, a Motown concert at Chincoteague Center, a scavenger hunt at the Museum, Misty’s Birthday Party, mobile LOVEworks at the Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman’s Carnival are just a part of the lineup.

“Virginia is for Lovers is one of the most iconic tourism slogans in the world, and we are thrilled to be celebrating “50 years of Love” with partners from around the Commonwealth in 2019,” **said Rita McClenny, president and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation.** “This grant program provides an engaging opportunity for destinations across the state to showcase what makes a vacation in Virginia so special, and helps to show travelers why *Virginia is for Lovers* still rings true 50 years later.”

Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Evelyn Shotwell encourages the traveling public “to ‘Discover the Spirit of Chincoteague Island’ this summer with endless ways to LOVE Chincoteague, Assateague and Wallops Islands. From wild ponies to rocket launches, history to nature trails, local lore to coastal cuisine..... you will find it on our shores”.

In total, VTC awarded \$390,000 to 39 tourism marketing programs across the Commonwealth to help increase visitation and revenue. Each grant recipient received a \$10,000 grant for its “50 Years of Love” project, with the requirement of engaging 10 or more tourism partners in order to receive grant funding.

The Virginia Tourism Corporation is the state agency responsible for marketing Virginia to visitors and promoting the “Virginia is for Lovers” brand, which is celebrating 50 years in 2019. Tourism is an instant revenue generator in Virginia. In 2017, visitors spent \$25 billion, which supported 232,000 jobs and contributed \$1.73 billion in state and local taxes.

About Virginia is for Lovers

Fifty years after its creation, *Virginia is for Lovers* continues to be one of the most recognizable and iconic tourism slogans of all time. *Virginia is for Lovers* was inducted into the Madison Avenue Advertising Walk of Fame on Sept. 21, 2009. The slogan was included in the Advertising Icon Museum alongside fellow 2009 inductees, the AOL Running Man, the Budweiser Clydesdales and State Farm’s slogan, *Like a Good Neighbor, State Farm is There*. This recognition came on the heels of Forbes.com tapping Virginia is for Lovers as one of the top 10 tourism marketing campaigns of all time. Today, a new generation is discovering love for Virginia’s mountains, beaches, history, theme parks, vibrant cities, outdoor activities, sports and hospitality.

For more information about 50 Years of Love, please visit <https://www.virginia.org/virginiaisforlovers>

For more information and to plan your next vacation in Virginia, please visit www.virginia.org. Begin your Chincoteague Island vacation at www.chincoteaguechamber.com.

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