

2025-26

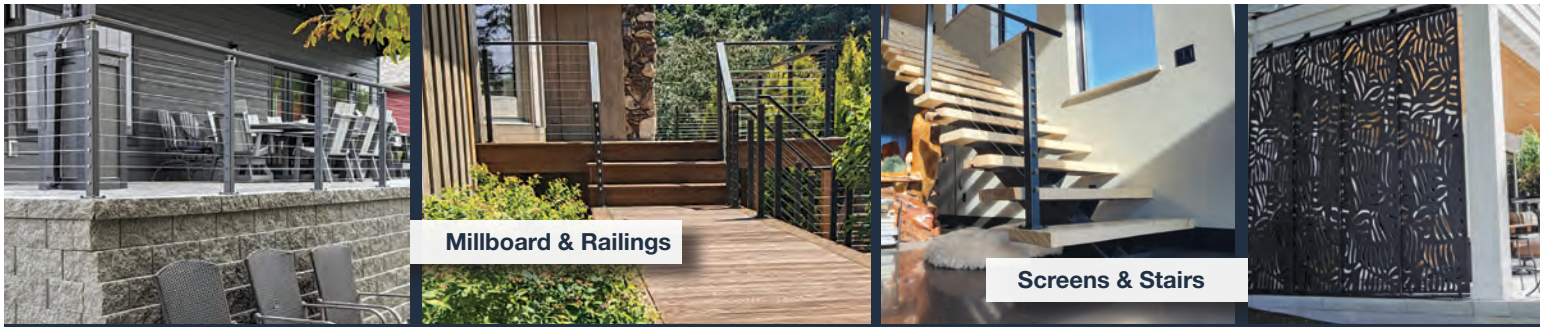


*experience*

# CLAY COUNTY

VISITORS GUIDE





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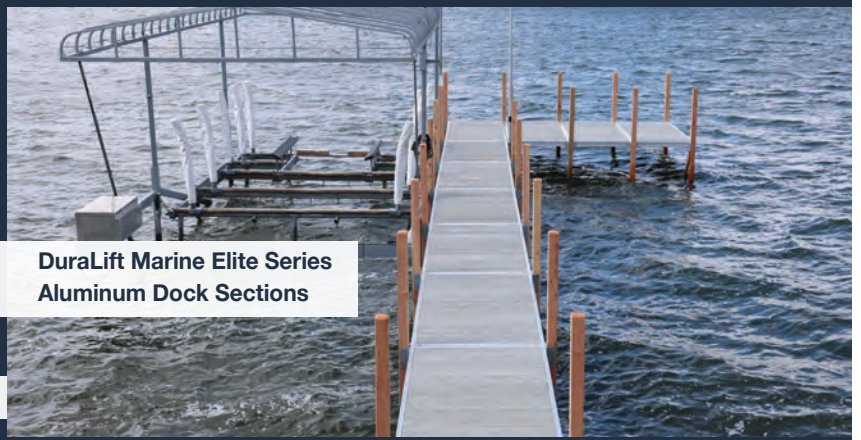
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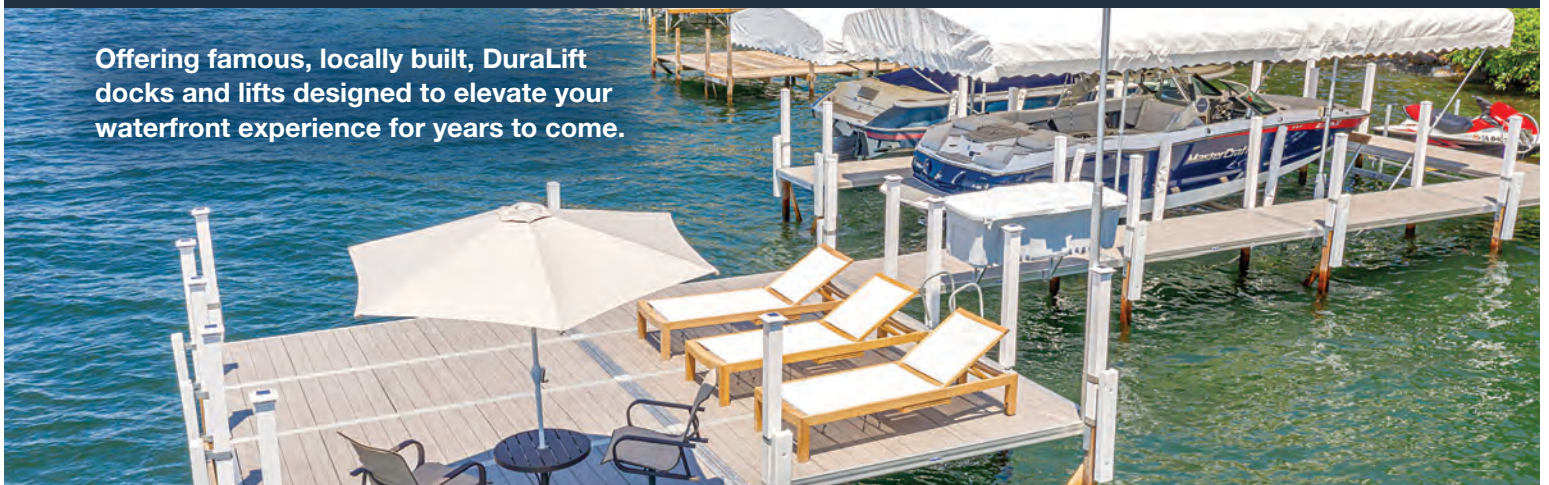
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## Luckys

SPORTS GRILL

welcome to  
**CLAY  
COUNTY**

**RESILIENT, VIBRANT,  
AND ALWAYS WELCOMING**

On behalf of Clay County Tourism and the Spencer Chamber of Commerce, welcome to Clay County! Nestled in the heart of Northwest Iowa, our county is a hidden gem offering a blend of natural beauty, rich history, and thriving communities.

In June 2024, our community faced a challenging flood. Through resilience and teamwork, Clay County has not only recovered but emerged stronger. Visitors will see this spirit reflected in our restored landmarks, vibrant businesses, and welcoming smiles. We invite you to explore the treasures of our region, from scenic byways to bustling downtowns.

Clay County is home to world-class events like the "World's Greatest County Fair," diverse recreational opportunities, and charming small-town experiences. Whether you're seeking outdoor adventures, a taste of local flavors, or an enriching dive into our history, Clay County has something for everyone.

We're honored to share our home with you and can't wait for you to experience all that makes Clay County unforgettable.

Sincerely,

**Olivia Baxter**  
Tourism Coordinator  
Clay County Tourism



Produced & distributed by the  
Spencer Reporter in partnership with the  
Spencer Chamber & Clay County Tourism

1805 Highway Blvd | Spencer, IA  
712-580-8687  
exploreclaycounty.org

22 E 4th St | Spencer, IA  
712-262-6610  
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📷 FRONT COVER: f8 creative

📷 PHOTOGRAPHY: Special thanks to those who submitted photography for this publication.



## HERITAGE CENTER

**Open hours:**  
 Tuesday - Friday  
 10 AM - 4 PM  
 Saturday  
 10 AM - 3 PM  
 Closed Sunday  
 and Monday

7 Grand Avenue,  
 Spencer, Iowa

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# CLAY COUNTY CONSERVATION

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# CLAY COUNTY

## history



FIRST COURTHOUSE



SECOND COURTHOUSE



### 1858

Clay County was organized in 1858 after declaring its judicial independence from Woodbury County. The county was named in honor of Henry Clay, Jr., a colonel in the Mexican - American War. Out of 18 men who voted, 14 were elected to an office and conducted county business out of their homes until 1859.

### 1859 - 1860

At this time A. W. Hubbard, Judge of the Fourth Judicial District, authorized a commission to locate a county seat. On July 16, 1859, the commission chose the present site of Spencer. But, due to the fact that Spencer was unimproved, and no settler lived within a 10-mile radius, it was refused by the residents of Clay County. In May 1860 the county judge received a petition asking that the county seat be located at Peterson. An election was held, and all 10 participants voted in favor of Peterson.

### 1871

In 1871 the town of Spencer was formally laid out, and since it was more centrally located than Peterson, the question of moving the county seat was asked again. It was answered in an election held in October of that same year; Spencer won the county seat by a margin of 159 votes.

### 1901

It was decided in 1900 that the county needed a new courthouse. The structure was erected on the same site in Spencer and would become the third iteration of the courthouse in Clay County. It was ready for occupancy in September 1901. With no formal dedication, the doors were opened and business continued. The population of Clay County has increased approximately 30% since the 1901 courthouse was completed.

### 1979

In 1979, the Board of Supervisors decided to renovate the existing courthouse and construct an administration building. The motion passed in August and \$2.1 million was approved for the two projects. A dedication ceremony was held on September 26, 1982, and Clay County now has two buildings of which to be proud.

### 2024

On June 22, 2024, historic flooding devastated homes, businesses, and infrastructure across Clay County. In the face of immense challenges, the community came together, launching recovery efforts that showcased resilience, determination, and unity. This disaster became a defining moment, highlighting the strength and spirit of Clay County's people.

### FUN FACT

The first courthouse was built by the residents of Spencer. They formed a stock company and sold shares. Those who could not afford a share offered their labor. When the building was completed, it was sold to the city for \$1,333. A second building was built in 1884 at a different location.

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# SPRING

As the snow melts away, Clay County awakens with fresh blooms, lively events, and outdoor adventures. Longer days invite you to explore scenic trails, cast a fishing line, or enjoy seasonal flavors at local markets.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS

### BULLS & BREWS - MARCH

Each year Bull Riding, produced by Raise 'Em Rank Rodeo, kicks off **Bulls & Brews** and includes some of the industry's top bull riders and animal athletes. Join a night full of entertainment for the entire family as Raise 'Em Rank brings bull riding back to the Clay County Regional Events Center. Always a great time, and we can't wait to see you there!!

### SPENCER JAYCEES' EASTER EGG HUNT-APRIL

Each year the Spencer Jaycees, a local service organization, host an **Easter Egg Hunt** for Clay County communities. Ages 1-11 are welcome to participate in the egg hunt and receive a goody bag, plus an opportunity to see the Easter Bunny!

### BREWS & BITES-APRIL

This event is for all beer lovers! Travel through participating businesses in Spencer's downtown with a keepsake mug and passport. **Brews & Bites** features 10 different stops to sample beer and have a bite to eat.



SPENCER JAYCEES' EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL SHOWERS BRING.. SPRING FUN FOR ALL!

### AVERAGE TEMP

MAR

H 43°/L 24°

APR

H 58°/L 35°

MAY

H 71°/L 48°



BULLS & BREWS



BREWS & BITES



BREWS & BITES

# SUMMER

Warm days and long evenings bring excitement to Clay County. From bustling fairs and outdoor concerts to days on the water, summer is the season to get outside and soak up the fun.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS

### FARMERS MARKETS

**South T Farmers Market** - Saturdays and Wednesdays June-October  
**Mainstreet Market** - Thursday evenings in July and August

### FLAGFEST-JUNE

Spencer's big community celebration is Flagfest, held the **second weekend in June**. A parade, dances, 5K run, bike ride, Grand cruise, music and more are hallmarks of this community-wide festival.

### ROYAL FUN DAYS-JULY

A weekend full of family friendly activities.

### NORTHWEST IOWA AMATEUR GOLF TOURNAMENT-AUGUST

1921 marked the inaugural year for the **Northwest Amateur Golf Tournament** at the Spencer Golf and Country Club. That year also marked the beginning of Iowa's second oldest golf tournament, the oldest being the Iowa Amateur. Throughout history, the Northwest Am has earned respect as Iowa's only 72-hole tournament.

AVERAGE TEMP	JUN	H 81°/L 58°	JUL	H 84°/L 62°	AUG	H 82°/L 59°
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-------------	-----	-------------

SUMMERTIME,  
AND THE  
LIVING IS EASY



CLAY COUNTY  
CONSERVATION  
- NATURE JUBILEE

## CONNECT WITH NATURE

### NATURE JUBILEE - JUNE

**Nature Jubilee** - Longest Day of the year celebration held annually in June. Why not spend the time in nature? Clay County Conservation will have nature filled activities for the whole family to participate in! The events will be all over Clay County. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



NORTHWEST IOWA AMATEUR GOLF TOURNAMENT



MAINSTREET MARKET



# Spencer Community Schools

## An Incredible Place to LEARN, TEACH & LIVE

The Spencer Community Schools strives to provide the best educational opportunities for students while supporting our teachers as they continue to learn and grow. We have an amazing support system for our educators. Our small, closely knit school community offers outstanding academic programs and extracurricular activities that prepare students for the future.

### What's SPECIAL About SPENCER?

- Big-City Opportunities with a Small-Town Feel
- Outstanding Healthcare System
- Vibrant Downtown Area
- Extensive Trail and Parks System
- Opportunities to get Involved in the Community
- Within a Short Drive of the Beautiful Iowa Great Lakes



### SCAN THIS

to learn more about Spencer Schools and the community



*"A common phrase that I hear is, 'What can I do to help?' Whether that's from another teacher, teacher associate, principal or janitor, if I'm trying something new or if I'm facing a challenge, I always hear that phrase."*

**- Nicole Anderson, Teacher**

*"Spencer has wonderful mentoring teachers who meet with you so that you feel supported and have what you need to be a successful teacher."*

**- Hannah Heissel, Teacher**

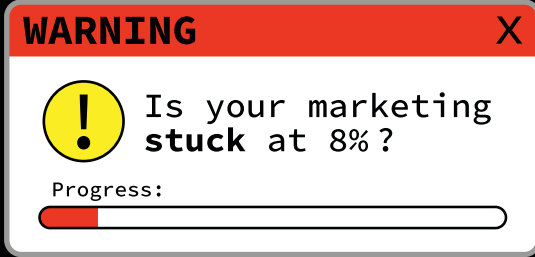
*"I appreciate that, even as a classroom teacher, I have a seat at the table as decisions are being made. I am seen as a valuable team member, and I know I'm heard and understood."*

**- Debra Wittrock, Teacher**


To check out current job opportunities, scan the QR code or visit [spencerschools.org](http://spencerschools.org)!



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For Emergencies, please call 911.

# SPENCER

## GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

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(712) 262-2028

[www.spencergolf.com](http://www.spencergolf.com) 

*Come enjoy a day of golf with us!*



# FALL

Crisp air, golden leaves, and harvest celebrations make fall one of the best times to visit Clay County. Whether you're enjoying a scenic drive or sipping locally crafted wine, autumn is the perfect blend of adventure and relaxation.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS

### CLAY COUNTY FAIR-SEPTEMBER

The **Clay County Fair**, "The World's Greatest County Fair" since 1918, attracts more than 300,000 people to **Spencer, Iowa** for nine days each September.

### BLACK KNIGHTS DRAGS-SEPTEMBER

The **Black Knights Car Club** hosts the annual Airport Drag Races at the Spencer Airport. Spectators gather to watch local drivers race a 350-foot side by side track on the airport runway.

### VINESTOCK WINE & ARTS FESTIVAL-OCTOBER

Held in Peterson the first weekend in October, this festival features locally crafted wine & beer tasting, incredible food and handcrafted items such as arts, crafts, woodworking and much more!

### SHOP SMALL SATURDAY - NOVEMBER

An annual event on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, **Shop Small Saturday** encouraging residents to shop at local businesses, fostering community support and boosting small businesses during the holiday season!

### THUNDERBRIDGE 5K - NOVEMBER

The Spencer Family YMCA **Annual Thunderbridge 5K** is held every year in November.



ERIC JOHANSEN

CLAY COUNTY FAIR SEASON, FALLING LEAVES & COZY EVENINGS

PAUL DANIELS

AVERAGE TEMP	SEPT	H 75°/L 50°	OCT	H 60°/L 37°	NOV	H 43°/L 24°
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BLACK KNIGHTS CAR CLUB AIRPORT DRAGS



SHOP SMALL SATURDAY - SPENCER MAIN STREET



# WINTER

As snow blankets Clay County, the community gathers for cozy celebrations, outdoor adventures, and holiday magic. From festive markets to scenic snow-covered trails, winter is a season to embrace.

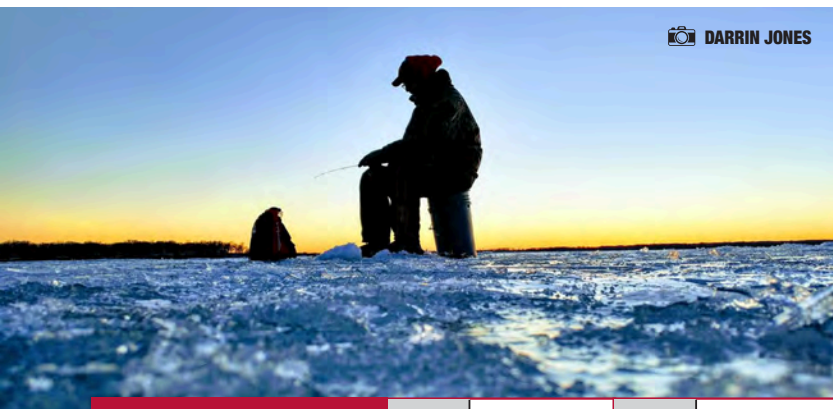
## SIGNATURE EVENTS

### GRAND MEANDER-DECEMBER

**Grand Meander** is a time-honored tradition where kids can make crafts, decorate a cookie, make an ornament, write a letter to Santa, pet a rabbit and see some dogs and cats up for adoption.

### AG OUTLOOK-FEBRUARY

**Northwest Iowa Ag Outlook Conference and Trade show** is a day-long seminar and trade show geared toward farmers and agri-business professionals. The trade show features the latest in agriculture products, equipment and services.



DARRIN JONES

AVERAGE TEMP	DEC	H 30°/L 12°	JAN	H 26°/L 7°	FEB	H 30°/L 11°
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	------------	-----	-------------

MARGARET MOLLITOR



2025/26 EXPERIENCE CLAY COUNTY



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WEATHER  
IS BETTER  
TOGETHER



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**04. Fareway**

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**05. Godfathers Pizza**

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**06. Hy-Vee**

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delivery/pick up available!

**07. McCreery's Creative Catering**

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**08. Prime Rib**

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Nightly Specials  
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**09. Sneakers**

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**10. Spencer Main Street**

Annual events:  
Wine Stroll, Cinco de Mayo  
Roc n' Guac & more!  
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**11. Weasys**

weasys.com  
Check our Facebook  
for Daily Specials! 



01



02



02



04

INSPIRATION  
FOR THE  
**FOODIES**

From classic comfort foods to locally crafted spirits, Clay County's food scene is full of flavor. Whether you're craving a hearty burger, hometown Mexican cuisine, or a handcrafted cocktail, you'll find something to satisfy your taste buds.

**FOR MORE VISIT [EXPLORECLAYCOUNTY.ORG/DINING](https://www.exploreclaycounty.org/dining)**





05



06



07



08



09



10



11



01



02



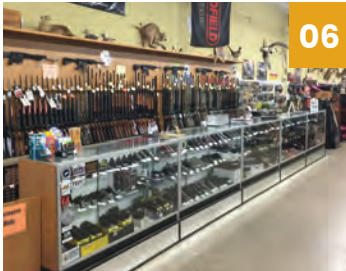
03



04



05



06



07



08



09



10

# INSPIRATION FOR THE ADVENTURERS

For those craving outdoor thrills, scenic trails, or a day on the water, Clay County is your gateway to adventure. Hike through wildlife areas, paddle the Little Sioux River, or bike rolling countryside trails—endless exploration awaits!

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**02. Clay County Conservation**  
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**03. Everly Heritage Museum**  
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**05. Home State Bank**  
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**06. No Limits Outdoors**  
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**07. Picket Trail**  
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**08. Peterson Heritage Museum**  
Find us on Facebook!

**09. Southern Archery**  
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Ammo | Browning Gun Safes  
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**10. Spencer Municipal Golf Course**  
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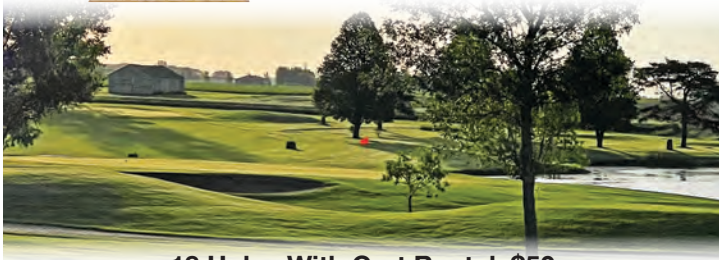
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**04. Clay County Heritage/ Parker Museum**

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**05. Everly Heritage Museum**

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**06. Fridley Theatres/ Palms Theatre Southpark**

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**07. Home State Bank**

www.hsbroyal.com  
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**08. Peterson Heritage Museum**

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**09. Spencer Community Theatre**

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**10. Spencer Family YMCA**

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**11. Spencer Hospital**

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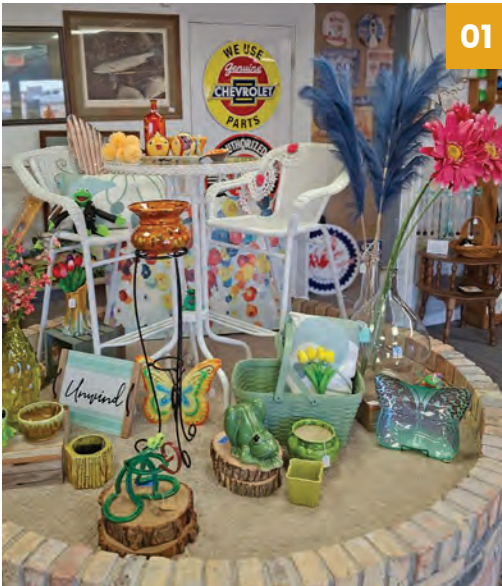


**INSPIRATION  
FOR THE  
FAMILIES**

Traveling with kids (or furry friends)?  
Clay County is packed with family-friendly fun,  
from parks and playgrounds to seasonal events  
and outdoor adventures. Make memories together  
in a place where everyone feels welcome.

**FOR MORE VISIT  
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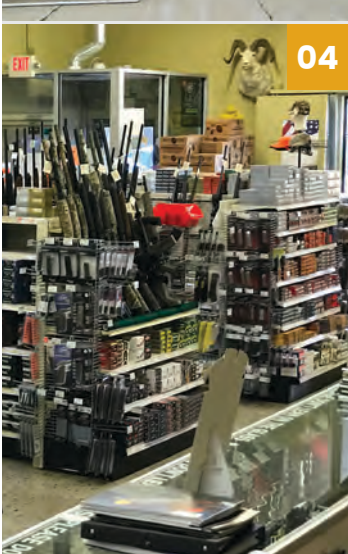
01



02



03



04

# INSPIRATION FOR THE COLLECTORS

Hunting for hidden treasures? Clay County is home to charming boutiques, antique shops, and artisan markets filled with one-of-a-kind finds. Whether you're looking for a unique souvenir or a new favorite piece, your next great discovery is here.

**FOR MORE VISIT  
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05



06



07

## 01. Collector's Cove

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## 02. Marjie's Boutique

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## 05. Southern Archery

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## 06. Southpark Mall

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## 07. Vermeer Art Glass

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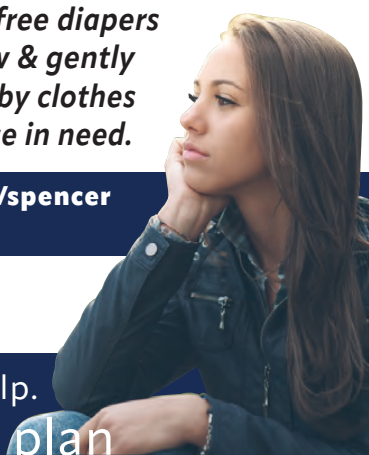
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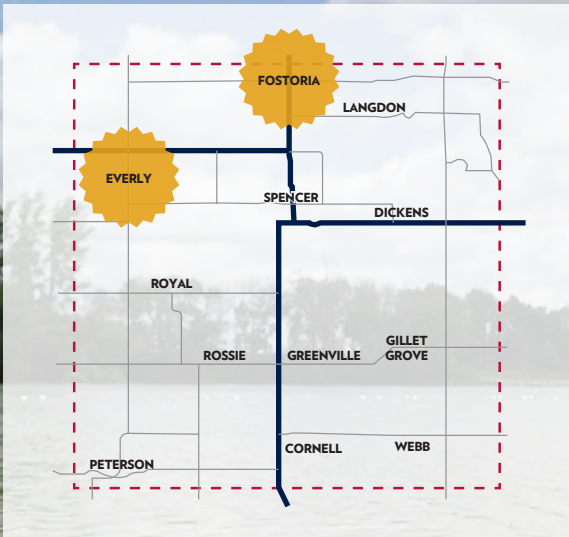


let's take a  
**ROAD TRIP**

Come along for an adventure through Clay County's neighboring communities

most likely to have  
**SCENIC DRIVES**

# LET'S TAKE A ROAD TRIP



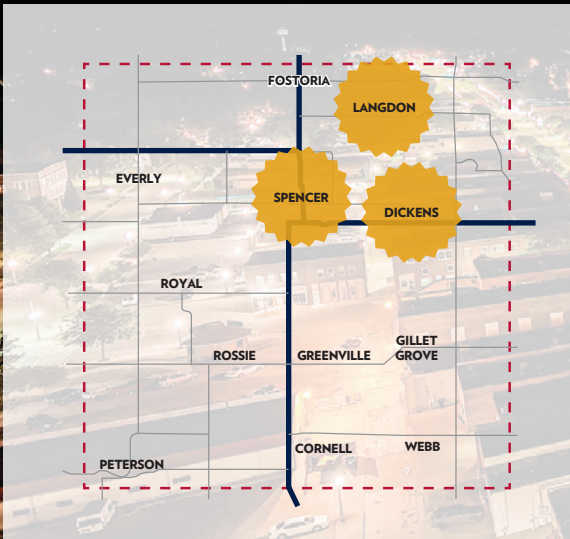
CLAY COUNTY CONSERVATION

PHOTO ABOVE: SCHARNBERG PARK, CLAY COUNTY CONSERVATION

The northwest quadrant of Clay County is a peaceful retreat filled with outdoor recreation and small-town charm.

**Everly** and **Fostoria** serve as gateways to rolling prairies, quiet fishing spots, and scenic trails. **Scharnberg Park**, one of the county's most popular outdoor destinations, offers a swimming beach, fishing pond, and picnic shelters—perfect for a summer getaway. **Schmerse Wildlife Area** near Fostoria is a haven for canoeing, fishing, and hunting, while nearby **Mori Prairie** showcases native grasses and is a prime spot for birdwatching. Whether you're looking to relax by the water, cast a line, or take a scenic drive, Northwest Clay County has something for every outdoor enthusiast.

# next up NORTHWEST CLAY COUNTY Everly Fostoria



DARRIN JONES



HIGGINS MANSION - TYLER SULLIVAN, IOWA SCENIC VIEWS BY FOOT

next up  
**NORTHEAST  
CLAY  
COUNTY**  
**Dickens • Spencer  
Langdon  
(Unincorporated)**

Whether you're strolling downtown Spencer, exploring historic sites, or enjoying the natural beauty of the riverfront, Northeast Clay County is full of places to experience and explore.

Home to **Spencer**, the county seat, and the towns of **Dickens** and **Langdon** (unincorporated), the northeast quadrant is a vibrant mix of history, recreation, and community life. Spencer's **Green Belt** along the **Little Sioux River** offers miles of walking and biking trails, with scenic river views and picnic spots. Nearby, **Oneota Park** provides opportunities for hiking, equestrian trails, and winter sports, making it a year-round destination. For those who love to fish or explore nature, **Dickens Pit** is a quiet, stocked pond perfect for a peaceful afternoon outdoors.

FOR THE TASTE BUDS



local

# FLAVORS

These establishments have stood the test of time and are must-visit spots for travelers.

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THE PRIME RIB



MCCREARY'S HOSPITALITY



FAREWAY MEAT & GROCERY



WEASY'S

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**Established 2008**

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*McCreary's*

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Enjoy varied meals and services including custom catering, mobile food truck and The Dock location at Iowa Lakes Community College. They serve meals for college students, as well as being open to the public for dine-in, carry-out or DoorDash.

**Established 1981**

## THE PRIME RIB/ SILVER HAMMER

**LOCALS CALL IT:**

*Prime Rib/The Hammer*

Since 1981, **The Prime Rib** is a local favorite. Not only will you find folks bonding over a few signature cocktails, but you'll find them ordering up Huey's Famous Prime Rib, crafted with Certified Angus Beef sourced right from Iowa. Upgrade to their famous Salad Bar!

The Silver Hammer Lounge boasts Wing Night every Wednesday and Slider Night on Thursdays. Perfect pairings with their choice of 10 draft beers and big screen TVs.

**Established 2003**

## WEASY'S LOUNGE & GRILLE

**LOCALS CALL IT:**

*Weasy's*

**Weasy's Lounge and Grille** has become a Northwest Iowa tradition. Home to great tasting steaks, burgers, pizzas, sandwiches and the award winning "Weaser Pleaser."

Newly added is "Weasy's Too", which features a full-service bar, dining area along with a banquet room, with accommodations of up to 100. Weasy's Lounge and Grille is located on Grand Avenue in the historic downtown district of Spencer, Iowa.

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next up

# SOUTHWEST CLAY COUNTY

Royal • Greenville  
Rossie • Peterson

## Scenic landscapes and rural charm define Southwest Clay County

Towns of **Royal**, **Rossie**, and **Peterson** offer a glimpse into small-town life. Peterson, one of Clay County's most historic communities, is home to pioneer-era buildings, museums, and river access points, making it a must-visit for history lovers. This area features the **Riverside Little Sioux Access** to explore the waterway. Take a drive along quiet country roads, stop by a local farm, and enjoy the peaceful beauty of Southwest Clay County's open spaces.



### Glacial Trail Scenic Byway

Take a drive down **Glacial Trail Scenic Byway** showcasing steep, unplowed prairie-cloaked hills that flank this meandering river and forested and farmed valley in Southwest Clay County. Nature, scenery, archaeology, and history intersect in the Glacial Trail Byway corridor, creating a compelling experience for byway travelers.



KINDLESPIRE COMPLEX



KINDLESPIRE PARK, CLAY COUNTY CONSERVATION

next up

# SOUTHEAST CLAY COUNTY

## Cornell (Unincorporated) Gillett Grove • Webb

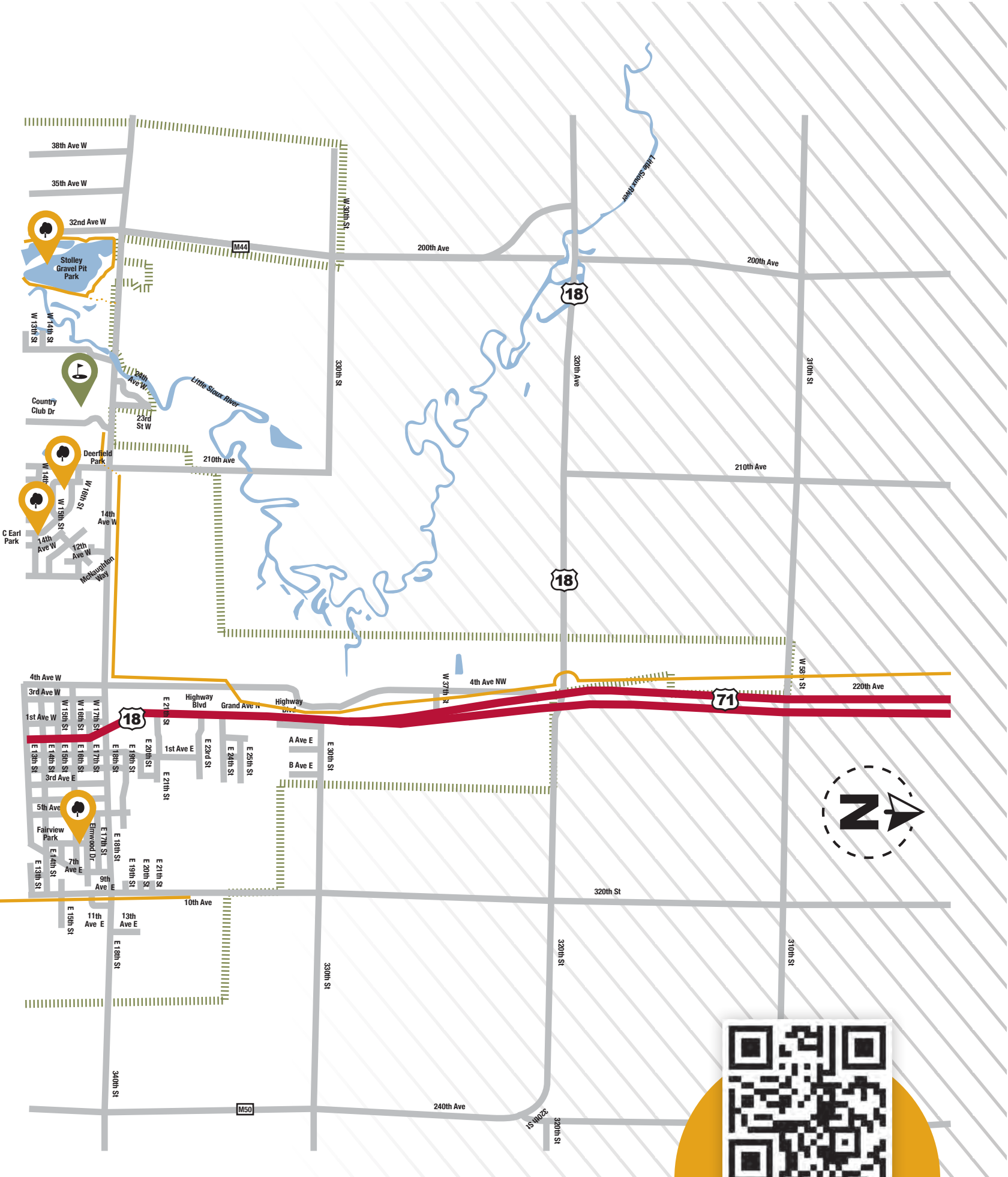
The southeast quadrant of Clay County offers a blend of scenic landscapes, outdoor recreation, and small-town charm.

The towns of **Greenville**, **Webb**, **Gillett Grove**, and **Cornell** (unincorporated) offer a quiet escape with plenty of opportunities to enjoy nature. **Kindlespire Complex**, located near Webb, is a multi-use park featuring camping, hiking trails, canoeing access, and hunting grounds. Outdoor enthusiasts can also visit **Vera and Gilbert James Wildlife Area** for canoeing, fishing, and picnic areas or head to **Burr Wildlife Area**, where equestrian trails, hiking paths, and hunting opportunities create a true back-to-nature experience. A scenic drive through this area reveals rolling hills, river views, and hidden gems waiting to be explored. explore the waterway. Take a drive along quiet country roads, stop by a local farm, and enjoy the peaceful beauty of Southwest Clay County's open spaces.

# SPENCER



**KEY** | Park Golf Course Pool City boundary Bike Trail Street Highway



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PARK INFORMATION



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FOR THE  
FAITHFUL**

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**Aug- May:**  
Sunday school: 9:00 AM  
Worship: 10:00 AM

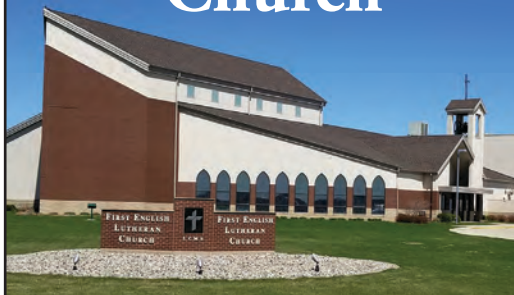
**June/July:**  
Worship at 9:00 AM

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Matthew 19:14

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Body - in a quality,  
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01.



02.



**PRO TIP**

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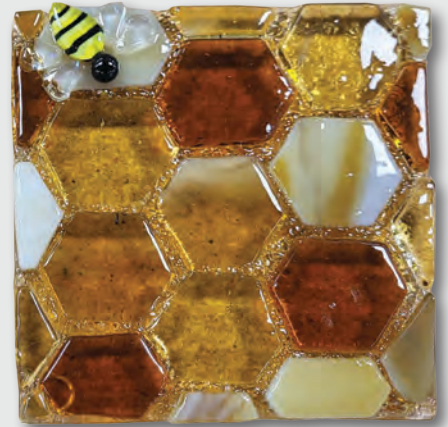
03.



04.



05.



07.



06.



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- 06. H&N Chevy Buick – *A new ride*
- 07. Axaholics, Cargo Express, Godfathers – *Pizza cravings*



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*at the*  
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# Fused Glass

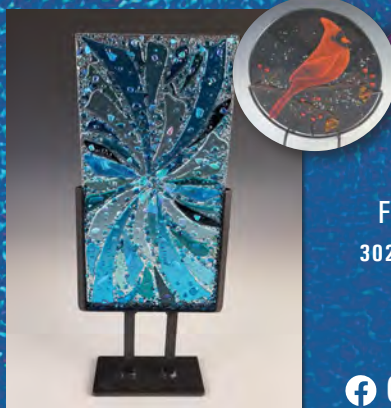


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clay county

# WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

Don't just take it from us, here's what outsiders are sharing about their experience in the hidden gem that is Clay County!

FOR MORE VISIT  
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## Experience Clay County in My Town

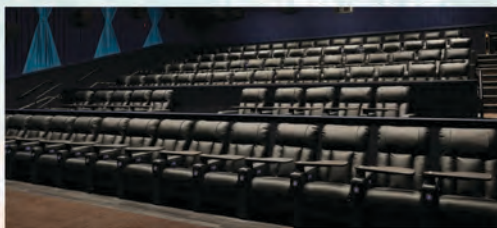
Clay County and the Iowa Lakes Corridor take center stage in *My Town*, a documentary-style series showcasing the vibrancy, resilience, and entrepreneurial spirit of rural America. Directed by Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Cory Hepola, the episode highlights the people, businesses, and opportunities that make this region a great place to live, work, and visit.

Premiering at the 15th Annual Twin Cities Film Fest, *My Town* brought the story of Clay County and the Corridor to audiences on the big screen. Now, you can experience it too! **Scan the QR code to watch the full episode and see why Clay County is the perfect place to explore, grow, and thrive.**



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+ full kitchen and bar - perfect for dinner and a movie!



Tuesdays are Bargain Day - enjoy discounted admission and a free bag of popcorn with a drink purchase



scan this code with your smart phone to see what's playing today!



CLAY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS - TYLER SULLIVAN, IOWA SCENIC VIEWS BY FOOT

## Iowa Scenic Views by Foot

*My time running and exploring the streets of Clay County was filled with open arms welcoming me to their communities. I was shown love, support, and generosity. Thank you for allowing me to explore Clay County."*

-Tyler Sullivan, Iowa Scenic Views by Foot

[facebook.com/whoisyourredcardinal](https://facebook.com/whoisyourredcardinal)

# SPENCER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## LEADING RECOVERY & INSPIRING GROWTH

### RESILIENCE - GROWTH - COMMUNITY - PROGRESS - INNOVATION

The Spencer Chamber of Commerce is proud to lead our community in resilience, fostering growth and building connections that make Spencer & Clay County thrive.



CLAY COUNTY  
**LONG-TERM  
RECOVERY  
GROUP**



**51**

Clay County  
Businesses



**250**

Clay County  
Residents



**519**

Donations  
Received

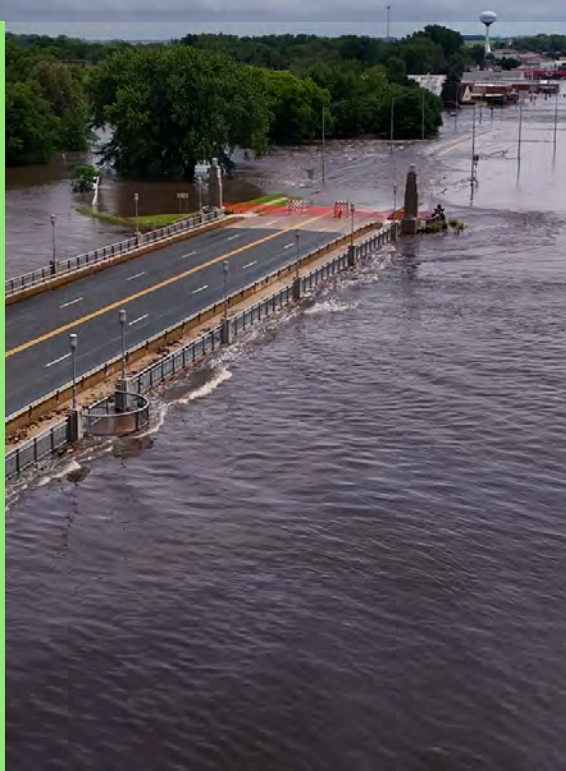
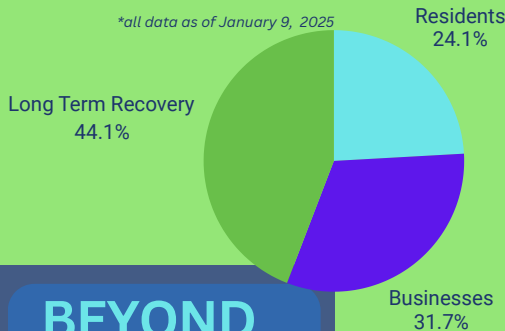
#### Flood Relief Donation Distributions

Residents

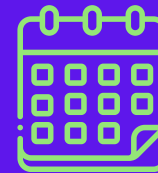
Businesses

Long Term Recovery

*\*all data as of January 9, 2025*



### CHAMBER EVENT CALENDAR 2025



**Eggs & Issues**  
January 25  
February 15  
March 29

**Ag Outlook**  
February 18

**Ag Breakfast**  
March 18

**Career Fair**  
April TBD

**Flagfest**  
June 13-15

**Spencer Strong  
Day**  
June 22

**363**  
INVESTORS

**18 NEW**  
INVESTORS

**94%**  
RETENTION  
RATE

### BEYOND SPENCER

Donations for flood relief have been received from **16 states** across the United States to help residents & businesses.

### WHY INVEST IN THE SPENCER CHAMBER?

Consumers are 80% more likely to patronize a business in the future when they know it's an investor of the local chamber.\*

86% of consumers believe the local chamber helps create jobs and promotes local economic development.\*

If a company shows that it is highly involved in its local chamber, consumers are 10% more likely to favor it over a competitor.\*

\*Quote data from a 2012 study by The Schapiro Group, an Atlanta-based research firm, based on a national survey of 2000 adults.



**SPENCER  
CHAMBER**

1805 Highway Blvd  
712-262-5680  
SpencerIowaChamber.org

Join us in making Spencer & Clay County stronger!

Become a Chamber member today. Learn more by scanning the QR code!





📷 THEONE QUATTLEBAUM



📷 📍 MOVIE IN THE PARK, ERIC JOHANSEN



📍 CENTURY FARMS DISTILLERY



📷 📍 MEDLAR COFFEE CO.

YOU ARE CLAY COUNTY

**share**

# YOUR STORY

Many of the photos we share on social media (and in this guide) are taken by locals or folks passing through. Want to be one of them? Upload your photos to the QR code below

**FOR MORE VISIT**  
**EXPLORECLAYCOUNTY.ORG**




📷 BRIANNE BLOM



📷 ROBIN EDWARDS



📍 NATURE JUBILEE, CLAY COUNTY CONSERVATION



📷 📍 CLAY COUNTY COURTHOUSE, JEFF EWOLDT



📷 DARRIN JONES



📷 📍 SPENCER BRIDGE, ERIC JOHANSEN



# INSPIRATION



# FOR THE ADVENTURERS

## Iowa Great Lakes Connection Trail



**PRO TIP**

**Need to rest & refuel?**  
Rest and grab something unique from Picket Trail after checking out the newly paved Iowa Great Lakes Connection Trail now reaching Fostoria!

**T**o outdoor bicycle enthusiasts the continuing growth of bike trails has promoted an enjoyable and much safer bicycling experience. Throughout the past several years, many Iowa communities and local volunteers have banded together to enhance trail growth in their area. As more and more drivers have become distracted drivers, the need for a safer way to get from community to community, by bicycle has become a top priority. Iowa is home to over 2,000 miles of multi-use trails used by cyclists, walkers & runners.

One such project began in 2011, when the Clay County Trail group was organized, in Spencer. This group saw the need to not only build trails within the cities of Spencer, but to also find a way to join communities together. Thus, the **Iowa Great Lakes Trail Connection Trail** began. With a rail to trail project completed connecting the communities of Jefferson, Panora & Perry, it became apparent that there were only five counties to connect in northwest Iowa, to complete a contiguous 200(+) mile paved trail from Okoboji to Des Moines. In 2015 the communities of Carroll and Sac began connecting the communities of Carroll and Lake View. To date, the Sauk Rail Trail committee has built over 33 miles of trail and are currently working to connect Lake View to Sac City. In 2024, Clay County completed their portion of the trail from Spencer north to Dickinson County. Okoboji will begin their trail construction south to Spencer, this spring, with completion in 2026.

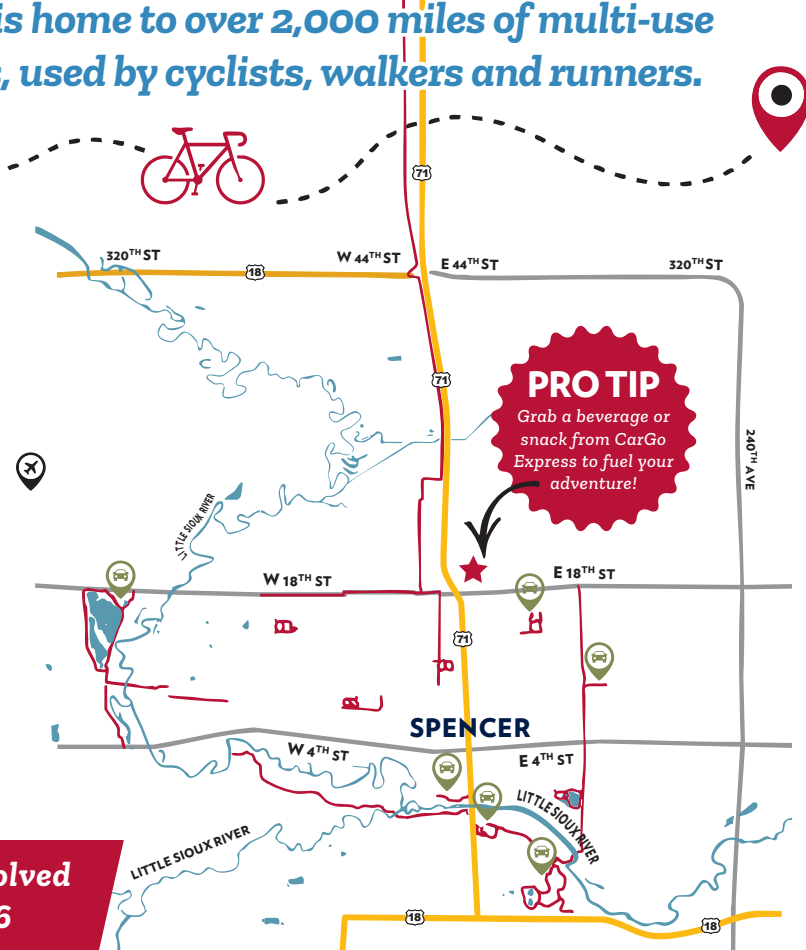
Iowa is home to over 2,000 miles of multi-use trails, used by cyclists, walkers and runners. The Iowa Great Lakes Connection Trail is just the beginning as more and more trails are being proposed across the state. The amount of lakes that are encompassed in this span of trails, make this a huge tourism component for the state of Iowa.

In March 2025, the five county representatives will once again gather, to begin plans for the final phase joining Spencer, Storm Lake and Sac City. Fundraising efforts are underway in each community.

PHOTO ABOVE: CLAY COUNTY TRAILS, ERIC JOHANNSEN



**Iowa is home to over 2,000 miles of multi-use trails, used by cyclists, walkers and runners.**



**WANT MORE?**

For questions, to donate or to get involved please contact Kathy at 712-363-3936

AT A GLANCE



# 2024 FLOOD

In June 2024, our community faced a challenging flood. Through resilience and teamwork, Clay County has not only recovered but emerged stronger.

## OVERVIEW

**4,080**  
BUILDINGS  
AFFECTED

**2,000**  
FEMA  
REGISTRANTS

**264**  
RENTERS &  
OWNERS IMPACTED

**65%**  
RENTAL PROPERTIES  
IMPACTED

## POPULATION

**11,325**  
SPENCER

**16,384**  
CLAY COUNTY

most likely  
to have  
**STRONG  
COMMUNITIES**

ERIC JOHANNSEN

# CLAY COUNTY



# PHEASANTS

*forever*<sup>®</sup>  
The Habitat Organization  
CHAPTER #42

*Dedicated to improving habitat in Clay County, increasing public hunting access, providing mentored hunts and advocating for conservation.*



## MENTORED HUNTS

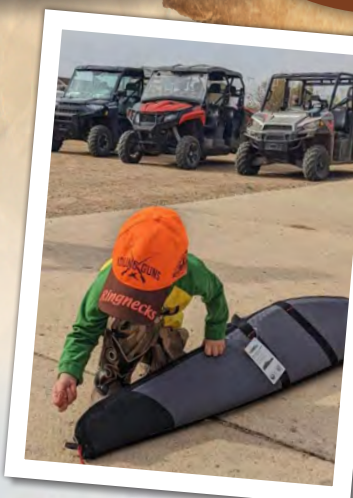


## HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS



Money raised from our banquet goes back to our community in the form of donations to youth shooting sports scholarships and procurement of habitat for public hunting and wildlife.

## Thousands of Acres of Public Hunting in Clay County



## ANNUAL BANQUET



**100% VOLUNTEER BASED**

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE AT: [FACEBOOK.COM/CLAYCOUNTYIAPHEASANTSFOREVER](https://facebook.com/claycountyiapheasantsforever)



★ ★ ★  
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# An Event to Remember!



## Book your event early!

Host your next meeting, business event or wedding at The Great Hall of Royal.

Boasting beautiful indoor and outdoor spaces and a variety of room set-up options, we can accommodate events for groups of all sizes.

Photo Credit: Susan Oehlertz Photography

# The GREAT HALL of Royal

## Contact our experienced team today to book your next event!

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