



Carroll County Backgrounder

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About the Area

Carroll County is a rural community in the hills of eastern Ohio. It is on the southern edge of northeast Ohio and part of Ohio's Appalachian Country also. The county seat is Carrollton with a population of 3,500 and the county population is just under 30,000. The landscape is rolling hills with great vistas interspersed with lakes and ponds. Agriculture is the largest industry with tourism being second. There are no four-lane highways in the county, which helps to keep a laid-back lifestyle in the area.

Story Ideas

Stone Gate Manor: Visit an authentic Gothic English Manor House replete with stained-glass windows, stone walls, spires and iron gates. You will think you have returned to 14th-century England as you visit this one-of-a-kind manor home in Carroll County. The manor was built over 7 ½ years by the owners from stone and timber gathered off the land. They made English-lead windows from salvaged glass and barn wood and used old barn slate for the roof. The owners are now teaching classes on stained glass making and on stone masonry.

Bluebird Farm Park: Restaurant, Gift Shop, Toy Museum, Gardens and Amphitheater: The restaurant is located in a century-old home and features home-cooked meals and desserts. The English-style gardens lead you to the gift shop and Toy Museum that are both located in pre-Civil War era barns. The Toy Museum has more than 1,000 dolls, bears and other toys that will remind you of your childhood no matter how old you are. The collection has dolls from the 1700s to present day. The amphitheater holds a summer concert and event series presented by the Carroll County Arts. The owner of Bluebird Farm passed away in 2009 and donated the entire facility to the County Park Board and it is currently in a period of transition but is working at full operation by the 2010 season.

AgriTourism: Agriculture is the largest industry in the county and we are working to merge tourism and agriculture so that people can continue to learn how important farming is to the county. Carroll County has three farms where you can interact with alpacas and purchase items made from alpaca fiber. The county also has two buffalo farms where the visitor can see a buffalo herd and learn more about this mighty animal. The weekly Farmer's Market is in its 21st season and is open every Saturday morning from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., May through

November. There are also several local farm market stands throughout the county that are operated by multiple generations of farming families. There are also dairy, beef and other traditional farming operations that arrangements can be made to visit.

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District: (MWCD) Carroll County is home to two MWCD lakes, Atwood and Leesville. While the original and main purpose of the lakes is flood control, they are also home to great recreational activities. Atwood Lake is home to Atwood Lake Resort, two marinas, Atwood Lake Park, AIBi Winery and Atwood Yacht Club. The Yacht clubs hold several sailing regattas throughout the season. Atwood Lake is known for its great sailing conditions as well as fishing. Leesville Lake is the No. 1 Musky fishing lake in Ohio. It also is home to six residential youth summer camps, two marinas and campgrounds. The lake also has a secluded feel, as it is not visible from any state highway.

Attractions

Ashton House Museum: Mid-century modern home that has been made into a museum depicting the lives of John and Evelyn Ashton during the 20th century in Carrollton. The museum also contains their multiple collections of dishes, stamps, coins and more as well as sport memorabilia from the Indians, The Ohio State University Buckeyes and the Kentucky Derby. The Ashton's started the local Ben Franklin store during the depression and continued to own and operate it until their deaths in the early 21st century. There is also retailing history at the museum.

Downtown Carrollton: The square area of Carrollton is home to three buildings that are on the National Historic Register; the County Courthouse, the VanHorne Building and the McCook House. Along with these three great examples of mid 19th-century architecture, the rest of the downtown area is home to an original Ben Franklin store, bakery, several antique and collectible shops, the Arts Center, toy store and several restaurants.

McCook House Civil War Museum: The McCook House is owned by the Ohio Historical Society and run by the Carroll County Historical Society. This historic house was the home of Major Daniel McCool, who with his nine sons and the five sons of his brother, Dr. John McCook, became known as the "Fighting McCooks" because of their participation in the armed services prior to and especially during the Civil War. The home is now a museum of both Civil War memorabilia and local history.

Manfull Orchards Farm Market: This family-run farm market, which is seeing its sixth generation helping with the chores, is in Augusta and is open June through the end of the year. It has locally grown vegetables and fruit (especially peaches and apples) during their appropriate seasons and also locally made baked goods and collectibles. Farmgirl Finds has opened in part of the market with antiques.

See story ideas for other attractions.

Annual Events

Daffodil Drive-It-Yourself Tour: Mid-April, this annual driving tour will concentrate on one corner of the county and stop at farms, historic sites and other attractions. There are plenty of notable drive-by points of interest and of course daffodils, the county flower to see.

Algonquin Mill Fall Festival: Held the second weekend of October, the festival will be celebrating its 39th year this year. The festival is centered on an 1800s flouring steam-operated grist mill that grinds three different types of flour throughout the weekend. There are plenty of

home-cooked foods, multiple demonstrations and unique vendors selling their wares. This festival is unique in that it has no carnival rides or food. It's truly about the history.

Ag & Natural Resources Expo: The second weekend of September is an educational event that teaches alternative farming and land conservancy practices.

Atwood Fall Festival: Held the first weekend of October at Atwood Lake Park, this festival brings together crafters, re-enactments and plenty of entertainment in this annual celebration of fall.

Great Trail Festival: Last weekend of August and Labor Day Weekend, this festival celebrates the Indian Great Trail. It includes a mountain man encampment, state tomahawk throwing championships and arts and crafts.

Location/Getting Here

Carroll County is located in eastern Ohio. It is 20 miles southeast of Canton, Ohio, and 25 miles west of Steubenville and the Ohio River. It is 40 miles southeast of the Akron/Canton Airport, 80 miles southeast of Cleveland Airport and 50 miles west of the Pittsburgh Airport. The two main highways that cross through the county are State Road 43 north to south and State Road 39 east to west. There is also a great county airport for small planes.

Cultural History/Diversity

Carroll County was founded in 1832 from the five surrounding counties. It was named for Charles Carroll, the last living signer of the Declaration of Independence. It is a rural community that was founded on agriculture and still depends on it today.

Climate

The climate is moderate in Carroll County, with some snow fall in the winter but not as much as the Cleveland area. Spring is lush with the countryside coming alive in its annual rebirth; the daffodil, the county flower, is front-and-center at this time of year. Summers are warm, which is perfect for spending time at the lakes. The fall is one of the most beautiful times of the year with the foliage that covers the rolling hills.

Economy

Tourism is a \$50 million industry in Carroll County which accounts for 1 in every 13 private-sector jobs. The largest employer in the county is county government with the school district the second. There is light manufacturing with most being tied to the auto industry making parts.

Lodging

Carroll County is home to Atwood Lake Resort, 104 rooms; Carrollton Days Inn, 43 rooms; and several bed and breakfasts and cabins. There are also quite a few campgrounds.