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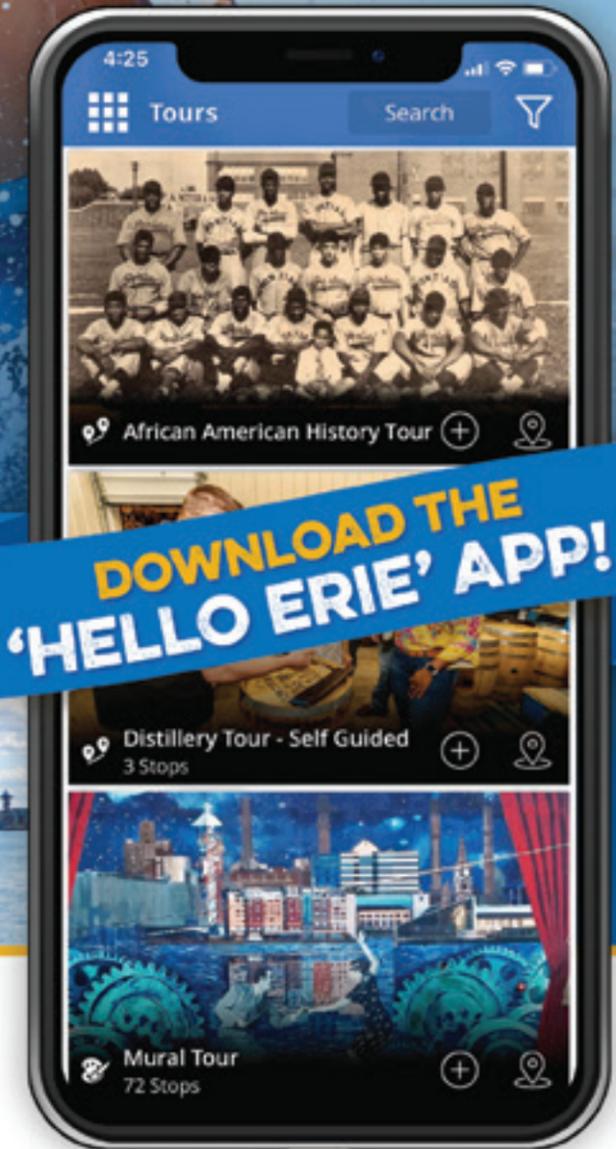
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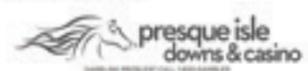
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### In the Next Issue:

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# BIKING THE GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE

When I got my Bianchi bicycle a few years ago I never imagined what was waiting for me on the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP). Stretching from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland, this 150-mile biking and hiking trail is truly an adventure for the entire family or just you and another person.

By Douglas M. Kish, MA

The trail is built mostly on old rail beds and is constructed of crushed limestone, so for the most part it is a smooth ride, although it does get a little bumpy in some areas. The Passage is open from dusk to dawn with numerous picnic tables and comfort stations along the way. Although it's always a good rule to pay attention to the trail and where you are going, the amazing views will have you distracted most of the time.

It's very important to be ready for the unexpected. There are several checklists online of items you might need. We took extra inner tubes, a tire pump, a first aid kit, snacks and water. You should always have at least a quart of water a day, so take more than you think you'll need because dehydration will set in quickly.

My brother-in-law, Chris Eagon, and I chose to make it a three-day trip. Arriving in Cumberland around 11:00 am, we decided to have lunch before we started our first day's journey. After being on the trail a mere 15 minutes, we encountered our first challenge when Chris got a flat tire. After a quick repair, we were on our way again.



The first day we targeted 32 miles to our first stop in Meyersdale, Pennsylvania. Bikers can average roughly 12 miles per hour, while hikers average 2-3 miles an hour. The first day we fell way short of the 12-mile pace. The grade level was very difficult with a pretty steep constant incline up the mountain. Sometimes the terrain was so steep, it felt like each mile was a challenge. The various stops we made for water and snack breaks were breathtaking. I would look back to where we had been and couldn't believe how high we were, elevating with each passing mile.

That first day, I took a memorable photo at the Mason-Dixon Line where a property dispute was settled in 1767. A large monument in the area indicates where Maryland and Pennsylvania meet. We crossed the Eastern Continental Divide, left the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and entered The Gulf of Mexico Watershed. A tunnel commemorates this location which abounds with great photo opportunities.

We went through a few tunnels that were pretty exciting. The 914-foot Brush Tunnel under Piney Mountain was epic, but the longest and most exciting was the 3,294-foot Big Savage Tunnel. It is well maintained and lighted, so we easily made our way through. We

crossed the Curved Viaduct and Bollman Bridge, part of the few remaining iron trusses in the United States.

After about six hours of peddling, we arrived at Meyersdale a quaint little town with inns, and bed and breakfasts throughout. We were told by the host at Yoder's Guest House, the Bed and Breakfast where we stayed, that The Meyersdale Historical Society recently renovated the former train station to make it a gift shop. The 360-degree views in this small town are astounding. There are numerous camping facilities along the trail if that's something you enjoy.

We carried all our belongings for the 3-day journey in saddle bags on the backs of our bikes. It made it a little harder to pedal, but it's best to keep everything at a minimum since you won't want the extra weight. There are numerous towns and shops along the way where you can purchase food, snacks and water. We packed our clothes in plastic bags in case we ran into rain. It's best to make this journey with another person since there are several areas on the trail where there is no cell phone service. If something were to happen to you, such as an accident or illness, you wouldn't have communication to get help. That might mean waiting until someone comes along to help you or get help for you.

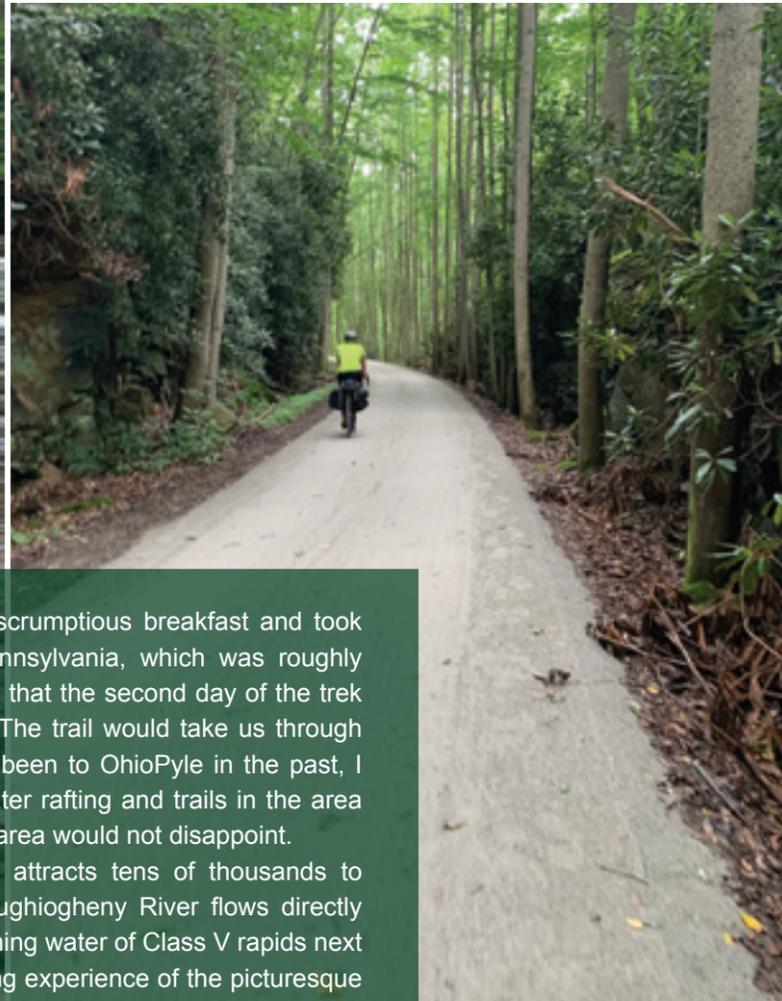




The next day we had a scrumptious breakfast and took off towards Connellsville, Pennsylvania, which was roughly 56 miles away. We had heard that the second day of the trek would be the most beautiful. The trail would take us through OhioPyle State Park. Having been to OhioPyle in the past, I remembered that the whitewater rafting and trails in the area were spectacular. I knew that area would not disappoint.

This section of the GAP attracts tens of thousands to the area every year. The Youghiogheny River flows directly through OhioPyle and the rushing water of Class V rapids next the trail adds to the exhilarating experience of the picturesque storybook of nature. While traveling through this area we came upon a family of young deer right next to the trail and river. Accustomed to humans on the trail, they looked at us as if to say, "What's up?" I will never forget that memorable experience.

After arriving in OhioPyle, we did go off the path and investigate the town. We visited a few shops and restaurants, planned our whitewater rafting trip for a future adventure, and visited the lagoons for a few photos. Clouds appeared, so we checked the radar and saw that a rainstorm was headed our way. We put on our rain jackets and quickly jumped back on the trail, continuing to Connellsville.



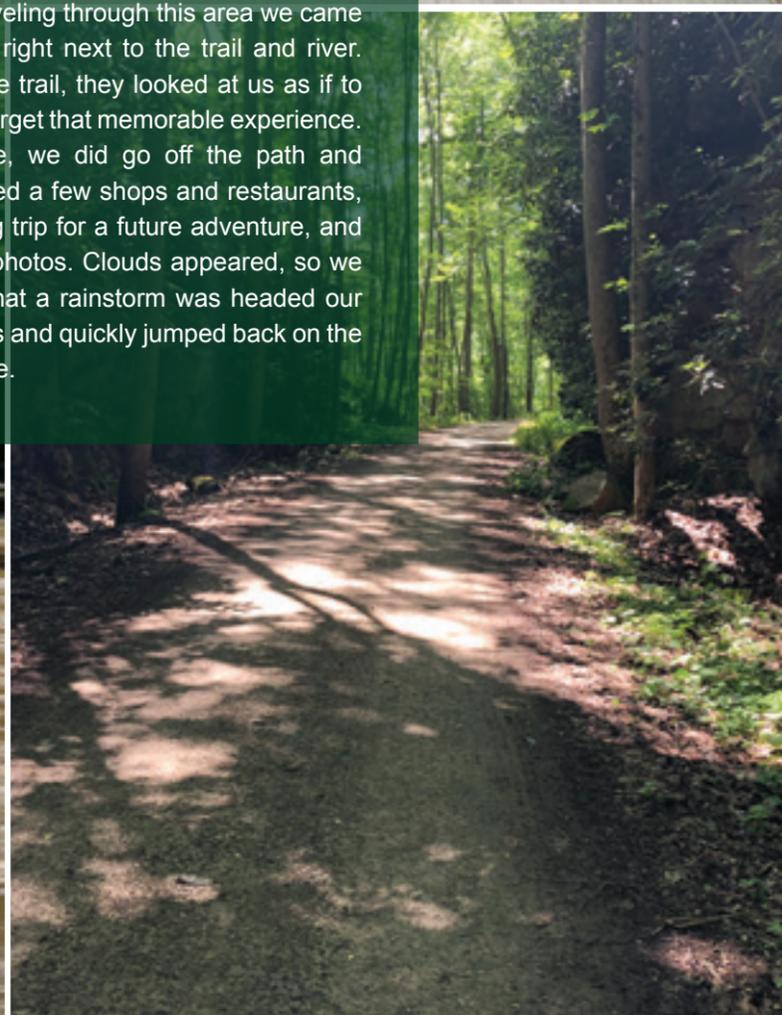
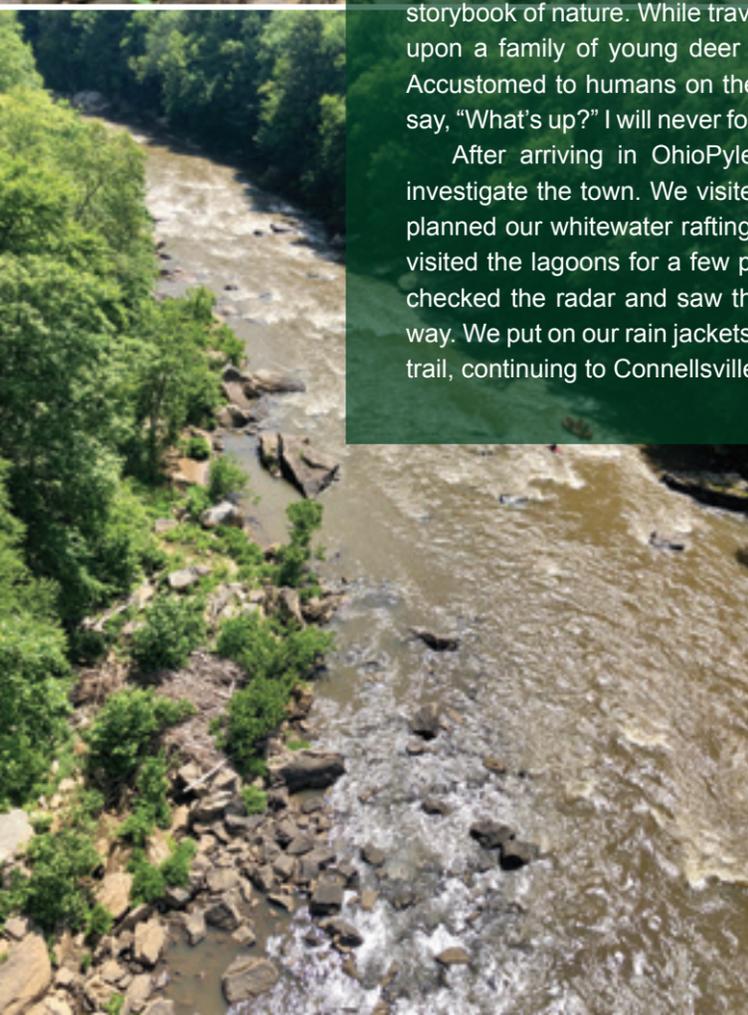
About 15 minutes later, the rain cut loose. It was like a typhoon hit us. The rain was coming down so hard with the wind blowing, it was difficult to see in front of us as the trail became flooded. We had no choice but to push forward and keep pedaling. The amazing feeling of the rain brought an overwhelming surge of excitement to me, as if to cleanse my soul. I never felt so alive with the scents of nature and the scenery before me.

The rain stopped and the sun came out quickly with steam permeating from the wet earth. It gave a sense of rebirth and newness to the experience. We stopped to take a photo of the amazing steam over the river and quickly continued.



Arriving in Connellsville we noticed numerous locations for overnight accommodations, restaurants and many churches for travelers. Also, directly along the trail is a beautiful Comfort Inn with all the amenities, including a pool and restaurant. Management advised that they cater to travelers who use the GAP trail. Another option in that area is Seams Like Home Bed and Breakfast. They have rooms accommodating 2 to 4 people, including a 2-bedroom suite. The interior reflects a home away from home with a lounge area for movies and popcorn and a pool table. Outdoors there is a fire pit for roasting hot dogs and making s'mores after a hard day on the trail.

We stayed the night in a bed and breakfast, followed by an enjoyable breakfast the next morning. The final leg of our journey was 61 miles to Pittsburgh. The terrain was pretty easy with a few challenging hills. As we inched closer and closer to Pittsburgh it was apparent that we were in the home stretch of our adventure. We passed through numerous towns with lunch locations, entertainment venues, bike shops for repairs and additional trails off the beaten path.



As we came into Pittsburgh, it was really cool to bike on the property adjacent to Kennywood Amusement Park. We could see the roller coasters above our heads. Traveling over bridge after bridge, weaving from one side of the river to the other, we entered an area where the trail moved to city streets. It was the only way to continue navigating the GAP trail to end of the line at Point State Park, which is where the Allegheny River meets the Monongahela River and the Ohio River begins.

Ending at the fountain at Point State Park in downtown Pittsburgh, I felt like I was running up the steps in the movie *Rocky*. The water from the fountain streams so high up in the air, it resembles a fireworks display celebrating the 150-plus miles we traveled. I fulfilled a true accomplishment that I never thought was possible, even though I did train for this adventure. I advise anyone to go and experience this trail ride, even if you just do a small portion of it. You will not be disappointed.



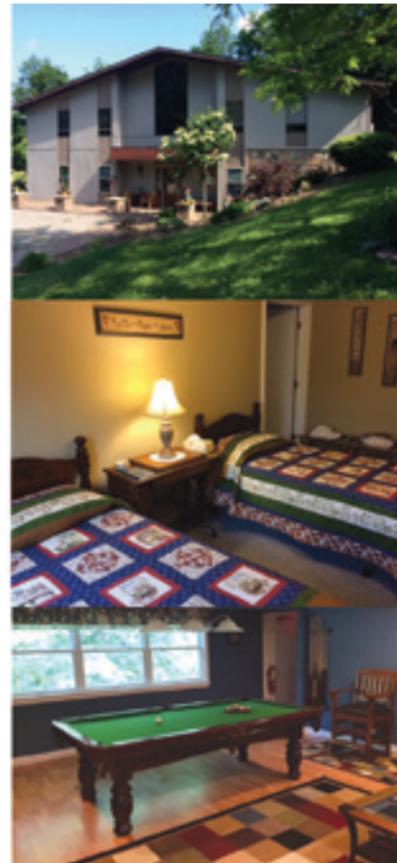
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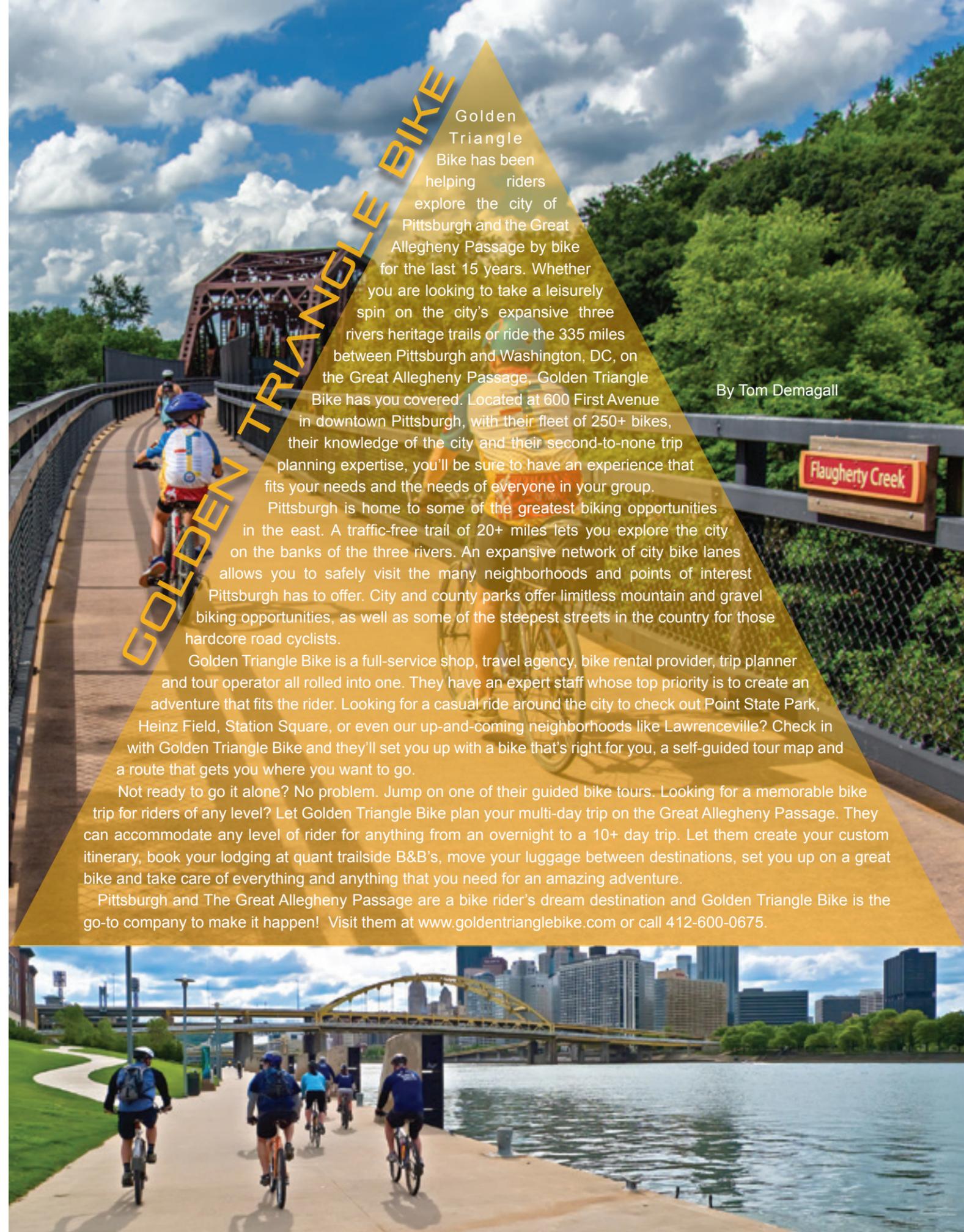
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**GOLDEN TRIANGLE BIKE**

Golden Triangle Bike has been helping riders explore the city of Pittsburgh and the Great Allegheny Passage by bike for the last 15 years. Whether you are looking to take a leisurely spin on the city's expansive three rivers heritage trails or ride the 335 miles between Pittsburgh and Washington, DC, on the Great Allegheny Passage, Golden Triangle Bike has you covered. Located at 600 First Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh, with their fleet of 250+ bikes, their knowledge of the city and their second-to-none trip planning expertise, you'll be sure to have an experience that fits your needs and the needs of everyone in your group.

By Tom Demagall

Pittsburgh is home to some of the greatest biking opportunities in the east. A traffic-free trail of 20+ miles lets you explore the city on the banks of the three rivers. An expansive network of city bike lanes allows you to safely visit the many neighborhoods and points of interest Pittsburgh has to offer. City and county parks offer limitless mountain and gravel biking opportunities, as well as some of the steepest streets in the country for those hardcore road cyclists.

Golden Triangle Bike is a full-service shop, travel agency, bike rental provider, trip planner and tour operator all rolled into one. They have an expert staff whose top priority is to create an adventure that fits the rider. Looking for a casual ride around the city to check out Point State Park, Heinz Field, Station Square, or even our up-and-coming neighborhoods like Lawrenceville? Check in with Golden Triangle Bike and they'll set you up with a bike that's right for you, a self-guided tour map and a route that gets you where you want to go.

Not ready to go it alone? No problem. Jump on one of their guided bike tours. Looking for a memorable bike trip for riders of any level? Let Golden Triangle Bike plan your multi-day trip on the Great Allegheny Passage. They can accommodate any level of rider for anything from an overnight to a 10+ day trip. Let them create your custom itinerary, book your lodging at quaint trailside B&B's, move your luggage between destinations, set you up on a great bike and take care of everything and anything that you need for an amazing adventure.

Pittsburgh and The Great Allegheny Passage are a bike rider's dream destination and Golden Triangle Bike is the go-to company to make it happen! Visit them at [www.goldentrianglebike.com](http://www.goldentrianglebike.com) or call 412-600-0675.

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SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT

# ROCKY GAP CASINO RESORT

Article courtesy of Golden Entertainment



Rocky Gap Casino Resort, a AAA Four Diamond Hotel nestled in the Appalachian Mountains with lakeside views, offers luxurious amenities, award-winning restaurants, spaciouly distanced outdoor activities, and a high-energy casino experience all set to the natural beauty of Rocky Gap State Park. Located about two hours from Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Pittsburgh with easy access from Exit 50 on I-68, Rocky Gap offers a picturesque retreat for an adventure-filled getaway, a corporate event or family reunion.

Home to Rocky Gap Casino Resort, Rocky Gap State Park also includes 3,000 acres of land with dozens of scenic hiking and mountain biking trails, plus a 243-acre lake. Throughout much of the year, Rocky Gap Casino Resort is an outdoor playground, with a boathouse on the lake to rent pedal boats, canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards. Fishing is another popular activity, as is bird watching. Rocky Gap's spacious grounds offer oversized chairs and several firepits for lounging, as well as bocce and cornhole games.

Recently named one of Golfweek's "Best Casino Courses," Rocky Gap Golf Course is a 7,000-yard, par 72, 18-hole course with five tee boxes at each hole to allow players to adjust according to their handicap. The only Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course in Maryland, the course also offers a 50-spot driving range, two large putting greens, two chipping areas and a practice bunker. The front nine is carved from mountainous, tree lined terrain with numerous dramatic elevation changes, while the back nine is spread across expansive, gently rolling meadows. 2021 celebrates the 20th year of the destination golf course. Rocky Gap Golf Course offers

competitive membership packages for locals and visitors alike with single and group lessons also available.

There is plenty of adventure year-round at Rocky Gap's award-winning casino, where there are thrills to be had playing slot machines as well as at exciting table games. Rocky Gap Casino Resort features 665 slot machines, 17 table games and two casino bars. Table games include bonus craps, roulette, three card poker, Lucky Ladies blackjack, double deck pitch blackjack, Mississippi stud and ultimate Texas hold 'em. Golden Entertainment, Inc.'s innovative guest loyalty rewards program, True Rewards, is available at Rocky Gap and 140+ other locations.

Rocky Gap also offers a tranquil spa, salon, fitness center and a spacious indoor swimming pool, open year-round. The Spa at Rocky Gap offers guests a variety of indulgent services, including massages, facials, salon services, manicures, pedicures and waxing services. A popular favorite includes Rocky Gap's signature spa massage with warm stones and aromatherapy, perfect after a long day of adventure or golf.



Rocky Gap's exceptional dining includes the resort's high-end restaurant, LB's Place. Overlooking the stunning and spacious lake, LB's specializes in steaks, chops and fish and features a curated wine list, plus its crowd-pleasing Maryland crab cakes. Other restaurants include Signatures Bar & Grill, which offers sports viewing, burgers, pizzas, beer and more in a clubhouse atmosphere; and Lobby Lounge + Café, a popular spot for pastries, coffee and Boar's Head sandwiches, as well as a full-service bar. On the Rocks, the resort's biggest full-service bar, serves specialty cocktails and a wide selection of beers on tap.

With tens of thousands of square feet of meeting space, Rocky Gap is a popular destination for private events. In addition to four 600-square-foot meeting rooms; an executive boardroom; and two private dining rooms, each accommodating up to 24 guests; Rocky Gap offers outdoor events at the Allegheny Event Center; the Lakeside Reception Area, Lakeside Terrace and Golfview Pavilion.

Luxury rooms and suites, all of which have been recently renovated, are appointed with top-of-the-line luxury bedding and pillow-top mattresses, offer breathtaking views of the mountains and the lake. Exceptional amenities include premium cable channels on HDTVs, and refrigerators.

"Many people are looking for a way to escape right now, and we are happy to provide a relaxing getaway while also providing a safe, healthy atmosphere," said Skylar Dice, vice president and general manager of Rocky Gap Casino Resort.

A Golden Entertainment, Inc. casino, Rocky Gap Casino Resort has implemented broad safety measures in accordance with the company's new "Golden Commitment" standards. These measures include sanitation protocols at every touch point, from the casino, restaurants and bars to the elevators and rooms. A full outline of the "Golden Commitment" standards is available at [goldenent.com](http://goldenent.com).

Some operations are impacted by state mandates. Visit the website [www.rockygapcasino.com](http://www.rockygapcasino.com) for more information and room reservations



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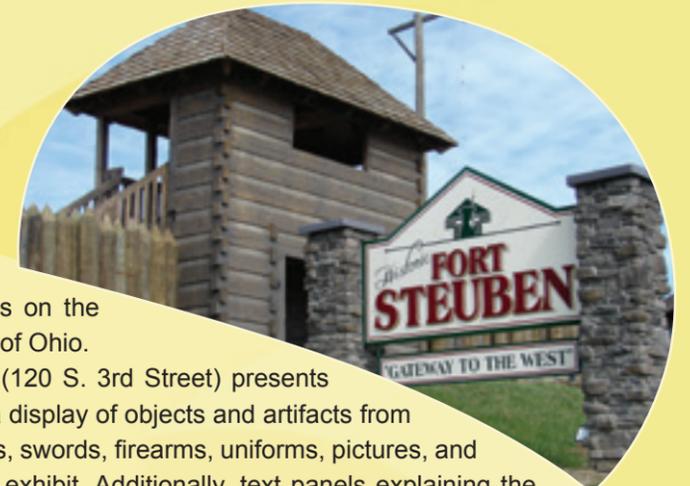
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**TAKE THE ROAD AND SPRING FORWARD**

By Judith Bratten

The daffodils and crocuses of spring are signs of hope – much needed after the past year! And with hope comes plans for getting out and about and taking road trips again. If you are looking for destinations that are just a short drive away and offer safe and family-friendly attractions, check out what is on the calendar in Steubenville, on the eastern border of Ohio.



The Historic Fort Steuben Visitor Center (120 S. 3rd Street) presents "The Ohio Valley & the Civil War" with a display of objects and artifacts from the period. Original Civil War letters, swords, firearms, uniforms, pictures, and personal items are part of the exhibit. Additionally, text panels explaining the Civil War and its impact on the Ohio Valley are displayed along with the restored cannon donated to the veteran's section of Steubenville's Union Cemetery by Veterans of the Civil War. The exhibit will be open Monday through Friday from 10 am to 4 pm or by appointment until March 20.



On March 29, the annual Spring Quilt Show will open at Historic Fort Steuben featuring dozens of hand-crafted textile creations from local artisans; some classic patterns and some new ones. The display will be up through April 10, Monday through Friday, 10 am to 4 pm or by appointment.

The city offers several outdoor activities that allow social distancing while getting some exercise. Known as "The City of Murals," Steubenville has 25 larger than life works of art, most within walking distance in the downtown area. A map of the murals can be obtained at the Visitor Center. For a more strenuous activity, Friends of Beatty Park invite you to a "Spring Hike to the Fossil and Secret Staircase" in the 19th century park/nature preserve located at 621 Lincoln Avenue on March 20 at noon.

The annual Great Steubenville Eggsibition will open on April 2 with over twenty 3' tall, hand painted Easter eggs strategically placed in downtown businesses for an all-city, all ages Easter Egg Hunt! It will run through May 2 and maps can be obtained at Leonardo's Coffeehouse or at the Visitor Center.

And before you know it May will be here when Historic Fort Steuben opens for tours of the eight fully furnished buildings that recreate life in an 18th century frontier fort as well as the adjacent original log structure that served as the First Federal Land Office from 1801 to 1840. A special exhibit based on the best-selling book by David McCullough, *The Pioneers*, will be on display from May 16 to June 30. So, get out of the house and explore! For information on these and other events in the area, contact the Fort Steuben Visitor Center, 740-283-4935, or check the website [www.VisitSteubenville.com](http://www.VisitSteubenville.com).

# NO BOUNDARIES ON THIS BIKE RIDE

By Knute E. Hankins



The people of Iowa truly make the event special by opening up homes on the route and their towns and communities to participants. Personally, Anne and I experienced the ultimate Iowa support in 2018 when our bike frame broke and we almost had to stop during one of the day rides. We happened to break down in front of a farmhouse. The farmer and his family came out and within an hour he repaired our bike well enough to finish out the week. As we prepared to leave, he teared up and his wife explained that his brother had passed away six months earlier in the farm tool shed. The parts he used were from that shed and he had not been in it until the day he helped us. Needless to say, we were humbled by this act of kindness.



The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) is an annual seven-day bicycle ride across the state of Iowa averaging approximately 450-500 miles. RAGBRAI is the oldest, largest, and longest recreational bicycle touring event in the world. This rolling celebration of Iowa attracts participants from all 50 states and many foreign countries. As many as 10,000 riders embark on the journey every year, with as many as 20,000 riders on some days.

My wife, Anne, and I have been involved in this event since 2015. At that time, we purchased a unique tandem bike known as a Pino so we could adventure together. The Vermont bike shop we worked with was actively involved in selling and modifying bikes for people with disabilities. After numerous conversations, they recommended we contact a group called Adaptive Sports Iowa (ASI) and volunteer to ride with the team and support disabled riders participating in the RAGBRAI adventure.



The ride typically goes through 5-7 towns a day serving plenty of food and drink. Many towns use this as the key fundraiser for school activities and community projects. Also, along the route there are numerous vendors who have served the ride for years. They specialize in everything from breakfasts, to pork chops, to ice cream, and beer tents.

Another interesting aspect is the large Air Force riding team that travels back and forth amongst the riders providing repair and medical support for participants in need. They exemplify the service attitude of these great men and women. There are food and entertainment venues at each overnight town. All of this gives riders a great chance to meet many people from Iowa and all over the world.

Disability Is Not Inability

Another factor of riding with ASI is it provides a great annual "refresh" for Anne and me. As volunteers, our main function is riding with cyclists who may need support as we go through crowded towns, helping get food and drinks, and generally lending a hand. We are also able to provide repair support and just general company.

Blind riders ride tandem bikes with the lead rider providing the sight. I have assisted blind riders in the past. It requires the sighted rider to balance the challenge of describing the area as you ride, along with the physical responsibility of riding safely and keeping your legs moving at the same pace as your blind companion.

At night, due to medical needs, the team stays in an indoor facility. All beds are set up and most of the evening is spent eating, tuning bikes, and exchanging stories. These disabled riders annually provide us with a great appreciation for overcoming challenges from loss of limbs, illnesses that limit mobility, and blindness. As one rider stated, "It is truly an amazing week. We have all

been told that we couldn't do these types of activities, so there are tears of joy and pride of accomplishment the week of RAGBRAI." As another ASI Team member said, "When I walk, I'm an amputee; when I ride, I'm normal."

Another tremendous aspect of the ASI team is the response and reaction they have felt from the RAGBRAI community. During the event, team members become advocates. They meet people every day who share their stories about disability in their lives and ask questions like, "How can my daughter with CP do RAGBRAI?" or "My mother just lost her sight; what are some good tips to know when piloting her?"

Participating in RAGBRAI is a very fulfilling experience. ASI provides a great way to make it especially unique and special. If you have or know someone with a disability who might enjoy the

challenge of riding in a great event, please email me at [knutehankins3@gmail.com](mailto:knutehankins3@gmail.com) and we will be glad to help answer your questions. You can also find additional information about this unique event at the website [ragbrai.com](http://ragbrai.com).



ASI's mission is to provide cyclists with physical and/or vision disabilities access to experience RAGBRAI. This unique opportunity is open to all disabled United States and International riders. The organization provides lodging, medical support, and the numerous general volunteers needed to make the annual ride happen. By eliminating some of the common stresses that would normally drive people away, these cyclists can now focus on participation. This combination of bike adventure and support service has served as the perfect combination for us and the other 60-80 disabled riders and volunteers we ride with annually.

RAGBRAI is a bicycle ride, not a race, managed by the Des Moines Register and held each year during the last full week in July. The route is not necessarily flat; wrong perception that Iowa is flat. It begins somewhere along Iowa's western border on the Missouri River and ends along the eastern border on the Mississippi River. Each year the route changes and eight Iowa communities along the route serve as "host" communities for overnight stays. Almost all participants are supported as campers throughout the week. Many of the towns are small but do an incredible job hosting the huge crowds.

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# The Health Benefits of Travel

By Karen Raymore

Health has never been so front and center of everyone's minds before. We are inundated with information about protecting our loved ones and ourselves from a global pandemic. Social media is filled with humorous memes about the physical effects of working from home, quarantining and television bingeing. Covid exhaustion is hitting everyone.

Good news, there's a cure; travel. Did you know travel has been scientifically proven to have health benefits for mind and body? According to a joint study from the Global Commission on Aging and Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies, in partnership with the U.S. Travel Association, travel keeps you healthy. Travel reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Travel relieves stress and who doesn't need that these days. Three days after taking a vacation, travelers report feeling less anxious, more rested and in a better mood. Interestingly, these benefits tend to linger for weeks after the trip has ended.

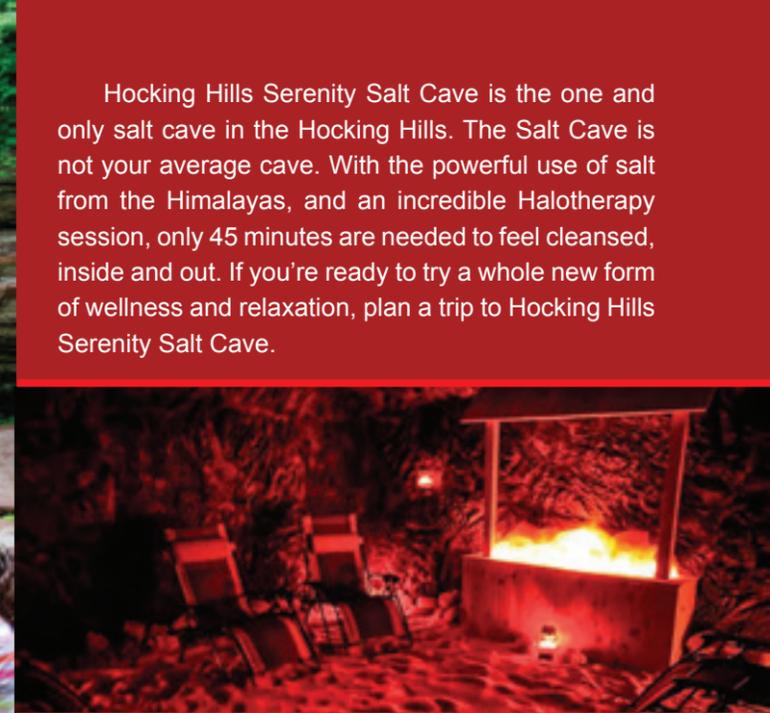
Travel enhances creativity. When we slow down long enough to really connect with ourselves, the result is self-discovery. Immersing in another culture opens our minds and hearts to possibilities and passions.

Travel makes us happy. A change of scenery and escape from routine is good for us. A Cornell University study revealed people also experience a direct increase in happiness from just planning a trip.

Combine the general benefits of travel with a destination that specializes in wellness and you've got Ohio's Hocking Hills. The plethora of Mother Nature's offerings are complimented by outdoor adventures, spa services, even forest bathing which is simply being in nature, connecting with it through our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

New to the Hocking Hills this spring is Nature Therapy, brought to you by the folks at High Rock Adventures & Eco Tours. Nature Therapy won't be the adrenaline pumping experience many come to High Rock Adventures to enjoy. Using all of your senses you will be guided through a slow walk in the woods with various activities that allow you to connect more deeply with the forest. Nature

Therapy is based on the belief that people form part of the web of life and that our psyches are not independent of the environment.



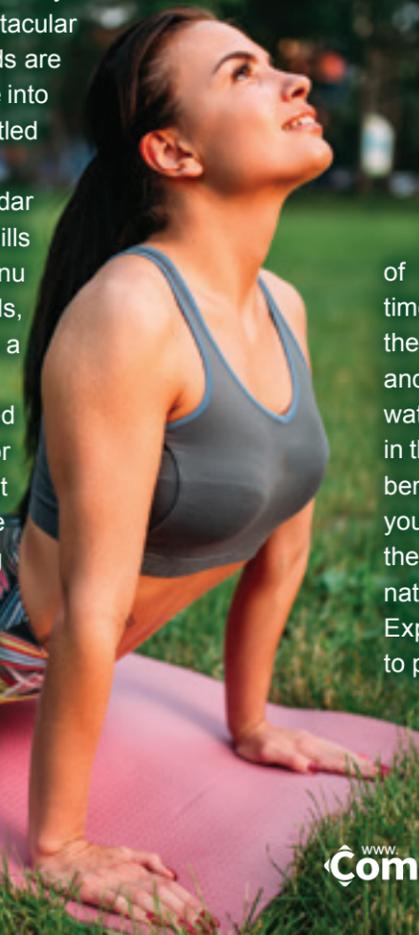
The quintessential Hocking Hills visit requires a cozy cabin. No need to leave your cabin to enjoy a relaxing massage. Blue Valley Massage & Traveling Spa and Ash Cave Day Spa will come to you. Their experienced massage therapists offer couple's massage and an array of spa services in the comfort of your cabin.

Sauna Pods Hocking Hills bring the woods to you while you relax in a cedar lined, heated sauna. Enjoy the spectacular view from the floor-to-ceiling fish-eye window. The pods are available by the hour or a full day. Just drive up, change into your sauna wear and step into your private sauna nestled in the woods.

Ash Cave Day Spa and the Inn & Spa at Cedar Falls are surrounded by the beauty of the Hocking Hills State Park and Hocking State Forest. Both offer a menu of spa services including relaxation massage, facials, pregnancy massage, hot stone massage and more in a sublime environment for the ultimate in stress relief.

Historic Logan's newest spa offers an unparalleled experience for relaxation. From massage or acupuncture to yoga, light therapy, hot Himalayan salt foot baths and energy healing. Their services provide the ultimate pampering for you in the heart of Hocking Hills' hometown.

The parks are calling. Ziplines are waiting to carry you through the tree canopy for a birds-eye view of Ohio's natural crown jewels. Meander down the historic Hocking River by canoe or kayak. Ride to an authentic Cowboy Cookout or explore a haunted train tunnel by horseback. Take a break from your inbox and spend some time with your tackle box



Give yourself the gift of better health. Spend time getting in touch with the natural world. Stop and smell the roses, trees, water and earth. Indulge in the physical and mental benefits of pampering yourself. Find yourself in the Hocking Hills, Ohio's natural crown jewels. Visit [ExploreHockingHills.com](http://ExploreHockingHills.com) to plan your getaway.

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# A GOLFERS' PARADISE is Closer Than You Think

By Lindsey Scripture



Nestled in the stunning Appalachian foothills just two hours from northeastern Ohio, you'll find Oglebay, West Virginia's most popular golf destination offering affordable golf getaways and a multitude of amenities for golfers of all ages thanks to a Cleveland business tycoon who purchased a stately mansion and farmland in Wheeling, WV more than 90 years ago.

To fully appreciate this hidden gem, it's important to have a little background. The resort's property was gifted to the people of Wheeling by Cleveland industrialist Earl Oglebay, who willed his beloved 2,000-acre Waddington Farm to the people of Wheeling for public recreation. Oglebay died in 1928 and the rest, as they say, is history, as the property would evolve into a major travel destination in the years to come.

Today, Oglebay offers course layouts for golfers of all abilities, including two exceptional 18-hole championship layouts at The Speidel Golf Club designed by the legendary Robert Trent Jones, Sr. and Arnold Palmer. The Crispin course, the resort's 5,600-yard course dating back to 1930, is perfect for warm-up rounds, seniors and beginners. Plus, guests can enjoy two driving ranges and a family-friendly par-3 course.

Oglebay also offers multiple restaurants and shops, a lake, hiking trails, manicured gardens, museums, an outdoor amphitheater which plays host to national musicians throughout the summer, a 30-acre zoo, and more. That's right; guests can observe more than 50 species of animals, 20 of which are rare or endangered, at Oglebay's Good Zoo. It's the only zoo in the state of West Virginia accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. So yes, you can play a few rounds of golf and visit rare and endangered animals in the same day at the same place.

The Speidel Golf Club pays homage to two golf legends, Palmer and Jones. The newest course at Oglebay is a par-71 championship layout with six par-3 holes, seven par-4 holes and five par-5 holes designed by Arnold Palmer. It ranges in distance from 6,800 yards from the championship tees up to 4,200 yards from the forward tees, and is designed to accommodate golfers of all skill levels. This new layout takes advantage of the existing terrain and with the addition of strategically placed bunkers, attractive mounding and generous greens, the course's unique character was completed.

Oglebay's Speidel Golf Club also features a spectacular course designed by Robert Trent Jones, Sr. Multiple tee placements allow the course to play from 7,000 yards from the championship tees, to 5,515 yards from the forward tees. Home to the West Virginia LPGA Classic for more than a decade, this course is sure to provoke conversation as well as settle some bets.

Oglebay also features the 18-hole regulation Crispin Course, a nine-hole, par-3 course, and a full-service practice range and short-game area at the Speidel Golf Club.

Overnight accommodations include the inviting Wilson Lodge, recently renovated cottages and spacious estate houses, and a variety of golf packages are available for individuals and groups of all sizes.

"Our superb packages are just the ticket for long days of golf followed by nightly recharging in our comfortable lodging options," says Rodney Haley, Executive Vice President of Operations. "Few destinations offer as much 'bang for your golfing buck' as we do here at Oglebay."

For additional information about Oglebay's golf packages, visit [www.oglebay.com/golf](http://www.oglebay.com/golf) or call 877-436-1797.

# PHYSICAL THERAPY

## FOR Runners

By Breanne Bakan

While running is a great way to stay active and healthy, it can also be hard on your body. If you're running on sidewalks, roads, or even a treadmill, the pounding on the hard surface can be tough on your bones and joints. Running places a lot of strain on your muscles and tendons in general, and if you're not taking action to stay healthy, you could be at high risk for an injury.

I routinely see a physical therapist to take care of the aches, pains, and injuries that come with running. Seeing a physical therapist regularly also helps keep my serious injuries at bay, as he treats minor injuries before they become major and prevent me from running. Dr. Mike Pavlak and Dr. Tim Pavlak of Physio Orthopedics and Performance in Akron, Ohio have been my go-to physical therapists for all my running-related issues through my years of collegiate competition and since.

Both doctors sat down virtually with me to chat about common injuries, preventative measures, and strengthening options. Check out this article to see answers to some common questions, and then schedule an appointment with a physical therapist to give your body the treatment it deserves.



### IS THERE A COMMON INJURY YOU SEE AMONG RUNNERS THAT IS EASILY PREVENTABLE?

**Dr. Mike:** One thing we saw during coronavirus among runners, but it was really work related, was a lot of neck or low back tension just from sitting too long and then trying to jump out and do a run with no warmup.

**Dr. Tim:** Looking at just runners, IT band syndrome (which is related to lateral stability), glute med syndrome (which is also related to lateral stability), and then achilles tendinitis and plantar fasciitis (which is more related to the calf complex, poor shoe choice, and poor movement patterns). In newer runners, it's all shin splints because they're not used to the mileage. Serious runners often deal with overuse or have a weakness they didn't realize was underlying. That's why we focus a lot on preventative care.

### WHEN TREATING RUNNERS, IS THERE A COMMON CAUSE FOR INJURY YOU SEE MOST FREQUENTLY--SUCH AS LACK OF STRETCHING, WEAKNESSES, INEFFICIENCIES--OR IS IT A PRETTY EVEN SPREAD?

**Dr. Tim:** When you look at research, there is no article that says stretching prevents injuries. You need the range of motion that is necessary for your sport and that's it.

The number one thing we see in runners is an asymmetry; something being different on one side of your body versus the other, and it almost always goes back to being hip related. Running is a straight-line sport, so the side-to-side muscles that give you stability don't get strengthened as much from running. You see this more in road runners than trail runners, as trail running gives you more opportunity to strengthen stabilizing muscles.

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE THAT PRE-RUN WARMUP ROUTINE?

**Dr. Mike:** I would say dire. It's really common for people to come in and say that on their runs they feel bad for about a mile and then start to feel better because their muscles are finally warmed up after that mile. This could be easily improved by supplementing with a warmup routine. Just stretching before a run really doesn't do anything to prepare you; warmups should be activation based so your muscles are firing and ready before you run. That way the muscles used for running are warm and ready to do what you need them to.

### WHAT ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF SOME WARMUP DRILLS YOU DEFINITELY RECOMMEND?

**Dr. Tim:** Hip mobility is great as a warmup and should ideally be done as a strength routine around three times a week. So, clam shells, monster walks, and other banded exercises are all great. As mentioned, a lot of problems for runners come from weak hips and glutes.

Another good daily thing is foam rolling after you run. This is a big deal because your body is in sympathetic mode with lots of blood flow, and if you don't take the time to roll out and cool the muscles down after activity, then they're staying activated. Then when you go and sit at work or wherever they'll just get really tight.

**Dr. Mike:** Also going with the hip stability work, it's important to do a good job of taking care of the big three joints when it comes to running--the ankle, knee, and hip. If you take care of the hip and you take care of the ankle, the knee is usually safe. If someone is having knee problems, it's often coming from a lack of stability at the hip or a lack of mobility down at the ankle. That's why it's important to be warming up and cooling down the ankle and the hip; so, doing the hip stability work and then adding in some toe walking and calf exercises to activate the ankle is a great way to keep the knee healthy.

### IF SOMEONE IS INJURED, WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE CROSS-TRAINING ACTIVITIES TO STAY FIT UNTIL THEY'RE ABLE TO RUN AGAIN?

**Dr. Mike:** Aqua jogging is a great way to maintain cardio fitness and muscle memory. If you've got a load-related injury, then that's a great option for you. Just throw a belt on for floatation and stay upright maintaining the pumping motion of running.

**Dr. Tim:** Aqua jogging is good and even just swimming is great. You're using completely different muscles, you're unweighting joints, you're not getting irritation from load-bearing surfaces, you're getting core stability and movement at the hips. But it also comes down to what you have available.

### ARE THERE ANY WEIGHT TRAINING EXERCISES YOU THINK ALL RUNNERS SHOULD BE DOING FOR BOTH STAYING HEALTHY AND IMPROVING PERFORMANCE?

**Dr. Mike:** Single leg work and posterior chain work are what's biggest. There's no double-legged stance in running, so single leg activities are really helpful.

**Dr. Tim:** Single-leg deadlifts with a kettle bell or dumbbell, a kettle bell swing, Turkish get-ups, and then chin-ups and push-ups. If you're doing all of these, you're good to go.

**Dr. Mike:** You don't even have to pay for a gym membership then, just get a kettle bell.

My personal recommendation is to see a physical therapist and do preventative activities before an injury occurs. Whether you're a runner, a walker, or just an active person in general, your body is doing a lot for you. Give it the care and maintenance it deserves so you can keep doing what you love.

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Located in the heart of Northwest Ohio, Defiance County is home to many national, state, and locally recognized walking trails. Whether you are a seasoned hiker or just looking to take a stroll, all experience levels will enjoy the outdoor amenities along each path. Below are five land and one water trail but there are many other smaller trails for your hiking enjoyment. We encourage you to put hiking in Defiance County on your bucket list.

# DISCOVER DEFIANCE'S TRAILS

Article courtesy of Defiance Development and Visitors Bureau  
Photo of Reservoir Trail courtesy of Williams Aerial

## DEFIANCE RESERVOIR & WALKING TRAILS, 1261 PRECISION WAY, DEFIANCE, OHIO

The Reservoir Nature Trail is an 8-foot wide, multi-use trail extending from the Defiance Reservoir parking lot through approximately 2,500 feet of natural wooded area. It connects to the "lower" pathway around the municipal reservoir. This walkway offers opportunities for recreational uses such as bird watching, leaf-peeping, or just enjoying quiet walks through nature.

The "upper" trail is a 1¼ mile stone walkway around the top of the reservoir that provides unobstructed views of the reservoir and occasional waterfowl. Benches are spaced along the walk for relaxing bird watching opportunities.

The Reservoir trails utilize a section of the historical Miami & Erie Canal along Canal Road and connect to the Buckeye trail which, in turn, connects Defiance to the scenic 7-state North Country Trail.

## THOREAU WILDLIFE RESERVE, 10485 HALLER ROAD, BRUNERSBURG, OHIO

Thoreau Wildlife Reserve is now open to the public for the enjoyment of nature and its 4 nature trails that highlight meadows, woodlands, wetlands, and old growth forest. The Reserve covers approximately 250 acres with 2 miles of trails.

Thoreau Wildlife Reserve is working with the Audubon Sanctuary Program to encourage blue birds, wood ducks, and mallard ducks to nest on the property. Numerous signs can be found along the trails with reference to the thoughts of H.D. Thoreau who inspired the Reserve.

## OXBOW LAKE AND WILDLIFE AREA, 9 SCHICK ROAD, DEFIANCE, OHIO

Oxbow Lake lies 10 miles northwest of the City of Defiance. Fish of interest for anglers include largemouth bass, bluegill, green sunfish, and bullhead.

The Oxbow Lake Wildlife Area is a 416-acre area situated in the glaciated lake plain of Ohio and has slightly rolling topography. Some steep land lies adjacent to Mud Creek, which bisects the area. Large cottonwoods and sycamores are found along Mud Creek. The upland woods consist mostly of oaks and hickories. Migrating shorebirds and songbirds can be observed utilizing the lake edges and woodlots during spring and fall. Other types of wildlife such as tree swallows and great blue herons make Oxbow Lake their home territory for the summer months.

## INDEPENDENCE DAM STATE PARK, 27722 STATE ROUTE 424, DEFIANCE, OHIO

Independence Dam State Park covers 591 acres situated along the banks of the beautiful Maumee River. This park is located approximately 3 miles east of Defiance and offers recreational opportunities including boating access, hiking trails, camping, fishing, scenic drives, and picnic areas. Recently playground equipment has been installed and kayak trials are available. A hiking trail, once the towpath for the Miami/Wabash/Erie Canal, meanders between the old canal and the river for 3 miles ending in Florida, Ohio. This trail offers imaginative trips into the colorful past of Ohio's canal era.

## BUCKEYE TRAIL, DEFIANCE COUNTY SECTION

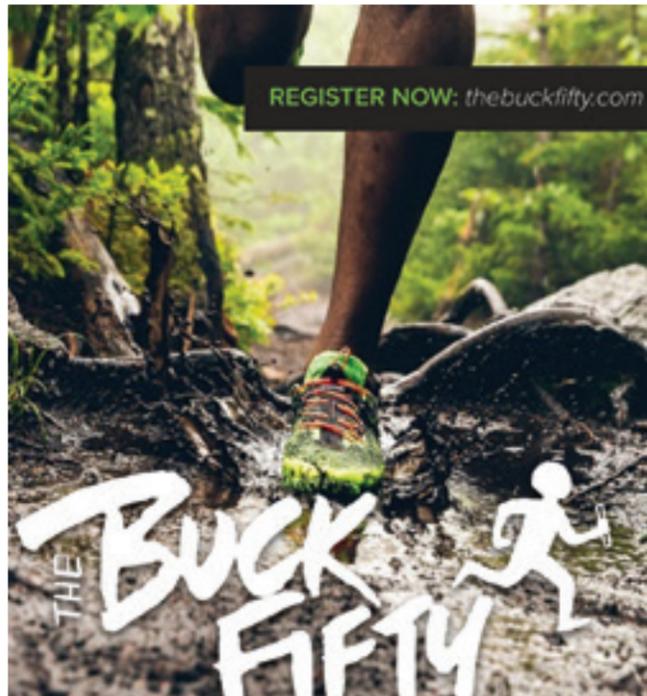
The Buckeye Trail is a 1,444-mile hiking and long-distance trail that loops around the state of Ohio. In 2017, the Buckeye Trail Association named the City of Defiance an official Buckeye Trail Town. The path of the Buckeye Trail enters the southwest area of Defiance County and travels on-road through county roads until it enters the City of Defiance. This section moves from on-road to sidewalk passing tree-lined streets of downtown Defiance and beautiful historic homes of yesteryear. On the north side of the downtown, the path travels past a Johnny Appleseed tribute and parallel to the Maumee River and continues on the newly constructed enhanced shoulder to Independence Dam State Park and past old canal locks until the path reaches the Henry County Line. Be sure to Follow the Blue Blazes.

## NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL, DEFIANCE COUNTY SECTION

Defiance is honored to be one section on the longest trail in the National Trails System for the US. The North Country Scenic Trail stretches 4,600 miles across 8 different states traveling from North Dakota to Vermont. The path follows the same as the Buckeye Trail through Defiance County.

Here in Defiance County, we have seen quite the increased interest in hiking, biking, nature watching, and exploring the outdoors. We all look forward to Spring and enjoying all that Defiance County has to offer. We hope you come check it out for yourself! More information on all of our trails can be found at [www.visitdefianceohio.com](http://www.visitdefianceohio.com).

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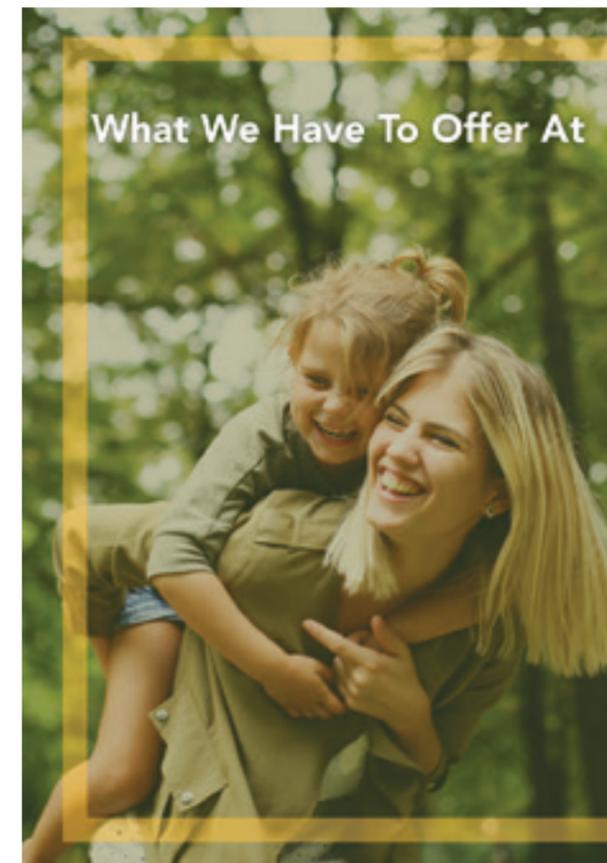


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In today's society, it is typical to go to the doctor after a problem has already developed. Based on the issue, the doctor usually prescribes a medicine to treat the symptom and we are sent on our way. But what if we could prevent these problems in the first place? Taking care of our bodies with functional and integrative approaches will allow us to look, feel, and live better; and prevent and protect our bodies from a lot of issues from ever occurring.

We need more health professionals who are willing to look at the body as a whole, functional unit, and support a holistic view on health. For example, in the case of muscles, all soft tissue is connected through layers of fascia called myofascial slings. A problem in the knee or shoulder can very well lead to pain in the back. Go even deeper with this concept, and it is easy to see how physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually connected we are. Social, spiritual, or mental stress can manifest as symptoms such as chronic pain or insomnia and vice versa.



doctor after a problem has already developed. a medicine to treat the symptom and we are sent these problems in the first place? Taking care of approaches will allow us to look, feel, and live from a lot of issues from ever occurring. who are willing to look at the body as a whole, view on health. For example, in the case through layers of fascia called myofascial can very well lead to pain in the back. Go easy to see how physically, psychologically, are. Social, spiritual, or mental stress can pain or insomnia and vice versa.

# HEALTH *by* Nature

– A Shift in the Wellness Paradigm –

By Cierra Bloom, LAT, ATC, MS, CES

It's easy to look at someone with back pain, not knowing the cause of it, and inject them with a steroid. In the case of anxiety and depression, most physicians are quick to prescribe an anti-anxiety or antidepressant medication. This is a western or "reductionist" approach to health. However, in eastern medicine, the patient would more than likely be prescribed meditation, acupuncture, or methods for enhancing their diet or exercise routine to combat these physical and mental symptoms.

Historically, eastern medicine is typically very holistic in nature. Even in the west, the Native Americans believe that healing comes from being in harmony with the earth. Although these concepts have been lost in modern medicine, I think it is time to go back to these natural ways of viewing our health. Between heart disease due to lack of exercise and fast-food diets, lung conditions from smoke and pollution, and cancer from many different causes, these can often be prevented by making lifestyle changes. The way humans have evolved, we have lost touch with ourselves and with nature and the important connection the two have with each other, by being caught up in the bustle of life as we know it.

How can we implement these historical philosophies into our modern-day wellness? Between the pandemic, rioting, and pollution, our earth and country are being destroyed through unrest, unwellness, and uncertainty. Our bodies are becoming weakened from the resulting stress of the virus, the quarantine, and from civil turmoil. From essential oils and flower essences, to herbal medicine and raw organic diets, there are many ways to become more harmonized with the earth's energy. Then there are things like mindfulness training, breathwork, and exploring nature that connects us to ourselves.

One technique that I strongly believe encompasses both aspects of this philosophy is grounding, or earthing. This is when we walk barefoot or sit with our bare skin touching the natural earth (grass, sand, dirt), or a conductive mat. The earth, and everything that inhabits it, is made up of energy and specific vibrational frequencies. This direct contact with the ground, allows for a transfer of the earth's energy to the energy in our bodies, thus harmonizing us with the earth's vibrational frequency (Menigoz, Latz, Ely, Kamei, Melvin, & Sinatra, 2020).

Grounding has been found to have many benefits for various conditions and illnesses. It is now clear that inflammation is the main contributor to most of today's health and pain disorders. The transfer of energy from the earth to our bodies allows negatively charged ions to neutralize the free radicals that cause inflammation. There are various studies showing potential benefits of grounding on cardiovascular, respiratory, and nervous system function, as well as decreasing anxiety, depression, and pain (Menigoz, et al, 2020). Also, with the threat of Covid-19 still upon us, research is showing that grounding may be helpful in reducing the susceptibility of coronavirus as it can increase the pH of our respiratory tract, not allowing bacteria or viruses to survive (Sokal, Sokal, Chevalier, Kieronka, & Sokal, 2020).

Take this one step further, and think about meditation while grounding in nature. Meditation is a technique that connects the mind and the body through mindfulness. By practicing meditation, one can become more aware of thoughts and feelings and become more equipped to control them. By increasing our mindfulness, meditation has been shown to reduce depression and anxiety, improve self-awareness, self-control, and relationships, help with focus and memory, decrease pain and blood pressure, and enhance sleep (Rose, Zell, & Strickhouser, 2020). If we take these positive effects from meditation and implement it while harmonizing our energy with the earth, the results would be profound.

Try getting outside for 15 minutes a day, barefoot or seated in the grass if possible. Try to avoid high traffic areas, like sidewalks and roads, and go on a trail or walking path where there are a lot of plants and trees. If it is cold or not possible for you to get outside, there are grounding mats, bands, and patches that you can purchase. Meditation can be done anywhere at any time.

Next time you are starting to feel overwhelmed, try closing your eyes and sitting still in a quiet space for just 5 minutes and see how you feel. The only way we can transform the world is by transforming ourselves. The question is not why should you, but why wouldn't you?



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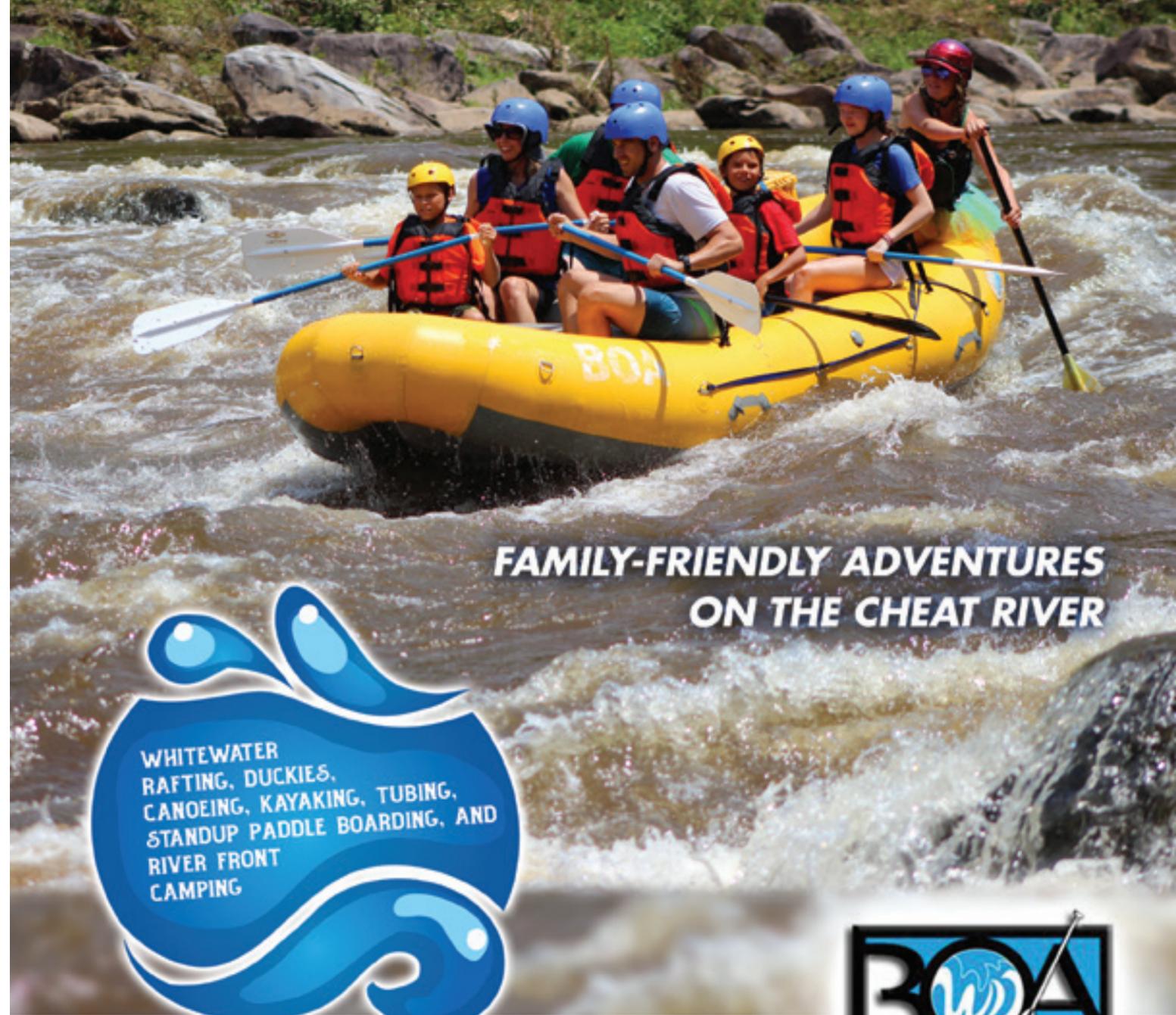
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# AN UNEXPECTED SURPRISE

By Lori Pingle

This year, we can all use a little more time spent outside, staying active and, most importantly, having fun. Finding new and exciting ways to adventure together (safely) with family or friends has never been more essential, or more challenging to coordinate.

Luckily, ZipZone Outdoor Adventures, located right in the heart of Columbus, almost seems as though it was made for these strange times we're all living through. You'll find an oasis of outdoor fun with three distinct adventure attractions to choose from, surprisingly tucked just off of busy State Route 23 at Camp Mary Orton.

One thing we really love about ZipZone is that it is often an unexpected surprise for first time visitors. We're right in Columbus, just 15 minutes north of downtown, but we offer a true nature escape. You can't beat the convenience or, we think, the experience. It really is rare and special.

Locally owned and operated by my husband, Jerrod, and me, the ZipZone concept came from a desire to bring ziplining to Columbus, as both of us share an over 20-year career in the aerial adventure industry. This year, especially, we're thankful to have brought this kind of outdoor adventure to our city for our friends and our neighbors to enjoy along with us.

ZipZone's zip line tours were the first attraction to open, in 2012. Choose this adventure if you want to enjoy a unique experience, and if you're ready for a thrill. Zip line tours are a fully guided experience that showcases over 20 acres of the natural beauty of Columbus. Soaring through the treetops from platform to platform, you'll fly across zip lines and cross suspension-style sky bridges. Your guides will take care of all safety aspects of the tour, from clipping into the zip lines to operating the braking system, leaving you to simply enjoy and have fun.

Zip line tours are popular with both first time zipliners and experienced adventurers alike. There's nothing quite like seeing the forest from a bird's eye view; beautiful any time of year, but perhaps no more alive feeling than during the springtime. With summer comes lush, dense greenery, and fall is just beautiful out here. Each season has its own perks. You really can't go wrong.

In the years since opening, our desire to create a truly top-of-the-line adventure destination has continued to evolve. In 2017, the Adventure Park and Kids Park were added to ZipZone's attraction offerings.

With five courses and over 60 different challenge elements, ZipZone's Adventure Park is the largest forest climbing park in Central Ohio. This "choose your own adventure," self-guided experience begins at the main treehouse platform where five different courses branch off and up into the treetops. Zip lines, which are of course a highlight, are incorporated on courses within the Adventure Park. Similar to ski slopes, each course is color coded to indicate the level of difficulty. Best of all, you can move at your own pace and within your own comfort zone during your two-hour climbing session.

When we say there is a course for everyone, we really mean it. Two child-friendly courses, the Kids Park, provide a one to two-hour experience made especially for kids ages 4 to 7 years. This park is a few feet off the ground and is the perfect introduction for the youngest adventurers. Little kids get to wear a harness just like big kids and adults, and receive instruction from trained staff prior to entering the course. A sense of accomplishment and a whole lot of joy are inherent to the Kids Park experience.

When it comes to having fun together, we're all accustomed to the normal challenge of finding something everyone can agree on. It's never an easy task. But these days, we also have the added complexity of needing options that allow for adherence to recommended safety guidelines. This is precisely what makes ZipZone such a great choice for you, your family and friends, both now and in the future.

Safety is, and will always be, top of mind at ZipZone. While it may be a while yet until things are back to normal, the trees at ZipZone are ready to welcome you with open arms (er... branches), providing endless adventure, countless memories, lots of fresh air, and plenty of space for social distancing.

For more information about ZipZone Outdoor Adventures, and to book your Zip Line, Adventure Park, or Kids Park tickets, visit [zipzonetours.com](http://zipzonetours.com) or call 614-847-9477.

Photos courtesy of Jerrod Pingle and Natasha Faye



# SUCCESS FOR A NEW NUTRITION PLAN

By Danielle Wirick, MS, CSCS, FMSC

Maybe you don't know. One of the biggest pitfalls people encounter when they start a new nutrition plan is called the "I know" syndrome. Let's say you're teaching a beginner how to cook and they keep turning the heat up and burning the food. They keep saying they're not a good cook and you suggest that they turn down the heat. What do they say? "I know, I know."

An obese woman needs to lose weight and her doctor tells her she needs to exercise more and eat less. She says, "I know, I know." Maybe they've heard this stuff before, but the truth is, they don't really know until they've done it successfully and then repeated it.

They might not even know something well enough until they've done it, repeated it and taught it to others. "I know, I know" can be a mental shortcut that enables us to turn off our brains, stop thinking about the application of information and avoid action. So, if you've got room for improvement, maybe you don't know--not yet anyway. If you really knew, you'd be doing it.

Avoid the problem of not matching up your behaviors and goals. For example, a guy wants to lose 100 pounds. He joins the gym and exercises twice a week, but completely ignores proper eating habits. His goal is a massive, life-changing weight loss. His behaviors are small, lifestyle changes. Early on a trainer will be asking goals and setting behaviors to match goals that are reasonable.

Understand that you'll see peaks and valleys. You can't go 90 miles an hour forever. There should be more peaks than valleys, but those valleys will come. And if you accept them, it's much easier to start back up the hill.

Our world is a processed-food world. It's tough to go back to real food. Plan to start small and slow; it's the only way to go. Once you master the basics, it will be much easier to tweak and individualize your lifestyle.

If you have specific goals, measure them. Changing our bodies and our health can take some time. And when we're really pressuring ourselves to see these changes quickly, we can get impatient. Taking some measurements will help when the mirror doesn't cooperate.

Early on you'll see good progress over a reasonable amount of time. You may even see weekly progress. However, weekly progress doesn't go on indefinitely. A trainer will help you to understand what is reasonable and when you should change up your activities.

Don't get caught up in the paradox of numbers. Numbers aren't everything. People too often judge their happiness based on their numbers. They're happy if they lose a pound on the scale in a given day or week, and they're sad if they don't. Remember that this isn't just a numbers game. You're doing this to improve your health, longevity, performance, energy level and a number of other variables.

Also, keep in mind that sometimes the numbers lie. Have too much sodium and you'll gain a pound. Dehydrate yourself and you'll lose a pound. Remember, it's only a number.

Expect reasonable progress. We all want to see progress, but don't get greedy. Every day trainers see clients who have lost 4 pounds in a month yet ask why they can't lose weight. Sometimes you have to do the math. If you lose 4 pounds a month, in 1 year you will have lost 48 pounds. Four pounds a month is the equivalent of leaving 10 bites of food on your plate each day and making no other changes.

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but if you see results quickly out of the starting gate, remember that it will be hard to maintain that indefinitely. As your body gets leaner, it gets harder to lose weight. You will eventually learn to outsmart your body's adaptation process.



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# PADDLE THE RIVER

By Moneen McBride



In 2021 many of us will be still looking for ways to get together safely with friends and family for a little fun. Well, you don't need to look any further than northeastern Ohio for great urban kayaking. Plan a staycation in northeast Ohio and paddle the Cuyahoga River or Mahoning River this summer. It's as easy as visiting the website PaddleTheRiver.com, booking your trip, and showing up ready to paddle. The staff will handle the rest.

My husband, Brad McBride, sparked the idea of starting a kayak rental business in Cuyahoga Falls in 2015. This endeavor was fitting since Brad grew up living on the Cuyahoga River, we exchanged our wedding vows along the river, and subsequently purchased our first home on the river. We are more than business owners; we are a family of river advocates and community leaders.

Since the inception of Paddle the River in 2015, our mission has been to spread the joy of our local rivers and the great outdoors to everyone. We have expanded over the last six years from the middle section of the Cuyahoga River (Burning River Adventures), to the upper Mahoning River (Mahoning River Adventures), and now in 2021 to the Merriam Valley of the Cuyahoga River (Cuyahoga Valley Adventures).

All locations provide knowledgeable staff, well-maintained equipment and Jackson Kayaks to enjoy paddling down the river. The individual areas offer their own unique experience with an abundance of wildlife ranging from fish, birds, ducks, blue herons, beavers, deer, muskrat, river otters, and bald eagles, just to name a few.

Burning River Adventures, on the middle section of the Cuyahoga River, was founded in 2015 after the dams on the Cuyahoga River were removed allowing the water to become a free-flowing river (minus two remaining dams at that time). On this section of the river, there are three different trip offerings: Short Trip (2 miles), Middle Trip (4.5 miles) and Long Trip (6.5 miles). The short trip is a perfect flat-water adventure for beginners, families with smaller children or if you're limited on time. The middle and long trips allow you to paddle through two Class I rapids that are easy to navigate, but add a little thrill to your paddle. All of these trips meet at the boat launch in Water Works Park located at 2025 Munroe Falls Avenue in Cuyahoga Falls.

Located on the upper section of the Mahoning River, Mahoning River Adventures was founded in 2018 in partnership with the Trumbull County Metro Parks to bring kayaking back to the community. The Mahoning River is a delightful, easy paddle for all skill levels. They currently have two trip offerings: Short Trip (3.66 miles) and Long Trip (11 miles). These excursions traverse the Mahoning River from the Newton Falls 1st Street Dam to the Leavittsburg Dam. Mahoning River trips meet at Canoe City Metro Park at 75 North Leavitt Road NW, Leavittsburg.

Our newest adventure location, Cuyahoga Valley Adventures, will open on Memorial Day, 2021. Located on the Merriam Valley section of the Cuyahoga River, it brings the paddling opportunity to an area that is already filled with recreational facilities. At opening, their only trip will be seven miles long. After further development of river access is created, more trips will be offered.

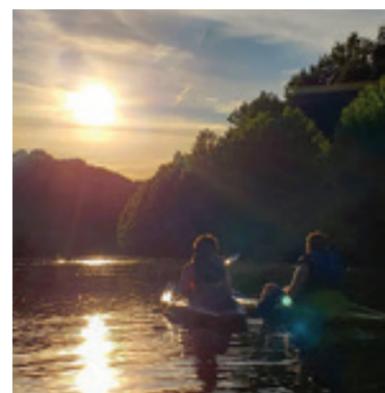
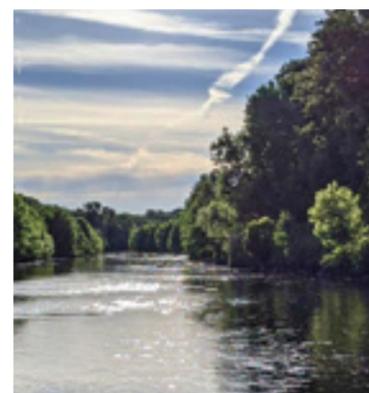
Cuyahoga Valley Adventures trips will meet at 1590 Akron Peninsula Road in Akron. This section of the Cuyahoga River is full of bends and curves which provide a different paddling experience, rocky beaches to stop for stretching your legs, and plentiful wildlife!

Burning River Adventures and Mahoning River Adventures offer Kayaking and Yoga Adventure trips which include some yoga prior to paddling and additional yoga when returning to land. There is also a Guided Beginner Rapids trip which runs through some Class II rapids. Skills required for this trip will depend on water depth at the time.

All trips are scheduled online, with rental agreements and waivers available for completion prior to arrival. Paddlers are instructed to arrive at their specific meeting place 30 minutes prior to departure time. Each paddler is provided a boat, life jacket, and paddle, as well as transportation to their launch area. Paddlers and their belongings will more than likely get wet, so it is advisable to prepare in advance for that. In addition, all rental equipment is completely sanitized after use and paddlers are requested to remain socially distant from others, even on the water.

Upon arrival at your specific location, you will check in and attend a short, informational review about how to paddle and what to expect on the river, as well as information regarding your specific takeout area. You will then board a shuttle vehicle and head to the start area for your paddle. As a part of current COVID-19 guidelines, shuttle vehicles are limited to ten passengers per trip.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to kayak the Cuyahoga River and Mahoning River this Summer. You will become addicted to paddling once you do!



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1. Inspect your engine. You want to make sure your engine is in good shape and ready for boating season. Refer to your engine's owner's manual and check the spark plugs on your boat. If there's any rust present, odds are it'll be in your engine. You also want to be sure to change the fuel filter, inspect the fuel line for cracks, and change the oil. If it has been more than three years since you had a water pump replaced, it would be a great idea to get it done now before the season starts.

2. Give your battery some love and care. A dead battery is a common problem all boaters face. That said, you want to make sure yours is working properly and that it's fully charged before taking your pontoon anywhere. Consider taking your boat to the marina to check the status of your battery. If you can charge your battery yourself, it's recommended to let it charge overnight.

3. Check the hull for cracks. You want to inspect the hull of your pontoon for dents, cracks, or blisters when you take your boat out of storage. If you notice any cracks, make the necessary arrangements to have them repaired. Wash the dirt and grime that's built up during the winter months away. Wait for your boat to dry before waxing it.

4. Consider installing new gadgets. Once your boat is ready for the water, think about sprucing things up in your pontoon for the upcoming summer months. New boat accessories, lighting systems, or a grill can be a lot of fun. You can even think about investing in a new pontoon for the new season.

5. Make sure all your safety items work and are up to date. Take the time to make sure your lights, bilge pump and all your safety equipment are clean and up to date.

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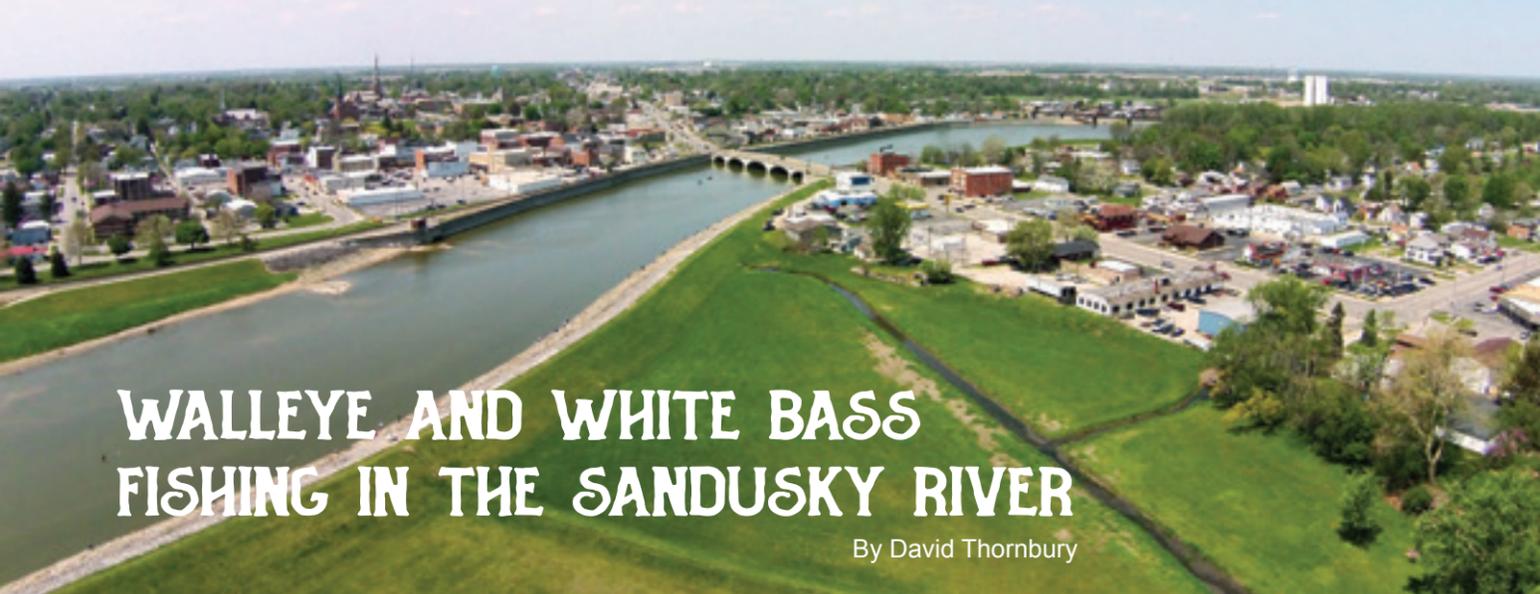
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# WALLEYE AND WHITE BASS FISHING IN THE SANDUSKY RIVER

By David Thornbury

Each year, a natural phenomenon takes place in the Sandusky River that has attracted generations of anglers who seek to experience the “Spring Run.” It begins in early March with walleye and lasts well into April. The white bass are second to arrive to the river and they tend to run from early April through mid-May.

Hundreds of thousands of these fish spawn in the river and begin their journey

The spring run is also known for producing some of the largest walleye taken from Ohio’s waterways each year. The best walleye and white bass fishing in Sandusky

downstream to Lake Erie.

During this 3-month period, the riverbanks are lined with fishermen from all across Ohio and the United States. Many of them return year after year, making fishing the Sandusky River an annual, generational event with their family and friends.

Fremont native Kameron Allicock has fished the Sandusky River for over 25 years, since he was a youngster. “I have family that comes from Pennsylvania and Florida each year to fish the river. It’s a long-standing family tradition. I’m in that river as often as I can be each spring.”

County can be found from public access areas near the downtown Fremont area.

The Black Swamp Conservancy is working to restore land along the river to a more natural habitat and recently converted a former golf course in Fremont to natural space with fishing access. Darr-Root State Fishing Access, located at the end of Walnut Street in Fremont, also opened in 2019 with a public boat launch, large parking area and frontage for fishing the Sandusky River.

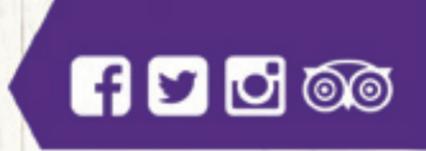
Located just a short walk from the downtown Fremont fishing area is a popular bait shop named Anglers Supplies. This locally owned and operated business has been in operation for 35 years, and Bernie and Tina Whitt have served a lot of fishermen over the years. For many, walleye and white bass fishing begins and ends with a stop at Anglers Supplies. Owner Bernie says, “I have seen some amazing fish come from that river and I try to snap pictures for the Anglers Supplies Facebook Page (@anglersupplies) to show what people are catching and to provide daily updates about fishing conditions.



Anglers Supplies, located at 319 Howland Street, sells fishing gear, bait, snacks and more. Everything you need to get out there to fish. Bernie also offers free fishing condition reports and his expert advice. “Fishing is in my blood,” says Bernie. “Prior to me running Anglers Supplies, my brother operated a carryout and bait shop next door to my current location.” Plan a fishing trip to Fremont, Ohio this

year and stop in to see Bernie, and maybe you and your river monster will be featured on the Anglers Supplies Facebook Page. Several years ago, the Sandusky County Convention Bureau introduced Angler Savings Cards. These plastic credit cards offer licensed fishermen discounts on select local hotels, restaurants, and businesses. The cards are available to both local anglers as well as those visiting from other areas and can be used with a valid fishing license. The cards will act as a measure for the economic impact that fishing has on our county. These cards are available at the Visitor’s Bureau, located at 712 North Street in Fremont, as well as at participating businesses. For more information about fishing, public access areas and/or promotions, visit the website [www.sanduskycounty.org](http://www.sanduskycounty.org).

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# A TRUE MOUNTAIN GEM

By Brian Sarfino

After a cold and snowy 2021 winter a lot of you have probably been thinking spring for a long time now. This certainly is the case for myself. The crisp fresh smells of spring and sound of song birds arriving from southern states has infiltrated my senses. Begin dreaming and planning now so that when the time comes for quality time off, you will be all set to visit a true mountain gem, Tucker County, West Virginia.

Located in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains, Tucker County finds itself one of the easier West Virginia mountain destinations to drive to. Only forty-five miles from Interstate 68, a funnel for I-70 drivers coming out of Ohio, are the towns of Thomas and Davis. You will be welcomed by these two small mountain towns, recognized as some of the finest small towns in West Virginia.

In a nut shell, Tucker County is paradise for anyone that loves the great outdoors and appreciates modern amenities that compliment any vacation destination. The big difference is our outdoors are the real deal. With tens of thousands of acres of public forest, abundant wildlife, and mountain tops that stretch up to 4,600 feet. Amenities do not lack either with abundant lodging options, a burgeoning art scene, dynamite restaurants, and award-winning breweries.

Perched upon the highest plateau east of the Mississippi River is the Dolly Sods Wilderness and Bear Rocks Nature Preserve. Hikers set out for multiple nights in the woods or rise early for one of West Virginia's most famed sunrise locations. If you are a photographer, Bear Rocks is where the sunrise is best seen. Otter Creek Wilderness is the second wilderness designated area finding itself within our county's border. These areas are extremely sensitive and demand leave no trace policies along with other regulations so the wildness stays a wilderness.

Blackwater Falls and Canaan Valley State Parks resonate as the best state parks in West Virginia, with Blackwater Falls consistently ranking number one. *Blue Ridge Outdoors* magazine found Blackwater Falls to be the favorite waterfall in the southeast according to reader polls. Canaan Valley State Park benefits from a recently renovated lodge, 18-hole golf course, and ski resort offering scenic chairlift rides in spring, summer, and fall. Both parks also offer cozy cabin rentals which are wildly popular among families and couples year-round.

The Monongahela National Forest is 900,000 acres of continuous forest with hiking trails, world class trout streams, and West Virginia's tallest peaks. In Canaan Valley are over 15,000 acres of protected lands under the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge. In 2020 a new headquarters and interpretive center were constructed and are open to the public. To say the least, Tucker County is full of opportunity for the outdoors men and women of all ages and abilities.



With the same awe our forests are known for, charming small towns dot the landscape and somehow live with only one stop light. The county of 7,000 packs a punch when it comes to hospitality and exceeding expectations. Parsons is the county seat located along the banks of the Shavers and Black Forks Rivers. Whitewater and canoe/kayak trips begin in early spring at Blackwater Outdoor Adventures. The Allegheny Highlands Rail Trail goes through Parsons on its way to Thomas and Elkins.

Davis and Thomas are the life of Tucker County's restaurant, arts, shopping, and live entertainment scenes. The two towns are only two miles apart and are proud to say you will not find any franchise stores here other than a grocery and general store. Thomas's front street is a historic brick clad town grown from the coal industry. This is where motivated, young artists arrived 20 years ago to eventually establish several contemporary art galleries. This influenced coffee houses, restaurants, and shops to now occupy every store front available, bringing with it palpable excitement and life.

Davis was a lumber town transformed into a recreation destination in the 1950's. Since then, restaurants, dining, and breweries had always been the town's strong suit, as well as the trail head for over 100 miles of hiking and biking trails. Now various shopping opportunities dot downtown, rounding out everything you could possibly need in a town of 650.

Where to stay for your spring excursion is as abundant as Tucker County's natural resources. For the simple minded, there are quality hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts available with more charm than you can shake a stick at. Small wooded cabins are the most sought-after form of lodging and yes, you are covered there too. What really separates Tucker County from the rest are mountain home rentals perfect for multi family vacations or family reunions.

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