

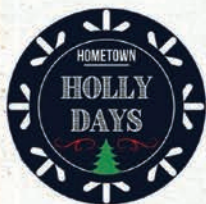
A Day Away

Fall/Winter 2025 Guide



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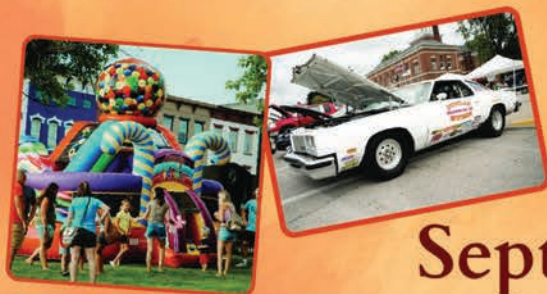
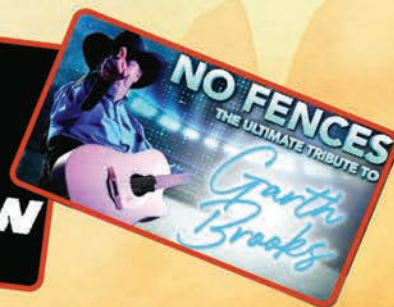
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A Day Away

Fall/Winter 2025

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Growing number of visitors discovering southern Illinois as travel destination
SONYA DYMOVA AND MAGGIE DOUGHERTY/MEDILL ILLINOIS NEWS BUREAU



ON THE COVER

A demonstration at Illinois Rural Heritage Museum in Pinckneyville is shown. Photo credit Discover Downstate Illinois

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Please recycle when you're done with it!



A shipping container converted into a living space serves as a popular Airbnb destination in Greenup.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CATHY GRIFFITH

Seven years ago, Eland Spittler was wondering what to do with the barn he had built after adding a bathroom to it.

“I thought I’m gonna put it on Airbnb. If it pays for the utilities, pays the taxes, that would be kind of cool,” he recalled.

The Greenup Airbnb, named Crooked Creek Cabin, has surpassed that. It has become a bustling hub for renters, particularly popular among hunters due to its serene country location.

Inspired by the success, Spittler came across a shipping container that had been converted into a living space online. He had just the spot for it on 35 acres he owns in Greenup, a mile from the cabin.

Spittler has since opened two more Airbnbs – one in Martinsville and another in Casey. But the shipping container, which he calls Fox Den, is the most popular. He attributes that to its uniqueness.

“That’s what I tell people: the more unique, the busier they are,” he said.

He also attributes it to the tiny house craze.

The 320-square-foot rental accommodates four guests with two sets of bunk beds, a kitchenette and bar, a sitting area with a couch, and a bathroom with a shower. One comment Spittler said he hears a lot is, “Wow, it’s a lot bigger than I thought.”

Spittler gets a lot of repeat guests who make the Fox Den a regular stop when passing through.

He estimates it’s booked at least 60% of the year. While most stays are one to two nights, he has had people stay much longer, including a traveling nurse working at HSHS St. Anthony’s Memorial Hospital, who stayed for two months straight.

The remote location of the Airbnb keeps it secluded, and the vast, mowed grounds around it are popular with travelers who have dogs, according to Spittler.

While many are domestic travelers, the tiny Airbnb has attracted people from other countries, including one couple who came

from France. The couple stayed there while they converted a former school bus they had bought in Tennessee into an RV, also known as a “skoolie.”

The tiny Airbnb became a popular getaway for city dwellers during the pandemic.

“During COVID, it was probably one of the busiest years. A lot of people from Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis, wanting to get out,” said Spittler. “A lot of people who had been in the city for a long time come out and can’t believe the stars. I guess we take it for granted.”

The Airbnb has no Wi-Fi or TV, which Spittler speculates might be part of its charm as no one has complained about the lack of amenities. He said there is, however, a lot of wildlife to see. One guest felt inspired by it, painting a fox on an interior wall of the Fox Den after Spittler granted permission, of course. The Fox Den isn’t the only unique feature among Spittler’s Airbnbs.

He purchased a building in his hometown of Casey, which initially served as an old gas station and later evolved into a transmission service shop. Although it had sat vacant for years, Spittler was drawn to the building’s industrial look and its location along Main Street. As the owner of an excavating business, Spittler said he likes old buildings.

“We’re in the demolition business, so we tear down 50 structures a year, all kinds of different buildings,” he said.

His Airbnb side business has inspired him to view old buildings in a new way.



Eland Spittler stands at the entrance of his Airbnb in Greenup that was once a shipping container.



This shipping container Airbnb has all the amenities, including a kitchen area.

"I drove by one day, and that old gas station was for sale," he said. "I thought that would be pretty cool.

So, I bought it. Then I thought, 'What am I going to do with this?' I thought, 'I think I can turn it into an Airbnb.'"

Spittler strove to preserve the industrial theme of the old gas station, repurposing what he could. He even traveled

to Memphis, Tennessee, to acquire industrial items to incorporate into it. One guest from Chicago was impressed with the decor, "from the original shop fixtures repurposed as stylish accents to the seamless blend of raw, exposed elements with modern comforts," he wrote in his review.

Anywhere he can save history, Spittler

said he does. For the Martinsville Airbnb, it was the "cool metal ceiling" that Spittler chose to leave in.

The building that houses it was originally the town's post office. The building is now used as a warehouse in the front, and Spittler has a small office in the center. But when a group of traveling linemen needed additional rooms for the arrival of more, he got an idea for a room off the back that sat empty.

"It was just a blank canvas that hadn't been touched for a long time," he said. "I was like, if you guys need more room, I can turn that into an apartment. So, I turned it into a two-bedroom apartment. "As soon as they left, I put it on Airbnb."

While Spittler is partial to the industrial look, he wouldn't consider himself an interior decorator.

"When choosing what color to paint, I'm probably not your guy," he admitted.

Spittler enjoys visiting with the renters if they're in the mood to chat, whether he's mowing or bringing them firewood at the Fox Den, which features an outdoor seating area complete with chairs and a picnic table.





Outside the Fox Den in Greenup is a sitting area.

"I enjoy meeting people. It's fun for me," he said.

Spittler is a superhost, which means he's experienced, highly rated, and committed to providing great stays for guests, and his Airbnbs are listed as highly rated Guest Favorites, consistently receiving excellent reviews. With little downtime from his excavating business, which takes him and his crew to other states, he admits that rating wouldn't be possible without the help of his manager/cleaner.

"Finding the right people sure helps make life a little easier," he said.

Spittler said he would like to own more Airbnbs and is already thinking about unique ideas for other properties he owns.

"I have a property north of Casey that I think would be good. I like to find some that are done. Turnkey, ready to do, where I can set them off like I did this one," he said of the Fox Den. "I would like to do three or four in one location of tiny houses, whether it be a tiny house or shipping container."



This shipping container Airbnb in Greenup has a kitchenette and room for sitting with a couch and bar.

Bond County Events

Sept. 6: Bond County Farmers Market 9 a.m.–1 p.m. on the square in Greenville.

Sept. 6: Jeep Scavenger Hunt. Registration at Pub 36 in Pocahontas 11 a.m.–noon. Return to Pub 36 at 5 p.m. Poker hands also available. Raffles and prizes at Pub 36 after event. Food available for purchase. Proceeds benefit Shriner's Hospital St. Louis.

Sept. 20: 1st Annual Bond County PrideFest. Family friendly event with food, crafts and entertainment. For more info, email bocopride@gmail.com

Sept. 21: Radius Rod Roundup Car Show for Pre 1949 Street Rods only at the park in Pocahontas IL. Registration 9 a.m.–noon. Dash plaques, coffee & donuts, novelty trophies, games for all, raffle & 50/50, homemade cake walk, food stand. For more information, call Dave Prater at 618-593-8643.

Sept. 27: Miles for Marshall: A 5K Adventure for Childhood Cancer at 10 a.m. at Patriot's Park in Greenville, IL. Inspired by Marshall Staff's courageous journey, this inspiring adventure combines physical challenge with purposeful action, creating an unforgettable experience for participants of all skill levels. Every registration, every step, and every moment shared helps build awareness and support for young warriors facing cancer. Join us in turning physical endurance into lasting impact! All ages welcome! For more info, go to MilesforMarshall.com

Oct. 3 & 4: Halloweenville at American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville. Jack-O-Lantern Express, pumpkins & Indian corn for sale, food, & more starting at 6:30 pm.

Oct. 4: Apple Fest in Greenville, IL

Oct. 4: Bond County Cruise-Ins Car Show & Chili Cook-Off from 5–8 p.m. Enter from the east side of Main Street on to 2nd Street in Greenville, IL. Starts at 11 a.m. on the square in Greenville.

Oct. 4: Bond County Farmers Market 9 a.m.–1 p.m. on the square in Greenville.

Oct. 10 & 11: Halloweenville at American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville. Jack-O-Lantern Express, pumpkins & Indian corn for sale, food, & more starting at 6:30 pm.

Oct. 16: Piece by Piece Fundraiser – Puzzle Competition for a Cause! Put your puzzle skills to the test! Teams will compete to complete a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle the fastest. Exciting raffles, delicious food trucks and refreshments, door prizes throughout the night. Doors open 5 p.m. All proceeds to benefit Bond County Crisis Nursery. For more information go to www.bondcountycrisisnursery.org

Oct. 17: BBQ Cookout with Wes Pourchot 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at The Milk House in Greenville. Pork burger, brat on bun, chicken tender sandwich, pork chop sandwich, chips, drinks, desserts. Call/text 618-304-5519 for delivery. Benefiting school kids, veterans and first responders in the communities of Benjamin Mills Chapter and Isaac Hull Chapter.

Oct. 17 & 18: Halloweenville at American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville. Jack-O-Lantern Express, pumpkins & Indian corn for sale, food, & more starting at 6:30 pm.

Oct. 18: Bond County Fair Association Fall Festival 1–5 p.m. Hayride, vendor show, petting zoo, car show, bounce houses, food trucks & demo derby. 1224 Midway Drive, Greenville, IL 62246. For more info, see Facebook page or email bocofallfest@yahoo.com

Oct. 23–26: Greenville University's Homecoming & Family Weekend includes a parade, concerts, class reunions and more!

Oct. 24 & 25: Halloweenville at American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville. Jack-O-Lantern Express, pumpkins & Indian corn for sale, food, & more starting at 6:30 pm.

Nov. 28–Dec. 31: Christmas display at American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville.

Nov. 29: Small Business Saturday Holiday Vendor Market 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Hall, 401 E. State St., Pocahontas, IL 62275 and at The Strand at 105 Academy. Visit Santa while you shop!

BOND COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

DeMoulin Museum

Located at 205 S. Prairie St. in Greenville. Check out spanking machines and other initiation devices. Group tours are welcome and can be scheduled at any time. Free admission. Donations welcome. For more information, visit demoulinmuseum.org

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Variety of cheeses and dairy products available. Our specialty raw milk cheeses are aged in our aging cave. The aging cave is modeled after the man-made cheese caves in Switzerland. Some of our cheeses are raw milk cheese, which will age from a minimum of 60 days up to 12 months. Our building is built with viewing windows so the public can view as we make cheese and process milk. You are also invited to visit our calves, housed near the creamery. Located at 526 Dudleyville Road, Greenville. For more information, call 618-664-1110 or visit marcootjerseycreamery.com

American Farm Heritage Museum

Offers a glimpse of life on a farm in days gone by. Located 45 miles east of St. Louis on I-70, exit 45. For more information call 618-664-9733 or visit americanfarmheritagemuseum.com

Champaign County Events

Aug. 22–23: Mahomet Music Festival features live music, food court, vendors, crafters, carnival, drinks, beer garden and much more! Family-friendly fun in downtown Mahomet opens 5 p.m. Friday featuring Lexi Tieffel from American Idol and Gina Miles, Season 23 "The Voice" 2023



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Winner. Parade Saturday at 9 a.m. with festival opening Saturday at 10:30 a.m. Live music Saturday by Lakeview and Parmalee.

Aug. 23: The Illiac featuring Sinfonia da Camera orchestra, The Marching Illini, The Soul Syn-dicate sextet, and tango orquesta Bandoneon Massacre. Free performance in historic Hessel Park, 1400 Grandview Drive in Champaign, to celebrate the conclusion of summer! Local food trucks, beer and wine available.

Aug. 26: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Aug. 30: Smokewars BBQ Festival and Competition 3–10 p.m. Join us for a sizzling good time at 51 E. Main St., Champaign, IL. Get ready to indulge in mouthwatering BBQ dishes, watch talented pitmasters compete, and enjoy live music all day long. This event is perfect for BBQ enthusiasts and foodies alike. Come hungry and leave happy! Don't miss out on this epic BBQ showdown!

Sept. 2: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Sept. 4: Ties & Tennessees Gala at I Hotel. A night of dinner, drinks, and live and silent auctions while wearing your best outfit and favorite pair of sneakers to benefit Champaign Parks Foundation. Featured speaker will be Shauna Green, head coach of the Fighting Illini Women's Basketball program.

Sept. 6: Craft Crawl: Beer Me, Champaign! Our first-ever beer tasting crawl will be hoppin' through downtown Champaign! Breweries, retail pop-ups, and bubbly good times! Explore our local shops while sampling craft beers from regional breweries and distilleries.

Sept. 6: A Night of Yacht Rock featuring Atlanta Rhythm Section, Firefall, and Orleans at 7 p.m. at State Farm Center in Champaign.

Sept. 9: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Sept. 14: West Side Arts free juried art festival celebrates the creativity of local and regional artists at West Side Park, 400 W. University Ave. in Champaign 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Food vendors, art experiences for children, and a sidewalk chalk contest.

Sept. 16: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign.

Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Sept. 19: Jon Pardi with Jake Worthington and Colby Acuff at State Farm Center in Champaign. Show packed with fiddle, twang, steel guitar and contagious charisma!

Sept. 22: Amy Grant at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Sept. 23: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Sept. 26: Steve Miller Band at 8 p.m. at State Farm Center in Champaign during University of Illinois Homecoming week.

Sept 27: Touch-a-Truck. Big trucks, big fun! Touch-a-Truck invites kids to get behind the wheel and explore a variety of vehicles up close, from fire trucks and police cars to tow trucks and more! This hands-on adventure is held at Centennial Park in Champaign 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Senso-ry-friendly hour from 10–11 a.m. for those with sensory sensitivities (no flashing lights, sirens or horns). Inflatables, facepainting, bubbles, food vendors and icy treats.

Sept. 27: Prairie Farm Barn Bash 6–8 p.m. at Prairie Farm Programs, 2202 W. Kirby Ave., Champaign. Live country music, dancing under the stars and classic farm activities for all ages. Enjoy delicious local eats, hop on a hayride, roast s'mores by the fire, visit the petting zoo and try your hand at barn games and crafts. Registration is required by contacting Kathryn.bell@champaignparks.org

Sept. 30: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Oct. 7: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Oct. 12: Masterchef All-Stars Live! TV's biggest cooking competition show at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 14: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.



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| Oct 12 | MasterChef All-Stars Live! |
| Oct 23 | Whose Live Anyway? |
| Oct 24 | An Evening with Fran Lebowitz |
| Oct 25 | Rocky Horror Picture Show – 50th Anniversary |
| Nov 6–8 | Alice in Wonderland Jr. |
| Nov 10 | Ben Folds and a Piano |
| Nov 12 | Black Violin: Full Circle Tour |
| Dec 1 | Béla Fleck & The Flecktones |
| Dec 13 | Sinfonia da Camera: Winter Fantasia |



Award-winning national music acts announced for 2025 festival

The Casey Popcorn Festival Committee is thrilled to announce the national entertainment lineup for the 2025 Casey Popcorn Festival, taking place from Aug. 29 to Sept. 1, 2025, at Fairview Park in Casey, Illinois.

The main stage will kick off on Friday, Aug. 29 with Crush - The Bon Jovi Concert Experience. This band has been captivating audiences for nearly a decade with their live performances and authentic renditions of Bon Jovi's greatest hits. A Crush concert offers an exhilarating musical experience that simply must be seen to be believed!

On Saturday, Aug. 30, Lakeview, the rural, blue-collar duo, will take the stage. Known for their hits like "Home Team" and "See Me in A Suit," their performance promises to be a highlight of the festival.

Sunday, Aug. 31, will feature Tyler Farr on the main stage. Recognized by Taste of Country as "one of the best male vocalists in country music today," Farr made a significant impact on the country music scene with his debut album, "Redneck Crazy," which quickly reached No. 2 on the Billboard Country Albums Chart and No. 5 on the Billboard Top 200.

He has achieved three No. 1 hits, including the emotionally charged "Whiskey in My Water" and the poignant "A Guy Walks Into a Bar."

On Monday, Sept. 1, Christian artist Colton Dixon will perform a special afternoon show at the park. After finishing

in the top seven on Season 11 of Fox's American Idol, Dixon emerged as a

Colton Dixon and Crush — The Bon Jovi Concert Experience are schedule to perform during the 2025 Casey Popcorn Festival.

phenomenon in the music scene. His first album, "A Messenger," released in 2013, achieved the biggest first-week sales by a new solo Christian artist and reached the Top 15 on the Billboard 200, as well as No. 1 on the Billboard Christian Albums Chart.

He has since garnered multiple No. 1 hits on Christian Hot AC, including "More of You" and "Through It All." In 2017, he returned to the top of the Christian Albums Chart for the third time and has won two Dove Awards for "Rock/Contemporary Album" and "Recorded Music Packaging."

General admission to the concerts is FREE, thanks to our incredible sponsors! The Party Pit section returns this year, located directly in front of the stage and featuring a separate bar and restrooms. Party Pit tickets will be available for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights only, with a discounted 3-Day Package option.



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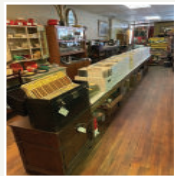


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Witness Distillery in Vandalia produces a range of spirits. Photo credit Route 3 Films

DISCOVER DOWNSTATE ILLINOIS

Dive into the heart of the region's beverage scene, uncovering hidden gems, award-winning blends, and our best brews.

Crooked Creek Winery in Centralia is a charming destination where you can savor handcrafted wines, such as their smooth Chambourcin Reserve or crisp Seyval Blanc, while taking in the beautiful views of their horse farm. Their new dining option, Farmstand 161, features freshly made pizzas, charcuterie boards, and other small bites that pair perfectly with your drink of choice.

Cameo Vineyards in Greenup is the perfect place to relax and unwind. Every visit promises a personal and flavorful experience where visitors can discover their new favorite wine. For the holidays, they offer Christmas tree-shaped bottles that make the perfect gift.

Enjoy award-winning wines crafted from estate-grown grapes at Twelve Oaks Vineyard in Carlyle. Visitors can bring their own picnic or purchase cheese and crackers on-site while unwinding by the vineyard's two-acre pond.

Irene's Vineyard and Winery in Oblong offers a peaceful countryside retreat, featuring handcrafted wines like their dry Le Blanc and Creekside Bliss. Pair your favorite wine with delicious menu options, including smoked chicken nachos and handmade pizzas, all served in a tranquil, family-owned setting.

New for 2025 for Old Monroe in Columbia are a wedding venue and tasting room.

White Rooster Farmhouse Brewery in Sparta is a destination for beer lovers seeking innovative, barrel-aged farmhouse ales. With a focus on traditional brewing techniques, their hand-crafted beers are best enjoyed in their welcoming tasting room.

Lieferbrau Brewery in Red Bud is a family-owned craft brewery housed in a beautifully restored 19th-century building. Known for its German-style beers, creative cocktails like the Hearts on Fire Margarita, it's a favorite for locals and visitors alike.

Beer and burger lovers, you won't want to miss Schlafly Highland Square in Highland. Known for their expertly crafted beers, they offer a rotating selection of seasonal brews that keep every visit exciting. Pair your drink with one of their delicious menu items for the ultimate dining experience.

Witness Distillery, located in Vandalia, is a craft distillery that produces a range of spirits, including whiskeys, rums, and vodkas. Visitors can enjoy tours and tastings, exploring the distillation process and sampling the handcrafted spirits in the unique underground bar and lounge, Whiskey Underground. Their Lemon Flavored Vodka and Fayette County Fire are a must-try!

Old Monroe Distilling Co., formerly known as Stumpy's Spirits Distillery, is a family-owned craft distillery located on an eighth-generation family farm in Columbia. They specialize in producing grain-to-glass spirits, including bourbon, whiskey, vodka, and gin. Exciting changes are coming in 2025, with the addition of a new wedding venue and tasting room. The original location will remain open, inviting visitors to enjoy tours and tastings while experiencing their handcrafted spirits firsthand.



Irene's Vineyard in Oblong provides a peaceful countryside retreat.

Cedarhurst announces final year for art and craft fair

Cedarhurst invites the southern Illinois community to part of the Grand Finale for the Cedarhurst Art and Craft Fair.

Museum staff have announced that 2025 will be the final year for the longtime fair, which was started in 1977 as one of the Mitchell Museum's first major programs.

"We were one of the first craft fairs in the country, and it has been a core piece of the museum's development and identity," said Executive Director Hillary Esser. "It will be bittersweet to say goodbye to the fair, but our leadership team feels this is the right time.

"As culture shifts and Cedarhurst evolves, we will be re-allocating our resources to other areas moving forward - continuing to support the arts community and build affinity for our museum," Esser said.

The Art and Craft Fair has been a key program at Cedarhurst for almost 50 years, helping to support artists across the nation, raises awareness of Mt. Vernon's small-town museum, and create a noteworthy, arts-rich tourist attraction for southern Illinois.

Staff and volunteers are planning a grand farewell to send off the beloved fair and honor its place in museum history.

"We are excited to make this a celebration and hope that the community will turn out to support the final fair," said Cheryl Settle, who serves as an Administrative Counselor volunteer for the museum and co-chair of the Art and Craft Fair committee. "So many of us have fond memories of the fair, and we want to give people a chance to visit one more time, share those memories, and just enjoy the beautiful experience that is the Cedarhurst Art and Craft Fair. There will be many special touches throughout the weekend."

The 2025 Cedarhurst Art and Craft Fair is scheduled September 5-7, 2025. Visit cedarhurst.org or follow the museum's social media platforms for the most up-to-date information.

About Cedarhurst Center for the Arts: Opening in 1973, the Mt. Vernon, IL museum and nonprofit celebrates the arts year-round with exciting visual/performing arts, galleries, outdoor sculptures, classes, music, and other special programming. It services the 40 most southern counties in Illinois through its mission to generate enthusiastic participation and support for the arts, and provide opportunities for enjoyment, increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the arts.

Oct. 14: Elvis Costello & The Imposters with Charlie Sexton 7:30 p.m. at the Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 14: Avatar: The Last Airbender In Concert — the 20th Anniversary Tour at 7 p.m. at State Farm Center in Champaign.

Oct. 15: Halloween Fun Fest 5–7 p.m. at Market Place Mall in Champaign. Trick-or-treating for kids 12 and under throughout the mall, festive games and a costume contest.

Oct. 16: Golden Girls: The Laughs Continue at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 18: Fright Night at Prairie Farm 5–10 p.m. at Prairie Farm Programs, 2202 W. Kirby Ave., Champaign. This free activity requires no registration! Join us for a spooky good time with hayrack rides, pumpkin decorating, bonfire & s'mores, costume contest, trick-or-treat stations and a special outdoor screening of Hotel Transylvania to end the night.

Oct. 18: Mania: The Abba Tribute 7:30 p.m. at the Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 18–26: Pride Fest in Champaign-Urbana. Parade & Fair will be Saturday, Oct. 25 in downtown Urbana. More info at unitingpride.org

Oct. 21: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Oct. 21: TINA: The Tina Turner Musical at State Farm Center at University of Illinois in Champaign.

Oct. 23: Whose Live Anyway?, based on the beloved Emmy-nominated TV show, WHOSE LIVE ANYWAY? is 90 minutes of hilarious improvised comedy and song, at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 24: An Evening with Fran Lebowitz at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Oct. 25: Flannel Fest 11 a.m.–6 p.m. at West Side Park in Champaign. Live lumberjack shows, an epic mustache contest, a fiery hot pepper challenge, local bands, free games, hayrack rides and inflatable for the kids. Ice-cold beer for those 21+.

Oct. 25: Rocky Horror Picture Show — 50th Anniversary at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign. Come early for fun and prizes! Trivia Contest 6:15–6:40 p.m. — win pairs of free movie tickets. Free goodie bags for the first 100 patrons. Free raffle for concert and/or movie tickets at the Virginia Theatre. Costumes encouraged — a costume contest with prizes.

Oct. 28: Champaign Farmers Market 3–6 p.m. at Neil & University in downtown Champaign. Shop fresh local produce, baked goods, and handmade treasures. Enjoy Rhythm & Roots, our live music series on the Downtown Plaza Stage and let the little ones explore the Kids Corner with games and activities.

Nov. 1: Dia De Los Muertos 11 a.m.–3 p.m. at Martens Center, 1515 N. Market St. in Champaign. Live music, cultural activities, Mexican cuisine, and health and wellness activities provided by the students of Carle Illinois College of Medicine. Family-friendly event.

Nov. 6–8: Alice in Wonderland Jr., presented by Champaign Park District Youth Theatre at Virginia Theatre in Champaign on Thursday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m., Friday, Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 8 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Nov. 8 & 9: 2025 Annual CLCU Art Fair 10 a.m.–4 p.m. both days at the Savoy Recreation Center, 402 W. Graham Drive in Savoy, IL 61874.

Nov. 10: Ben Folds & A Piano Tour at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Nov. 12: Black Violin: Full Circle Tour 2025 featuring Grammy-nominated duo Wil Baptiste and Kev Marcus merging classical depth with hip-hop's pulse at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Nov. 14: Paula Poundstone, comedian, at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Dec. 1: Bela Fleck & The Flecktones: Jingle All The Way with special guests Jeff Coffin & Alash at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Dec. 10: A Magical Cirque Christmas at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

Dec. 13: Sinfonia Da Camera: Winter Fantasia at 7 p.m. at Virginia Theatre in Champaign. Internationally renowned violinist Andres Cardenes joins Sinfonia da Camera as featured soloist, bringing dazzling technique and expressive warmth to a program rich in seasonal color and musical storytelling.

March 25: Kinky Boots Musical at State Farm Center at University of Illinois in Champaign.

May 2: Mrs. Doubtfire Musical at State Farm Center at University of Illinois in Champaign.

May 12: Hadestown Musical at State Farm Center at University of Illinois in Champaign.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Krannert Art Museum

Located at 500 East Peabody Drive on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a unit within the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the museum opened its doors in 1961, establishing a permanent home for the university's existing collection of fine art. For more information, phone 217-333-1861 or 217-244-0516 or visit kam.illinois.edu.

The UI Arboretum

A living laboratory, including plant collections and facilities that support the teaching, research, and public service programs of several units throughout campus. Located on the campus of the University of Illinois, it was developed in the late 1980s to early 1990s, and is currently 57 acres. Central to the Arboretum was the development of the "All American Selection Trial Gardens." The Arboretum is available for organized events from 8 a.m.–dusk. The Arboretum is located on Lincoln Avenue in Urbana. The Arboretum is open daily, sunrise until sunset. Admission is free. For more information call 217-333-7595 or visit the website at www.arboretum.illinois.edu.

Gordyville USA

Founded by legendary auctioneer Gordon and his wife, Jan Hannagan. They created Gordyville. It boasts 160,000 square feet of space to host any kind of event. It consists of two 100' x 270' arenas and room for 650 portable stalls all under one roof that is heated in the winter and has new ventilation fans to cool in the summer. It is equipped with food concessions, wash racks, new "green" lighting and 40 acres of parking. Located on Rt. 136 East outside Gifford. For more information, call 217-568-7117.

Curtis Orchard

From prairie to farmland to apple orchard ... how this piece of central Illinois has changed. You have plenty of choices — pick apples and pumpkins, feed goats, celebrate birthdays, and much more. Fresh country air and plenty of memories are waiting for you at Curtis Orchard. Located at 3902 S. Duncan Road in Champaign. Open late July through mid-December. Phone 217-359-5565 or visit info@curtisorchard.com.

Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve

Lake of the Woods County Park is a 900-acre preserve that features an 18-hole regulation golf course, a 9-hole par 3 course and practice range, fishing, hiking, picnicking, cross-country skiing, sledding, the HI-tower bell carillon and observation area, 3.3 mile bicycle/pedestrian path, the Early American Museum, Mabery Gelvin Botanical Gardens, building rentals, and programs. Located at 109 S. Lake of the Woods Road in Mahomet.

Christian County Events

Aug. 23: Meet The Machines. FREE event at the Christian County Fairgrounds. Stop by between 9 a.m.–noon and explore a huge selection of tractors, trucks, emergency vehicles and more! We'll also be holding a Combine Demolition Derby that is sure to bring the excitement!

Aug. 30: Sock Hop Night at Arpeggio Winery at Pana, IL 6–9 p.m. Join us for a night of vintage tunes, local wines and a dance floor under the stars. Costumes encouraged.

Sept. 5: Small Town Taylorville Cruise on the Taylorville Square in Taylorville, IL. 4:30–8 p.m. Cars, trucks, 4x4 bikes, trikes, vintage, restored, off-road, new and unique! All models welcome! Food, family and fun!

Sept. 12 & 13: St. Mary's Fall Festival at 116 W. Adams St. in Taylorville. Friday, Sept. 12 Fish Fry 4:30–7:30 p.m. and live music from Captain Geech and the Shrimp Shack Shooters while enjoying adult beverages. Hotdogs, walking tacos and BBQ sandwiches will also be available for purchase. Saturday, Sept. 13 from 7–10 p.m. features live music by Brushville, high-energy country-rock show! Cold drinks and festival fun!

Sept. 14: 7th Street Block Party 5–8 p.m. at 100 Block of W. 7th Street in Pana, IL. Music, fun and community spirit! Live music by The Warren Commission band. Bring lawn chairs and enjoy the tunes!

Oct. 4 & 5: Chillifest in downtown Taylorville on the square. 2 Day ICS (International Chili Society) sanctioned chili cook off, cornhole tournament, craft & food vendors, pageants, parade, kiddie tractor pull, kid zone, entertainment. For more info, contact 217-824-4919

Oct. 10: Small Town Taylorville Cruise on the Taylorville Square in Taylorville, IL. 4:30–8 p.m. Trunk or Treat 5–7 p.m. All models welcome! Food, family and fun!

Nov. 8: Pana Holiday Market at Pana Sr. High School in Pana, IL 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

CHRISTIAN COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Paublo Agricultural Museum

The objective of the Paublo Agricultural Museum is to preserve and promote agriculture from the past to the present. To accomplish this, the museum building houses antique trailers, threshing machines & more. Located in Stonington.

Christian County Historical Society Museum

Walk through an 1820 log house, the 1839 Christian County courthouse where Lincoln argued cases, an 1854 farmhouse and an 1856 one-room school. Also military weapons from five wars. Christian County Historical Society Museum in Taylorville.

The Christian County Coal Mine Museum

It features the history of and memorabilia pertaining to coal mining in Christian County. Visit the coal miner monument on the courthouse lawn. Christian County Coal Mine Museum in Taylorville.

Anderson Prairie

Anderson Prairie is a 25-acre wildlife park that features remnants of the original Tall Grass Prairie of Illinois. The park was established in August of 1986. It serves as an outdoor laboratory for students and the public. Located South of Rt 16 on Chestnut Street, in Pana, this mile-long, 200 foot strip is the old historic Illinois Central Railroad bed. For more information go to facebook.com/panaandersonprairie.

Pana Tri-County Fairgrounds

The Pana Tri-County Fairgrounds is the home to the Pana Tri-County Fair. First held in 1885, this yearly event starts the Wednesday before Labor Day and runs for six days as one of America's top agricultural fairs. The Pana Labor Day Parade, a two-hour plus extravaganza, runs through downtown Pana and ends in Kitchell Park, and attracts thousands to view the largest Labor Day Parade in the state.

Clark County Events

Aug. 23: Music by Scott Wattles & the Blue Suede Crew — Rock & Roll, Country, Gospel — at 7 p.m. at Linn Park Amphitheater in Martinsville. Bring lawn chairs or blankets. A free-will offering will be taken. Food available for purchase beginning at 6 p.m.

Aug. 29–Sept. 1: Casey Popcorn Festival in Casey. 4 big days of fun, food and entertainment! For more info, go to popcornfestival.net

Aug. 30: Music by Atta Boy — 2000s to today — at 7 p.m. at Linn Park Amphitheater in Martinsville. Bring lawn chairs or blankets. A free-will offering will be taken. Food available for purchase beginning at 6 p.m.

Sept. 19–21: Autumn Festival in downtown Marshall. A weekend full of fun, food and live entertainment. Food trucks, cakewalk, vendors of all kinds, parade and over 100 arts and crafts booths. Car, truck & motorcycle show. Free live music all weekend includes Boy Band Review and No Fences — the ultimate tribute to Garth Brooks and so many more entertainers!

Oct. 3–5: Fall Frolic 2025 at Lincoln Trail State Park in Marshall. Decorated campsites, trick or treating, hayrides, glow kayak event and more! Check the Facebook page for more details.

Nov. 28–Dec. 31: Christmas in Fairview Park in Casey, IL. A drive-through celebration that sparkles with joy and wonder. Free admission.

Dec. 5 & 6: Candy Canes on Main in downtown Casey, IL. Lighted Christmas parade, vendor merry market, downtown starlight shopping, stories with Santa, character breakfast, snowball drop, sidewalk vendors, kids inflatables, ice skating, local shopping and more!

Dec. 6: Hometown Holly Days in downtown Marshall IL. Ride the Polar Express Train — Depot at the Marshall Public Library. Live Nativity — walk through 10+ different scenes depicting the story of stories! Carolers, slide & bounce houses, food trucks, Christmas music, cookie walk, visit Santa, Christmas shopping, dining, Santa run, characters around town, lighting of the Christmas Tree, Christmas market at Harlan Hall, lighted Christmas Parade and more! Free family fun!

CLARK COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Archer House

The Archer House, located at 717 Archer Ave in Marshall, was built in 1841 and is the oldest hotel still in operation in Illinois. It was entered into the National Register of Historic places on March 16, 1976. Both presidents Abraham Lincoln and Grover Cleveland were guests at the Archer House.

Stone Arch Bridge

Stone Arch Bridge was constructed in 1831 with no mortar and is still in use today. The National Road runs over this bridge and it is located on Archer Ave. at the west edge of the City of Marshall.

Mill Creek Park

Located seven miles northwest of Marshall on the Lincoln Heritage Trail Road. Mill Creek Park opened May 29, 1982 and consists of 2,600 acres of land and 811 acres of water with 39 miles of shoreline. There are picnic areas on either side of the boat launch and at areas around the lake, a 139-site campground with shower facilities and a playground, 15 miles of ATV trails, horse and walking trails, courtesy dock facilities, annual leased docks, fuel dispensing, cabins, and boat rentals. The park also has a picnic area with four shelters and three playgrounds, as well as nine primitive camping sites. Please call 217-889-3901 or 217-889-3601 for more information.

Moonshine

Moonshine, located about 12 miles southeast of Casey, is the home of the Moonshine Burger and the annual Moonshine Run — a must for motorcyclists everywhere. For more information on the event, please visit the Moonshine Run Home page.

Lincoln Trail State Park

Whether you are looking for history, unusual plant life or recreation, Lincoln Trail State Park has something to interest you. Located just west of IL Rt. 1, 2 miles south of Marshall in Clark County, the area is named after the trail Abraham Lincoln's family followed enroute from Indiana to Illinois in 1831. Three Native American groups, the Miami, Kickapoo and Mascouten,

occupied the site before it was ceded to the United States in the early 19th century. Today, visitors to the 1,023-acre park can enjoy the sights of an American Beech woods; wildflowers, including the unusual squaw-root and beech drops; and recreational activities such as boating, camping, fishing, hiking and winter sports.

World's Largest

Casey has become home to a growing display of "giant" objects, earning the small town several spots in Guinness World Records book. Displayed throughout the city are gigantic wind chime, golf tee, knitting needles, pitchfork, mailbox, clogs and rocking chair and more!

Clay County Events

Sept. 12–13: Shadows of Elmwood Cemetery Tours. Meet at Flora Depot.

Sept. 19–20: Ford Town Fun Fest in Flora, IL. Cruise-In with classic cars, Clay County Cruisers Car Show, Ford Town memorabilia on display, craft and vendor fair, craft brew & wine fest, chili cook-off and more!

Sept. 27: FAF Appleknocker — A great family-friendly arts & science festival event put on by the Flora Academic Foundation and held at the Flora Elementary School grounds that has free entertainment, inexpensive games for kids, and great food. Booths are ran by school groups, churches, and local organizations. The money raised goes to groups working the booths. Everyone is welcome to attend! 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Oct. 11: Flora Chamber Annual Amateur Doubles Disc Golf Tournament at Charley Brown Park in Flora, IL.

Oct. 24 & 25: Louisville, IL Fall Festival.

Oct. 25: Halloween parade in downtown Flora.

Dec. 12–14: Flora Kriskindle Market 2025 — Library Park area in Flora, IL. Step into a holiday wonderland where twinkling lights, festive cheer and magical memories await! Shop hand-crafted gifts, holiday décor and seasonal treats from local artisans and vendors. Live reindeer, ice skating rink, breakfast with Santa with pancakes, giant selfie snow globe (step inside and snap the ultimate holiday photo!), food trucks and festive eats and much more!

CLAY COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Little Toot Railroad

Located in Charley Brown Park in Flora, the 15-inch gauge locomotive runs each weekend, four times each day (except during rain), beginning Memorial Day weekend and concluding when Labor Day arrives. Special trains run in November and December for the holiday weekends. Tickets can be purchased at the park. For more information and schedule times, call 618-662-8040.

Charley Brown Park

Located west of Flora, the park has 100 acres of rolling wooded hills, a swimming pool, camp sites for both campers and tents, picnic sites and a lake for boating and fishing. Charley Brown Park not only hosts the Little Toot Railroad, but also hosts the county fair, and is home to Flora Rotary Disc Golf Park.

B & O Depot

Located at 223 West Railroad Street in Flora. Built at the height of the railroad industry in Illinois, the recently restored three-story brick building is now the home to the Flora Chamber of Commerce and other various businesses.

Clinton County Events

Aug. 22: Farmers Market at Carlyle IL VFW 5 p.m. to dusk.

Aug. 23: Party at the Park in Bartleso, IL. See Facebook page for more information.

Aug. 31: Albers Hootenanny in Lehrter Park in Albers, IL. Music 2 p.m.–midnight. Inflatables, kids activities, concessions and more! Hoop-enanny 3 on 3 boys and girls basketball at 11 a.m. To enter a team of 4, contact 618-520-8717.

Sept. 5 & 6: Carlyle Street Fair in downtown Carlyle, IL around the courthouse square. Food vendors, events, live music, penny raffle, vendor sales and so much more! Sept. 5 begins with food stands and vendor sales opening at 4 p.m. Car cruise in 5–9 p.m. Inflatables, mobile arcade and laser tag 5–9 p.m. Live music by Hangtime on main stage 6–10 p.m. Pickleball open play 6–8 p.m. Sept. 6 begins with pet parade registration at 9:30 a.m. and pet parade at 10:30 a.m. Pickleball tournament starts 9:30 a.m. Food stands, mobile arcade and vendor sales open at 11 a.m. Bags tournament registration at 11 a.m. with tournament beginning at noon. 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Zip line, rock wall and Extreme Air 3–9 p.m. Laser tag 5–9 p.m. Benders & Backroads providing live music at 6–10 p.m. on the main stage.

Sept. 13: Peace. Love. Walk. Community Link Buddy Walk at Northside Park in Breese, IL. Karaoke performances begin at 10 a.m. One-mile fun walk through streets of Breese at 11 a.m. After the walk there will be mellow time with games and crafts, food vendors and more!

Sept. 19 & 20: Fall City Wide Yard Sales in Carlyle, IL. Maps are available at city hall, Case-Halstead Library, IGA, all Carlyle gas stations and banks.

Sept. 26: Farmers Market at Carlyle, IL VFW 5 p.m. to dusk.

Sept. 27: Breese Optimist Fall Fest at Northside Park in Breese, IL. Chili cook-off, homebrew contest, vendor fair, live music, bounce houses, petting zoo, tractor/car show, games and plenty more fun!

Oct. 3–5 and 10–12: Over the River and Through the Woods at Avon Theatre in Breese, IL. Over the River and Through the Woods is a heartfelt and hilarious comedy that explores the bonds of family, tradition, and change. Written by Joe DiPietro, this charming play follows

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Nick, a young, single Italian-American man whose announcement of a life-changing career move sends shockwaves through his devoted grandparents. With love, laughter, and plenty of pasta, they scheme to keep him close to home, no matter what it takes. Touching and laugh-out-loud funny, *Over the River and Through the Woods* offers a warm, relatable story about family ties, generational differences, and the bittersweet moments of growing up. Performances Oct. 3, 4, 10 & 11 at 8 p.m., and Oct. 5 & 12 at 2 p.m.

Oct. 17 & 18: Haunted Trail at Carlyle Lake 6:30–10 p.m. Embark on a hayride from Dam West Boat Ramp to the Little Prairie Nature Trail where your hike on the Haunted Trail begins on an unpaved trail. Food vendors in Dam West Boat Ramp parking lot.

Oct. 25: A Nightmare on Main Street Pub Crawl in Breese, IL with a live party band from 9 p.m.–1 a.m.

Dec. 5-7 and 12-14: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever at Avon Theatre in Breese, IL. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever is a hilarious and heartwarming holiday classic that's perfect for the whole family. Based on the beloved book by Barbara Robinson, this delightful play tells the story of the Herdman kids, labeled the worst children in the history of the world, who unexpectedly take over the local church's annual Christmas pageant. What follows is a chaotic, comical, and ultimately touching retelling of the Nativity story like you've never seen before. Filled with laughter, surprises, and a powerful message about acceptance and the true spirit of Christmas, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever is sure to become a holiday favorite. Performances Dec. 5, 6, 12 & 13 at 8 p.m., and Dec. 7 & 14 at 2 p.m.

Feb. 6-8 and 13-15: Boeing Boeing at Avon Theatre in Breese, IL. Boeing Boeing is a fast-paced farce packed with nonstop laughs and outrageous fun. Set in the swinging 1960s, this classic comedy follows Bernard, a charming bachelor in Paris who's juggling three fiancées, each an airline stewardess with a different flight schedule. His perfectly timed romantic roster goes hilariously off course when the airlines switch to faster jets, all three women end up in town at the same time, and his plans come crashing down. With rapid-fire dialogue, wild misunderstandings, and physical comedy galore, Boeing Boeing is a high-flying theatrical romp that's sure to leave audiences laughing from takeoff to landing. Performances Feb. 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 8 p.m., and Feb. 8 & 15 at 2 p.m.

April 17-19 and 24-26: Exit Laughing at Avon Theatre in Breese, IL. Exit Laughing is a witty and touching comedy about friendship, living life to the fullest, and finding joy in the unexpected. When the ladies of a long-standing bridge club lose one of their own, the remaining three borrow her ashes from the funeral home for one last night of fun. What follows is an unforgettable evening full of surprises, laughter, and even a little romance. This heartwarming and hilarious play by Paul Elliott reminds us that it's never too late to let go, live a little, and, of course, exit laughing. Performances April 17, 18, 24 & 25 at 8 p.m., and April 19 & 26 at 2 p.m.

CLINTON COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

General Dean Suspension Bridge

The General Dean Suspension Bridge spans the Kaskaskia River at Carlyle. It is named after Major General William F. Dean, a native of Carlyle who served during the Korean War. The bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was added to the Register in 1973.

Cholera Cross

Driving along the main road south of Breese, you will pass a soaring white cross, about 25 feet tall, a remembrance of tragedy that happened 183 years ago. The Cholera Cross is a local landmark with a notable history. Built in 1850, the cross is a memorial to those who lost their lives in the cholera outbreak of 1832. It was a devastating disease caused by contaminated water or food, and transmitted by personal contact. This outbreak was first diagnosed in Chicago, where part of the militia fighting the Black Hawk War was struck. The disease spread quickly, raging like wildfire, eventually reaching southern Illinois where the towns of Breese, Germantown and Carlyle suffered the most devastating losses. During this time, a local farmer, Joe Altepeter, prayed to God to spare his family, and promised that if they lived, he would erect a large cross to profess his faith. His family was spared and Altepeter constructed the cross and mounted it at the road in front of his home. A brass plaque notes the story, a reminder of one man's pledge and a county's devastation. The cross sits at the original location on County Highway 7, about one mile south of Breese, just off the lane that runs to a dairy farm. Be sure to stop and take note the next time you drive by.

Coal Miners' Monument

Joseph Koch, who along with eight other local miners died in a mine explosion in 1947, is depicted here. Today the Coal Miners Monument on Louis Street in Beckemeyer depicts these downed workers, and pays tribute to the men who helped build one of Clinton County's largest industries.

Breese Historical Park & Garden

Located at 496 N. 2nd Street in Breese, IL, peruse Breese's history in photographs, memorials and on the granite pyramid in this neighborhood park. Benches and seasonal plants make this a quiet spot for rest and reflection. Make Breese Historical Park & Garden your spot for picnicking and playing.

Clinton County Historical Museum

This museum is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Clinton County's heritage through education, written and photographic documentation, artifacts and oral histories. Built in the late 1800s as a private home, the museum holds many artifacts from the area, including genealogical material, books and periodicals on the history of the county. Open every Thursday, except the first Thursday of the month, from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. and by appointment.

Excel Bottling Company

Excel Bottling Company is located in Breese, IL, where Ski and other all-natural, pure cane sodas have been produced since the mid '30s. Tours are available. In 2012 Excel Brewing was established, home to several craft beers including Carlyle Lake Lager and Shoal Creek Oktoberfest, Wheat, & Winter Ale, Hop Heist, Piague Bringer and Double IPA.



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ANNUAL EVENTS

- Polar Plunge
- Farmers Market
- City Wide Yard Sales
- Street Fair
- Clinton County Fair
- 4th of July Fireworks
- Cruisin' the Dam Car Show
- Haunted Trail
- Pumpkin Patch
- Christmas in Carlyle



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ENJOY A DAY IN COLES COUNTY!

Coles County Events

Aug. 28: Concerts in the Park featuring Chat Noir at 7 p.m. at the Daum Amphitheater at Kiwanis Park in Charleston.

Aug. 30: I'm Not A Comedian....I'm Lenny Bruce at 7:30 p.m. at The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Sept. 5-7: Sports Card Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Sept. 12: Cultural Crossroads: Dvorak in America, live concert experience that explores the Black and Indigenous influences on Dvorak during his time in America, at 7:30 p.m. at Dvorak Concert Hall in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Sept. 12: Cruisin' Downtown Mattoon 5-9 p.m.

Sept. 13: Greater Coles County Walk to End Alzheimers at Linder Sports Complex in Charleston. A morning filled with passionate speakers, family friendly activities, pet photo booth and so much more before hitting the route for a walk around Linder Sports Complex.

Sept. 13: Train Show in the Rural King Event Center in Mattoon.

Sept. 13: Mattoon Artisan Fair in Heritage Park in Mattoon.

Sept. 13: Battle Creek Band performs at Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Sept. 13: Harvest of Hope Family Concert at Peterson Park in Mattoon starting at 5 p.m. An annual live music event, bringing together multiple Christian artists for a one-night show. See Jeremy Camp headlining with Jamie MacDonald opening and Big Daddy Weave joining the concert.

Sept. 13: North of Slavery: The Matson Slave Trial presented by Sam Wheeler in the Visitor Center Auditorium at 2 p.m. at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site in Lerna. The talk will





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examine the critical role the Illinois Supreme Court played in ensuring Illinois developed as a free state.

Sept. 19 & 20: CIL-Con at the Front Street Event Center in Gays.

Sept. 20: Coles County Memorial Airport Young Eagles, free flights for kids.

Sept. 20: Special Olympics Family Festival at Lake Land College. An exciting day filled with fun, food, music, entertainment and noncompetitive games. Every participant truly emerges a winner!

Sept. 20: Six Appeal, a world class vocal ensemble, in conjunction with the 2nd Annual ACA Festival, at 7:30 p.m. at Dvorak Concert Hall in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Sept. 26-28: Fall Flea Market at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Sept. 27: Tour de Charleston bike race starting at 8 a.m. Register to participate in 1 of 3 adult bike races around the Charleston area and compete for awards. Enjoy music and fun at the Festival if you're not a racer, or join in after you race! Commemorate your day with our selfie spot, grab a bite from a food truck, and take part in the beer garden. There's something for everyone at Tour de Charleston!

Sept. 27 & 28: Harvest Frolic Fall Celebration from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site in Lerna. Event is free and open to the public. Experience 19th-century life on the farm including children's crafts, food preservation, hearth cooking and more. Artisan demonstrations will include spinning, pottery, ropemaking, blacksmithing, tinsmithing, embroidery, soapmaking, and much more. Enjoy performances from The Unreconstructed String Band, storyteller and dulcimer player Mike Anderson, the Clockwork Clown, a Punch and Judy Show and classic Americana circus performers KB Circus Spectacular. Go on a nature walk or watch a performance from storyteller Brian "Fox" Ellis. Historic cricket demonstrations available on Sunday. Food trucks both days.



Mattoon Trunk or Treat

Oct. 2: Mattoon Chamber of Commerce Business Expo 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Cross County Mall in Mattoon. Free to public.

Oct. 10: Cruisin' Downtown Mattoon 5-9 p.m.

Oct. 10-12: Mattoon Pride Field of Screams Halloween Tourney

Oct. 16: Shaun Boothe: Unauthorized Biography Series, at 7:30 p.m. at The Theatre in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Oct. 24: Celebrate Downtown Mattoon Trunk or Treat from 5-8 p.m. Costumes, candy and community fun! Food trucks, live music and a candy wonderland of booths and decorated trunks of treats! New this year will be carnival games and a costume contest!

Oct. 24: Scare on the Square in downtown Charleston

Oct. 25: Torchlight Halloween Hike, Storytelling and Wiener Roast from 5-8 p.m. at Lincoln Log Cabin Historic Site in Lerna. Enjoy cider, hotdogs and s'mores available for purchase. Non-frightening actors in historic clothing and "friendly ghost" makeup are walking along the torchlit path to interact with guests, carrying lanterns.

Oct. 31: Trunk or Treat at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

CROSS COUNTY MALL

- Rural King
- Elevate - Business Innovation Center
- Alamo Steakhouse
- Dunham's Sports
- Marshalls
- Shoe Dept.

- Glik's
- Claire's
- Pro Nails
- C & C Kettle Corn
- Impact Life Blood Services
- Industrial Martial Arts
- Journal Gazette-Times Courier

FALL / WINTER 2025 & SPRING 2026 EVENTS

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 5-7 Sports Card Show • September 13 Battle Creek Band performs • September 26-28 Fall Flea Market • October 2 - Mattoon Chamber of Commerce Business Expo 10am-3pm - Free to public • Throughout the month of November - US Military memorabilia display - in the storefront next to Glik's • November 1 - Coles County Veterans Support Coalition Trivia Night benefit - inside the Rural King Event Center - veterantrivia.com • November 7-9 Sports Card Show • November 14-16 - Christmas Gift and Craft Show | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 21-23 - Mattoon Tourism Holiday Artisan Market • December - various dates of Santa visits • January 30-31 & February 1 Sports Card Show • March 6-8 - East Central Illinois Antique Farm Equipment Club Farm Show • March 13-15 - ECIA Tractor and Quilt Show • March 20-22 - Class Pack Car Club Classic Car Show • March 27-29 - Flea Market • April 3 & 4 - Easter Bunny visits 1-5pm both days • April 10-12 - Sports Card Show • April 18 - Festival of the Young Child 10am- 2pm |
|---|--|

Cross County Mall is Conveniently Located At 700 Broadway East Mattoon
 With Easy Access From I-57 On Rte. 16 - Exit West To 3rd Stop Light - North Side
 Hours - Monday -Saturday 10am-8pm | Sunday Noon-5pm.

LINCOLN LOG CABIN
STATE HISTORIC SITE

Special events all year long, check the calendar of events at the website www.lincolnlogcabin.org or call 217-345-1845

Experience the living history program at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site May through October

We look forward to seeing you out on the farm, eight miles south of Charleston, Illinois, until then be sure to follow us on Facebook.

This ad sponsored by Lincoln Log Cabin Foundation and Charleston Tourism

Oct. 31: City of Mattoon citywide trick or treating.

Nov. 1: Coles County Veterans Support Coalition Trivia Night benefit — inside the Rural King Event Center. More info and tickets can be found at veterantrivia.com

Nov. 7-9: Sports Card Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Nov. 11: Veterans Day Parade in Mattoon.

Nov. 14-16: Christmas Gift and Craft Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Nov. 20: Mattoon Lightworks Walk Thru at Peterson Park in Mattoon.

Nov. 21-Dec. 25: Mattoon Lightworks drive through

Nov. 29: Downtown Mattoon Cookie Walk. Each ticket holder will receive a collectible bag to collect specialty cookies from local businesses in the Broadway District! Special sales from downtown businesses, snacks, live music and giveaways!

Dec. 4-7: Holiday Fest at Eastern Illinois University. Art sale, food vendors, carolers, concerts, art and science activities for the kids, Santa and Mrs. Claus and more!

Dec. 5: Mattoon Celebrate Downtown Christmas 5-8 p.m. Experience the enchantment of the holiday season like never before! A winter wonderland! Reindeer petting, photo opp with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, local food trucks and restaurants serving up delicious holiday treats, shops downtown offering specials.

Dec. 7: Old Fashioned Christmas on the Prairie from 1-4 p.m. at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site in Lerna. Enjoy light refreshments and visit the children's craft stations. Watch volunteers baking gingerbread on the hearth and take a horse and carriage ride around the site. The East Central Chorale will lead carols in the auditorium at 1 p.m. The Gooseneck Prairie Gift Shop is open for unique gifts including many locally sourced and handcrafted products.

Jan. 24: Immunity: Joshua Roman at 7:30 p.m. at The Theatre in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Jan. 30-31 & Feb. 1: Sports Card Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

Feb. 6: John Clayton, during the 66th Annual Jazz Festival, at 7:30 p.m. at Dvorak Concert Hall in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Feb. 14: Eaglemania: The World's Greatest Eagles Tribute Band at 7:30 p.m. at Dvorak Concert Hall in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

Feb. 27 & 28, March 1, 6, 7 & 8: Bright Star with shows at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 27 and 28 and March 6 and 7 and shows at 2 p.m. on March 1 and 8 at The Theatre in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

March 6-8: East Central Illinois Antique Farm Equipment Club Farm Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon. Tractors will be set up during this show through the week of the Tractor Show.

March 13-15: ECIA Tractor and Quilt Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

March 20-22: Class Pack Car Club Classic Car Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

March 27-29: Spring Flea Market at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

April 3-4: Easter Bunny visits 1-5 p.m. both days at Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

April 10-12: Sports Card Show at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

April 11: Koresh Dance Masquerade at 7:30 p.m. at The Theatre in the Doudna Fine Arts Center on the campus of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston.

April 18: Festival of the Young Child 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Cross County Mall in Mattoon.

COLES COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Douglas-Hart Nature Center

Helen Douglas-Hart had a dream of developing a natural area that would reflect the native habitats of east-central Illinois. Her dream became a reality in the late 1960's by planting a 33-acre nature preserve. Today, the Douglas-Hart Nature Center features more than 70 acres of prairie, wetland, and forest habitat. Also, it provides the people of the surrounding communities the unique opportunity to learn about and discover the wonders of nature. For more information call 217-235-4644 or go to www.dhnature.org. Douglas-Hart Nature Center is located at 2204 DeWitt Ave. East in Mattoon, IL

Lincoln Log Cabin Historic Site

Lincoln Log Cabin Historic Site was the 1840s home of Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, father and stepmother of Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States.

The site includes a working, living historic farm developed around a two-room cabin. A second farmstead, the Stephen Sargent Farm, has been moved to the site to help broaden visitors' understanding of the 1840s rural life in Illinois. Both offer an array of interpretive programs. For a current calendar of events, call the site at 217-345-1845 or check online at www.lincolnlogcabin.org. Special group tours are available by appointment.

Hours are 8:30 a.m. through dusk Wednesday through Sunday. The visitor's center is open 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. and the living history program runs from 9 a.m. through 5 p.m. on days the site is open.

Admission is on a donation basis. The site is located at 402 S. Lincoln Highway Road, Lerna.

Lake Charleston

With 10 miles of paved and unpaved trails that surround the lake, it's a perfect place to run, hike, walk and enjoy the scenery. Plus new playgrounds and pavilions for picnics. www.charlestonillinois.org

Thomas Lincoln Cemetery

Many visit this cemetery in the Lerna area to see the burial site of Abraham Lincoln's father and stepmother, Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Lincoln. Free admission. Open each day until dusk.

Charleston Downtown Square

Charleston's Downtown Square has been the site of the Coles County seat since 1835. Abraham Lincoln practiced law in a previous version of the courthouse. Today, the late 19th century Romanesque courthouse sits at the center of the square. Historic buildings display stunning architectural details and serve as home to current professional offices, unique shops and restaurants.

Charleston Riot Historic Marker

Located on the Coles County Courthouse square, the Charleston Riot Historic Marker commemorates a face-to-face encounter in Charleston that took place during the Civil War between southern sympathizers, Union soldiers and citizens who favored the Lincoln administration.

Warren James Winery

Warren James Winery opened in 2023 by brothers Cole and Blake Pierce, with the goal of creating a legacy business in their hometown, and an environment for people to gather, relax, and enjoy the company of their friends and family. The property consists of nearly 55 acres that boasts a vineyard spanning 8 different varieties, wildflowers, sunflowers, prairie grass, bee hives, walking trail, pond, and patio. Our building is split between our production facilities and our tasting room which features the main bar, fireplace, stage, and rentable event room. Warren James Winery is located at 5600 Lerna Rd, Mattoon, IL 61938.



Christmas in the Heart of Charleston is scheduled for Saturday, December 6 on the square in Charleston, IL.

Just a Short Drive From the Downtown Square COPPER EAGLE ANTIQUES

Copper Eagle Antiques is home to 40 antique dealers offering more than 5000 sq. ft. of antiques, art and collectibles.

222 Madison Ave. | 217-348-0404

Open Mon. - Sun. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Growing number of visitors discovering southern Illinois as travel destination



Machaela Sweeney enjoys the view at the top of Inspiration Point near the Mississippi River in southern Illinois' Shawnee National Forest. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Maggie Dougherty)

SONYA DYMOVA AND MAGGIE DOUGHERTY
MEDILL ILLINOIS NEWS BUREAU

Standing on the edge of a 300-foot limestone bluff in southern Illinois' Shawnee National Forest, Machaela Sweeney could thank the perfect words she typed into ChatGPT for bringing her to the unexpected spot.



Road sign points to wine trail locations along the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Sonya Dymova)

"I literally looked up lush, magical, fairytale areas," she recalled, looking over the edge of the forest's Inspiration Point Trail.

A 30-year-old social worker from Hopkinsville, Kentucky, Sweeney was looking for a destination to recover from burnout. The AI app recommended two destinations: North Carolina or southern Illinois.

The first recommendation didn't surprise her. Sweeney said that many people in Kentucky go to the Great Smoky Mountains when they want to get away. But she had never heard anyone talk about the Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois before.

"So this almost feels like a hidden gem," Sweeney said. "If somebody was going to the Smokies all the time and they were tired of it, I would say, 'Try mixing it up.'"

The forest stretches across the eastern and western parts of southern Illinois, from Inspiration Point Trail overlooking the Mississippi River Valley here in the west to the popular Garden of the Gods wilderness area in Herod to the east.

Sweeney is among the growing number of visitors discovering southern Illinois as a travel destination amid a recent effort to entice more people to visit for the summer season.

Carol Hoffman, executive director of the Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau, said the primary draws to southern Illinois are the outdoor recreation activities in Shawnee National Forest, including hiking, cycling, rock climbing and ziplining, as well as another Illinois surprise linked to the unusual terrain: vineyards and five wine trails.

The bureau has appealed to riders of the Chicago Transit Authority with a recent signage campaign that invited potential travelers to “go where the bus won’t take you” and to “come see our skyscrapers.”

In addition to plastering photos of lush greenery and rocky bluffs across Chicago buses and train stops, the bureau has paid to have promotional mailers, exhibits, shows and content creator posts that promote tourism to Illinois’ southern region.

Southern tourism bureaus have been tapping into a trend of high visitor spending in Illinois in recent years, exceeding pre-pandemic numbers for the first time in 2023, according to the most recent available data from a 2024 report prepared for the Illinois Office of Tourism.

MORE THAN \$80 BILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

In 2023, tourists spent over \$47 billion across Illinois, creating nearly 450,000 new jobs and generating over \$6.5 billion in state and local taxes, according to the 2024 Tourism Office report. The report estimated that tourism in that year generated over \$80 billion in total economic impact for the state.

Travel tourism influencer Jessica Baine, 35, has worked on tourism promotions with the Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau and Jackson County’s Southern Illinois Tourism bureau for more than two years.

Baine, a Carterville nurse practitioner raised in southern Illinois, said she regularly receives messages from viewers online who were surprised by the content she shared, telling her, “I had no idea that southern Illinois looked like that.”

Hoffman’s group aims to connect with people within “an easy day’s drive,” typically those within a three- to six-hour driving distance from the forest, such as those living in central and southern Illinois and in the St. Louis metro area.

The advertising campaign is just one in a series of projects seeking to boost tourism in the area in recent years. The industry has seen a more than twofold increase in funding since 2023, with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, or DCEO, giving out over \$9 million in grants to boost tourism in the southern part of the state.

That money was distributed to cities and tourism bureaus across the south-

ern half of the state for the last fiscal year, from Alton and Mattoon down to Metropolis, the officially designated home of Superman, where fans can take photos with a 15-foot statue of the comic book hero.

Past Illinois tourism campaigns have paid major returns. In the 2023 fiscal year, every dollar invested in promoting tourism generated \$75 in direct visitor spending, according to the 2023 – 2024 Economic Impact of Tourism report by the DCEO Office of Tourism.

Grant funds are matched by local hotels and motels hoping to bring travelers in, according to Hoffman.

In some cases, lodging is the attraction itself. According to Lyle and Tammy Woodrum, the married innkeepers of the Davie School Inn in Anna, Illinois, a fifth of their guests come just for the experience of staying in a former schoolhouse.

Originally built in 1853 as a school, the Davie School Inn was repurposed as a bed and breakfast, but still looks in many ways like a school, with various rooms featuring desks, globes and chalkboards covered with messages from past guests.

Susan Hill traveled from her home in

Memphis to stay at the Davie School Inn last month. She said she’s done it a handful of times since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, when she was looking for somewhere to stay where she could sit outside.

According to Hill, the novelty of staying in an old school was a draw. “It’s like, heck yeah, come on,” she said. “It’s just really quaint. I feel safe there.”

The Woodrums said most of their guests have come for the area’s local attractions, primarily the Shawnee Hills Wine trail and outdoor activities in the Shawnee National Forest but also for family and college reunions.

‘WINE JUST LIKES US’

Shawnee Hills Wine Trail is the largest of the state’s five trails, comprising 12 wineries and 13 locations. It originated in the summer of 1995, when owners of the first three wineries in southern Illinois — Alto Vineyards, Pomona Winery and Owl Creek Vineyard — worked with the Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau and the Carbondale Convention and Tourism Bureau to start the first wine trail in Illinois.

Maggie Pugh, assistant manager at Feather Hills Vineyard on Highway 51,



A peace sign flag hangs from the window of a storefront on the Makanda Boardwalk. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Sonya Dymova)

300-foot limestone bluff at Inspiration Point. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Sonya Dymova)



said the campaign to attract tourists to the region has had a real effect on the winery. Recently, the company ran out of three of its bestselling — and most bottled — wines, which, to her, is an indicator of increased visitor flow.

“I think we are getting busier. I think the advertising has worked,” she said. “I also know that the Wine Trail is doing quite a lot to try and bring more people down, because part of the problem is, this area isn’t taken seriously for wine — although it should be.”

Illinois is the second-flattest state on the nation’s mainland, seemingly perfect only for corn. But Pugh described the Shawnee Hills region — home to many of Illinois’ highest elevations — as a

“little golden nugget” in which “wine (is) just likes us, grapes enjoy our soil.”

Since 2015, wineries on the trail have won over 30 medals in national and international wine competitions. Although the vineyards are geographically close together, scattered across an area of 40 miles, the trail boasts a wide range of wines, Pugh said.

“The coolest part about southern Illinois is that even a winery that’s only 20 minutes away from this location right here, our wine is going to taste vastly different, even if we made it the exact same way,” she said. “Our grapes don’t taste the same because of the elevation, and you get those slight hints that might make or break a wine for you.”

‘ILLINOIS’ MOST HIPPIE TOWN’

Award-winning wines and breathtaking vistas aren’t the only unexpected finds in southern Illinois.

Makanda, a short drive from the Southern Illinois University campus in Carbondale, features a boardwalk of shops by local artists. Artists sell jewelry, gemstones, sage for burning, paintings, intricate metalwork and more. The tiny village of fewer than 550 people, a short drive from SIU, proudly calls itself “Illinois’ most hippie” town.

Nina Kovar is one of those artists. In her Visions Art Gallery, dream catchers are hung along the front window, inviting shoppers to come browse clothing, jewelry and handmade ceramics.

Kovar said she sees graduates coming back for homecoming again and again, as well as others who are discovering the town for the first time after hearing about its hippie reputation.

“There’s a certain timeless element to it,” Kovar said of Makanda. “The creativity that we have, that a lot of us are artists and artisans and crafters, that it’s kind of nestled in nature; it’s beautiful.”

Kovar said she has seen a significant increase in tourism to Makanda since the COVID-19 pandemic, with people not flying as much, but also wanting to get out of the house and into the outdoors.

Makanda also made it onto the map, Kovar said, because of the total solar eclipse that took place on April 8, 2024. A few shops down from Kovar, artist Dave Dardis painted a line through his shop to represent the path of totality at the time.

Dardis is better known as the Rainmaker, a name he shares with his bronze art studio. A backdoor in Dardis’ shop opens out to his secret garden, a poorly kept secret in Makanda.

The garden features lush greenery and natural elements interwoven with bronze sculptures. Sweeney, a self-described whimsical person, said her visit to Dardis’ not-so-secret garden was the best part of her southern Illinois experience.

“That’s like walking into a literal fairy tale,” Sweeney said. “He’s like a hermit slash hippie slash, I don’t know, man with wisdom,” Sweeney added of Dardis. “He almost reminds me of a sage, like, you know those giant trees that talk?”

Having grown up in the area, tourism

Open cabinet doors in a Davie School Inn guest room display globes and other teacher-themed decorations. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Sonya Dymova)



influencer Baine is well aware of the traditional engines for local economies — whether that's coal mining or agriculture. But she sees a path for tourism to become an even bigger factor in time.

"There's coal mines and there's all these very blue-collar jobs, but tourism brings even more money to our region. Tourists are spending money at restaurants, at the wineries, and they can reinvest in our communities," Baine said.

"When you live and breathe southern Illinois, and your kid goes to school here," she said, "you want these businesses to thrive."

Sonya Dymova and Maggie Dougherty are students in journalism with Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications, and fellows in its Medill Illinois News Bureau working in partnership with Capitol News Illinois.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Sculptures peak through the leaves in the secret garden behind the Rainmaker studio in Makanda. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Maggie Dougherty)



Emiquon celebrates 25 years of restoration with free events

This year, The Nature Conservancy is marking 25 years of restoration at its Emiquon Preserve with a series of free, family-friendly public events. From paddling tours and fishing days to nature hikes and hands-on science experiences, the anniversary lineup offers unique ways for people of all ages to explore one of the Midwest's most remarkable ecological success stories.

Located along the Illinois River near Lewistown, Emiquon was once a natural backwater floodplain supporting hundreds of native plant and animal species. By the mid-20th century, it had been drained for agriculture. In 2000, The Nature Conservancy began an ambitious effort to return more than 5,000 acres to functioning wetlands.

Since then, native fish, birds and wetland plants have returned in remarkable numbers, signaling the resilience of nature. Today, Emiquon supports a thriving ecosystem, attracts researchers from around the world and serves as a hub for education and recreation.

"Places like Emiquon are rare in central Illinois — and across the Midwest," said Randy Smith, director of the Illinois River Program for The Nature Conservancy. "We're hosting these events to give people a hands-on look at how wetlands function, why they matter and how nature can bounce back when given the chance."

To mark the milestone, The Nature Conservancy will host the following public events:

- **Ridge Hike** — Sept. 13, 12:30 p.m.–2 p.m. Take in panoramic views of the Illinois River valley on a guided hike with Conservancy staff and partners. Learn about Emiquon's ecological and cultural history along the way.
- **Science Day** — Sept. 13 and Sept. 27, morning session. Join scientists from the Therkildsen Field Station and The Nature Conservancy for a hands-on wetland workshop. Participants (high school and up) will sample wetland macroinvertebrates, analyze findings under microscopes and learn how these organisms reflect water quality. Registration required.
- **Fishing Days** — Aug. 29–Sept. 1, 5 a.m.–9 p.m. Fish along the banks during Labor Day weekend. Staff may be available.
- **Volunteer Days** — Sept. 2–4, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Get hands-on with habitat restoration by planting native wildflowers, removing invasive species and supporting long-term stewardship efforts. Tools and guidance are provided.
- **Bird Hike** — Sept. 20, 7 a.m.–9 a.m. Join a two-hour guided birding hike through a variety of habitats, from woodland to the marsh, listening for various fall migrants. Advance registration is preferred.

All events are free and open to the public, with some requiring advance registration. Some programs are suitable for all ages and will be adapted as needed for weather conditions. To register or view the full event fall schedule, visit: nature.org/Emiquon25 or email emiquon@tnc.org

Crawford County Events

Aug. 29-Sept. 1: Annual Pioneer City Labor Day Festival and Rodeo. Pioneer City Arena, Leaverton Park & Main Street Palestine play hosts to a street fair, carnival, and the PRCA rodeo. Chuckwagon breakfast, parade, camping, junior-sized tractor pull, lunch with clowns, flea market, mechanical bull rides, free entertainment at the band shell, town-wide garage sales and more! Contact: Palestine Chamber of Commerce 618-586-2222, pioneercity.com or email PalestineCofC@verizon.net

Oct. 3-Oct. 4: Annual Heath Toffee Festival and Parade. Located on the square in Robinson. Celebrating the delicious Heath Candy Bar, created in 1928 by Heath Brothers Confectionery in Robinson. Features Friday night entertainment, street dance, and car show, and Saturday craft show, live entertainment, toffee bake-off, and parade, capped off by a free chili supper. Call 618-546-1557 for more information.

Oct. 4-5: Annual Wabash Valley Wine & Arts Festival. Several wineries provide various wines for tasting as you stroll Main Street and enjoy artworks from numerous artists from the Wabash Valley area. Some may be purchased. Food booths and live entertainment. Saturday 11 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sunday noon-5 p.m. Contact Susan Goodwine at 618-586-2035.

Oct. 25: Annual Oblong Fall Follies and "Spooktacular" Band Fest and Parade. Features night-time parade, band field competition, food, crafts, and entertainment on the square in Oblong. Call 618-592-4355 for more information.

Nov. 15: Palestine Preservation Projects Society Cookie Walk, Fife Opera House 9:00 a.m. -7 p.m. Browse table after table of homemade cookies for purchase.

Nov. 22: Christmas on the River. Visit the village of Hutsonville for beautifully decorated Christmas trees, food, and entertainment.

Nov. 28: Leaverton Park Holiday Lighting Festival. 5 p.m. Leaverton Park comes alive with over 40,000 lights and displays. Enjoy hot chocolate and cookies with Santa, listen to area church choirs and singing groups caroling. Watch the fireworks and enjoy cornbread and beans, hotdogs, & desserts served by the Lions club. Contact Palestine Chamber of Commerce, 618-586-2222.

Dec. 5-7: Home for the Holidays. Join us for Robinson holiday market and lighting of the beautiful Christmas displays in Robinson. Santa arrives, food booths available, games for kids, train rides, skating rink, and bounce houses. Located at the Robinson Civic Center. Call the City of Robinson for more information at 618-544-7616 or visit our Facebook page, The City of Robinson.

CRAWFORD COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Oblong

Oblong, located on the western edge of the county, also offers a variety of unique retailers. Collectibles, quilt and sewing supplies, handcrafted gifts, floral, and furnishings can be found along Main Street in Oblong. The Oil Field Museum in Oblong is one of only seven such facilities in the nation. It features two buildings of displays, tools, books and literature, working models and photographs regarding the boom days of oil discovery in Crawford County Illinois in the early 1900s.

Palestine

Palestine is the oldest town in the state of Illinois still in its original location. The entire business district is listed on the National Historic Register, and many turn-of-the-century buildings house art galleries, antique and collectible stores, and gift shops. Visitors come from all around to visit this historic village full of rich history. Palestine is home to the Fife Opera House, the annual Pioneer City Rodeo and Labor Day Festival, and many other history rich events throughout the year.

Hutsonville

Hutsonville, at the Wabash River Bridge on the northeast edge of the county, features the Hutson Memorial Village. A "town" made up of original, furnished log cabins, a log barn, and log church, is named in honor of the Isaac Hutson family which was massacred by Indians in 1813. Each year, the event is re-enacted, and several other family oriented events are held at the complex throughout the year. Antique and specialty stores round out the village, along with a bookstore located in the house where Illinois' ninth Governor, August French, was married.

Flat Rock

Flat Rock may not be the retail mecca of the county, but it does get a big "thumbs up" when it comes to a great milkshake, fresh pie, and friendly conversation. The annual Flat Rock Homecoming is a great time to visit the village for memorable family fun. After a disastrous fire in 1912, an ordinance was passed that all new buildings must be constructed of brick. The town has more concrete sidewalk per capita than anywhere in the nation.

Irene's Vineyard

Irene's Vineyard and Winery is locally owned and operated by the Boldrey Family at their secluded countryside home nestled along the North Fork Creek at 8500 N 2250th St, Oblong, Illinois 62449. Wayne and Irene moved to their home in 1958 where they raised their 4 children at this beautiful countryside place, we now call Irene's Vineyard. Although they have both passed now, our family still carries on the traditions of family, food, fun and wine! We welcome you to make yourselves at home and enjoy this beautiful place we proudly call home.

2025 Crawford County Calendar of Events

(Dates are subject to change. Please call ahead or visit www.cityofrobinson.com for more information)

August 29 – September 1

Annual Pioneer City Labor Day Festival and Rodeo

Pioneer City Arena, Leaverton Park & Main Street Palestine play hosts to a Street Fair, Carnival, and the PRCA rodeo. Chuckwagon Breakfast, Parade, Camping, Junior-sized Tractor Pull, Lunch with Clowns, Flea Market, Mechanical Bull Rides, Free Entertainment at the Band shell, Town-Wide Garage Sales and more!

Contact: Palestine Chamber of Commerce

618-586-2222

www.pioneercity.com or Email: PalestineCofC@verizon.net

October 3 - October 4

Annual Heath Toffee Festival and Parade

Located on the square in Robinson. Celebrating the delicious Heath Candy Bar, created in 1928 by Heath Brothers Confectionery in Robinson. Features Friday night entertainment, street dance, and car show, and Saturday craft show, live entertainment, toffee bake-off, and parade, capped off by a free chili supper.

Call 618-546-1557 for more information.

October 4-5

Annual Wabash Valley Wine & Arts Festival

Several wineries provide various wines for tasting as you stroll Main Street and enjoy artworks from numerous artists from the Wabash Valley area. Some may be purchased. Food booths and live entertainment. Sat 11am-7pm & Sun 12-5pm

Contact: Susan Goodwine 618-586-2035

October 25

Annual Oblong Fall Follies and "Spooktacular" Band fest and Parade

Features night time parade, band field competition, food, crafts, and entertainment on the square in Oblong.

Call 618-592-4355 for more information.

November 15

Palestine Preservation Projects Society Cookie Walk

Fife Opera House 9:00 a.m. -7

Browse table after table of homemade cookies for purchase

November 22

Christmas on the River

Visit the Village of Hutsonville for beautifully decorated Christmas Trees, food, and entertainment.

November 28 – Friday after Thanksgiving

Leaverton Park Holiday Lighting Festival

5:00 p.m. - Leaverton Park comes alive with over 40,000 lights and displays. Enjoy hot chocolate and cookies with Santa, listen to area church choirs and singing groups caroling. Watch the fireworks and enjoy cornbread and beans, hotdogs, & desserts served by the Lions club.

Contact: Palestine Chamber of Commerce

618-586-2222

December 5-7

Home for the Holidays

Join us for Robinson holiday market and lighting of the beautiful Christmas displays in Robinson. Santa arrives, food booths available, games for kids, train rides, skating rink, and bounce houses. Located at the Robinson Civic Center. **Call the City of Robinson for more information 618-544-7616 or visit our Facebook page The City of Robinson.**



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- Antique Tractor & Farm Machinery Exhibits
- Meal Grinding & Blacksmith Demonstrations
- Juried Fine Art Show
- Kids Activities

C.H. MOORE HOMESTEAD DeWitt County Museum

*For festival information, contact the C.H. Moore Homestead & DeWitt County Museum chmoore.homestead@gmail.com or 217-935-6066 or find us on Facebook www.chmoorehomestead.org

At Irene's, we go above and beyond to craft quality wine that our customers will love and enjoy. We produce wines ranging from dry, off-dry, semi-sweet, sweet and fruit. One of our most popular wines is White Trash. This wine is well known for its elegant name but also its fruity aroma and pleasantly smooth and sweet taste.

Cumberland County Events

Aug. 23: Neoga Fall City-Wide Garage Sales

Sept. 5 & 6: Neoga Bucks Club Side x Side Run 2025. Campground opens north of Camp New Hope, Lake Mattoon, Neoga IL Sept. 5 at 1 p.m. with obstacle course at 6 p.m. Events on Sept. 6 begin with check-in starting at 9 a.m. and departure at 11 a.m. Mud pit & bounty hole following ride. This year's proceeds to go to the Trevor Roy family to assist with Trevor's Road to Recovery. For more info, contact Jared McKay at 217-962-1207 or Matt Peters at 217-254-3479.

Sept. 13: Benefit for Trevor Roy at The Kelly Bar in Neoga. For more information, check updates on our Facebook page.

Sept. 27: Family Fall Fest 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Camp New Hope. Games and Inflatables, food trucks, vendors, music, Wheels of Hope Car Show, train rides on the Camp New Hope trails, and more! Open to the public!

Sept. 27: Sooyefest in Neoga.

Oct. 9-11: Chamber of Commerce Greenup Apple Fest in Greenup.

Oct. 18: A Spooktacular Bingo Night at Neoga American Legion Post 458 in Neoga. Check their Facebook page for more details.

Oct. 25: Halloween Celebration at the Greenup Municipal Building in Greenup.

Nov. 29: Hometown Christmas in Neoga.

Dec. 6: Christmas Around the Square in Toledo. Join us for another magical celebration filled with festive fun, holiday cheer, and community spirit.

Dec. 13: Christmas in the Village at the Greenup Municipal Building in Greenup.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

National Road Covered Bridge

The Embarras River near Greenup was the site of a covered bridge built by Abe and Thomas Lincoln and Dennis Hanks. The original bridge was 200 feet long. Reconstruction of the bridge began in 1998 and was dedicated in 2000. Call 217-923-3401 or visit villageofgreenup.com for more information.

Greenup Train Depot and Museum

Located at 211 Cumberland St., Greenup, the original depot was used until 1967 when the train master retired. There are several train artifacts in the depot and there is a large miniature train display and upstairs is the train masters living quarters. Hours are Thursday through Sunday from 11:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Cumberland Co. Historical Society Illinois Military Museum

101 N. Mill St., Greenup. Features photos and memorabilia of local and Illinois veterans. For more information call 217-923-9306 or email: historic1859@gmail.com

Cameo Vineyards

Enjoy complimentary tastings, purchase wine by the glass, and browse leisurely through the gift shop. Tours of the cellar provided whenever possible. Visitors may choose to enjoy a peaceful afternoon on the grand porch overlooking the vineyard, or opt to have cozy conversation by the crackling fireplace. Perched on a bluff overlooking panoramic views of the hillside vineyard and the Embarras River Valley, the boutique winery was built using the family's grandfather's circa 1900 pin-beamed barn.

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Outside Seating

Clock Tower

Visit a Clock Tower on a local farm at 138 Co Rd 500N, Sigel, IL 62462 that is powered by the old clockwork from St. Michael Catholic Church in Sigel IL. The clockwork is over 100 years old. The tower is approximately 35 foot tall, is lit at night and decorated during the holiday season.

Cumberland County Courthouse

Visit the completely restored Cumberland County Courthouse located on the square in Toledo, IL. Built in 1887-88, the building is Cumberland County's second courthouse. The first courthouse, located at the same site as the current one, was built in 1856 and burned in 1885. The second courthouse was designed by architects S. S. Goehring and L.L. Pierson. The building's design features a central clock tower, arched entrances on the east and west sides, column-supported balconies above the entrances, and a balustrade along the roofline. The building has continuously served as the seat of county government since its opening. The courthouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places on June 11, 1981.

DeWitt County Events

Every Saturday now through Oct. 11: Clinton Area Farmers and Artisans Market 8 a.m.-noon at Mr. Lincoln's Square in downtown Clinton, IL.

Sept. 27 & 28: Apple 'n Pork Festival. Food stands with old-fashioned harvest time treats, crafters and artisans, live music and so much more at the C.H. Moore Homestead in Clinton, IL.

Nov. 28: Candlelight Tours and Santa Night at C.H. Moore Homestead in Clinton, IL. Light refreshments will be served.

Dec. 5, 12 & 19: Candlelight Tours at C.H. Moore Homestead in Clinton, IL.

Dec. 12 & 19: Christmastime Carriage Rides through the beautifully decorated streets of historic Clinton, IL. Climb aboard a horse-drawn carriage, take in the twinkling lights and enjoy the timeless atmosphere of a Victorian Christmas.

DeWITT COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Clinton Lake State Recreation Area

Clinton Lake S.R.A. is east of Clinton off Rt. 10 and Rt. 54. Enjoy 9,300 acres of great outdoors for all seasons — picnics, hiking, camping, swimming, water skiing, boating, fishing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling and so much more. Contact Clinton Lake S.R.A. at 217-935-8722.

Ultimate Play Space

Clinton's own Ultimate Play Space is located in Kiwanis Park behind the YMCA at 417 S. Alexander. The Ultimate Play Space was built in 2003 by hundreds of volunteers from Clinton and the

surrounding area. Bring the kids and enjoy a fun-filled afternoon of imagination and play in this 13-acre park. The "UPS" is also adjacent to the "Spray and Play" spray park.

Weldon Springs State Park

Just two miles east of Clinton is Weldon Springs State Park, a 550-acre park for all seasons, where you can fish, boat, camp, hike, view or photograph nature and wildlife and so much more. Pack a picnic lunch, and come spend the day with the family. Contact Weldon Springs State Park at 217-935-2644.

Douglas County Events

Aug. 22 & 23: Mennonite Relief Sale at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Aug. 29-31: Tabbapalooza Music Festival at 730 N 450 East Road, Garrett, IL.

Aug. 30, 31 & Sept. 1: Amish Country Cheese Festival in downtown Arthur.

Sept. 5-7: Arcola Broomcorn Festival. We're ready to sweep you off your feet with three days of small-town charm, quirky fun and history brought to life! Craft & food vendors, live broom making demos, famous Lawn Rangers Parade, 5K/10K race, live entertainment, National Broom Sweeping Contest and more! Contact Arcola Chamber of Commerce at 217-268-4530 for more information.

Sept. 5 & 6: Town Wide Garage Sales in Arthur.

Sept. 17: The Great Pumpkin Patch opens in Arthur.

Sept. 19: Haven of Care Benefit at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Sept. 26: Semi-Annual Toy Auction at the Tri-County Auction Facility, 650 E County Road 400 N, Arcola, IL 61910.

Sept. 27: Semi-Annual Consignment Sale at the Tri-County Auction Facility.

Oct. 10 & 11: Harvest to Home Festival at the Illinois Amish Heritage Center on Rte. 133, 3 miles east of Arthur, IL and 5 miles west of the Arcola, IL I-57 exit. Oats will be threshed by a threshing machine powered by teams of horses. Harvest activities and demonstrations will take place.

Oct. 11: Pop The Top Car Show in downtown Arcola 9 a.m.-3 p.m. where horsepower meets harvest! From hot rods to classics, rat rods to muscle cars, there's something for every enthusiast! Unique handcrafted trophies like People's Choice and Most Likely to Attract Unwanted Police Attention! Enjoy food trucks and live music, all while enjoying the Moomaw America's Hippy Memorial and 15 stunning Walldog murals!

Oct. 18: 3rd Saturday Market/Bazaar at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Oct. 24 & 25: Annual Haiti Benefit Auction at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Oct. 24-31: Lighted Pumpkin House Display in downtown Arthur.

Nov. 1: Bi-Annual Fish Fry at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Nov. 7 & 8: Homesteaders on the Prairie Antique Show at the Arthur Sale Barn.

Nov. 7 & 8: Country Spirit Antique Show with 50 top dealers from 19 states showcasing the best in early country antiques at three Arcola locations: Best Western Plus Green Mill Village Convention Center, Arcola Center at 107 W. Main St., and Masonic Community Center at 111 S. Locust St. Whether you're a collector, decorator or vintage lover, this is the perfect Midwest weekend to explore, shop and discover timeless treasures!

Nov. 8: Arthur Amish Country Open Houses in downtown Arthur and various locations near Arthur.

Nov. 8: Gathering on the Prairie Antique Show at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Nov. 15: 3rd Saturday Market/Bazaar at the Otto Center in Arthur.

Nov. 28: Black Friday Shopping Event in downtown Arthur and County Line Road businesses.

Nov. 28: Toy, Farm Primitives, Antiques & Collectibles Auction at the Tri-County Auction Facility.

Nov. 29: Advertising Signage, Petrolina, & Collectibles Auction at the Tri-County Auction Facility.



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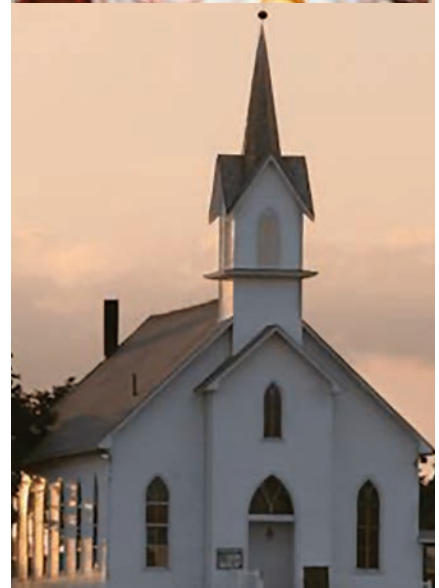
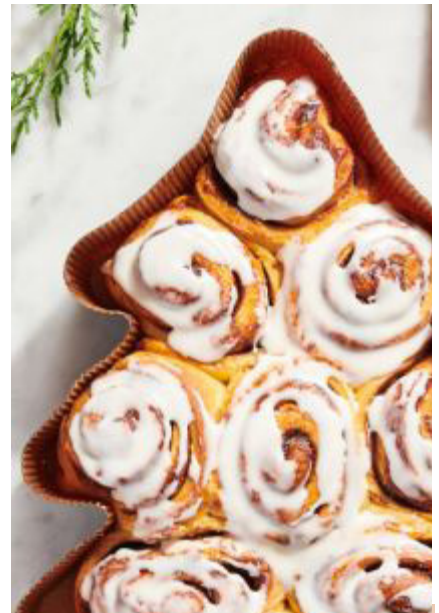
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THE ARCOLA BROOM PALACE 201 E. Main Street, Arcola

Located in the heart of downtown, this new attraction highlights Arcola's rich ties to broom corn and the crop's role in shaping the community.

Arcola Chamber of Commerce

201 E. Main Street, Arcola, IL (First floor of The Arcola Broom Palace)

217.268.4530 www.arcolachamber.com

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Dec. 6: Breakfast with Santa at Yoder's Kitchen.

Dec. 6: Lighted Christmas Parade in downtown Arthur.

Dec. 20: 3rd Saturday Market/Bazaar at the Otto Center in Arthur.

2026 Dates

March 6-7: Antique Weekend

March 13-14: Arthur Home & Garden Expo at the Otto Center in Arthur.

March 20: Gospel Echoes Auction

March 27-28: C.A.M.S. Rummage Sale

March 27: Tri-County Spring Toy Auction

March 28: Tri-County Semi-Annual Consignment Sale

April 4: Bi-Annual Fish Fry

April 19: Arthur Legacy of Love Foundation Benefit Auction

April 30-May 2: Annual Arthur Quilt Show at the Otto Center in Arthur.

May 15: Strawberry Jam in Arthur, IL.

June 27: Parade / Fireworks / Freedom Celebration at Moultrie-Douglas Fairgrounds behind Arthur High School.

Aug. 28-29: Arthur Mennonite Relief Sale

Sept. 5-7: Amish Country Cheese Festival in Arthur, IL.

Sept. 25: Tri-County Fall Toy Auction

Sept. 26: Tri-County Fall Consignment Sale

Oct. 23-24: Haiti Benefit Auction

Oct. 24-31: Lighted Pumpkin House Display in Arthur, IL.

Nov. 7: Otto Center Bi-Annual Fish Fry

Nov. 13-14: Antique Weekend

Nov. 15: Amish Country Christmas Kickoff

Nov. 27: Black Friday Shopping Event

Dec. 5: Breakfast with Santa

Dec. 5: Lighted Christmas Parade in downtown Arthur.

DOUGLAS COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Aikman Wildlife Adventure (formerly Rockome Gardens)

Located between Arcola & Arthur. Come see and take pictures of animals from six different continents. For more information call 217-268-3500, email info@aikmanwildlife.com or visit aikmanwildlife.com

Harris Ag Museum

To tour a 1920's farm kitchen, early grain elevator office and blacksmith shop, visit Harris Agricultural Museum at Atwood. Antique tractors from 1922 through 1937, engines and Ford Model-T grain/dump truck from 1919 also are on exhibit. Hours are 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or weekends by appointment. Call 217-578-2231 or 217-578-3040.

Sears "Catalog Homes"

Tuscola is home to four "catalog homes." From 1908 until 1940, the Chicago-based catalog giant Sears, as well as Montgomery Ward, offered and sold roughly 100,000 build-it-yourself home kits. There were 450 various models ranging in price from \$150 to a little more than \$5,000. One home is located at 309 N Main. It was ordered in 1931 and is called "The Cambridge". Another is located at 106 E. Buckner. The home was built in 1915 and located 5 ½ miles west of Tuscola, before being moved to its present site in 1946. Yet another home is located a few miles north of Tuscola on Route 45. It was built 1920-22. The fourth home is located on Scott St. and was built in 1915.

Douglas County Courthouse

The Douglas County Courthouse sits on a full block on the south side of Tuscola. It is the home of murals printed by E. Martin Hennings, circa 1912. It was built in 1912-13 in classical style architecture. The woodwork is all white oak, floors in public places are of tile and terrazzo and corridor walls are wainscoted with finely polished marble. All columns and pilasters are of scagliola exquisite workmanship. In the center of the building and extending throughout the three stories is a beautiful glass dome.

Illinois Amish Heritage Center

The Illinois Amish Heritage Center was first created in 1994 as the Illinois Amish Interpretive Center located in Arthur, Illinois. The Center offered an introductory film to Amish life, exhibits on Amish heritage and culture, a gift shop, and Amish Country Tours of Amish homes, farms, businesses and meals in Amish homes.

In 2010, the Center was moved to Rockome Gardens and renamed The Illinois Amish Museum. The museum remained open at Rockome through 2014 when Rockome went up for sale. Rockome was purchased later that year and the new owner began implementation of a wildlife park. The Amish Museum was subsequently put into storage and the search for a new facility began.

In the year 2000, two historic Amish houses were saved from destruction and moved to a location behind Yoder's Kitchen in Arthur, Illinois. In 2014, plans had been made to move the houses to Rockome Gardens, \$102,000 was raised, and a state tourism grant was written. The pending sale of Rockome and state budget problems put a hold on these plans.

In 2016, five acres of land were secured one mile west of Chesterville and three miles east of

Arthur, Illinois. In September, the houses were moved to the new site and a plan for the construction of a new museum building and Amish living history farm were developed. Restoration on the Schrock house and planning for a steam threshing event in the summer of 2017 began. A development plan laid out a four year time table for the completion of the site.

The mission of the Illinois Amish Heritage Preservation Center is to enhance the preservation, understanding, and appreciation of all aspects of the culture and heritage of the Amish people in Illinois from 1865 to present.

A Walk Through Time Museum

A Walk Through Time Museum features many local pieces from Arcola's past including:

- History on Raggedy Ann and Andy
- Originals by Johnny Gruelle and R.B. Gruelle
- A Local Heroes' section displaying Vietnam War memorabilia
- Hispanic Display featuring Arcola's rich history
- Arcola Industrial Display
- Arcola Tradition of Excellence in Sports
- Walldog Murals in Arcola display
- History of the Railroad
- Old Arcola Display
- River to Rail Display
- Aikman's Wildlife Adventure Display

A donation is required for entry to the museum.

The Arcola Broom Palace

The Arcola Broom Palace at 201 E. Main St., Arcola, IL is officially open and ready to welcome visitors! Located in the heart of downtown, this new attraction highlights Arcola's rich ties to broomcorn and the crop's role in shaping the community.

Watch a short film that brings this unique history to life, then explore local artifacts, Raggedy Ann and Andy memorabilia, and exhibits that celebrate Arcola's heritage. Don't miss the stunning views from our rooftop observation deck!

Whether you're a history lover or just passing through, the Broom Palace is a must-visit destination in Amazing Arcola.



Edgar County Events

Sept. 6: Edgar County Shrine Auction at the Bloomfield Barn, 18444 N. 1600th St., Chrisman, IL 61924.

Sept. 13: Spencer Day: A Night Out with Sinatra at 7 p.m. at Paris Center of Fine Arts, 14040 E. 1200th Rd, Paris IL 61944.

Oct. 4: Live From Laurel Canyon at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. Relive the sound of the 60's and 70's.

Oct. 19: The Rocketman Show at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. Elton John Tribute Show.

Nov. 1: Paris Park Board's Halloween Ball. Join us for the second annual Paris Park Board Fund-raiser! This year, an extravagant Halloween Masquerade is planned! We need you, your families, your friends and the best costumes you can come up with!

Nov. 22: Betsy & The Bears at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. Jazz and Vintage Vibes.

Nov. 29: Christmas in Paris.

Dec. 20: The Harp Twins at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris.

Feb. 14: The Everly Set at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. The Everly Brothers Tribute.

March 5: Red Hot Chili Pipers at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. Bagpipes meets rock and roll.

April 25: Patti Murin at Paris Center of Fine Arts in Paris. From Oz to Us.

EDGAR COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Paris Center of Fine Arts — Performances on the Prairie

A 500-seat theater hosts world-class musicians, illusionists, speakers, actors, comedians, and other professional performers. Located next to Paris High School at 14040 E. 1200th Road, Paris, Illinois

Southfork Homestead & Pumpkin Patch

Beautiful pumpkin patch and farm grounds, located in the heart of Central Illinois, offer fun, family-friendly activities for visitors of all ages! Enjoy wagon rides, corn mazes, hiking trails, picking out the perfect pumpkin, and more. Plus visit Outlaw Grill for hungry visitors. There is something for everyone to love!

Vance Park

It is a calm and quiet place that's perfect for meditation. Inside you will find a lushly landscaped sunken garden with it's own traces of history. A serpentine wall, that reflects a design by Thomas Jefferson, located in Charlottesville, NC, and a Lions Head fountain at the far end of the small park duplicates one found in Paris, France.

Twin Lakes Park

The city's oldest and principal recreation center is Twin Lakes Park, the development of which began back in 1895, when the dam impounding Paris' first reservoir was completed. The facilities of Twin Lakes Park include: a bathing beach, bathhouse and shelter, large shelter house, miniature golf course, picnic areas with plenty of picnic tables and benches, boating rentals and tour boats, commercial amusement rides, professional league baseball diamond, lighted horseshoe courts and the West Lake Boys and Girls Scout Camp.

Edgar County Courthouse

The Edgar County Courthouse is the center of the community. Built in 1891, its Romanesque architecture and the four-face clock tower are renowned within this region. As one of four Paris buildings on the National Register of Historic places, it features native limestone and interior painting motifs reflecting the Chicago Exposition.

Effingham County Events

Aug. 22: Boom Box all '80s pop/rock band at Effingham Event Center Patio 8-11 p.m.

Aug. 22: Farmin' on a Friday Outdoor Show at Lake Sara Community Building, 9282 E. Park Ave., Effingham, IL 62401. Doors open 6 p.m. Merry Travelers 6:45-7:20 p.m. Jacob Kuhns Experience 7:30-8:15 p.m. Chicago Farmer & the Fieldnotes 8:30-10 p.m. Food and beverages for sale. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket and spread out under the trees and stars! Proceeds benefit Poss Music Works and the upcoming Summer Sundown Music Festival.

Aug. 23: Tracy Lawrence. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Aug. 23: Harry's Tavern 7th Annual Jeep Run. Registration at 11 a.m. Ride leaves at noon. Flight Fifty is the evening entertainment starting at 7 p.m. See Facebook page for more details.

Aug. 23: Magic & Mischief: A Midsummer's Night Ball and Oddities Market at Thelma Keller Convention Center in Effingham. Oddities Market is free admission and open to all ages with lots of unique oddity vendors and performances. Enchanted Ball is 18+ only event with cash bar, hors d'oeuvres, exciting performance, DJ Music and Enchanted Ball attire.


Sept. 6: Cruise Night in downtown Effingham. Cars & Coffee 8-10 a.m. at The Gabby Goat then a Road Rally Cruise down Route 40 to Greenup with a group lunch at Changes R Bar at 11 a.m. in Greenup. Show & Shine Car Show at the courthouse square in Effingham starting at 2 p.m. with food trucks, a beer tent and live music. Downtown cruise begins at 5 p.m. through the streets of Effingham. Live music by Danny Shelton & The Bird dogs starting at 7 p.m. Net proceeds from the event benefit Operation Blackhawk which provides support to active-duty military families in Effingham area.

Sept. 6: Scavenger Hunt at Little M Event Center, 23282 E. 200th Ave., Dieterich. Register 6 p.m.-6:30 p.m. with hunt starting at 7 p.m. and ending at 9 p.m.

Sept. 6: Last Chance Pull at Beecher City Community Park in Beecher City.


Sept. 6: Little Buckaroo Saddle Club Horse Show at the arena in Teutopolis, just south of the Teutopolis Banquet Hall ball diamond. For more info, email ttownlsc@gmail.com

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- » disc golf course
- » camping areas
- » picnic areas
- » storywalk
- » pickleball courts

2025 ENTERTAINMENT AT LAKE SARA

- » Aug. 22 - Farmin' on a Friday outdoor show at Lake Sara Community Building
- » Sept. 5 & 6 - Crossroads Music Festival
- » Sept. 12-14 - Summer Sundown Music Festival
- » Sept. 19-21 - Effing Pride Fest 2025



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| DATE/TIME | SHOW | TOP TIER | LEVEL A | LEVEL B |
|-------------------|--|----------|---------|---------|
| Aug. 23 7:00 pm | Tracy Lawrence | \$80 | \$70 | \$60 |
| Sep. 19 7:00 pm | Skillet | \$84.99 | \$64.99 | \$44.99 |
| Oct. 03 7:00 pm | T. Graham Brown | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Oct. 10 7:00 pm | Grits & Glamour: Lorrie Morgan & Pam Tillis | \$75 | \$55 | \$45 |
| Oct. 11 7:00 pm | Tom Petty Night - Fear Nothing | \$30 | \$30 | \$30 |
| Oct. 17 7:00 pm | Adam Wainwright Band | \$84.99 | \$64.99 | \$44.99 |
| Oct. 18 7:00 pm | Hocus Pocus (Interactive Movie) | \$20 | \$20 | \$20 |
| Oct. 19 7:00 pm | Amy Grant | \$80 | \$70 | \$60 |
| Oct. 24 7:00 pm | Nitty Gritty Dirt Band | \$80 | \$60 | \$50 |
| Oct. 26 7:00 pm | Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood | \$70 | \$55 | \$45 |
| Nov. 07 7:00 pm | Straight No Chaser | \$80 | \$60 | \$50 |
| Nov. 08 7:00 pm | Disenchanted | \$60 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Nov. 15 7:00 pm | Three Dog Night | \$80 | \$70 | \$60 |
| Nov. 21 8:00 pm | Hairball | \$39 | \$39 | \$39 |
| Nov. 22 7:00 pm | Michael Cavanaugh Christmas | \$55 | \$45 | \$35 |
| Dec. 06 7:00 pm | Who Brought the Humbug? | \$55 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Dec. 07 7:00 pm | Lonestar & Collin Raye | \$80 | \$65 | \$50 |
| Dec. 12 7:00 pm | Texas Tenors | \$60 | \$50 | \$40 |
| Dec. 13 3:00 pm | Polar Express (Interactive Movie) | \$40 | \$20 | \$20 |
| Dec. 19 7:00 pm | Jingle Bell Jam | \$30 | \$30 | \$30 |
| Dec. 20 7:00 pm | Christmas with Elvis - Scott Wattles | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Jan. 17 3:00 pm | Frozen (Interactive Movie) | \$40 | \$20 | \$20 |
| Jan. 23 7:00 pm | Matt Dusk Sings Sinatra | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Jan. 30 7:00 pm | Chris Janson | \$80 | \$65 | \$50 |
| Feb. 06 7:00 pm | Hee Haw Honey Reunion | \$60 | \$45 | \$35 |
| Feb. 07 7:00 pm | Mike Super 2.OH! | \$60 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Feb. 14 7:00 pm | Direct from Sweden: The Music of ABBA | \$60 | \$50 | \$40 |
| Feb. 20 7:00 pm | Dinosaur World Live | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Feb. 21 7:00 pm | Floyd Nation | \$60 | \$45 | \$30 |
| Feb. 26 7:00 pm | Dr. Reed Timmer: America's Storm Chaser | \$50 | \$35 | \$25 |
| Feb. 27 7:00 pm | The Barricade Boys | \$53 | \$43 | \$33 |
| Feb. 28 7:00 pm | Six String Summit | \$30 | \$30 | \$30 |
| Mar. 06 7:00 pm | Celebrating Meat Loaf | \$65 | \$50 | \$40 |
| Mar. 12 7:00 pm | Vitamin String Quartet | \$55 | \$45 | \$35 |
| Mar. 13 7:00 pm | Pauly Shore | \$70 | \$50 | \$35 |
| Mar. 21 7:00 pm | Mama I'm a Big Girl Now | \$65 | \$50 | \$35 |
| Mar. 27 7:00 pm | The Traveling Salvation: A Tribute to Neil Diamond | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |
| Mar. 28 7:00 pm | Fake News: A Tribute to Huey Lewis | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 |



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VISIT DOWNTOWN EFFINGHAM

Just beyond a 198-foot cross located at the junction of Interstates 57 and 70 lies one of the most progressive cities in Illinois named Effingham. A short drive into the city brings you to the heart of downtown where you'll find fascinating museums, galleries, a coffee roaster, entrepreneurs and several restaurants and bars. You can spend a day taking it all in or experience downtown Effingham with an overnight stay in one of the coolest Airbnb spaces in town. Located above XCHNG, these Airbnb's are available for short or long term stays. Another feature is Effingham Public Library located just across the street from Effingham County Museum.

Downtown Effingham hosts a number of fun events during the year including Farmers Market each Saturday morning during the summer months, Ladies Night Out, seasonal open houses, EffinghamHAM JAM barbeque festival, Cruise Night, a huge Halloween parade, a downtown Trick or Treat event and a marvelous Christmas celebration that includes tasty treats, stunning lights and a visit from Santa at Santa's House. Traditional activities during the Christmas celebration include carriage rides, live entertainment, an ice rink, light parade, train rides and live reindeer, to name a few!

There are many monstrous light displays that stay all winter long on the lawn of the Effingham County Museum as an awesome photo op for thousands of visitors.

The City of Effingham was proud to be ranked second in a line-up of Illinois' Best Downtown Areas in 2022! Effingham invites you to come see what draws thousands to visit this thriving downtown area all throughout the year!



New gazebo on courthouse square in downtown Effingham

📍 The Arena Trampoline Park

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Sept. 12 & 13: Fall Open Houses in downtown Effingham.

Sept. 12-14: Summer Sundown Music Festival at The Stage at Lake Sara, Effingham.

Sept. 13: Wine & Music at the Dr. Charles M. Wright House, 3 W. Jackson Ave., Altamont, IL. There will be plenty of beer and wine on hand to enjoy. Andy Rueter plays music 2:30-5:30 p.m. and Drew Sheafor and Audrey Simes play music 6-9 p.m. Bring lawn chairs.

Sept. 19: Community Support Systems Art Auction & Community Celebration at Teutopolis Banquet Hall. Grounds open 5 p.m. Auction 6 p.m. Food, live music, bake sale, free kids activities, CSS vendor fair. Danny Shelton & The Bird Dogs band 7:30-10:30 p.m.

Sept. 19: Skillet: Revolution. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Sept. 19-20: Effingham Citywide Fall Garage Sales.

Sept. 19-21: Triple A Tractor Club Annual Show at Percival Springs Airport, South Rt. 45, just south of the Watson Y. Working AC Tractor Show. Family fun event with tractor pull, kids pedal pull, games, potato digging, harvest beans, corn picking, plowing, kids games and lots more! All colors of tractors welcome!

Sept. 20: ALIS BBQ Cookoff Fundraiser 1-9 p.m. at Effingham County Fairgrounds. Contest Prizes for 1st, 2nd 3rd and People's Choice. Lutheran Ladies bake sale. Dinner Served 4 p.m. until gone

for free will donation: brisket, pulled pork, baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad, and chips. Beer garden, food, bounce houses, games. Entertainment by The Mutineers from 6-9 p.m. Pickle ball tournament at 2 p.m. with signup at 1 p.m. Visit us on Facebook at ALIS BBQ Cookoff Fundraiser for more info.

Sept. 20: St. Francis Parish Picnic starts with 4:30 mass outside in the mini-park, weather permitting. Food, games, and more! St. Francis Parish in Teutopolis, IL.

Sept. 20: Corvette Fun Fest at the Mid America Motorworks grounds in Effingham.

Sept. 21: Fall Craft & Vendor Show at Thelma Keller Convention Center 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 80+ booths to shop from. Gift card giveaways.

Sept. 26: Adult Pumpkin Hunt Fundraiser at dusk at Tuscan Hills Winery in Effingham. Hunt. Sip. Win. Pumpkins packed with prizes and the Golden Pumpkin holds \$500 cash for one lucky winner! All proceeds go to Enduring Freedom Ministries.

Sept. 27: Schuetzenfest at Effingham County Fairgrounds in Altamont.

Sept. 27: Oktoberfest at Teutopolis Banquet Hall grounds 5 p.m.-midnight. Bands include Dave Hylla's Good Time Band from 5:30-9 p.m. and Nerdvana band from 9 p.m. to end. Free admission. Free inflatables for the kids! German style food! German style beer! Stein holding contest!

Oct. 3: T. Graham Brown. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 4: Fall Fest in downtown Effingham.

Oct. 4: Fall Village Wide Garage Sales in Dieterich 7 a.m.-noon.

Oct. 10: Pam Tillis + Lorrie Morgan Grits & Glamour Tour. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 11: Tom Petty Night Fundraiser for Fear Nothing. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 16: Women's Health Showcase at Keller Convention Center in Effingham. Presented by HSHS St Anthony Memorial Hospital. Pamper Yourself, do Christmas Shopping, girls' night out, panel discussions and more!

Oct. 17: Adam Wainwright live in concert with special guest. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 18: Hocus Pocus interactive movie. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 19: An Evening with Amy Grant. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 24: Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Oct. 25: Dieterich's Boos and Brews 10 a.m.-11 p.m. at Liberty Park in Dieterich. Carriage rides, inflatables, food vendors, live music, spirits tasting. Trunk or Treat at 5 p.m. and more!

Oct. 25: Downtown Trick or Treat in downtown Effingham.

Oct. 26: Rotary Halloween Parade in downtown Effingham at 1 p.m.

Oct. 26: Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 7: Straight No Chaser Holiday Road Tour. A cappella group. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 8: Disenchanted! Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 15: Three Dog Night. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 19: Theresa Caputo Live. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7:30 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 21: Hairball. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 8 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 21: Pink Friday in downtown Effingham. Shop small first before the holidays!

Nov. 22: Michael Cavanaugh Christmas. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Nov. 28 & 29: E.A.R.S. Tinsel & Tails. Enjoy a golf cart ride and be delighted by spectacular light displays along the golf course at Cardinal Golf Course in Effingham. Sip on hot chocolate, enjoy warm snacks, roast s'mores and make plenty of family fun holiday memories. Friday and Saturday night 5-9 p.m.

Nov. 29: Hometown Christmas in downtown Effingham. Lighted parade, food trucks, kids and adult activities, Santa and much more!

Nov. 30: All I Want for Christmas Craft & Vendor Show at Thelma Keller Convention Center in Effingham. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free entry. 80+ booths to shop from. Free pictures with Santa!

Dec. 5 & 6: E.A.R.S. Tinsel & Tails. Enjoy a golf cart ride and be delighted by spectacular light displays along the golf course at Cardinal Golf Course in Effingham. Sip on hot chocolate, enjoy warm snacks, roast s'mores and make plenty of family fun holiday memories. Friday and Saturday night 5-9 p.m.

Dec. 6: Who Brought The Humbug? Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 7: Lonestar & Collin Raye Christmas. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 7: Small Town Christmas in Dieterich at Liberty Park from 2-5 p.m.

Dec. 12 & 13: E.A.R.S. Tinsel & Tails. Enjoy a golf cart ride and be delighted by spectacular light displays along the golf course at Cardinal Golf Course in Effingham. Sip on hot chocolate, enjoy warm snacks, roast s'mores and make plenty of family fun holiday memories. Friday and Saturday night 5-9 p.m.



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Dec. 12: The Texas Tenors Christmas. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 13: The Polar Express interactive movie experience. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 3 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 19 & 20: E.A.R.S. Tinsel & Tails. Enjoy a golf cart ride and be delighted by spectacular light displays along the golf course at Cardinal Golf Course in Effingham. Sip on hot chocolate, enjoy warm snacks, roast s'mores and make plenty of family fun holiday memories. Friday and Saturday night 5-9 p.m.

Dec. 19: Jingle Bell Jam. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 20: Stocking Stuffer Saturday in downtown Effingham. Downtown stores have great stocking stuffer offers!

Dec. 20: Christmas with Elvis featuring Scott Wattles & The Blue Suede Crew. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Dec. 22: Scrooge Day in downtown Effingham. Last-minute shopping ideas from your downtown Effingham businesses!

Dec. 26 & 27: E.A.R.S. Tinsel & Tails. Enjoy a golf cart ride and be delighted by spectacular light displays along the golf course at Cardinal Golf Course in Effingham. Sip on hot chocolate, enjoy warm snacks, roast s'mores and make plenty of family fun holiday memories. Friday and Saturday night 5-9 p.m.

Jan. 17: Frozen interactive movie. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 3 p.m. theepc.org

Jan. 23: Matt Dusk Sings SINATRA. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Jan. 30: Chris Janson. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 6: Hee Haw Honey Reunion. Featuring the Original Stars of Hee Haw: Misty Rowe, Jeff Smith and Tammy Stephens Smith. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 7: Mike Super 2.OH! Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 14: Direct from Sweden: The Music of ABBA. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 20: Dinosaur World Live. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 21: Floyd Nation Celebrating Pink Floyd. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 26: Dr. Reed Timmer, America's Most Famous Storm Chaser. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 27: The Barricade Boys Broadway Party. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

Feb. 28: Six String Summit. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 6: Celebrating Meat Loaf. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 12: Vitamin String Quartet. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 13: Pauly Shore stand up comedy. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 21: Mama I'm A Big Girl Now! Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Broadway Musical "Hairspray." Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 27: Fake News: A Tribute to Huey Lewis. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

March 28: The Traveling Salvation Show: A Tribute to Neil Diamond. Tickets online now! Effingham Performance Center 7 p.m. theepc.org

EFFINGHAM COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Sculptures on the Avenues

Located along Jefferson and Washington avenues in downtown Effingham, this exhibit features pieces created by Midwest sculptors. Call 1-800-772-0750, 217-342-5310 or effinghamsculptures@gmail.com

Ballard Nature Center

Located three miles east of Altamont, the center features a bird viewing area, displays, children's activity area and library. Trails open to foot traffic only from dawn to dusk daily. The visitor center is open Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m., and from noon-3 p.m. on Saturday. For more information, call 618-483-6856.

The Cross at the Crossroads

The 198-foot-tall cross can be seen at Exit 159 in Effingham and features plaques of the 10 Commandments and also has a visitors center. For more information visit crossusa.org.

Effingham County Museum

Located at 110 E. Jefferson Avenue in downtown Effingham, the Effingham County Museum is housed in the historic 1871 courthouse which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The galleries located on two floors of the building are loaded with artifacts which tell the story of the area's rich heritage. The Museum is open to the public on Tuesdays and Saturdays, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., from March through December,

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Every Weekend
Through September
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Days**
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St. Peter, IL City Park
[f](#) St. Peter Prairie Days



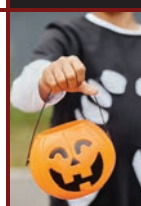
**5th Annual
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Downtown
Brownstown
[f](#) The Cabin



**Witches Night
Out**
October 11
2pm-8pm
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[f](#) This-n-That



**Halloween
Parade**
October 23
Starts at 7pm
Downtown Vandalia



**Trick or Treat in
Vandalia**
October 25
Downtown 10am-1pm
All Town 6pm-8pm



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Above, Flora Depot Railroad and Local History Museum is shown. Inset, a demonstration at Illinois Rural Heritage Museum in Pinckneyville is shown.

DISCOVER HISTORY in Downstate Illinois

DISCOVER DOWNSTATE ILLINOIS

From westward expansion to oil booms and Civil War battles, the area has shaped the nation's past, present, and future. Thanks to dedicated historians, many artifacts and stories have been preserved, making Downstate an amazing travel destination for history lovers.

The American Farm Heritage Museum in Greenville offers a fascinating look into America's rural past. With a collection of vintage farm equipment, antique tractors, and agricultural tools, the museum features the evolution of farming and rural life. Visitors can explore well-preserved exhibits and interactive displays that highlight agriculture's key role in shaping the nation. It's a must-visit for history enthusiasts and families.

Olney's Carnegie Museum is a testament to the region's rich history and culture. Housed in the historic Carnegie Library, the museum showcases local artifacts, art, and vintage photographs. Visitors can explore engaging exhibits that provide a glimpse into Olney's heritage and the surrounding area.

Immerse yourself in the legacy of the railroads at the Flora Depot Railroad and Local History Museum, where history comes alive in a beautifully preserved 1917 train station. This museum offers an

intriguing collection of railroad artifacts, period photographs, and interactive exhibits that highlight the vital role of railroads.

Another museum to add to your list is the Labor and Industry Museum in Belleville. This unique museum explores the evolution of local industry with exhibits highlighting its impact on the community. Visitors can view historical artifacts, vintage machinery, and displays showcasing the resilience of workers.

Explore the Illinois Oil Field Museum in Oblong to see vintage drilling equipment, detailed exhibits, and historical photographs. Visitors can learn about the industry's evolution from its early days to modern times, offering a look at oil's impact on the region's economy and history.

The Illinois Rural Heritage Museum in Pinckneyville offers a glimpse into the state's agricultural past. Featuring exhibits on farming tools, rural life, and the evolution of agriculture, the museum shows the impact of farming on local communities.

The History Museum of Monroe County in Waterloo features exhibits on local history, early settlers, and significant events. Visitors can explore artifacts, photographs, and displays that

trace the county's development from its founding to modern times. They often host free events that are both educational and fun!

Fort de Chartres State Historic Site in Prairie du Rocher played a significant role in the region's early settlement. The on-site museum displays artifacts and exhibits that tell the story of the fort's past, French colonial life, and the interactions between settlers and Native American tribes. Visitors can explore the fascinating displays and learn about the fort's unique history, making it an educational and engaging stop.

Thanks to dedicated historians, many artifacts and stories have been preserved, making Downstate an amazing travel destination.

The Kinmundy Log Cabin Village in Kinmundy, is a historical attraction that transports visitors to the 1800s through a collection of authentically restored log cabins. Each cabin offers a glimpse into pioneer life, featuring original furnishings, tools, and artifacts from the era. Surrounded by scenic woods, the village hosts events and reenactments that bring history to life.

Right, visitors prepare to enter a cabin at Kinmundy Log Cabin Village. Below, Fort de Chartres is shown (photo Credit Route 3 Films).



or by appointment on other days of the week, or at different times of the day. For more information, call (217)240-2471 or visit effinghamcountymuseum.org. or on Facebook Effingham County Courthouse Museum Effingham IL

Effingham Performance Center

Located on the north side of Effingham along Outerbelt West, is a 1,500-seat theatre that hosts a variety of performances a year. Local, regional and national acts are scheduled to perform. For more information on performances, visit theepc.org or call the theatre at 217-540-2788.

Lake Sara

Lake Sara is an 800-acre recreational lake nestled into a wooded shoreline and encircled by a winding road. Spend a day, a week, or a season on the shores of Lake Sara. Also, visit nearby golf courses, Cardinal and Fore-Way, just a few minutes from the lake. The new Lake Sara Beach Park includes a disc golf course, playgrounds, a shade sail shelter and several smaller amusements.

MY Garage Museum & Retail Store

Located on the northeast side of Effingham, this is a one-of-a-kind museum that houses vintage Corvettes and thousands of pieces of Corvette history and memorabilia. The museum is owned by Mid-America Motorworks and is headed by Corvette enthusiast Mike Yager, owner of Mid-America. The museum is open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Saturday. For more information, visit mamotorworks.com.

Teutopolis Monastery Museum

Located off Route 40 at 110 South Garrett Street in Teutopolis. Museum features more than 30 small rooms with displays of articles, books and antiques used by the Franciscan Friars and early settlers. In addition, the tour includes a Franciscan Mausoleum and St. Francis Church with stained glass windows depicting events in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Museum is open the first Sunday of each month from May thru November. Hours are 12:30-4 p.m. Special tours can be arranged by calling 217-857-6404 ext 236. Stop by to enjoy the renovations to the entrance, lobby, first floor and elevator access, as well as the new acquisitions on display.

The Dr. Charles M. Wright House Museum

Located at 3 W. Jackson Avenue in Altamont, IL. Dr. C. M. Wright built this stately Renaissance revival home in 1889. It was subsequently owned by his son, also a doctor, and his grandson, an attorney. The lineage ended with the third Mr. Wright, who donated his home as a museum. Many of the original furnishings, including carpets, remain in the 18 rooms on the tour. The doctor's surgery, the nursery and the library are particularly memorable. Open every Sunday; 2-4 p.m.: May thru September. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$1 for students (ages 6-18). Throughout the year, tours of 2 to 55 may be scheduled on other days. Special tours are offered for grade school or high school classes. Volunteer guides share information about the three generations of the Wright family who lived in the home from 1889-2001. It is one of two buildings in

Effingham County listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, or to schedule tours please email scott@wrightmansion.org

Tuscan Hills Winery

Established in July 2011, by Wes and Wanda Pitcher, Tuscan Hills Winery, located at 2200 Historic Hills Drive in Effingham, is a beautiful winery with an Old-World Tuscan feel. Enjoy tasting any of their wines with help from their knowledgeable staff. They also offer a variety of sangrias, wine slushies, seasonal beers, liquors and non-alcoholic beverages. Hot pizzas and Italian baguettes are served all day. Tuscan Hills is a family-friendly and pet-friendly winery where you are invited to "come as our guest, leave as our friend." Visit www.effinghamwinery.com for a list of upcoming events and live music.

Barn & Bottle Winery

Established in 2022, Barn & Bottle Winery is located at 10810 N. 1st Street, Altamont, IL. They offer wine, slushies, beer, soda or bottled water. Seating inside by the fireplace or outside on the porch. Pizzas and meat/cheese boards also available for purchase. Open weekends.

Fayette County Events

Aug. 22: Dakota Danielle at Charters Patio in downtown Vandalia.

Aug. 22-24: St. Peter Prairie Days "Cheers to 50 Years." Friday, Aug. 22: 5 p.m. Fish dinners/ribeye or chicken sandwiches, 5-8 p.m. Loudon Country Band, 6 p.m. Sand volleyball tourney begins, 9 p.m.-midnight Bryor Rhodes Band. Aug. 23: 11 a.m. Lunch at St. Peter City Park (bratwurst, pork burgers & hot dogs), beer garden opens, whiffle ball tournament (call 618-359-5261 for more info), 1 p.m. Parade through St. Peter to the city park, 2:30 p.m. Horseshoe tournament (blind draw), 3 p.m. Sand volleyball continues, 3-5 p.m. Bingo, 3:30 p.m. Air Evac, 4:30-7 p.m. Chicken supper served, 5 p.m. cake walk, 5 p.m. God Bless America with The National Anthem & raffle drawing, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Feudin' Hillbillies, 9:30-11 p.m. The Kentucky Headhunters. Sunday, Aug. 24: 10:30 a.m. Tractor pull registration 11:30 a.m. Tractor pull (contact Jeff Hunt at 217-240-0672 for more info). Note: There will be a beer garden. No carry-ins please and no outside ATV/golf carts allowed. Proceeds from Saturday go to St. Peter Park improvements.

Aug. 23: Flea Market on Main Street in St. Elmo, IL 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Aug. 30-Sept. 1: Labor Day Forging Festival in St. Elmo, IL.

Sept. 1: Cages Annual Bike Show at 215 S. Third St. in Vandalia.

Sept. 12 & 13: Brownstown Cool Down in Downtown Brownstown. Sept. 12 features live music by Emma Nobbe 5-8 p.m. and Boombox 80's Band 8:30-11:30 p.m. Sept. 13 features live music by The Hip Huggers from 5-8 p.m. and The Bryor Rhodes Band from 8:30-11:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday features 25/8 Xtreme Kid Friendly Attractions 6-10 p.m. Saturday features a bags tournament at the bank parking lot and a car show at the high school front lawn. Beer garden Friday 5-11:30 p.m. and Saturday noon-11:30 p.m. For more info on the car show, contact Chuck Enlow at 217-821-4585.

Sept. 13: Farmers Market in downtown Vandalia 8-11 a.m.

Sept. 19: Vandalia Chamber Fall Golf Outing at Indian Springs Golf Course.

Sept. 27: Backroad Boogie Band at Charters Patio in downtown Vandalia.

Sept. 27: Flea Market on Main Street in St. Elmo, IL 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Oct. 11: Farmers Market in downtown Vandalia 8-11 a.m.

Oct. 11: Witches Night Out 2-8 p.m. at 120 N. 5th St. in Vandalia.

Oct. 23: Lions Club annual Halloween parade in downtown Vandalia.

Oct. 25: Flea Market on Main Street in St. Elmo, IL 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Oct. 25: Trunk or Treat on Main Street in St. Elmo.

Oct. 25: Trick or Treat in Vandalia. Downtown 10 a.m.-1 p.m. All town 6-8 p.m.

Nov. 14 & 15: Olde Tyme Christmas in downtown Vandalia.

Nov. 27-Jan. 1: Festival of Lights in Vandalia.

Dec. 5: Statehouse Gala at Vandalia State House in Vandalia.

Dec. 13: Vandalia State House Christmas Open House 5-7 p.m.

FAYETTE COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Vandalia State House

The Vandalia State House, built in 1836, is the fourth capitol building of the U.S. state of Illinois. It is also the oldest capitol building in Illinois to survive, as the first, second, and third capitol buildings have all disappeared. The brick Federal style state house has been operated by the state of Illinois as a monument of Illinois pioneer years since 1933. It is located in Vandalia, Illinois, on the National Road (and National Old Trails Road), and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was the scene of most of the service of Abraham Lincoln as a member of the Illinois state legislature. Open Tues - Sat 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Sun and Mon. Located 315 W Gallatin St., Vandalia, IL 62471

Fayette County Museum

Located in the 1867 Presbyterian Church directly behind The Vandalia State House, it houses over 8,000 donated items from county residents as well as a tool used by Abraham Lincoln. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

National Road Interpretive Center

Located at 106 S. Fifth St., Vandalia, pays homage to the first totally federally funded highway. It began in Cumberland, Md., in 1811 and reached Illinois in the early 1830s. History of travel



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and transportation in the early days of our country and how it helped to open the West is its focus. The center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Call 618-283-9380 for more information.

Axe on Main/Forge A Memory

Axe Throwing Center located at 409 N. Main St. in St. Elmo IL.

Ford County Events

Sept. 5: "First Fridays" Summer Concert Series 7-9 p.m. features The Brat Pack — TOTALLY 80's, on the front lawn of Veterans Square in downtown Paxton. Free event. Bring lawn chairs. Selling food at concession stand starting 6 p.m. No pets and no alcohol, please.

Sept. 13: Gibson City Harvest Fest in Gibson City IL. Craft and food vendors, games live music, kids activities and more, all in downtown Gibson City. Concert starting 7:30 p.m. with bands FUEL and X-KRUSH. Family-friendly event.

Sept. 19: Friday Nights Under The Lights — Everyone Cruisin' Main — in downtown Gibson City. Classic vehicles, vendors and live music 6-9 p.m.

Sept. 20: Paxton Swine & Dine BBQ Contest & Festival. BBQ Contest, corn hole tournament, kids zone, petting zoo, food and craft vendors, cruise-in, bags tournament and more! Concert featuring Feudin' Hillbillies opening for Diamond Rio. www.paxtonswinedine.com

Oct. 4: Wine & Chocolate Walk 4-6 p.m. in downtown Paxton.

Oct. 18: Glo Bingo at Kruse Event Center in Gibson City IL, hosted by Gibson Area Hospital. Food trucks. Doors open 4 p.m. Bingo 6:30 p.m.

Nov. 22: Lighted Christmas Parade in downtown Gibson City IL.

Nov. 29: Annual Christmas Parade in downtown Paxton 1:30-3 p.m. beginning at the intersection of Taft and Orleans streets proceeding east on Orleans Street, north onto Market Street and through downtown, ending at intersection of Market and Pine streets (just north of fire station). Phone 217-379-4245 for more information.

Dec. 5: Evening Holiday Shopping Event includes shopping, holiday decorations, food trucks and live Christmas music throughout downtown Paxton 5-8 p.m.

Dec. 31: Cash Bash at Kruse Event Center in Gibson City, hosted by Gibson City Lions Club.

FORD COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Ford County Historical Society & Water Tower Museum

Ford County Historical Society & Water Tower Museum at 145 ½ S. Market Street in Paxton, IL is located inside an historical 1884 water tower next to city hall in downtown Paxton. Museum tours available upon request by calling 1-734-834-1485 or by emailing ilfchs@gmail.com

Paxton Park District

Paxton Park District in Paxton includes the following facilities: Coady Park Civic Center with full kitchen, Paxton Community Pool, Paxton Dog Park at Coady Park, Coady Park Skatepark, Coady Park, Westlawn Park and Nelson Field.

Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In Theatre

Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In Theatre located at 1175 S. Sangamon Avenue in Gibson City IL is conveniently located 35 miles from Bloomington Normal and 30 miles from Champaign Urbana, Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In Theatre is open April-November featuring your favorite movies. In addition, the drive-in hosts unique events and private rentals in a nostalgic 50's drive-in atmosphere. Call 217-784-8770 or contact them at info@harvestmoondrivein.com. Ranked as one of the top drive-ins in the nation year after year, Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In Theatre has been featured on numerous TV channels.

North Park

North Park located at the corner of Church & 13th Street in Gibson City features a playground for kids, a large pavilion, swimming pool, baseball field, tennis courts lined for playing pickleball and a basketball court, horseshoe pits and multiple picnic tables. South Park, at the corner of Lott Blvd & Route 9 in Gibson City has a camping area directly next to it and features covered picnic tables, a basketball court and playground.

Countryside Campground and Event Center

Countryside Campground and Event Center in Gibson City features gravel campsites with 30/50 amp and full hookups and a swimming pond. The newest and most exciting addition is the 40' x 70' Countryside Event Center with a full-service kitchen and onsite full bar service.

Jasper County Events

Saturdays now through September: Farmers Market 8 a.m.-noon at Picquet Park in Sainte Marie, IL.

Aug. 22 & 23: Newton American Legion Post 20 2nd Annual BBQ Competition at the fairgrounds in Newton.

Aug. 31: St. Mary's Church Picnic in Sainte Marie, IL.

Sept. 13: Jasper County Fall Festival on the courthouse square in Newton.

Sept. 21: Jake & Mikayla at BJ's Saloon starting at 3 p.m.

Oct. 18: Scare on the Square in Newton, IL.

Nov. 1: BJ Saloon Annual Jeepsgiving. Sign-in begins at 11 a.m. Leave at noon. Stops announced day of event. Quick & Bradley is the entertainment at BJ's Saloon after the ride. Benefit to purchase Christmas gifts and coats for children in need in the county.

Dec. 6: Holiday Vendor Market at West End Event Center in Newton, IL starting at 9 a.m.

Dec. 13: Christmas on the Square in Newton, IL.

Jan. 17: Howl at the Moon Dueling Pianos at West End Event Center in Newton.

JASPER COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Sam Parr State Fish and Wildlife Area

The 1,103-acre state park is located two miles northeast of Newton on State Route 33. The park offers a 183-acre lake for fishing with two boat ramps and nine miles of shore line. Sam Parr also offers hunting, hiking, primitive camping, picnic area and 13 miles of equestrian trails. For more information, call 618-783-2661.

Drive N Theatre

One of four remaining drive-in theaters in the state, the Drive N Theatre operates May through September with a double feature each weekend. Drive N Theatre is located five miles east of Newton on Route 33. For more information, call 618-455-3100.

Embarras River

The river meanders through Jasper County, offering many opportunities for beautiful photography, an encounter with wildlife or to wet a line. The river tracks from west of Hidalgo and Rose Hill, southeast to Sainte Marie. There are plenty of places to stop, look and enjoy.

Jefferson County Events

Aug. 23: Blues, Brews & Bourbon Festival at Cedarhurst Center For the Arts in Mt. Vernon.

Sept 5-7: Cedarhurst Art & Craft Fair at Cedarhurst Center for the Arts in Mt. Vernon. Over 60 booths, food concessions, refreshing drinks and adult beverages, regional musicians, kids' area with make-and-take crafts and family-friendly performances.

Sept. 13: Mt. Vernon Flea Market held at The Commons, 911 Broadway St. in Mt. Vernon 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Antiques, collectibles, handmade crafts, plants, jewelry, flea market treasures, fresh produce, baked goods, kettle corn and much more!

Sept. 26-27: Mt. Vernon Fall Festival in Mt. Vernon, IL featuring live performances, kid zone, cruise in, vendors marketplace, parade at 1 p.m. on Saturday with over 100 entries, food vendors and more! Friday's bands include King Kaiju, a four piece alt-rock band from Western Kentucky at 5:15 p.m. and E5C4P3 — The Journey Tribute at 8 p.m. Saturday's music lineup features Jon Spicer at 2:30 p.m., Shannon Arview Band at 5 p.m. and David Lee Murphy at 8 p.m.

Oct. 4: Heritage Festival from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Jefferson County Historical Village, 1411 N. 27th St. in Mt. Vernon. Food & food vendors, demonstrations & vendors including baskets, blacksmiths, old coots' advice, woodcarvings, rope making, black powder guns, spinning, antique tractors, ham radios, Civil War doctor, soap, copper and silver jewelry, crafts, dulcimers, old-fashioned games and much more!

Oct. 11: Mt. Vernon Flea Market held at The Commons, 911 Broadway St. in Mt. Vernon 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Antiques, collectibles, handmade crafts, plants, jewelry, flea market treasures, fresh produce, baked goods, kettle corn and much more!

Nov. 28-29: Junk-N-Disorderly Christmas at the Mall at Times Square Mall in Mt. Vernon. 7 a.m.-9 p.m. on Friday and 8 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday. Handmade and vintage, gift items, rusty junk, crafts jewelry, T-shirts, specialty foods, soaps/body care, fudge, toys, fishing poles/tackle/knives, food vendors and so much more!! Don't miss this beautiful vintage market with a funky twist! Great music vibes all weekend long by DJ Shaking Shane!

Dec. 6: The Great Christmas Light Fight Parade & Activities in Mt. Vernon. Parade at 5 p.m., then cookie decorating, hot cocoa, kettle corn and a visit with Santa and pictures with the Grinch. Event is free and open to the public.

JEFFERSON COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

The Aquatic Zoo

Visit Mt. Vernon's favorite summer destination—the Aquatic Zoo in Lincoln Park at 1700 South 34th Street just off of Veterans Memorial Drive. 1-618-241-0691. Open Sat. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. & Sun. noon to 6 p.m. through Labor Day weekend.

Appellate Courthouse

Constructed in 1857 as the southern division of the Illinois State Supreme Court, Abraham Lincoln successfully argued a famous tax case in 1859. In 1888, Clara Barton used this Mt. Vernon building as a hospital. Tours are available. Please call in advance. 618-242-3120

Cedarhurst Center For The Arts

Cedarhurst, an 85-acre estate, located in Mt. Vernon, features the Mitchell Museum, outdoor sculpture park, and art center. Cedarhurst presents changing exhibitions in its galleries, performing arts programs including chamber music, concerts, and dinner theatre, and the Cedarhurst craft fair each September. The Cedarhurst Art Center provides year-round classes and workshops for adults and children. (618) 242-1236

Jefferson County Historical Village

Unique to Mt. Vernon, you can experience the past at the Historical Village as you walk through a pioneer village of authentic log cabins, featuring a calaboose (circa 1820), the Mount Olive Church (circa 1873), a one-room schoolhouse and more. Admission is free. (618) 246-0033

Macon County Events

Aug. 23: Grunge Fest — Featuring Hollow and Creep 7 p.m. at The Devon Lakeshore Amphitheater in Decatur.

Sept. 10: Styx 7 p.m. at The Devon Lakeshore Amphitheater in Decatur.

Sept. 27: Farm to Fund 2025 at Merchant Street, 145 N. Merchant St., Decatur, IL 62523-1216. Spend an evening under the lights of Merchant Street! As you enjoy a farm to table dinner prepared by Richland Community College chefs, you'll be surrounded by others dedicated to the support and growth of our neighbors in need. The evening includes cash bar, live entertainment, and both silent and live auction items. Visit our Facebook page for more info.

Oct. 3: All Fired Up — Pat Benatar musical tribute at Decatur Civic Center in Decatur, IL .at 8 p.m. with doors opening at 7:30 p.m.

Oct. 4: Finders Harvest Market from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at Progress City, 47 College Park Drive, Decatur, IL 62521. 90+ curated vendors filling 3 barns + lots of outdoor spaces, featuring unique, original and irresistible goods! Great vintage and antiques, flea market finds, hand-made items, original art, gourmet and artisanal items, furniture, decor, boutique clothing, seasonal goods, food trucks and lots of fun!

Oct. 4: Forever Janis at 8 p.m. with doors opening 7:30 p.m. Playing all of the best of Janis Joplin while honoring her legacy and her legendary, blues-rock vocals.

Oct 10–12: Mary Poppins, presented by Thrive Theater Group at Decatur Civic Center in Decatur. Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Oct. 17: Brooklyn Charmers — Steely Dan Tribute Band at 7:30 p.m. at Decatur Civic Center with doors opening at 7 p.m.

Oct. 18: CryBaby & Kiss The Sky: The #1 Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix Experience at 7 p.m. at Lincoln Square Theater in Decatur.

Nov. 14–16 and 21–23: Legally Blonde The Musical at Decatur Civic Center. Friday and Saturday shows 7 p.m. Sunday show at 2 p.m.

Dec. 3: Christmas at Decatur Civic Center. Tree lighting at 6:15 p.m., free ice skating 6:30–7:30 p.m., hot chocolate, live reindeer and Christmas music! Free family-friendly event.

Dec. 5 & 6: Rudolph's Village Market in Forsyth.

MACON COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Scovill Zoo

Nestled along the shores of Lake Decatur, Scovill Zoo is home to more than 400 animals spanning six continents. Originally called Scovill Farm, the zoo was built by the Decatur Park District in 1966 and opened to the public in 1967. The original collection of farm animals has evolved over the years to become more exotic, featuring cheetahs, camels, meerkats, zebras, and more. Scovill Zoo earned accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in 2001. The zoo has since passed two more accreditation inspections in 2006 and 2011. Accreditation shows that Scovill Zoo meets the highest standards for animal care, exhibit maintenance, education, conservation, and administration. Scovill Zoo is an educational, family-friendly destination for residents of Decatur, Macon County, and Central Illinois.

Marion County Events

Aug. 23: Smoke on the Water Fest at Castle Ridge in Centralia, IL. General admission is free. Bring a lawn chair. Boat races daily. Artisan vendors, yard games, live music and more! 11 a.m.–10:30 p.m.

Sept. 6: Dueling Pianos at Castle Ridge. Experience the ultimate dueling pianos event, featuring Howl at the Moon Dueling Pianos. This highly anticipated event will take place on Saturday, Sept. 6th in Centralia, Illinois. Secure your tickets now to avoid sell-out. With spirited cocktails, beautiful lakeside views, and adornments built for royalty ... this is an event that you do not want to miss.

Sept. 13: Salem AppleFest 2025 at 1800 Fairgrounds Road in Salem, IL 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Local market vendors, food trucks, musicians, family fun, free activities/giveaways and much more! Bring lawn chairs.

Sept. 20 & 21: Fall Festival at Kinmundy Log Cabin Village in Kinmundy, IL. Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Over 175 vendors, crafts, food, live demonstrations of early pioneer life, 1800 time period log cabins, re-enactments, kettle corn, pork rinds, pony rides, ham and beans, pottery, rug and rope making, woodworking, blacksmith, live music, dulcimer players and more!

Sept. 27 & 28: Fall Festival at Kinmundy Log Cabin Village in Kinmundy, IL. Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Over 175 vendors, crafts, food, live demonstrations of early pioneer life, 1800 time period log cabins, re-enactments, kettle corn, pork rinds, pony rides, ham and beans, pottery, rug and rope making, woodworking, blacksmith, live music, dulcimer players and more!

Oct. 24 & 25: Haunted Trails & Cabins at Kinmundy Log Cabin Village in Kinmundy, IL. 7–11 p.m. Experience a terrifying 30–45 minute journey through a haunted 1800s trail. Dare to walk alongside ghosts and discover the haunting secrets of the log cabins. Prepare to immerse yourself in the paranormal as you venture into a haunted trail that winds its way through the eerie woods and historic log cabins from the 1800s, where ghostly figures and supernatural phenomena lurk in the shadows.

Oct. 31 & Nov. 1: Haunted Trails & Cabins at Kinmundy Log Cabin Village in Kinmundy, IL. 7–11 p.m. Experience a terrifying 30–45 minute journey through a haunted 1800s trail. Dare to walk alongside ghosts and discover the haunting secrets of the log cabins. Prepare to immerse yourself in the paranormal as you venture into a haunted trail that winds its way through the eerie woods and historic log cabins from the 1800s, where ghostly figures and supernatural phenomena lurk in the shadows.

Dec. 13: Christmas at the Castle 10 a.m.–4 p.m. at Castle Ridge in Centralia, IL. Vendor market, cocktails, Santa and Mrs. Claus and so much more!

MARION COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Centralia Carillon & Musical Fountain

Come see and hear the distinctive sites and sounds of the Centralia Carillon towering 165 feet high above the city. The Centralia Carillon, the sixth largest bell tower in the world, is played by a professional carillonneur who climbs 173 steps to play the bells in concert. The base of the tower contains a small museum, and tours of the Carillon are available free to the public by making a reservation.

The beauty of the Centralia Carillon is enhanced by the surrounding tower park just west of the carillon tower. The "sitting wall" is a perfect spot to listen to the music. Soft amber lighting at night makes the park an attractive place to take an evening stroll. Visitors may also experience the one and only musical fountain which moves to the unique expressions of the Carillon. For private tours or concert information please call 618-533-4381.

Centralia Area Historical Society Museum

At the Centralia Area Historical Society Museum, located at 240 South Locust Street in Centralia, IL, you can experience the area's rich railroad history through vintage pictures, tools, clothing and even a tour of a real caboose. Civil War items, military uniforms, equipment, ration books, flags, awards and other artifacts mark special times in the history of this country and the Centralia area.

Centralia is rich in mining history, and detonators, lunch buckets, rescue equipment, and newspaper reports of the #5 Mine Disaster can be viewed at the Museum. The experiences you can have here are too numerous to list, but we know you won't want to miss the history of this unique area.

Kinmundy Log Cabin Village

Every year the last couple weekends of September, Kinmundy Log Cabin Village has a Fall Festival that includes food and craft vendors and people in period costume doing demonstrations. Fast forward to the last two weekends in October to enjoy their Haunted Trail! Many of the cabins were local cabins moved here for preservation. Learn the history of these cabins and get a first-hand glimpse of what cabin life was like for 19th century pioneers. kinmundy-logcabinvillage.com

Stephen A Forbes State Park

Picture yourself on the banks of a beautiful lake, surrounded by shady oaks and rolling hills. As the sun comes up, take a swim at sandy Rocky Point Beach. The rest of the day offers many options, from hiking on the nature trails, to softball or volleyball at the Circle Drive Picnic Area to water skiing. Or, you may want to spend the night at the Oak Ridge Campground. All of this, and more, awaits visitors to Stephen A. Forbes State Recreation Area at 6924 Omega Rd, Kinmundy, IL.

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A statue of young Abraham Lincoln stands outside the gift shop and concessions building at the New Salem Historic Site in Petersburg. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Athan Yanos)

Lincoln's New Salem expanding popular annual candlelight walk

What could be better than exploring the village at Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site by candlelight during a crisp October weekend? How about exploring the village by candlelight during three weekends in October?

The candlelight walk at Lincoln's New Salem in Menard County is one of the most popular autumn events in central Illinois, attracting thousands of visitors to the park during the first weekend of October every year. The popularity of the walk has led site staff to expand it to three weekends for 2025 to give visitors more evenings to enjoy the event and to ease congestion at the park.

Dates for this year's candlelight walk are Oct. 3-5, Oct. 10-12, and Oct. 17-19. Event hours will be 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

"The New Salem candlelight walk is one of central Illinois' premier fall traditions," said Natalie Phelps Finnie, director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, which operates the site. "We're thrilled to expand this beloved event to multiple weekends, offering people more opportunities to enjoy the beauty of the historic village by candlelight while also taking a little pressure off our dedicated staff and volunteers."

Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site relies on volunteers to ensure the candlelight walk is successful. Additional volunteers will be needed this year to help visitors during the event's expanded dates. Those who are interested can sign up today by emailing dnr.newsalem@illinois.gov. Volunteers will be trained and onboarded by site staff prior to the event.

"The New Salem candlelight walk is the wildly successful event it is today because of support from dedicated volunteers. We couldn't do it without them," said Troy Gilmore, acting superintendent of Lincoln's New Salem. "We'll accept volunteers for any amount of time they can devote over the course of the three weekends, and we'll make sure everyone is properly trained and ready to assist visitors."

During the candlelight walk, the historic village's pathways are lined with candle lanterns. Site staff and volunteer interpreters dressed in period clothing will be in many of the log homes and shops to talk about life in the original village and in 19th-century Illinois. Building interiors will be candle-lit, and visitors will be able to walk through buildings that are open. Visitors are asked to keep flashlights off while experiencing the village at candlelight.

Lincoln's New Salem is one of 56 state historic sites managed by IDNR. Built in the 1930s and 1940s as a Civilian Conservation Corps program, the site's historic village features 23 historically furnished buildings, including several homes, stores, and tradesmen's shops, as well as a tavern, school, wool carding mill, a sawmill and gristmill.

Scattered throughout the village are log barns and other out-buildings. In addition to the village, the 700-acre park features hiking trails, a campground, picnic areas, and playground equipment.

The address is 15588 History Lane, Petersburg, Illinois. 217-632-4000

Moultrie County Events

Now- Aug. 24: Forever Plaid at The Little Theatre on the Square in Sullivan.

Sept. 6: Makers Market 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Building 1225 at 1225 S. Hamilton St. in Sullivan, IL. Over 50 amazing local vendors offering handmade or homegrown goods just in time for fall from cozy candles and farmhouse signs to fresh-baked treats, boutique clothing, home décor, garden goods and more! Cash bar with specialty drinks. Free indoor playground for the kids. Air-conditioned venue. Family-friendly, faith-based atmosphere. Free admission.

Sept. 12 & 13: Backyard Bluegrass Festival at 790 Souther Rd, Sullivan, IL 61951.

Nov. 15: Mistletoe Market at Building 1225 at 1225 S. Hamilton St. in Sullivan, IL. Over 50 vendor booths with handmade goods, holiday gifts, home décor, clothing, treats and more! Free indoor playground for kids. Cash bar with seasonal specialty drinks. Cozy, family-friendly atmosphere.

MOULTRIE COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

"Boats, Buggies & Broadway"

Sullivan serves as the county seat for Moultrie County and is home to The Little Theatre On The Square, the only professional theatre located between Chicago and St. Louis. In addition, the city serves as the north gateway to Lake Shelbyville and also marks the west edge of the area's large Amish settlement. Abraham Lincoln traversed the county as a circuit riding lawyer and tried many cases in one of the county's first courthouses. The present courthouse, located downtown, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sullivan Civic Center

Public, indoor pool that is larger than an Olympic size pool can be found here, as well as a gymnasium and weight equipment. The civic center is located at 600 N. Washington St., Sullivan. For more information, contact 217-728-4541 or sullivanil.us.

Sullivan Beach and Recreation Area

Sullivan Beach and Recreation Area is located on Rt. 32 South, Sullivan. Picnic shelters and showers are available.

Okaw Valley Orchard

U-pick and retail: gift items, pasteurized fresh cider, cider slush, peaches, apples, plums, apple doughnuts, apple dumplings, jams and jellies. Playground, picnic area and group tours. The address is 724 CR 1750N, Sullivan, IL. For more information, call 217-460-0283.

Richland County Events

April-October: Olney Downtown Market at Bower Park. Every Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Rediscover the charm of downtown shopping with local artisans at the market and nearby merchants.

May 17: Spring Crash Demolition Derby, 7 p.m., Richland County Fairgrounds. A great night of local entertainment awaits! Check out all the details on the Richland County Fair Facebook page.

Thursdays in June & July: Free Sounds of Summer concert series in Bower Park, 6 to 8 p.m.

July 4: Fireworks Spectacular. Richland County Fairgrounds/Olney City Park.

July 18-26: Richland County Fair, Olney City Park. For more information, call 618-392-0766 or visit richlandcountyfair.org

August 17: 38th Annual Olney Car Show, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration opens at 9 a.m. with a \$20 entry fee for participants. Judging begins at 11 a.m. with awards at 2 p.m. Free entry. Bring the entire family and enjoy the wide variety of show cars. Concessions available. 502 White Squirrel Drive, Olney, IL.

Oct 31: Olney Halloween Parade, downtown Olney, 6 p.m.

Nov 28-30: Christmas lights display, City Park, 5 p.m. in Olney.

Nov 29: Christmas Parade, downtown Olney, 6:30 p.m.

Dec 1-31: Christmas lights display, City Park, 5 p.m. in Olney.

RICHLAND COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

White Squirrels

For more than 100 years, the Olney area has been home to the largest known population of white squirrels. The best viewing spots are Olney City Park, Millers Grove and several residential neighborhoods with mature trees and feeding stations. Look for them in the early morning hours when they are most active.

The Elliott Street Historic District

This historic district comprising five blocks of South Elliott Street in Olney, Illinois. The district is primarily residential; all but four of the 33 main buildings in the district are single-family homes.

Shelby County Events

May 2: FREE Kentucky Derby Music Bingo with prizes for the best Kentucky Derby hat and outfit! at Willow Ridge Winery in rural Shelbyville, starting at 6 p.m.

May 9 & 10: Chet Kingery Memorial Bluegrass Festival at the historic Chautauqua Auditorium at Forest Park in Shelbyville, featuring bands Special Consensus Friday evening, Kings Highway band Friday evening and Saturday, Host Band Mackville Friday evening and Saturday, The Grascals band on Saturday and The Little Roy & Lizzie Show and The Price Sisters on Saturday. Instrument Workshops on Saturday from 2-7 p.m. Jamming encouraged. For more info www.mackvillebluegrass.com or call 217-460-1439.

May 10: West End Spring Festival at the EPOC parking lot at Johnstowne Mall in Shelbyville from noon-10 p.m. Food trucks noon-7 p.m., local vendors noon-4 p.m., live music. Classic car show noon-4 p.m., barstool golf signup at noon with tee-off at 12:30 p.m. lasting until 6:30 p.m., music by Max Heuerman from 4-6:30 p.m. and music by Josh Holland Band from 7-10 p.m. (21+ ONLY) in tent.

May 10: Decade of Decadence: Ultimate 80's Hair Night, 8-11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor. Doors open at 6 p.m. Free parking. For tickets: H18brewing.com

May 11: Mother's Day Brunch with music by Andy Rueter. Featuring a brunch menu as well as bottomless mimosas and a beautiful flower bar available to build your own bouquets at Willow Ridge Winery, 1796 N 1475 East Road, Shelbyville, IL, all starting at 11 a.m.

May 17: Country Sky band at 6 p.m. at Willow Ridge Winery, rural Shelbyville, featuring a broad range of country, rock 'n' roll and pop favorites.

May 24: Village Wide Rummage Sales in Strasburg starting 7 a.m.

May 24: Buffett Night with The Boat Drunks band from 6-9 p.m. at Willow Ridge Winery, rural Shelbyville. Food vendor onsite. The Boat Drunks have performed from coast to coast with nearly every member of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band and have opened shows for Jimmy Buffett, The Beach Boys and Little Feat among many others. Enjoy Buffett hits to Johnny Cash to The Beatles and more!

June 5-7: Moweaqua Pow Wow Days in Moweaqua, IL.

June 7: Lions Club Chicken Fry starting at 4 p.m. in Strasburg.

June 14: Summer Solstice Artisan & Merchant Market, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the park in Tower Hill.

June 14: Carrie'd Away/A Tribute to Carrie Underwood at Hangar 18 in Windsor, 8-11 p.m.

June 22: Berries & Burgers at the village park in Strasburg. Porkburgers and fresh strawberry shortcake from 4-6 p.m.

June 29: Extreme Dwarf Wrestling, 4-7 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

July 11 & 12: Lions Club Homecoming in Strasburg. Tractor pull and sandwiches in the park on Saturday.

July 12: Dueling Piano, 8-11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

July 19: Second Hand News/A Tribute to Fleetwood Mac, 8-11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

July 25 & 26: Walleye Festival in Findlay. Food, beer tent with live bands, 3-on-3 basketball tournament, parade & loads of fun!



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Aug. 2: Tribute to Garth Brooks/Tim McGraw, 8–11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

Aug 14–16: Windsor Harvest Picnic at the park in Windsor. Visit their Facebook page for more info on the announcement of the talented country artist to perform a concert this year!

Aug. 15: Fueding' Hillbillies, 9 p.m.–midnight at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

Aug. 16: Matt Poss Band, 9 p.m.–midnight at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

Aug. 23: Kashmir/A Tribute to Led Zepplin, 8–11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

Aug. 24: Car, Truck, Motorcycle & Golf Cart Show at Windsor American Legion in Windsor. Registration noon–12:30 p.m. with awards at 3 p.m. Proceeds to benefit American Legion projects. For more info, call Mike at 217-962-9945 or Jeff at 217-259-5333.

Aug. 30: Fall Village Wide Rummage Sales in Strasburg.

Sept. 13: Broken Hearts/A Tribute to Tom Petty, 8–11 p.m. at Hangar 18 in Windsor.

Oct. 10–12: Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon Fest in Shelbyville.

Oct. 24: Halloween soup supper, parade, costumes, and cake walk at the Community Center in Strasburg.

Nov. 2: American Legion Christmas Auction starting at 1 p.m. at the Community Center in Strasburg.

Nov. 8: Santa Brigade Breakfast starting at 6 a.m. with Christmas Market starting at 7 a.m. at St. Paul's Social Hall & Gym in Strasburg.

Dec. 7: American Legion Christmas Auction starting at 1 p.m. at the Community Center in Strasburg.

Dec. 12 & 13: Christmas Store/Cookie Walk at the Community Center in Strasburg.

Dec. 13: Santa comes to the Community Center in Strasburg from 9:30–11 a.m.

Dec. 14: Lutheran Churches Christmas Cantata at 7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church in Strasburg.

SHELBY COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Vahling Vineyards

Vahling Vineyards is a winery located at 2683 Co. Hwy 6, Stewardson IL. (217)682-5409. vahlingvineyards.com. They have a Wine & Brandy Tasting Room. Enjoy a glass inside or on their large patio!

Willow Ridge Vineyards and Winery

Willow Ridge Vineyards and Winery is located at 1796 North 1475 East Road, Shelbyville IL. (217)738-2323. Open noon - 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 1 p.m. - 6 p.m. on Sundays. Check out their Facebook page for a list of live bands and food vendors each weekend.

Tallman House

The historic Tallman House is located at 806 Main St., Shelbyville. It was built in 1905 by the inventor of the first mechanical hay baler and is listed in National Register of Historical Places. It was restored in 1989 and now serves as office of Shelby Historic House and Inn. For more information call 217-774-3991

Shelby County Courthouse

Shelby County Courthouse in downtown Shelbyville was built between 1879 and 1881. It houses historic paintings, including the Robert Root depiction of the Abraham Lincoln-Anthony Thornton debate. Hours are 8 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday through Friday and courtrooms are generally open for viewing when court is not in session.

Tree-filled Forest Park

Tree-filled Forest Park in Shelbyville is a beautiful place to spend a day. There are areas for picnicking, hiking and fishing. During summer there are swimming, basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, soccer and tennis facilities.

Lincoln Public Square

The Lincoln Public Square houses the Soldiers & Sailors Monument, designed by local artist Robert Marshall Root. The square was erected in 1907 in memory of the fighting men in the county. The square also has a plaque in honor of Abraham Lincoln, who practiced law in Shelbyville. There is also a plaque of Horrace Tallman, the inventor of the first mechanical pick-up hay baler. Flags are placed around the square during Memorial Day and Labor Day. On July 3, 2002, an eternal flame was dedicated to the men and women who have served in the past wars. The black granite base of the flame contains etchings, such as General Douglas McArthur wading ashore in the Phillipines in 1945, Marines raising the flag at Iwo Jima in World War II and Shelbyville resident August West.

Johnson's Goat Tower

Johnson's Goat Tower is located at 1968 N. 2500 East Road at Windsor, IL 61957. The tower is a structure consisting of 5000 handmade bricks from North Carolina, 276 concrete steps that are 40 inches long and cantilevered into the brick and a copper roof. The six compartments, three on each side, have a concrete floor. At 31 feet tall with a 7 ½ foot diameter, it is the world's largest goat tower. Saaen goats, Swiss dairy goats that love to climb, live in the tower. Phone (217)454-2337 and leave a message or text. goattowerfarm.com

Paddling Lake Shelbyville

Established in 2020, the Lake Shelbyville Water Trail – Kaskaskia Branch travels downstream from Denham Pit Primitive Boat Ramp to Forrest W. Bo Wood Boat Ramp. In total, it is just under a 12-mile kayak trip that takes around 4 hours to complete (at normal lake level.) This versatile trail offers distances for all paddling experience levels with several put in/take out points along the route and quiet coves to explore!

Moweaqua Coal Mine Museum

Moweaqua Coal Mine Museum at 129 S. Main St. in Moweaqua, IL has displays and memorabilia from a bygone era in mid-western prairie history. Most well-known for the Dec. 24, 1932 disaster that killed 54 workers, the coal mine closed in 1935 and the museum was dedicated in 1986. Hours are 1 p.m.–4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Moweaqua.org

The Best Wedding Chapel

The Best Wedding Chapel is nestled in the historic town of Shelbyville. Dedicated in the 1870s, this former Catholic Church features Gothic style architecture, 14-foot original stained-glass windows, and a 33-foot cathedral ceiling with a small archway separating the vestibule from the nave. It is now the home and business of the Best family. The wedding chapel is available as a traditional, as well as non-traditional, wedding or vow renewal site. It is located at 159 North Washington Street.

Boarman's Roxy Theatre

The Roxy Theatre ran movies until November 6, 1966, when its final curtain fell on "Mary Poppins." After the marquee was removed the building became home to several different businesses over the years. In 2003, Bob Boarman put up \$100,000 of his own money to get the ball rolling to reopen the theatre and it was decided the theatre would be named the Boarman Roxy Theatre. A group of interested business owners and towns people put in hundreds of volunteer hours to bring the theatre back to life. The first movie to be shown in the newly refurbished theatre was Mary Poppins on Nov. 6, 2003, exactly 37 years after it closed. The theatre is located in downtown Shelbyville.

Lake Shelbyville

Lake Shelbyville is a reservoir located in Shelby County, Illinois and Moultrie County, Illinois created by damming the Kaskaskia River at Shelbyville, Illinois. The lake's normal surface pool is 11,100 acres (44.9km²) at an elevation of 183 meters (600.4 ft). The area that surrounds the lake is the Shelbyville State Fish and Wildlife Area. The lake is managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the wildlife is managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

\$57 million was appropriated for the dam and lake project. Groundbreaking on the dam occurred May 4, 1963. Filling of the reservoir began Aug. 1, 1970. The lake was officially dedicated Sept. 12, 1970. The dam is 3,025 feet (922.0 m) long and 108 feet (32.9 m) tall with normal pool height 17 feet (5.2 m) below the top.

Bordering the lake are two state parks: Wolf Creek State Park and Eagle Creek State Park; and five federal campgrounds including Coon Creek, Opossum Creek, Lithia Springs, Lone Point and Forest (Bo) Woods. There is also Wilborn Creek and Whitley Creek Recreational Area. Lake Shelbyville's shoreline is heavily wooded and subject to severe erosion. Man-made beaches are located at Dam West (Shelbyville), Wilborn Creek, Wolf Creek State Park and Sullivan Beach. Aside from the main channel of the lake are many coves, suited for fishing. The lake is deeper than other major lakes in Illinois, so it is popular with boaters during the summer.

There are full-service marinas, resorts and campgrounds on the lake. There are three full service marinas: Findlay, Lithia Springs and Sullivan Marina. Findlay Marina is located north of Marker 5 just past the bridge on the west side of the lake. Sullivan Marina and Campground is located 4 miles south of Sullivan and includes hotel suites. Lithia Springs Marina is located on the southern end of Lake Shelbyville.



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217-923-3434

AV Tobacco and Liquor
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217-923-5512

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217-923-1475

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Greenup American Legion
Post #566
114 W. Cumberland St.
(217) 923-5308

RESTAURANTS

Subway Restaurant
200 N. Haughton Hwy
217-923-3370

Taco Rey
203 N. Haughton Hwy
217-923-5100

Dairy Queen
At The Interstate Exit
217-923-5186

Chances R. Sports Bar & Grill
113 W. Cumberland St.
217-923-6027

**The Greenup Mill Cafe &
Cocktail Lounge**
120 W. Cumberland St.
217-923-2001

Miss K's Kitchen
117 W. Cumberland
217-923-3093

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Love's Travel Stops & Country Store
203 N. Haughton Hwy.
217-923-3220
nafnafgrill.com

Godfather's Pizza
Love's Travel Stops & Country Store
203 N. Haughton Hwy.
217-923-3225
godfathers.com/home

Hootenanny
Greenup Municipal Building
1st Saturday of the Month

Cumberland County Fair
August 9 - August 16, 2025

Chamber of Commerce
Greenup Apple Fest
October 9-11, 2025

Halloween Celebration
Greenup Municipal Building
October 25, 2025

Christmas in the Village
Greenup Municipal Building
December 13, 2025

MUSEUMS

**Cumberland Co. Historical Society
Railroad Museum & Johnson Bldg.**

211 W. Cumberland St.
217-923 -8362

**Cumberland Co. Historical Society
Illinois Military Museum**
101 N. Mill St.
217-923 -8362

CARNEGIE MILITARY MUSEUM



NATIONAL ROAD COVERED BRIDGE



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217-923-3176

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Greenup Inn
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217-923-5512

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The Candy Kitchen
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The Village Venue
119 S. Kentucky St.
217-690-3312 and Facebook

Bergbower Chiropractic
Family Wellness Clinic
100 W. Cumberland St. • 217-923-0100

The Shipyard
(Batting Cages/Pitching Mound)
106 E. Cumberland St. • Facebook

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654 Wagon Rd. • 217-343-8689

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217-343-2972

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