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## Part of the Community
East Fork Campground, Page 7

## A Family Affair
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## Outdoor Dining
The Pleasure of Picnicking, Page 17

Supplement to *The Pocahontas Times* Vol. 24, No. 2 - Summer 2025 Post Office No. 436-640 ISSN No. 07388376

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# Tunes and theater at the Opera House

**Season Preview Party**
**Saturday, June 14**
**7 to 9 p.m.**

The Pocahontas County Opera House has long been a cornerstone of artistic and cultural expression in our community. Its diverse programming enriches our lives, bringing together people of all ages to celebrate the transformative power of the performing arts.

The upcoming 2025-2026 Season Preview Party on Saturday, June 14, is a testament to the unwavering commitment to the mission of the opera house.

This complimentary public event is more than just a sneak peek at the upcoming performance series; it is a community celebration that showcases the very best of what the opera house has to offer. Attendees will be treated to an evening of hors d'oeuvres, drinks, door prizes, a raffle and a silent auction, providing the perfect opportunity for arts and culture enthusiasts to connect, celebrate and support the new season.

One of the most exciting aspects of this year's preview party is the chance for attendees to purchase season tickets at a special discount price. This unparalleled opportunity ensures that you will have a seat for the array of performances. By securing your tickets early, you are not only guaranteeing your spot at these incredible shows but also demonstrating your support for the arts in our community.

As we look ahead to the 2025-2026 season, we can only imagine the incredible performances that await us. The Season Preview Party offers a tantalizing glimpse into this future, whetting our appetites for the amazing shows to come. But more than that, it gives us an exclusive chance to engage with the vibrant history of the opera house and to play a part in shaping its future.

**The Rustic Mechanicals Present Shakespeare's "Macbeth"**
**Sunday, July 13**
**3 p.m.**

The opera house staff is thrilled to announce that The Rustic Mechanicals, West Virginia's premier Shakespeare touring company, will perform its captivating production of William Shakespeare's "Macbeth" Sunday, July 13, at 3 p.m. This one-time performance promises to be an unforgettable afternoon of magic, intrigue and timeless storytelling.

Founded in 2014 by Celi Oliveto, The Rustic Mechanicals is dedicated to making Shakespeare's works accessible to modern audiences through innovative casting and

*See **HOUSE,** page 5*

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*Cover:* **The Greenbrier River is the largest and longest of the eight rivers that have their headwaters in Pocahontas County.** *Photo courtesy of Pocahontas County CVB*

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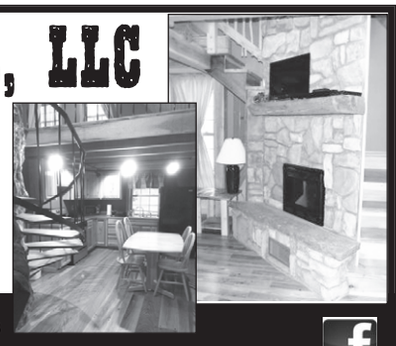

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*HOUSE* from pg 4

faithful adherence to Shakespeare's staging conditions. The troupe tours five shows annually, including its much-loved "West Virginia Shakespeare in the Park(s)" and the unique "a Play, a Pie, and a Pint" series.

Tickets for this mesmerizing performance are now available for purchase. Adult admission is priced at $10, while attendees aged 17 and younger can enjoy the show free of charge. To secure your tickets, please stop by the 4th Avenue Gallery in Marlinton or visit pocahontasoperahouse.org. You may also purchase tickets at the door on the day of the performance.

The Pocahontas County Opera House extends its heartfelt gratitude to the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, endorsed by the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, as well as Pocahontas County Dramas, Fairs and Festivals, Mid-Atlantic Arts, and the Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau for their continuous financial support. The Opera House is equally thankful for the broader community whose love and appreciation have been steadfast, enabling them to bring quality performances and cultural experiences to their beloved audience.

**Summer Theater Camp Presents**
**"Black Beard the Pirate"**
**Friday, July 25**
**5 p.m.**
**Saturday, July 26**
**2 p.m.**

The week-long Summer Theater Camp, held in collaboration with the Missoula Children's Theater's Touring Program returns to the opera house this summer. This partnership aims to create a complete theatrical production within just one week. The Missoula Children's Theater, the largest touring children's theater in the U.S., has been extensively touring for more than 40 years, serving nearly 1,200 communities each year with as many as 44 teams of Tour Actor/Directors. This year's production is titled "Black Beard the Pirate."

The production will feature a variety of roles, including Blackbeard and his crew of Bearded Pirates, Sailors of the High Seas, Cranky Crabs and Crocodiles, Magical Mermaids and Seaweed Creatures, Parrots, and even a group of Beach Bums!

Children will rehearse throughout the week in a supportive and engaging environment, where they can develop essential life skills such as confidence, empathy, communication, self-discipline, cooperation, creativity, and dedication. The camp will culminate in two performances on the Pocahontas County Opera House stage Friday, July 25, at 5 p.m. and Saturday, July 26, at 2 p.m. Children will need to arrive at the theater one hour before the Saturday performance.

In addition to the theatrical production, the Pocahontas County Opera House Summer Camp classes will introduce children to acting, movement, and the behind-the-scenes world of costumes, sets, and props. The camp will also include pirate-themed experiments, storytelling, and craft projects.

This camp is made possible by the support of the community. A group of talented local volunteer thespians will be on hand to assist. Financial and logistical support through the WV Neighborhood Investment Program from Parks and Recreation, Pocahontas County Schools, and various civic organizations have helped bring this project to fruition.

**The Missoula Children's Theatre camp was a pet project of late Opera House board member Shenda Smith, who had a passion for music, theater and dance. A fund has been set up in her honor to continue funding for the program in the future.**

Our late board member, Shenda Smith, who was instrumental in founding this camp, was passionate about ensuring that all children have the opportunity to experience the arts. In her name, scholarships are available for children in need (simply check the box on the registration form). If you would like to make an additional donation to help ensure this amazing experience is open to all children and to continue growing the arts in Pocahontas County, it would be greatly appreciated.

**Black Mountain**
**Bluegrass Boys**
**Saturday, August 30**
**7 p.m.**

The legendary Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys,

*See* ***HOUSE,*** *page 6*

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***HOUSE*** from pg 5

West Virginia's most enduring bluegrass ensemble, will grace the opera house stage again on Saturday, August 30, at 7 p.m. Under the skillful leadership of Mill Point native Richard Hefner, who has been at the helm for more than five decades, the band has earned a stellar reputation for their authentic bluegrass sound, impeccable vocal harmonies, and deep-rooted connection to the region's musical heritage.This all-star band, The Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys, is comprised of some of the most talented musicians in the genre.

For those who wish to delve deeper into the band's history and Richard Hefner's musical journey, the "Opera House Story Sessions" offer a treasure trove of captivating videos and podcasts. These sessions provide a glimpse into Richard's early years and highlight some of his most cherished songs. In a particularly fascinating segment, Richard shares stories of his time playing alongside the legendary father of bluegrass, Bill Monroe, offering a rare insight into the origins of this beloved musical style.

**The Black Mountain Bluegrass Boys – and gal, from left: Danny Arthur, Richard Hefner, Joanna Burt-Kinderman and and Dave Bing.**

Adult tickets are priced at $10, while young music aficionados aged 17 and younger can attend free of charge, making it an accessible and inclusive evening for all. Tickets can be conveniently purchased in person at the 4th Avenue Gallery in Marlinton, online at pocahontasoperahouse.org or at the door the night of the performance – subject to availability.

The Opera House Performance Series is made possible through the generous support of grants from the West Virginia Division of Culture and History and the West Virginia Commission on the Arts. The series also benefits from the backing of Pocahontas County Dramas, Fairs and Festivals, and the Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, underscoring the community's unwavering commitment to preserving and celebrating its rich cultural heritage.


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# Community-minded at East Fork Campground

**Suzanne Stewart**
**Staff Writer**

After 25 years of owning and operating East Fork Campground, Mark and Marsha Kane were ready to retire. Luckily, they had a friend who loved the campground as much as they did.

Tony Kyle was drawn to the campground in part because it catered to visitors with horses. In the early 1990s, Kyle was in the "horse business."

"I had horses at Blackwater State Park," he said. "I started at Snowshoe in 1990 for Jim Burks. In 1995, my dad thought I had a good thing going in the horse business and he built me a quarter of a million-dollar arena barn in Mill Creek."

Kyle was based in Mill Creek but traveled to Pocahontas County when he could. He camped at East Fork often and became friends with the Kanes.

*See **FORK,** page 8*

Photos by Suzanne Stewart

**East Fork Campground is located in Durbin, nestled between the mountains and the historic town. Twenty of the 45 campsites are located along the Greenbrier River. At left, campground operators Tony Kyle and Ilene Graham stand on the porch of the office.**

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"I told Mike, 'I want to be just like you when I grow up,'" he said, laughing. "He'd sit there on the porch in his shorts and his flip flops."

Last year, the timing was right and Kyle's son, Jonathan, bought the campground for him to run.

Kyle and his wife, Ilene Graham, have taken to campground life and expanded to include 20 campsites with electric and water along the Greenbrier River and 25 campsites in the rest of the campground with full hookups.

They have also expanded the living quarters for horses to include 60 stalls in barns and pens.

"I'm a horse person as is Ilene – we've been riding horses together for fifteen years," Kyle said. "My big project was that I wanted a nice dry place for the horses to be. I wanted to build a nice barn for the customers.

"One barn was here," he continued. "Some of the seasonal campers built this for Mark when he was in Florida five or six years ago."

Kyle added on to the existing barn which had four stalls. The new addition has 12 stalls. Each stall has a wash spigot and light switch, as well as plenty of room for the horses to rest after a day on the trail.

When Kyle and Graham are living on-site, they are joined by their horse Major, who watches over the visiting horses and is very personable.

"He follows you around like a dog," Kyle said.

In addition to the campsites, there are two bathhouses at the campground. One has separate men's and women's stalls, and the new one is "cowboy style" – one big room with a toilet, sink and walk-in shower.

Photo by Suzanne Stewart

**East Fork Campground has barns and pens to cater to 60 horses on-site. Manager Tony Kyle built onto the existing barn to include 12 additional stalls complete with electric, water spigots and plenty of room for visitors' horses to relax after a trail ride. Kyle's horse, Major, is the resident landlord, watching over his guests.**

Each campsite comes with hookups, a fire pit and picnic table. There is also a primitive cabin on-site that sits near the river.

The campground attracts a lot of groups who come to the county to enjoy the many trail systems where they can safely ride their horses. Kyle has a horse trailer visitors can rent for trips that are farther away – such as Snowshoe or Marlinton.

East Fork Campground also has a building on Main Street in Durbin with two rental units. One unit has four bedrooms and the other has two bedrooms.

Kyle recently entered into a lease agreement

*See **FORK**, page 9*


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***FORK*** from pg 8

with the town of Durbin for a piece of land adjacent to the campground where he plans to add 12 more campsites with full hookups.

He did this to keep the main field open for community events, including the annual Durbin Days Heritage Festival that takes place in July.

Kyle and Graham are very community-oriented and are always hosting events for campers and locals. Visit the campground's Facebook page at East Fork Campground-Durbin, WV for upcoming events.

To learn more about East Fork Campground, visit eastforkcampgrounddurbin.com or call 304-456-3101.

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# The Treasures of Pocahontas County

**By Curtis Curry**
*From the Archives*

Pocahontas County, located in the mountains of eastern West Virginia, is known as the "Birthplace of Rivers."

In its 942 square miles, eight rivers have their origin or "birth." They begin their long journeys high in the mountains as a trickle to eventually end it in the Gulf of Mexico. These rivers are the Shavers Fork of Cheat, Cherry River, Cranberry River, Elk River, Gauley River, Greenbrier, Tygart River and The Williams River.

### Tygart River

The Tygart River was named for David Tygart, an early settler in the Tygart Valley in the 1750s. It has one of the shortest journeys through Pocahontas County originating on Cheat Mountain near Snowshoe Mountain Resort and flowing a few miles northwest before entering Randolph County near the community of Mingo. The Tygart, where it leaves Pocahontas, is barely six feet wide. As it flows north through the Tygart Valley, it gains volume to become a major river when it reaches Fairmont where it joins the West Fork River to become the Monongahela River. At this place, the Tygart has flowed 135 miles from its humble beginnings in the mountains of Pocahontas County. A major contribution of the Tygart is the Tygart Lake near Grafton that supplies water resources and recreation to north central West Virginia.

The Tygart has also been known as the Tygart Valley River and the Muddy River.

### Gauley River

The Gauley River was named by early French explorers. The French had claimed the Ohio River basin and its tributaries. They were fur traders and friends to the Indians. The Gauley originates on the western slopes of the Yew Mountain range near Sharp's Knob and the Slaty Fork community. The North Fork of Gauley and the Middle Fork flow a few miles through Pocahontas and Randolph to join in Webster County to form the Gauley River. The South Fork joins them downstream to complete the Gauley.

Three more Pocahontas rivers join the Gauley on its way to merge with the New River from the south. The Williams, Cranberry and Cherry rivers flow into the Gauley. The Gauley makes a major contribution to central West Virginia with its Summersville Dam that provides water resources and recreation. The whitewater rafting below the dam is known worldwide and provides substantial revenue to the area and state.

The Gauley ends its 105-mile journey at Gauley Bridge where it merges with the New River to form the Kanawha River.

### Elk River

The Elk River was named for the herds of elk found in this area when early settlers arrived. It is one of the most unusual and interesting streams in Pocahontas County and in West Virginia. The Elk begins in the community of Slaty Fork where the Big Spring Fork flowing south from Cheat Mountain merges with the Old Field Fork flowing north from Red Lick Mountain.

The Big Springs Fork is fed by Cup Run and Hawthorne Run near Snowshoe. Two springs contributing to the Big Springs Fork are the Gatewood Springs near Linwood and a spring just above its joining with the Old Field Fork. It is an "interrupted" stream with its waters sinking and rising frequently on its journey to Old Field.

The Old Field Fork flows through Pleasant Valley and was named for fields thought to have been cleared by Indians. It is joined by the Slaty Fork just above its junction with Big Springs.

*See **TREASURES**, page 11*

**Whitaker Falls of the Elk River**

***TREASURES***
from pg 10

From Slaty Fork the Elk flows generally westward for several miles until its waters completely disappear. Records in Randolph County tell of a large hole that developed in 1896 and swallowed the entire river. In a few years the hole filled with rocks, but the water still continued to sink through to an underground waterway. Nearby is a small tributary called "Black Hole Run" which may attest to the fact a hole once existed in the riverbed. William T. Price in his 1901 book "Historical Sketches of Pocahontas County, West Virginia" refers to a "Black Hole near Linwood" in his "natural curiosities" of the county. Perhaps he was referring to the hole in the Elk riverbed.

For the next five miles the riverbed is completely dry and has become known as "the dries" or "the dry bed of the Elk." It is strange to walk across the dry rocks and know that somewhere below flows a large stream! In one place there is a large, nearly level area of exposed bedrock. Local residents were known to have square dances on what they called "Flat Rock." In Randolph County below the dries the Elk rises to the surface in a stream of cold, clean water again filling the riverbed and providing good trout fishing. It continues its journey through Randolph and Webster counties on its way to join the Kanawha River in the capitol city of Charleston.

By then, it has traveled 172 miles from the highlands of Pocahontas County.

**Upper Shavers Fork of Cheat River**

### Shavers Fork of Cheat River

The Shavers Fork of Cheat was named for Paul Shaver, an early settler, Indian fighter and revolutionary soldier who was killed by the Indians. The Shavers Fork begins near the highest point on Cheat Mountain at Thorny Flats (4,848 feet) in the Snowshoe Resort area. From its source, the Shaver's waters flow the first 30 miles at an elevation above 3,000 feet making it the largest river at that elevation in eastern North America. Its upper region waters have been impounded to form Shaver's Lake to provide water and recreation for the resort. It flows north through the site of the former logging town of Spruce and into Randolph and Tucker counties. After 88.5 miles it merges with the Black Fork River at Parsons, to form the Cheat River. The Cheat continues north for 78.3 miles to

*See **TREASURES**, page 12*

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*TREASURES* from pg 11

join the Monongahela River. During the warmer months the Shaver's Fork provides an abundance of recreational opportunities including great trout fishing and adds to the scenic train rides from Elkins and Cass.

**Cherry River**

The Cherry River got its name from the abundance of wild cherry trees growing along its watershed. It is formed by the North Fork of Cherry and the South Fork of Cherry that join in Richwood, Nicholas County. Both the North and South Forks originate in Pocahontas County. The North Fork begins on the western slope of Kennison Mountain with the merging of Darnell Run and Little Branch. In its upper region, the North Fork meanders lazily through a narrow valley before beginning a rapid descent toward Richwood. From there the Cherry rushes about 10 miles to empty into the Gauley River upstream from the Summersville Dam.

**Cranberry River**

The South Fork flows through the glades for about four miles while dropping in elevation by less than 50 feet. Along the way it gathers volume from several small streams feeding into the spongy soil of the glades. The glades are a favorite place for the black bear and visitors may often see them on or near the boardwalk winding through two of the open glades and bog forest.

After exiting the glades, the South Fork begins a steeper descent and now has the appearance of a typical mountain trout stream. For the next 16 miles the Cranberry River is not accessible by motorized vehicles. Nine miles from its beginning the South Fork merges with the North Fork of Cranberry. The North Fork flows only two miles from its origin near the Highland Scenic Highway. The Cranberry River now begins its journey to join the Gauley River some 24 miles west. It enters the Gauley near Craigsville upstream from the Cherry River and downstream from the Williams River.

The Cranberry River and adjoining Cranberry Wilderness area provide hiking, camping and some of the best trout fishing in the eastern United States.

**Williams River**

Williams River is named for William "Swago Bill" Ewing, a Revolutionary soldier who lived on Swago Run and owned property on the headwaters of the river. The Williams is formed near Spruce Flats on Days Mountain near Marlinton with the merger of Beaver Dam Run and Downey Run. It begins its 33-mile journey to the Gauley River by winding lazily through high meadows before disappearing into the forest near Mountain Lick Run. For the next several miles the

*See* ***TREASURES,*** *page 13*


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**TREASURES**
from pg 12

Williams flows beneath a canopy of shade trees and over a constantly dropping rocky stream bed. Fallen trees frequently cross the stream providing cover for fish and deep pools downstream from them. This part of the river is favored by anglers preferring native brook trout and stream reared brown trout. Fishing pressure is normally light in this segment of the river.

Below the falls is a low water bridge. In the early spring and fall, the Department of Natural Resources frequently stock the segment between this bridge and the highway #17 bridge. This area is heavily fished and has worn paths along the river. It includes the popular Day Run Campground and other campsites along this stretch.

The Williams takes on a different personality below the highway #17 bridge. It flows lazily through a broad valley with high dirt banks and scattered deep pools. It is a difficult area to access, and fishing pressure is light. Fishermen might expect to catch trout and some warm water fish such as rock bass and small mouth bass. They might also encounter curious beavers that favor the slow-moving water.

At the lower end of this broad valley, the river has the appearance of a long lake with high dirt banks, a muddy bottom and murky water. The Indians called this segment the "stillwater" and it is known today as the "deadwater." It is a popular fishing area but must be fished from the banks or by boat. There is a special platform for handicapped fishermen near the Highland Scenic Highway bridge. During the timbering years of the early 1900s, a splash dam was built at the lower end of the deadwater to gather logs before they were released to float down to the Gauley River and a sawmill at Camden on Gauley.

Photo by Laurie Cameron

**The Great Greenbrier River Race is a colorful sight as kayaks and canoes make their way down the Greenbrier River and under the old blue bridge in Buckeye. A new bridge was built and the blue bridge was removed in 2015.**

Below the deadwater, the Williams returns to a rocky bed with swift water and shallow pools. During the next mile it is joined by Sugar Creek off Black Mountain and Tea Creek flowing from the Gauley Mountain slopes. These two tributaries increase the volume and width of the Williams.

About four miles from Tea Creek the Williams exits Pocahontas County and enters Webster County. Two miles within this area is limited to catch and release fishing. It provides some of the best trout fishing in West Virginia with rushing water, huge rocks and deep pools. The Williams ends its journey at Cowen where it joins the Gauley River.

### Greenbrier River

The Greenbrier River is the largest and longest river flowing through Pocahontas County. It was named by early settlers for a thorny vine found growing along its banks. It originates in the mountains of northeast Pocahontas County, flows south through most of the county, and exits in the southwest into Greenbrier County. The Greenbrier is the longest "free flowing" river left in the eastern United States.

The East Fork of the Greenbrier and West Fork both begin above 3,300 feet in the northernmost mountains of Pocahontas County. They merge near the community of Durbin as the largest river in the county. The early pioneers recognized the value of the Greenbrier, and many settlements arose along its banks. It provided water resources, food and transportation.

When commercial timber harvesting came to West Virginia, the river became the mode of transportation for getting logs to sawmills. Great "log drives" were part of the Greenbrier's history and have been immortalized in several books including "Riders of the Flood" by W.E. Blackhurst.

Today, the Greenbrier provides unlimited recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Anglers may try their skills on trout in the upper region or cast for a variety of warm water fish in the middle and lower region. There are numerous access areas for launching of boats, canoes, kayaks, tubes and other floating devices. In the warmer months the river is filled in some areas with swimmers and waders.

The Greenbrier River Trail, a West Virginia state park, parallels the river for 77 miles beginning at the logging town of Cass and extending south to Caldwell in Greenbrier County. It crosses 35 bridges and passes through two tunnels. It is available to bicyclers, hikers and horsemen but no motorized vehicles are allowed. It gives access to some of the most scenic and historic areas of the county.

For more info visit greenbrierriver trail.com

A popular event in Marlinton in April combines the Greenbrier River and the Greenbrier River Trail in a mini triathlon. It begins with a three-mile run on the trail, a four mile paddle down the river, and closes with a 10 mile bike ride on the trail. There are individual and team awards. This race draws hundreds of participants and hundreds more to watch. It is a great family event.

The Greenbrier goes on to join the New River after traveling 173 miles from its source in Pocahontas County.

The eight rivers of Pocahontas County make a significant contribution to the county but also to the economy of much of the rest of West Virginia. They are truly the irreplaceable treasures of the county and state.

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# A family affair

# Boyer Station Campground

**Suzanne Stewart**
**Staff Writer**

When Karen Murphy was a little girl, she and her family would travel from their home in Frederick, Maryland, to camp in Pocahontas County. Her dad, George Phillips, fell in love with the county, so much so that he looked for jobs here.

"He found out there was a teaching job at the Green Bank school, so he applied, got it and then, of course, everything just fell into place," Karen said.

One of the things that caught Phillips' eye every time they came to Pocahontas County was a field near the Boyer Motel. Because of his love of camping, he didn't see a hayfield – he saw a campsite.

In 1977, Phillips bought the motel. By 1979, there was a restaurant and, in 1980, a campground with 12 camper sites.

"That's how it all started," Karen said.

Karen followed in her father's footsteps and became a teacher. She married Mike Murphy, who is a retired school bus driver and owns Murphy's Body and Repair Shop.

In the past 40 years, many things have changed – good and bad. The motel and restaurant are both now closed, but the campground is thriving with 80 camper sites, primitive camp sites and a new set of cabins coming soon.

After Phillips died, his wife, Carolyn Phillips, carried on the operation until she sold it to Frank and Susie Murphy in 1994. The couple just so happens to be Karen's in-laws, so the campground remained in the family.

Photos courtesy of Boyer Station Campground

**When it first opened in 1980, Boyer Station Campground was a modest 12-lot campsite for visitors to Pocahontas County. In the past 45 years, it has grown to have 45 lots in the lower campground, shown above, and 35 lots in the upper campground. The site also includes primitive campsites, trails for walking and biking, a dining hall and pavilion, shown at right.**

Karen and Mike work with Frank and Susie to maintain and expand the campground for visitors and locals alike. Now that she's retired from teaching, Karen is able to help out more at the campground and plans events for guests and locals to enjoy.

"Everybody has a really important part in making it go," Karen said. "Frank's our ambassador. He loves doing this. He takes people around and explains everything – the history of the area. Susie does all the reservations and all the bookings."

From the road, the campground looks modest enough, but once you hop into a side-by-side with Frank or Karen, you realize just how big the place is.

There are 45 lots in the lower campground – visible from the road – with full hook-ups. Then there's the upper campground with another 35 lots with full hook-ups.

Connecting the two sites and the primitive camping sites are a series of trails that the family has worked hard on carving out of the mountain.

"We had to put the road in and thin this bank out," Karen said of one of the trails. "A lot of people don't know about this part of the campground."

The Murphys expanded the campground when they realized there was a need for more options. The campground attracts families, groups and even locals who enjoy a little "staycation" in the summer.

Winding around the trails, the higher you go, the more rustic it gets. There are several flat areas known as the primitive sites. Those are for the campers who want to totally unplug and rough it.

"People come and they don't want electric," Karen said. "You can bring a camper up here, but it's mostly tents."

On the 58-acre campground, there are trails perfect for walking or biking and the property is right beside national forest for those looking to explore even more.

"These paths – they're mapped out if they want to go for a hike or ride their bikes, they can get a map," Karen said. "There's no way you're going to get lost because it all circles back."

The Murphys had help with the trails from a local contractor, Wally Starks, who made a special hardwood bridge for a portion of the trail.

"This was a surprise for Frank," Karen said. "You could only get so far and then there wasn't anything, so Wally Starks came up and finished the bridge to connect the other trails. I absolutely love the bridge."

Campers can also enjoy the sights around them while they are at the campground, including woodland critters such as whitetail deer, squirrels and maybe even a few wild turkeys.

Then there's the night sky. The view from the upper campground and primitive sites is spectacular. It's even attracted astrophotographers who wanted to capture the bright stars.

The newest addition to the campground is a series of small cabins that visitors can rent. Two are arriving in June and four more will be on-site in October.

"We've been talking about the cabins for a couple of years now and one of the reasons why is because there's people who don't want to pull their camper or don't have a camper," Karen said. "They still want to come camping with their family.

*See* ***BOYER,*** *page 16*

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**BOYER** from pg 15

This will give people the option. If they don't want to camp, they can stay in the cabins and still be part of the campground."

The cabins will feature sleeping quarters, of course, as well as a kitchen, bathroom and sitting area.

The campground is all inclusive, with a dining hall that has a full kitchen a pavilion for dining and meetings, the trail system for hiking and biking, and fun activities planned all year.

"We have had squares dances and a couple of magic shows," Karen said. "Fourth of July we do the slip and slide and inflatables. We had two color runs on the trail. Then we do the Halloween trail and, this year, we added Christmas."

A lot of the activities are free to visitors, with the option of making donations for local organizations. The past Christmas event benefitted the Humane Society, Pocahontas County Senior Citizens and Pocahontas County Reading Council.

For more information on the Boyer Station Campground, visit boyerstation.com or call 304-456-4667.

Photo by Suzanne Stewart

**Boyer Station Campground has a total of 58 acres, which includes a labyrinth of trails for hiking and biking. When the Murphys were working on the trails, they realized there was a need for a bridge to connect them. They called in local contractor Wally Starks, who helped clear out the trails and built this bridge out of locally sourced timber that is sturdy enough for an ATV to cross.**

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# Adventure Dining ~ UTV Tour

**Rita Wilson**
**Contributing Writer**

You and your family have several options to choose from when it comes to dining at Snowshoe Mountain Resort. All are unique and worth exploring, but for the ultimate dining experience – the Adventure Dining Tour is something you should consider.

Join a one-of-a-kind, memory making, 15-mile off-road UTV tour, culminating with a delicious three-course meal at the Sunrise Backcountry Hut.

Your tour, which is approximately three hours long, begins at the Village Adventure Outpost located in the middle of the Depot and the Mountain Top Dome. There, you and your family or guests will register and be fitted with a DOT approved helmet. You will then join other dinner and tour guests in your own four seated, fully enclosed Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV).

Once everyone is ready to go, your guide will give you basic instructions, and your Back Country Excursion will begin. NOTE: If you are traveling alone and do not want to drive the UTV, prior arrangements can be made so that you can ride as a guest with your guide.

A mild beginning allows guests to become familiar with their vehicle. Then the terrain becomes more fun and challenging. The nature trails can be steep and rocky, adding to the unique adventure.

The next stop will be at the 60-foot Fire Tower to enjoy the stunning views of Snowshoe and the surrounding mountains.

Everyone is invited to climb to the top of the Tower to take pictures as keepsakes of this exciting experience.

Then it is off to The Sunrise Backcountry Hut where your pre-selected meal choices will be freshly prepared to your specifications. To see the full menu options visit snowshoemtn.com

The Sunrise Backcountry Hut offers A Unique Dining Experience and menu options change seasonally.

Check out the Adventure Dining Tours to see cost, plan your dates and make your reservations.

The personal and family memories that are made during this time together are priceless and will last forever.

Photo courtesy of Snowshoe Mountain Resort

**Chariots for the Adventure Dining Tour at Snowshoe Mountain Resort are these Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV). You and your party have the option of driving yourselves or having an employee take the wheel as you head to the Backcountry Hut for a unique dining experience at the top of the mountain.**


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# The pleasure of picnicking

**Laura Dean Bennett**
**Staff Writer**

It's summertime and that means picnic time.

Picnicking may have evolved into a quintessential American activity, but it began in the old-world centuries ago.

The word, picnic, is derived from the 17th century French word, "picquenique."

It referred to a leisurely social gathering with food – often finger foods – brought by each participant to be shared with everyone.

It must have been a fashionable thing to do. Many famous paintings by the old masters show ladies and gentlemen – dressed to the nines – and picnicking.

Although the word picnic did not appear in the English language until around 1800, early American colonists were hosting informal meals outdoors much earlier than that.

One could say the first Thanksgiving was the first recorded American picnic. It is certainly the most famous.

Ever notice that food just seems to taste better when we are dining al-fresco?

Even a simple hot dog or hamburger cooked over a campfire can rival the taste of the finest restaurant meal. And that's not a figment of your imagination.

Science has broken down several reasons for it.

Fresh air, being in a natural environment and even temperature changes have been shown to influence our enjoyment of food.

We have long understood that there are four basic tastes – sweet, sour, salty and bitter.

But in the 80s, another taste, umami – which is described as savoriness – was added to the list.

And scientists tell us that eating outdoors can make the taste of umami more pronounced, especially at higher altitudes.

In addition to the relaxation we feel when we cook and or eat outdoors, it's actually healthy for us – physically, mentally and emotionally.

Being outside boosts vitamin D levels, which helps protect against osteoporosis, heart attacks and strokes.

The American Psychological Association tells us that time spent in nature

*See **PLEASURE,** page 19*

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***PLEASURE***
from pg 18

can reduce stress, improve our mood, sharpen cognition and creativity, improve sleep and decrease depression.

Each summer is another opportunity to up your picnic game.

Rather than just saying, "we're having a picnic," chose a theme or explore new locations where some new adventures might to be had.

Baskets with handles are an excellent way to transport the feast and make lovely decoration when they get there.

Mason jars are fun for serving beverages. To get them to the picnic unbroken, wrap them in tea towels – much nicer, and more economical than paper napkins.

Don't forget what some nice audio vibrations might do for your get-together. These days, there are lots of ways to bring music to the party.

Invite guests to take a hand in cooking on the campfire. Provide roasting sticks for everyone and you've got built-in fun.

Make homemade roasting sticks by cutting long, strong branches, peeling off the bark and soaking them overnight in water.

A do-it-yourself sandwich bar is fun and practical.

Choose sturdy bread like ciabatta, sourdough or baguettes, and consider toasting them – maybe right there on the grill. Offer a tantalizing array of sandwich ingredients, packed separately for attable assembly.

You never know when there might be an impromptu picnic opportunity, so keep your picnic supplies all together and ready to go.

This might include paper or plasticware, wet wipes and hand sanitizer, a food thermometer, baskets, clean coolers and plenty of ice.

Old quilts make excellent picnic tablecloths or blankets. It's also handy to carry a picnic blanket with a waterproof underside in case you find yourself setting up on wet grass.

And if your picnic's rained out? No worries! Just move the picnic indoors. Spread a few quilts around and voila! It's still a picnic.

Children love indoor picnicking. It's something to keep in mind for those times when boredom sets in, but – for some reason – an outdoor picnic isn't in the cards.

Of course, by putting unusual foods on the menu, using new recipes and being creative with beverages, we can make every picnic a unique experience.

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# Some recipes to up your picnicking game

**Watermelon and Feta Salad**

Serves 4

3 cups arugula

3 Tuscan kale leaves (look for dark, blue-green, "bumpy" leaves), stems removed, chopped and massaged

2 cup watermelon, cubed and seeds removed

1/2 cup cucumber, halved and sliced

1 cup kumato (black) tomatoes, halved (substitute yellow cherry tomatoes)

1/2 cup goat feta cheese

1/4 cup pistachios, crushed

3 sprigs mint (stems removed)- chopped

1 green onion, finely chopped

**Dressing**

3 Tbsp. coconut vinegar (substitute white or apple cider vinegar and a small amount of diced coconut flakes)

Juice of one lime

1Tbsp. brown sugar

1/2 cup olive oil

1/8 tsp. sea salt

1/8 tsp. pepper

Instructions

Mix dressing ingredients and set aside.

Arrange the arugula and kale on four plates. Add watermelon, cucumber, tomatoes, feta and pistachios.

Top with mint and green onion, drizzle on dressing and serve.

**Vegetable Crudité with Hummus**

This is the perfect, no guilt appetizer for a picnic – easy to transport and doesn't require serving plates or utensils.

And what's healthier than raw vegetables? And what is a healthier dip than hummus? Don't think there is one. It's made from mashed chickpeas (aka called garbanzo beans) and it's rich in protein, fiber and antioxidants.

Watermelon and Feta Salad

You can buy a variety of hummus at the grocery store – but why not make your own? Double this recipe for a crowd.

**Classic Hummus**

2 cups garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/3 cup tahini (sesame seed paste- can be substituted with peanut butter)

1/4 cup lemon juice

1 tsp. sea salt (regular table salt ok)

1 Tbsp. olive oil

Paprika to taste

**Strawberry Rice Krispy Treats**

Fancy desserts are fine, but if you want one that's quick, inexpensive and super-portable, you can't beat Rice Krispy treats.

Here's one way to glamorize this ever-popular favorite. And they're gluten and dairy-free.

Tips:

Do not substitute fresh strawberries for freeze-dried.

Take care to melt marshmallows on low to medium heat – they burn easily.

Don't forget to reserve 1cup of the marshmallows and 1/4 cup of the chopped freeze-dried strawberries to add at the end.

This recipe will make about 8-10 servings, depending on size. But if you want to make a crowd-sized batch, double the recipe and use a 9x13 pan.

Ingredients:

6 Tbsp. butter

7 cup marshmallows, separated (reg. size or mini-mini will melt faster) Reserving 1cup for the end

1 tsp. vanilla

5 cups Rice Krispies cereal

3/4 cup freeze dried strawberries, ground into a fine powder

1/2 cup freeze dried strawberries, chopped into small pieces (divided into two equal portions)

Instructions:

Line an 8x8 or 9x9 baking pan with parchment paper. In a blender or food processor, grind 1/2 cup freeze dried

*See **RECIPES**, page 21*

*RECIPES* from pg 20

strawberries to powder. Chop the remaining 3/4 cup strawberries and set aside.

In a large pot, melt the butter over medium heat.

Add 6 cups of marshmallows (leaving 1 cup aside). Stir with the melted butter until the marshmallows are completely melted.

Remove from heat. Add the vanilla to the ground up strawberries, stir with a wooden spoon until combined. Leave the chopped strawberries aside.

Add the Rice Krispies and 1/4 cup chopped freeze dried strawberries. Stir quickly until combined.

Pour the mixture into the lined pan. Use a greased spatula or your hands to gently press the mixture until the top is even. Sprinkle on the rest of the dried strawberries and gently press them onto the top. You may also drizzle the pan with melted white or milk chocolate.

Let set completely before slicing.

Stored in an airtight container, will keep for up to 5 days. Or freeze and keep for up to 6 weeks.

**Jasmine and Lemon Iced Tea**

4 Servings
6 jasmine tea bags
2 cups boiling water
1/2 cup blue agave (may substitute honey)
2 lemons, juiced
4 cups of ice cubes
3 cups ice water

Steep jasmine tea bags in hot water for 5 minutes (do not boil). Stir in agave and lemon juice. Fill tall glasses with ice cubes. Pour in tea mixture to the halfway mark, then fill up the glasses with ice water. You may place lemon slices on rim of glasses to garnish.

**Safety First**

Nothing would ruin the memory of a wonderful picnic more than someone getting sick. No matter what, don't forget to take the threat of food-borne illness into account.

Make it easy on yourself. Choose your menu carefully to minimize foods that need to stay cold. Your coolers will quickly fill up with meat and other at-risk foods. Give special preference to foods which can travel outside of a cooler.

Wash fruit and produce before packing – don't count on having a sink at the picnic location.

Keep hot foods above 140 degrees and cold foods below 40 degrees. Some foods which will be served cold can be packed in a frozen state and allowed to thaw during transport, saving room in the cooler.

You always need at least two coolers – one for food, one for beverages. Coolers holding beverages get a lot of traffic. Separate coolers for food and beverages will minimize the number of times the food cooler gets opened.

Raw meats should always be tightly packaged and stored in a separate cooler.

Pack coolers with plenty of ice and leave cold foods out of the cooler no longer than necessary.

Cook meats thoroughly – to a temperature of 165 degrees for most meats.

Chafing dishes are a great way to keep hot foods hot.

Remember to periodically check that foods are maintaining safe temperatures. A good rule of thumb for food safety – and not just for picnics – is: "When in doubt, throw it out."

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# Legendary Lavender

**Laura Dean Bennett**
**Staff Writer**

Most of us know how a vase of dried lavender can cast its lovely scent throughout a house.

We've tied it to wreaths, scented our dresser drawers with lavender potpourri and decorated wedding presents with lavender sachets.

We find it in soaps, shampoos, body washes, perfumes, body lotions, room sprays and laundry detergents.

But lavender is so much more than just a wonderful fragrance.

It's also been used for medicine, religious rituals and in cooking and baking.

History tells us that humans have been using lavender for at least 2,500 years.

It originated in the Middle East, India, the Greek Islands and coastal France where it took part in all aspects of life – from household and personal use to religious rituals.

Egyptian queens bathed in lavender water.

And when the tomb of Tutankhamun was opened, traces of lavender were discovered, and its fragrance still hung in the air.

Cleopatra was said to wear the fragrance of lavender to seduce both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony.

There are many references to it in the Bible, where it was called "spikenard," which was lavender's first name around the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

The name spikenard or "nard" was taken from the city of Naarda in Assyria (now Iraq) – which was a major hub of the original lavender trade.

King David's Song of Solomon refers to the beguiling scent of lavender.

It was one of the holy herbs which were the basis of the Hebrew's "holy essence" which scented the temple in Jerusalem.

*See **LAVENDER**, page 24*

**This large and lovely lavender bush is in Alan Crist's yard in Arbovale, across from Trent's Store.**

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## LAVENDER
from pg 23

Its oil is mentioned in the gospel stories about Mary Magdalene anointing the feet of Jesus.

In ancient Greece, where it was called "nardus," lavender was widely recognized as medicine.

Roman soldiers carried dried lavender to pack wounds and Roman citizens relaxed in their famous public bath houses in water scented with it.

By 600 B.C. it was being brought to England by Arabic-speaking traders and it didn't take long to captivate European royalty.

Louis XIV was known to bathe in it.

And lavender was just as popular for washing clothes.

Soon, the plant was given the name, "lavender," which came from the Latin word, "lavare," which means "to wash."

During the Middle Ages, washerwomen in Europe were known as "lavenders," because they often dried laundry by spreading it on lavender shrubs.

Throughout Europe superstition about lavender's power against malevolent spirits proliferated.

It was strewn on church floors, tossed onto bonfires, hung above thresholds and used in bath water to ward off evil.

It was believed to predict romance during the reign of the Tudors, when English ladies drank lavender tea on St. Luke's Day to discover the name of their true love.

Scandinavian maidens often stuffed their pillows with sprigs of lavender to attract a favored suitor.

By the 19th century, lavender was widely thought to ensure good fortune.

Lavender bouquets and lavender sachets were sold on the streets of European cities as talismans of good luck.

Whether or not the scent of lavender could secure good fortune, it must have done a credible job of combatting the less than pleasant odors of city living in an era not known for public sanitation.

Centuries before science discovered the reasons for lavender's anti-inflammatory and antibacterial effects, many ancient cultures instinctively used lavender to fight disease, pack wounds and ease pain.

Lavender's medicinal properties were familiar to ancient Asian cultures.

Records indicate that Greek, Roman and Egyptian physicians prescribed lavender tea to treat headaches, anxiety and sleeplessness and digestive complaints.

Lavender poultices were used to enhance healing and arthritic complaints.

We now know that lavender is high in calcium, magnesium, zinc, vitamin C and copper.

The Greek physician, Dioscorides, used an oral solution of lavender to treat indigestion, sore throat and headache and wash wounds to prevent infection.

*See **LAVENDER,** page 25*

Photo source: MetroCreative

**Lavender is a commonly used scent in aromatherapy, lotions and perfumes. It's soothing scent is said to help you relax and have a more restful sleep.**


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***LAVENDER***
from pg 24

During the devastation of the Black Plague, an acidic concoction of crushed lavender buds and vinegar, called Four Thieves Vinegar, was widely used by grave diggers. They believed that bathing in it, and even drinking it, protected them from contracting the disease.

A 12th Century German nun, Hildegard of Bingen, also prescribed lavender water – crushed lavender buds soaked in vodka – to treat migraines.

In the 16th century, many glovemakers who used lavender to rid glove leather of bad odors reportedly did not contract cholera.

During the Renaissance, it became popular to keep lavender stems in pillowcases to ensure a good night's sleep and prevent headaches. This habit is still employed by many people even today.

It was common among royalty and the upper classes to have their bed linens rinsed in lavender water and their pillowcases stuffed with lavender.

In the 16th Century, the medicinal uses of lavender were recorded by an English herbalist, John Parkinson.

During the 1930s, French chemist Rene Maurice Gattefosse studied lavender's healing properties before it was used in France during World War II to treat battlefield wounds.

These days many people are familiar with the benefits of lavender tea, oral supplements, lotion, oil and ointment.

It's used to relieve anxiety, depression, menstrual cramps, to help with sleep and reduce many types of pain.

Lavender has long been popular for use in aromatherapy. It's great for homemade heating pads. Sprinkle the buds into a rice-filled fabric pouch and warm the pouch in a microwave.

Of course, it's always recommended to consult a doctor before ingesting any herbal medicine.

The lavender plant is in the mint family. It's a close relative of rosemary, sage and thyme.

And it can be found in many food recipes.

We don't know exactly when lavender began to find its way into old world kitchens, but by the Middle Ages, it was known as an ingredient in the cooking of many cultures.

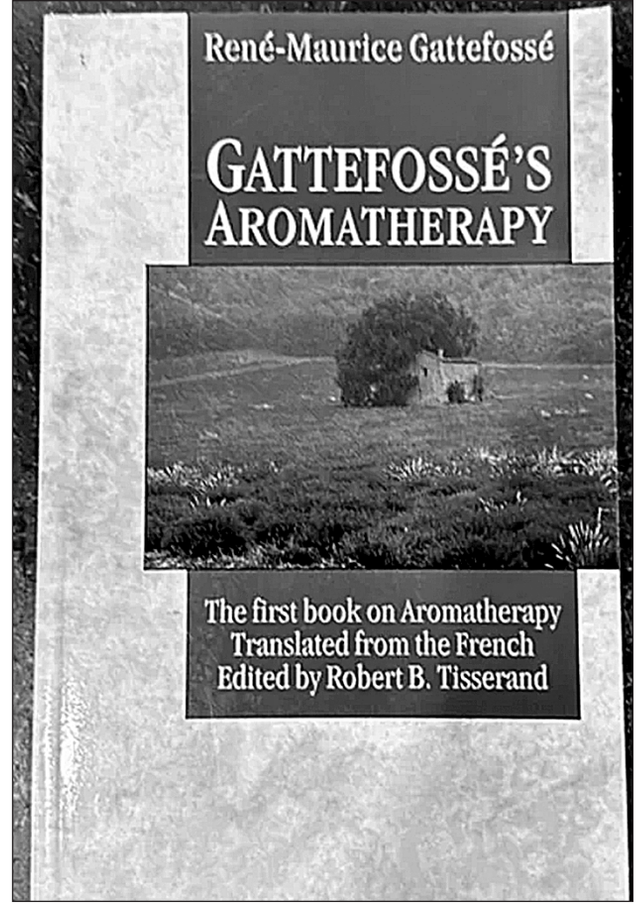
Now more than ever, because we now understand its healthful components, lavender is right at home in the modern kitchen.

It's brewed for teas and cold beverages and used in everything from baked goods to savory dishes.

The first thing to remember about cooking with lavender is to only use culinary lavender.

You don't want your recipes to taste like potpourri.

And more importantly, you must be careful to differentiate between culinary lavender – which is chemical and pesticide free – and decorative lavender.




**French chemist Rene Maurice Gattefosse, the "Father of Aromatherapy," wrote about his studies of the healing properties of lavender, as well as other natural elements used in aromatherapy.**

When buying lavender for food or medicine, be absolutely sure that it is chemical-free.

Often recipes call for using lavender buds. Rub the buds off the stalk and discard the stalks, which contain essential oils that are usually way too pungent for culinary use.

There are many varieties of lavender.

The French and Spanish varieties are ideal for personal and home fragrance, but English lavender (L. Angustifolia) is best for cooking. It's usually considered to have the sweetest fragrance of all lavenders.

*See **LAVENDER**, page 26*

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***LAVENDER***
from pg 25

And there are many varieties of English lavender. Their fragrance and flavor be can be different from the scent we usually recognize as lavender. It can be woody, minty, smoky or even fruity.

It's often used in desserts and baked goods and there are many varieties of it – some sweeter than others. Some even contain a hint of lemon.

Lavandins (L. Intermedia) is an English lavender with a very strong flavor. Some say its fragrance is reminiscent of pine. It pairs well with savory dishes.

In addition to English lavender, many cooks like to use Lavandin Provence, which has a very mild flavor.

Take care to use any culinary lavender sparingly. Especially when used dry, it can easily overpower a recipe.

And always use about a third as much of any dried lavender as compared to fresh.

It's often used in roasted meat dishes instead of rosemary and is especially good with lamb.

You may have unknowingly used lavender on roasted meat if you've ever used the savory herb blend called Herbs de Provence.

Lemon is a natural companion to lavender (think lemon lavender chicken and lavender lemonade) and so is honey (warm honey and drop in a tea ball of lavender buds).

Lavender can be distilled into a lovely vinegar or other liquid concoctions. It's great in marinades, dry rubs, salad dressings, syrups and much more.

If you've never cooked with lavender, see what you think of its flavor by sprinkling a few culinary lavender buds on salads or using them as a garnish on desserts and baked goods.

If you don't already grow lavender, now's the time to start. It will surely become an indispensable member of your herb garden.

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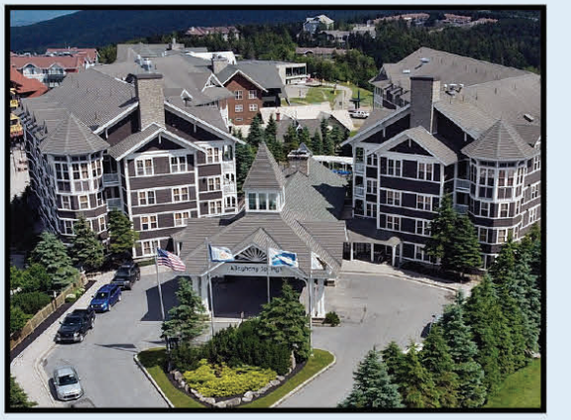

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