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2021 FREE GUIDE

Lafayette County

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WELCOME TO

LAFAYETTE COUNTY

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Scan this code to take you to our Facebook page!



It's a wonderful life here in the driftless region in Southwest Wisconsin. If you would like to come and visit us, it will be a pleasure to serve you!

If you are looking for a little peace and quiet, a respite from the hustle and bustle of chaotic life, Lafayette County is just what you need to reenergize, reorganize and renew your spirit.

Lafayette County has a rich history and played a significant role in the early beginnings of our state. Settlers arrived in the early 1820s to mine the lead in the region. Early miners had no time to build permanent homes so they clawed out hillsides resembling badger holes to make crude dwellings. Those original miners were the inspiration for Wisconsin becoming known as the Badger State. Go Badgers!

It won't take long for you to discover that Lafayette County is farm country! We are the most agriculturally dependent county in the state. With many cheese factories, dairy farms, small vegetable and fiber producers, agriculture is the heart of many of our communities. If you are looking for outdoor recreation, Lafayette County has everything you can imagine. We have plenty of opportunities to enjoy nature from calm to thrilling! Hiking, bicycling, fishing, hunting, canoeing, swimming, ATV riding, horseback riding, cross country skiing and snowmobiling — all offer you a chance to relax and enjoy the beautiful scenic countryside.

For a more relaxing day, take a drive along the winding roads and enjoy a quiet moment with your camera, experience a bird-watching adventure, or take a hike in one of our numerous parks, such as Yellowstone Lake State Park.

When you think of small towns and what they have to offer, think of caring people, great schools, community activities and pride. Each of our communities in Lafayette County invests in our future. We support our seven school districts, local hospital and clinic and many churches. We take pride in our youth and believe in our rich history.

We would like to share this wonderful small town life and natural beauty with you. Come and experience our small town culture. Meet the folks who make our communities great. Enjoy your stay in breathtaking Lafayette County. You'll be glad you came!

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PUBLIC TRAILS

EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

Lafayette County is a dream destination for horseback riding. **Yellowstone State Park** features miles of mowed trails as well as camping. Nearby, the Yellowstone Wildlife Area features approximately 30 miles of equestrian trails laid out over a 2,500 acre wildlife area that feature beautiful landscapes and abundant wildlife. Call 608.575.9288 for more information. Several private ranches and saddle clubs offer trail rides, day camps, special rides and events in addition to boarding, farrier services, tack shops, rider training and equestrian centers. Saddle up!

MOTORCYCLE TRAILS

If you ride an iron horse, Lafayette County is as close to the old west as you can get in Wisconsin. Virtually every community in the county has a place to tie up and relax. New Diggings is home to the General Store and Anton's Saloon — both Midwest destinations for great bands, great rides and great people. The General Store is also a featured stop on Wisconsin's Canon Run Route 66 for those riders looking to make their way across the entire state. Each year, local clubs host special events and rides. The unique topography of the region provides breathtaking views, great curves and back-roads that will take you back in time.

Come ride with us!



New memberships & sponsors are welcomed. See website for membership form. Check out our website or Facebook page for trail updates <http://www.tricountyatv.org>

adno-194781

BIKING TRAILS



The back-roads of Lafayette County also offer something special for bikes with less horsepower. With fewer people and more hills, bicyclists will find the county a rewarding place to peddle. There are plenty of places to stop for a bite to eat along the way and lodging or camping for rest as you wind your way through the beautiful countryside. Cycle Southwest Wisconsin provides some great ideas for loops to complete throughout the region, they can be found at www.cyclesouthwestwisconsin.com. New in 2018, the **Mound View State Trail** is now open as a bike and pedestrian trail. This trail links Belmont and the Pecatonica State Trail to the Rountree Branch Trail in Platteville. Please be advised that the Mound View State trail is non-motorized.

ATV AND UTV TRAILS

Lafayette County is home to the **Cheese Country Trail** and **Pecatonica State Trail** which make up over sixty off-road multi-use miles. The trails meander throughout the county connecting towns and villages along the way. Both trails are maintained by the Tri-County ATV Club and its members. The Cheese Country trail connects Lafayette to Iowa and Green Counties, while County approved road routes for ATV/UTV's link to Grant County and Jo Daviess County, IL making it easy to see the landscapes of the driftless region. The trails are open to hiking, biking, ATVs, UTVs, snowshoeing, horseback riding, snowmobiling and more! Along the trails you will find beautiful scenery including wildlife, rivers and ponds, wildflowers and farmland. You will also see all that our communities have to offer!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

FOR TRAIL UPDATES GO TO WWW.LAFAYETTECOUNTYWI.ORG/TRAILS



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PUBLIC TRAILS

SCENIC TRAILS

You don't need a bike, boat or horse to enjoy Lafayette County. Your car will do just fine. The scenery is wonderful year-round and each small community has something truly special to offer. Finally, if the mood strikes, you can hike the trails at Yellowstone Lake or take a walk down any of the "Main Streets" that make Lafayette County such a special place.

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

During the winter months, trails pop up all across Lafayette County and the region; crisscrossing farmland, streams and roads alike. Our area snowmobile clubs sign, maintain and groom these trails so that snowmobilers can enjoy them throughout the winter months. The **Cheese Country** and **Pecatonica State Trail** both are used for snowmobilers throughout the winter and connect the entire trail system, making miles and miles of meandering trails. T-Riders, Fayette Sno-Goers, Hollandale Snow Drifters, Platteville Driftbusters, Blackhawk Riders, Argyle Ditch Bangers and Arthur Ariders all work diligently to maintain our winter trail system and work with area land owners to ensure that riders stay on marked trails. Travel Wisconsin let's snowmobilers throughout the state know which trails are open and which are closed throughout the winter months. Be sure to check before riding: <https://www.travelwisconsin.com/snowreport/snowmobile>



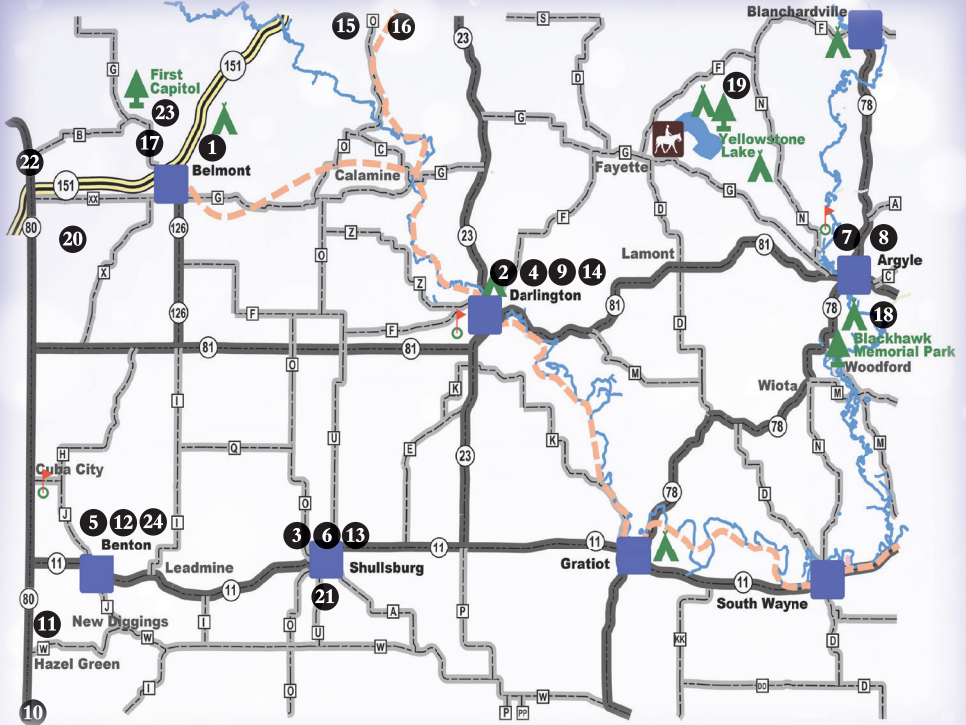
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MAP YOUR VISIT



- 1. Wisconsin's First Capitol Historic Site,**
County Hwy. G, 3 miles northwest of Belmont.
- 2. Lafayette County Historical Society Museum,**
525 Main Street, Darlington.
- 3. Badger Mine and Museum,**
279 W. Estey Street, Shullsburg.
- 4. Lafayette County Courthouse,**
626 Main Street, Darlington.
- 5. Swindler's Ridge Museum,**
W. Main Street, Benton.
- 6. Shullsburg Historic Water Street District,**
downtown Shullsburg.
- 7. Saxton House,** State Street, Argyle.
- 8. Partridge Hall/Star Theatre,**
200 S. State Street, Argyle.
- 9. Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Monument,**
500 block of Main Street, Darlington.
- 10. Point of Beginnings,**
Hwy. 80, south of Hazel Green.
- 11. Hazel Green,** Hwy. 80.
- 12. Benton,** Hwy. 11.
- 13. Shullsburg,** Hwy. 11.
- 14. Darlington,** Hwy. 23.

- 15. Prairie Spring Hotel,**
Hwy. 23, about 8 miles north of Darlington.
- 16. Fort Defiance Historical Marker,**
Hwy. 23 north, about 8 miles north of Darlington.
- 17. Belmont Mound State Park,**
Cty. Hwy. G, northeast of Belmont.
- 18. Blackhawk Memorial Park (Aka Bloody Lake),**
County Hwy. Y, north of Woodford,
six miles south of Argyle.
- 19. Yellowstone Lake State Park,**
8495 Lake Road, west of Argyle and Blanchardville.
- 20. UW-Platteville Pioneer Farm,**
located in northwestern Lafayette County,
29200 College Farm Road, east of Platteville.
- 21. Gravity Hill,**
Two miles south of Shullsburg on County U
- 22. The Big "M,"**
County Hwy. B, rural Belmont.
- 23. Belmont and Platteville Mounds,**
County Hwy. B between Belmont and Platteville.
- 24. Father Samuel Mazzuchelli Gravesite,**
Rectorry and St. Patrick's Catholic Church,
237 Main Street, Benton.

RICH HISTORY

Start your history lesson in Shullsburg at the **Badger Mining Museum** where you can get a glimpse of life through nearly 190 years of this historic community. Learn about Shullsburg's more infamous stories too – like a daring bank robbery by Chicago mobsters in 1927. At the center of it all is a look back at the important mining industry with displays of minerals, mining equipment and a working replica of the Eagle Pitcher mine. Take a tour into an actual hand-dug 19th century mine. The museum is open daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day. While in Shullsburg, be sure to spend some time downtown on Water Street, a **National Historic District** and the unusual street names like Virtue, Judgement and Hope named by Father Samuel Mazzuchelli, an Italian Missionary Priest. Fr. Mazzuchelli established many local parishes in frontier Wisconsin and designed more than 24 churches and civic buildings. Just down the road in New Diggings, is **St. Augustine's Church**, the only church that remains as he originally designed it. Built in 1844, this structure on the National Register of Historic Places has recently been restored. A memorial Mass is held annually on the last Sunday of August. St. Augustine's is open Sunday afternoons from 1:00-4:00 p.m. from May 31 through September 30. For more information call 608.965.4517.

In 1993, Pope John Paul II declared Fr. Mazzuchelli Venerable and began the process of possible recognition as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. **Fr. Mazzuchelli's home and gravesite** are located in Benton. While in Benton, visit **Swindler's Ridge**



BLANCHARDVILLE, WI
CRUISE IN
Wednesday, August 18, 2021

This event is sponsored by the
Blanchardville Community Pride
with profits going back to the community.

adno-1936632

Museum where you will find more mining artifacts and a working diorama of a lead and zinc mine. Call 608.776.8340 for open hours.

Benton's historic limestone water tower, built in 1900, served the community for nearly a century. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. The 1915 **Schoolhouse Museum** houses a collection of early education and alumni memorabilia. It is open on Labor Day and Memorial Day weekends. For more information call 608.759.3441.

Travel to the northern part of the county to visit Belmont, home of **The First Capitol Historical Site**. It was here that in 1836 the first session of the legislature of the newly formed Wisconsin Territory met. The two buildings remaining from this 1836 session contain historical exhibits. The First Capitol Historical Site is open for tours Wednesday through Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day. For more information call 608.987.2122.

Head over to Blanchardville and find a community nestled along the banks of the Pecatonica River. In 1848 a group of Mormons broke away from Brigham Young and settled here. The river was dammed and a **grist mill** was built where Blanchardville Historical Society stands today. Discover more fascinating stories at their **museum** Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

Continue your journey through Argyle, the boyhood home of **"Fighting Bob" LaFollette**, who was elected Wisconsin's Governor in 1900 and served as United States Senator from 1904 until his death in 1925. His home, the **Saxton House**, is being restored for future use as a museum. One of the oldest buildings is **Partridge Hall**, listed on the National Register of Historic Places (under the name Star Theatre). It retains its original storefronts, segmental arch windows, 6 over 6 panes and its unique bell shaped fascia. Blackhawk Memorial Park, just south of Argyle near the community of Woodford, is the site of the annual **Bloody Lake Rendezvous** commemorating an 1832 skirmish

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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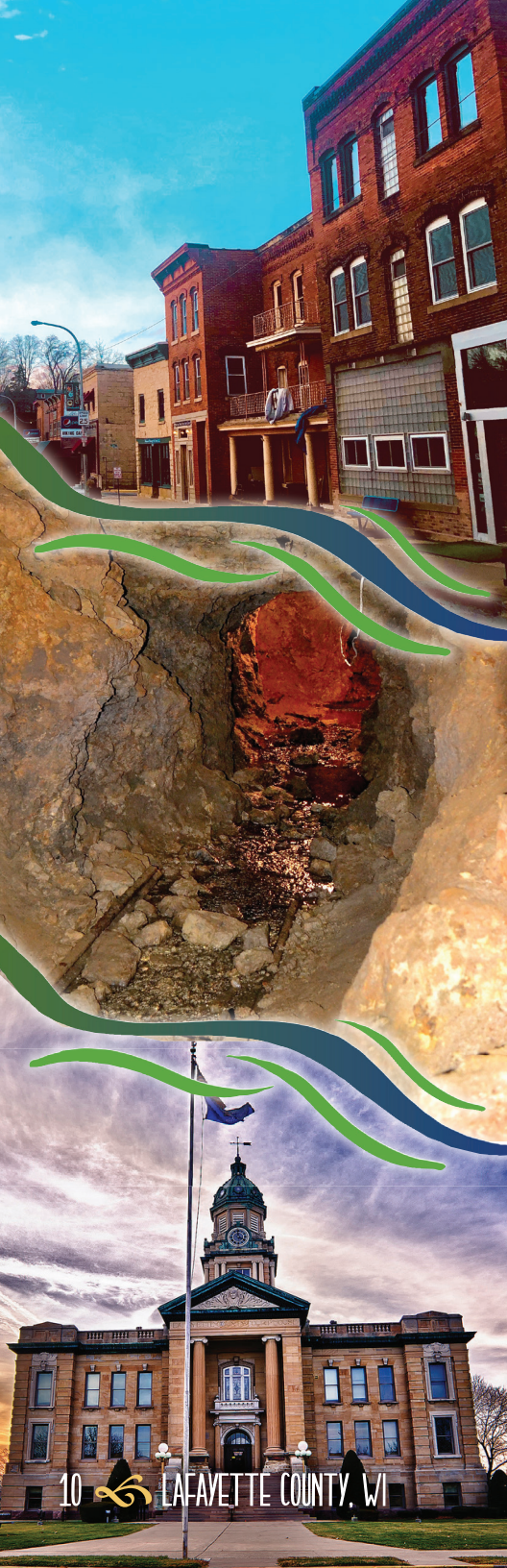
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RICH HISTORY



of the Blackhawk War. Save the first weekend of May for a trip back in time. Re-enactors from all over the country take you back to the Fur Trade Era, Civil War and Pow Wows of pre-1840 Wisconsin with food, music, knife and hawk throwing and primitive shooting competitions. The tiny village of Wiota was originally known as “Hamilton’s Diggings” after one of its founders, William “Billy” Hamilton, the youngest son of Alexander Hamilton, U.S. Secretary of Treasury. Billy was a miner and like so many other young men in the 1820s, he was anxious to have a share in the quick riches promised in lead mining country. The **Fort Hamilton Historical Marker** tells the story of how Captain Hamilton led an effort to construct a fort to house frightened settlers. Hamilton’s stay in Wisconsin ended when news of gold and even greater riches beckoned them to California.

We wind up our historical travels in the County Seat community of Darlington. Darlington is known as the “Pearl of the Pecatonica” because the Pecatonica River which flows through the town was for years a source for the production of pearl button blanks. Take a walk down **Darlington’s Historic Main Street** which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

One of the buildings contributing to that designation, **The Driver Opera House**, is undergoing a massive renovation to restore this beautiful historic building to its former glory; not only to honor the past, but also prepare for an even brighter future for Darlington and Lafayette County. Built in 1883 of Milwaukee Cream City Brick, the upper story was used for traveling theatre troupes, dances and musical performances, as well as a mercantile on the lower level. The Opera House has been empty since 1951 and the building is in disrepair due to years of flooding that has damaged the infrastructure and stability of the building. A DNR flood proofing grant in the amount of \$540,000



The restored Driver Opera House after phase 1 is pictured to the right.

was awarded to help flood-proof the lower level and repair the damage. The historic quality of the building has been maintained — as original colors and facades were duplicated during Phase I of the project that was completed in 2018. The second phase of the project, which entails restoring the beautiful upper story opera house, is estimated to cost \$1.5 million. This work can be completed by skilled craftsmen and others who can donate their time and skills. The flat-floor opera house can accommodate almost any type of activity, play or performance and will be fully accessible with an elevator. The restored Driver Opera House will help us continue the social, cultural and artistic needs of Southwestern Wisconsin.

Restoring the Opera House will strengthen tourism, support area business and enhance additional revenue for the region! You can help us reach our goal by donating money or pledging your support over two to four years. Mail your donation to The Driver Opera House, P.O. Box 62, Darlington, WI 53530. You can also donate online at www.razoo.com/organization/Driver-Opera-House-Restoration. For more information about the project and our Board of Directors and Ambassadors, visit our Facebook page or www.DriverOperaHouse.org. Questions can be directed to info@driveroperahouse.org. The Driver Opera House is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization.

Darlington also houses the central landmark of Lafayette County, the **Lafayette County Courthouse**, which holds the distinction as the only Courthouse still in use in the United States that was funded by the estate of one man, Mat Murphy of Benton. The monumental limestone structure features a central rotunda with an elaborate dome and evidence of Johnny Depp’s visit to the Courthouse when it was featured in the 2009 movie “Public Enemies”. The Lafayette County Historical Society Museum is located in the Carnegie Building across from the Courthouse. It features the lives of early Lafayette County residents. You will find items from the Civil War as well as memorabilia from early businesses, farms, homes and schools and paintings. The museum is open 1:00-4:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The **Darlington Depot Museum**, filled with railroad artifacts, tourist information and railroad maps is open Memorial Day through Labor Day. Please call 608.776.8340 for hours. Both museums are free but donations are appreciated. 🌐

Lafayette County Historical Society Museum & Archives

Open Monday thru Saturday 1-4 p.m.
525 Main Street, Darlington, WI
lafayettehistorical@centurylink.net
(608) 776-8340

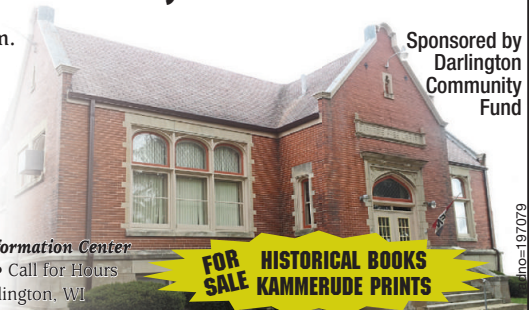
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The page features a vertical collage of three images. The top image shows a river with several orange kayakers. The middle image shows a frozen lake with a wooden bridge in the foreground. The bottom image shows a river with a waterfall and a brick building on the left. The title 'RIVERS, LAKES AND WATER' is written in a blue, serif font on the right side of the page. The page number '17' and the logo for Lafayette County, WI are at the bottom left.

RIVERS, LAKES AND WATER

Yellowstone Lake State Park is in the driftless area of southwest Wisconsin. This 1,000-acre park, has a 455-acre lake, which offers visitors ample space to enjoy camping, swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, biking and picnicking. In winter the park is open to ice fishing, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Many of the campsites offer electricity hook up for those who prefer this convenience. There is an area of the lake that is a no-wake area, perfect for the canoe enthusiasts. Canoe, row boat and paddle boat rentals are available at the lake for those who do not have a canoe or boat. Yellowstone Lake is regularly stocked with game fish and offers premium fishing opportunities for those who enjoy fishing. Fishing license and trout stamp is required. Please review the fishing regulations for the lake to enjoy the best fishing experience.

The **Pecatonica River** offers over 90 miles of gentle canoeing on both the east and west branches - the longest unrestricted flow of water in the state of Wisconsin. The water moves at 2½ miles per hour, occasionally dropping over small ripraps. The river meanders in large loops back and forth across a beautiful broad valley and some claim that “Pee-ka-tol-a-ka” is the Winnebago word for “crooked river”. Scenic bluffs tower above some sections of the river. It may be necessary to maneuver around and over occasional fallen trees which provide shelter for raccoon, muskrat, beaver, deer and a wide variety of birds that make their home along the river. It is not uncommon to see beaver cuttings along the bank; great blue herons gracefully rising from the water or a mother wood duck



hurrying her ducklings along.

The Pecatonica yields its share of excellent game fish every year. The muddy banks are quite deceptive, as most of the river bottom is gravel. Catfish, walleye and occasional northern are the main game fish taken from the river. Many of the best fishing spots are accessible only by canoe. The Pecatonica River, whose name means “place of many canoes” starts in Iowa County and flows through Lafayette County into Illinois. The canoer will enjoy beautiful scenic farm

pastures, marshes and woods filled with many species of wildlife. The river will be a pleasant 2 day trip going through Lafayette County.

Fever River is 29.4 miles long 28 feet average width 1.2 feet average depth base flow is 22 cfs (cubic feet per second). This is an enjoyable one day canoe ride. The Fever River is considered to be the best small stream for smallmouth bass fishing in the area. There is also 14 miles of public fishing easement along the river for more fishing enjoyment.

Lake Joy, located outside of Belmont, WI, is a family owned and managed campground that has been a favorite summer getaway for more than 40 years. They provide a clean, relaxing, friendly environment for families and friends to enjoy time together. The 60 acre private, spring fed lake is no-wake and provides swimming, boating and some of the best fishing in this part of the state. ↻

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EXPERIENCE NATURE

BARN QUILTS

Grab your camera. Bring your binoculars. Take a leisurely drive throughout Lafayette County and enjoy spectacular views, with small towns nestled in valleys and winding tree-lined country roads that will weave you along rivers and beside wooded hillsides and farmsteads. You're likely to see cows dotting the fields, a sure sign that you're in Wisconsin. Check out 65+ barn quilts featured on barns along the country roads – you can get a map showing locations at www.LafayetteCountyWI.org/Explore or stop by the courthouse for a copy.

BIRDING

Lafayette County is a great place to relax and enjoy the sights and sounds of our feathered friends. Many people know that camping, hiking and hunting are big business. Many may not know that birds, bird watching and items related to birds are also big business. In fact, according to the "Market Analysis of Bird-Based Tourism," \$41 billion dollars is spent annually on birding in the U.S. Darlington has been previously designated as a "Bird City" in Wisconsin. Make a stop at The Bluebird Nest Nature Center in Darlington. The Center features interactive interpretive displays relaxing to the Eastern Bluebird and other cavity-nesting birds, along with information about threatened and endangered species and the general fauna and flora in the driftless area. New to the area are the bird statues depicting native birds of Wisconsin. These statues, created by David Oswald of Sparta, WI, can be found in communities across Lafayette County and were made possible by donations from individuals and businesses; you can find eagles, blue herons, bluebirds,

cardinals and more! If you would like to make a donation for a bird statue, you can stop by The Bluebird Nest Nature Center which is open Wednesday through Saturday from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

CAMPING

There are many campgrounds throughout Lafayette County, some like Yellowstone Lake State Park, Blackhawk Memorial County Park and Lake Joy Campground, feature gorgeous lakes or rivers and wildlife habitats, others such as DAT Campground and Backyard Campground have camper and tent sites available for short or long term rental, Pecatonica River Trails Park and Wolf Creek Campground are both located right off the Cheese Country Trail and are perfect for ATVers throughout the warm summer months!

RUSTIC ROADS

Enjoy a scenic 7.5 mile drive along Rustic Road 66 in the southwest corner of the county, located just off County W in the town of Benton. Look for an abandoned lead mine, complete with tin shacks, rusted ore buckets and piles of tailings. This stretch of road offers you a gorgeous drive, especially in autumn with a display of spectacular fall colors. While in this part of Lafayette County, you really should make a detour to Gravity Hill and experience something that defies common sense. Just a couple miles outside Shullsburg on County Road U, the highway plunges down a steep hill, across a low area and curves back up a steeper hill. Stop your car about three-quarters of the way down the first hill, just short of the 25 mph sign (the spot is also marked on the road) and shift your vehicle into neutral. You will start rolling backward up the hill, gradually picking up speed. You have to be there to believe it.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Lake Joy Campground

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Pecatonica River TRAILS PARK

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EXPERIENCE NATURE

PARKS AND RECREATION

While driving through the county, stop for a bit and enjoy a leisurely hike or a picnic at one of our parks. **Belmont State Park** is located on County Hwy. G just northwest of Belmont. Belle Mont, French for “beautiful mountain”, is clearly an appropriate name. The park includes picnic areas, hiking trails and playgrounds. In territorial days, the mound served as a landmark to guide travelers. One of the reasons Governor Dodge placed the First Capitol at Belmont was because it was easy to find in the uncharted Wisconsin Territorial wilderness.

Yellowstone Lake State Park, located between Blanchardville and Argyle, is open year round. The park is host to many different species of wildlife, including whitetail deer, wild turkey, groundhog, fox, grey squirrel and cottontail rabbit. There have been over 170 species of birds observed in and around the park. Bald eagles, osprey, common loon and the double-crested cormorant visit the lake in the spring and fall during migration. Waterfowl of all kinds, including wood ducks, mallards and Canadian geese use the lake as a rest stop during their migration. Sandhill cranes have been observed in the park with their young. The great blue heron is a common resident seen wading in the shallows hunting for fish or frogs. And bats! Yellowstone Lake is the summer home to more than 4,000 little brown bats. Nature programs run throughout the summer months. Evening programs have many different topics, from bat houses, stars in the night sky, to prairie ecosystems and more.

Near the State Park, you will also find the Yellowstone Wildlife Area, a 4,000-acre property located in Lafayette County. The property consists mostly of rolling upland grass and agricultural fields, with scattered woods and old oak savannah. Find it on County Road F between Darlington and Blanchardville.

The **Yellowstone Wildlife Area** offers many recreational activities including birding, cross country skiing (no designated trail), fishing- catch and release trout on Steiner Brook, hiking (no designated trail), Horseback riding- 30 miles of trails, hunting, snowmobiling, trapping, wild edibles/gathering and wildlife viewing.

The Yellowstone Wildlife Area also includes a shooting range, located in northeastern Lafayette County, it is owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is managed in cooperation with the Fayette Sportsman's Club. The shooting range is open daily each week throughout the year, except for Tuesdays when the range is closed for use by state and local Law Enforcement agencies. There are no fees required for use of the range.

When you're in the Yellowstone Park neighborhood, drive into Argyle and visit the Erickson Wildlife Area. You can enjoy open water, wetlands, Pecatonica River frontage, big oak trees, woodland, rock outcrops and grassland. Wildlife is abundant! Cranes, songbirds, turtles, frogs, fox, butterflies and fish call this special place home. And there are plenty of wonderful wildflowers, grasses and trees! The area is open to the public throughout the year for non-motorized uses like hiking, birding and wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, trapping and skiing. Six miles south of Argyle off County Road Y is Blackhawk Memorial Park. Situated alongside the Pecatonica River, you will find a picturesque 120- acre park where you can camp, hike, canoe and fish.



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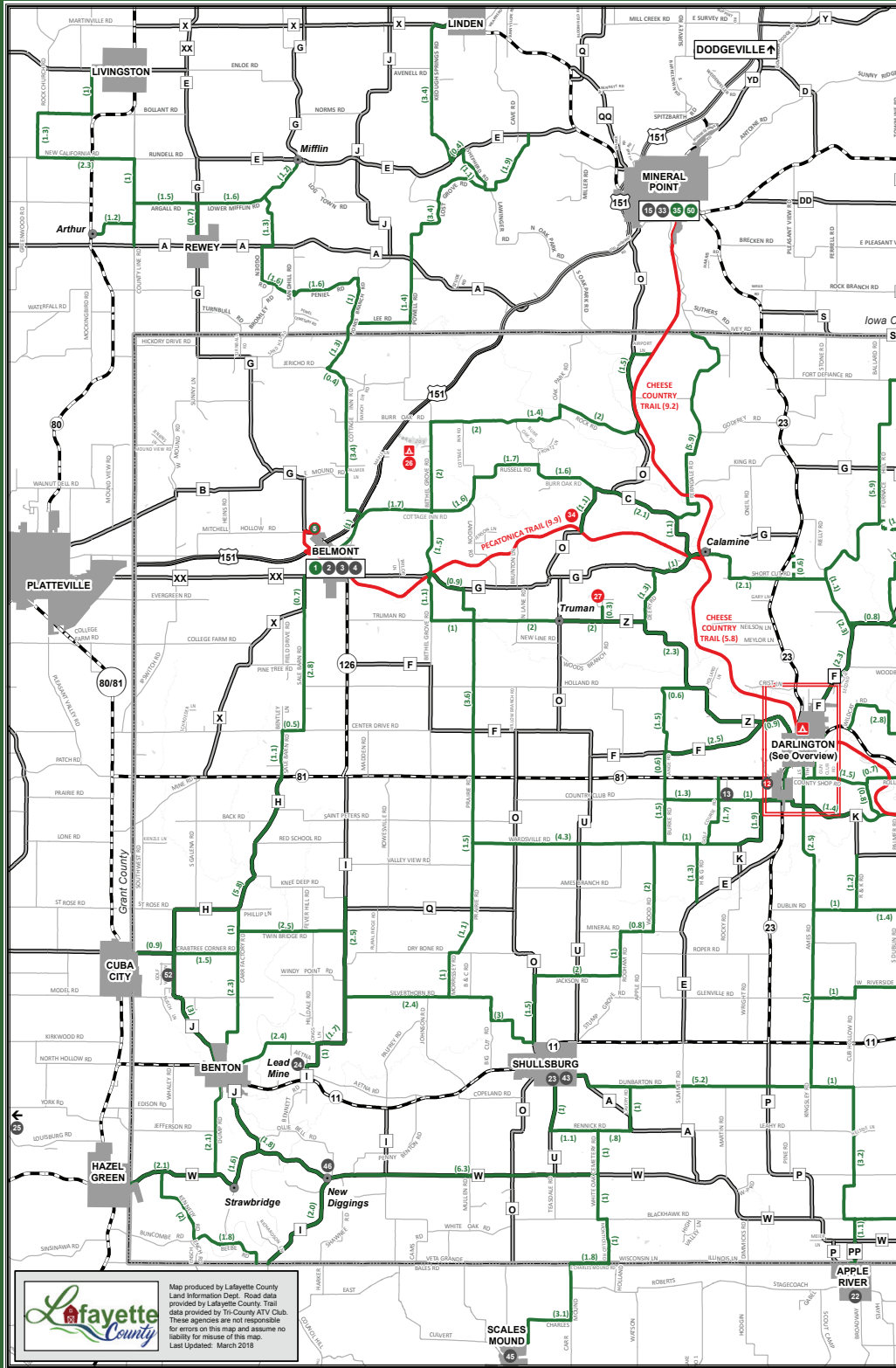
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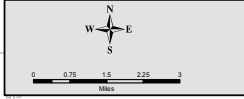
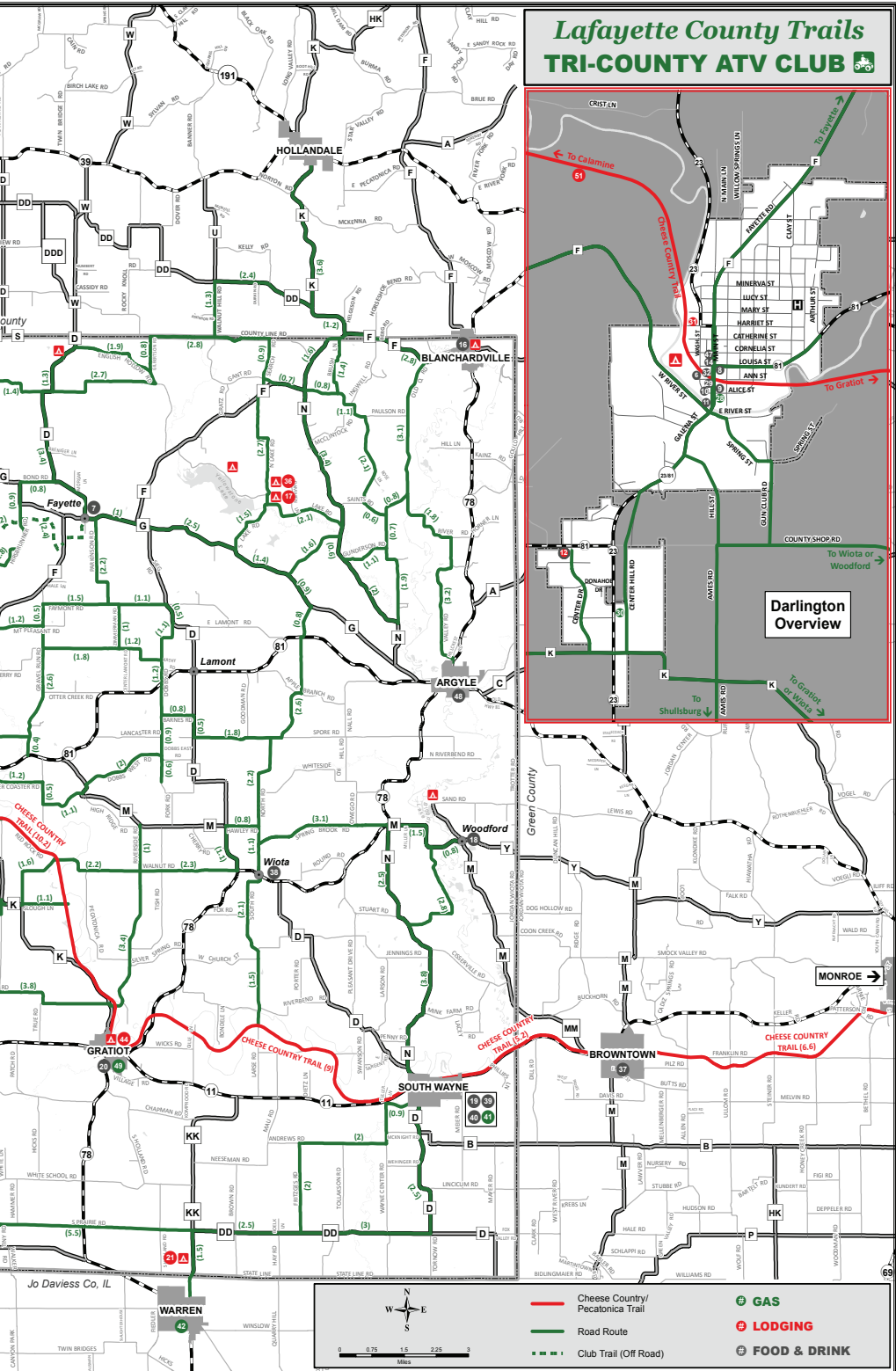
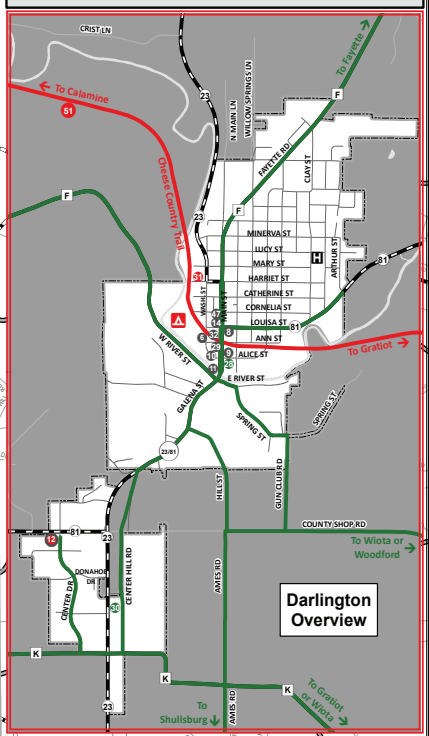
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Map produced by Lafayette County Land Information Dept. Road data provided by Lafayette County. Trail data provided by Tri-County ATV Club. These agencies are not responsible for errors on this map and assume no liability for misuse of this map. Last Updated: March 2018

Lafayette County Trails

TRI-COUNTY ATV CLUB



- + GAS
- + LODGING
- + FOOD & DRINK
- Cheese Country/Pecatonica Trail
- Road Route
- - - Club Trail (Off Road)



TASTE THE COUNTY:

Lafayette County is farm country – the most agriculturally dependent county in the state. From large scale dairy farms to small family homesteads, agriculture is the lifeblood of the county.

With dairy farmers settling in Lafayette County, the cheese factories followed next and within our county borders you can find some of the best cheese in the country! World Champion Cheeses that are featured all over the world, are made right here in Lafayette County. We have a plethora of cheese varieties for you to try including French, Finnish, Goat, Mexican and of course Swiss inspired cheeses. Our specialty cheese producers go above and beyond to create a product that will awaken your taste buds and leave you yearning for more.

With farmers, also comes farmers markets and roadside stands; a truly unique way to try a variety of homemade and homegrown goods right where they are made. Our villages and cities offer farmers markets throughout the summer that feature local producers. Honey, tomatoes, flowers, squash, pies, pumpkins, sweet corn, potatoes, eggs, soap, jams and jellies can all be found at our local market stands.

Keep your eyes peeled as you travel our winding roads for our many roadside stands that pop-up throughout the region; it's hard to find produce as fresh and flavorful as the varieties you will find there.

Our local pubs and restaurants have all found ways to incorporate Lafayette County ingredients into their menus. From cheeseburgers featuring our many cheeses



and local meats to deep fried cheese curds that are hand battered and deep fried with a secret recipe that you won't find anywhere else and even specialty pizzas, wraps and soups; you won't go wrong no matter where you stop for a bite to eat in our little county.

The Amish Community

Lafayette County is home to a small population of Amish families that you may see with their signature black, horse-drawn buggy traversing across the county. This community is known for their home grown produce, gorgeous flowers, fresh baked goods and carpentry skills. Throughout the county you may notice several signs at the end of driveways indicating "fresh eggs", "greenhouse now open" and "fresh baked goods daily". Since the Amish community do not use electricity or phones, this is their way of advertising and inviting the public to their homesteads to purchase their products. Because of the growing interest in the Amish community, we have reached out to them so we could help educate the public on their way of life and let everyone know that they love visitors!

Amish Common Courtesies: No Sunday sales, this is the Amish community's day of worship and all shops are closed. Check or Cash only. Please make sure to bring proper payment as they do not accept credit cards. No pictures please. The Amish do not allow their pictures to be taken, leave the camera in the car.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



Rachel Rays
Pub Grill

608-523-4888
Food Available until close

Blanchardville, WI

adno=194808

The Viking Cafe

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Blanchardville, WI
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adno=197306



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TASTE THE COUNTY:

Brunkow Cheese Located in the rolling hills of rural Darlington. Since 1899 Brunkow Cheese has been creating over 50 varieties of artisanal and specialty cheeses. In addition to making all of their cheese by hand in small batches, they also age all of their cheeses on site. They take pride and dedication in handcrafting some of the finest cheeses around; from their aged cheddars and our flavored Jacks to their specialty cheeses and spreads. They are recipients of 15 (and counting) awards for our fine cheeses. They have won Best of Class for their Brun-uusto Baked Cheese with Garlic, 99.3 in 2014 at the World Championship Cheese Contest. In 2012, they won Best of Class for our Raw Milk Cheddar with Horseradish, 97.75, again in the World Championship Cheese Contest. Stroll in and experience what Brunkow Cheese has to offer.

Gile Cheese Visit Gile Cheese Factory Outlet Store located at 116 N Main St. in

Sherrell Jean's Diner

108 E. Monroe St.
 South Wayne
 608-439-5567
 Mon.-Thurs., 6 a.m.-6 p.m.;
 Fri., 6 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. night fish fry
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adno=197301

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adno=198157

downtown Cuba City. Their cheese is made by third and fourth generation Wisconsin Cheesemakers and sold directly to you from their Cheese Store. Gile Cheese has been voted the "Areas Best Cheese Store" for 11 years in a row. Their cheese store offers many varieties of Wisconsin cheese cut to your liking. When you order from Gile Cheese Factory Outlet and the Carr Cheese Factory, you are also helping keep the time-honored tradition of the family-owned Wisconsin Dairy alive. They are proud to be Wisconsin State Champion Cheesemakers with over 200 awards for making cheese.

Roelli Cheese Haus is located East of Shullsburg, Wisconsin on State Highway 11 and has a family tradition of making hand-crafted specialty cheese for nearly 100 years. Adolph Roelli came to this area of Lafayette County Wisconsin from Switzerland in the 1920s. From that time, four generations of the Roelli family have been in the cheese business at this location, building on Adolph's commitment to quality, service, and customer satisfaction. Their long-standing commitment continues to be the cornerstone of the Roelli Cheese Haus business. 



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15982 Hwy. 11, Shullsburg, WI 53586 608.965.3779 - roellicheese.com

adho=197668

CULTURE

Growth in our nation's population has historically accompanied challenges to all cities; big and small. This is especially the case in the small City of Darlington, WI in Lafayette County, where within a decade the Hispanic population has grown significantly and now makes up approximately twenty percent of the total population.

This rapid growth has led to challenges of communication, culture clash and understanding; the community faced the challenges head on and with the help of the Darlington Chamber Main Street Program and the Darlington Community Schools, Cinco de Mayo – Latino Festival was born. This annual event has been recognized by the State of Wisconsin as an exemplary event that has helped build an inclusive community and earning the Best Downtown Special Event Award.

Darlington realized that they could make the greatest impact in their community by supporting causes that are important to the citizens of Darlington. Customs and differences are but variations on a theme, a rich and varied expression of the shared humanity; we are all the same at heart. Our life is richer as we strive to understand others and appreciate our differences.

Lafayette County continues to grow in diversity and new shops focused on the Hispanic population have popped up, soccer is now a growing sport in the community and Cinco de Mayo draws record crowds to the County each year. So mark your calendars for a celebration of Latin Culture on the Second Saturday each May. Latin food, music, arts and entertainment are all featured. Come immerse yourself in a celebration of culture!

SEE PAGE 31 EVENTS

**For the Cinco de Mayo & Fiesta Latina
at Darlington Festival Grounds in May**

Fun for the entire family!



And there's more...

LAFAYETTE COUNTY SPEEDWAY

Lafayette County Speedway, located in Darlington, Wis. has a 70-year auto-racing legacy. The slightly banked three-eighths mile clay track has been in existence since the 1950's. Facilities can comfortably seat 3,000 fans. Racing begins each April and continues into August, with a full weekly schedule, including several large specials throughout the season.

More than 600 people attend the dirt track races each week to watch five to seven classes race. Hot laps begin at 6:45pm and racing starts shortly after 7:00pm. Two family nights occur, one in May and one in August. Each of those events feature more than 100 giveaways for the children. The speedway also offers a \$25 family pass during each weekly race program. Learn more about the 60-plus drivers, the summer schedule and more by visiting lafayettecountyspeedwaywi.com.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY BOUTIQUE TRAIL

Lafayette County offers wonderful boutiques for shopping year round in our communities. The first Saturday in April, these boutiques extend their hours, roll out some great specials and invite ladies everywhere to experience all of the fantastic shopping options by partaking in the Lafayette County Boutique Trail! So be sure to mark your calendars for a full day of shopping! It's going to be a BLAST! There are several unique clothing boutiques sprinkled across Lafayette County, and we want you to enjoy them all. Pick any of our small towns to start in, grab a late breakfast, and head out on the trail! All of our participating boutique shops will be open from 10am-6pm, and have surprise specials and discounts available to you!

Pick up your "Passport" that day in any of the participating boutiques, get a stamp on your passport at each shop and once you have gotten your last stamp, turn in your passport for a chance to win a gift basket stuffed with goodies from our participating shops!

To help us spread the word about our charming Boutique Trail, all of the lovely boutiques decided to add ANOTHER special just for you! Each Boutique will have a social media photo op set up, take your selfie, post it with our the hashtags #LafCoBoutiqueTrail and #ExploreLafCoWisconsin and tag the boutique. Show your post to the boutique team, and they will let you in on their special!

ARGYLE & BENTON

Nestled into the hills of the northeastern corner of the county, is the community of **Argyle**, the gateway to Yellowstone Lake State Park and the boyhood home of "Fighting Bob" La Follette. The Pecatonica River flows through the heart of Argyle, offering opportunities for fishing, canoeing and boating. You will find three maintained fishing areas, which include community boat landings, a sheltered picnic facility and a handicapped fishing area. Stop in for refreshments at the local pubs and restaurants, browse through several local downtown shops and get acquainted with some of its 850 friendly residents. Argyle is ideally suited for bicycling with spectacular views along winding, tree-lined roads. Nearby attractions include the Toy Train Museum, the Erickson Wetlands, Yellowstone Golf Course, the Rod & Gun Club and the Cheese Country Trail.

For more information on these events a full list of our 2021 events and other activities, check online at argylewi.org

- **Argyle's Open Market** will be held on the first and third Saturdays from 9 am- 12:30 pm from June through October. They will be held at the old high school lot on the corner of Hwy. 81 and Broad Street.
- **Argyle Garage Sales:** June 4-5
- **Chunky Monkey Epilepsy Run:** November 6

— SINCE 1897 —

The community of **Benton**, with its gently rolling hills, lazy streams and fertile soil is steeped in the traditions and culture of the early Wisconsin lead mining industry. Situated in the southwest corner of the county and bordered on all sides by open land and farm fields, it is just a stone's throw from the bordering states of Iowa and Illinois. The Fever River meanders past the eastern boundaries of the village and flows to Galena, Illinois, where it empties into the Mississippi River. In addition to small businesses located in Benton, the village has developed an industrial park that is ready, along with almost 1,000 residents, to welcome business and industry to the community.

Benton is the place to be on Labor Day Weekend. The town overflows with people for a Labor Day tradition — 124 years in 2020! Activities include a chicken barbecue, dance, parade, midway rides, music, games, craft fair, duck races, pasty dinner and raffle. Find more information about Benton at bentonwi.us.

For all Benton Events and Community Activities for 2021, visit our website at www.bentonwi.us

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 www.bentonbank.com		

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BELMONT

With two mounds nearby, it is easy to understand how **Belmont** came by its name Belle Monte, French for “beautiful hill.” The village of Belmont today is a few miles from its original location when it was the first capitol of the Wisconsin Territory. Be sure to take a trip out to this Wisconsin State Historic Site for a flashback to what frontier Wisconsin looked like. Belmont is home to two French specialty cheese factories that produce brie, camembert and feta that is distributed worldwide. It also boasts one of the area’s largest greenhouse operations. With direct access to the four lane highway, Belmont is one of the fastest growing communities in southwest Wisconsin. The Belmont School and Community Fair, Wisconsin’s oldest (and still free) is held the second weekend after Labor Day. It includes a livestock show, carnival, kid’s games, horse show, parade. For more information, email dance.belmontschoolfair@gmail.com.





For more information on these events and other activities, check online at www.belmontwi.com

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BLANCHARDVILLE

Blanchardville is home to plenty of live music, an incredibly user-friendly park, a huge public swimming pool and a modern and an aesthetically pleasing campground area situated in an oak tree-canopied park.

Visitors may fish in the sparkling waters of the Pecatonica River, the waterway that splits the village in half and which offers sporting and recreational opportunities such as kayaks, canoes and inner tubes!

Community event organizers host a bevy of summertime entertainment, dining and spectator-friendly opportunities for visitors of all ages, as well as offering a diverse selection 'farmers market' on rotating Saturday mornings! You may enjoy a waltz or polka at the summer music series events taking place on 'Every-Other-Wednesday' night!

Blanchardville has, historically, been referred to as 'The Gem of The Pecatonica' by many across Wisconsin as the community that's uniquely known and situated as 'In The Heart

of Four Counties', making Blanchardville one of southern Wisconsin's most diversified geographical destinations!

Remember, Blanchardville is not only a popular tourist destination for those utilizing the nearby Yellowstone Lake State Park, but Blanchardville's many businesses serve as an obvious stopping-off point to 'stock up' on supplies, dining and entertainment destination while camping!

BLANCHARDVILLE COMMUNITY FUN!

June 1-August 31 Music In the Park at Ryan Park, every other Thursday evening

June 1-August 31 Farmer's Market in Ryan Park

Blanchardville also hosts TWO summer **Car Shows** and a yearly **Homecoming Parade** and **Festival** that people travel near and far to attend. Don't forget about their **Annual Father's Day Chicken BBQ** too!

For more information on Blanchardville events visit: www.blanchardville.com

BLANCHARDVILLE 2021 EVENTS



- Fireman's Pancake Breakfast** Mar. 7
- Fireman's Dance** June 19, 7 p.m.
- Father's Day Chicken BBQ** June 20 from 11am-2pm
- Cruis'n Wisconsin Car Show** July 11
- Cruis'n Night/Town Raffle** August 18
- Pec Jam Music Festival** TBD
- Alumni/Homecoming Parade** September 18
- Holiday On Main Street** December 3

adno=197314

CUBA CITY

THE CITY OF PRESIDENTS

While driving down Cuba City's award-winning Main Street, stop at the Presidential Caboose downtown and inspect the Presidential Shields which adorn the retro-style light poles in honor of all 45 U.S. Presidents.

Main Street is "Antique Avenue" **Cuba City** won the 2017 Wisconsin Main Street Award for its recent downtown revitalization. Antique Avenue in Cuba City, WI is home to over 35,000 square feet of unique antiques and collectibles ranging from architectural salvage to jewelry and primitives.

Acclaimed Farm to Table Retailers "Made Fresh, Made Local" Weber's Processing Plant and Retail Store opened in 1905 as a small butcher shop. From handcrafted ham and bacon to aged hand cut steaks, Weber's has garnered over 500 State and National Awards for its meat products. Small batches of fresh sausages and brats made daily.

Gile Cheese is a nationally recognized cheese

maker that has been producing handcrafted cheeses since 1946. Their Colby and Baby Swiss have won several Wisconsin State Championships and all of their products are sourced from a single dairy farm.

Grant County's Best Breakfast Nick's Café recently celebrated its 15th anniversary and was also recognized as the Best of the Best in Grant County under the Breakfast category.

CUBA CITY COMMUNITY FUN!

May-September Community Market

4:00-7:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday of each month
Each market features a wide range of produce, crafts, food and services and family orientated events.

Cuba City also hosts an **Annual Truck and Tractor Pull** and **Christmas Glow Parade!**

Find more events, dates and information on our website at www.cubacity.org

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DARLINGTON

Darlington is an active community that knows how to have fun all year around. The Pop Factory Players provide theatrical performances that continue to draw crowds year after year. A taste of Old Mexico heats up for Cinco de Mayo on the first Saturday of May. The vibrant local Hispanic community leads the way with Mariachi bands, dancers in authentic costumes, piñatas and games for the kids. For four days, over the second full weekend of June, the community goes a little crazy with the Canoe Festival, a summer party that packs in over 35 events, from stock car races, softball and volleyball tournaments, to kids' shows, parade, fireworks and a memorable canoe race down the Pecatonica River, plus lots more. Music fills Darlington each Sunday evening in July during Tunes at Twilight. Relax under the shade trees of Veteran's Park on Main Street and enjoy this summer concert series. The Annual Fall Festival and the Pecatonica Valley Antique Days are annual September events. On the first Saturday in December, Darlington hosts a lighted Christmas Parade on Main

Street that ends with a visit from Santa on the banks of the River. Christmas carols, hot chocolate, bonfires and the lighting of the famous floating Christmas Trees make a picture perfect start to the holiday season. But don't wait for a special event to visit...Darlington welcomes you anytime to come and enjoy a day, a week or a lifetime.

DARLINGTON COMMUNITY FUN!

May-October Farmers Market Saturdays at Darlington Festival Grounds, 8:00 a.m.-noon. Come see our many local vendors. For more information, call 608.776.3067

Sundays in July Tunes at Twilight at Veteran's Memorial Park from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Relax under the trees, bring a lawn chair, concessions available, call 608.776.3067 for more information.

For more Darlington Community Fun visit DarlingtonWI.org/ChamberofCommerce

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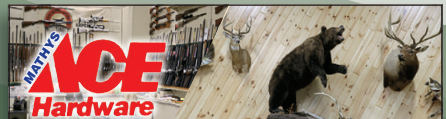
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GRATIOT & SOUTH WAYNE



Slow down and enjoy some time in the small village of **Gratiot**. With hassle free access to the Cheese Country Trail, along with camping and fishing, this is a great place to get outdoors and enjoy the beauty of southwest Wisconsin. Wolf Creek Campground located on the Cheese Country Trail in Gratiot offers electricity, water and a new bath house. Gratiot firefighters host Fish Boils the last Saturday in April and the first Saturday in November. Their Annual Chicken Barbecue is always on the Monday of Labor Day Weekend, along with a great parade, music and ball games. More information about Gratiot is available at gratiot.us.

South Wayne, originally called Collins, named after the local railroad superintendent, the railroad played prominently in the creation of South Wayne. The rail lines have now been replaced by the Cheese Country Trail, a multi-use recreational trail that brings thousands to enjoy the beautiful country of southwest Wisconsin. Every summer, the community cuts loose with the Red Cracker Music Festival. The event continues to grow in size and distinction, attracting more and more people to the village during the final weekend in July. Visit Veteran's Memorial Park in South Wayne. Trail users love the Outdoor Deck at The Vault for some of the best food and drinks along the Cheese Country Trail!

More Gratiot Community Fun information is available at gratiot.us

More information about South Wayne is available at www.villageofsouthwayne.com

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adno=197317

For more information on Lafayette County visit www.lafayettecountywi.org



SHULLSBURG

Shullsburg is Wisconsin's 3rd oldest city and home to the state's mascot, The Badger. Founded in 1827 it was the center of the early lead mining trade. Its downtown is renowned for its charm and restored buildings which represent many different architectural styles. The limestone High School, 8-acre Badger Park and two churches are popular stops for history buffs. However, Gravity Hill south of town is its most popular tourist destination. Also, receiving attention is the peculiar street names in the Northeast section, all named after the virtues of life to live by; Peace, Truth, Happy, Friendship, etc. named by the venerable saint Father Samuel Mazzuchelli in 1844. Badger Mine and Museum located in Badger Park is the only hand dug primitive mine open to the public in existence. Today, it is a tight-knit community with shops, eateries, lodging and services lining its downtown and with many events occurring throughout the year. It is home to Shullsburg Creamery, one of the largest cheese distributors in the nation. Their Visitors Center located downtown can provide many details about this rich community.

ROLL UPHILL AT GRAVITY HILL

Approximately two miles out of town, Highway U plunges down a steep hill, across a low area and curves back up a steeper hill. Stop your car about three-quarters of the way down the first hill, just short of the 25 mph sign that announced the curve back up the other side. From here, U appears to drop considerably to the valley floor before rising again. Place the car in neutral and you will be rolling backward up the hill, slowly at first then faster and faster!

**For more information on
local Shullsburg events visit:**

**www.ExperienceShullsburg.com
or [facebook.com/experienceshullsburg](https://www.facebook.com/experienceshullsburg)**

BADGER MINE AND MUSEUM

Visit Badger Mine and Museum in Badger Park located at the center of SW Wisconsin's lead mining region and experience first hand the daily routine of an 1850's lead miner. During a guided tour, view the tools he used to extract his lead treasure from the earth and learn about his life in this early mining town. A separate experience geared for younger minds is on Saturday and Sunday. Children can learn about lead mining history and early Wisconsin life through hands on experiences and educational games. For more information visit www.badgermineandmuseum.com.

SHULLSBURG COMMUNITY FUN!

Thursdays, July 1-August 5 Music in the Park in Badger Park at 6:30 p.m. Talented regional acts in a relaxed setting with food options, call 608.214.8836

June 5 Cruisin' Shullsburg Car Show, downtown at 3:00 p.m. with 150 cars, music, prizes and fun, 608.778.0969

June-September Shullsburg Market 3rd Saturday of the each month

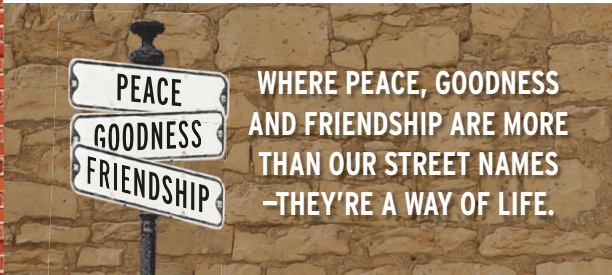
July 3 and 4 Old Fashioned Fourth of July including the Hometown Throwdown, 4th of July Parade, Fireworks and much more.

August 8 Gravity Hill Run in downtown Shullsburg at 5:00 p.m., 5K walk/run for families and competitors with prizes, 608.778.0969

October 2 Cheesefest all day, downtown with longstanding events and many activities for fun throughout the day, 608.482.1859

November 27 Bit of Yesteryear Christmas, all day, downtown. Old-Time Celebration including a tour of homes and an evening parade, 608.482.1859

December 8 Ladie's Night Out, downtown at 4:30 p.m. with festive atmosphere, holiday windows, shopping and drink specials, 608.574.9740





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Darlington



ANNUAL EVENTS IN DARLINGTON*

FARMERS MARKET
EVERY SATURDAY MAY-OCTOBER

FIESTA LATINA/CINCO DE MAYO
SECOND WEEKEND IN MAY

TUNES AT TWILIGHT
EVERY SUNDAY IN JULY

LAFAYETTE COUNTY FAIR
SECOND WEEK IN JULY

FALL IN LOVE WITH DARLINGTON
MID-SEPTEMBER

WITCHES, WARLOCKS, & WINE
LATE OCTOBER

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY
SATURDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING

LIVING WINDOWS/HOLIDAY PARADE
FIRST SATURDAY IN DECEMBER

DARLINGTON CHAMBER/MAIN STREET OFFICE

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*EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. VISIT THE CHAMBER'S FACEBOOK PAGE FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION.





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