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SUMMER 2023

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IN THIS ISSUE

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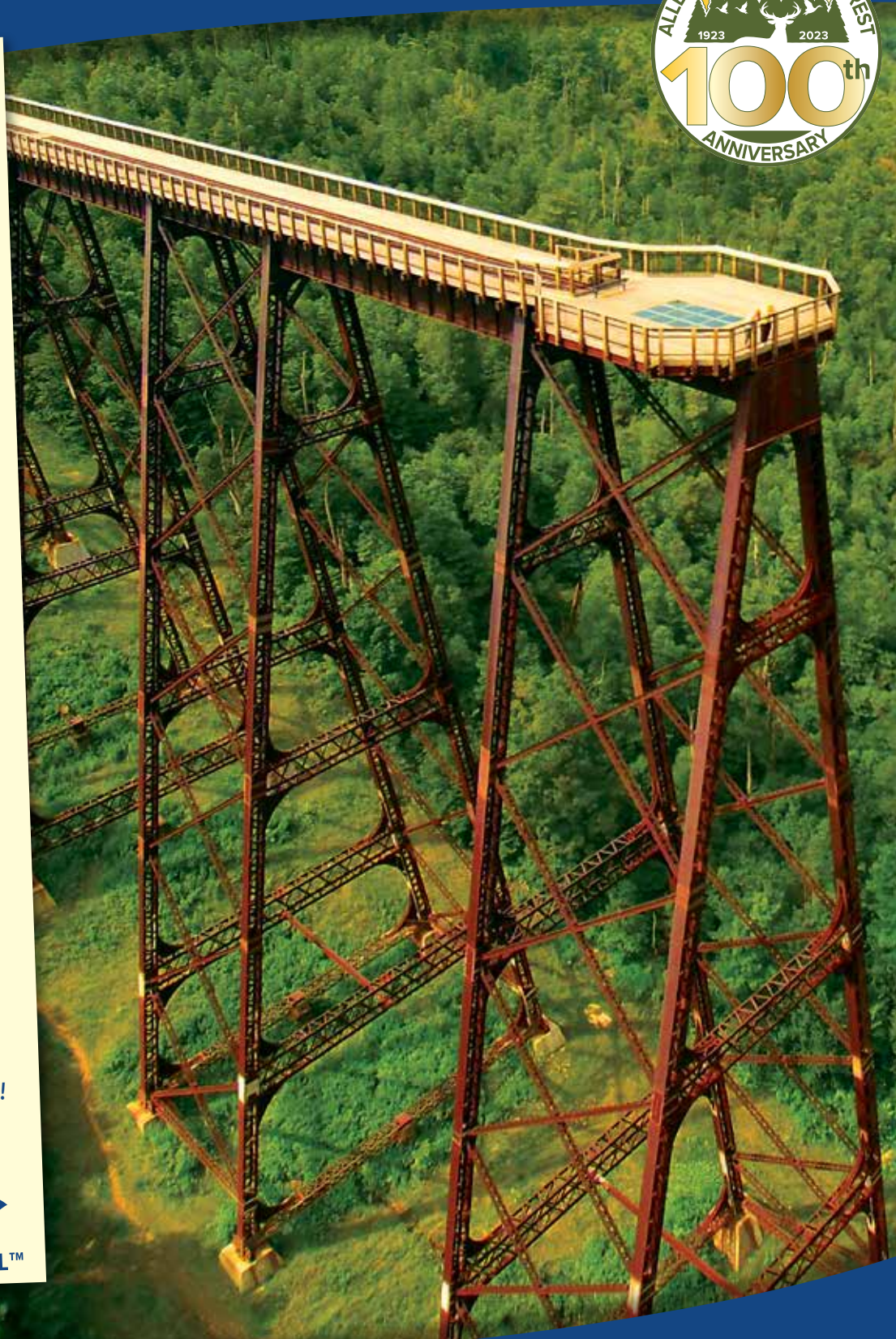
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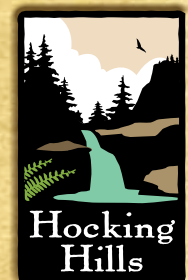
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# A Message from The Editor



This issue includes the article about my rim-to-rim hike through the Grand Canyon. I'm excited to share with you my most difficult adventure to date. You'll feel as though you are hiking right along with us. The sights and sounds of the Grand Canyon are something I will never forget and I hope it inspires everyone to see this great wonder.

For those of you who follow Compass Ohio on line, we recently introduced two new interesting platforms. Compass Experiences highlights locations we have visited in the past, as well as some we look forward to seeing in the future.

Compass Cuisine is all about food. Area restaurants will share favorite recipes and you'll learn about wineries, with information regarding tours and tastings. Be sure to check them out at our redesigned website, [CompassOhio.com](http://CompassOhio.com).

The warm summer sunshine is a welcome change from the gloomy clouds and rain we had in the spring. It's time to get outdoors and make your summer "Grand" with an adventure of your own. We have numerous suggestions for new locations and experiences, including websites to research fun and adventure.

Whether it's a favorite location or something new, close to home or a bit further away, enjoy the summer and be sure to have a grand adventure or two for lasting memories.

*Douglas M. Kish, M.A.*

Editor

Compass Ohio strives to be a thought leader in Fitness, Health and Recreation information to educate and inspire readers through print, digital, mobile, social media, strategic marketing campaigns and trade shows throughout Ohio and beyond.

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## CompassOhio

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# New and Exciting Experiences at Valley Overlook Campground

By Trish Mann

The senses awaken to the sweet chirpy sounds of warblers and finches broken by the occasional tapping of a woodpecker. Upon rising from the bed's soft, soothing comfort, gently pull back the canvas door to see the morning sunlight sifting through the canopy of leaves. The woods are awake and ready to help greet the day.

Valley Overlook Campground and Lodging, in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) area, is the former site of Camp Mueller, but that is where the similarities end. Valley Overlook is a family-run endeavor that takes camping and elevates it. The cabin rentals, conventional tent sites, and multiple glamping sites draw visitors from as far away as California and Washington State.

Glamping sites allow campers to enjoy the pleasures of home while being in nature. The tents include comfortable beds, furniture, electricity, and Wi-Fi. The glamping and conventional camping share modern private bathrooms, including showers, and toilets, with heating and air conditioning.

The property comprises 62 primarily wooded acres and is teeming with wildlife. The camp is within walking distance of the CVNP, full of history, scenic vistas, and miles of hiking and biking trails, providing abundant exceptional recreational opportunities.

For a challenging hike, check out Kendall Ledges. Leftover remnants from the ice age create stunning rock formations and unique climbing trails. For something easier to maneuver, the Beaver Marsh is an exceptional area of scenery and wildlife situated along a boardwalk.

The quaint village of Peninsula offers unique shops and dining options. Visit the farm market, and enjoy fishing and kayaking nearby. Then board the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad for a relaxing ride through the park system. Valley Overlook's proximity to the Brandywine and Boston Mills ski area makes the perfect winter getaway. Each cabin is climate controlled for year-round comfort, and the glamping tents are also available and include heated pads/blankets for your bed.

Camping has never been easier or more enjoyable in the CVNP, thanks to the addition of Valley Overlook Campground. For those who want adventure in their day, its location provides endless opportunities to get out and explore. But if all you want to do is relax and take in the beauty of the area from your site, simply find a comfortable seat and just breathe it all in. Nature is restorative. Not only will your senses thank you, but so will your mind, body, and soul. Visit [www.valleyoverlook.com](http://www.valleyoverlook.com) and plan your stay today.

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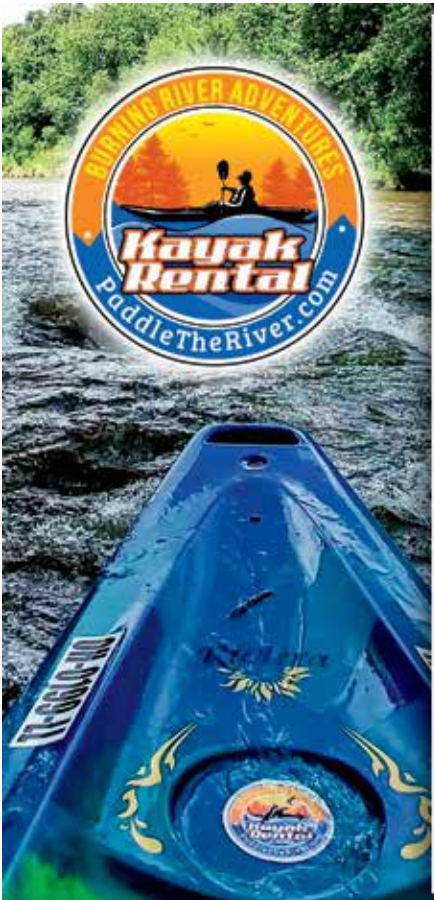


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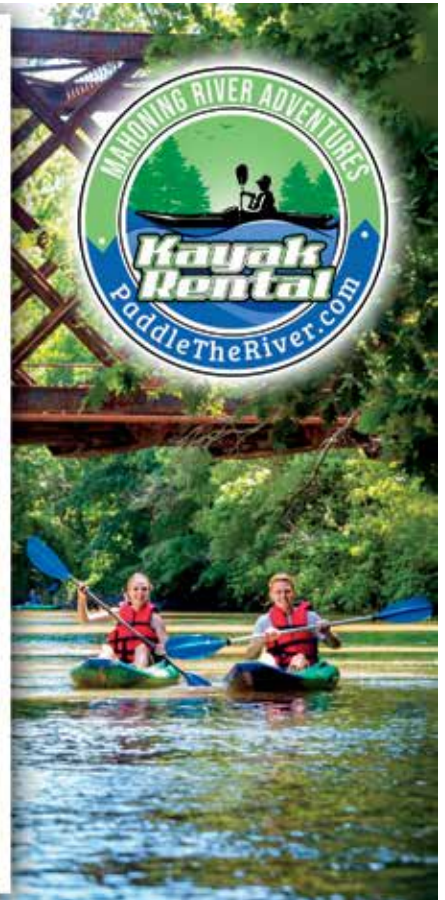
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# Adventures Abound in Ohio's Largest Playground

By Scott Hutchinson

Warren County, Ohio proves your next big getaway doesn't have to be far away. Conveniently cradled between Interstates 71 and 75 and just minutes from the hustle and bustle of both Cincinnati and Dayton sits a Southwest Ohio hotspot so popular among road trip travelers it's affectionately known as *Ohio's Largest Playground*.

Home to an impressive array of family (and wallet)-friendly offerings ranging from high-thrill highlights to romantic, relaxing retreats, Warren County boasts all of the makings of an easy and affordable, yet equally unforgettable spring or summer escape. So, where do you start on a Warren County weekend? Well, that all depends on what you're looking for.

If there's a coaster lover in your crew, you simply can't miss Kings Island. Routinely ranked as one of the most incredible (and affordable) amusement parks in the entire world, it's home to a seemingly endless collection of rides and attractions, including a trio of record-crushing wonders in *The Beast* (the world's longest wooden roller coaster), *Banshee* (the world's longest inverted roller coaster) and *Orion* (a 300-foot behemoth that's one of only 7 "giga" roller coasters worldwide).

Soak City, Kings Island's accompanying water park, is equally impressive, as its 50+ slides and attractions make it a staple of every steamy Ohio summer.

Located just minutes from the theme park, Great Wolf Lodge boasts an amazing indoor waterpark of its own, while Camp Cedar Outdoor Resort (one of Warren County's newest and most unique lodging offerings) treats guests to all the outdoorsy excitement of a classic family camping trip, but with the modern comforts of fully connected cottages and state-of-the-art amenities.

Speaking of the great outdoors, if it's fresh-air fun you're after, you'll find it in abundance around just about every corner in Ohio's Largest Playground. Kayak, canoe, raft or tube a scenic, peaceful stretch of the Little Miami River, one of the Midwest's premier recreational waterways.

Pedal your way along 70+ miles of quiet, serene wilderness and through charming small towns on the Little Miami Bike Trail, one of the longest paved trail networks in the United States. Soar high through the skies at Ozone Zipline Adventures, a heart-racing and educational treetop canopy zip tour, or soar to new heights and take in incredible panoramic views with the Gentle Breeze Hot Air Balloon Company. Birdwatch, boat, paddleboard or even forage for fossils at one of the Buckeye State's richest geological sites, Caesar Creek State Park.

Hikers and history buffs alike will want to be sure Fort Ancient Earthworks & Nature Preserve is on their Warren County agenda. Home to more than

2,000 years of Native American history (and mystery), it's an attraction so awe-inspiring it's on the fast track to join such world wonders as the Taj Mahal and the Egyptian pyramids on UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites.

Warren County's historical highlights don't stop there either. One of the county's northern-most communities, the City of Springboro, once served as a pivotal stop along the Underground Railroad, while the Golden Lamb in nearby Historic Downtown Lebanon is Ohio's oldest hotel and restaurant and has played host to 12 US Presidents, literary legends Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, and numerous other American icons.

Just on the edge of Warren County and nearby Dayton, Wright B. Flyer Inc. offers once-in-a-lifetime rides in a replica of the Model B Airplane Ohio natives Wilbur and Orville Wright first took flight in so many years ago. Meanwhile in Lebanon, the LM&M Railroad treats visitors to nostalgic, seasonally themed train rides through the scenic Ohio countryside.

Any avid shoppers or art aficionados in your group can spend an afternoon exploring the endless aisles of the

Village of Waynesville, Antique Capitol of the Midwest; then trek just a little way north for an evening performance of a Broadway classic at Springboro's La Comedia, one of the largest remaining professional dinner theaters in the nation.

Sports fans of all sorts will find themselves just a matter of minutes from Cincinnati Reds, Bengals and FC Cincinnati games and, if visiting in August, can even catch the Western & Southern Open, one of the world's most prestigious and fan-friendly professional tennis tournaments.

Of course, no vacation could ever be complete without a sampling of your destination's local eats. Featuring more than 70 locally-owned restaurants serving everything from All-American classics to organic, farm-to-table fare, Warren County's dining scene is bursting with delicious variety.

Craft brew connoisseurs can explore 13 (and counting) unique local breweries and wineries, including Valley Vineyards (the second largest vineyard in Ohio), which even offers romantic, relaxing grill-your-own steak nights on its gorgeous, grape-laden grounds.

No matter where your Warren County travels take you, you're sure to find unforgettable fun. Learn more and plan your getaway (not far away) today at [OhioLargestPlayground.com](http://OhioLargestPlayground.com).



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# Fun Ways to Spend a Summer Day Around Streetsboro, Ohio

By Trish Mann



Northeast Ohio is bursting with attractions for the whole family. Whether venturing North, East, South, or West, you are always close to fun and entertainment in Streetsboro, Ohio. Centrally located, this family community offers visitors an opportunity to take in all the excellent sights and sounds of the area. But narrowing down which direction and what adventure interests you most is the hard part.

Streetsboro Family Days, held July 27-30, is a long-standing tradition in the area. This free four-day event draws crowds from near and far with live concerts, fireworks, a beer garden, and more. This event is an opportunity for individuals to gather and enjoy the hospitality and generosity the area is known for.

Pure Passions Farm is a popular new addition to the excitement around Streetsboro, located a few minutes down the road in Kent. Who can resist checking out a place with the motto, "Come for the Alpacas and stay for the sunsets." Owners Scott Sigga and Max have more in store than just interacting with the alpacas. They invite you onto their farm, where you can

Party with the Alpacas, Tour the Farm, or rent the facilities for a special event, plus much more.

If it's the sunset you are looking for, they offer an intimate evening for you and three guests to enjoy the alpacas while watching one of Northeast Ohio's stunning sunsets. Or perhaps the campfire package or yoga with goats and alpacas is appealing. There is something here for everyone. Check out their webpage at [purepassionsfarm.com](http://purepassionsfarm.com) for all the activities and details.

Grab your date, friends, or family, and head to TimberBeast Axe Throwing. Once you try it, you will wonder why you never did this. Axe throwing makes a fun first date and is rapidly growing in popularity, and best of all, it is a great stress reliever. Although it sounds dangerous, it isn't. The blade is designed to penetrate the wood with a strong impact but is not razor-sharp. There is little risk of cutting yourself if you respectfully handle the axe.

TimberBeast Axe Throwing offers lane rentals and seasonal leagues. According to Manager Stefan Karakis, you don't need to know how to axe throw.

"It's not about how hard you throw but how you throw." The staff is readily available for assistance, tips, and safety lessons. Anyone aged 11 and up can participate, making it a great family activity. A snack bar on the premises offers items such as paninis, hot dogs, and pretzels. However, save room for the Craft Milkshakes made with high-quality, Ohio-made ice cream. The combinations will blow your mind, and if the axe throwing isn't enough excitement, the shakes will have you coming back again and again.

Streetsboro City Park is also home to the Portage County Craft Beer Festival. What could be better than an ice-cold craft beer on a hot summer day? This fun event is sponsored by Leadership Portage County, a non-profit dedicated to growing leaders and inspiring positive change in Portage County. Celebrate Northeast Ohio's expanding craft beers from 12-6 on August 19, 2023. Tickets are required.

For more information on all the area offers, visit [www.streetsborovcb.com](http://www.streetsborovcb.com) and [compassohio.com/streetsboro-in-the-spring/](http://compassohio.com/streetsboro-in-the-spring/) for more ideas on where your fun begins.

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## APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6 8:35 ERI	7 7:00 ERI	8 8:00 ERI
9	10	11 8:25 @BOW	12 8:35 @BOW	13 8:35 @BOW	14 7:00 @BOW	15 8:35 @BOW
16 1:05 @BOW	17	18 8:35 HBG	19 8:35 HBG	20 8:35 HBG	21 7:00 HBG	22 8:00 HBG
23 2:05 HBG	24	25 11:05am @BNG	26 8:00 @BNG	27 8:00 @BNG	28 8:00 @BNG	29 1:00 @BNG
30 1:05 @BNG						

## MAY

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
2:05	1	2 8:35 POR	3 8:35 POR	4 8:35 POR	5 1:05 POR	6 8:00 POR
7 2:05 POR	8	9 8:00 @ALT	10 11:00am @ALT	11 8:00 @ALT	12 8:00 @ALT	13 4:00 @ALT
14 1:00 @ALT	15	16 8:35 @RIC	17 8:35 @RIC	18 8:35 @RIC	19 12:00 @RIC	20 8:00 @RIC
21 1:35 @RIC	22	23 11:05am BOW	24 8:35 BOW	25 6:35 BOW	26 7:00 BOW	27 7:00 BOW
28 8:35 BOW	29	30 8:35 HFD	31 8:35 HFD			

## JUNE

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1 8:35 HFD	2 7:00 HFD	3 1:00 HFD
4 2:05 HFD	5	6 8:00 @POR	7 8:00 @POR	8 11:00am @POR	9 8:00 @POR	10 1:00 @POR
11 1:00 @POR	12	13 8:35 @NH	14 8:35 @NH	15 8:35 @NH	16 7:00 @NH	17 7:00 @NH
18 1:35 @NH	19	20 8:35 BNG	21 8:35 BNG	22 8:35 BNG	23 7:00 BNG	24 7:00 BNG
25 2:05 BNG	26	27	28 8:35 @ERI	29 8:00 @ERI	30 8:35 @ERI	

## JULY

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1 8:00 @ERI
2 8:35 @ERI	3 9:00 @ERI	4 7:00 HBG	5 8:35 HBG	6 8:35 HBG	7 7:00 HBG	8 7:00 HBG
9 2:05 HBG	10	11	12	13	14 7:00 @BOW	15 8:35 @BOW
16 1:05 @BOW	17	18 12:00 RIC	19 8:35 RIC	20 8:35 RIC	21 7:00 RIC	22 7:00 RIC
23 2:05 RIC	24	25 8:00 @ERI	26 12:35 @ERI	27 8:00 @ERI	28 8:35 @ERI	29 8:00 @ERI
30 1:35 @ERI	31					

## AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1 12:05 SOM	2 8:35 SOM	3 8:35 SOM	4 7:00 SOM	5 7:00 SOM
6 7:05 SOM	7	8 8:30 @HBG	9 8:30 @HBG	10 8:30 @HBG	11 7:00 @HBG	12 8:00 @HBG
13 1:00 @HBG	14	15 8:35 ERI	16 8:35 ERI	17 8:35 ERI	18 7:00 ERI	19 7:00 ERI
20 2:05 ERI	21	22 8:00 @ALT	23 8:00 @ALT	24 8:00 @ALT	25 8:00 @ALT	26 8:00 @ALT
27 1:00 @ALT	28	29 8:35 BOW	30 8:35 BOW	31 8:35 BOW		

## SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1 7:00 BOW	2 7:00 BOW
3 8:00 BOW	4	5 8:05 @RIC	6 8:05 @RIC	7 8:05 @RIC	8 8:05 @RIC	9 8:05 @RIC
10 1:35 @RIC	11	12 8:35 ALT	13 8:35 ALT	14 8:35 ALT	15 1:00 ALT	16 7:00 ALT
17 8:05 ALT	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

\* ALL GAME TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

HOME	AWAY
AKR	AKRON RUBBERDUCKS
ALT	ALTONA CURVE
BOW	BOWIE BAYSOX
ERI	ERIE SEAWOLVES
HBG	HARRISBURG SENATORS
RIC	RICHMOND FLYING SQUIRRELS

BNG	BINGHAMTON RUMBLE PONIES
HFD	HARTFORD YARD GOATS
NH	NEW HAMPSHIRE FISHER CATS
POR	PORTLAND SEADOGS
REA	READING FIGHTIN' PHILS
SOM	SOMERSET PATRIOTS

HOME	AWAY	FIRE WORKS
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# Visit Kelleys Island

By Cody Carson



Ready for a **Shores & Islands Ohio** getaway? Jump on the next ferry or charter flight to Kelleys Island, the largest of Ohio's Lake Erie Islands. This island includes 2,800 acres of state parks, nature preserves and a cozy downtown to unwind with local food, drinks, and shopping.

Ferry services offered by Jet Express, Kelleys Island Ferry Boat Line, and the Goodtime Lake Erie Cruises depart from the mainland on a daily schedule during their open season. You can also jump on

a charter flight offered by Griffing Flying Service or Island Air Taxi to Kelleys Island Airport for your stay. Rent a bike or golf cart to quickly hop around the island at Caddy Shack Square or Portside Marina, among other rental spots. You can also bring your own bike on the ferries for a small fee.

Experience all that nature has to offer at one of Kelleys Islands' many natural areas. Kelleys Island State Park offers great Lake Erie views, easy access to the shoreline, and scenic overnight



accommodations. Kelleys Island State Park adjoins the North Shore Alvar State Nature Preserve with the North Pond State Nature Preserve. The North Shore Alvar Nature Preserve boasts unique natural features like barren limestone and dolomite. The North Shore Loop is also a great place to hike or bike within the North Shore Alvar Nature Preserve. The North Pond Nature Preserve is the perfect place for birding with hundreds of different species of migrating songbirds, and dozens of waterfowl species resting here before winging it across the lake.

For those looking to stay a few days in nature, Kelleys Island State Park offers 129 shaded campsites, as well as group, rent-a-camp sites, yurts, and pet sites. Some sites include electric hookups and several main shower houses are available throughout the park.

Glacial Grooves Geological Preserve is the most famous glacial groove occurrence in the world based on the size and accessibility of the feature. Inscription Rock shows Indigenous symbols carved in rock on the south shore of the island, the feature was rediscovered partly buried in the shoreline in 1833. The East Quarry is one of the most popular fishing locations on the island, hosting abundant aquatic and plant life at Horseshoe Lake. The East Quarry Trails are also the best place on Kelleys Island



Kelleys Island State Park Campground

to go fossil hunting, and welcome both hikers and bikers on the trails.

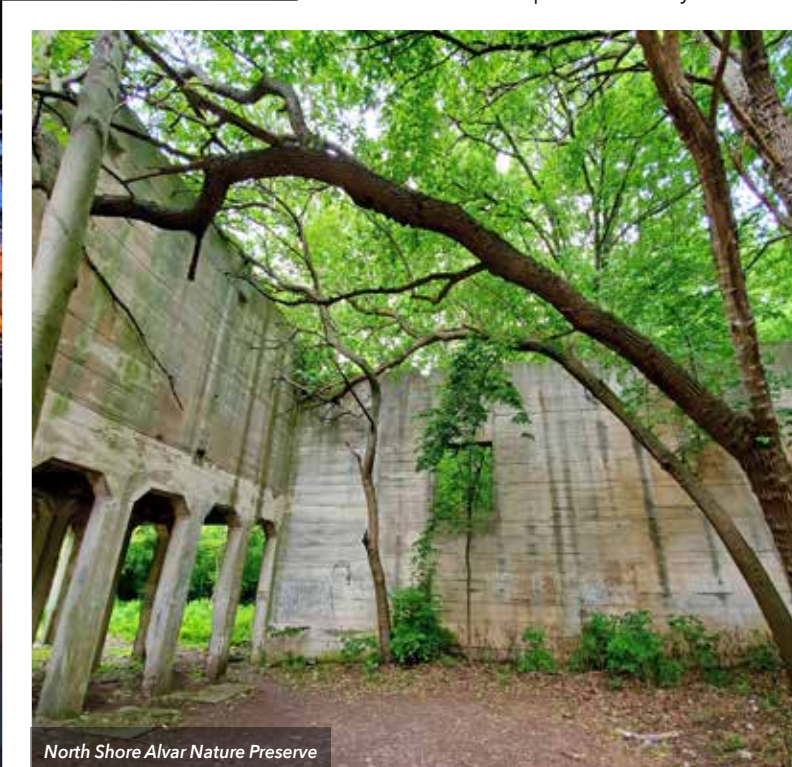
Need to cool off? Kelleys Island Kayak Rental located at Kelleys Island State Park offers kayak and standup paddle board rental during the summer months. Put your kayak or SUP in right at the beach! Make sure you wear your life vest when you explore the Kelleys Island Water Trail, a 12-mile water trail across points at Kelleys Island State Park, North Pond State Nature Preserve, Scheele Preserve, Woodford Rd. Access, and Inspection Rock Petroglyphs.

Looking to find your next catch on the island? Fishing is allowed at Kelleys Island State Park, make sure you have a valid Ohio fishing license before dropping a line for one of the many species of fish including walleye, bass, perch and many others. Bait and tackle are available at several locations, including Uncle Dik's, Crafts Lakeview Lane, and Portside Marina.

Kelleys Island is home to several fantastic wineries where you can enjoy some fine wine and take in the natural beauty of the island. Crooked Tree Vineyard is a three-acre working vineyard on the island with a small tasting room serving wines made on site. The Kelley's Island Wine Co. is the place to have a friendly competition while you enjoy up to seven island wines and small local dishes made in house. Toss a game of cornhole, bocce or horseshoes while you sample some of the islands finest local fare.

The Monarch Winery specializes in fruit wine and wine slushies, also offering an array of wine-related gifts, souvenirs, and snacks as well as a beautiful wine garden to explore. Monarch also hosts live musicians throughout the summer months.

No matter your age or familiarity, Kelleys Island promises fun for all to enjoy. Learn more about exciting events and all other happenings at [SHORESandISLANDS.com](http://SHORESandISLANDS.com).



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# RIVER EXPEDITIONS OFFERS THRILL SEEKING ADVENTURES

**By Candy S. Collins**

Get ready for the biggest adrenaline rush of the season. River Expeditions in West Virginia has some of the most beautiful and challenging white river rafting, and The Gauley River is recognized as one of the top rivers by paddlers.

The outfit offers various white water rafting trips and vacations suitable for multiple ages and abilities within America's newest National Park, New River Gorge National Park & Preserve. Whether you are looking for an action-packed rafting trip or a more relaxed scenic float trip, River Expeditions has you covered.

"River Expeditions continues to offer inflation-busting getaways, so travelers get more for their vacation dollar," stated Heather Johnson, co-owner. "We have incredible mid-week deals on rafting and zipline tours. Plus, you can get the fourth night of lodging free. While some outfitters have raised their rates, we have stabilized ours to mitigate rising costs."

If you prefer land over water, check out their ATV tours, rock climbing, horseback riding, mountain biking, catwalk tours, hiking, ziplining, and more.

Staying on-site has its advantages, as you are conveniently located to leave for early-morning excursions. Overnight guests can access the Fire Creek Lodge & Conference Center with complimentary Wi-Fi, breakfast each morning, and exclusive use of the outdoor pool and hot tub (remember, the fourth night is FREE).

River Expeditions is known for its events and specials. Kids ages 6-11 raft for free with a paying adult, raft and zipline for a special price, and on specific days during the week, you buy one, get one half price.

You won't want to miss the biggest summer bash, the Totally Awesome 80s Party. It takes place on the first Saturday in August, with guests and staff throwing back to the decade of big hair and hair bands. Dance to your favorite 80's music at The Red Dog River Saloon & Grill and compete for prizes, including best costume, best dancer, and classic 80's trivia. The package includes rafting, a BBQ cookout, and a daily lite breakfast.

Enjoy other festivities such as a Halloween party, 2023 Bridge Day weekend blowout, and Celebrate West Virginia's Birthday, to name a few.

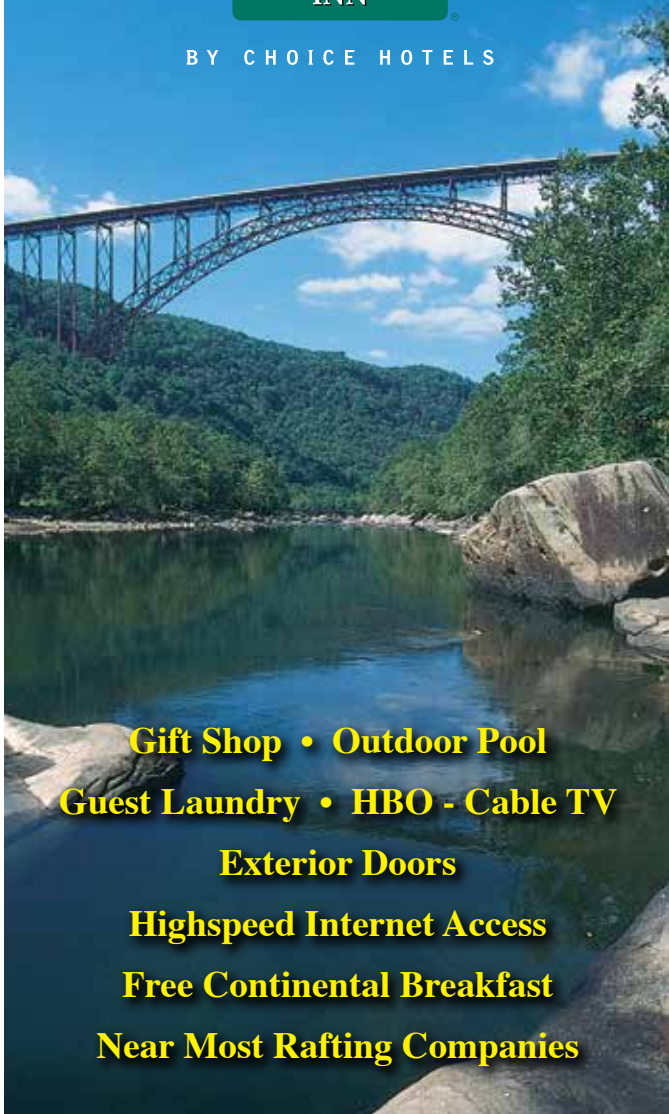
For more information on River Expeditions and lodging, visit [www.raftinginfo.com](http://www.raftinginfo.com).



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# MOHICAN ADVENTURES

**By Candy S. Collins, BS**

Summer is about camping under the stars, having adventures on and off the water, all while making memories to last a lifetime. At Mohican Adventures in Loudonville, Ohio, you will have an extraordinary vacation with friends and family.

Mohican Adventures offers river trips, an aerial adventure park, mini golf, go-karts, and a full-service campground with cabin rentals.

"Lots of options for fun. I've been here many times," said Mohican Adventures guest Tristin. "It's a great place for the whole family or an adult weekend."

Aerial Adventure Park gives guests a challenge. There are six courses varying by difficulty. Select from one of the two green courses, which are easier obstacles at 12 feet above the ground.



The two blue courses offer a higher level of height and adventure. The red course is considered "advanced" in challenge, offering an obstacle course for the toughest athletes. If you are looking for an adrenaline rush, the black course is for you. The highest course, 42 feet above the ground, offers the greatest difficulty and thrill. The only way down is a quick jump back down to the ground.

The Fun Center offers a chance for competition between family members or friends. See if you can get the hole-in-one at the 18-hole mini golf course. Or zoom around the go-kart tracks to see who can finish first.

Looking for a little water adventure? Mohican Adventures offers two river trips. Take a day to leisurely float on a tube. Feel your stress drift away from the everyday hustle and bustle as you take in the sounds and sights of nature. Board a canoe or kayak and start a seven-mile adventure into the beautiful Mohican scenery. The river is class 1 (easy) in ideal conditions and takes around 2 hours.

Mohican Adventures offers rustic log cabins and deluxe vacation homes with unique charm for those who wish to camp but with some of the comfort of home. Cabins and homes sleep 4-16 people.

The full-service campground is uniquely shaped by mother nature and makes for the perfect spot to submerge yourself in the woods. Amenities include eight pristine shower houses and restroom facilities, a 4.5-



acre lake with catch and release, pedal boat rentals, basketball and volleyball courts, horseshoe rings, and a picnic pavilion. One may choose from primitive tent camping or electric tent camping. They offer unique full hook-up sites for RVs and decide to pull through or back in.

Be sure to check out their options-Classic Fun Package and Adventure Package. The classic fun includes one main attraction ticket redeemable for a seven-mile river trip or a one-hour Aerial Park Pass and Fun Center tickets. The Adventure Package includes two main attraction tickets and Fun Center tickets. Group outings can be accommodated with any of their activities, and special group rates are offered during the week.

Mohican Adventures' operating season runs from April to October. For more information on all Mohican Adventures offers, visit [www.mohicanadventures.com](http://www.mohicanadventures.com).



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DISCOVER THE

# PA Grand Canyon by Covered Wagon

By Trish Mann

Known for its stunning scenery, exceptional recreational activities, and rich history, the Pine Creek Gorge, also known as the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, is located in the Potter-Tioga region. Potter-Tioga encompasses two counties and was recently voted Best Outdoor Destination by New World Report. And what better way to get acquainted with this stunning place than by covered wagon.



Sit back and enjoy traveling through this unique and captivating part of Pennsylvania on the Pine Creek Rail Trail along the canyon floor. Experience an area time has forgotten from the serenity of a horse-drawn wagon. Marvel at how Pine Creek has been carving its way through the Allegheny Plateau for thousands of years, forming steep canyon walls and majestic waterfalls. At a depth of almost 1,500 feet, the canyon floor is home to diverse plants, dense forests, and wildlife as nature intended.

Located in Wellsboro, PA, Ole Covered Wagon Tours has provided passengers with up close and personal tours of the canyon floor for many years. When the business became available 12 years ago, it was only natural that the owner, Brad Confer, and his family take over the tours. After all, the trail access begins at the farm that has been in their family since 1903. The Ole Covered Wagon Tours has become a beloved family business. And their family wants to make sure your family has the best time possible visiting the Gorge. According to Confer, it is common to see bears, deer, eagles, otters, and various waterfowl in the area.

The wagons are suitable for the whole family or any large group. They have padded seating and a canvas top covering the entire wagon to keep everyone safe from the elements. A skilled team of Belgian and Percheron horses winds you through the canyon. Each wagon holds up to 30 guests and includes two wagons for a trip. Private tours are available upon request.

A typical tour runs two times a day, spring, summer, and fall, lasting approximately two hours. The trail is an old railroad bed, and you quickly become immersed in the natural beauty on all sides. Your horseman will weave the rich history, exciting folklore, and Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon tales into an unforgettable experience. Visitors often remark on how entertaining and informative the guides are. Ole Covered Wagon Tours takes pride in making your visit the best it can be, and while you arrive as strangers, you leave as friends.

The Ole Covered Wagon Tours offers a waterfall ride in spring and summer. The trip averages three and one-half hours and can occasionally run up to four hours, depending on the guests' interests. You will visit Little Four Miles Falls at the halfway point, and your guide provides plenty of time to get pictures, stretch your legs, and explore the beautiful area.

Recently added to the Tours are a chuck wagon tour and primitive camping suitable for equine and bike/walking travelers. Visit their Facebook page for more information regarding equine camping.



The Pine Creek Rail Trail offers visitors other opportunities to explore the area. Walking, biking, and horseback riding are available year-round, with snowshoeing and cross-country skiing being wintertime activities. However, no motored vehicles are permitted. Backpack camping is available in the gorge.

When you visit the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, you won't be disappointed. Whether camping, star gazing, hiking, fishing, or simply enjoying the view from one of the many scenic overlooks, you will be amazed by what your eyes behold. You may, however, decide you need more time to take in all there is to do and plan your return visit before you even leave. With accommodations to meet every need, you will find just the right place to lay your head at night. Camping is available at the state parks and private campgrounds, hotels are handy for quick trips, and cabins always make great memories of sitting around a campfire under a star-filled sky.

The Potter-Tioga area offers something for everyone. Not only is it an outdoor enthusiast's paradise, but it is also home to charming towns providing many different and exciting activities. See a movie in one of three vintage movie theaters, golf at one of three award-winning courses, or take in a play or a live concert.

Check out one of the many exciting events throughout the year, such as Wellsboro's PA State Laurel Festival in June, Galeton's annual Red Suspenders weekend in July, and The Endless Mountain Music Festival in July and August, which encompasses 17 concerts over 17 days.

For more information on everything to see and do in the Potter-Tioga region, visit <https://www.visitpottertioga.com/events/> and the article "The PA Grand Canyon Offers History Arts and Recreation" in the Compass Ohio Spring 2023 edition for more exciting places to visit in the Potter-Tioga area. Plus, don't forget to book your tour for the Ole Covered Wagon Tour today.



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# Studio Arts & Glass Brings Local Artists Together

By Candy S. Collins, BS

Studio Arts & Glass kicks the summer off with a unique "Art of the Garden" Art show and Sale on June 9-10 from 10 am - 5 pm. Guests will have a chance to see some of the most spectacular pieces of art from local artists.

"This annual event focuses on art for the garden," said Wendy Joliet, owner of Studio Arts & Glass. "Glass art comes to life with the light coming through making it the perfect addition to your garden."

The show will showcase glass globes, hummingbird feeders, pottery, jewelry, metal sculptures, and more. Everything is handmade by talented artists giving it that special touch.

Studio Arts & Glass has been providing unique glass pieces for over 40 years. Their studio is in the North Canton area where you will find an amazing gallery of artwork with artists' works from around the US and Canada. Discover hand-blown glass items, fused glass, lead glass, and pottery to name just a few.

Their specialty is in stained glass windows, and they have been providing beautiful work throughout the United States for churches, businesses, restaurants, and finer homes. You can see



their work on display locally at 35 Brix, a restaurant known for everything being made from scratch.

For more information on the studio or to reserve your spot for an art glass class for both mornings of the "Art of the Garden" show call 330-494-9779. Be sure to visit their website at [www.studioartsandglass.com](http://www.studioartsandglass.com) and follow

them on Facebook for up-to-date events and classes. Make sure to say hello to their best employees, beloved fur babies Katie (pictured), Mia and Gary. They are sure to put a smile on your face.

*Photos courtesy of CS Photography*



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# THE GRAND CANYON

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## By Douglas M. Kish, MA

The alarm went off at 3:30 am on October 10, 2022. And so began the most physically-challenging day of my life.

I first learned about the Grand Canyon Rim-to-Rim Hike about a year ago when some friends were discussing getting together to undertake this amazing adventure. I had never seen the Grand Canyon in person, but it had been on my bucket list to visit.

Since I have completed numerous physical activities in the past, I considered myself to be a fit and active individual. I've completed several bike trips on the Great Allegheny Passage, one of which involved three days of pedaling. I've hiked

the John Muir Trail up to Half Dome in Yosemite National Park and several trails in Sequoia National Park. I've whitewater rafted numerous times. I run on a treadmill six days a week and lift weights regularly. Despite my thinking I was prepared, I joined others to begin training since we knew the hike would be very challenging and require a minimum of 12 hours to finish.

One of the things we did to prepare was to hike the Stanford House Trail in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park from Peninsula to Brandywine Falls, carrying 30-pound backpacks to simulate our Grand Canyon backpacks. I thought I was ready.

I did research about first aid and food for the trip based on recommendations from seasoned adventurers who were part of our hiking group. They also helped create a checklist of important items to have in your backpack, such as salt tablets, liquid IV for electrolytes, and GU, an energy substance popular with long-distance runners.

There are also numerous hiking and survival checklist guides available on the internet. Two of my favorites are [hikinguy.com](http://hikinguy.com) and [travelawaits.com](http://travelawaits.com), both of which contain numerous suggestions for such an adventure.



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Compass Ohio partner Second Sole assisted me with finding a pair of appropriate On long-distance hiking shoes suitable for the terrain that were comfortable and waterproof, as well as some moisture-wicking socks.

The night before the hike we all reviewed the contents of our backpacks. Some of us added peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, trail mix, raisins, almonds, and assorted energy bars. We also added some bottled water, knowing that we could refill at water stations along the 23-mile trail. Our Camel Bags were equipped with “bladders” which hold up to 3 liters of

water accessed through a drinking tube connected to the bag.

Anxious to begin, our group consisted of Christopher Eagon, Janet Eagon, Knute Hankins, Jerry Haynam, Dale Bonebrake and me. We dressed in layers at 5 am, as the temperature was 32 degrees, knowing we would likely shed some layers when the temperature at the bottom of the canyon reached the 90s.

In the parking lot of the South Rim two non-hikers in our group provided us transportation to the trail, confirming they would meet us on the North Rim in about 15 hours. Starting with a prayer, knowing that numerous people have

encountered severe difficulties and medical emergencies on this trip, we gathered our gear and started out.

Along with other hikers, we began with a 1-mile hike to the South Rim Trailhead which was the beginning of our journey. We saw a sign advising hikers that if they need to be rescued, they would be responsible for the cost of the emergency service.

It's 5:45 am and pitch-black; the only light is coming from the full moon and our headlamps. The sun is starting to rise. I can barely describe the beauty of what I saw in words. It was breathtaking. It reminded me how truly minute we are on this planet



and what an enormous challenge this hike would be. Every photo we took was better and more stunning than the last.

We came upon another sign telling us to heed the instructions of the mule guides. Mules? Within 10 minutes, a caravan of sure-footed mules arrived carrying supplies to campers at the bottom of the trail.

Our first break of the morning took place at Ooh Ahh Point. It was perfectly named, given the view, which was spectacular. The sun didn't so much rise as ignite, which bathed the canyon in orange light. The sun glistened off the rocks creating what seemed to be a fire storm. The temperature started to rise – quickly.

At this point, I recognized exactly how treacherous the trail is. You have to pay attention. One misstep, and you're gone. The trail is man-made of steps carved right out of the mountain.

Below us, the Colorado River snaked through the canyon. From our vantage point, it seemed so small, the muddy water like a chocolate river.

As the temperature continued to rise and we trekked deeper into the canyon, we peeled off layers keeping our hats on to shield us from the sun. An hour before, we were bundled up like Eskimos. Now we were in T-shirts and slathering on sunscreen to protect us from the sun's rays.

We looked ahead and saw that the mules that had passed us an hour earlier were already making their way back up the trail. "Lucky mules," Bonebrake said, to laughter.

By noon, we made it to the bottom of the canyon. We knew we were close to our break location and lunch stop, a camping area called Phantom Ranch, located at the 7.5-mile mark of the 22-mile journey.

Located on the north side of the Colorado River, the Phantom Ranch is the only lodging below the Grand Canyon rim, and can only be reached by mule, foot, or raft. Campfires are not permitted in the area and guests must make reservations for a campsite in advance.

Phantom Ranch is famous for its lemonade. Part of the trail tradition is to purchase one from the canteen on site. We ate, sat on rocks and stumps, and exchanged stories with fellow hikers, then got back on the trail.

The most enjoyable segment of the hike came shortly after Phantom Ranch. The terrain was flatter and the breeze cascading through the canyon gave me an overwhelming sense of nature. Both offered some shade and protection from the 95-degree heat. We stopped and put our feet in the refreshing water and, of course, took more photos.

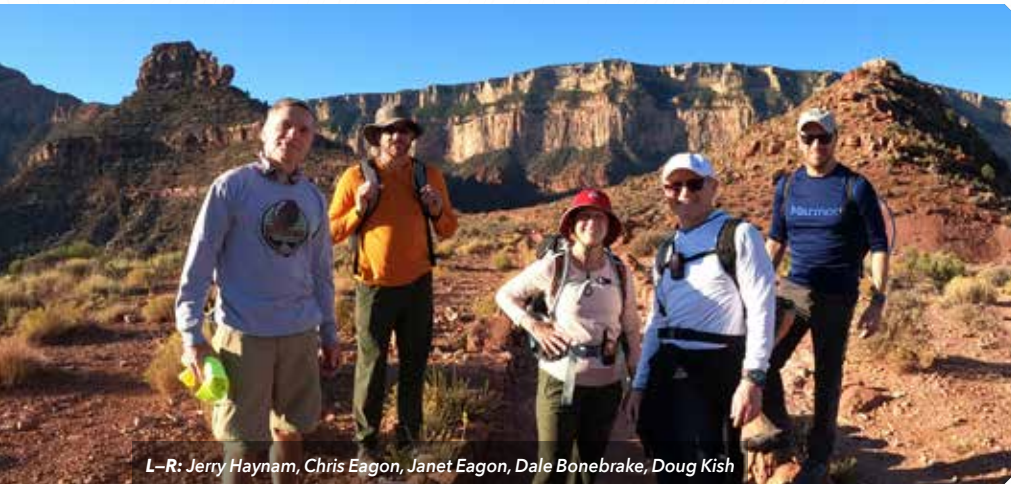
This part of the trail also offered relief from the stress of trying to keep yourself from tumbling forward while hiking downhill. One nice and unexpected surprise was a number of small waterfalls that dotted the bottom of the trail, along with patches of small cactus plants.

Moving on, about an hour later, I started feeling nauseous. I thought I had done everything right. I ate properly, I was hydrated and I took salt tablets, but I was overheated and had to stop to rest. My hiking partners sprang to my aid. They doused me with water, gave me a liquid IV, and I began eating GU every 15 minutes. After a while, I felt better and was ready to continue.

Two hours later, we came to Bright Angel Creek, a spot where hikers are known to fill their caps with water and put them on their heads to keep cool. Again, nauseous and overheated, I dunked myself in the water to cool off. Others in the group did the same.

With everyone cooled off and refreshed, we started hiking again beginning the ascent to the north side,





L-R: Jerry Haynam, Chris Eagon, Janet Eagon, Dale Bonebrake, Doug Kish



Janet Eagon



which is a much steeper incline and higher elevation than the south side. By this time the sun was starting to set. We estimated 3 to 4 more hours of hiking to reach the top, although I thought that was a high estimate.

It's 7:00 pm now and we've been hiking for 13 hours. At this point, we have traveled about 16 miles and I believe we must surely be close to the end of the trail. I was about to understand the reason for the high estimate of time to finish.

The sun disappeared and it was dark again. We turned our headlamps on and began adding back the layers we had shed that morning to keep warm. The wind was blowing so hard, it cut through our clothes. The temperature plunged back down into the 30s as we endlessly walked along switchbacks in the dark. The only thing we saw was the headlamps of the hikers ahead and above us; tiny lights, periodically sparkling and blinking in the moonlight on this mountain we're trying to climb.

Climbing up the north rim was the hardest thing I have ever endured in my life. I resorted to using Tiger Balm Red Extra Strength to relieve the intense back spasms and lower back pain that took

my breath away. In addition to physical pain, some of us had problems with the altitude and were gasping for air. We'd hike two minutes and rest two minutes. Then hike two minutes and rest two minutes again.

Pushing on and on, someone finally announced we were within a half mile of the finish. The wind was so strong and so cold. I checked the time and it was 9:45 pm.

As we crossed the finish line, some of us in tears, we all hugged and quickly took a group photo. We made it to the top! We conquered the canyon. And we couldn't wait to get into those heated vehicles waiting for us.

As to whether I would do it again, I believe the safest and most comfortable way to complete this trip is to make it a 2-day adventure by hiking to the bottom of the canyon the first day, camping for the night, and continuing on to climb up the other side on the second day.

In retrospect, I'm not sure what other physical training I would have done to prepare for this. The Grand Canyon tested my physical strength, as well as my mental strength. It gave me all I could handle. But in sixteen hours, we did it.

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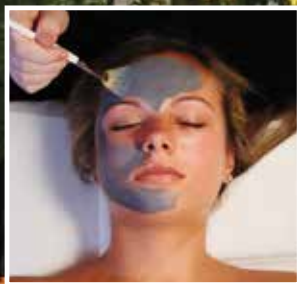


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# MILLIONS OF MILES

## on Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

By Leo Jennings

Millions of passengers have traveled tens of millions of miles on the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) since the first passenger took a ride on the public transit agency back on December 1, 1997. Over the next quarter-century, SARTA has become a valuable community asset, every bit as respected and recognizable as the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the McKinley Library, the MAPS Museum, and numerous other area landmarks and attractions, all of which also happen to be served by the system.

In fact, SARTA has become so deeply woven into the fabric of the community that public transportation, which was a novelty 25 years ago, is now taken for granted. "On one level that's a good thing," SARTA CEO Kirt Conrad observed. "It means people trust us to do what we've done from Day One: take them where they need to go when they need to get there."

"At the same time, being perceived as just the 'bus company' obscures the remarkable things SARTA does and the amazing people who do them," Conrad said. "Our year-long 25th birthday celebration provides a perfect opportunity to shine a spotlight on both."

In addition to our operators who are the familiar public faces of the agency, our spotlight will shine on the rarely seen, but vitally important, team of dedicated professionals who keep SARTA's wheels turning. From the mechanics who maintain our vehicles and make sure they are safe, to the grant writers who secure the dollars that help



fuel the agency, to the financial wizards who ensure that every one of those dollars is spent wisely, to the geniuses who work computer magic to constantly evaluate and revise our routes, the travel trainers who have taught more than 14,000 people how to get the most out of every trip, to our dispatchers and customer service representatives, who ensure that our passengers' needs are met.

With all those amazing people on board, it's no surprise that SARTA has and continues to do remarkable things. Over the years, we expanded service into every part of Stark County, launched the Canton-Akron express route and Cleveland Route 4 which makes three round trips each day and offers free rides to local veterans who have appointments at the Wade Park VA hospital, worked with local economic development agencies to connect workers and local businesses, and created Wayne County Transit which now provides thousands of rides per week in areas where public transit was virtually non-existent just a short time ago.

"And that is just a partial list," noted Conrad. "We're not kidding when we say SARTA travels to thousands of destinations in Stark County and beyond, and more are being added all the time."

Where SARTA goes is not the only thing that has changed; we've also transformed how we get where we're going. The system has replaced its fume-spewing diesel buses with vehicles powered by compressed natural gas and zero-emission hydrogen fuel cells. As a result of the switch, our community is a healthier place to live, work, and raise a family.

Finally, we would like to mark this occasion by thanking our riders and the residents of Stark County who have always supported SARTA. We could not have traveled these millions of miles over the past quarter century without you. We invite you to hop on board and ride along as we rack up millions more.



# Happy SARTAVERSARY!

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# Scenic Wine & Dine Trail Awaits You on a Hocking Hills Adventure



**By Trish Mann**

Hocking Hills is known for its outstanding sights, sounds, and adventures in the stunning landscape. But did you know the area is also becoming known for its wine and dining excursions?

The fertile land, rolling hills, and moderate temperatures lend themselves to producing quality grapes for full-flavored wine. Fortunately, along with wine growers, the area has talented chefs putting their spin on traditional and innovative mouthwatering dishes.

There are many exceptional wineries and restaurants in the area, and we couldn't cover them all. But we have compiled a trail of vino and appetite-worthy offerings to give you a taste of what this area offers. Come along with us as we travel the scenic byways of the Hocking Hills region and uncover a few of the hidden gems this area of Ohio offers, leaving you anxious to plan your return visit.

Our tour begins in the charming town of Logan, and the perfect start to any day begins with a delicious cup of java. The Hocking Hills Coffee Emporium in Logan offers exceptional fair-trade coffee, delicious housemaid breakfast and lunch pastries, and tempting sandwiches. Rumor has it the meatloaf sandwich is to die for.

Our first winery is the Hocking Hills Winery. The farm has been in the family for over 60 years and became a vineyard in 2008. Many of their wines have received numerous awards. Sample



the Ohio Honeysuckle, a semi-sweet blend that recently won the vineyard's highest honor, Best of Class, at a 2023 competition in California.

While we are in Rockbridge, stop by RXR (Revolution Rockbridge) Winery which is new to the scene and offers artisanal wines crafted onsite. In honor of the rock and water formation in Hocking Hills, known by the same name, their Devil's Bathtub is a spicy blend of sweet strawberry wine and habanero peppers.

Next, we come across Rockside Winery and Vineyards. The first vines were planted in 2007, and the vineyard boasts hardy native American and French American varieties. Most wine is hand-crafted onsite with an eye for detail, creating exciting flavor profiles. Heading down the road to Lancaster, we discover Pizza Crossing, a popular spot to grab a bite. USA Today voted their Logan location "The Best Pizzeria in Ohio." Both sites will satisfy your pizza, subs, and wing cravings.



Leaving Lancaster, we travel through the captivating vistas of the Appalachian foothills to Manchester Hill Winery. This award-winning family winery handcrafts its vino from locally-sourced fruit and their estate vineyard grapes. Cider and charcuterie boards are also available.

Our next stop is the lovely Le Petit Chevalier Vineyards and Farm Winery. You will want to savor your time here in Creola. When visiting the vineyard, discover the history of Eastern Northern

American Wine culture by tasting traditional varieties from the 1700s. While no food is sold on-premises, you can bring in your own.

As we head back into Logan, the Inn at Cedar Falls restaurant, Kindred Spirits, is nestled against the stunning Hocking Hills backdrop. The 1840s log cabin serves gourmet food in a casual dining atmosphere.

A twist on wine tastings, Allegría Wine Room, located in Logan, offers

wine from around the world, specialty food items, and a tasting bar. Take your experience up a notch and schedule a Wine Experience. Offering classes in the wine room or private wine tastings at your lodging provides an intimate and engaging way to share your love of wine with your friends or family.

Your trip would not be complete without a visit to the area's newest and hottest place to dine, 58 West. This inviting atmosphere is nestled in the historic district of Logan and features a full menu of wines, beers, and spirits, many of which are crafted on-premises. Open for lunch and dinner; their menu offers tasty shareables, salads, and classic entrees featuring unique twists and decadent desserts.

Upon returning to Logan, we can't help but appreciate the charming town set against the natural beauty and history of the Hocking region. In honor of Chief Logan of the Mingo Indian Tribe, Logan was established in 1816. This historic town offers everything guests want, from local mom-and-pop establishments to unique lodging and dining experiences.

Whew, what a trip! We covered a lot of ground; still, there is so much more to see and do. More wineries, breweries, and restaurants exist for all appetites and interests. If you would like to visit some of these unique places but prefer someone else to handle the navigation, check out Cork & Tap Excursions and let them do the work for you. They will even pick you up and drop you off at your lodging.

Hocking Hills is so much more than a winery, a place to eat, or a trail to hike. It is the people, the hills, the charm, and the natural beauty of this area, surrounded by Appalachian history and hospitality, that brings people back again and again. The places we visited on this trail are only a sample of the beautiful spots tucked away among the rolling hills, trees, and creeks that call this area home.

Take time to clear your head, indulge your soul and spend time with people you love in a place you will never forget. Visit [www.explorehockinghills.com](http://www.explorehockinghills.com) to plan your adventure.

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Looking for a new golf destination? The Youngstown area has been ranked #4 in the U.S. for top quality, affordable public golf courses. Golfers of all skill levels will be challenged on scenic, well-maintained courses. No need to spend a fortune on a golf getaway because local hotels offer affordable golf packages.

A favorite since 1928, the historic **Mill Creek Golf Course** in Boardman features two 18-hole championship courses designed by the legendary Donald Ross. *Golfweek* recognized Mill Creek in its Best Courses You Can Play category.

**Reserve Run** in Poland has been hailed as one of Ohio's top public golf courses. Designed around an old quarry by architect Barry Serafin, Reserve Run was rated as a 4-star Ohio course by *Golf Digest*.

Award-winning golf course architect Brian Huntley designed **Kennington Golf Club** to blend

natural beauty with a challenging layout featuring lakes, scenic ravines and tree-lined fairways. Huntley also designed the **Links at Firestone Farms** in Columbiana. It has been listed by *Golf Digest* as the Best New Affordable Public Golf Course in the State of Ohio, and 9th nationally. You can enjoy the challenge of a links-style course without having to travel overseas.

On the western side of Mahoning County, **Olde Dutch Mill** in Lake Milton winds through an interesting natural landscape around the Lake Milton Dam and the Mahoning River, and is adjacent to the popular Halliday's Winery, which you can enjoy following your round. The eastern edge of Mahoning County is home to the 180 rolling acres of **Knoll Run Golf Course** with water hazards and dog legs, and **Bedford Trails Golf Course**, a scenic, wooded course.

Try a Golf Simulator for a Virtual Experience. **The Bunker Southern Park** is a new, expansive indoor golf practice and learning facility. Eight Foresight Sports simulators are open to the public and will provide you with the utmost true-to-life golf experience. A short game/putting green area, practice driving range as well as food and beverage options are available on-site.

The **Kennington Golf Simulator Lounge** offers you a state-of-the-art facility featuring three Full Swing Pro Series simulators. Chose from over 80 iconic championship courses and sharpen your skills. The Simulator Lounge features a full bar, specialty food and a putting green.

For more information on these and other Youngstown-area courses, visit [golfyoungstown.com](http://golfyoungstown.com) and download the Golf Guide.

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# VIEWING NATURE FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

**By Candy S. Collins, BS**

Start your summer adrenaline by tackling dangling obstacles, exploring trees from a new perspective, and flying around multiple zip lines from exciting heights. Go Ape Zipline and Adventure Park (Go Ape) is an unparalleled outdoor adventure experience in Cleveland, Ohio.

Go Ape offers four unique thrill-seeking activities for everyone in the trees and on the ground—the Treetop Adventure, Treetop Journey, Axe Throwing, and Forest Escape. They spotlight the forest's natural beauty while offering new ways to view indigenous wildlife and plant life. There are options for all ages, including beginners and young ones.

The Treetop Adventure will keep you challenged, present, and living in the moment. Enjoy a 2-3-hour aerial journey through the forest canopy, where you will engage every sense in a fully immersive and visually stunning forest setting. The adventure starts with a safety briefing, a harness fitting, and highly trained instructors will assist you in learning the ropes.

Let the fun begin as you climb a rope ladder into the beautiful trees. You will then navigate wobbly bridges, traverse through obstacles, and conquer the unique free drop "Tarzan" swing. Ride the zipline back down to the forest floor and repeat.

Go Ape Treetop Journey offers one hour of engaging outdoor recreation and is the introduction to high ropes for all ages. It focuses on getting you off the ground and into the trees with over







20 obstacles and two zip lines. An instructor will fit you into a harness and ensure you are safely connected the entire time you are in the trees.

This course is split into three loops that increase in difficulty. You will connect to a loop and climb stairs up into the trees. From there, you will navigate aerial bridges, nets, and planks designed to challenge and excite. One will gain a new and unique perspective on the great outdoors. Each loop will end with a thrilling zipline taking you back to the forest floor. Once again, repeat any loops you want within your one-hour journey. There is no age limit, but you must be at least 3'3" tall.

Your fun doesn't have to stop above ground as there is plenty to do on the forest grounds. Try your hand at Go Ape Axe Throwing. Gain the satisfaction of sticking an axe in a target where technique is more important than strength. Compete with your friends and family to make it a memorable experience and earn bragging rights. The hatchets weigh under 2 pounds allowing ease of throwing. Instructors will give you tips on how to throw the hatchet and go over safety rules. You must be 10 years of age or older to participate.

Escape rooms are just not meant for indoors. At Go Ape, they take a different approach and allow the forest and trees to be the playground. When you "EscAPE" with family, friends, and co-workers, your team works together using your best problem-solving skills in a fun, immersive natural environment. You will have one hour to solve puzzles and tackle mental challenges. The minimum age is seven years of age.

Take learning outside. Everyday Go Ape utilizes science, technology, engineering, and mathematical skills to deliver a "tree-mendous" experience. Children can observe various core STEM principles in action as they swing through trees, have a blast, and create memories. When you book a STEM Program, you will receive an activity sheet to bring your lesson to life. Decide on a level-appropriate option on topics from Geometry, Physics, or Biology. At Go Ape, they want students fired up and excited to learn.

Go Ape Zipline and Adventure Park's first site opened in Rockville, Maryland, in 2010. Today, 15 sites operate throughout the United States. They are an industry leader regarding safety, with over 10 million participants worldwide having

safely used their courses. Every step needed is taken to ensure guests' safety, including daily staff inspections of equipment and the course, detailed and documented monthly staff inspections, and standard annual inspections by industry professionals.

"At Go Ape, we strive to provide guests with a tree-mendous experience that helps them get out of their comfort zone," said Jason Budden, Chief Operating Officer. "Our fun, exciting and confidence building activities are perfect for friends, families, group outings and more. Whether you are an experienced adventurer or just beginning your time in the trees, Go Ape is an amazing option to enjoy the outdoors."

Go Ape Zipline and Adventure Park is located at the Mill Run Reservation which is part of Cleveland's Metroparks. A portion of every ticket sale goes back to the park, making it easier to preserve the natural areas and provide a rich outdoor experience for all. For more information, visit [www.goape.com](http://www.goape.com).



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Looking for an adventure this summer? Go Ape Zipline & Adventure Park is an exhilarating journey through the forest canopy as you take on suspended obstacles and breathtaking ziplines – all with an incredible view. Axe Throwing and Forest EscAPE also available.

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# Steaming Through History

## A Visit to the Mad River Railroad Train Museum

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[madrivermuseum.org](http://madrivermuseum.org)

All aboard! The Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum in Bellevue, Ohio is the perfect destination for anyone who loves trains, history or just needs an excuse to wear a conductor's hat. This museum has it all. From the impressive collection of locomotives and cabooses to the extensive selection of railroad memorabilia, there's something for everyone. And let's be real, who doesn't love a good caboose?

The museum's star attraction is the Nickel Plate Road steam locomotive No. 757. And let me tell you, this baby's like the little engine that could, except it's not so little. In fact, it's massive. And restored to perfection, no less. You'll feel like a kid again as you marvel at the sheer size and power of this impressive machine.

And don't forget about the passenger and freight cars. They're like giant metal tubes that people used to ride in before airplanes were invented. It's like being on a roller coaster, except you're going really slow and there's no loop-de-loops. But hey, at least you don't have to take off your shoes as you walk inside these historic relics.

But the Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum isn't just about trains. It's also about the people who made them run. The museum has an extensive collection of railroad memorabilia, including photographs, uniforms and other artifacts that offer a glimpse into the history of the railroad industry. It's like taking a trip back in time, except you don't have to deal with outdated technology or outdated fashion.

So what are you waiting for? Hop on board the train to fun and head on over to the Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum. It's the perfect place to let off some steam and chug-a-lug your way through history! Learn more at [madrivermuseum.org](http://madrivermuseum.org)

Article & Photography by David Thornbury



**Sandusky County**  
Visitors Bureau  
Dare to Discover at [Sanduskycounty.org](http://Sanduskycounty.org)

# SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKE SHORE

**By Elise Schultz**

When it comes to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, there is no shortage of “wow” factor. Nestled along the freshwater coast of Lake Michigan, it’s no wonder that hundreds of thousands of people flock to this scenic Midwest destination every year.

Known most notably for its sizeable sand dunes, the views offered at the “Dune Climb” are nothing short of breathtaking. The beauty doesn’t stop there, however.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore encompasses the northeast shore of Lake Michigan and includes both the South and North Manitou islands. From there, one can find numerous beaches nestled throughout, or even hop on The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail and explore on bike or by foot.

Even named the “Most Beautiful Place in America” on ABC’s Good Morning America, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore puts Midwest vacation destinations on the map. Perhaps what sets Northern Michigan apart from so many other destinations is the amount of untouched beauty the area holds.

As experts, there are a few must-sees when visiting. As a luxury to our readers, we’ve gone ahead and laid out our top attractions.



### **The Dune Climb:**

Starting with the standout, The Sleeping Bear Dune Climb. With a sprawling picnic area nestled at the base, the dunes can make for all day fun if one plans accordingly. While the climb itself can be challenging, the walk (or run) back down is easy, breezy. If you're looking for a longer hike, you can take the dunes all the way to Lake Michigan. But, be cautioned, this hike can take up to 3-4 hours. We highly recommend bringing plenty of water and snacks, and ensuring you are up for the challenge before descending down to the water. The Dune Climb is located 5 miles north of Empire M-109. The Dune Center offers a public restroom and bookstore for visitors

### **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail:**

An easy, fun, and immersive way to get around Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail is a paved, multi-use trail that spans over 20 miles. Park your car and lace up your running/walking shoes, or opt for travel via bike or rollerblades. Trailheads are located at Port Oneida, Bay View, Crystal River, Alligator Hill, Glen Haven, Dune Climb, Pierce Stocking, and Bar Lake Road. The trail itself is handicap accessible.

### **Point Betsie Light:**

Rich in history and beauty, the Point Betsie Light is worth adding to your itinerary. Standing tall in its original 1858 form, visitors can explore an area where Great Maritime history is waiting around every corner. Located in Frankfort, Michigan, this breathtaking piece of history sits on one of the most pristine, secluded beaches around. Open to the public, the lighthouse "Boathouse Museum" offers gifts, apparel, toys, and plenty of other items to remember your trip to this iconic destination. Beach day highly encouraged.

### **Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive:**

Looking for something a little less physically taxing during your visit to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore? Pierce Stocking

Scenic Drive is the perfect way to enjoy all of the views without breaking a sweat. A self-guided driving tour allows you to follow the numbered signs as they direct you from one educational stop to another. While bicycling is permitted, the route is expert level and quite steep.

### **Empire Bluffs:**

Last, but certainly not least, Empire Bluffs hike is an absolute must. An easy, out and back hike for individuals of all physical ability, Empire Bluffs offers a sweeping view of the Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes and Lake Michigan. High above the water, 400 feet to be exact, the culmination of the hike is set on a dune overlooking the water. For just about 40 minutes round trip, plus time spent admiring the view, Empire Bluffs is a stop worth your while.

### **Where to Stay:**

Now that you know all there is to know about Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and the immense amount of beauty it holds, all that's left to do is book the trip. If you're looking to stay as close to the heart of it all as possible, we highly recommend The Homestead in Glen Arbor, Michigan. The Homestead is a beachfront resort offering a wide range of unique lodging choices supported by luxurious facilities designed for romantic getaways, family vacations, weddings, and meetings. It is located on the beach chosen by Money Magazine as "No. 1 of the 8 Best Beaches to Visit this Summer" and is surrounded by the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore which was chosen by the viewers of ABC's Good Morning America as the "Most Beautiful Place in America". Guests enjoy its mile-long beach, spa and salon services, golf courses, granular surface tennis courts, watercrafts, pools, and hot tubs, restaurants, meeting facilities and, come winter, skiing, riding, snowshoeing, and skating. The Homestead offers a variety of lodging options that include hotel rooms, suites, villas and homes are offered in seasonal packages at the heart of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.





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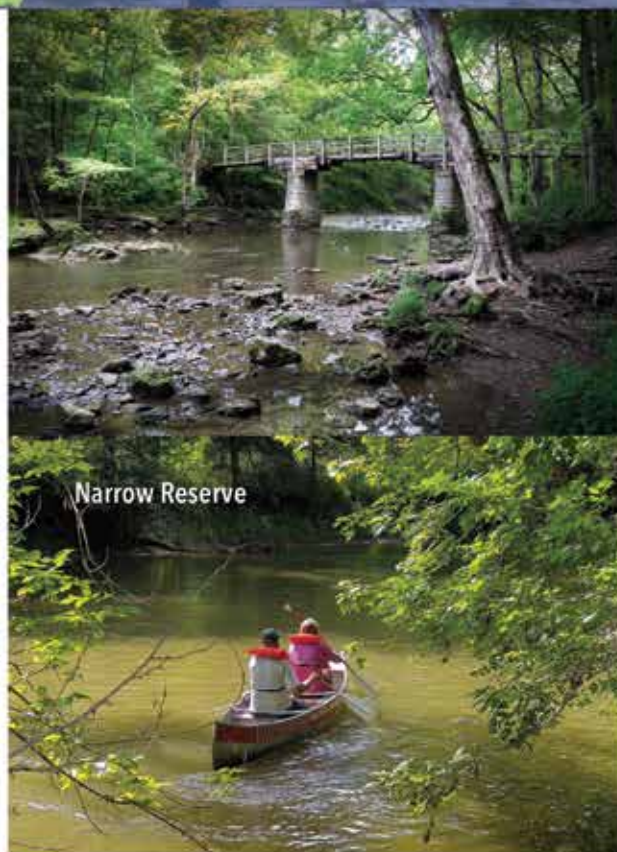
**John Bryan State Park** – This is the most scenic state park in western Ohio. Campsites are not laid out in a grid, adding a sense of freedom to your experience. With 752 acres and nine miles of hiking trails along the Little Miami River's towering limestone cliffs.

**Glen Helen Nature Preserve** – 1000 acre nature preserve of woods, waterways, prairies, and fields laced with 25 miles of trails for hiking.

**Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve** – 268 acres. A spectacular example of geological forces, limestone cliffs, scenic waterfalls and rapids on the headwaters of the Little Miami Scenic River.

**Indian Mound Reserve** – 169 acres offer one of the most diverse areas managed by Greene County Parks. A spectacular natural resource is created with a blend of Cedar Cliff Falls, the Massie Creek Gorge, meadows, woods, river and marsh, creating an amazing view in any season of the year.

**Narrows Reserve** – The Narrows Reserve offers canoeing, fishing, picnicking and hiking through forests, meadows and ravines where you'll see an abundance of plant and animal wildlife. Over four miles of hiking trails on 162 acres.



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- Scenic Rides & Drives
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## Historic Greek Catholic/Russian Orthodox Church Being Restored in Belle Valley, Ohio

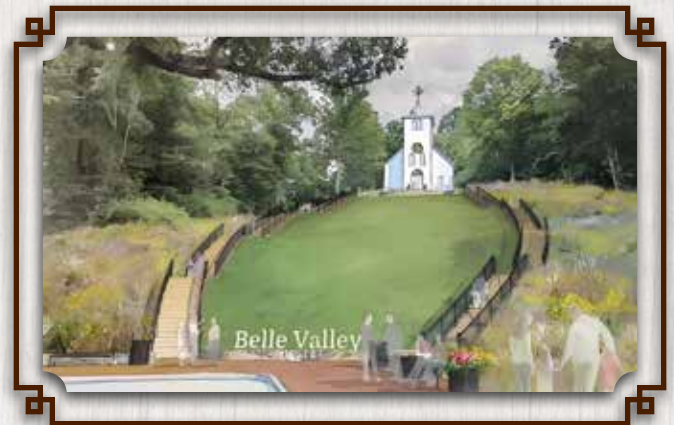


### By Marcia Hartman

On the hill above Main Street in Belle Valley, Ohio sits a church that appears to be placed to guard and protect the homes and businesses below. The town was settled in 1875, in large part by immigrants from Eastern Europe. They came looking for freedom and opportunity, and they contributed their hard work and culture to make their new home a good home.

The 1916 church was originally named the St. Vozdvizainje Cestnaho Kresta Greek Catholic Uhro Roski Church of Belle Valley Ohio. Greek Catholic and Russian Orthodox masses were regularly held until 1967 and again for a short time in the early 1990s. The design of the church's dome is traditional for churches in the Carpathian Mountains where heavy snows could collapse steeples. An Orthodox cross with three crossbars, one of which is tilted, sits atop the dome. The original bells are still in the steeple. One side of the cornerstone is in Slovak and the other side in Russian. A nearby cemetery contains 30 to 40 graves whose headstones are carved with epitaphs in those languages.

Local citizens have formed the Belle Valley Area Historic Preservation Society to raise funds to restore the church as a community center and site for historical displays. They've made progress by replacing part of the roof, are looking for a contractor to restore the dome, and will soon replace the outer doors. Once they are able to restore the inside, it is hoped visitors will be able to view the altar, the glass chandelier that was one of only two in



the world, and some of the original paintings called icons that hung in the church. The pews and most of the original stained-glass windows are intact, although the windows are currently covered for protection.

There are other good reasons to come to Belle Valley to view this unique structure. The Road Fork Section of the Buckeye Trail, one of the least populated sections to hike, starts in Belle Valley. In Pleasant City, fifteen minutes away, you'll find St. Michael's Byzantine Catholic Church, which still holds Orthodox Masses.

There are several "mom and pop" restaurants in town, and in nearby Caldwell you'll find a number of hotels, restaurants and things to do. Into camping? Wolf Run State Park is in Belle Valley. And you can gas up in either community. Come see what you can do in Noble County.




# Eagle Ridge Disc Golf

By Mindy Brems

Opening early this summer, Coshocton's brand-new Eagle Ridge Disc Golf course is going to be epic. The course features 18 challenging holes with significant elevation changes, three ponds, and two sets of tees that will accommodate every level of play, from beginner to advanced. The course will be open daily from dawn to dusk and is free to play.

More than 10 miles of asphalt paths run throughout the course for those wishing to walk, jog, hike or bike this scenic park that boasts a view of Coshocton County second to none, especially at sunset. The Eagle Ridge Disc Golf Course is a beautiful addition to Coshocton's many attractions, which include Historic Roscoe Village, Lake Park, and the Three Rivers Wine Trail.

Disc golf is fun for the whole family! Players throw special frisbees, called discs, at chain targets. Like golf, players count the number of throws (strokes) it takes to get the disc in the chains.



Players can compete individually against the course, against one another, or simply play for fun. The sport's popularity has surged over the last few years, with Udisc, the sport's most popular scoring app, recording 11.6 million rounds scored in the US in 2021 alone.

Ohio currently ranks as the 9th best disc golf state in the US, with over 400 courses. The addition of Eagle Ridge will bring a much-needed course to the Coshocton area, which currently has none.

A dedicated team of volunteers have worked for months to create this new disc golf course, clearing what was once a golf course. "We are excited to welcome a whole new group of people to the area," said volunteer Lainie Brillhart. "It's an easy drive from Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Columbus, so we are expecting to see a lot of people come to play the course. Several local foundations and area businesses sponsored our efforts, and we are truly grateful for their support."

Those planning to play the course should watch Udisc, as the course will go live on the app when it is open. To find out more about all that Coshocton has to offer and to request a free visitor packet, call the Coshocton Visitors Bureau at (740) 622-4877 or visit their website, [visitcoshocton.com](http://visitcoshocton.com). Eagle Ridge Disc Golf is located at 23253 State Route 83, Coshocton, Ohio.



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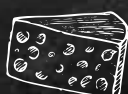
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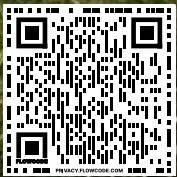
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# GREAT IDEAS FOR Nature-Based Summer Vacations

By Linda Devlin

The Allegheny National Forest Region is a great destination for exploring nature, participating in hiking, biking and mountain biking adventures, learning local history along the collectible pin trail, or enjoying rest and relaxation in a cabin or campsite along the shoreline of the Allegheny Reservoir.

Designated a National Forest on September 24, 1923, this year marks 100 years of preserving and managing this massive land mass, 414,029 acres, for conservation and public recreation. Special events planned to mark this important 100-year milestone are the Centennial Geo-Trail, the ANF's 100-mile trail challenge, and a monthly list of events throughout the forest and its gateway communities. Be sure to check the online event schedule at [VisitANF.com](http://VisitANF.com) for more details. Lodging choices include cabins or campsites at Red Bridge Campground and Willow Bay Recreation Area.

The main celebratory event will be held at Twin Lakes in the ANF. This family-friendly event will be on September 24, 2023,

from 11 am to 7 pm. For more information on ANF Centennial events and the history of the Forest, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alleggheny>.

The Forest offers 14 campgrounds, with more than 1,000 sites for developed recreation, cabin rentals, and a marina. The Allegheny Reservoir offers fishing, kayaking, and canoeing along with motorized boating. The Kinzua Wolf Run Marina is a full-service marina, with a seasonal restaurant. Allegheny Site Management offers kayaks, canoes, and paddle boats for rent at Willow Bay Recreation Area. Fin & Fly Adventures offers fishing guide services. The 2nd Kinzua Cup Walleye Tournament, sponsored by the Willow Creek Sportsman's Club, will be on May 20 & 21, 2023.

The trail systems in the ANF Region provide a wide variety of opportunities to get outside and enjoy nature. In all, there are over 600 miles of four-season trails in the region. History lovers will enjoy exploring the McKean County Historic Collectible Pin Trail which offers a different collectible pin at 10 historic sites within McKean County.

Two local trails offer picture-perfect wooden covered bridges. Marilla Bridges Trail, a 1-mile loop trail, features a covered wooden bridge across the spillway of Marilla Reservoir. A second wooden bridge is located on the Kinzua Valley Trail, a 10.5-mile trail from Red Bridge Campground, past the village of Westline, to Rt. 219. Mountain bikers will enjoy Morrison Trail, a 10.8-mile loop trail through open hardwoods and large rock formations. The Trails at Jakes Rocks offer mountain bikers a wide degree of challenges, from gentler loops to the one-way, epic Blacksnake gravity trail.

The 2023 Pennsylvania Trail of the Year, the Knox & Kane Rail Trail, is the 7.8-mile section of trail which runs from the Kinzua Bridge State Park to Mt. Jewett, PA. This trail connects to the #1 State Park of the Year, as voted on by TripAdvisor, the Kinzua Bridge State Park, home of the awesome Kinzua Sky Walk. Bike rentals for this trail are available at Lantz Corners Getaway.

To help plan your summer vacation, order a free Adventure Guide from the ANF Visitors Bureau, or go online at [VisitANF.com](http://VisitANF.com). Summer fun awaits!



Known as Trail Central, the ANF Region offers a wide variety of trail adventures including a 1-mile hike along scenic Marilla Bridges Trail.





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