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Biography



News

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Vacationing in Southeast Missouri

Summer is here, and many families will choose to pack up the car for a vacation or get away. Whether the destination is educational, historical, or just for fun, you don't have to go as far as you might think. Here in Southeast Missouri, there are plenty of great vacation destinations full of fun and adventure.

Our area is full of historic landmarks that are both interesting and educational. In

Leopold, one can visit St. John's Church, which is home to one of the oldest pipe organs west of the Mississippi. While in Bollinger County, stop in Marble Hill and check out the [Bollinger County Museum of Natural History](#), which specializes in the area's history. The museum is now showcasing "The Missouri Dinosaur" and Native American artifacts. Another Marble Hill destination is [The Cat Ranch Art Guild](#), which was started in memory of local artist, sculptor and writer Tom Runnels. Visitors can tour the property, which includes Runnels' cabin studio, artwork and gravesite.



**The Bollinger County
Museum of Natural History.**



One of the exhibits at the Cape River Heritage Museum.

The largest city in the region is Cape Girardeau, which is full of opportunities. Tours and stops in the city include the Great Murals Tour, the [Cape River Heritage Museum](#), the [Glenn House](#), and Capaha Park Rose Garden. Another place to visit is the Red House Interpretive Center, commemorating Lewis and Clark's visit to the area in 1803. Before Cape Girardeau became one of the most picturesque river towns along the Mississippi River it was a single trading post; [Cape](#)

[Rock Park](#) commemorates that site.

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 majestic Mississippi. The park is also a great place to fish for bass, blue gill, and catfish.

In Burfordville, visitors have the opportunity to visit the [Bollinger Mill State Historic Site](#), a 19th century gristmill and covered bridge, the oldest of four remaining covered bridges in Missouri. In the City of Charleston, visitors can enjoy the Lewis and Clark Memorial commemorating the voyagers' "first steps into the Louisiana Purchase" in November 1803. Just south



The covered bridge at Bollinger Mill State Historic Site in Bufordville.

of East Prairie, visitors can enjoy [Big Oak Tree State Park](#), which contains 1,029 acres of preserved original landscape, a stark contrast to the surrounding farmland. Other destinations in the area also include the [Towosahgy State Historic Site](#) and Ten Mile Pond Conservation Area. The [Dorena-Hickman Toll Ferry](#) gives visitors the chance to cross the Mississippi River. Near Fredericktown, visit [Castor River Shut-Ins](#) and [Millstream Gardens Conservation Area](#). These sites are the location for the Missouri Whitewater Championships each March, which are open

to the public.



The crowd at the Bootheel Rodeo in 2008.

For more than 50 years, the Sikeston Jaycees have brought you the [Sikeston Bootheel Rodeo](#), the fifth largest rodeo in the nation. This year's rodeo is going to be held August 11-14. The rodeo features the usual events as well as an array of musical entertainment. In Sikeston, you will find a blend of "Gingerbread" mansions, cotton gins, and other reminders of the Old South. Lambert's Café in

Sikeston is the home of the famous "throwed rolls," and is at the top of the list for best meals in Missouri.

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

Missouri State Parks www.mostateparks.com

Missouri Department of Tourism visitmo.com

River Heritage Association www.visitsemo.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.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

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