

AN ARCADIA VALLEY OUTDOORS PUBLICATION



ARCADIA VALLEY GUIDE ΑΡΚΑΔΙΑ ΒΑΛΛΕΑΣ ΟΔΗΓΟΣ

Volume 1 • Summer 2022

THE HISTORY ~ THE NATURE ~ THE ADVENTURES ~ THE EVENTS ~ THE PEOPLE



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official tourism
website

TO CALEDONIA

21

ELEPHANT
ROCKS

HWY W

HWY N

21

PILOT
KNOB

RT-221

TO JOHNSON
SHUT-INS

PILOT KNOB
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HISTORIC SITE

BIKE
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IRONTON

HWY M

ARCADIA VALLEY

RT-72

TO
LAKE
KILARNEY
&
MILL
STREAM
GARDENS

TO
TIP
TOP

HWY CC

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HWY E

TO
BLACK RIVER

TO
MARBLE CREEK

Map designed by
Michelle & Noelle

SUMMER 2020
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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

I moved here with essentially no knowledge of the area. I had never explored any of the nearby towns, only every corner of my grandparents' land in rural Annapolis. But I knew I felt peace as I walked along the bank of Little Creek, collecting colorful rocks as the clear water cooled my feet. The picturesque hills urged exploration, and the quiet valleys promised respite from a polarized world closing in on me.

I am often overcome with gratitude that my path has led me to this part of Missouri. I arrived here a wounded creature, unsure of how to fulfill my purpose and unsure of what home was – depression and grief weighing me down frequently. I hoped that living closer to nature would offer some healing and was drawn to the opportunity to connect with and learn from my grandparents, the only two people I knew in the whole state.

Nearly a year later, and my horizon has expanded to a much fuller perspective of the place I now call home. I have now heard the roar of Mina Sauk Falls after the rain. I have felt the red granite at Johnson's Shut-Ins with trembling fingers while climbing the bluffs above the Black River. I have danced beside the sky atop the boulders at Elephant Rocks. I have gazed wistfully down steep sections of the Ozark Trail, wondering what secrets it may offer, determined to eventually traverse the whole of it. I have wiped dirt from my face after ascending and descending Shepherd Mountain on a bike. I have fallen asleep to the sound of the flowing Current River and have peered into the ceaseless sapphire water at Blue Spring. I have glided across Shepherd Mountain Lake in the moonlight, and spent countless hours at the haven beyond its shore – Arcadia Valley Outdoors. It is here where my growing love for my new community collided with a connection with those who have traveled here for a moment of peace from the heavy burdens of the world around us, leading to the discovery that I am not the only one who finds healing here.

I feel I have found the beating heart of Missouri – a place where the east meets the west amongst rivers, springs and mountains. As the valley blossoms this spring, with it comes new adventures and new travelers who will marvel at the abundant beauty it has to offer.

After years of questioning the meaning of home, I have concluded that it should be a place of growth. And as I push my roots into the clay and mineral filled earth beneath me, I can't help but grow. It's been half a year since I made my leap into a new realm, and my health has improved drastically, both physically and mentally. Questions emerge. How do I repay this place for the healing it has provided? How does an outsider like me deserve to call this place home?

I've realized that if I want this to truly be home, I must participate in cleaning it, cultivating it, and caring for the people within it. And as I observe so many of my neighbors supporting each other, learning from each other, and growing together – all while preserving a simpler way of life unique to the area – I feel called to write. This place, it's people, it's growth – it's a story worth telling.

I am determined to build a bridge between the hungry wanderer and gracious host, hence the birth of this project – a celebration of the unique history, biodiversity, geology, craftsmanship, community, and peace found here in Arcadia Valley.

This is my contribution. This is how I make this home. This is Arcadia Valley Guide.

- Sydney Joy Willis

THE HISTORY

A Brief History of Arcadia Valley

By Sydney Joy Willis & Susan Smith Kline

Approximately 1.5 billion years ago, intrusive volcanic activity birthed the St. Francois Mountain Range. This beautiful section of the Ozarks long served as a bountiful and sacred hunting ground for the Osage Indians, who lived in villages along the Osage River on the Ozark border. Here in the southeast, they hunted animals such as elk, beaver, and bear.

The first people of European descent that the Osage saw were French trappers, who established trade with the Osage and began mining the stores of lead in the St. Francois Range.

The United States acquired the Ozarks through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, and it was the discoveries made by geologists which brought settlement to Missouri. Iron mining on Shepherd Mountain and Pilot Knob Mountain led to the development of towns where people of all occupations began to settle. Though the region was one of the first to be settled in Missouri due to its bountiful mineral resources, it has maintained an untouched quality, due to the rugged-

ness of much of the landscape.

Arcadia Valley is comprised of the three side by side cities of Arcadia, Ironton and Pilot Knob, all founded in the 19th century. The area is aptly named for the ancient Greek province of Arcadia, whose mountainous topography and sparse population of pastoralists led to the word's evolution as a poetic term for an idyllic vision of unspoiled wilderness. The city of Ironton was chosen as county seat in 1857.

In April 1858, the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railway was completed as far south as Pilot Knob before construction was halted during the Civil War, which the valley experienced first hand at Fort Davidson during the Battle of Pilot Knob. The Iron County Courthouse bears the scars of cannon fire that can still be seen today, and one can hike to the top of Shepherd Mountain and see where the cannon emplacements are.

Granite has been commercially quarried since 1869 in the vicinity of Elephant Rocks State Park. The red architectural granite quarried in the area has been

used in buildings in St. Louis and other areas in the country. It is currently marketed as Missouri Red monument stone.

Geology students across the country visit the Valley every year to observe the unique rock structures and geologic history that make the Valley so special.

Arcadia Valley has long served as a retreat from the city for St. Louisans and has been described as "Missouri's best kept secret" by those possessing the knowledge of its existence. Many city dwellers built summer homes in Arcadia Valley in the early 20th century. The region is bursting with the beauty of untouched wilderness with nearby state parks and national forest. Now, due to the development of bike trails on Shepherd Mountain which caught the attention of mountain bike enthusiasts across the nation, Arcadia Valley is growing its potential as an outdoor destination, attracting new visitors each year, many who can't wait to come back and experience more of the natural splendor which is so abundant here.

Historical Iron County Courthouse



Photo by Susan Smith Kline

Iron County, Missouri, was created by an act of the Missouri General Assembly on February 1857. Elections were held to determine which town in the newly organized area should be the county seat. At the time, a 112 acres lot belonging to businessmen David Carson and Hiram N. Tong was being surveyed for the establishment of a new town -- Ironton. Carson and Tong offered to donate alternate lots to be sold at public auction, with proceeds to be used in the construction of a county courthouse, on the grounds that Ironton be made the county seat. An election for the location of the county seat was subsequently held between Middlebrook, Pilot Knob, Arcadia and Ironton. In September of 1857, Ironton was chosen as the county seat, and a public auction was arranged. Money from

the sale of these lots provided more than \$10,000 of the \$14,000 cost of the courthouse.

Architect Henry H. Wright was awarded \$25 for his design and specifications for the building, and the court authorized the building contract to George S. Evans and William F. Mitchell. Superintendent of building construction was the Hon. J.V. Logan, first Presiding Judge of the Iron County court. The cornerstone ceremony took place on July 4, 1858. Forming the northeast corner of the structure, the cornerstone contains a copy of the Declaration of Independence, a copy of a free soil newspaper, the Ironton Furnace, and numerous other articles, such as U.S. coins. The building became ready for occupancy in October 1860.

Civil War History: Battle of Pilot Knob

by Susan Smith Kline

In September 1864, an army of Confederate soldiers, 12,000 strong marched from Arkansas into Missouri, led by Major General Sterling Price. They were heading to Fort Davidson which was defended by only 1,500 Union soldiers which were led by Brigadier General Thomas Ewing Jr.

General Price thought that there, he could obtain arms for his 3,000 unarmed soldiers. Feeling one swift assault would overwhelm the fort, Price ordered his men to divide up and move in from different directions. One brigade went over the top of Pilot Knob Mountain, while another went over Shepherd Mountain with plans to use the cannons atop the mountains to fire on the fort as the attack began. A third brigade went around the base of Shepherd Mountain, and the fourth charged through the valley between the mountains.

It didn't work out quite as General Price had planned. The multiple attacks were not coordinated giving General Ewing's men time to redirect their fire. As the smoke cleared it revealed nearly 1,200 dead and wounded Confederates covering the battleground.

As the remaining Confederate troops were busy build-

ing ladders to scale Fort Davidson's steep walls, inside the fort, General Ewing and his men were making plans. Though they suffered only an estimated 100 casualties and 28 deaths, they were low on ammunition and wouldn't be able to hold out for another day of battle.

During the night, the Union soldiers stealthily evacuated the fort, blowing up the powder magazine as they departed leaving the fort a smoldering crater.

The Confederate troops believed an accident had occurred at the fort and the survivors would surrender at dawn. While inspecting the fort the following morning, Price discovered that Ewing and his men were gone. General Price, who lost 10 percent of his men, declined to pursue General Ewing.

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site now serves as a memorial to the many soldiers who lost their life there. The earthworks of the fort are mostly intact and visitors can explore this as well as a portion of the original battlefield. A full-scale reenactment of the Battle of Pilot Knob is held every three years and attracts thousands of spectators to Arcadia Valley.

On the site, a granite monument marks the place which is the mass grave. Maps for locations throughout the valley that were significant points on the battlefield are available at the Visitor's Center and Museum.

Ulysses S. Grant started out his Civil War career in command of Federal volunteers in the State of Missouri.

There is a monument in Ironton memorializing the place where Ulysses S. Grant received notice in August of 1861 that he had been promoted to Brigadier-General of Federal Volunteers. The promotion was retroactive to May 17, 1861.

Grant wrote about this in his memoirs:

"Shortly after my promotion I was ordered to Ironton, Missouri, to command a district in that part of the State, and took the 21st Illinois, my old regiment, with me. Several other regiments were ordered to the same destination about the same time. Ironton is on the Iron Mountain railroad, about seventy miles south of St. Louis, and situated among hills rising almost to the dignity of mountains."



Photo by Susan Smith Kline



The Arcadia Academy, a breathtaking historical gem nestled into our valley, is a place that is rich with stories. Its unique history is an obvious highlight, and then there's the stories of how it can come alive with the sounds and spirits of forgotten times...

In 1846, Rev. Jerome Berryman, a well-known Methodist circuit riding preacher, completed his project with

his brother by his side. They had built a place of higher learning, called Arcadia College. The impressive and romantic 16 room structure was surrounded by almost pure wilderness. There was no Iron County or Arcadia Valley at that time, but families began to move to the area so their children could attend Rev. Berryman's school. Tuition was \$10-\$16.

The school was closed at the beginning of the Civil War and used as a Union hospital until 1863. The school reopened but didn't see the same success as it had under Rev. Berryman until Mother Johanna of the Ursuline Order purchased the buildings and the grounds in 1877 for \$30,000. The original structure was now accompanied by an unfinished four-story brick building, which had been built in 1870. The Sisters got to work, and the Ursuline Academy for girls prospered. The breathtaking St. Joseph's Chapel was built in 1907, featuring some of the most beautiful stained glass in the world. A four story wing was added in 1913, and when the 1870

building burned in 1917, a three story wing was built to replace it. In 1922, another wing was added connecting to the Chaplain's residence. The Gymnasium, which features a unique roof truss system designed in Germany, was erected in 1930. During peak years, more than 100 girls were boarded and educated at the Academy. The curriculum was prestigious, the school had an impressive library, and students were immersed in music and culture. The gorgeous setting of the grounds was enhanced by landscaping and even an artificial lake.

1970 marked the last graduating class, and the Academy then served as a convent; however, many children still had the privilege of learning from the Sisters through a day care center they operated. The facility was closed down when the nuns were moved to St. Louis in 1985.

The buildings are now owned by the Oyler family and houses a restaurant, bakery, ice cream parlor, candy shop, and antique mall. Lodging is also available.

Whistle Junction Visitors Center and Museum

One of the best places to experience the history of the valley is the Iron County Historical Society Museum. The Society's museum is located inside the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center and remains open on a limited weekend schedule. Those hours are Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Among the highlights of their collection are the remnants of the Union Garrison Flag that flew over the powder magazine at Fort Davidson (Pilot Knob) on the night of 27 September 1864 before the Union forces blew up the powder magazine after they had made their successful escape from the fort. Adorn-

ing the walls are part of the over 100 enlarged photographs that were gathered and annotated. Lester Keathley donated her extensive rock and mineral collection featuring many samples from deep inside Iron County mines. Charles Ottman donated his extensive collection of Missouri Pacific Railroad Memorabilia and there is an extensive collection of Native American arrow and spear heads that were all found on the Kelton White farm outside of Arcadia. This accounting doesn't even include all the original records that the Society has in its collection including maps, school records, etc.

3700 MO-21, Arcadia, MO (573) 546-3513



THE NATURE

The Dogwood People

By Sydney Joy Willis

Photo by Susan Smith Kline

The Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) is Missouri's state arboreal emblem. The tree's eye-catching blooms are nearly as enchanting as the supernatural tales entangling them.

Like many cultures around the world, the Cherokee Indians believed in a small race of anthropomorphic spirits known as the "Little People", or Yunwi Tsunsi, which compare to the Celtic pixies or the Irish leprechaun. They believed this divine little race was sent to teach people to live in harmony with the woods. There are three clans of Little People: Rock People, Laurel People, and Dogwood People.

The Rock Little People were known to be mean and vengeful, but only in response to being invaded. The Laurel People just liked to have fun: they were light hearted and joyful. Last but not least, the Dogwood peo-

ple were benevolent creatures who loved to help others. Their teachings are simple: respect the boundaries of others, don't take life too seriously, and do good for goodness sake without expecting a reward. If we consider the beauty of the tree, and its value as a resource, it's easy to understand why the kindest of the Little People were called the Dogwood People.

The Cherokee are said to have brought the Little People with them when they were forcefully removed from their homelands after Andrew Jackson passed the Indian Removal Act on May 28th 1830. The Cherokees traveled across the states of Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas by foot, horse, wagon, or steamboat. Their journey became known as the Trail of Tears due to thousands of deaths that occurred during the forced marches.

"Long time we travel on way to new land. People feel

bad when they leave old nation. Women cry and make sad wails. Children cry and many men cry, and all look sad like when friends die, but they say nothing and just put heads down and keep on go towards West. Many days pass and people die very much. We bury close by Trail." –Survivor of the Trail of Tears.

In Missouri, they camped in the Upper Arcadia Valley near what is today Fort Davidson State Historic Site.

Whether you call Missouri home or are simply passing through, I think we should all take a moment to acknowledge the Dogwood and what it represents. And as we remember the horrors inflicted on the Cherokee Nation, it does our souls a service to ponder the teachings of the Dogwood People. May we learn to respect each other, give selflessly, and laugh at life.



SPRING BEAUTY

By Mariah Earthkeeper Fabry



Surrounded by mountains and wildflowers, play a round of frisbee golf or jog the quarter-mile track at Arcadia Valley Sports Complex. Observe butterflies, water turtles and the elusive paw paw's purple blooms as you hike the mile-plus cross country course that encircles the complex. From the wooden bridge which spans Stouts Creek on the east border, relax to the sound of spring-fed water tumbling over rhyolite stones laid down by volcanoes millennia ago. Geology students clamor to study the impressive variety of rock formations visible right on the surface here in Arcadia Valley. Wildflowers dot the woods and pastures from March thru November, but none are more delicate and rewarding than the spring ephemerals--Dutchmen's Breeches hang their tiny pink trousers from stalks emerging from mossy bluffs and Spring Beauty opens white five-petaled blooms striped with bright pink. Violets in white, blue or bi-colors provide a ground-cover of bright

edible flowers and leaves. Rue Anemone's lacy foliage and double-petaled blooms will make you rue the day you spend inside away from their splendor. Wild Sweet William and his cousin Moss Phlox brighten the shaded woods with stalks of purple stars. New wildflowers begin blooming almost every day along Arcadia Valley trails and roads. Recently bloomed this Spring: coreopsis, silene, spiderwort, penstemon, nodding milkweed, false dandelion, squaw weed, birds foot violet, Philadelphia Fleabane, wild raspberry, dead nettle.... Birders might spot killdeer, ruby-throated hummingbirds, pileated woodpeckers, or a pair of Bald Eagles (spotted at Marble Creek Campground.) And as the black vultures circle overhead, you'll realize that today is the day to get out and enjoy your life--soak in the serene scenic beauty of Arcadia Valley, Missouri.

John and Ellen Proffitt

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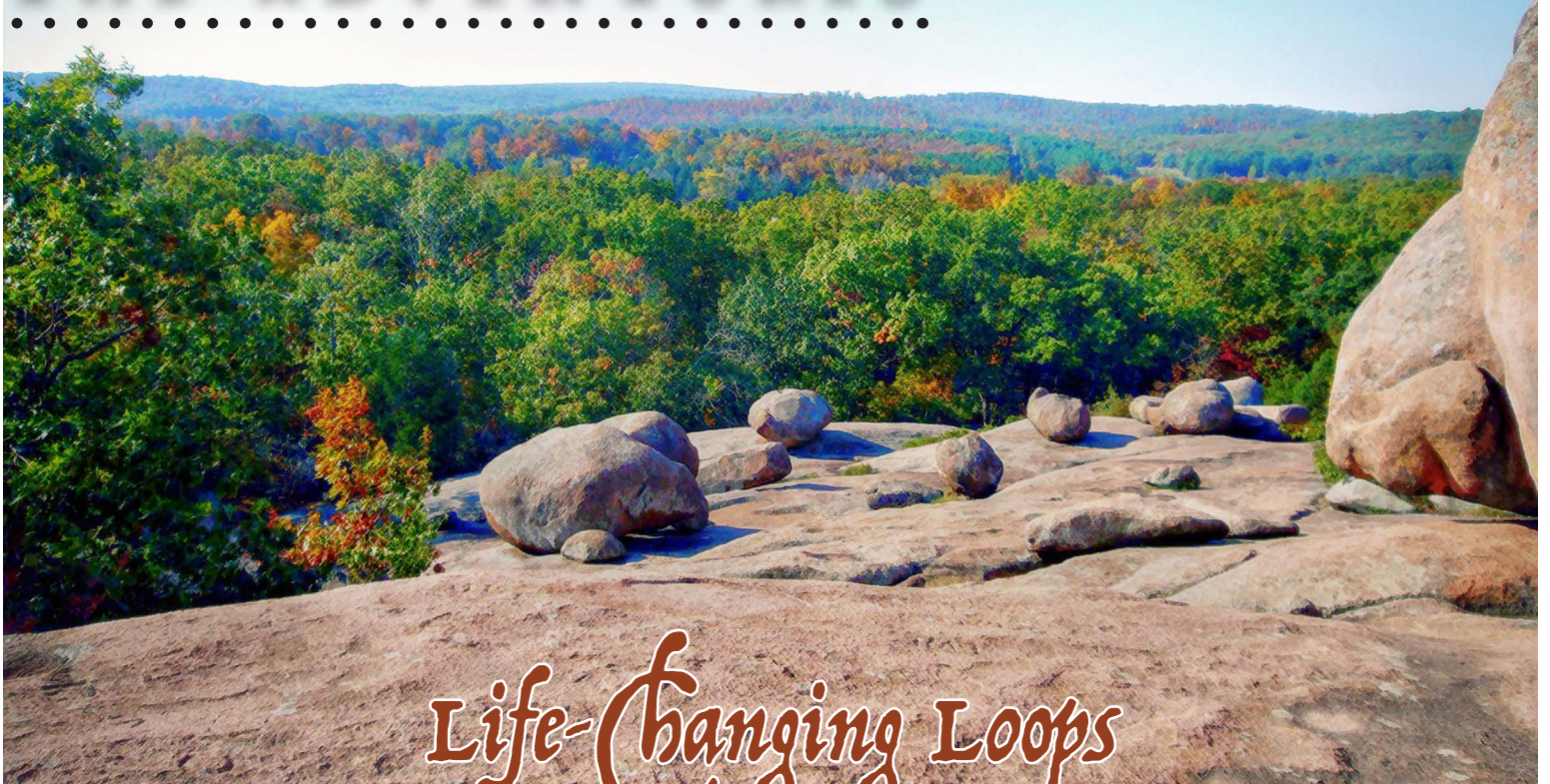
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THE ADVENTURES



Life-Changing Loops

A view atop the boulders at Elephant Rocks

Photos by Susan Smith Kline

There are three day hikes recommended to any Arcadia Valley wanderer who asks. These trails are not only perfect for a few hours of walking immersed in nature, but are also distinctly unique from each other in both difficulty and view. Located at three beautiful Missouri State Parks, these loops have the potential to change your perspective on life -- if you let them. Sometimes the best journeys lead you right back where you started.

Braille Trail: Elephant Rocks State Park

Awe-inspiring granite boulders take center stage at the 7.5-acre Elephant Rocks Natural Area and can easily be viewed Braille Trail, which was designed in 1981 to provide access especially for those with visual or physical disabilities. The trail passes by a quarry pond, which now supports a variety of animal life. This asphalt trail features interpretive signage.

A short spur off of the trail takes visitors to the top of the granite outcrop, where they can explore the maze of giant elephant rocks, which were formed from 1.5 billion year old granite. Spur trails off the main trail include one passing through "Fat Man's Squeeze," a narrow gap between two boulders that leads hikers to

an abandoned quarry where Missouri red granite was quarried from the 1860s through the early 1900s., and another that goes through "The Maze," a 100-foot section of scattered boulders. An extension off the trail leads back to the ruins of an old railroad engine house, a remnant of the area's quarrying and railroad history. Picnic tables are scattered among the trees and provide great spots to have a picnic lunch or rest and enjoy the fascinating geologic formations found throughout the park.

Distance: 0.9 Mile
Uses: Hiking
Surface Type: Paved/Concrete
Trail Rating: Easy

Scan for more about Elephant Rocks State Park.



Mina Sauk Falls Trail: Taum Sauk Mountain State Park

Mina Sauk Falls Trail provides access to two of Missouri's most important geologic wonders - its highest point and its tallest waterfall. From the parking area, a



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short walk along a wheelchair-accessible trail leads to the top of Taum Sauk Mountain and the highest point in the state at 1,772 feet above sea level. Beyond this point, the trail becomes rocky and rugged, passing through oak-hickory woodlands that give way to rocky, open glades with expansive and impressive views of the St. Francois Mountains. The trail passes along the top of Mina Sauk Falls, the tallest waterfall in Missouri. Cascading 132 feet over a series of ledges into Taum Sauk Creek, this wet-weather waterfall flows best after a rain. A hike back up the mountain ends at the trailhead. This is a strenuous and challenging trail so be prepared for the rugged, rocky climb and carry plenty of water. Hikers may encounter water crossings in wet weather.



The Taum Sauk Section of the Ozark Trail can be accessed from Mina Sauk Falls Trail. These two trails run together for approximately one mile. At the top of the falls, the Ozark Trail continues down the valley while Mina Sauk Falls Trail loops back up the mountain.

Distance: 2.9 Miles
 Uses: Hiking
 Surface Type: Natural, Paved/Concrete
 Trail Rating: Rugged



Scan for more about Taum Sauk Mountain State Park.

Shut-Ins Trail: Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park

Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park offers ancient beauty. The wilderness qualities and geology of the surrounding St. Francois Mountains make this park a special place to visit. Shut-Ins Trail takes visitors to its namesake - the shut-ins. This rocky gorge along the East Fork of the Black River has thrilled visitors for generations. From the main parking lot, an easy, wheelchair-accessible .30-mile trail leads to an observation platform above the flowing waters of the shut-ins. The trail then becomes more difficult, continuing up a stairway. Entering the East Fork Wild Area, Shut-Ins Trail follows natural tread through oak-hickory forest and small glade clearings, eventually returning to the main parking lot.

This loop trail involves some short rocky climbs and a long series of stairs. White connector 2 is available to shorten the hike. Hikers may also encounter some water crossings in wet weather. Carry plenty of water, since no drinking water is available along the trail. This trail is for day-use hiking only. No pets are allowed on Shut-Ins Trail. The park also features equestrian and hardened surface bike trails.

Distance: 2.3 Miles
 Uses: Hiking
 Surface Type: Boardwalk, Natural, Paved/Concrete
 Trail Rating: Moderate



Scan for more about Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park



The Shut-Ins serve as a popular swimming hole on hot summer days



Fishing Along Shepherd Mountain Lake



Photo by Susan Smith Kline

Shepherd Mountain Lake, a 23 acre reservoir spanning the space between Shepherd Mountain and Arcadia Valley Outdoors, has served as a popular fishing spot for both visitors and locals for alike for generations. On the east side of the lake, a public pier sits below Ironton Water Works. Shepherd Mountain Lake Park is located just beyond the dam, accessible by Highway M. The park sports picnic benches and a spacious lawn for lounging and fishing with an uninterrupted view of Ironton's jewel -- Shepherd Mountain. The entrance to Arcadia Valley Outdoors campground is just beyond the park. Included in trail development at the campground is the revival of an old fishing trail

starting from the park and winding through the woods and along the lake's west shore, which has multiple large rock features from which to cast a line. This public trail provides access to many more perspectives of the serene landscape -- and more fish. Species caught from the lake include Bluegill, Catfish, Bullhead, Crappie, Sunfish, and Largemouth Bass. No boats are permitted on the lake other than those which permanently reside there. Of course, make sure you have your permit and follow all fishing guidelines specified by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Scan the code for more about fishing in Missouri.

Why You Deserve A Bike

By Sydney Joy Willis

Have you ever thought of yourself as a motor? Well, that's exactly what you can become with the assistance of a brilliant 19th century invention - the bicycle - a tool which increases the efficiency of your movement. Our ability to create and use tools is something that makes us uniquely human, and the tools we choose to use define the course of history. To some, a bicycle may seem like a tool of the past in a world where nearly everyone owns a motor vehicle and entertainment is unlimited, but I dream of a future where bikes rule the road. Here are three indisputable reasons why you deserve a bike:

You deserve affordable, reliable transportation. Not only are bikes typically much cheaper than other forms of transportation, but they also require no fuel other than the energy of the rider. They also require no insurance and less maintenance, and the skills required to fix them are more accessible. Though permanently trading out one's car for a bicycle is not realistic for most, many of us regularly get in our vehicles to travel very bikeable distances. According to a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation, nearly 60% of household vehicle trips are less than six miles one-way. These are lost opportunities to save our money, health, and planet. It's time we start looking at our motor vehicles as the second option.

You deserve physical well-being. Maintaining one's health has continued to get more complicated over the years as the world encourages and even demands a sedentary lifestyle. Many of us go from our homes to our vehicles to our jobs and responsibilities and back home again, without spending much time outdoors and often not getting enough exercise. Implementing

biking into your daily life will have life changing health benefits, including strengthening the upper-respiratory and immune system. And, obviously, cycling burns calories, helping with weight loss and maintaining healthy weight. Cycling also builds muscle, but in a low-impact way, lessening the chances of impact related injury or pain. It also improves balance, posture, and coordination. Additionally, biking is one of the best activities for an exercise novice.

You deserve mental well-being. Exercise promotes the release of endorphins, and exercising outdoors only increases the effects. Combine these chemical releases with the confidence that comes from personal growth, the satisfaction of self-reliance, and the knowledge that you are choosing a tool which preserves both your health and that of the planet, and you've got yourself a recipe for feeling good. Regular exercise also improves sleep cycles, which have huge effects on mental health. Biking also provides a lesson in perspective and a reminder to slow down. The scenery passes by more leisurely, allowing space for notice and appreciation. The wind wakes up the senses as one's breath becomes a rhythm. Riding a bike can actually be very meditative. When we replace ourselves with an artificial motor, we do not feel the frustration of the climb, the satisfaction of reaching the top, nor the pure joy of Earth's gravitational pull as we are propelled downhill. This is life - the moments that challenge us and demand our perseverance and grit are often followed by the days that fly past us as we bask in all the good that existence can bring. When we choose motor vehicles, we are depriving ourselves of the experience of life.



Photo by Susan Smith Kline



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Millstream Gardens Conservation Area is a 916-acre tract of land in Madison County, about halfway between Fredericktown and Arcadia, off of Highway 72. The spectacular Tiemann Shut-ins are within the area's boundaries. The St. Francis River forms one of the area's western boundaries, then meanders eastward for 1.2 miles through the area's mid-southern section, before rushing through the shut-ins and passing into the Silver Mines area. The area's woodlands are composed primarily of oak, hickory, and pine in the uplands, and ash, elm, and maple along the river border and its drainages. The St. Francis River at Millstream Gardens and its wooded corridor is a part of Missouri's Natural Area System. This large stream contains an adjoining slough and large igneous shut-ins. Each year in March this river is home to the Missouri Whitewater Championships. The event consists of slalom, downriver and boatercross races for all ages, kayaks, canoes and skill levels on class II-III whitewater.



Floating the Black River

Located about 15 minutes from the Valley, the Black River is a tranquil treasure not to be missed. Experience a relaxing trip through the shimmering waters of Missouri's clearest stream. Seasoned and first-time floaters alike can choose from canoes, rafts, tubes or kayaks. From a misty morning rendezvous to a festive group float in the sun-drenched afternoon, Black River caters to your every whim.

Marble Creek Recreation Area

Marble Creek, which travels through the National Forest for about 20 miles, is named for its colorful deposits of dolomite, which was mined and used as "Taum Sauk Marble" many years ago. This beautiful creek is the focus of Marble Creek Rec Area, which also offers a primitive campground, a picnic area, and is the main trailhead for the Ozark Trail - Marble Creek Section. Along the creek, you can see the remains of a grist mill dam and building foundation. The dam was the third to be built here, and was operated until 1935. The 8-mile segment of the Ozark Trail goes from here to Crane Lake, and is open to hikers, mtn bikers, and equestrian riders.

MoCreekin

Looking for a definitive guide to paddling in the St. Francois Mountains? Look no further than MoCreekin, a website curated by avid Arcadia Valley river rats who know the secrets of Missouri streams. Within the website pages you will find information on the various whitewater runs that can be found in Missouri. Scan the code to check it out!



 An advertisement for Ironton City Pool. The background image shows an outdoor swimming pool with a blue and white striped umbrella, a white lounge chair, and two red plastic chairs on the pool deck. The pool water is clear blue.

Ironton City Pool

Admission: \$5 per swimmer

Hours: 12pm - 5pm

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TRAILS

COOLIO'S CLIMB ACCESS TRAIL/HIKING

Riders who prefer pedaling up rather than getting a lift can take this trail to the top. The length is approximately 2.3 miles. The trail features loose rock, punchy hills, rock glades, and inspirational views. If you are hiking up or down, please watch for bikers. The trail is uni-directional (up only) for bikers. The average grade is around 5-6 degrees.

TROLLEY TRACK GREEN

This trail is appropriate for novice riders and is made for maximum fun! It's full of rollers to keep your speed up with minimal pedaling while providing plenty of opportunities for air-time for more advanced riders. While the trail is smooth, new riders should beware of the steep sections!

ELEMENT 26 BLUE FLOW

The bottom of this trail is shared with Trolley Track, and the whole trail reflects the same fun and flowy style. However, it is much steeper and faster with additional features such as drops, tables, and natural rock features, though there are ride-arounds for less ambitious riders. This trail is also the longest and requires the most pedaling.

MINESHAFT BLUE TECHNICAL

This intermediate trail is a roller coaster of varying terrain. While there are no mandatory drops or jumps, the trail contains fun rock features and steep, technical sections. The trail finishes with a big jump line shared with Cannonball.

POWDERKEG BLACK DIAMOND

The upper section features a perfect combination of sweeping turns, great dirt and enough downhill grade to keep things fast and fun. Keep your momentum as you enter the slotted rock formation as there won't be any pedaling while you're rolling through. After the big, open glade, things get steep and tricky, with rock gardens that have no smooth lines whatsoever. Midway you'll encounter the Corkscrew! Check it out before you drop in. The trail is steep, tricky and rocky the rest of the way down.

CANNONBALL DOUBLE BLACK DIAMOND

While the top is fine for intermediate riders, it changes quickly! Once riders reach the mandatory, super-steep roll-in, things get technical quickly. Riders that make it to the end will be rewarded with the huge jump line at the bottom.

Mountain Bike Responsibility Code

Mountain Biking involves the risk of serious injury or death. Your knowledge, decisions, and actions contribute to your safety and that of others. For your safety and the safety of others, please always adhere to the code.

STAY IN CONTROL. You are responsible for avoiding objects and people.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS. Ride within your ability. Start small and work your way up.

PROTECT YOURSELF. Use an appropriate bike, helmet, and protective equipment. Helmets are REQUIRED and other protective equipment is strongly recommended.

INSPECT & MAINTAIN YOUR EQUIPMENT. Know your components and their operations prior to riding. Inspect your bike or have it checked by a qualified bike mechanic before you ride.

INSPECT THE TRAILS AND FEATURES. Conditions change constantly; plan and adjust your riding accordingly.

OBEY SIGNS AND WARNINGS. Stay on marked trails only. Keep off closed trails and features. Ride in direction indicated.

BE VISIBLE. Do not stop where you obstruct a trail, feature, landing, or are not visible.

LOOK OUT FOR OTHERS. Look both ways and yield when entering or crossing a road or trail. When overtaking, use caution and yield to those ahead. Look uphill and yield to other riders when entering a trail or starting downhill.

Shepherd Mountain Bike Park Rules

- Helmets are mandatory for all users and other protective equipment is strongly recommended.
- All users age 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult or legal guardian at all times while utilizing the bike park.
- All ticket holders for the shuttles are required to complete the release of liability form. Any person under the age of 18 must have a parent/legal guardian present to sign a mountain bike release of liability form.
- Full suspension mountain bikes are recommended.
- For your safety and preservation of the trails, take note and abide by closed areas, hazard markings and signage. Ride only on designated trails that are open. Uphill riding is only allowed on the designated uphill trails.
- There are associated risks to your bike and yourself when using the shuttles and bike trails. SMBP is not responsible for injury or damage. You assume ALL the risk.
- Always use caution and dismount during times of heavy traffic.
- ATV's, trucks, heavy machinery, and maintenance personnel may be encountered at any time. Use caution. The shuttles and bike park may close at any time for inclement weather. Seek shelter during lightening storms and other bad weather.

RAW TRAILS

As the word raw implies, these trails have an unpolished quality, with minimal interference with the natural terrain. These trails also do not exit at the same location as the official trails and instead spit riders out at different points around the base of the mountain. Many were used as stages for the 2022 Big Mountain Enduro. These trails are great for experienced riders looking to change things up or for those who'd like to travel over the mountain to reach different points within the city of Ironton.

\$300 SEASON PASS

Want unlimited shuttling up Shepherd Mountain Bike Park year-round? Look no further! Your Annual Pass includes:

- Unlimited shuttle passes
- 10% off all merchandise at the Wheel House

\$30 SHUTTLE TICKETS

Shuttle tickets MUST be purchased in advance online and retrieved in-person at The Wheel House.

Wheel House Hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 8:30 AM-4:30 PM

WEBSITE

Scan the code to visit the website, purchase shuttle tickets, etc.



M A P



.....Other Adventures Around the Corner.....

Council Bluff Recreation Area, located next to the largest lake on the Mark Twain National Forest, is perfect for anyone looking to enjoy the outdoors. The area provides ample opportunities for camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, swimming and more. The site is large and spread out, the campground and beach are about a 1 mile hike apart, the hike/bike is downhill from the campground to the beach, but uphill coming back. Council Bluff Lake was created by a dam built across Big River. It is 440 acres in size and 87 feet deep in some places.

The Chapel Hill Beach is at the eastern end of the campground and provides 1.25 acres of sandy beach. The beach is accessible via a short walkway from the parking area. Boating and paddling is a popular pastime on the lake, but all boats on the lake must operate at a no-wake speed. Visitors can access the water via the two boat ramps located at the lake.

Fishing is also available. Anglers can expect a catch of a variety of freshwater fish, including bass, bluegills, catfish and crappies. The 12-mile Council Bluff Trail encircles the lake, with spurs to the campground. Hikers can enjoy scenic views of the lake and a look at the Mark Twain wilderness. The Ozark Trail connects to the Council Bluff Trail at Trace Creek mile 15. Waterfowl hunting is allowed on Council Bluff Lake and the nearby Enough Fields provide upland game opportunities. A variety of wildlife makes its home in the heavily wooded area.

Silver Mines Recreation Area

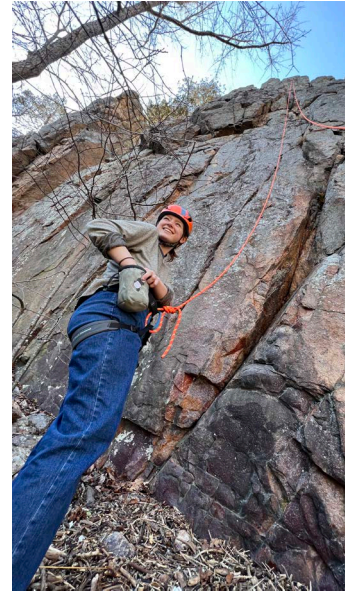
Silver Mines offers a variety of recreational opportunities and is abundant with historic and geological wonders. This beautiful area is located along the St. Francis River, the only river in Missouri classified as "white water," and is used for kayaking during the spring high waters. People enjoy hiking and fishing along the river throughout the

year. Silver Mines is located at a historic mining operation and is known for its Precambrian granite and felsite rocks. The area is named for the abandoned "Einstein Mine", which was mined for Silver, Tungsten and Lead. The Einstein Silver Mining Company began mining in 1877, and mining ceased completely in 1946.

Climbing at Johnson's Shut-Ins

In August 2021, Missouri State Parks partnered with BETA Fund to install top-anchors along the bluffs at Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park for the purpose of making outdoor rock climbing more accessible. The installation of these anchors maintains the traditional climbing ethic of the area while also meeting State Parks goals for improving climbing access. BETA Fund is a 501c3 non-profit organization committed to protecting outdoor resources in the midwest for the purposes of recreational rock climbing.

This historic climbing area features over 60 traditional routes, many of which are Missouri classics. Amateurs should be sure to go with a guide or skilled climber to receive training, and to always use the proper gear and safety measures. Be sure to obtain your free daily climbing permit from the visitors center before climbing at Johnson's Shut-Ins.



..... Play in Town



This beautiful 9 hole course plays 3,330 yards from the longest tees for a par of 36. The clubhouse serves hot food and refreshing drinks. Members and their guests have access to the pool. Call to set up your tee time today!

(573) 546-9508

Clubhouse hours:
Tues - Fri 8am to 8pm

Leagues

Couples scramble: Thursdays @ 5pm

Seniors scramble: Wed, Fri & Sun @ 10am

Green Fees

Mon - Thurs

9 holes \$18 • with cart \$24

18 holes \$24 • with cart \$32

Twilight (unlimited play with cart after 3pm) \$26

Fri - Sun

9 holes \$22 • with cart \$28

18 holes \$28 • with cart \$36

Twilight (unlimited play with cart after 3pm) \$30

Children 14 and under:

unlimited play \$14



Arcadia Valley Sports Complex

The Arcadia Valley Sports Complex is a multi-use sports and recreation facility located and owned by the city of Arcadia and supported by volunteer efforts, fund raisers, and grants. The entrance is located behind the Arcadia Valley High School Career Tech building in Ironton, Missouri.

The Arcadia Valley Sports Complex hosts Kiwanis soccer leagues, Arcadia Valley youth baseball leagues, adult softball leagues, high school track and field and cross country teams, high school girls softball team, Boy Scout flag retirement facility, recreational walking and hiking trails, 400 meter rubberized track, a nine hole double tee box disc golf course, educational kiosks & gardens and various other school and community activities. New bike trails are being implemented as well.

To reserve facilities please contact Jim Erpenbach 573-701-5085, or email jimerpenbach@gmail.com

THE EVENTS

Annual Events

Held at the Iron County Courthouse Square each year in June, the Arcadia Valley BBQ Battle is a free event and a wonderful opportunity to enjoy delicious food and lively musical acts. It is held in conjunction with a 5K run and 2 mile fun run starting in the Courthouse square.



Friday, June 10 - Saturday, June 11, 2022

Arcadia Valley Sports Complex

Commemorating the

15th Year

June 11, 2022

Registration Starts at 9 a.m.
Race Starts at 10 a.m.
Courthouse Square
Main St., Ironton, MO

Medals Awarded
for Top 3 Males and
Top 3 Females
Plus Overall Winner Male & Female

– Age Divisions –
60 & Up, 50-59, 40-49, 30-39,
20-29, 16-19, 13-15, 12 & Under

with the low price
of \$15 for all!
2 Mile Fun Run/Walk
In Conjunction with the Arcadia Valley BBQ Battle

ARCADIA VALLEY COMMUNITY PICNIC &

FAIRY-THEMED

CHALK FEST

Saturday, June 18th, 10am-4pm / Battle of Pilot Knob State Park

Horseshoe & Bean Toss

Tournaments

Food & Drink

Make Your Own Fairy House

Castle Building Contest

Fantasy Photo Booth

Face Painting

Vendor Booths



FREE activities:

Music

Maker Space

Interactive Performances of

Midsummer Night's Dream

Old Time Games & Races

Nerf Gun Fun

& MORE

An Arcadia Moment

Each entry
is a chance
to win!

Sponsored by the Battle of Pilot Knob State Park, AV Chamber, RVRTA, AV Art, and AV Theatre Guild

All proceeds go to this year's AV Chamber of Commerce fireworks display!

15000
in price
per ticket!

In partnership with the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce, Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site will host the first Arcadia Valley Community Picnic. This event is a way for the community to come together and kick off the summer with games, food, kids activities, and a horseshoe and bean toss tournament for the adults and kids. Also, the historic site will partner with the area art guild to host the Arcadia Valley chalk art competition. This year's theme is "Fairy Tales." Visitors can enjoy several fun fantasy activities, including arts, crafts, dressing up for pictures and putting on a play. All proceeds will go toward supporting the annual fireworks display, which the Chamber of Commerce holds on the historic site grounds every Fourth of July.

Independence Day Celebration



3 P.M. - 10:30 P.M.

The Arcadia Valley Chamber of commerce will again partner with Missouri State parks Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site to celebrate the Fourth of July with its annual fireworks display. The display will be held on the grounds of the historic site. The parade begins at 10 am in Ironton.



October 14 & 15 2022

The Arcadia Valley Mountain Music Festival features lively Americana music in the heart of the Missouri countryside. Held both in the spring and fall, this free event includes vendors featuring local craftsmanship at its finest and fun activities for the youngsters. In the fall, it's held alongside Missouri's longest running parade. Visitors are encouraged to bring their instruments and join in on the pickin'!

Christmas in the Valley



Held every December at the Iron County Courthouse grounds and paired with a lights display parade in the evening.

Weekly Events



Living History

This spring and summer Battle of Pilot Knob Historic Site will host a living history event each month, April to September.

Each month, there will be special presentations from reenactors and historic skills demonstrators. Each event will cover a different topic related to the Civil War and the battle. The site also hosts a large reenactment and festival every 3 years. The last one was held in 2021. Pilot Knob.

ARCADIA VALLEY Farmer's Market

Held in the courthouse square Friday and Saturday May through October, the farmer's market gives the opportunity to pick up some locally grown vegetables & plants.

Locally produced handmade crafts and baked items are available as well!
It's local, it's delicious.

Farmer's Market is weather dependent.
Fridays: 2 pm - 7 pm
Saturdays: 7am - 12 pm



Pickin' on the Square

One can also enjoy some mountain music every Friday evening from 6 to 8 at the courthouse lawn thanks to a valley tradition -- Pickin' on the Square.

ARCADIA VALLEY LIONS CLUB



RODEO



– featuring –

I.P.R.A./A.C.R.A. Rodeo

2015 Co-Sanctioned

Rodeo of the Year

30th
Annual

.....
FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

AUGUST 19 & 20 2022

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – RODEO BEGINS AT 8:00 P.M.

RODEO WILL GO ON RAIN OR SHINE – NO REFUNDS

Bull Riding
Barrel Racing
Saddle Bronc Riding

Events:
Team Roping
Calf Roping

Steer Wrestling
Bareback Bronc Riding
Cowgirl Breakaway Roping

\$8000.00 Added Money

Place: Arcadia Valley Lions Club Fairgrounds
Highway 21 & M Ironton, MO

For additional information call Ken & Sue Wooten at (573) 701-1726

LAWN CHAIR SEATING AVAILABLE • NO COOLERS

More Events

Missouri State Parks Union Retreat Auto Tour
 Saturday, September 24, 2022
 Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site

At this event, you can follow interpreters along the route taken by the retreating Union forces, learning about the retreat and several points of interest along the way.

The Baptist Home Annual Auction & Homecoming
 SEPTEMBER, 2022
 The Baptist Home, 101 Riggs Scott Lane, Ironton, MO

The Baptist Home will be hosting their fundraising annual auction and homecoming in September. Scan the code to visit their website.





302 N Main St. Ironton
(573) 432-2220

Tue - Fri: 9am - 5pm
Sat: 9am - 2pm

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LEARN SIMPLE BIKE MAINTENANCE!



MISSOURI STATE PARKS

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CITY OF PILOT KNOB

FREE HELMETS
 WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
SATURDAY, JUNE 25TH
10 AM-2 PM

CHILDREN'S BIKE RAFFLE!



Ozark Regional Library

MORE INFO VISIT : OZARKREGIONAL.ORG

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT AS ADMINISTERED BY THE MISSOURI STATE LIBRARY, A DIVISION OF THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.



Check out one of the *friendliest* **Thrift Stores** in the Valley!

We have great deals on oodles of items from clothing to furniture, home improvement & home decor. Extensive "baby" department, mens suits, prom and evening dresses. Affordable clothing for families, everyday! Proceeds go to fulfill our "Mission".

Our "Mission" is to serve God and individual needs of people in the beautiful Arcadia Valley and surrounding communities.

475 S Main St, Ironton, MO
 Formerly "Grant's Inn"
 573-432-2262 or 573-747-7694

Thrift Store

Community Services and Events

Meeting Room available

14

The Father's Servants, LLC



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- Smoothies • Ice Cream • Gallery
- Live Entertainment
- Event Rental

135 S Main St. Ironton

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Hours:

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Thurs - Fri: 7am - 2pm

Sat: 8am - 2pm

Sun: 8am - 12pm

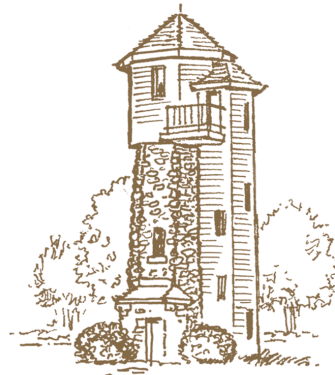
The story begins with a mission of bringing quality, ethically sourced coffee to Arcadia Valley. The beans imported here are directly obtained from Gold Mountain Coffee Growers, a small community of farmers in the Maltogapa and Jinotega regions of Nicaragua. Next, they are roasted in-house by Crystal and Wade Buckman in a beautiful San Franciscan roaster before transforming into the pick-me-ups we all so desperately need. In 2019, Wade Buckman was awarded a Golden Bean for his pour over filter coffee -- a testament to the coffee's quality. Though the beans continue to be roasted with care by the Buckmans, the valley's caffeine capitol is being refashioned by an energetic new owner, image, and name. But the mission has stayed the same -- coffee doing good.

Sherri Merriman moved to Arcadia Valley in the fall of 2017 along with her husband and their menagerie. Relocation gave her the opportunity to turn the historical estate she now calls home into the beautiful piece of property it was destined to be. Here, at The Maples, she has opened a charming bed & breakfast in a historic granite cabin, complete with a patio, hottub, and view of the Ozarks.

As Sherri began integrating herself within the community surrounding her beautiful home, an opportunity presented itself which she refused to pass up -- hence the birth of Arcadia Valley Coffee Company. The next chapter has begun for the shop, but the main characters -- the beans & roaster -- continue to live on.

New additions to the shop include extended hours, delicious pastries, a breakfast cereal bar, hand dipped ice cream, and an art gallery which will feature new exhibits throughout the year. In the near future, we can expect even more new food options and a variety of Missouri made products, leaning into partnerships which help build the small business community. The shop is partnering with Big Heart Tea Co. to pour more quality and ethically sourced drinks into our cups. The shop is also eager to bring back live music on The Woods stage, so be on the lookout for upcoming events.

Arcadia Valley Coffee Co. has plenty of seating, from bistro tables outside to cozy couches in the back. It's the perfect place to catch up with a friend, read a good book, get some work done, and, of course, get your coffee fix.



The Maples

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LUNCH MENU

- Taco Salad** 6.99
Crispy flour tortilla filled with ground beef or shredded chicken topped with cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, and sour cream.
- Taco Salad Fajita** 7.99
Crispy flour tortilla filled with your choice of chicken or steak, sautéed with onion, bell pepper, tomatoes. Topped with lettuce, cheese, and sour cream.
- Fajitas** 8.50
Tender strips of marinated chicken breast or steak cooked with sautéed onions, bell peppers and garnished with lettuce, guacamole, sour cream, Pico de Gallo, tomatoes, and tortillas. Served with rice and beans.
- Huevos Rancheros** 4.50
Ranch-style eggs topped with Mexican sauce, rice, beans, and flour tortillas.
- Chimichanga** 7.99
A flour tortilla filled with your choice of chunks of beef or chicken, deep-fried to a golden brown, and topped with cheese sauce. Served with rice, beans, lettuce, guacamole, sour cream, and Pico de Gallo.
- Taquitos Mexicanos** 6.99
Two rolled corn tortillas stuffed with beef or chicken and deep fried. Served with rice, beans, lettuce, guacamole and sour cream.
- Burrito Checo's** 7.50
A large flour tortilla willed with ground beef or chunks of chicken, topped with lettuce, tomatoes, sour cream and cheese. Served with Mexican rice and beans.
- Pollo Parrilla** 7.99
Grilled half of chicken breast marinated in a special sauce topped with onions, peppers, tomatoes, and melted cheese. Served with rice and beans.
- Speedy Gonzalez** 4.99
One Taco, one enchilada, and either rice or beans.

EXPRESS LUNCH

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 - Enchilada with rice and beans
 - Tamale with rice and beans
 - Toastada with rice and beans
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Chile relleno, taco, beans, and guacamole salad.
 - #2 Special**
One burrito, rice and beans.
 - #3 Special**
Bean Burrito, cheese enchilada, and rice.
- \$5.99**

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Fri - Sat: 11AM - 10PM

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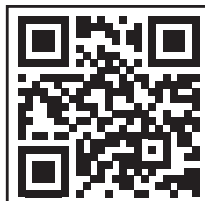


Sunday: 7:00AM - 2:00PM
Monday - Saturday: 7:00AM - 9:00PM

156 South Main Street
Ironton, MO

(573) 432-2301

info@punkinsbb.com



Scan the code to view the menu!



Visitor Spotlight: Brothers of the OT

• • • • • By *Sydney Joy Willis* • • • • •

I serendipitously stumbled upon them at the start of their journey. The men were scattered about the Ketcherside Mountain trailhead along highway 21. For the six travelers, it served as the mouth of a great beast - a four day hike along the Ozark Trail. A few were double checking their packs, cigarettes hung from the mouths of others. They had traveled together from their homes in Chicago for a change of scenery. Each of them carried a pack, weighing on average just under fifty pounds. Their experience was as varied as their get-up. Matt, a member of the National Guard clad in full camouflage, carried the most experience with multiple three night expeditions already under his belt. He explained why they chose this particular section of trail.

"It's drivable from Chicago and you don't need a permit to hike this trail, so it's amenable to quick planning."

His last name - Goggin - also served as inspiration for the route, which would spit them out at Goggin's Mountain Trailhead at Johnson's Shut Ins State Park after three nights on the trail.

"We thought, of all the places on the Ozark trail, why not choose this one. This section is supposed to be really pretty."

The group did a couple of practice runs back in Illinois to get an idea of what they would need and what it's like to carry 50 lbs on your back.

"Could you note in the article that on the second training trip, Luke didn't bring his bag," says Matt.

Luke, who looked as if he was ready to model for REI, laughs this off. He was the only other in the group with previous backpacking experience, having done multiple two night expeditions before, but never three.

"Oh, and three of these guys didn't come because it was too cold. Put that in there," adds JR, who wore a baseball cap, large sunglasses, and what I assume were not hiking shoes. He had never gone overnight backpacking, but had plenty of camping experience.

Dan, looking fresh with his fanny pack and vest, admitted to having zero camping experience. Pat, wearing jeans and a gray sweatshirt, had camped only once. And Zev, who was laid back in both attire and demeanor, was apparently overlooked by this neglectful journalist -- whoops.

Some of the hikers would be sleeping in tents, others in hammocks.

I inquired upon their intentions for the journey:

"Kill Luke and bury his body."

- "Bonding."
- "Something new. Get out of the city. See some stars."
- "This will be good. Life shifting is what I'm thinking."
- And I inquired upon their fears:
- "Pooping."
- "I'm scared of the dark."
- "Organization"
- "That it stops being fun too soon."
- "Just group drama."
- "Laying in the hammock and being exposed to whatever wants to be around."

From left to right:
Dan, Zev, Luke,
JR, Pat & Matt

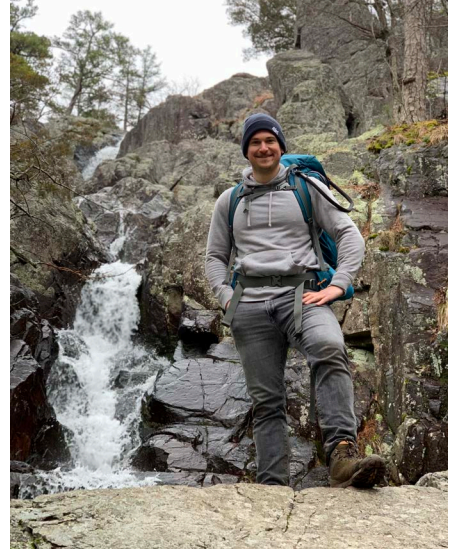
Day 1 journal notes: Biggest scare: JR's ankle. Pat voices concern over sleeping alone with thoughts. Group win: located clean shelter with wood burning stove. Pat destroys sock on stove. Luke claims to have argued and made up with all group members.

Day 2 journal notes: Long day. Did not make it to 15 miles, cut short to 12. Food hung and all camped in woodline, except Zev, who is in the open, where the wild pigs can see him.

Day 3 journal notes: AM: Pat invents and wins throwing rocks at rock monument game. All wonder why we have waited so long to play rock throwing games. PM: Good day. Roaring fire. Mt. Goggin Summit. Luke finally snaps on Goggin, but peace is made. JR ices ankle in lake. Scary podcasts going as night falls.

I arrived with donuts in hand the morning of their completed journey. The exhausted hikers first rambled on about woodpeckers, owls, wild hogs, and coyotes. They spoke of the spots they camped, such as the shelter called "Levi's Place", which they stayed their first night. Their favorite camp was made the last night upon Goggin's Mountain, where they had a roaring fire and listened to scary podcasts. Most of the group was excited to get back home to their beds and showers, other were dreading entering back into the "real world". Some knew that this was a one and done experience, others were looking forward to planning their next trip, but all were glad that they had decided to make the trek and experience three nights under the stars and on the beautiful Ozark trail, disconnected from the stresses of their usual daily existences.

THE PEOPLE

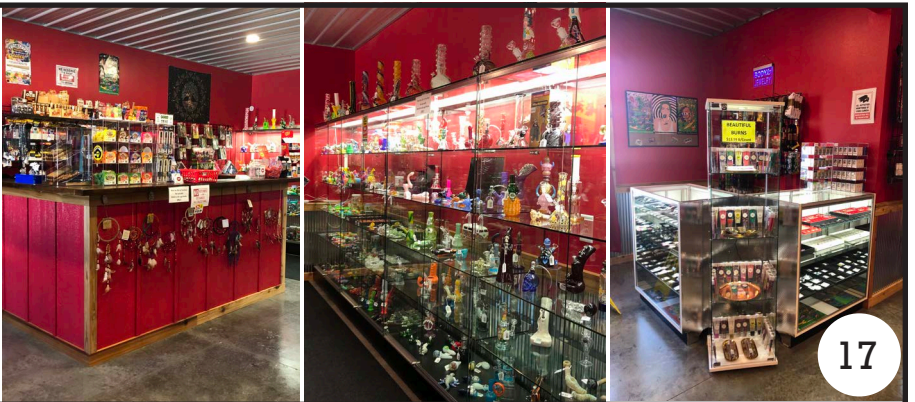


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Introducing: The Shepherd Mountain Race Team

The Shepherd Mountain Race team, consisting of David Boyko, Devin Hines, and Mike Flieg, are competing in the entire Big Mountain Enduro series, re-presenting the city of Ironton, Shepherd Mountain Bike Park, and Missouri mountain biking as a whole.

The team saw success in Ironton, which was stop #1 in the series, with Hines placing 2nd in the men's expert division. It was the most anticipated race for all three riders, who regularly ride at Shepherd Mountain.

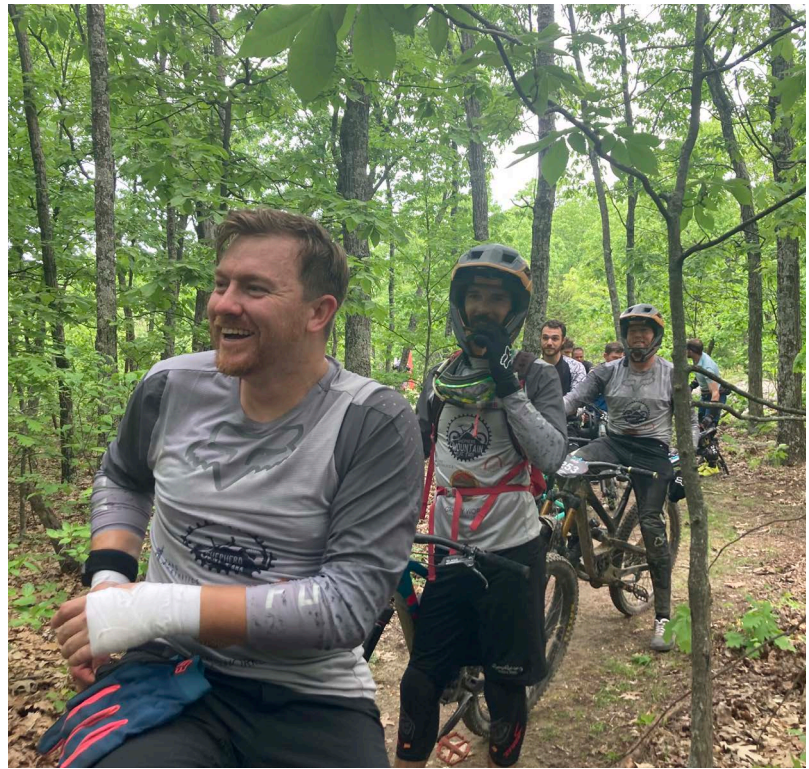
The trio will travel to Big Sky MT in June, Durango Purgatory CO in July, Brian Head UT in August, and Bend/Mt. Bachelor OR in September.

"I'm excited to hit the road to represent what Missouri has to offer, because we're not just there to race, we're there to spread the word," says Hines, who is especially excited to visit Yellowstone and the Teton Range during his travels west. The team will be setting up a booth alongside Director Lacey Cofer at each race and are looking forward to making friends and connections in the mountain biking community.

"This will be my first time out west and riding on big mountains, so I'm excited to do that," says Boyko. Though Shepherd Mountain is comparable in difficulty to the other stops in the series, there are other destinations that could prove challenging to the team due to the size of the mountains and length of the descents. "My goal is to not break my body or my bike," jokes Boyko.

The bikers would love to see the team grow in the future, hoping it will stoke community around bikes and grow the sport in the region. The team would like to thank their sponsors: Zaro Aesteics, Gravity Works, St. Louis Mountain Bike Camps, Arcadia Valley Outdoors.

Scan the code to view the highlights from the 2022 Ironton race!



The Shepherd Mountain race team: (from left to right) Devin Hines, David Boyko & Mike Flieg.



The Award Winning

Brad Wooten

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Local Spotlight: Return to the Ozark's Embrace

By Jeff Orr



I don't suppose it's uncommon for kids to want to leave the place where they grew up to go see the big world outside their kid range. As a teenager, I felt strongly that for me it was different. I needed to get out of this one-stoplight town* because it was simply too small to contain me. There's no symphony orchestra, NFL team, or a silicon chip manufacturing facility—let alone a single skyscraper. What was I to ever do here?

So I left. In 1988, I graduated from Arcadia Valley High School to attend the US Air Force Academy in Colorado followed by a nearly 30-year career in the Air Force that took me and my family all over the world. We lived in and visited foreign countries. We lived in places surrounded by high mountains, places so flat you couldn't see a hill in any direction, places near the ocean, and places in the heartland, deserts, forests, and plains. We lived in places with symphony orchestras, a handful with skyscrapers and even one city with an NFL team.

Not once in all those years did my wife, Bizzy (who's from Gainesville, MO a town smaller than any of the three that comprise the Arcadia Valley), and I ever so much as broach the subject of moving back. Why would we?

Then one day during the dark early days of the recent global scourge whose name I shall not mention, Bizzy, standing in the kitchen of our nice home in a medium-large western city that offered us every amenity we could conceivably care about, asked a question.

"Have you ever thought about moving back to the family farm?" She asked, referring to my family, still located in Iron County, Missouri.

Everything changed in a lightning flash moment. I had spent eighteen years trying to escape that place and thirty years saying I'd never go back, and now a single question had upended my entire world view. We immediately began the process of winding up our careers out west and, in what seemed like a whirl-

wind, landed in a little house in Ironton at the foot of Shepherd Mountain.

Then, looking at Arcadia Valley with the eyes of newcomers, Bizzy and I began falling in love with the little one-stoplight town where I grew up...

When I left Arcadia Valley in the late-80s, outdoor sports still had a bit of a fringe-y feel, at least in rural Missouri. For locals, the outdoors was the exclusive domain of hunters and fishermen. The idea of riding a bike or walking around in the woods without a gun was frankly weird, in my mind at least. Since I never had the patience to hunt or fish, that meant all of my sporting endeavors happened on a court or a field covered in white chalk lines.

That all changed thanks to the Air Force stationing me in several places that featured "real" mountains. Four years in Colorado introduced me to the joys of downhill skiing. Since my friends had grown up skiing as kids, instruction for the sport for me consisted of "come with us, it's not that bad" followed by me tumbling down fields of moguls on which I had no business skiing. Eventually, I learned how to stay upright. Four years of being stationed at Misawa Air Base, Japan with Bizzy turned us into avid hikers, campers and skiers. Almost every weekend found us venturing out into the gorgeous mountains of Northern Honshu, Japan's "main" island. In the winter, we skied at one of the many resorts. In the summer, we camped and hiked.

The Yagen Valley, in particular, became a special, almost spiritual, place for me. At every opportunity, we grabbed our hardcopy Japanese road atlas, loaded up the car, and made the trek deep into the mountains of the Shimokita Peninsula. There, we would be greeted by some of the most beautiful terrain on earth—beach, forest, mountains, streams, trails and natural hot springs. If we were lucky, we would see some of the area's famous snow monkeys. Yagen defined for me what it meant to be in nature.

Moving to the Desert Southwest made it impossible to ski every weekend, but with its 300+ days of sunny weather, and seemingly endless desert and mountain trails, it brought boundless new outdoor opportunities. We fell in with an avid group of triathletes, cyclists and hikers and spent many of our weekends exploring this new environment.

Just like my learning-to-ski experience in the Rocky Mountains, my mountain biking education happened at the hands of friends who were experts and professionals. I spent most of my rides chasing them on my battleship-heavy bike with 26" wheels and rim brakes through terrain I had no business being in. After spending more time upside down in cactus patches than I care to admit, I eventually learned how to be a hack, if at least upright, mountain biker.

While living in the desert, we enjoyed the competitive aspect of our new hobbies. We participated in multiple road triathlons from small, local sprint races to long-course races with thousands of entrants put on by nationally recognized promoters. We raced on foot, on bikes, and in the pool. I even served as a team member in a 24-hour mountain bike race that has since become famous as "the Burning Man of mountain biking." The goal was never to win the race. Rather, it was to be a little bit faster than last time and to spend quality time with good friends (and rivals!). As Bizzy's words "moving back to the family farm" hung in the air, my initial thoughts were some form of "what the heck are we going to DO there??" My family still lived in Iron County, so we would have that connection, but what about Whole Foods? Where we lived, we could walk to Whole Foods. And to the bike store next to Whole Foods. What about the symphony?

Despite the lingering questions, we made a plan, sold a house, a business, and about a third of our belongings and pressed off into what felt like the unknown. As we drove into my old stomping grounds after three days on the road, the questions started coming from Bizzy. Although she also grew up in Southern Missouri, this part of the Ozarks was new territory for her, so naturally she wanted to hear straight from the expert what there was to do here.

"What's that river?" she asked as we crossed over a bridge on Highway 72. I had no idea. As it turns out, it was the St Francis River. The bridge crosses the river about a mile upstream of Millstream Gardens, the site of the Missouri Whitewater Association's State Whitewater Championships. When I found out there was any kind of state championship event held here, I was shocked.

The shocks continued as we settled in. We hiked to Mina Sauk Falls shortly after moving in. I don't remember ever hearing about the falls when I was a kid. We were blown away by how gorgeous they were. Council Bluff Lake (about a 40-minute drive from AVO) is a gorgeous, 440-acre lake with a sandy beach area and a 12-mile perimeter loop suitable for mountain biking and hiking. This lake was relatively new when I was a kid, and I never once

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considered going out there. As an "old newcomer" I found it's a fantastic place for kayaking, fishing, biking, open water swimming and general recreation. Elephant Rocks and Johnson's Shut-Ins are two places where I actually did spend a lot of time outdoors when I was a kid. Elephant Rocks is only a couple of miles down the road from the farm where I grew up in Belleview. My best friend from high school and I like to say that we invented Parkour there in the 80s, scrambling at what were probably unsafe speeds around the giant granite boulders during off peak times when the park was empty. I could tell a similar story about the Shut-Ins, but with the addition of an incredible swimming hole.

Coming home to visit over the years, the parks have continued to be my go-to for running and HIIT-style workouts. Now, the word seems to be out on my outdoor exercise playground. The rock climbing community has discovered them as well. It seems every other time I go to one of the parks, I see climbers walking to the rocks, bouldering crash pad strapped to his or her back. It thrills me to be sharing my outdoor "gym" with new faces from outside the area.

My favorite "new" place in my old hometown is without a doubt, Shepherd Mountain, which is literally in my front yard. I can walk out my front door and 100 yards later I'm at the foot of the mountain on the yet-to-be-named trail that exits the hill on Madison St. From there, it's a bit over a mile, and 630 vertical feet, to the Hub, the highest point on the mountain and the place where the downhill mountain bike trails start.

When I was a kid, I couldn't have told you what the name of the mountain that I drove around every day on my way to school. That's assuming I ever processed the notion that there was a mountain at all.

That partly explains my skepticism when I heard that the City of Ironton had made a rather large investment (bet) on building a downhill mountain bike park. I simply couldn't imagine an outdoor recreation opportunity here that involved bicycles.

Much to my surprise and delight, the opening weekend played host to an event put on by a national-level promoter, Big Mountain Enduro. The atmosphere on the courthouse square with the vendor booths, food trucks, and a legit professional stage rivaled huge events in which I'd participated in major cities like Phoenix and San Diego. To see Ironton pull off a similar spectacle despite having zero experience in that world filled me with a sense of pride that's frankly hard to describe.

Then I started to meet some of the folks who had moved down here because they see the good things happening. One day, in a conversation with Jackson DePew, co-owner of AV Outdoors, I asked him what was the draw? Why here? His answer has stuck with me—the mountains here are, to use his word, "huggable."

Huggable. Although I can't define for you what that means, I'll tell you that I can feel it. The mountain exudes it. There's something about the forest, the rock features, the wildlife, the slope of the terrain, the quiet that engulfs you once you're sheltered from the sounds

of civilization below. In a short time, it's become a spiritual refuge for me the same as Yagen but with groundhogs and whitetail deer instead of mountain goats and snow monkeys. It's huggable.

We've been back to Missouri for about a year, and we continue to be overwhelmed by the quality of the outdoor opportunities which in turn add to our overall quality of life. Where the Arcadia Valley lacks in the skyscraper, symphony and NFL team departments, it more than makes up for in forests, lakes, huggable mountains, and unbelievably outgoing and friendly people.

*Up until 1976, Ironton had a stoplight at the intersection of Main and Russell Streets.

The city removed it and made the intersection a 4-way stop because the light malfunctioned one day giving green lights simultaneously to westbound Russell and southbound Main. My brother, on his way to school in his Hugger Orange (yes, really) 1969 Firebird was halfway through the intersection making a left turn from Russell to Main when he was t-boned by a car traveling south on Main.

The collision sent him careening into a large light pole on the southwest corner of the intersection like a cue knocking the 8-ball into the corner pocket. If not for that pole, his orange Firebird would have been a floor display in the building that currently houses The Lost Cove on the Square. The pole still has the dent from his bumper. Go check it out!

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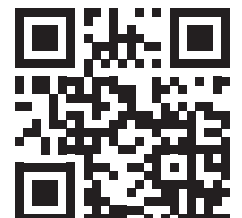
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the sun has kissed my nose
for many hours this past week
sweat has rolled from my brow
or accumulated within my shoes
I've been damp smelly dirty
dusty soggy from the creek

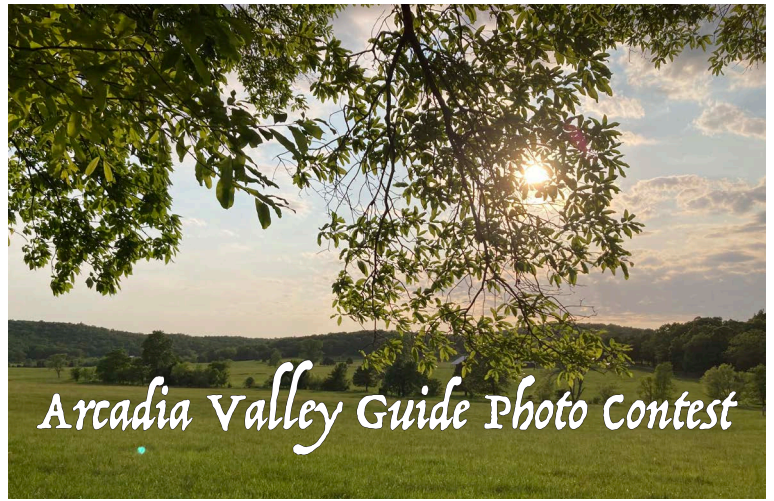
I've been bitten by bugs
and caught in the rain
the wildflowers in the fields
I've learned all their names

I've sat quietly and listened
to the symphony of creation
an orchestra of frogs under the stars
the song of birds at my awakening

upon my own family tree
I've found something quite special
a unique and loving branch

this is why I have fallen in love
with a place called Little Creek Ranch

- Sydney Joy



Arcadia Valley Guide Photo Contest

Calling all locals and visitors who enjoy snapping photos in the valley! To enter this content, submit up to three original photos by emailing them to arcadiavalleyguide@gmail.com along with your name, age, where you're from, and the location of where each was taken. For this debut contest, the theme is "this is a moment to remember" so whip out your camera the next time that thought crosses your mind.

Portrait orientation is preferred, but the only rules are 1) that the photos are your own original work and 2) that the photo was taken within or near Arcadia Valley.

The winning photo will be featured on the next cover of Arcadia Valley Guide, and the winner will receive one free night of glamping in the whimsical Arcadian Oasis site at Arcadia Valley Outdoors! Runner-ups will also be featured in the next issue.

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Thank you

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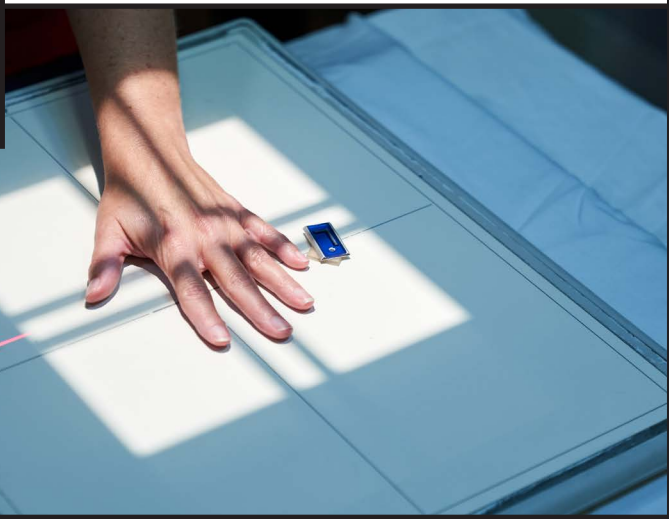
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