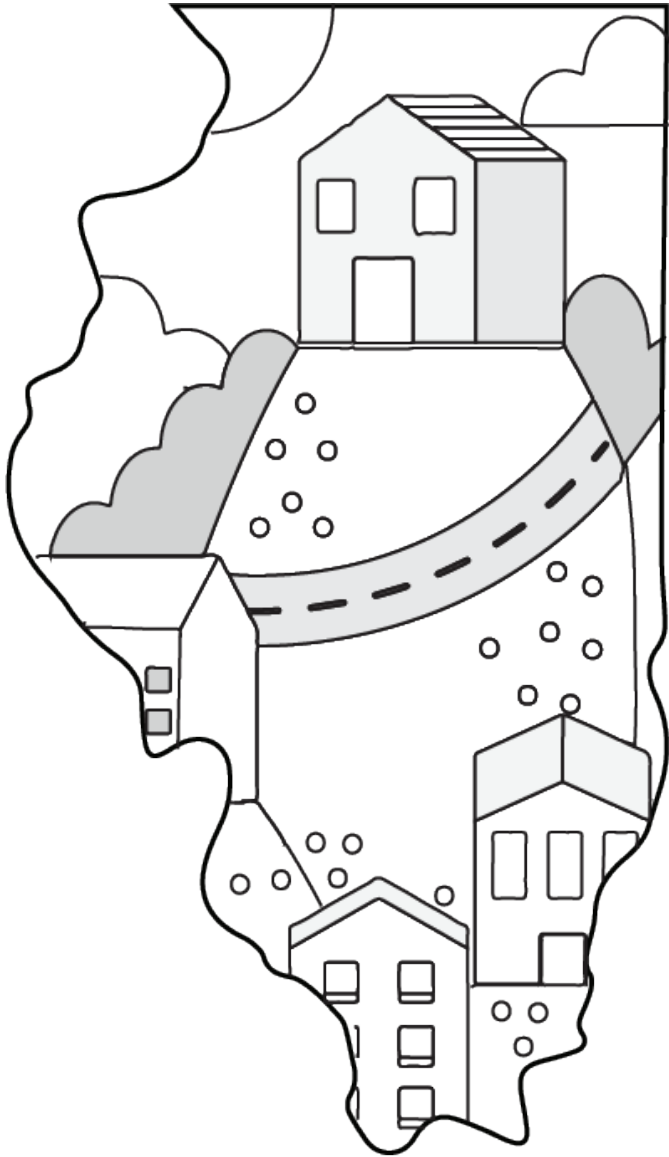


EXPLORE ILLINOIS WITH HOUSING ACTION



WELCOME..

...and thank you for your support of Housing Action!

Illinois is full of interesting corners to explore, so for our 5th Annual Toast to Housing Justice, we collected suggestions for adventures that Illinoisans can enjoy safely while we continue to stay close to home.

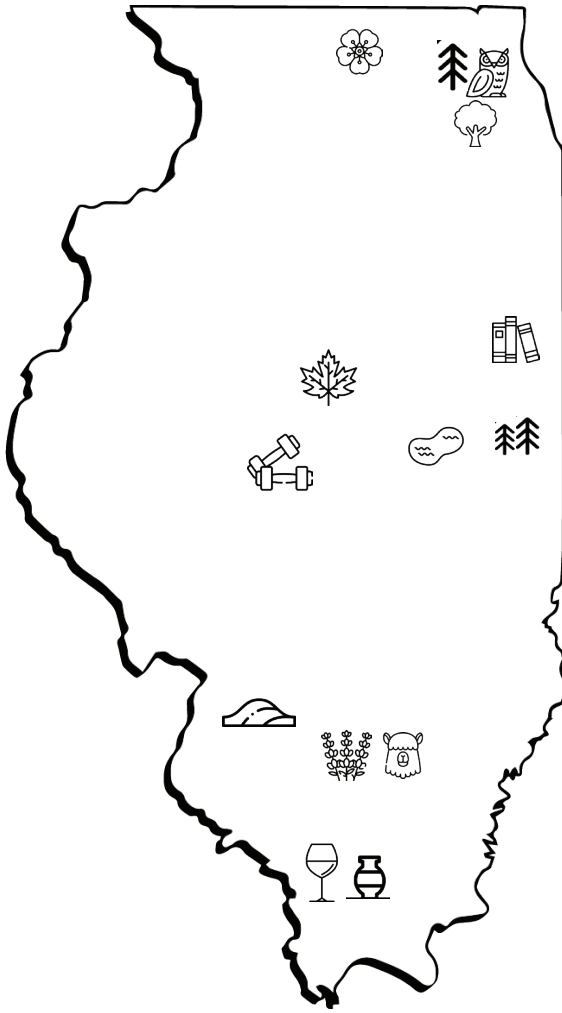
This guide and activity book can be accessed digitally or printed at home and assembled in a booklet. In addition to member and supporter suggestions, we have included games and crafts to enjoy indoors.

We hope that this encourages everyone to take advantage of all the things Illinois has to offer.

—The Housing Action Illinois Team

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Activity: Map.....	4
Deer Grove Forest Preserve.....	5
Activity: Amazing Mazes.....	6
Scheels Sporting Goods.....	7
Funks Grove.....	8
UIUC Arboretum.....	9
Activity: Word Search.....	10
Bernard Family Alpaca Farm.....	11
Activity: Coloring Page.....	12
Farmhouse Harvest Lavender Farm.....	13
Activity: Word Scramble.....	14
Kickapoo State Park.....	15
Cahokia Mounds.....	16
Activity: Illinois Crossword.....	17
Activity: Coloring Page.....	18
Shawnee Hills Wine Trail.....	19
Activity: Coloring Page.....	20
Lake of the Woods.....	21
Activity: Coloring Page.....	22
River Trail Nature Center.....	23
Activity: Amazing Mazes.....	24
African American Museum of Southern Illinois.....	25
Activity: Paper House Cut Out.....	26
Anderson Japanese Gardens.....	27
Outdoor Adventures in Northwestern Illinois.....	28
Morton Arboretum.....	29
Activity: Answer Key.....	30




Recommended Places:

Kickapoo State Park: 

Lavender Farm: 

Deer Grove Forest: 

Alpaca Farm: 

Shawnee Hills: 

UIUC Arboretum: 


Funks Grove: 


Lake of the Woods: 

Morton Arboretum: 

African American Museum: 

Cahokia Mounds: 

Scheels Sporting Goods: 

Nature Center: 

Anderson Japanese Gardens: 

Your Places:

Place you call home:

Place you want to visit:

Place you want to go again:

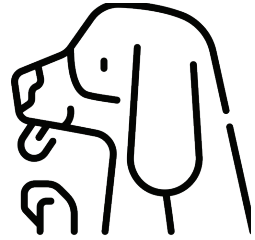
DEER GROVE FOREST PRESERVE

Recommended by: Mary Lu Seidel, Preservation Chicago

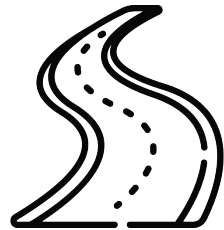
At Deer Grove Forest Preserve, there are miles of different types of paths—from a paved, mostly-sunny loop starting near Quentin and Dundee, to more rugged dirt trails. Bikes are welcome on all trails.



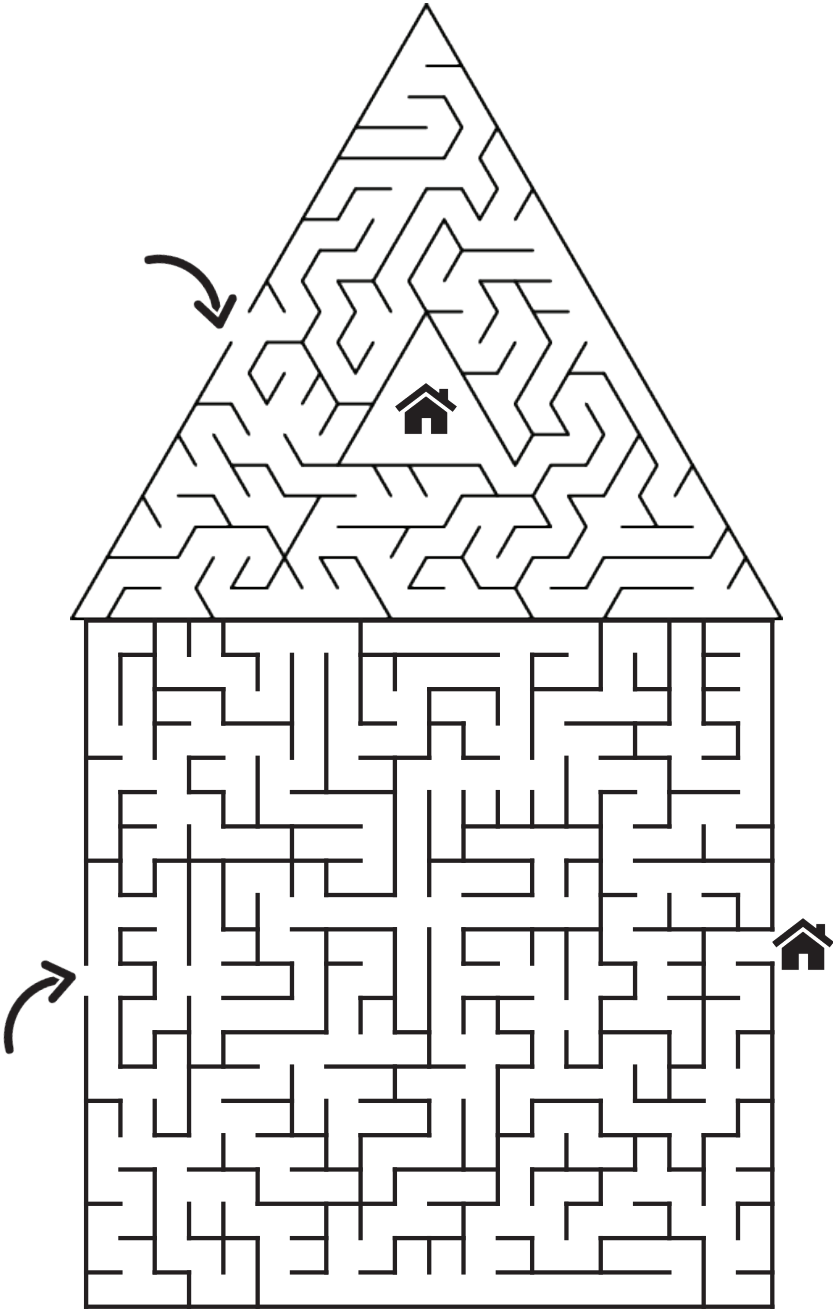
I love tackling any length of trail—from a quick 2-mile hike to a 14-mile marathon training run. Outdoor hiking is great year-round. When the trails are snowy, snowshoes, or cross country skis may be needed. Dogs are welcome and kids love it!



The preserve is in Palatine, Illinois, and can be accessed via Dundee Road (Route 68) just off Highway 14 (Northwest Highway). The park extends over to Quentin Road as well.



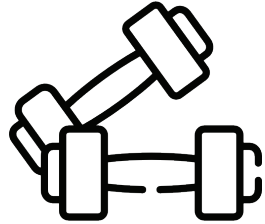
AMAZING MAZES



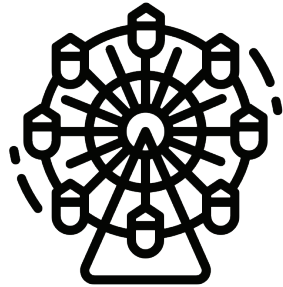
SCHEELS SPORTING GOODS

Recommended by: Niccole Clements, PNC

Scheels is more than just a sporting goods store, although it certainly provides a large variety of goods for sports enthusiasts of all kinds.



There are fun sites to see for all. You can enjoy the animated, talking statues of United States presidents, the giant indoor ferris wheel, restaurant, fudge factory, amazing taxidermy displays, giant aquarium, and multiple games and arcades.

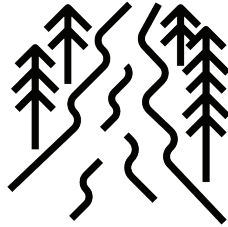


Scheels is located in Springfield, Illinois, and is right off of I-72 on the MacArthur exit. Once you take the exit, Scheels is less than 1 mile away on the left side of the street.

FUNKS GROVE

Recommended by: Laurie Petersen, Former Housing Action Board Member

Funks Grove is a village, a historical stop, a nature preserve, and a great place to get maple syrup! All activities are well-marked and easily reached. The Sugar Grove Nature Center is a must-see with your kids. There are regular educational activities along with a great exploration area among the maple groves by the creekside.



Funks Grove Farms offers tree-tapping and syrup-making demonstrations. And if you're looking for a memorable place to get married, the Funks Grove Chapel in the Trees is the spot for you. Best yet, there are no admission fees for any of the places!



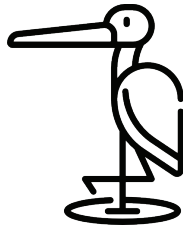
Easily accessible from I-55, using Exit 154 or 143. Better yet, Get Your Kicks on Route 66, which runs right through the Funks Grove area.

UIUC ARBORETUM

Recommended by: Caitlin Hillyard, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Every day in the late summer through the fall, I would spend at least an hour walking in the UIUC Arboretum, which is located near where I live. The UIUC Arboretum is home to garden beds, groves of trees, open fields, ponds, and even hills (a rare sight in Central Illinois).

On my walks, I've seen hawks, groundhogs, a great blue heron, a green heron, a great horned owl, and many, many turtles, including a gigantic snapping turtle. I especially love dusk, when the resident bats come out to catch their breakfast.



Wildlife isn't the only draw—the people watching in the UIUC Arboretum is excellent, too. When the weather is warmer, one man comes to the UIUC Arboretum each Sunday to play his saxophone. Many people bring their dogs to romp and play. University students hang hammocks from the trees or spread blankets on the grass. I've seen middle school students at cross county practice, couples shooting wedding photos, and a young woman walking her cat on a leash. During the isolation of the pandemic, being safely near people has felt like a lifeline.

The Arboretum is located just south of the main University of Illinois campus on Lincoln Avenue.

WORD SEARCH

V O C A H O K I A P B X K J Q X I R
K Y K R B L Z S E U H A R A K E V K
E N E I N R A F R P W U O R F L O N
V L S V C Q R V Q F R A T B F D Y F
G S M E D K V M E G U E D O E U S O
J C G R U Z A Z U N J X S R I Y H R
S H L A K E W P F S D G V E B I A E
P E P S T G B X O U E E D T R M W S
H E G Y T U B Z W O N U R U P V N T
K L Q A L P A C A P Z K M M P D E I
R S O S U Z Q J C O R U S R C Z E L
P T N L N N Y R N W G B U E X I Q O

ALPACA

KICKAPOO

PRESERVE

ARBORETUM

LAKE

RIVER

CAHOKIA

LAVENDER

SCHEELS

FOREST

MUSEUM

SHAWNEE

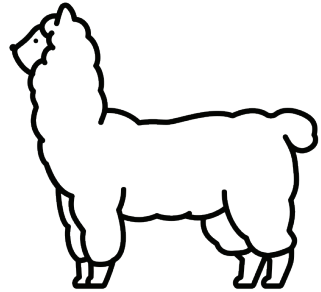
FUNKS

BERNARD FAMILY ALPACA FARM

Recommended by: Dorian Heimbach, Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless

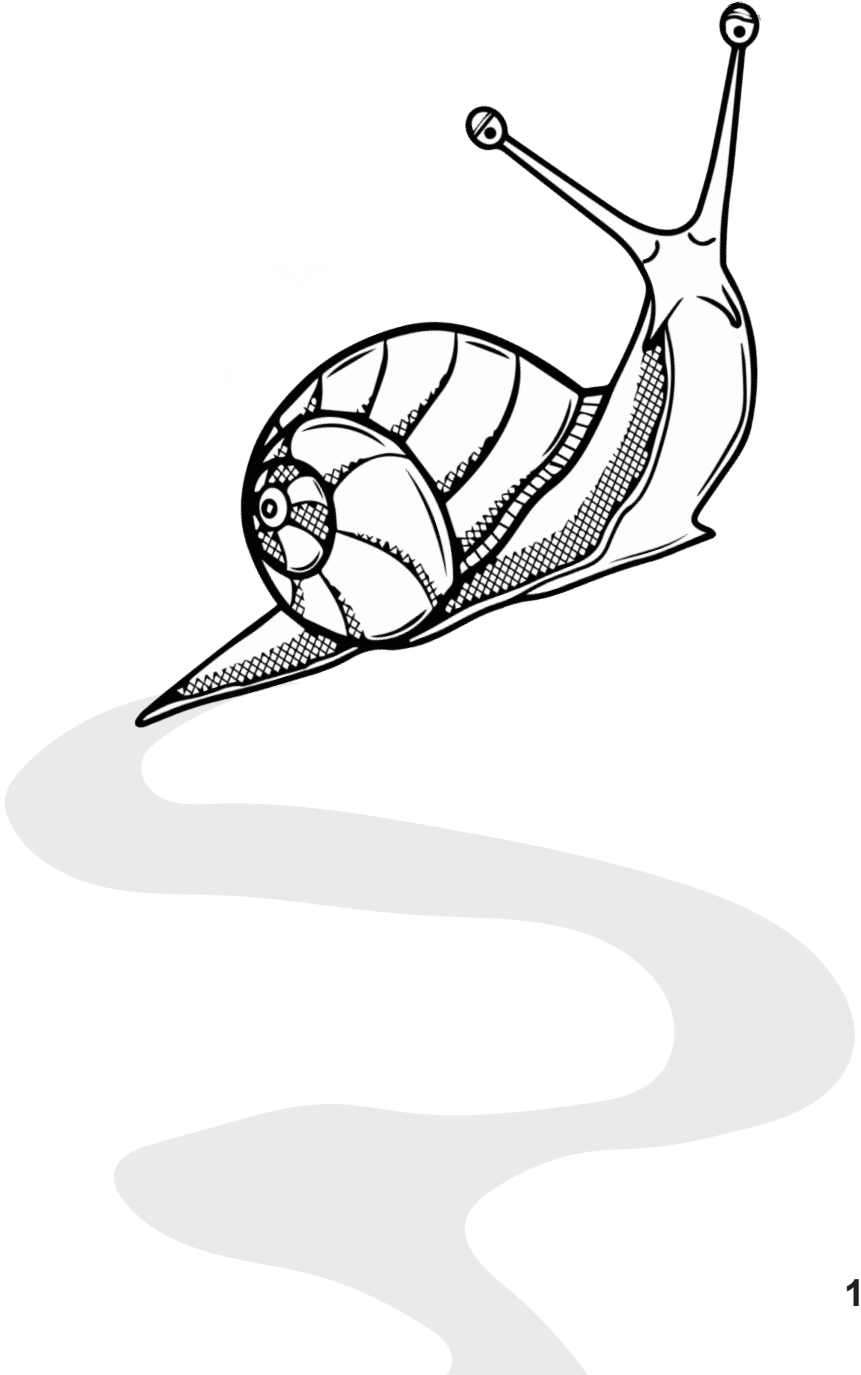
The Bernard Family Alpaca Farm is one of the best places for adults and kids to visit in Illinois.

Visiting the farm is totally free and open for drop-ins, but if you want to make your time there extra special, you can schedule ahead to take a private tour of the facility, which includes time to feed and meet all the Alpacas.



This farm is located in Bonnie, Illinois, and is accessible from I-57.

EVERYONE NEEDS A HOME...
HELP COLOR OURS!



FARMHOUSE HARVEST

LAVENDER FARM

Recommended by: Dorian Heimbach, Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless



If you have never before visited a lavender farm, Farmhouse Harvest is a must-see!

You can stroll through the beautiful rows of lavender fields, then head to the onsite restaurant for some delicious lavender-themed food. They even offer yoga and pilates sessions that you can register for in advance. Before you leave, don't forget to visit the gift shop, where they sell products made from their own lavender.

This farm is located in Benton, Illinois, only 3 miles south of Rend Lake and just off I-148.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these Housing Action Illinois and guide book-themed words!

Answers on page 30.

RLOSCNUEO _____

RNPFNOITO _____

IEHK _____

OTREFS _____

RNAETU _____

RPKA _____

OLNREUTSEV _____

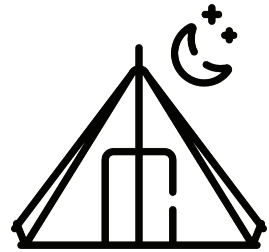
FafaEDLORB _____

OHSIGUN _____

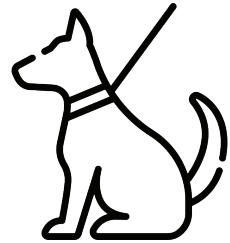
KICKAPOO STATE PARK

Recommended by: Sheila Dodd, City of Urbana

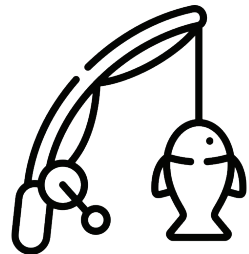
Kickapoo State Park has it all—great hiking trails, camping, rafting, fishing, playgrounds, and picnic areas!



The hiking trails are family and dog friendly. My four and five year old granddaughters love to hike here.



The park is just off I-74 at the Oakwood exit (Exit 206). Head north, following the signs to turn right on Oakwood Ave., heading north. Follow the signs to the park.



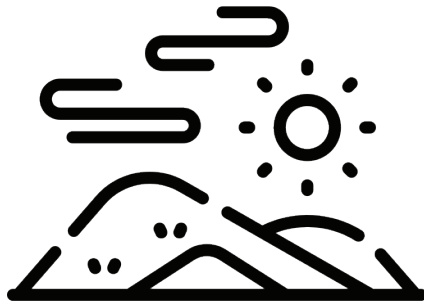
CAHOKIA MOUNDS

Recommended by: Sharon Legenza, Housing Action Illinois' Executive Director

The Cahokia Mounds are the remains of the most sophisticated prehistoric native civilization north of Mexico. Within the 2,200-acre tract, located a few miles west of Collinsville, Illinois, lie the archaeological remnants of the central section of the ancient settlement that is today known as Cahokia.

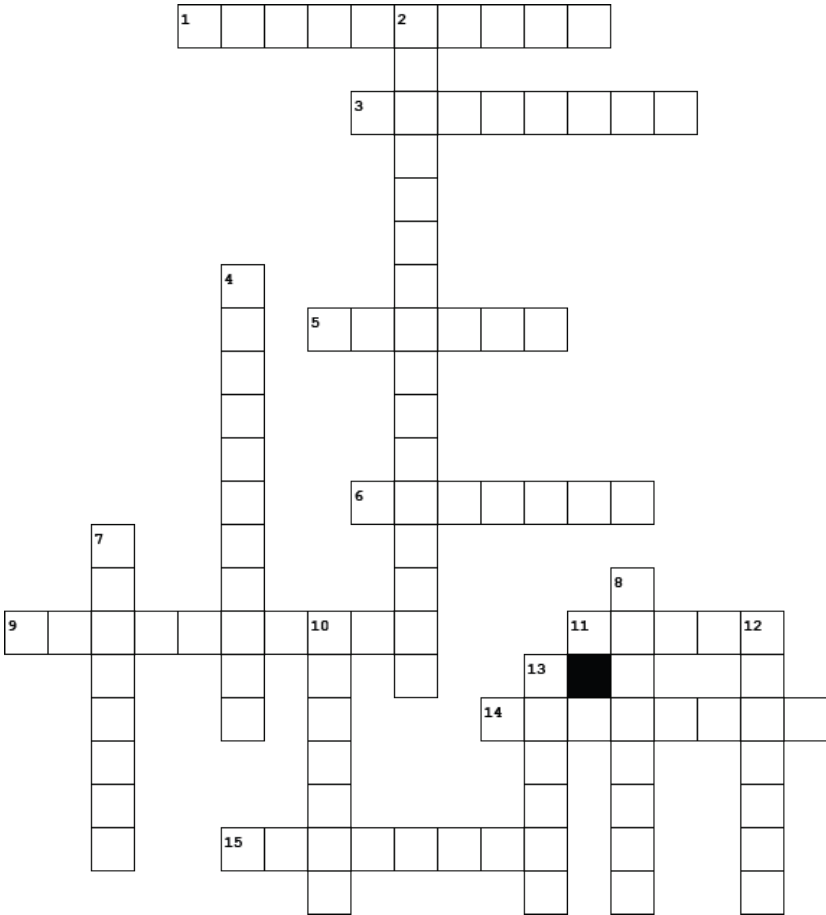


Cahokia Mounds has it all! Hiking, education, indoor and outdoor learning spaces, beautiful views, and places to picnic. There are options for guided tours and audio tours, or you can explore the grounds yourself, but make sure to call ahead if you want to visit the Interpretive Center.



The Cahokia Mounds are accessible from many directions via I-255.

ILLINOIS CROSSWORD



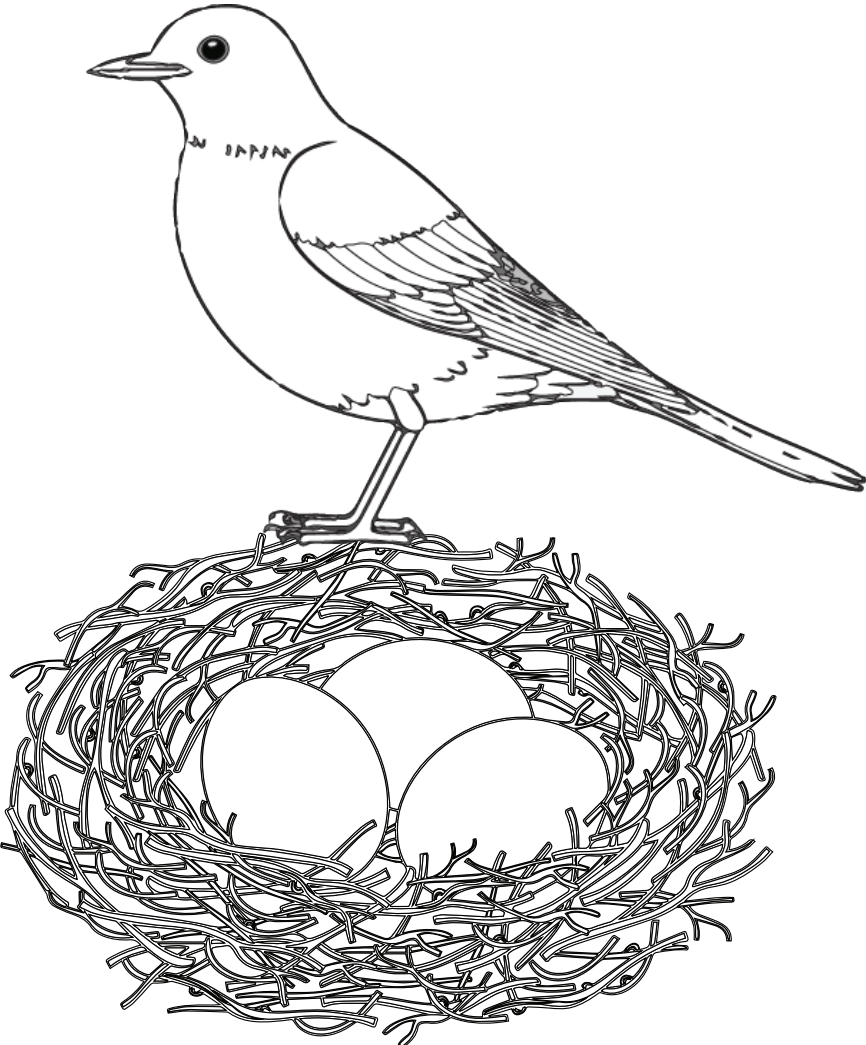
Across

1. Birthplace of Melissa McCarthy
3. State bird
5. State flower
6. Nicknamed the ___ State
9. 1st state to ratify the ___ amendment
11. Tallest building (original name)
14. State tree
15. State park

Down

2. Famous architect
4. Capital
7. Hostess treats invented in IL
8. Bordering state
10. Largest bakery
12. Location of Jordan's activity
13. Executive Director of Housing Action

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SHAWNEE HILLS WINE TRAIL

Recommended by: Jordan Wren, Carbondale Tourism

The Shawnee Hills Wine Trail boasts 11 wineries. Enjoy the distinctive character of each winery, charming towns that dot the trail, unique local restaurants, and a region rich in history.



Be sure to give yourself an extra day or more to discover new adventures that present themselves along the way.



Set among the scenic countryside of Southern Illinois, the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail is closest to Illinois Route 3 or 127.

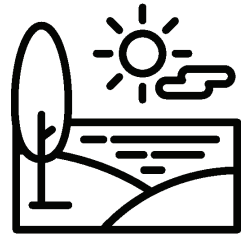
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HELP COLOR OURS!



LAKE OF THE WOODS

Recommended by: Sowmya Balachandran, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

While the Champaign County Forest Preserve has lots of wonderful hikes and nature to see, make sure that you are on the lake for sunset.

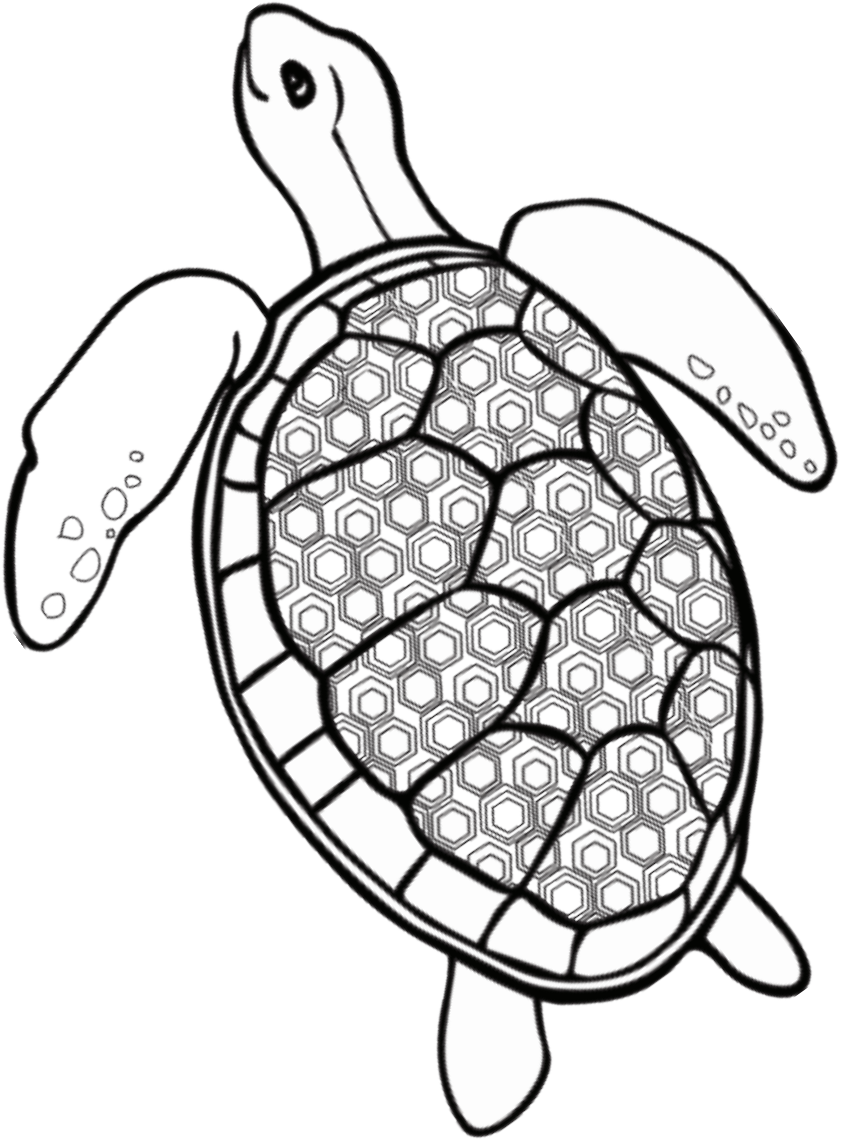


Especially in the spring and summer, you will see some of the most gorgeous sunsets in all of Illinois on this lake.



The Lake of the Woods is located in the Champaign County Forest Preserve and is easily accessible from I-74.

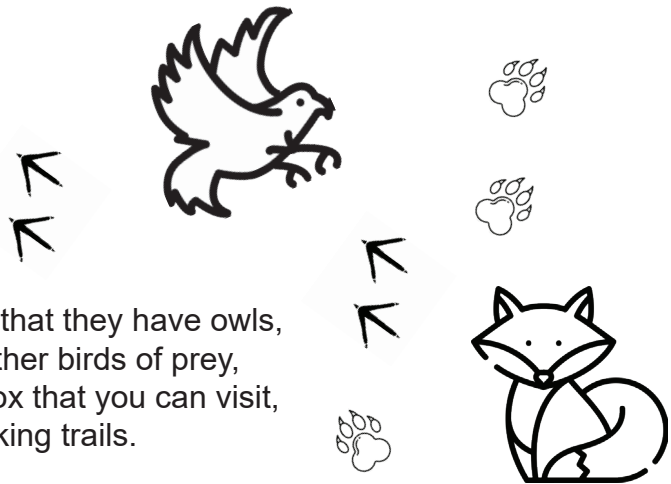
EVERYONE NEEDS A HOME...
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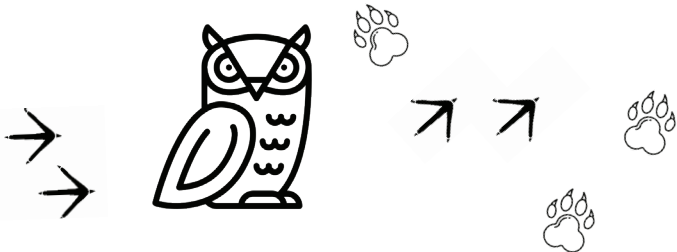
RIVER TRAIL NATURE CENTER

Recommended by: Gail Schechter, Housing Opportunities & Maintenance for the Elderly (H.O.M.E.)

The River Trail Nature Center is one of six educational centers in the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois. They offer free exhibits, onsite nature educators, and natural landscapes formed by the Des Plaines River.

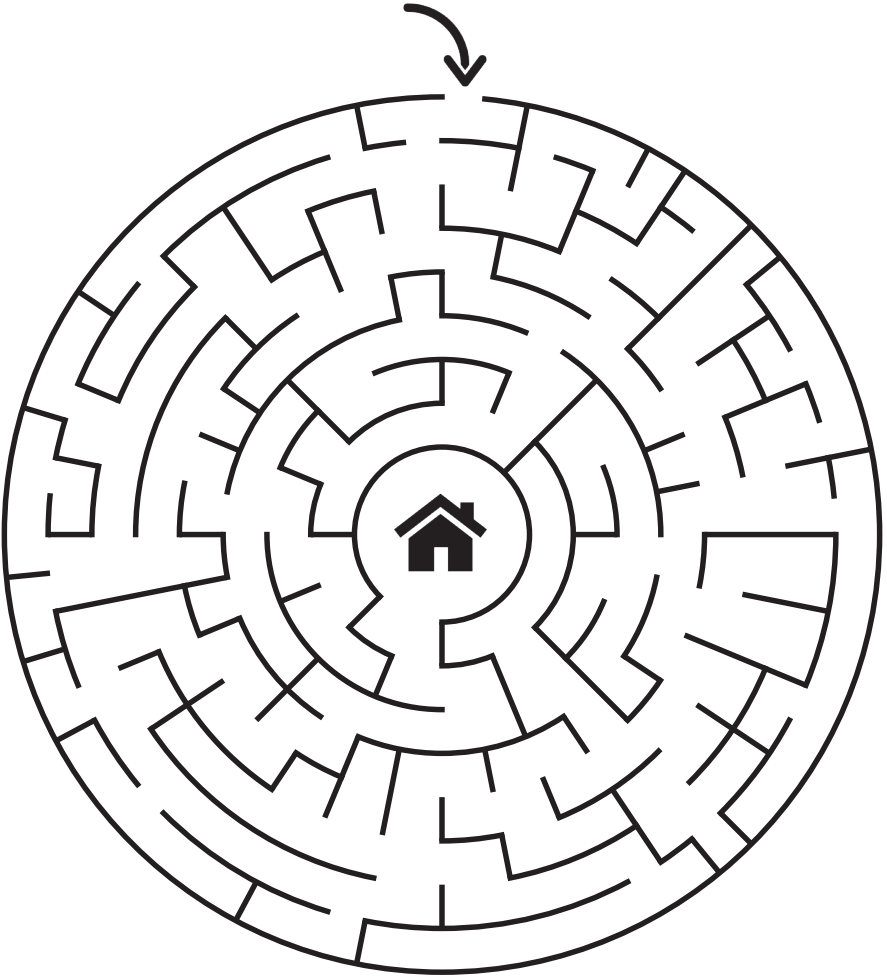


I love the fact that they have owls, eagles, and other birds of prey, along with a fox that you can visit, and great walking trails.



The Nature Center is in the norwest suburb of Northbrook on Milwaukee Avenue, off of Exit 48 from I-294N.

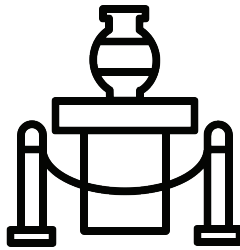
AMAZING MAZES



AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Recommended by: Jordan Wren, Carbondale Tourism

The African American Museum of Southern Illinois was founded in 1997 and is dedicated to identifying, preserving, and portraying the outstanding achievements of African American citizens.



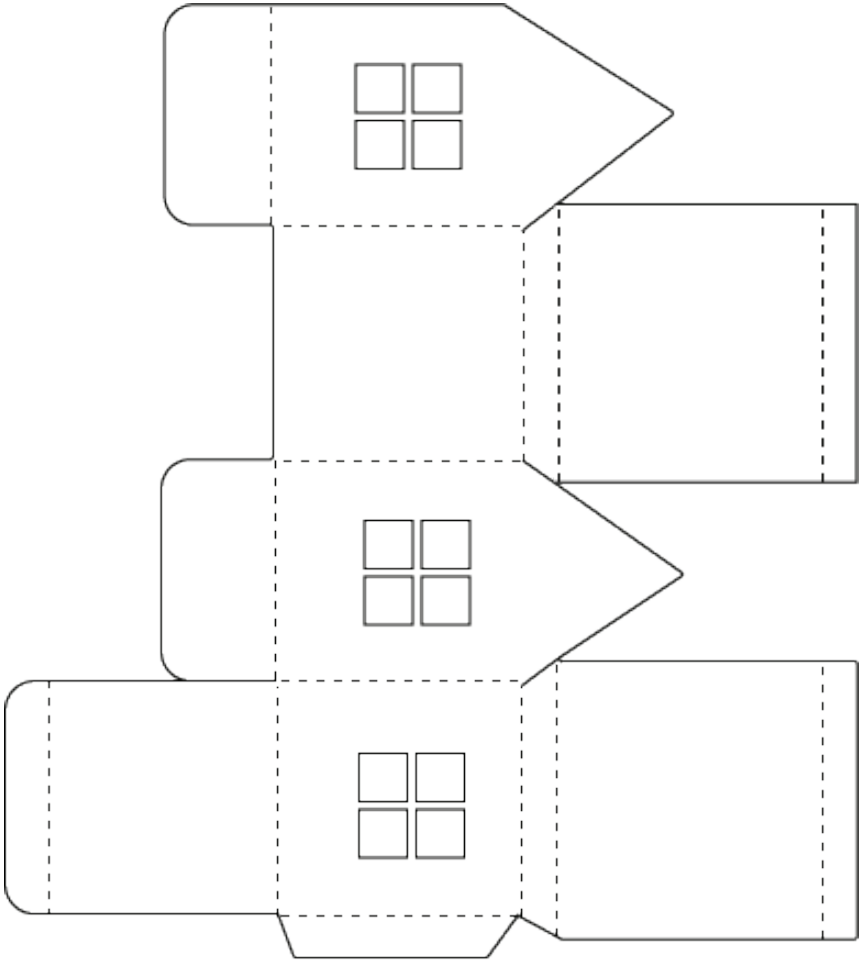
Permanent exhibits here include African art collections and artifacts of people who were enslaved. Rotating displays have included Underground Railroad message quilts and local artwork.



The museum is run entirely by volunteers, along with fifteen board members, and is the only African American History Museum between Chicago and Chattanooga.

PAPER HOME

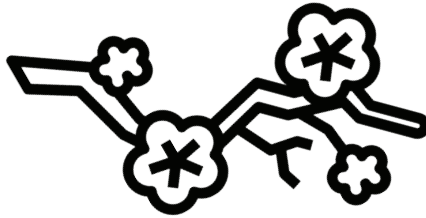
Cut out along the solid lines and fold along the dotted ones to create a tiny paper home that tucks together without any glue or tape!



ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

Recommended by: Bob Campbell, ZION Development

Anderson Japanese Gardens is considered the finest Japanese garden in the western hemisphere (meaning all of North and South America!). Construction of Anderson Japanese Gardens began in 1978, when Rockford businessman John Anderson was inspired by a visit to the Portland Japanese Garden in Oregon. With the ongoing assistance of renowned Master Craftsman and designer Hoichi Kurisu, the Andersons' swampy backyard along Rockford's Spring Creek was transformed into a Japanese-style landscape.



From groundbreaking to today, the placement of every rock, alignment of every tree, and layout of all paths has been made with careful consideration by Mr. Kurisu. It continues to grow and change to this day.

The Gardens will re-open on May 1, 2021. They are located in Rockford, Illinois, immediately east of the Rock River and just north of downtown. The Gardens are easily accessible from I-90 and I-39, making it an easy destination from the Chicago, Bloomington, Madison, and Milwaukee areas.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES IN NORTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

Recommended by: Bob Campbell, ZION Development

Rock Cut State Park: This state park covers 3,092 acres, including two lakes. The park's hiking trails, horseback riding trails, cross-country skiing, wildlife watching, and campsites make it a year-round destination. Paddle boating, kayaking, and sailboating are available, as is mountain biking, hiking, and camping.

For Golfers: Grab your clubs and hone your swings at Aldeen Golf Course in Rockford or PrairieView Golf Club in Byron.

Atwood Park: Situated along the beautiful Kishwaukee River, Atwood Park boasts 334 acres of diverse natural area, including forest, marsh, and prairieland. Go for a ride on newly built mountain bike trails!

For Cyclists: Freeport Bicycle Company organizes gravel rides in northwestern Illinois.

Krape Park: This city park in Freeport is a great place to visit, especially for families with young children. It includes an old, operational carousel, paddle boats and canoes to rent, tennis courts, trails, an 18-hole disc golf course, and a 44' waterfall that tumbles down from a high limestone bluff.

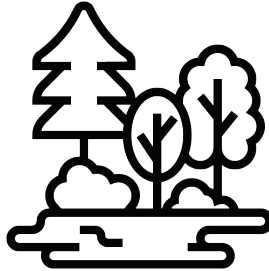
West Rock Wake Park at Levings Lake: Wakeboarders and water-skiers can take advantage of the park's Sesitec cable systems to hit the water without a boat.

Rockford City Market: On Friday nights, Rockford City Market is held outdoors downtown. I Bike Rockford includes a relaxed group ride that starts and ends at the Market each Friday night as well. The ride begins at 7.

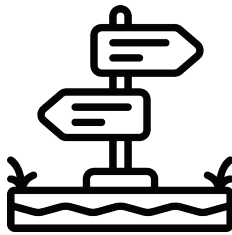
MORTON ARBORETUM

Recommended by: Joyce Hothan, Former Housing Action Board Member

When Joy Morton established The Morton Arboretum in 1922, he envisioned a “great outdoor museum” of trees. Today, its living collections inspire visitors to appreciate, learn about, plant, and protect trees.



The Morton Arboretum’s 1,700 acres hold more than 222,000 live plants, representing nearly 4,300 taxa from around the world. The grounds include a Visitor Center with The Arboretum Store and Ginkgo Restaurant and Café, four-acre Children’s Garden, one-acre Maze Garden, Sterling Morton Library, Plant Clinic, nine miles of roads, and 16 miles of trails.



Located 25 miles west of Chicago, The Morton Arboretum—4100 Illinois Route 53 in Lisle, IL 60532—is just west of I-355 and north of I-88 on Illinois Route 53 (sometimes known as Lincoln Avenue or Lincoln Highway).

ANSWER KEY

Crossword Answer Key

Across

1. Plainfield
3. Cardinal
5. Violet
6. Prairie
9. Thirteenth
11. Sears
14. White Oak
15. Kickapoo

Down

2. Frank Lloyd Wright
4. Springfield
7. Twinkies
8. Kentucky
10. Nabisco
12. Shawnee
13. Sharon

Word Scramble Answer Key

1. Counselor
2. Nonprofit
3. Hike
4. Forest
5. Nature
6. Park
7. Volunteers
8. Affordable
9. Housing

Word Search Answer Key

Directions and start points are formatted: (Direction, X, Y)

ALPACA (E,4,10)

ARBORETUM (S,14,2)

CAHOKIA (E,3,1)

FOREST (S,18,4)

FUNKS (SE,9,7)

SHAWNEE (S,17,5)

KICKAPOO (SE,3,2)

LAKE (E,3,7)

LAVENDER (SE,6,2)

MUSEUM (SE,8,5)

PRESERVE (SE,10,3)

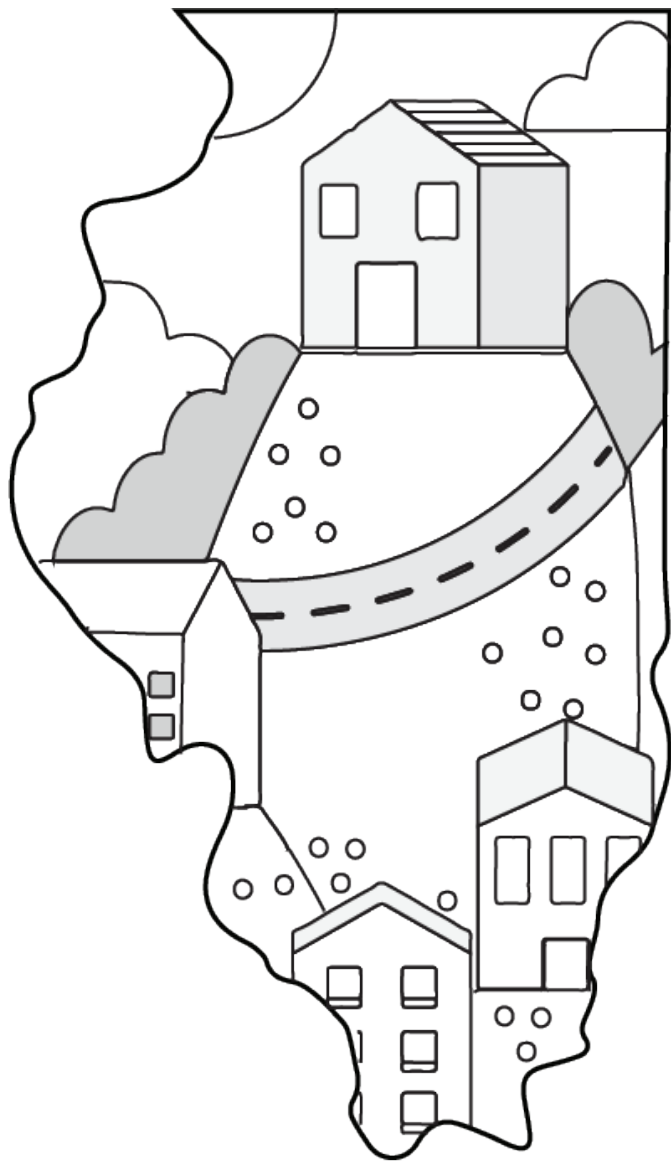
RIVER (S,4,2)

SCHEELS (S,2,5)

THANK YOU...

...to everyone who shared suggestions for what to explore in Illinois!

This guide and activity book was created in 2021 by Marcella Rosen, Communications and Capacity Building AmeriCorps VISTA at Housing Action Illinois.



THE END