

FALL/WINTER 2023-24

go guide

GREAT RIVERS & ROUTES OF
SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS

TOP 20
THINGS TO
DO THIS FALL

UNWRAP THE
HOLIDAYS

WINTER
FUN

GREAT
RIVERS
& ROUTES
OF SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS

enjoy
illinois

YOUR Adventure BEGINS HERE!

SKYTOUR • ZIPLINE • ALPINE COASTER • RESTAURANT • LODGING

Aerie's is located on a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers above downtown Grafton, Illinois providing a stunning view that captivates any visitor. **BRING A FRIEND, OR YOUR FAMILY, WE HAVE A BUNCH IN STORE FOR YOU!**

COMING SOON: Aerie's Byway Flyway – a new side-by-side dual line 1,400 foot zipline ride spanning Aerie's Timber Ridge. 45 minutes from downtown St. Louis MO & Lambert International Airport On the Scenic Byway in Grafton, IL

AERIE'S
RESORT

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The Best View in the Midwest

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ON THE COVER:

Pere Marquette Riding Stables, Grafton, IL

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ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Scott Evers, Brielle Decker, Midwest Nomad Family, Linda Rosland, The Loading Dock, Aerie's Resort, Donut Mamii, & Stanich Photography

VILLAGE OF ELSA

f facebook.com/RiversandRoutes i Instagram.com/RiversandRoutes y YouTube.com/RiversandRoutes





top 20 THINGS TO DO THIS FALL



LOCAL FAVE

Hugging the Mississippi River bluffs, the Aerie's Alpine Coaster flies down the 3,000 foot track on this gravity fed thrill ride. It's the only one of its kind in Illinois.



AERIE'S ALPINE COASTER, GRAFTON

FALL FUN IN SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS

1 Scenic Fall Drive along the **Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway** – this 33-mile stretch of road between Hartford and Pere Marquette State Park offers unparalleled views of the Mississippi River and is considered one of the most spectacular fall drives in the U.S.

2 With 130 miles of hard surface trails, the **MCT Trail System** is the perfect place to take a fall walk or bike ride. You won't see the same scenery twice.

3 Fall Color Cruises on the Mississippi River provide a different look at the dynamic tree colors along the Mississippi River bluffs. Hop on board the **Hakuna Matata** in Grafton for a cruise to remember.

4 Ride to the top of the Mississippi River bluffs on the **Grafton SkyTour**. Soar through the treetops with **Grafton Zipline Adventures**, both part of **Aerie's Resort**.

5 Halloween comes to the region in style with classic parades and fun on Oct. 31. Line up in Alton and Edwardsville and watch ghouls, ghosts and goblins walk and ride down the streets in two of the longest running parades in the region.

6 Meet the ghosts and spirits of Alton during Troy Taylor's **Haunted Alton** walking tour. Or take an Alton Odyssey **Haunted Craft Beer Walk** pairing beer with spirited adventures.

7 Spend an evening at the deliciously haunted **McPike Mansion** in Alton where more than 20 documented spirits reside.

8 Ever wanted to live your favorite horror film? Visit **The Cutting Room** – a horror film inspired haunted house in Granite City open Fridays and Saturdays in October.

9 Be A-mazed in Godfrey and take a walk through the **Great Godfrey Maze**. This year's maze theme: Godfrey Family Game Night. The maze opens Sept. 15 and is open every night in October.

10 Immerse yourself in history and the beautiful fall colors found along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers during a guided **Fall Color and History Tour** available Thursdays and Fridays Oct. 12 – Nov. 10.

11 Barbeque and craft beer make a great combination. They are also the stars of Edwardsville's **'Que and Brew** Oct. 14 & 15 in City Park.

12 Explore the **local wineries** that dot the six county landscape and create your own wine trail.

13 Sit alongside the Mighty Mississippi River at **The Loading Dock** in Grafton while sipping a signature slushie and enjoying some Dock Salsa.

14 Pick up a vintage treasure at the monthly **Litchfield Pickers Market**. Held the second Sunday of each month through October.

15 Explore prehistoric civilizations at **Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Collinsville.

16 Channel your inner Italian during the **Collinsville Italian Fest** held Sept. 15 & 16 on the streets of Uptown.

17 From bird watching to kayaking along the banks of the Mississippi River – check out the fall fun at the **Audubon Center at Riverlands**.

18 Wander through forest, prairie and natural wetlands at Edwardsville's **Watershed Nature Center**.

19 Art takes center stage at the three-day **Edwardsville Art Fair** Sept. 22-24 in City Park.

20 Ride the ferry across the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers on the **Grafton Ferry**, **Golden Eagle Ferry** and **Brussels Ferry**.



GRAFTON WINERY



THE LOADING DOCK



EDWARDSVILLE ART FAIR



SCAN ME
For more
things to do.

fall picks



BROOM ORCHARD

12803 Broom Rd. • Carlinville

Pears, plums, and more than 20 varieties of apples are available from late August through October.

BOONIES FARM

8863 Dustman Rd. • Worden

Find your great pumpkin here and enjoy a corn maze, pumpkin cannon, barnyard sports and more.

ECKERT'S COUNTRY STORE & FARM

20995 Eckert Orchard Rd. • Grafton

Hop on a wagon and travel to the U Pick apple orchard and bring home a bushel and a peck of your favorite fruit.

LIBERTY APPLE ORCHARD

8308 Kuhn Station Rd. • Edwardsville

18 varieties of U Pick apples are on hand along with Liberty Apple Orchard's house made apple butter.

RELLEKE PUMPKIN FARM

473 Sand Prairie Lane • Granite City

Celebrate Fall every weekend from Sept. 24 – Oct. 30 at this farm full of different varieties and flavors of pumpkins.

RINGHAUSEN APPLE HOUSE

19770 US Highway 67 • Jerseyville

When it comes to local apple cider, Ringhausen Apple House is tops. Enjoy this award-winning cider and take home a gallon... or two!

DEMANGE PUMPKIN PATCH & CORN MAZE

1205 Cypress Rd. • St. Jacob

Pick up a plump pumpkin and Fall mums, and then get lost in the themed corn maze.



SCAN ME
For more
things to do.



TAKE A TRIP TO A LOCAL PUMPKIN PATCH or U Pick Orchard and indulge in the smells and flavors of the season. There's nothing like the taste of a crisp, freshly picked apple or the sight of acres of pumpkins in all shapes and sizes to bring the season to life in southwest Illinois. Here are a few spots where you can take your pick!

FALL *flavors*

It's not just pumpkin spice and apples that put the zing in Fall flavors found at restaurants and shops in southwest Illinois. Find your next great tasty treat in Great Rivers & Routes.



C & B BOILED
BAGELS

boiled bagels – **A TRUE NEW YORK-STYLE BAGEL SHOP • C & B Boiled Bagels,**
62 E. Ferguson, Wood River, is a new addition to the flavor scene in southwest Illinois.
Choose from 10 different bagel varieties with delicious house-made schmears and toppings.

HOT STUFF

Taylor's Mexican Chili Parlor, 510 N. Side Square, Carlinville, has been serving up the perfect bowl of chili for over 100 years. This secret recipe delight is available by the bowl, pint or can (in select shops around the region). Taylor's Mexican Chili is also part of the Illinois Maker class of state-wide makers, creators and artisans.

FROM SCRATCH

Everything on the menu at Staunton's **Blackbird Bakery & Café**, 123 E. Main St., is made from scratch daily. Pick up French or American pastries, or sit down for a sandwich created from local produce and in-house freshly made bread.

POP IT UP

If flavored popcorn is your thing, then Edwardsville's the **Chef's Shoppe**, 2320 Troy Rd., is the ideal place to indulge any yearnings that happen to pop up! Choose from over 70 flavors of popcorn or go a different direction and pick up some decadent chocolate candy and fudge or discover a must-have kitchen gadget.

'QUE FOR YOU

The region is known for its rich and hearty barbeque restaurants and events but if doing it up in the backyard is your thing, then the **Collinsville BBQ Supply Store**, 1966 Vandalia St., is a must stop shop for supplies and more.



TAYLOR'S
MEXICAN CHILI
PARLOR



MY JUST
DESSERTS



BLACKBIRD
BAKERY



LIBERTY APPLE
ORCHARD



CHEF'S
SHOPPE



COLLINS
FARM

AN EYE FOR PIE

Order dessert first when sitting down for lunch at Alton's **My Just Desserts**, 31 E. Broadway. The chalkboard menu highlights the made-fresh pies available along with its from scratch lunch menu. When the pies are gone – they are erased off the board.

SIMPLY APPLES

Apple butter, applesauce, apple cider, oh my. **Liberty Apple Orchard**, 8308 Kuhn Station Rd., Edwardsville, has a wide range of apple products made from their own 18 varieties of apples.

TASTE-FUL FUN

Your tastebuds will explode with the flavor of the hundreds of olive oils and balsamic vinegars lining the shelves at **Olive Oil Marketplace**, 108 W. 3rd St., Alton. Pick up a bottle or two and don't forget a packet of the local seasonings for a little extra spice.

ARTISANAL BREAD

There's bread and then there's bread from **222 Artisan Bakery & Café**, 222 N. Main St., Edwardsville. A local favorite for its piping hot coffee and crusty bread including ryes, multigrain, and brioche. Pick up breakfast, lunch or a pizza. Don't forget one of their famously huge and tasty cinnamon rolls.

HIP & HEALTHY

Get your daily dose of greens at **Collins Farms**, 219 Hillsboro Ave., Edwardsville, and enjoy the hip, fun atmosphere as you build your own salad or let the cooks create one of their signature salads.



SCAN ME
For more
information.

take a ROAD TRIP



DOC'S JUST OFF ROUTE 66 IN GIRARD

Hand pulled sodas from the vintage soda fountain. A blast from the past!



DOC'S
JUST OFF
ROUTE 66

Planning a road trip? Set your phone GPS for the only place in America where the Mother Road of **Route 66** meets the **Great River Road** and plan on 48 hours of Fall fun in the Great Rivers & Routes region of southwest Illinois.

BRING YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE and explore the **Last 100 Miles of Route 66 in Illinois** where quirky Americana comes to life. It's not just a road trip – it's a way of life.

LUCKY IN LITCHFIELD Explore the Last 100 Miles of Route 66 in Illinois with a stop in Litchfield. The **Litchfield Welcome Center and Route 66 Museum** offers a look at the city's past and its place on the Mother Road. Let the neon lights guide you.



views for miles & miles Sitting on top of the Mississippi River bluffs along the Great River Road, **The Nature Institute** in Godfrey offers hiking trails and unparalleled views of wildlife, plant life and the magnificent Mississippi River.



WEST END
SERVICE
STATION



PINK
ELEPHANT
ANTIQUE
MALL

HEAD SOUTH AND WEST Route 66 was the ultimate road trip adventure nearly 100 years ago. Today it's a great way to reconnect with the past. A giant pink elephant greets visitors in Livingston at the **Pink Elephant Antique Mall**, a favorite road side stop for road trippers from all parts of the world. Make a pit stop in Hamel at the **Route 66 Creamery** for a sweet treat. Visit Edwardsville's newly renovated **West End Service Station** with its neon signage and Mother Road souvenirs. It's hard to miss the giant **Catsup Bottle Water Tower** standing tall over Collinsville on Route 66.

WORLD HERITAGE

Nearly forgotten and saved from extinction 60 years ago, **Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site** in Collinsville offers a look at prehistoric Native American life. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Cahokia Mounds is home to Monk's Mound and more than two dozen smaller mounds making it the largest mound system north of Mexico. It is located on and near Route 66 and the Great River Road.

A DRIVE TO REMEMBER

A trip along the 33-mile stretch of the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway (part of the Great River Road in Illinois) is unforgettable. Running alongside the Mississippi River, the Byway showcases the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers in Hartford and the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers in Grafton. Along the way, the impressive views are photo-worthy. Stop in the riverfront communities of Alton, Elsah and Grafton for great dining, overnight stays and history lessons.

THE WINERIES HAVE IT

Sip a glass of locally produced wine at the dozens of local wineries just off the beaten track along Route 66. **The Winery at Shale Lake** in Staunton, **Half Witt Winery** in Witt, **Wild Pickins Winery** in Chesterfield and **Bella Vista Winery** in Maryville are great places to stop while journeying down Route 66. Along the Great River Road, the **Grafton Winery & Brewery** in Grafton and **Grafton Winery The Vineyards** offer its fruit wines and local red wines produced at its on-site production facility.



RAISE A PINT

READY TO TAKE A TOUR OF
LOCAL CRAFT BREWERIES
IN SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS?
CREATE YOUR OWN CRAFT
BEER TRAIL AND SAMPLE
THE AMAZING BREWS THAT
CELEBRATE CREATIVITY
AND BREWING SKILLS
AVAILABLE AT CRAFT
BREWERIES THROUGHOUT
THE SIX COUNTY REGION.



OLD HERALD
BREWERY &
DISTILLERY



OLD BAKERY BEER COMPANY

400 Landmarks, Blvd. • Alton

Signature taps like Citrus Wheat and Bluff City Lager highlight the brews here. But the beer menu is extensive and you can expand your taste buds at this Certified Organic Brewery with blends like Hibiscus Tart, and Bees Knees. Or go with a bit of hop or amber/dark. Old Bakery Beer is an Illinois Maker.

GRAFTON WINERY & BREWHAUS

300 W. Main St. • Grafton

Sip a glass of locally brewed beer along the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers in Grafton at this combo winery and brewhaus. Pair your micro brew with great food from the on-site restaurant. Grafton Winery & Brewhaus is an Illinois Maker.



OLD HERALD BREWERY & DISTILLERY

115 E. Clay St. • Collinsville

A former newspaper building has been transformed in to a production craft brewery and distillery that serves up creative list of brews including dark ale Printer's Ink; red ale Read All Over and lager Sports Page Lite among others. Old Herald Brewery & Distillery is an Illinois Maker.

PEEL BREWING CO.

110 Quartz Knoll • Edwardsville

Originally known for its pizza, the owners of Peel expanded the craft beer scene serving up high quality brews including a Blood Orange Wheat, Fleur de Peel and Belgium Strong Ale among others.



NEW! MISSISSIPPI CULTURE OAK FERMENTED ALES

201 S. Union • Staunton

New to the craft beer scene, this brewery uses a combination of yeasts and bacteria uncommon in beer-making to create brews highlighting the flora of the Mississippi River Valley. Local ingredients like wildflower honey, peaches and blackberries are added to the mix to create unique and signature brews.

OPERA HOUSE BREWING CO.

405 S. Main St. • Hillsboro

When it comes to creative craft brews, Opera House leads the way. With its Gherkin' Around dill pickle beer to Strawberry Wheat and Backyard Beach, there's always something new at this former opera house turned brewery.



NEW! RED ROOSTER BREW WERKS & DISTILLERY

123 E. Seward • Hillsboro

Housed in a refurbished and historic hotel in downtown Hillsboro, this new craft brewery and distillery offers up local brews including Midnight Lounger, an aptly named dark lager; Cochin Bantam Amber and Lakehouse Lounger, a Lawnmower Beer featuring a light amber quality.



IT WOULDN'T BE
OCTOBER WITHOUT A
COOL CRAFT BEER FEST
ON THE CALENDAR.
THAT'S WHY THE GREAT
RIVERS & ROUTES
CRAFT BEER FEST AND
CRAFT BEER WEEK ARE
FALL FAVORITES.

On Saturday, Oct. 14, all roads lead to Herald Square in Collinsville for the kick off to Craft Beer Week with the Craft Beer Fest and outdoor celebration of all things brew related. Sip a collaboration beer created by a half dozen local breweries just for the festival served up in a special Craft Beer Fest sample glass. (Additional beer samples are also available.) Pair your brew with a cup of java from

local roasters who will also be on hand. The fun starts at Noon and runs through 4 p.m. There's live music, food and local vendors all celebrating the craft beer scene. Tickets are \$30 for beer and coffee tasting and \$10 for coffee tasting only.

SCAN HERE
FOR TICKETS



CELEBRATE ALL WEEK
LONG DURING CRAFT BEER
WEEK OCT. 14 – 21. Pick up
a Craft Beer Week passport
at the festival, or at any local
brewery, then visit three of six
sites and receive a free Craft
Beer Week T-Shirt.



get lost

A REAL AMERICAN RIVER TOWN
GRAFTON
EST. 1836

IN GRAFTON

DINE • STAY • PLAY

DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP TODAY!

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surprising
5
small towns
you'll want to visit

The welcome mat is out at these charming small towns in southwest Illinois. Discover true hidden gems where life moves a bit slower; where friendly smiles greet visitors; and where hometown charm skims the historic and quaint downtown districts.

HARDIN RIVERFRONT AND JOE PAGE BRIDGE



MILLION DOLLAR COURTHOUSE

HARDIN

Perched on the banks of the Illinois River, Hardin has experienced a resurgence in popularity, thanks in part to residents who have committed themselves to showcasing the community to visitors. Stop by the newly renovated **Barefoot Restaurant**, once again open for business and serving up delicious fried catfish (fresh caught, of course) and other local favorites. Or take a peek in to **Blue Ridge Farms Market** for home baked goods, seasonal fruits and veggies and home décor. The **Illinois Riverdock Restaurant** is a visitor favorite with its views of the Illinois River. And, of course, no visit to Hardin is possible without a drive across the historic **Joe Page Bridge**, which has the largest lift span of any bridge of its type in the world.



JERSEYVILLE

Midwestern charm rolls throughout Jerseyville, a farming community nestled on the vast Illinois prairie. Stroll down historic State Street and browse through the shops including **State Street Antiques**, **2nd Time Around**, **Ivy & Blush**, **Linn's Shoes** and **Outrageous Outdoors**. Take a break from shopping at one of the locally owned and operated restaurants in the downtown district including **George's Local Brew** (known for their steaks, fries and funky Wheel of Prizes), **Brossio Tavern**, **Red Bird Deli & Ice Cream Parlor** and **Fran & Marilyn's**. **The Cheney Mansion** is worth an exploration for local history and offers ghost tours by appointment.

CARLINVILLE

Historic **Route 66** left its mark on Carlinville, but that's not the city's only claim to fame. Located just north of **Beaver Dam State Park**, the city is home to **Blackburn College** and has a legacy of **Sears Homes** – kit homes popular at the turn of the 20th century.

Tour the **Macoupin County Courthouse** – also known as **The Million Dollar Courthouse**. Across the street from the courthouse stands the **Cannonball Jail**, another historic site, which held prisoners from 1868 through 1988. Don't miss the **Carlinville Square** – one of the few roundabouts left on Route 66. Relax at the quaint and comfortable **Uptown Tavern**; enjoy a cup of chili at **Taylor's Mexican Chili Parlor**; and shop at local boutiques including **Brave Hazel Boutique**, **Cherry Tree Gifts & Souvenirs**, **Country Gypsy** and more.

HILLSBORO

One word can be used to describe this rural community – picturesque. Take a walk along Main Street in downtown Hillsboro and browse through **Atlas 46/Hardcore Hammers**, **Blackboard Mercantile**, **Gold Pan Records & Recording Studio**, **Nzuri Boutique**, **The Holiday Shop**, **Resale Station**, **Shags Vintage**, **Alpha Candles**, **The Sweet Spot** and **Sage on Sage**. Then refresh yourself at **Opera House Brewery**, **Black Rabbit Coffee Roasters**, the **Courthouse Pub** and the **Cozy Café**. Spend the night in Hillsboro at the newly refurbished **Red Rooster Inn** and enjoy a drink and lunch or dinner at the adjacent **Red Rooster Beer Werks & Distillery**.



BELK PARK GOLF COURSE



THE SWEET SPOT

WOOD RIVER

History and heritage come together in the community of Wood River located between Alton to the west and Edwardsville to the east. Take a taste tour of Wood River and stop by **1929 Pizza & Wine**, **C.&B. Boiled Bagels**, the **Pump House**, the **Burger Bar** or enjoy a retro dining experience at **King Louie's Drive In**, home to homemade root beer and made to order sandwiches and sides. Explore the shopping at locally owned and operated business like **Almost Famous Gift Boutique**, **Rustic Roots**, **The Dress Shop**, **Downtown Delights** and **Von Dell's Gallery & Studios**. Hit the links at the classic and challenging **Belk Park Golf Course**.

ESCAPE TO Elsah

VOTED #1 SCENIC SPOT IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS*

SHOP | STAY | EXPLORE

Elsah General Store
Peace Works
A Market with a Mission
The Look Factory

Green Tree Inn Bed & Breakfast
Maple Leaf Cottages Bed & Breakfast
Inspiring Wooded Cottage Airbnb
Suite Jane Airbnb

*Statewide vote by the Illinois Bicentennial Commission and the State Journal Register

escapetoelsah.com

20 things to do FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Listen closely for the sounds of sleigh bells jingling and be on the look-out for millions of festive lights twinkling – that means the holidays have arrived in southwest Illinois.



1 Head to downtown Alton and enjoy horse drawn carriage rides, meet Santa's reindeer and watch the massive community tree light up during the **Community Tree Lighting**.

2 The holidays come to life in Alton at **Christmas Wonderland**. More than 2 million lights decorate Rock Spring Park for a lighted driving tour like no other. Nov. 24 – Dec. 27.

3 On Christmas Eve over 200 years ago, the men of the Lewis & Clark expedition arrived at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers near Hartford. Celebrate this history during **Arrival Days** at Lewis & Clark State Historic Site Dec. 9 & 10.



SCAN ME
For more
holiday fun.

4 Enjoy old fashioned fun during Jerseyville's **Downtown Country Christmas** Nov. 25. Jerseyville Bright Nights lighted displays run throughout the holiday season.

5 Journey to Hillsboro for the annual **Storybook Christmas** where scenes from favorite stories come to life on city streets.

6 Light up the holidays with the **Collinsville Light Up Parade** and **Christmas at Collins House**.

7 Take three days and explore Carlinville during **Christmas in Carlinville** Dec. 1 – 3.

8 The sounds of the season take flight when **Opera Edwardsville** presents its annual holiday concert Dec. 2 at Dunham Hall on the campus of SIU Edwardsville.

9 Come **Home for the Holidays** to the historic Village of Elsah on Dec. 2. Tour holiday-themed homes, businesses and take a self-guided walking tour.

10 Chocolate and Christmas go together like reindeer and sleighs! Take part in **Santa's Chocolate Express** in downtown Grafton.

11 Immerse yourself in the holidays at **Bethalto Christmas Village**. Visit with Santa and stroll through the glass cottages decorated for the season.

you'll find **HOLIDAY CHEER AND CELEBRATIONS** throughout the streets and shops of southwest Illinois. Parades, concerts, holiday gift shopping – and maybe a Santa sighting or two – all await as we celebrate the season with small town cheer.



CHRISTMAS
WONDERLAND



CHRISTMAS AT
COLLINS HOUSE



ELSAH HOME
FOR THE HOLIDAYS



OPERA
EDWARDSVILLE

12 You can never have too many Santas at Christmas. Or can you? Find out at the Grafton **Santa Con** – the place where Santa hangs out right before his biggest day of the year!

13 Enjoy the **12 Days of Christmas** with Opera Edwardsville – an online celebration of the season through opera.

14 Enjoy a holiday parade in Granite City when the **Candy Cane Parade** steps off on Saturday, Dec. 2.

15 What's the best part of the holidays? Find out at **Alton Little Theater's Best of the Best Christmas Concert** Dec. 9 & 10.

16 Catch the holiday spirit at Collinsville's **Willoughby Heritage Farm**. Enjoy holiday lights, Santa and more.

17 Celebrate the holidays at Illinois' largest park – **Pere Marquette State Park** in Grafton where you can enjoy dinner and an overnight stay.

18 Ever watched a Christmas Tree dance? Check out Jerseyville's 22-foot **Dancing Christmas Tree** at Dolan Park.

19 Step back in time at Edwardsville's historic **Benjamin Stephenson House** and learn how early settlers celebrated the season.

20 The fun doesn't end on Christmas Day. Head to Grafton for **New Year's Eve** and enjoy fireworks and party fun along the Mississippi River.

UNWRAP THE *holidays:* 10 BEST PLACES TO SHOP

Especially in the Great Rivers & Routes region of southwest Illinois.



MISSISSIPPI
MUD POTTERY

MISSISSIPPI MUD POTTERY

310 E. Broadway St. • Alton

With the Mississippi River as inspiration, the artists who own and operate this popular Alton shop create fun, elegant and durable hand thrown pottery that is the perfect accent piece for any space. Don't see what you want on the shelves? They accept special orders too. Mississippi Mud Pottery is part of the Illinois Made program and is one of the original Illinois Makers.

HARRISON'S GIFTS

224 E. Main St. • Grafton

Make a day of it when you explore 3,000-square-feet of shopping delights at Harrison's. Choose from home décor, jewelry, clothing and more. It's a favorite place for locals to pick up gifts that can't be found anywhere else.

RUBY WREN ECLECTIC BOUTIQUE

5761 Godfrey Rd. • Godfrey

When it comes to the hard to buy-for person on your gift list, then head to the Ruby Wren. Hip, trendy and fun gifts created by local makers are on display. Choose from home décor, skin care, local coffee or teas, jewelry and clothing.



RUSTIC
ROOTS

RUBY WREN
ECLECTIC
BOUTIQUE

BRIAR
ROSE

AP
CIGAR CO.

PEACE
WORKS

WATER
SWEETS SOAP
COMPANY

PEACE WORKS – A MARKET WITH A MISSION

18 LaSalle St. • Elsah

Shop for a cause at this Fair Trade gift shop nestled in the historic village of Elsah along the Mississippi River. Unique gifts on hand include jewelry, artwork and barn quilts. Each purchase helps raise social awareness and supports a cause.

WATER SWEETS SOAP COMPANY

6108 Shogar Dr. • Suite C,
Edwardsville

Every product in this shop is made locally and have zero preservatives. Take your pick of shower bombs, bath salts, soaps and lotions. Water Sweets is part of the class of Illinois Made makers.

THE SWEET SPOT

317 S. Main St. • Hillsboro

Satisfy your holiday sweet tooth while picking up stocking stuffer candy and treats at this new sweet hot spot with over 500 candies, treats and drinks.

head to – **DOWNTOWN ALTON** for First Friday shopping events in October, November and December. Shops and art galleries stay open later for holiday shopping

RUSTIC ROOTS

200 W. Ferguson Ave.
Wood River

Everything old is new again at this artist-centric gift shop. Shop owners have partnered with local artists and crafters to provide quality handcrafted gifts, home décor and more.

AP CIGAR CO.

202 State St. • Alton

If you or someone on your gift list loves the scent of cigars then this downtown Alton shop is the place to go. Browse the premium cigars on hand and pick up a 'stick' or two for your cigar smoking bestie.

COUNTRY MEADOWS ANTIQUES

401 E. Broadway • Alton

Discover vintage and antique collectibles at this family owned store that has been the go-to-shop for quality antiques and collectibles for decades. Depression-era glass, collectible Lionel train sets, White Hall pottery and more available.

BRIAR ROSE

216 N. State St. • Litchfield

Vintage and trendy merchandise fills the Briar Rose, an eclectic store nestled in downtown Litchfield. Find handcrafted Amish furniture, rustic home décor, which mingle with home-grown jars of honey and locally-made jam.



SCAN ME
For more
holiday fun.

one of the best things about the holidays is **SHOPPING FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**
Find the perfect gift to put under the tree in southwest Illinois from this list of the 10 Best Places to Shop.
The Great Rivers & Routes region is proud to represent official Illinois Makers throughout its six county region including Mississippi Mud Pottery and Water Sweets Soap Company!

ESCAPE *to* WINTER FUN

Especially in the Great Rivers & Routes region of southwest Illinois.



ROCK SPRING
PARK, ALTON

when the
**TEMPERATURES PLUNGE,
THE FUN HEATS UP**
in the Great Rivers &
Routes region of southwest
Illinois. Spend your days
enjoying outdoor delights
and evenings warming up
indoors enjoying live music,
live theater or simply a
great meal prepared at a
locally owned and operated
restaurant. It's time for
winter fun!

DATE NIGHT Enjoy a bit of
romance or celebrate a special
occasion with an evening of
live entertainment. **The Wildey
Theatre** in Edwardsville offers
great live music performances
from national cover bands.
Or get ready to laugh and cry
when the actors at **Alton
Little Theater** take the stage
in rip-roaring comedies and
heart-wrenching dramas.
Escape to **The Speakeasy**
in Granite City for a cozy
evening of Prohibition inspired
cocktails and bite size
appetizers. Get Flock-ed at
Flock Food Truck Park and
enjoy weekend alcoholic and
non-alcoholic cocktails.

MEAL TICKET It's no secret
that southwest Illinois is
home to delicious dining
destinations. Sample the
winter menu at regionally
famous **Cleveland Heath** in
Edwardsville. Secret recipe
fried chicken is served up hot
and fresh at **Castelli's at 255** in
Alton. Satisfy your craving for
Italian pastas at **Bella Milano**
in Edwardsville. Warm up
with a hearty menu of entrees
and desserts at Litchfield's
Ariston Café. When it comes
to fried fish, Grafton's two fish
stands **O'Jan's** and **Beaseley's**
—are second to none. **Brown
Bag Bistro** in Alton is home
to thick, tasty sandwiches
and decadent cheesecakes
and **Porters Steakhouse** in
Collinsville is home to thick
juicy steaks.

*let's go
fishing show*
celebrates its 30th
year of inspiring
fishing fans with
new products,
seminars and
family-friendly
fun. It's held
at Collinsville's
Gateway
Convention Center
Jan. 5 – 7, 2024.

FAMILY FUN Take the family on a winter
adventure and see what kinds of fun you can have
along the rivers and routes of the region. Lace
up the ice skates at **The Loading Dock Ice Rink** –
located on the edge of the Mississippi River – and
when you're done, enjoy some s'mores and drinks
around one of the indoor firepits.

Head to the **Goshen Winter Market** the third
Saturday of each month from November through
April for great outdoor shopping. Looking for
indoor adventure? **Edison's Entertainment Center**
in Edwardsville has bowling, laser tag, arcades,
food and more.

Trek through **Pere Marquette State Park** – the
largest state park in Illinois. Enjoy stunning views
of the Illinois River. Stretch your legs on more
than 130 miles of hard surface trails, part of the
nationally recognized **MCT Trail System**.

Let the kids explore at the **Edwardsville Children's
Museum** which offers winter themed activities.
Visit **Willoughby Heritage Farm** in Collinsville and
meet the animals and explore the farm.

And when it snows, grab the sleds and head
to Alton's **Rock Spring Park** and slide in to
some family fun.



BEER FOR BREAKFAST THE FOUR POSTER
A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE & MURDER
BEST OF THE BEST COUNTRY LOVE
WAITRESS ALABAMA STORY RED JASPER
THE ELEPHANT'S GRAVEYARD TWO ROOMS
THE BEST OF THE BEST CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The 90th Season
ALTON LITTLE THEATER

BEER FOR BREAKFAST THE FOUR POSTER
A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE & MURDER
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THE BEST OF THE BEST CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Your Community Theater is Celebrating its
90th Anniversary
with a new show nearly every month.

Come be a part of the magic that only
LIVE THEATER brings to the Riverbend.

Beer For Breakfast
September 15-24, 2023

The Elephant's Graveyard
January 26-28, 2024

*A Gentleman's Guide to
Love and Murder*
November 10-19, 2023

*The Best of the Best
Country Love*
February 10 & 11, 2024

*The Best of the Best
Christmas Concert*
December 9 & 10, 2023

The Four Poster
February 16-25, 2024

Two Rooms
January 11-13, 2024

Alabama Story
March 15-24, 2024

Red Jasper
January 18-21, 2024

Waitress
May 10-19, 2024

2450 N. Henry Street • Alton, Illinois 62002 | 618-462-3205 | www.altonlittletheater.org

make a NIGHT OF IT

UNIQUE OVERNIGHT STAYS



GREEN TREE INN 15 Mill St. • Elsah

Pamper yourself with a stay at this bed and breakfast inn located in the historic and picturesque Village of Elsah. Homemade afternoon snacks and made from scratch breakfasts, tailored to guests food restrictions or allergies, are part of the charm of an overnight stay. Guests have access to the onsite firepit, a full kitchen, the gazebo and bicycles for those who want to experience the village on two wheels. Conveniently located on the Great River Road between Alton and Grafton, the drive along this scenic road is the icing on the cake.

after **SPENDING A DAY EXPLORING**, it's nice to kick back and unwind for the evening in a comfortable bed and breakfast inn, historic hotel or guest suite. Fortunately, southwest Illinois is full of these hidden gems providing unique places to spend the night.



TARA POINT INN & COTTAGE 1 Tara Point Dr. • Grafton

Escape from daily stresses and spend a night or two at Tara Point located on the edge of the Mississippi River bluffs in Grafton. With stunning views of the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, take your pick of a stay in the spectacular main house or a nearby cozy guest cottage. Chairs are set up overlooking downtown Grafton and offer the perfect place to unwind. Or sit outside on the front porch of a cabin and watch deer and other local wildlife wander the expansive lawn. Enjoy nearby restaurants, wineries and night life.



ALTON CRACKER FACTORY – GREAT RIVERS LODGING 205 E. Broadway • Alton

A former cracker factory has been converted to upscale lofts for overnight stays in downtown Alton. With breathtaking views of the nearby Mississippi River from each unit, guests can walk to nearby restaurants, nightlife and Alton Argosy Casino. The stunning Eagles Nest Penthouse sleeps six and the smaller lofts sleep four people each.



URBAN COLLECTIVE BOUTIQUE HOTEL 201 N. 2nd St. • Edwardsville

Looking for an out-of-the-ordinary experience? This newly opened hotel offers guests a trendy overnight stay just minutes from downtown Edwardsville. Each of the eight suites has its own personality offering a unique ambiance through color, theme, style and décor. Eclectic dining experiences are just a short stroll away as is the iconic and historic Wildey Theatre, local bakeries and shops and the Mother Road of Route 66. Located in a historic building built in 1887, it's the perfect backdrop to explore Illinois' third oldest city.



THE HISTORIC RED ROOSTER INN 123 E. Seward St. • Hillsboro

"Welcome travelers, wayfarers and refined persons" was the theme of The Hillsboro Hotel 120 years ago. Today, the message continues to resonate as the lovingly renovated red brick building is now home to a boutique hotel, upscale residences, a brewery, distillery and tap room with a full restaurant. Book your stay in one of the historic rooms which still have the over the door transoms but offer comfortable, upscale décor.



THE CHARLESTON SUITE 513 S. Main • Carrollton

Bring the gang and spend a week or weekend in this cozy, comfortable three bedroom suite in downtown Carrollton. Want a girlfriend getaway? How about a small family gathering? The Charleston Suite offers 2,700-square-feet of living space including a large living room, full sized kitchen, separate dining room, laundry room, a bathroom with a soaking tub and the great views of historic downtown Carrollton.



SCAN ME
For overnight adventures.

SNOW BIRDS

Turn your eyes to the sky from January through early March and see if you can spot the classic white heads of American Bald Eagles wintering in southwest Illinois.



IT HAPPENS EVERY WINTER WITHOUT FAIL. American Bald Eagles make their way from the frigid northern climates to spend a few months along the rivers, lakes and ponds of the Great Rivers & Routes region of southwest Illinois. Spot these iconic symbols of America in the wild sitting in trees along the banks of the Mississippi River, using river ice floes to hunt for fish or soaring high above the river bluffs. It's not unusual to see eagles around lakes in the region including Lake Lou Yaeger in Litchfield, Beaver Dam State Park in Carlinville and Horseshoe Lake State Park in Collinsville.



DID YOU KNOW?

Southwest Illinois is also home to large populations of Trumpeter Swans in the winter. From November through February thousands of swans spend their time foraging in local fields and hanging out at the Audubon Center at Riverlands in West Alton and Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge in Brussels.



^ **EAGLE ice festival** It's time for an Eagle Party! Celebrate all things eagle related during the annual **Alton Eagle Ice Festival** on Saturday, Jan. 6 at **Flock Food Truck Park** in Alton. Meet an American Bald Eagle up close and personal, watch live ice carvings, cook up a s'more or two over fire pits and enjoy a glass of Snow Bird beer from Old Bakery Beer Company or a special winter cocktail created by Flock staff. The event takes place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. New this year during Eagle Fest is an indoor/outdoor Winter Market at **Jacoby Arts Center**. Check out additional activities at the **Lewis & Clark Confluence Tower** where the Birds of Winter will be on display along with activities at the **Audubon Center at Riverlands** and the **National Great Rivers Museum**.

> EAGLE meet & greet

Meet Liberty – an American Bald Eagle – who spends every Saturday in January in Alton and Grafton. Free Eagle Meet & Greets are planned for **Saturday, Jan. 13 and Jan. 27** at the Grafton Visitor Center and on **Saturday, Jan. 6** at Flock Food Truck Park in Alton and **Jan. 20** at the Alton Visitor Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each Saturday. Take photos and learn more about eagles' characteristics, habitats and hunting skills. Liberty is a permanent resident of the World Bird Sanctuary in St. Louis.



mark your calendars **FOR MORE EAGLE AND WINTER FUN** at the annual **Ice Jam at the Dam** at the **National Great Rivers Museum in February**.



GUIDED EAGLE TOURS

Reserve your seat on a guided Eagle Shuttle Tour offered by the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau every Saturday in January and February. These tours – offered in Alton and Grafton – provide inside tips on eagle viewing, best places to see eagles in the wild and the behavior of American Bald Eagles. Advance tickets are required and can be purchased at: **RiversandRoutes.com** or scan the QR Code below.

SHUTTLE TOUR DATES:

ALTON TOURS:

Meet at Alton Visitor Center, 200 Piassa St.

Tours are scheduled for 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. each Saturday

January 2024 6, 13, 20 & 27

February 2024 3, 10, 17 & 24

GRAFTON TOURS:

Meet at the Grafton SkyTour, 3 W. Clinton St.

Tours are scheduled for 9 a.m. each Saturday

January 2024 6, 13, 20 & 27

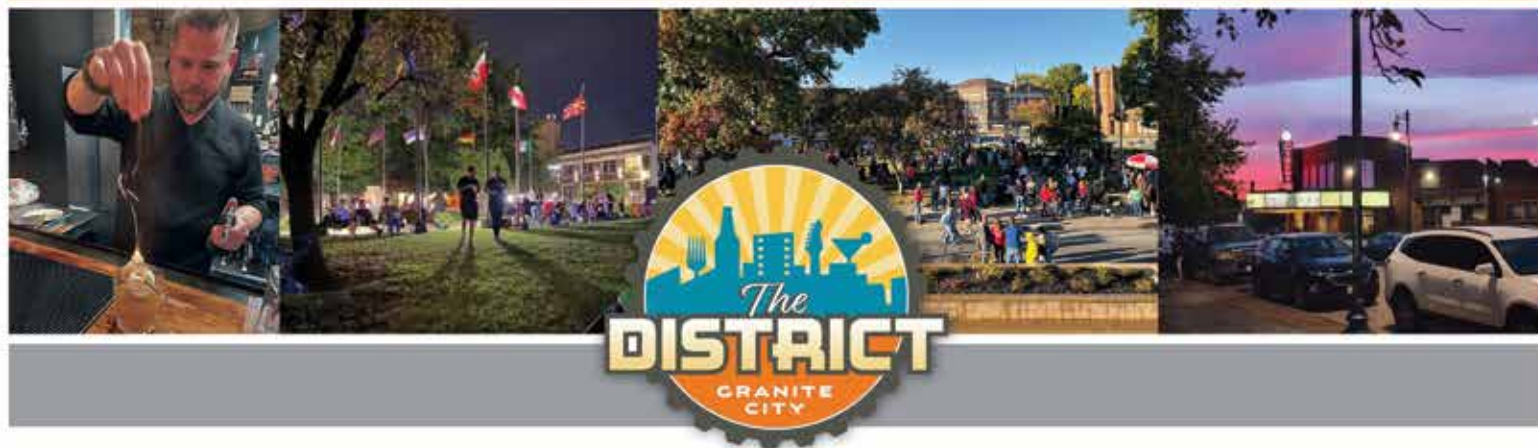
February 2024 3, 10, 17 & 24



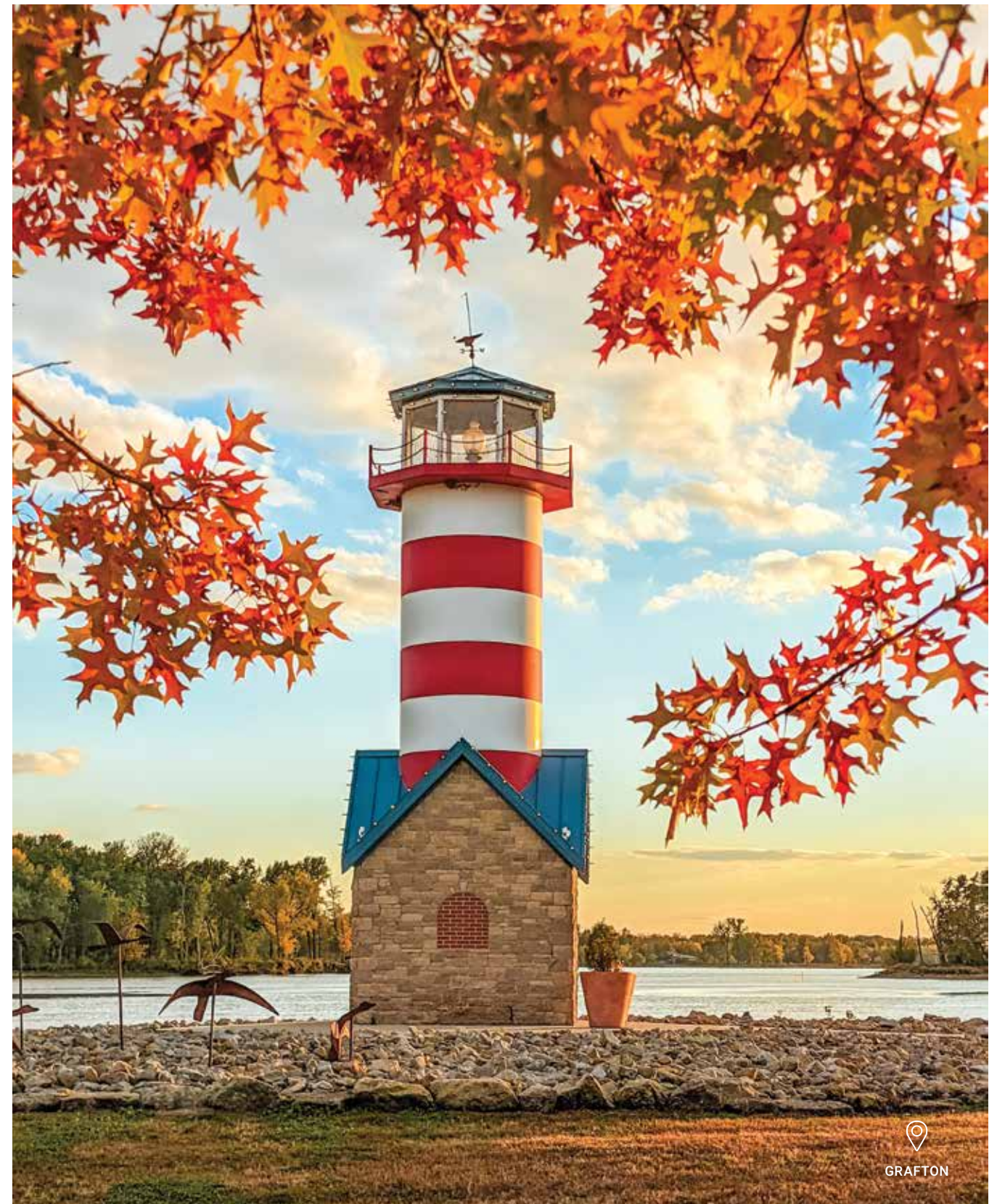
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SOLAR ECLIPSE 2024



HERALD SQUARE-COLLINSVILLE, ILLINOIS

APRIL 8, 2024



enjoy
illinois

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WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
ON APRIL 8,
2024?

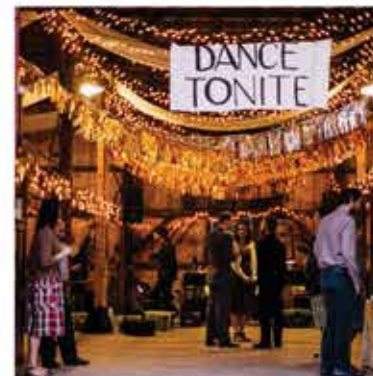
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Enjoy a Solar Shandy
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activities and games,
fire blowing events
and be sure to spend
the night using one
of the great hotel
packages offered
by local hotels and
motels. There's fun
for the entire family
on April 8!



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For more
information.

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For information on the Grafton Ferry please visit TheGraftonFerry.com or call (618) 465-6676