

# Evansville Hot Spots & Happenings

Compiled by Jason Francis

## Hot Spots

**Magnolia Bluff**, 4002 N. Croak Rd., is a 120-acre park featuring picturesque rock outcroppings and vistas. Because the park has steep areas and rock outcroppings, caution must be used by all park visitors. Found just south of Evansville, 1/2 mile south of the intersection of Highway 59 and Croak Road, the park includes three miles of hiking trails, picnic tables, grills, drinking water and restroom facilities. Two trails are featured. One is a bridle and nature trail. The other is a cross-country ski and hiking trail. The bridle trail was made possible through the efforts of the Tri-County Riders Club and is also open for walking. The cross-country ski and hiking trail was constructed by the YACC (Young Adult Conservation Corps) in 1981 with funding for materials and supplies provided by Rock County. The trails of Magnolia Bluff Park are open every day from dawn to dusk. 608-757-5451, [www.co.rock.wi.us/parks-magnolia-bluff](http://www.co.rock.wi.us/parks-magnolia-bluff)

The **Evansville Wildlife Area** is located south and east of the city. It currently contains 707 acres of state-owned property, 100 acres of easements and 40 acres of leased lands. The DNR also owns 223 acres of streambank protection land along Allen Creek immediately west of the wildlife area and west of State Highway 213. The Evansville Wildlife Area offers many recreational opportunities, including birding, cross-country skiing (no designated trail), fishing, hiking (no designated trail), hunting—especially noted for pheasants, trapping, wild edibles/gathering and wildlife viewing. The Evansville Wildlife Area was established in 1960 and is home to many grassland birds including pheasants, bobwhites, upland sandpipers, harriers and dickcissels. [dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/wildlifeareas/evansville.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/wildlifeareas/evansville.html)

Take a walk and take in some history by participating in an **Evansville Historic District Walking Tour**. Settled in 1839, the city of 5,000 has three historic districts with almost 200 structures and one park listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Customized, personalized walking tours with knowledgeable local history experts are offered. To make arrangements, simply call ahead. Or pick up a free booklet with a map (found at Eager Free Public Library, Creekside Place and other downtown businesses) and go at your own pace. 608-302-1722

Experience Evansville's storied history by stopping

in the Evansville Grove Society's historic **Baker Manufacturing Company office building museum** at the entrance to Evansville Park (15 Antes Drive). The museum is open Saturdays from 1-3 p.m. The museum features a permanent Baker Co. and technology exhibit, along with temporary exhibits that change semi-annually. A historic photograph exhibit showcasing Evansville's history, meanwhile, can be viewed in the lower level of the historic Eager Economy Store (7 E. Main St.), which was recently restored to its 1904 appearance. This exhibit is available for viewing Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. [www.grovesociety.org](http://www.grovesociety.org)

Evansville's **Eager Free Public Library** (39 W. Main St.) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. It opened in 1908, having been constructed with help of a \$10,000 gift from the estate of Almeron Eager. It is a fine example of Prairie School architecture. The library is open Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday, 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 608-882-2260, [www.als.lib.wi.us/EFPL/](http://www.als.lib.wi.us/EFPL/)

## Happenings

**Saturdays, May-Oct.-Evansville Farmers Market:** Situated outdoors on East Church Street, next door to Creekside Place, the market operates 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays. This is a producer-only market. The products that you will find there are produced locally by the folks who are vending them. There often is a free kids entertainment booth featuring a simple craft. 608-728-8208, [www.evansvillefarmersmarket.com](http://www.evansvillefarmersmarket.com)

**First Thursdays of month-Cruise Night:** Enjoy viewing the sweetest rides that come cruising into town. It's a family atmosphere with proud owners, wishful wanna-be-owners and everyone who appreciates great, classic cars. Food, beverages, event T-shirts, door prizes, music. Always the first Thursday evening of the month, May through September. Dates in 2018 include: May 3, June 7, July 5, Aug. 2 and Sept. 6. Creekside Place, Inc. (102 Maple St.), 5-8 p.m. 608-882-0407, [www.creeksideplace.org/cruise-night.html](http://www.creeksideplace.org/cruise-night.html)

**June 30-July 1, July 3-4-Community of Evansville Fourth of July Celebration:** Come to historic Leonard-Leota Park for picnics, car show, music and more. Enjoy adult beverages under the big tent or munch on fair food from local vendors. Saturday, the day starts with the kids fishing tournament at Lake Leota. At noon, the festival tent opens and live music

fills the day. Sunday, it's church service in the park, followed by the pancake breakfast and car show. At noon, the festival tent opens. Monday, it's a quiet day. Tuesday at 5 p.m., the festival tent opens again, with more live music from the area's most popular bands. The parade will start your Fourth of July day with fun at 9:45 a.m. Or start a little earlier at 7:30 a.m. in the park with the 5K/10K/1 mile run-walk fundraiser. The festival tent opens at noon and kids activities fill the afternoon. At dusk, Evansville's famous fireworks king will create another memorable explosive, starry display. Events take place at Leonard-Leota Park (Leonard Park Drive) 608-882-0598, [www.ecp-wi.org](http://www.ecp-wi.org)

**July 4-Evansville 4th of July Fun Run/Walk:** In Leonard Leota Park featuring 10k run, 5k run and walk and 1 mile run and walk. The 10k and 5k courses are certified. Proceeds benefit Evansville Soccer Club Scholarship Fund, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and the Deb Olsen Scholarship Fund. Sign up at [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com). 608-882-5131, [www.evansvillechamber.org](http://www.evansvillechamber.org)

**Aug. 3-4-Evansville Inside Out Days:** It's the community's famous garage sale extravaganza. Averaging 150-plus locations, this is a trash-to-treasure hunter's dream. Downtown Main Street and city-wide. Sale hours vary. 608-882-5131, [www.evansvillechamber.org](http://www.evansvillechamber.org)

**Sept. 5-Presentation on historic preservation law in Wisconsin.** Dan Stephans and John Decker will review the development of historic preservation initiatives and the implementation of preservation laws by legislatures and courts. Local preservation activities conducted by landmarks and preservation commissions that comply with the requirements of federal and state laws, meet best practices, and further community expectations, will be highlighted. John M. Evans Hall, 104 W. Main St., 6:30 p.m. [www.grovesociety.org](http://www.grovesociety.org)

**Sept. 14-Ladies Night Out:** A special evening of pampering is ready for ladies who enjoy a leisurely shopping experience. Historic Downtown Evansville and its merchants will be open later hours Friday evening. Participants who register for this event receive a gift bag filled with goodies, a glass of wine or non-alcoholic beverage, and a cupcake to enjoy at the historic Grange Building. Merchants will also offer enticing refreshments sponsored by local pastry chefs, bakers and others. Tickets available in advance or at the door. Madison and Main streets, 5-8 p.m. 608-882-5131, [www.evansvillechamber.org](http://www.evansvillechamber.org)

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