



Office of
Jason Crowell State Senator
The Crowell Connection

Senator Jason Crowell proudly represents the people of Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Southeast Missouri Summer Vacation Guide

From the giant Elephant Rocks in Ironton, to the Jaycee Bootheel Rodeo in Sikeston, Southeast Missouri is home to a variety of colorful destinations which we can escape to for fun and adventure.

Big Springs, near Van Buren, is one of the largest springs in the country with an average flow of 276 million gallons of water a day. It is home to 112 species of fish, 196 species of birds and 58 species of mammals.

Elephant Rocks State Park near Ironton is a favorite destination for many. The park features giant red boulders standing end to end, like a train of circus elephants. There is a mile-long path that takes you past the biggest elephant rock, named Dumbo. The rock is 27 feet tall, 35 feet long, and 17 feet wide and weighs 680 tons. Just a few minutes from the park is Johnson Shut-Ins State Park. The park is still recovering from the Taum Sauk failure back in December, but all are welcome to visit the park and see the recovery efforts first hand.

Missouri, the cave state, has more than 5,500 caves. The area from Fredericktown north to Bonne Terre was once the world's largest lead-mining district. At Bonne Terre, you can walk the wide passageways of the world's largest man-made caverns, or scuba-dive in its billion-gallon underground lake.

On the eastern side of this region, explore the Great River Road beginning in Ste. Genevieve. The first French settlers in Missouri came to Ste. Genevieve in 1735. The town features about 50 historic buildings constructed in the French Creole style and many are open for tours. See Indian artifacts and Civil War relics at the Ste. Genevieve Museum.

Maps for self-guided tours are available at the Great River Road Interpretive Center.

Jackson boasts the 3,415-acre Trail of Tears State Park, which serves as a memorial to the Cherokee Indians who passed through the land in 1838. One can walk through the solitude of the dark green forest, camp atop limestone bluffs or picnic as you embrace the majesty of the Mississippi. The park is also a great place to fish for bass, blue gill, and catfish.

Cape Girardeau is of course one of the most picturesque river towns along the Mississippi. Visitors can share in this legacy at the Cape River Heritage Museum. You can see the floodgates downtown that have saved the town numerous times. In Charleston, you can tour beautiful Victorian homes as well as the gardens surrounding them. Each April, Charleston hosts its annual Dogwood-Azalea Festival and the entire town is filled with millions of colorful dogwood and azalea blossoms. The festival helped earn Charleston's rating in Travel Holiday magazine as one of the 10 best small towns in America (April 2003 issue.)

Lambert's Café in Sikeston, home of the famous "throwed rolls," is at the top of the list for best meals in Missouri. One of the nation's most renowned rodeos, the Jaycee Bootheel Rodeo, is held in Sikeston each August. In New Madrid, visit Higginson School, a restored one-room schoolhouse and the Hunter-Dawson Home State Historic Site, an antebellum mansion. You can also visit Bloomfield, the birthplace of the U.S. military's *Stars and Stripes* newspaper during the Civil War.

For more information on planning a vacation in Missouri, visit these Web sites:

Missouri State Parks	http://www.mostateparks.com
Missouri Department of Tourism	http://www.missouritourism.org
Missouri Scenic Rivers	http://www.missouriscenicrivers.com

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

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