

A FREE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE FOR INDEPENDENCE COUNTY & BEYOND

SPRING 2026

monster country

in this issue

📍 POKE BAYOU

- 👤 Don & Sally Mullis
- 📅 Brewha Bushwhack
- + More

go digital





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A **FREE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE**
FOR INDEPENDENCE COUNTY & BEYOND

SPRING 2026 1.1

monstercountry.com

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editor'snote

It's spring, everyone! Spring is a time of renewal, growth, and fresh starts. Monster Country, for me, is exactly that.

You see, this isn't my first rodeo, as far as adventure magazines are concerned. Raise your hand if you remember a little magazine called The Web-Toed Mountain Goat. Unfortunately, there came a point where I had to choose between that magazine and my main job. I went with the more steady, secure option.

Since then, which was over thirteen years ago, things have gone pretty much as expected. My beautiful wife, Kayla, and I have fully embraced our graying hair. Three of our kids have left the nest, and the other two will be taking flight soon. One of our daughters just got married and another is about to be a mom. I'm going to be a grandpa! It's crazy how fast time goes by.

So, I've decided to stop letting my time just go by. I had a dream, and damn it, I'm going to see it realized. This is my fresh start. I hope you like what you find within its pages.

We've got games. I'm not talking about your grandma's word search. I'm talking about an in-magazine Monster Hunt that unlocks clues to find an actual lost medallion with a cash reward for whoever finds it. I'm also talking about a year-long scavenger hunt with cash prizes for the top three competitors. Did I mention cash?

That's just the beginning. We've also got places to go, people to know, creatures to show, and things to do.

Welcome to Monster Country, and enjoy your stay!

-Damian

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MONSTER HUNT

Welcome, one and all, to the Monster Games! This first game is fairly simple. See those little guys below? Those are our monsters, our mascots, and our namesake. If you thought this magazine was about hunting monsters, you weren't completely wrong. First and foremost, though, this magazine is about finding adventures. The monsters are just a bonus. It will all make sense, trust me.

Starting on the left, our first monster is Grotto. He comes from a highly advanced race of blue human-like beings who reside underground. The gateway to the blue people's subterranean civilization, according to legend, is a place you may know. Ever hear of Blowing Cave in Cushman, Arkansas? If not, then I guess our job is done.

Our second monster, in the middle, is Finley. You may know her grandfather, the White River Monster. He has been lurking in the cold waters of the White River since at least 1915, according to the first documented sighting. Since then, he's become a bit of an icon around these parts, inspiring Newport's Monster Series and making guest appearances at events like the White River Water Carnival and the Batesville Area Chamber Business Expo. You can learn more about Finley's gramps in our Creature Feature on page 14.

Lastly, on the right, we have everyone's favorite hairy cryptid—Bigfoot. Our Bigfoot? Well, his name is Ranger. Believe it or not, there are records of Bigfoot sightings in our area, too. If you haven't heard of Bigfoot, you must be living under a pretty big rock. One of those giant boulders below Jamestown Crag, maybe? Seems like a nice place to call home, if you ask me.

Now, let's connect some dots. Besides these legendary creatures, what else can you find in our caves, waterways, and forests? Adventures! Adventures are what we're trying to find, for you. If you happen to see a monster while on an adventure inspired by us, you're welcome. For now, though, if searching for monsters is your thing, then you can try to find the ones hiding in this very magazine.

That's right, it's time to get on with it—the Monster Hunt! As you flip through these pages, keep your eyes peeled. **Our monsters—Grotto, Finley, and Ranger—are each hiding on a different page. Find them, tell us the page where you found each one, including which issue, and you will be rewarded with a clue for our next Monster Game. Message Monster Country on Facebook or text (870) 805-8243.**





MONSTER MEDALLION

You're here! Welcome. I am glad you are here, sincerely. I assume you met my monster friends. They're pretty cool, don't you think? I certainly thought so. In fact, because of how incredibly magnificent I thought they were, I decided to have a medallion forged in their honor. That's right, I have a Monster Medallion. Well, I had a Monster Medallion. You see, I like to take it with me on my adventures and, unfortunately, I lost it. I lose it at least once a year, it seems. I know, I need help. Seriously, there are a few ways you can help me. Interested?

Find the Monster

I'll tell you what I remember from the day I lost my medallion. I didn't go more than 60 miles (by car) from Batesville, Arkansas. While exploring, which I only did on public land, I never strayed more than 500 feet from a designated trail. I obeyed the rules and took proper safety precautions at each area I visited. I didn't do any climbing, digging, or swimming. I didn't lift any rocks, logs, or anything of that sort. I didn't get dangerously close to any steep ledges. I simply set my medallion down, somewhere safe, and forgot to grab it. I captured a lot of photos, too; once you've completed the Monster Hunt, proving you have some serious finding skills, I'll send you one. **If you could find my medallion and return it to me, that would be a big help. I would be very grateful—and—I'd give you some money!**

Feed the Monster

Let me introduce you to the Monster Mutual Fund

(MMF). The MMF is not a traditional mutual fund. You won't be getting any of the money back, unless you win it back, or you're a business and your gift indirectly lands you a new customer or two, or three, or a hundred. It is an investment, though. The MMF's growth will be a clear indicator of Monster Country's growth, and the more we grow, the more we can give back to you—not just cash rewards and

prizes, I'm talking about more pages, more content, and more adventures.

That said, know that not a cent of the money given to the MMF goes into our pockets. In fact, we will be donating to it, as well—10% of each issue's ad revenue. **Of all the money donated to the MMF, 85% will be given back to the most worthy of you, including whichever one of you heroes fetches me my medallion.**

The other 15%? Well, this year we'll be giving that to the Jamestown Crag Foundation. See the full breakdown to the right. So, you see, if you donate to the MMF, the reward will get bigger, and more people will want to find my medallion. That, my friends, would be a big help.



Follow the Monster

We're on Facebook! Give us a follow. This is where we'll post MMF updates. Also, just like a donation to the MMF, a *follow* helps us grow. Growth means more donations, more advertisers, a bigger reward, and, most importantly, more people know that I lost my medallion. More people knowing that I lost my medallion means more people will be looking for it. More people looking for my medallion means—well, you get where this is going. Follow us on Facebook. Big help.

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BOUQUET OF BUGS & BIRDS

Hello! Hi, again, friend. Have you ever seen the movie *The Big Year*, with Jack Black? It's about birders. It focuses on three birders, mainly, who are all competing to see the most bird species in a single year. It's a real thing; every year birders are out there vying to see who can get the most unique bird sightings. This was the inspiration for our final game, the Bouquet of Bugs & Birds. It's a floral frenzy, a bug-off, and a Big Year, all rolled into one. That's right, we are challenging you to find as many species of flowers, bugs, and birds as you can. A cash reward awaits each of the top three finishers (see page 7).

The Flowers

Did you know Arkansas has over 600 species of native wildflowers? These are what we're asking you to find—not the petunias from your neighbor's flower garden. Do not pick any flowers; we just need a photo/video. Picking flowers may result in disqualification.

The Bugs

An estimated 35,000 to 40,000 insects call Arkansas home. We're looking for more than just insects, here; arachnids, myriapods, and woodlice are also on the table. That's a lot of bugs! We don't want any dead bugs, though. If you choose to handle any bugs, do so at your own risk, and please release them once you are finished.

The Birds

Over 400 documented species of birds can be found in The Natural State. For this competition, any wild birds will do. Well, any live wild birds, not in a nest, will do. Disturbing nesting birds will result in disqualification.

Submissions

Submit photos/videos of your finds to our Facebook group, *Monster Country's Bouquet of Bugs & Birds*. All photos/videos must be unedited originals and include your face or the official contest totem (see below). Save all of your original photos/videos, retaining their original EXIF data; they may be subjected to a screening before you can be declared a winner. No filters, AI, Photoshop, screenshots, photos/videos of photos/videos, or shared photos/videos allowed. You must submit at least one flower, one bug, and one bird to be eligible to win. Submission posts must include the correct identity of the species, along with the date and location of the sighting. The deadline for submissions is 11:59PM on November 20th, 2026.

Identification

There are many resources available to assist you with species identification. Aside from the countless books at your disposal, there are also apps, websites, and social media groups. Some of our favorite apps include Plantora, Seek, and Merlin. Some helpful websites include *iNaturalist.org*, *ArkansasHeritage.com*, and *ARBirds.org*. If you're having trouble IDing on your own, you can always ask for help in one of the many dedicated identification groups on Facebook; *Wildflowers of Arkansas*, *Arkansas Entomology*, *All Bugs go to Kevin*, *Spider Identification and Discussion*, and *Arkansas Birds* are good ones.

Be Cool

We'd like to continue doing this scavenger hunt next year and for years to come. With that in mind, please follow the rules/regulations of any search areas and respect the environments of the wildlife you are documenting. Any actions on your part that we find to go against these requests may result in disqualification.

Now that you know all the details, let the games begin. Good luck, and we hope you have a Big—no—we hope you have a Monster Year!

2026
monster
country
BOUQUET OF
BUGS & BIRDS



OFFICIAL
CONTEST
TOTEM

This is the official contest totem. It is designed to be cut out and glued to a super jumbo wooden crafting stick, but you can attach it to anything you like or keep it as is. Photos/videos that do not include your face or your totem (everything above the white line, including your name or initials in the white box) will not be accepted.





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PADDLE THE POKE

Each season, we're going to be doing a thing—highlighting one big adventure just for you. Since this issue (our debut issue) released in the spring, it seemed appropriate to feature an adventure that also begins with a spring. This is your guide to paddling the Poke Bayou.

The Poke Bayou starts at Big Spring, located on private property within the Big Spring Township, not far north of Mount Pleasant, Arkansas. Big Spring is one of countless springs that feed the Poke as it serpentine for 30 miles through a rugged section of the Ozarks until it merges with the White River in Batesville, just half a mile upstream from Kennedy Park and the Highway 67 bridge.

Beauty + History

The Poke Bayou isn't a scary stream. If you're chasing white water, this isn't the best place to do it. Most of the Poke's rapids are class I and II, with an occasional class III, depending on the section and the water levels. Paddling the bayou is more about relaxing, and taking in the beauty around you.

For many people, including myself, beauty and nature go hand-in-hand. The Poke Bayou is known for its high water quality, and high water quality means wildlife diversity. You're sure to see a variety of animals, fungi, and plants while paddling the bayou. For you fishermen, common catches include smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, Ozark bass, rock bass, and bluegill. For those of you

competing in our Bouquet of Bugs & Birds (see page 8), a paddle down the Poke might be worth your while.

The physical landscape of the Poke Bayou region is just as impressive as the wildlife. The stream has been carving its way through the Ozark Mountains for hundreds of millions of years. As a result, along some parts of the bayou's banks, you can find picturesque bluffs, up to 400 feet tall. You can see spring water bubbling up from the bayou's sandy bottoms or pouring out from beneath giant boulders that line its edge. If you know where to look, you can even see caves, fissures, and sinkholes.

There's more than just natural beauty to be seen on the bayou. Along the final stretch, almost 2.3 miles up from the the Highway 67 bridge, you'll see the Poke Bayou (Central Avenue) Bridge. Constructed in 1930, the bridge is now on the National Register of Historic Places and, if you like architecture, it's certainly aesthetic. A small watercraft launch below the Bayou Street bridge provides access to the oldest Main Street in Arkansas (downtown Batesville), for any floaters interested in seeing more historic sites.

Speaking of historic, the entire length of the Poke Bayou area is known for its rich past. Records show there has been settlement activity along the bayou since the early 1800s, ranging from trading posts, mercantiles, post offices, and Trail of Tears camps, to manganese mining, a Civil War expedition, and a Freedmen's colony. Unfortunately,

most traces of early settlement along the bayou, outside of Batesville, have been reclaimed by mother nature.

A Float for All

Think you're ready to go on a big adventure down the bayou? A good place to start your journey is at Poke Bayou Outfitters (PBO), also located in historic downtown Batesville. PBO is the only outfitter that offers kayak rentals and shuttle services for Poke Bayou trips. Their float services are water-level dependent, but generally run reliably between April and June. From PBO's back parking lot, you'll be shuttled to a private put-in that is 5.32 miles upstream from your eventual take-out, which is just across the bayou from PBO.

This float generally takes about three hours to complete, but PBO gives you plenty of time to stop and enjoy that beauty mentioned earlier. Their Thursday through Saturday shuttle departs at 8:30am and their Sunday shuttle departs at 1:30pm. Each requires you to be back by 5pm.

If you don't have your own boat and way to be dropped off and picked up, then floating with Poke Bayou Outfitters is the only way to go. This option is for anyone and everyone. It's a float for all.

The Alternatives

For those of you who do own your own kayak or canoe and do not need a shuttle, there are theoretically 15 different trips you can take on the

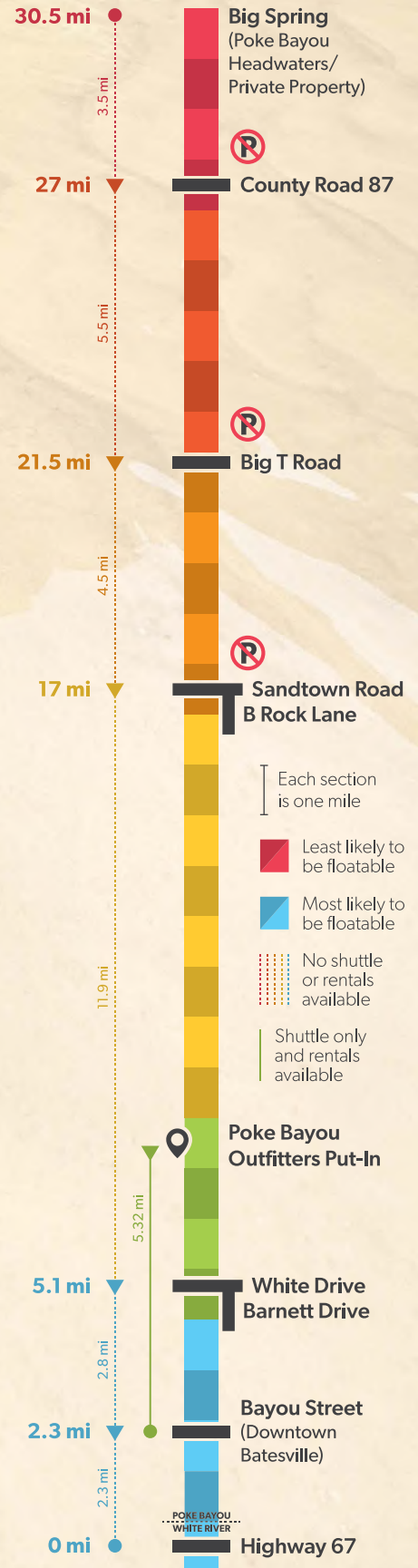


bayou without using Poke Bayou Outfitters or needing access to private land. However, which option is right for you depends on a few factors.

First of all, your options are heavily reliant on what resources you have at your disposal. Every option is on the table if you can be both dropped off and picked up. A couple options get eliminated when you add the need to leave a vehicle at a take-out. And only a couple options remain when you add the need to leave vehicles at both a put-in and a take-out. If you fall into that last category and prefer a more wild experience, you'd probably be better off just going on the PBO float.

Recent rain fall, your skill level, and unknown dangers are other factors that should be considered when choosing which trip is best for you. To put it simply, the amount of rainfall and paddling confidence needed, as well as the potential for dangerous obstructions, increases the further upstream you start. It's especially important to take these things into consideration if you are planning to begin your trip upstream from Sandtown Road.

Because most of the Poke Bayou runs through private land and there are very few developed public access points, finding information on how to go about paddling it can be difficult. Someday, I hope to be able to provide you with a detailed breakdown of every section, but today isn't that day. Until then, may this spread be your guide. Now, get out there and have an adventure—after you finish the magazine, of course.



DON & SALLY MULLIS

For Don and Sally Mullis, overlanding isn't just a hobby, it's a calling that blends adventure, history, and faith into a life lived beyond the pavement.

Overlanding, Don explains, is about self-reliant travel into the backcountry, where the journey matters far more than the destination. It blends off-road driving with off-grid camping. "It's like going back to old-school camping," he says. "You carry what you need, you depend on yourself, and you experience places most people never see."

Don's love for the outdoors began in childhood, camping with his father and learning to appreciate quiet woods and nights under open skies. As he grew older, off-road ATVs and hunting trips expanded that passion, eventually leading to backcountry deer camps that combined adventure with solitude.

After more than two decades in the custom firearms industry, Don and his wife of 30 years, Sally, devote their time to travel, faith, and family.

"Sally had never been camping before we married," said Don. "When I took her on her first camping trip, she loved it. She's loved it ever since."

Overlanding entered Don's life about 13 years ago after he watched a TV show highlighting expedition-style travel in Australia and South Africa. At the time, he and Sally owned a traditional fifth-wheel camper, but something about the freedom of remote travel struck a chord.

"We sold the fifth wheel and built our first camper with a rooftop tent," Mullis says. "Five years later, we upgraded

to the camper we use now." Their highly modified 2019 Runaway RangeRunner camper functions as a compact mobile basecamp. Solar panels power both 12-volt and standard AC systems, supporting essentials like refrigeration, cooking equipment, and climate control. A wraparound awning and well-thought-out storage solutions maximize the trailer's footprint.

Their travel companions include Lily, a rescued rat terrier who is deaf and has ongoing health challenges but thrives on the road. She follows in the pawprints of Sadie, their beloved previous dog who accompanied them on adventures for 11 years.

Much of the Mullis' travels focuses on sections of the Trans-America Trail, a mostly off-pavement route stretching east to west across the United States. Portions of this legendary trail run through Arkansas, making it a prime playground for Natural State adventurers.

For Don and Sally, these routes offer something rare: a glimpse into forgotten America. "You see things many people don't see - old homesteads from the 1800s, abandoned townships, structures standing in the middle of nowhere," he says. "It's remarkable what all you see. I try to picture things as they were back then."

The landscapes themselves leave an equally powerful impression: emerald water so vivid it seems unreal, hidden waterfalls spilling over bluffs, and deep forests and vast valleys without a sign of modern life.

Don describes these moments as both humbling and restorative. "There's connection out there with places so





beautiful you could stare for hours. You definitely feel a spiritual connection, too," he adds.

Overlanding demands preparation, and they approach each trip with careful research. Their adventures range from quick 24-hour escapes to multi-day expeditions spanning hundreds of miles.

One recent journey involved mapping a 232-mile off-road route that paralleled the Ouachita National Recreation Trail. Because the trail itself is restricted to hiking and biking, the Mullis' plotted a vehicle-friendly course using GPS tools and traditional forestry maps. The route eventually carried the couple all the way into Oklahoma.

This spring, the Mullis' will be overlanding through a portion of the Midwest Discovery Route. This scenic backroad journey, designed for overlanders and outdoor adventurers, offers approximately 300 miles of exploration and discovery in each of its four sections. The route is filled with breathtaking views, historic landmarks, and creek crossings. Don and Sally will be running the Arkansas section of the Midwest Discover Route, which includes a ferry boat crossing at Bull Shoals Lake in Northwest Arkansas. They will cross over to Missouri to continue on the route, and eventually end in Springfield, Missouri.

Don studies published maps created by other overlanders, combining them with digital navigation apps such as Gaia GPS and onX Offroad, and cross-references everything with paper resources, but he emphasizes that mapping is only part of the equation. It's also important to know

dispersed camping rules, private land laws, and terrain ratings. But most of all, just enjoy it, cautiously.

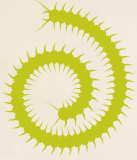
"Overlanding is unique," Don says. "You don't need a \$30,000 or \$100,000 vehicle build. You make it work for you. If difficulty is rated one to five, we stay around a three because that's what works for us. Know your limits and your vehicle's limits."

Adventure is only part of the Mullis' story. Faith shapes their travels just as much as maps and machinery. Together, they recently launched a YouTube channel, Maranatha Adventures, where they document trips, review gear, and offer practical advice for aspiring overlanders. "At the end of every video, I share a short devotion," Don says. "The Lord has led me to where I am, so I want to share as much about my faith with others as I can."

Of the places they have traveled, their favorites include the rugged beauty of the Ozarks and Ouachitas, where different forest ecosystems offer waterfalls, creekside camps, and open clearings perfect for stargazing. Don also praises Missouri's Mark Twain National Forest, especially the sweeping views along the Glade Top Scenic Byway.

"Sometimes home isn't enough," Don says. "You need to be somewhere different to find reprieve." Out on a quiet forest road, with tires crunching gravel and miles of unknown country ahead, Don and Sally Mullis have found exactly that.





WHITE RIVER MONSTER

The legend of Whitey, the White River Monster, is one of Arkansas's deeply rooted mysteries. Centered around Newport and Jacksonport along the White River, the story of this creature (or creatures as some believed) stretches back centuries, long before the first recorded newspaper accounts.

According to regional history, White River monsters were known to Native American tribes who lived along the river. The Cherokee referred to similar beings as Uktena, the Choctaw called them Sint-Holo, the Chickasaw knew them as Dakwa, and other tribes used the name Miku. These creatures were treated with reverence and respect. Tribal tradition held that the monsters were especially sensitive to human conflict. As a result, Native nations avoided using certain sections of the White River during disputes.

Stories of the monsters resurfaced (pun intended) during the American Civil War, when increased military traffic filled the White and Black Rivers. Soldiers from both Union and Confederate forces reported that ships were forced ashore or struggled in the current after being struck by something large beneath the water. While only a few of the ships were reportedly capsized, the incidents strengthened the belief that more than one White River monster inhabited the river, and that they did not tolerate violence in their waters.

The first documented modern sighting occurred in 1915, followed by another in 1924. However, the legend gained national attention in 1937 when farmer Bramblett Bateman reported seeing a massive, gray, serpent-like creature in the river near his home by the river in Newport. He described it as enormous, as wide as a car and three cars long. Three other residents signed affidavits claiming they had also seen the beast. Reporters, newsreel cameramen, and curiosity seekers

flocked to Newport, hoping to capture an image of what the press began calling Whitey, due to its sighting at the White River. Nets were strung across parts of the river, and even a diver armed with a harpoon searched the murky depths. No physical evidence was found, though the diver admitted visibility underwater was nearly nonexistent.

The creatures reportedly became more reclusive after periods of intense human activity. Accounts suggest that during the early twentieth century, hunting attempts reduced their numbers, contributing to fewer sightings for decades. By the early 1970s, however, reports surged once again. Between Newport and Jacksonport, witnesses described a gray creature as big as a boxcar and 30 feet long, with fins. At least seven sightings were recorded in 1972, and one individual even produced a blurred Polaroid photograph.

Physical traces were also reported, including broken vegetation, bent saplings, and large three-toed tracks along the shoreline. Notably, one sighting described two monsters together, reinforcing earlier traditions that more than one creature lived in the river.

The excitement of the 1970s brought national media coverage, a Japanese filmmaker, and community-wide celebrations. Local businesses hosted Monster Sidewalk Sales, restaurants served Monsterburgers, and folksinger Jimmy Driftwood debuted a song about the White River serpent. Amid the publicity, State Senator Robert Harvey expressed concern for the creature's safety. In 1973, the Arkansas Legislature passed a resolution declaring a stretch of the White River a protected White River Monster Sanctuary and Refuge, making it illegal to molest, kill, trample, or harm the creature within its designated habitat.

Whitey back
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4/4/74
brings friend?

...a disaster area. ...
50 per cent of Xenia is gone.
Police Chief Ray Jordan said
There were 24 reported deaths
and at least 1,000 were reported
homeless.
South lives monster country
were five deaths. Emergency
hospitals were set up both there

around town...
"WHAT THEY should do," the customer said, "instead of making this a refuge for him is to get ahead and get him out of the state..."

Japanese to Film
Show on Monster

From Gazette Press Services
NEWPORT — Representatives of Nippo Television will...



Whitey surfaces again in phone co. book

Scientists have offered possible explanations. Chicago biologist Dr. Roy Mackal theorized that Whitey might have been a northern elephant seal that strayed inland through the Mississippi River system. Others suggest oversized aquatic wildlife or misidentification. Yet some local observers point to unusual river conditions near Newport, including mysterious sinkholes, persistent eddies, and a surprising lack of Asian carp in certain stretches, as circumstantial evidence that a large aquatic predator may still roam the deeper channels.

Today, the legend only lives on as Arkansas folklore. The Newport Area Chamber of Commerce continues to invite residents to share stories and experiences, encouraging a spirit of coexistence rather than fear. Rather than hunting the creature, the community now embraces its role as guardian of a unique and mystical tradition. This year, the best way to view Whitey is by visiting the town of Newport during the Monster Nights Downtown Entertainment series, a collection of events throughout the year such as concerts, art festivals, kid's events, and more. These events are located in Downtown Newport, near a wall mural featuring a friendly, fun version of the White River Monster. He can also be spotted at Christmastime, floating on Newport Lake as part of the town's Christmas décor.

Whether Whitey represents misunderstood wildlife, multiple creatures, or a powerful cultural symbol shaped by generations of storytelling, the White River Monster remains woven into the identity of Jackson County. From Native American reverence to Civil War lore, from 1937 headlines to 1970s festival celebrations, to current day celebrations, Whitey continues to swim through Arkansas history, a solid reminder that some mysteries thrive not because they are solved, but because they are shared.

...though the White River Monster has not made an appearance in the last few days, it has not been forgotten. He was recently featured in Newport Talk, a public affairs publication of Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. A pamphlet states that the monster first appeared in 1937. His appearance resulted in a rush to the scene. Commercial interests were aroused and soft drink stands were brought in. Banjo and fiddle players strummed up entertainment for the masses. Apparently not everyone was happy about Whitey's appearance. Armed men guarded the river banks at night and the Chamber of Commerce hired divers to harpoon the monster. With such a welcome, it's not surprising that it took Whitey over 40 years to return.

NEWPORT INDEPENDENT
THURS AUG 1-19

(The only known photograph) of the White River monster. The first recorded sighting forty years later in 1890 the monster

was seen f...
again in 19...
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notorious r...

White River Monster 1971 near Jacksonville

...erately wide. "We don't know if it's a... father said that they might be able to...
"that it is," he said, "the closest I can get is to wait about running...
...to it is about 100 yards... story until they had a chance...
...is retired and does a lot of work... Today, A...
...the river during the... which is better...
...of the monster..."

Photos courtesy of Jacksonport State Park



Welcome to our event listings! On this page you'll find our feature event, and among the remaining pages you'll find more events we think you may enjoy. All information regarding these events comes from their organizers, and is subject to change—check before you go! Do you have a happening for July, August, or September that you would like to promote? Email damian@monstercountry.com.

Gather your crew and come bear witness to one of the most unique and robust outdoor adventure events Arkansas has to offer. While most listings in this section will be more local to our readers, Pack Rat Outdoor Center's Brewha Bushwhack at Byrd's Adventure Center is just too good to not include it.

Byrd's Adventure Center is tucked away in the Ozark National Forest, about half an hour from Ozark, Arkansas. This "destination for all outdoor sports and events" sits on the banks of the Mulberry River and is the perfect location for a one-of-a-kind outdoor adventure festival and competition.

The festival part of the Brewha Bushwhack is an all-day gathering full of clinics, gear demos, survival, bushcraft, archery, and more!

An eclectic mix of local businesses, outdoor brands, food & drink vendors, and primitive skills experts will be hosting a variety of clinics and events throughout the day. There will be plenty of fun activities for kids to enjoy!

Coinciding with the festival is the Brewha Bushwhack, itself. During this competition, teams will navigate to hidden checkpoints along the Mulberry River valley, completing a variety of outdoor challenges.

They will be tested in archery, fire-building, paddling, knot tying, climbing, rappelling, and animal track and plant identification. A team with varied skillsets is a must.

This bushwhack is not a race in the traditional sense—it's a test of skill, strategy, and teamwork. Teams must navigate rugged terrain, tackle the outdoor skills challenges, and earn points instead of racing a clock.

While the physical challenges will test each team's endurance, it is a team's diversity of skills and ability to work together that will make the difference.

Gear requirements for this competition are minimal. Primitive skills and woodlore, as well as a knife and cordage, are all competitors will need for most challenges. A sharp mind with a great team can go a long way.

At the end of it all, local breweries will be serving up beverages and an awards ceremony will be held. Stories will be swapped and scars will be compared, and you can be right there to take it all in.

Although it's too late to enter this year's competition, it's not too late to start assembling a team of your own. Maybe next year you'll be the ones swapping stories and comparing scars.

7037 Cass Oark Rd, **Ozark**, AR 72949
brewhabushwhack.com



DISC GOLF BATESVILLE EVERY SUNDAY

Come out and play with us every Sunday. It's free to play, unless you'd like to become a club member and be eligible for prizes. Join our group for more information.

Various Locations, **Batesville**, AR 72501

[Join Disc Golf Batesville on Facebook](#)

MUSIC BINGO NIGHT EVERY WEDNESDAY

Grab your crew and come out for a night of music, drinks, and bingo fun. Join us from 6–8PM for some great music, great energy, and chances to win every round!

Fathead Pizza | 1325 East Main Street, **Batesville**, AR 72501

[Follow Fathead Pizza Batesville on Facebook](#)

FARMERS MARKET EVERY SATURDAY

Come check out Cave City's farmers market, featuring local vendors and fresh produce from across the region. The market is open every Saturday from 9AM to 6PM.

Leona's Garden | 7765 N St. Louis, **Cave City**, AR 72521

[Follow Leona's Garden on Facebook](#)

LIBRARY ADVENTURES DAYS VARY

The Independence County Library hosts a variety of FREE recurring events! Join us for adult coloring, crafting, puzzle club, table-top games, tween robotics, yoga, and more.

267 East Main Street, **Batesville**, AR 72501

[indcolib.com](#)

CAVE CITY EASTER RUN 4/4

Join us for a 1/2 Marathon, 10k, 5k, or Virtual! All races begin at 9AM and start and finish at Cave City Park. Packet pickup and day-of-registration will be 7–8:45AM.

Cave City Park | W South Street, **Cave City**, AR 72521

runsignup.com/Race/AR/CaveCity/CaveCityEasterFunRun

LEONA'S GARDEN GRAND OPENING 4/4

Join us as we celebrate the relocation of our greenhouse and nursery business and the opening of the brand new farmers market. Ribbon cutting is at 10AM.

Leona's Garden | 7765 N St. Louis, **Cave City**, AR 72521

[Follow Leona's Garden on Facebook](#)

SCORCHED MOUNTAIN MUSIC & FLOW FESTIVAL 4/9-11

Join us for a family-friendly festival with live music, vendors, fire performers, swimming, food, camping, and more!

Dead End Ranch | 2381 Antioch Road, **Sidney**, AR 72577

deadendranchevents.com



FOUNDER'S DAY 4/11

Join us for a free community gathering that's all about celebrating the spirit of Cave City the old-fashioned way: good food, music, lawn games, and time spent together.

206 N Main Street (back lawn area), **Cave City**, AR 72521

Follow The Heart of Cave City on Facebook

MUD STOCK 4/16-19

Get muddy and enjoy some karaoke, mud races, trail rides, live music, mechanical bull rides, and more. Weekend passes are \$60 in advance or \$70 at the gate.

300 Meade Road, **Batesville**, AR 72501

greasybendoffroad.com

ARKANSAS FOLK FESTIVAL 4/17-18

Immerse yourself in the rich traditions of the Ozarks at the 64th Annual Arkansas Folk Festival! Celebrate the region's deep connection to folk music and cultural heritage.

109 N Peabody Avenue, **Mountain View**, AR 72560

mountainviewarkansas.com/arkansasfolkfest

JONESBORO OPEN 4/17-19

Come watch the top disc golfers in the world compete at the Disc Golf Pro Tour's 2026 Play it Again Sports Jonesboro Open presented by Westside Discs at Disc Side of Heaven!

4500 Strawfloor Drive, **Jonesboro**, AR 72404

dgpt.com/event/2026-jonesboro-open

OUTLAW OFF ROAD HILL CLIMB 4/23-26

Outlaw Off Road Racing LLC is returning to Greasy Bend Off-Road Park the for their 2026 Hill Climb Race Season. Weekend passes are \$60 and Saturday passes are \$30.

300 Meade Road, **Batesville**, AR 72501

greasybendoffroad.com

ARKANSAS PIE FESTIVAL 4/25

Come out and enjoy some pie tasting, a Pie Day 5k, live music, food trucks, pie eating and throwing contests, shopping at the Arkansas Pie Pop-up Shop, and more!

Multiple Locations, **Cherokee Village**, AR 72529

arkansaspiefestival.com

MAIN STREET RENAISSANCE FAIRE 4/25

Don't miss this fun day on Main Street! There will be a costume contest, music, a petting zoo, a caricature artist, arts and crafts vendors, food, and more.

Main Street (downtown), **Batesville**, AR 72501

Follow Batesville Main Street Renaissance Faire on Facebook

MOUNTAIN VIEW IRIS FESTIVAL 5/1-2

Get ready for iris blooms, carousel organs, painting, a kids' zone, Corvettes and hot rods, music and street dancing, a photo contest, a woodworking show, and more!

107 Main Street, **Mountain View**, AR 72560

mountainviewirisfest.com

SNOWBALL ADVENTURE RACE 5/9

This race combines a 6 mile run, an 8.5 mile float down the beautiful Buffalo River, and an 11.5 mile gravel bicycle ride. Compete individually or as a team. There's a kids race, too!

128 River Rd, **Snowball**, AR 72650

trireg.com/snowballadventurerace26

WHITE RIVER BASH DUCK BOAT RACE 5/9

Whether you're a seasoned racer or new to the sport, this is your chance to showcase your skills and win some cash! Follow us on Facebook for more information.

300 Meade Road, **Batesville**, AR 72501

greasybendoffroad.com

MEMORIAL WEEKEND BASH 5/22-25

Spend your Memorial Day Weekend with us! Enjoy trail rides, karaoke, live music, and more. Cost for entry is \$20 per day or \$50 for the weekend.

300 Meade Road, **Batesville**, AR 72501

greasybendoffroad.com

FISHING TOURNAMENT 5/23

With access to the White River, two cutoffs, and two ponds, Greasy Bend isn't just a place to get muddy. Tournament entry fee is \$10/person (in addition to park entry).

300 Meade Road, **Batesville**, AR 72501

greasybendoffroad.com

DELTA ARTS FESTIVAL 6/5-6

This two day event celebrates all of the creativity found in visual arts, music, literature, and film, with a multitude of visual artists, musical performances, and authors.

Downtown, **Newport**, AR 72112

deltaartsfestival.com

JEFF OWENS MEMORIAL RIDE 6/6

Join us for a cycling ride to honor Jeff Owens. Jeff was a beloved member of our community, known for his passion for cycling, and dedication to fitness and service.

325 E Main Street, **Batesville**, AR 72501

Follow The Jeff Owens Project on Facebook

DO YOU HAVE A SUMMER EVENT YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROMOTE?

Ad space is limited. Contact us today to reserve your spot. Text or call Gavin at **(870) 559-1011**, or email him at gavin@monstercountry.com.



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BATESVILLE 1325 Harrison St. • 3 Eagle Mountain Blvd. • 301 E. Main St. **SOUTHSIDE** 1 Allen Chapel Rd.
CAVE CITY 102 S. Main St. **NEWPORT** 2525 Malcolm Ave. **CHEROKEE VILLAGE/HIGHLAND** 1 Iroquois Dr.