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Untouched by the glaciers, the county lies in the unglaciated “driftless” area where rolling hills and rugged sandstone bluffs stand proud, giving shape to a landscape of wooded hills, rock ravines, and the cultivated mosaic of farm fields. You can enjoy nature at its best in Iowa County. Pack a picnic and your camera and get ready for some great outdoor adventures, like hiking, biking, canoeing, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, four-wheeling, snowmobiling, fishing, bird-watching...and more. Rolling hills, beautiful vistas, and a night sky where you can still see stars. Treat yourself to a relaxing dose of nature and enjoy the splendor of each season in turn.

This is where Wisconsin began. You can stand on the spot where, in 1836, Henry Dodge was sworn in as the first governor of the newly formed Wisconsin Territory, an area that included portions of what would become the states of Iowa, Minnesota, and North and South Dakota. When Dodge arrived, the primary attraction was lead mining. Thousands of tons of the mineral were shipped out of the county by wagon, train, and water. Wisconsin’s nickname, the Badger state, originated with these early miners. Unsure of how long they would stay and anxious to start mining, they built temporary housing

Don't Miss...

- Governor Dodge State Park
- Blue Mound State Park
- Tower Hill State Park
- Cave of the Mounds
- House on the Rock
- Montfort Wind Farm
- Pendarvis Historical Site
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin
- American Players Theatre
- Military Ridge State Trail
- The Many Historic Districts



by digging holes into sidehills, mimicking the burrowing habits of badgers. Mining days are past, but stories and historical artifacts are right below the surface. Visitors can recall these days at many sites throughout the county that preserve this important part of Wisconsin's history. As mining declined, the fertile valleys and rolling hills came under cultivation with the great influx of immigrant farmers. Agriculture remains at the heart of Iowa County. Dairy and beef herds still dot our hillsides, and other innovative agriculture is also emerging, including alpaca, deer, organic vegetable, and tree farming.

Iowa County is home to numerous outstanding attractions that are visited by guests from around the world. You, too, can find yourself immersed in history, the arts, and a variety of cultural activities. Plus, if you're looking for interesting shopping, visit Mineral Point, Dodgeville, and many of our charming villages and towns. You will not only find a unique and creative selection of products, but friendly people, and a comfortable pace of life.

■ ENJOY OUR ATTRACTIONS...

American Players Theatre, located on 110 wooded acres, has grown to become one of the largest and best-regarded theaters of its kind in the country. Each season, the hilltop amphitheater plays host to romance, deceit, drama, and laughter with the greatest stories under the sun, the moon, and the stars. playinthewoods.org.

Botham Vineyards, located at 8180 Langberry Road, Barneveld. Vine-to-bottle has been a fundamental part of our winemaking philosophy for more than 25 years.

Visit our tasting room, housed in a historic renovated barn, sample our wines and learn more about our uncommon approach to winemaking.

Dodge Mining Camp Cabin, built in 1827, has been designated Iowa County's oldest building. The interpretive center documents the story of Governor Henry Dodge, the Black Hawk War, the crude beginnings of lead mining in Iowa County, and the actual construction handiwork of lead miners more than 170 years ago. 608.935.7694.

Folklore Village is a nationally recognized folk arts center, presenting a year-round schedule of dances, concerts, participatory weekend events, folk school classes,

and family programs. 608.924.4000 www.folklorevillage.org

Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, where the world famous architect lived and worked in Wisconsin, is a place of pilgrimage for Wright's admirers from around the world. Guided tours of Taliesin and Hillside School, as well as walking tours of the grounds, are available. taliesinpreservation.org.

Grandview is the former estate of Nick Englebert, a dairy farmer, storyteller, and self-taught folk artist. Englebert decorated the entire exterior of his small farmhouse with a colorful mosaic of stones, shells, glass, ceramic fragments, and porcelain figures. Visitors are treated to a collection of concrete sculptures, mosaics, and paintings sure to fascinate people of all ages. nicksgrandview.com.

House on the Rock adds to their remarkable collection each year, ensuring that new and returning visitors to the Streets of Yesterday, Organ Room, Cannon Building, Dollhouse Building, Circus Building, Armor Room, Crown Jewel Room, Gun Collection, Infinity Room, and the "World's Largest Carousel" will find a visual feast. thehouseontherock.com.

Orchard Lawn The Gundry House is a wonderful example of the graciousness of a bygone era. The Italianate mansion built in 1868 offers a fascinating view of merchant-class life in the early days of Mineral Point and features authentic furnishings and local historical artifacts. mineralpointhistory.org.

Pendarvis Historic Site is one of the most exceptional historic building restorations in Wisconsin. Winding footpaths connect quaint stone-and-log cottages and a three-unit rowhouse on a craggy slope dotted with blooming gardens and charming rock courtyards. Guides outfitted in 19th-century garb walk you through the cottages and grounds, explaining the evolution of the Shake Rag neighborhood. pendarvishistoricsite.org

Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts, set in the beautiful and historic Shake Rag neighborhood, is a lively hands-on creative learning center. Students come from all over the country to join in the creative fun that takes place here. Workshops are offered year-round at Shake Rag Alley. shakeragalley.com.

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IOWA COUNTY CAMPGROUNDS

Avoca Lakeside Campground - A municipal run campground. 80 camping sites. 608.532.6831

Blue Mounds Area - Blue Mounds State Park, located on the eastern side of Iowa County. 608.437.5711

Dodgeville Area - Governor Dodge State Park, north of Dodgeville on Hwy 23. 608.935.2315

Tom's Campground - 2626 Spring Road, Dodgeville (just off State Hwy 191). 608.935.5446

Traders Campground between Arena and Spring Green on Hwy 14. 800.871.0115

Cobb/Highland - Black Hawk Lake on Hwy BH near Highland. 608.623.2707

Mineral Point - Iowa County Fairgrounds in Mineral Point. 608.987.2487

Spring Green Area - Tower Hill State Park near Spring Green. 608.588.2116



■ PLAY IN OUR GREAT BACKYARDS...

The 970-acre wet-mesic Avoca Prairie is the largest tall grass prairie east of the Mississippi—probably the only place in the eastern U.S. where only natural prairie-savanna features form the landscape. The prairie plant and animal species found here, and at other remnant prairie sites in the area, are of the pre-settlement prairie that once covered two million acres; today a little more than 2,000 scattered acres survive.

Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area has 150 campsites, a 220-acre lake, and 2,000 acres of surrounding beauty, with opportunities for hiking, fishing, swimming, and boating.

Blue Mound State Park is located at southern Wisconsin's highest point. The park is open year-round and offers 78 wooded campsites, two observation towers, double and single-track bike trails, nature and hiking trails, cross-country skiing, and a swimming pool.

Cave of the Mounds, just a stone's throw across the county line is a National Natural Landmark, opened in 1939 and offers guided tours from March 15 to November 15th. caveofthemounds.com.

Cheese Country Trail is a shared use trail which allows ATVs, horseback riding, snowmobiles, and bikes. The 47-mile trail runs from Mineral Point to Monroe, and has 57 overpasses, including a 440-foot bridge spanning the Pecatonica River.

Cycle Southwest Wisconsin is a three-county map consisting of 28 bicycling loops that provide wonderful opportunities for avid and amateur bicyclists alike. This is a bicyclist's paradise with challenging hills for the serious cyclists and gentler routes for the less adventurous.

Pine Ridge Motel

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Governor Dodge State Park is Wisconsin's second-largest and third-busiest state park. With more than 5,200 scenic acres of steep hills, bluffs, deep valleys, two lakes, and a waterfall, you can enjoy camping, hiking, fishing, picnicking, bicycling, mountain biking, swimming, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. The park has nearly 300 campsites

Hyde's Mill dam and millpond, built in 1850, is a tranquil and scenic stop surrounded by lush woodlands and prairie openings. Enjoy the gentle waterfalls, listen for bird calls, and take a step back to a quieter time. Don't forget the camera.

Military Ridge State Trail, a 40-mile trail for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing connects Dodgeville and Fitchburg, near Madison. Most of the trail follows the former Chicago and North Western Railway line, which has a gentle grade of only 2 to 5 percent. The Military Ridge Trail is also directly accessible from Mineral Point via a bike/hike-only trail.

Tower Hill State Park, with campsites, hiking trails, a canoe landing, picnic areas, and a fully staffed park office, was the site of a major lead shot production operation that supplied ammunition to the military and the market.

VISIT OUR COMMUNITIES...

■ ARENA

Arena, at the northeast corner of Iowa County, is a small community on the Lower

Grandview Folk Art Site

FREE ADMISSION - AN AMAZING ENVIRONMENT

In the 1930s farmer Nick Engelbert created more than 40 glass, bead and brick sculptures in his yard, combining patriotic themes with imagery from mythology, fairy tales, immigrant roots and his own imagination. Open dawn to dusk; museum open by appointment. Just west of Hollandale on State Road 39.



608-574-7169 

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Wisconsin Riverway. The Arena Landing lies across the river from a set of bluffs on the north side of the Lower Wisconsin River. Cheese, beer, and water—what could be more Wisconsin than that? You'll find all of that in Arena. Home to the maker of the original Co-Jack Cheese, you can watch the artisan cheesemaker at work and sample some great Wisconsin cheeses. You can't miss it—just look for the giant mouse! Tour groups are welcome and a narrative of the cheese-making process is available with an advance notice. Grab some cheese, then head around the corner for some locally brewed beer at the Lake Louie Brewery, where there are really fun and free tours on most Saturdays by appointment. And then take a trip down the river. With several places in the area to rent canoes, you can discover the Wisconsin River at her best.

■ **AVOCA**

Avoca, a small, beautiful village nestled between lush hills and the scenic Wisconsin River, straddles the northwest border of Iowa County. Avoca's yearly celebrations include Firemen's Annual Fisheree, St. Patrick's Day Parade & Celebration, Memorial Day Celebration, Country at the Crossroads Music Festival with fireworks, and Labor Day Celebration. Avoca has the biggest prairie land east of the Mississippi River, from which you are able to walk to the Wisconsin River and enjoy the natural beauty.

In 2008, Avoca dedicated its new Veteran's Memorial in Legion Park on Front Street, complete with a retired military tank. The Avoca Lakeside Park features a campground, ancient Indian mounds, ball diamond, concession stand, two picnic shelters, playgrounds, a swim at your own risk beach, and boat ramp.

The Avoca Campground has 75 sites, accommodating both permanent and vacationing campers. Sites are large and well spaced, which allows for all campers, from tenters to big rigs. Picnic tables and fire rings are provided at each site. The campground is open from April 15 to November 30. Reservations are recommended for holiday weekends. Call 608.532.6831 for campground information.

Indian mounds are in the park overlooking the Avoca Lake. The group includes six linear and four conical mounds. The Avoca Lake is a backwater of the Wisconsin River and

is great for fishing, boating, canoeing, and kayaking. The lake is approximately 2 miles long, and during most of the summer is shallow, with the deepest areas about 8 to 10 feet. The Avoca Prairie is located about two miles east of the village and is one of four Department of Natural Resources public hunting areas within seven miles of the village. Game common to the area are the whitetail deer, wild turkey, waterfowl, pheasants, and other small game. The prairie is the largest contiguous prairie east of the Mississippi River. The bottomlands are covered with many different grasses, flowers, and other plants.

■ **BARNEVELD**

Barneveld, the site of a devastating tornado which struck Iowa and Dane counties on June 8, 1984, is known for its resiliency. Barneveld took the brunt of this storm, which killed 9 people, injured 200, and did \$40 million worth of physical damage, leaving much of the village destroyed. Today a new modern and thriving community has grown out of the rubble. Just west of town is the new Deer Valley Golf Course, a par-72 championship facility and a water park for kids of all ages. South of Barneveld on Highway K is Botham Vineyards and Winery, a 15-acre vineyard rich in Iowa County history. Tastings of distinctive regional wines are offered during seasonal hours. East of Barneveld is Blue Mound State Park, located at southern Wisconsin's highest point. The park is open year-round and offers 78 wooded campsites, two observation towers, double- and single-track bike trails, nature and hiking trails, cross-country skiing, and a swimming pool. The Military Ridge Trail is a great place for a bike ride or hike, and snowmobiling and cross-country skiing when the snow flies. Or grab a fishing pole and head

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to Brigham Park, next to the Village of Blue Mounds, just a few miles away on County F. The Cave of the Mounds, a National Natural Landmark, opened in 1939 and offers guided tours all year.

■ **COBB**

Cobb, a quiet rural village, hosts a big community festival every summer, typically on the second Saturday of August. There are lots of reasons to visit Cobb for the annual Corn Roast, including fast-pitch tournaments, a chicken BBQ, and other great Wisconsin food and beverages, music, and

the MULBERRY pottery
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a parade. Oh, and don't forget—free sweet corn! For a pleasant break from the hustle and bustle, there are two village parks that provide places to play and picnic. Located just a few miles to the north, Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area has 150 campsites, a 220-acre lake, and 2,000 acres of surrounding beauty with opportunities for picnicking, hiking, fishing, swimming, and boating.

DODGEVILLE

Dodgeville, the county seat of Iowa County, has been at the hub of activity for Iowa County for well over a century. In the early years of settlement, Dodgeville was a mining town. Its namesake, Henry Dodge, came to the area seeking his fortune through lead mining and became the first Governor of the Wisconsin Territory. Many of the miners left for the California Gold Rush of 1849, but the city continued to grow and expand as a business and agricultural center. In 1995, the downtown area was declared a National Historic District.

There are plenty of reasons to plan a trip to Dodgeville, including several annual events: Wisconsin grilled cheese championship,

Lands' End Summer Concert Series, Halloween Street party, Off the Vine wine tasting, Farmers Appreciation Day, Kiwanis Chicken Barbeque, the Bloomfield Balloon Fest, and more. Three world-renowned attractions, The House on the Rock, Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, and American Players Theatre, are just a short drive up the road. When you come to town, shop in our stores, both on the north end and in our historic downtown. Dodgeville's business community keeps good company, from multi-generational family-owned retail businesses to international corporations, including the headquarters for Lands' End. Eat in our restaurants, supper clubs, and fast-food places, and stay in our hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and campgrounds. Play in our parks, visit our apple orchard, golf, go horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, bowling, or take in a movie.

Get in touch with history at the Iowa County Historical Society, the restored cabin from Henry Dodge's original mining party, and other artifacts from the hey-day of the lead mining era. One of the most notable structures in the downtown is the Iowa County Courthouse, the oldest continuously active courthouse in the state. The foundation was laid in 1859, when Dodgeville became the county seat (a distinction previously held by neighboring Mineral Point). The Dodge Mining Camp Cabin has been designated Iowa County's oldest building by the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Historical Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Located at 205 East Fountain Street in Dodgeville, the cabin is open by appointment only year-round. Call 608.935.7694 or 608.935.5557.

Just getting to Dodgeville is a delight. No matter the season, the landscape provides miles and miles of scenic beauty. You can venture off modern highways to the state parks, trails, and rustic country roads and enjoy many a bucolic view. Contact the Dodgeville Area Chamber of Commerce for more information. Call 877.863.6343 toll free or email info@dodgeville.com.

HIGHLAND

Highland, a vibrant small community of 860 friendly residents is located in the rolling hills of west-central Iowa County. Nearby, the Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area has 150 spacious campsites, a 220-acre lake,

and 2,000 acres of nature's beauty. It is a great location for picnicking, hiking, fishing, swimming, and boating. The Highland Village Park, with over 15 acres of green space, is centrally located in the Village and offers picnicking opportunities, shelter facilities, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts, softball diamonds, and a large playground area. OUR TOWN!, held annually on the fourth Saturday in July, is a fun-packed day to celebrate all that makes Highland a great community and to honor active service people. Chicken barbecues, ball tournaments, and a fisheriee at Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area are annual events. Every July 4th, kids, from little tykes through high school, participate in rodeo activities, such as bull riding, calf roping, barrel and pole racing, mutton busting, and tug of war. Award-winning wines are produced from at Spurgeon Winery from grapes, cranberries, cherries, raspberries, blueberries, and honey (mead). You are invited to stop in to sample from their line-up of more than 20 wines. There is no charge for the sampling. Spurgeon Winery has a covered deck for you to enjoy a glass of wine, a bite of food and some great scenery. The tasting room is stocked



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with cheese, salami and crackers or you are welcome to bring your own picnic fare. The Spurgeons also host several events during the year for your enjoyment.

■ **HOLLANDALE**

Hollandale is home to one of the more unique places in the county. A trip to southwest Wisconsin should include a visit to Grandview, on Highway 39 just outside this tiny village. You are welcome to stop by anytime for a self-guided tour. This is the former home of Nick Engelbert, a folk artist who created a mosaic masterpiece by covering his unassuming farmhouse with shards of china, glass, beads, buttons, and sea shells. Over the next 15 years, Nick created more than 40 concrete sculptures in his yard, combining patriotic themes with imagery from history, fairy tales, mythology, and his own imagination. Surrounded by a landscape of rolling hills and bucolic farmland, Engelbert named his sculpted panorama Grandview. Now owned by the Pecatonica Educational Charitable Foundation, Inc., his vivid imagination and love of life live on. One trip to Grandview and you will understand why we agree with Nick—"If a man can't find happiness on a little farm in Wisconsin, he hasn't the makings of happiness in his soul."

■ **LINDEN**

Linden, settled in 1828 following the 1827 discovery of lead by the "Dodgeville Peddler," was called Peddler's Creek until the 1850s, when it was renamed in honor of the numerous linden trees in the area. The tiny community, nestled in the beautiful hills and woods, is home to less than 700 people today, but during the lead rush days, it was a bustling center of mining with over

2,000 residents. The Methodist Church, built of local limestone in the fashion of Wesleyan chapels in Cornwall, was dedicated in 1851 and is the oldest Methodist Church building in continuous use in Wisconsin. The sanctuary, lighted by lovely stained glass windows, features a horseshoe gallery with the original box pews with doors and a raised pulpit platform.

■ **MINERAL POINT**

Mineral Point, population 2,500, has 17 art galleries and more working artists' studios, historic sites, world-class workshops, cultural events, wood-fired pizza, handcrafted beer, pasty, figgy hobbins and other Cornish traditions, award-winning artisan cheeses, quaint historic lodging, fine dining and friendly folks. It's another world...and it's a pleasant, scenic drive from anywhere, through rolling hills and valleys. In 2007, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named it one of the Dozen Distinctive Destinations in America. In 2008, it was voted the Most Beautiful Town in Wisconsin and the Best Wisconsin Town for a Historic Getaway.

Mineral Point, an early commerce center in the lead region, was settled in 1827. On July 4, 1836, Henry Dodge was sworn in as the first governor of the Wisconsin Territory, making Mineral Point "the Place Where Wisconsin Began." Miners from Cornwall, England, began arriving in the 1830s. Besides mining, they constructed stone buildings resembling their homes in Cornwall. Many of their buildings have been painstakingly restored and are part of the city's historic district. With over 500 contributing structures, Mineral Point was the first Wisconsin city placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several museums, including Pendarvis



Historic Site, the Mineral Point Depot (the oldest existing depot in Wisconsin), and Orchard Lawn offer a glimpse into the past.

A unique shopping experience awaits you, including many working studios where you can purchase works of art made by the person behind the counter. Restaurants ranging from an English-style pub to a traditional Midwestern family cafe offer plenty of choices for dining. You will find a delightful respite at the end of the day in any of our motels, guest houses, and B&Bs.

Come on July 4th for a small-town celebration reminiscent of times gone by. The last weekend of September is reserved for the annual Cornish Festival, with food tasting, Celtic music, pub games, and more. During the Fall Art Tour, held the third weekend in October, some of the state's best-known artists invite you to their personal studios, some of which are open to the public.



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during this event only. The holidays, too, are magical—Charles Dickens would feel at home here.

Mineral Point is home to the County Fairgrounds, which hosts one of the oldest county fairs in the state; with harness racing, an annual regional high school rodeo, and a variety of other events throughout the year. For more information, contact the Mineral Point Chamber of Commerce at info@mineralpoint.com or call toll free 888.764.6894.



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 Folklore Village
 Cave of the Mounds
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 Historic Hyde's Mill

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■ **MONTFORT**

Montfort, on Iowa County's western border, is a quiet, friendly town and home to the Montfort Wind Farm. You can see these graceful structures for miles and miles around the area. The largest wind farm in Wisconsin, its 20 turbines produce enough power to supply approximately 10,500 homes. They're nearly as tall as a 33-story building—that's the closest we get to skyscrapers in our corner of the world. If you happen along this ride in the late afternoon, you will have a beautiful silhouette of the windmills in the orange glow of the western sky. And for popcorn lovers—and who isn't?—there's a great place where you will find all kinds of gourmet, award winning flavors: Rural Route One Popcorn.

■ **REWEY**

Rewey is a tiny Iowa County community that swells by gigantic proportions for its annual fireworks display. By far the very best fireworks display seen in the area, this tradition draws thousands of spectators every year on the second Saturday after July 4th. If you like fireworks, you should not miss Rewey. If you want another adventure, take a short jaunt to the west, where you can climb the 265 steps of the "World's Largest M"—the landmark of nearby Platteville and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. In the winter of 1936, the engineering department of UW-Platteville was enlisted to build this permanent reminder of their alma mater. Four hundred tons of light-colored limestone were placed here to form a symmetrical "M" that some say has been seen from space. The incredible view is well worth the climb.

facebook.com/hiddenvalleys

■ **RIDGEWAY**

Ridgeway, famous for ghost stories, lies just off Highway 151 and along the Military Ridge Trail.

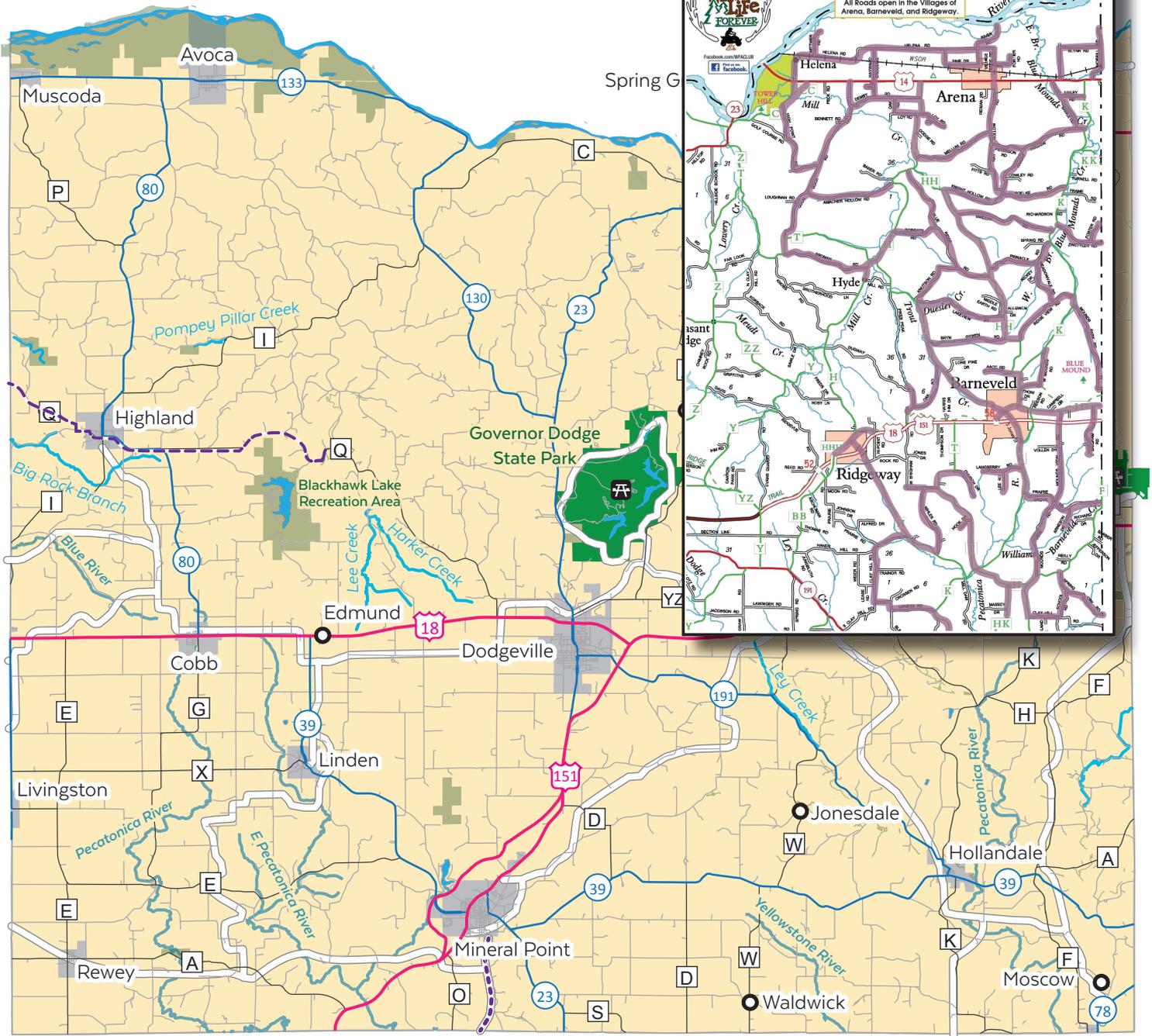
The town's mascot is the Ridgeway Ghost, who, according to local folklore, took many forms, frightening travelers as a headless man, an old woman, a ball of light, and a number of spectral animals, appearing from nowhere and attacking passersby. Origins of the ghost stories have been traced back to 1840, when two young men were murdered at McKillip's Saloon in Ridgeway. Some say the Ridgeway Phantom departed when the town burned down in 1910, but others believe the spirit is still out there, lurking in the woods. Ridgeway residents still claim him as their own.

Visit the 60-year-old railroad depot that the Friends of Military Ridge State Trail have restored. It is the only depot still standing from the time when Chicago and North Western passenger trains ran along the corridor. Stand on the traditional brick platform and imagine a time when the railroad was the heart of the community and the connection to the rest of the world. The Ridgeway Depot is open from May 1–November 1 on Sundays 1–4pm and features interpretive displays and a mural depicting life along the trail as a transportation corridor. The community celebrates Labor Day with a big festival, complete with a parade and ball tournaments, topping off the day with fireworks.



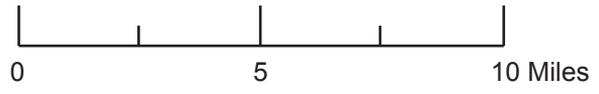
Photo by Julie Anderson

ATV Map



Blanchardville

-  City
-  Community
-  US Highway
-  State Highway
-  County Road
-  Natural Area
-  State & County Park
-  Class 1 Trout Stream
-  River
-  ATV Trail
-  Snowmobile Trail



Iowa County
 For visitor information, maps, lodging, dining,
 calendar of events, and more visit
iowacounty.org