



TROJANS AIM FOR REPEAT OF UPSET

PREP FOOTBALL
B1/B3

WEEKEND

COLORFUL COUNTRY
The charms of Brown County. C1



NEW SEASON, NEW STADIUM FOR COLTS

NFL
B1

DAILY JOURNAL

dailyjournal.net

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2008

Johnson County, Indiana

\$1.25

Colorful leaves, eclectic trappings bring visitors to Brown County

Autumn outing

BY RYAN TRARES

The change has started in central Indiana.

So far, it's been subtle. Warm temperatures are still common, and only a glance at the calendar betrays that summer is almost over. But soon, a chill will enter the air and green leaves will give way to brilliant red, yellow and orange hues.

And in Brown County, that means the busiest time of the year.

(SEE OUTING, PAGE C3)

WEB EXTRA: See more photos by clicking on "Photo gallery" under "Subscribers" at dailyjournal.net.

MARK THE CALENDAR

Several events are planned for fall in Brown County.

Today: Bean Blossom Blues, Brews and BBQ, Bill Monroe Memorial Music Park, Bean Blossom, \$27.50, beanblossomblues.com

Today and Sunday: 36th annual Cider Run Custom Car Show, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Brown County fairgrounds; admission free; car entry \$20, indianasra.com

Sept. 12-13: Abe Martin's

County Picnic and NASHCAR Outhouse Race, Main and Jefferson streets, downtown Nashville, free, wecaregang.org/events.htm

Sept. 13: Great Outdoor Art Contest, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., T.C. Steele Historic Site, free

Sept. 24-27: Bill Monroe Bluegrass Hall of Fame and Uncle Pen Days Festival, Bean Blossom, \$20 Sept. 24, \$25 Sept. 25, and \$30 Sept. 26 and 27, beanblossom.com

• Art

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

Indianapolis, Chicago and Cincinnati made it popular with American impressionists, she said.

Though contending with peaks and lulls in the past 80 years, the county is again home to a thriving scene.

Now known as the Art Colony of the Midwest, Brown County still fosters a sense of community and support among creative types.

"The great history that goes back to the early artists provides a built-in framework and tradition that newer artists are prone to wanting to keep alive," said Hess, a local watercolorist who lived in Nashville for 10 years and remains active in the community.

About 250 active artists live in the county, Dunbar said.

"They're drawn by the countryside, the scenery. They can go out to the country and hide away to spend time working on their crafts," she said.

Steele's style lives on in the sweeping landscapes and quaint country scenes artists create.

"You're not going to find too many abstracts in Brown County," Letsinger-Miller said.

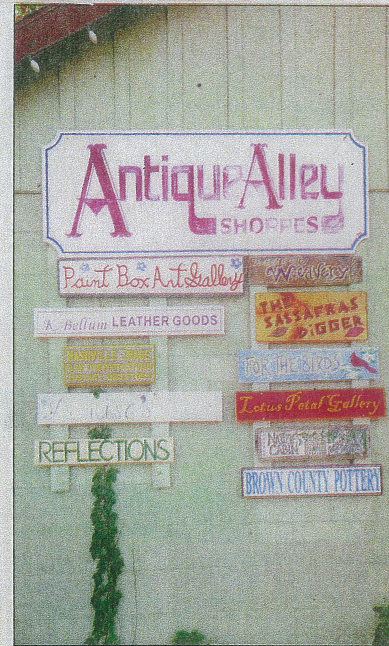
It seems like every other shop in downtown Nashville is a gallery.

But away from the main-drag bustle and up a hill on Main Street, the Historic Brown County Art Gallery unites the common heritage of the early artists with those currently working in the area.

Oil paintings and pastels from Steele and other Hoosier masters such as Glen Cooper Henshaw and Adolph Shulz hang a few rooms over from watercolors by current artists Sandee Hazelbaker and Hess.

Hess moved to Nashville in 1995 after retirement, improving his painting skills through workshops and local arts groups.

On Sept. 13, about 100 people will gather at



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/roberson@dailyjournal.net

Antique shops abound in downtown Nashville. A unique shopping experience is one of the many attractions for tourists in Brown County.

Steele's home, now a state historic site, to celebrate the artist's birthday.

The Great Outdoor Art Contest will bring painters together in the same place that inspired Brown County's most famous creative contributor.

"All the creative art came out of here, and that wouldn't have happened if it would have been a restrictive society," Letsinger-Miller said.

• Outing

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

Tourism generates \$111 million each year for the county, much of it from leaf-peepers looking to enjoy central Indiana's warm autumn days among some of the most unique landscape in the state.

"It's not your typical Indiana flatlands," said Rich Scheve, owner of Twisted Wick Candle Co. in Nashville. "Once you hit Brown County, it almost changes. This little center of Indiana that makes you seem further away than you really are."

Debbie Dunbar is getting ready.

As director of marketing and communications for the county's visitors bureau, she said the stores and shops already are hiring extra staff and preparing for more traffic.

"We just hope we have the weather to go along with the changing of the leaves," she said.

Though people flood Nashville and the surrounding roads to take in the scenery, Brown County has much more to offer than just trees.

World-class art, a strong historic identity and folksy, down-home shopping await those willing to explore and find it.

"There is a unique feeling of community among the artists and an atmosphere that is always present and can be sensed," said Richard Hess, a local artist. "I believe that Brown County is somehow more a state of mind than a place."

• Shopping

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1)

It's been way beyond anything we've ever done," she said.

Throughout the village, business owners are preparing for an onslaught of visitors to wander through shops.

True to the old-time flavor, many shops specialize in folk art and crafty items.

A knickknack store selling T-shirts and other souvenirs borders a leather craftsman, right next to an art gallery.

The unique aspect of the shopping experience is what attracts the crowds, local businessman Rich Scheve said.

"People enjoy walking around in a slightly different setting than a regular mall," he said.

Scheve, a Greenwood resident, owns Twisted Wick Candle Co. with his wife, Jodi.

Their shop on Van Buren Street offers soy candles and spa products in a variety of styles and scents.

Preparing for the fall season, the two have been making sure

inventory is stocked and ready for business.

They also have been cleaning, ensuring that potential customers become repeat buyers down the line.

"We want to make sure the shop looks good because this is most people's first exposure to us," he said. "So many people come to Brown County for the fall season."



Wind chimes and other knickknacks are for sale in abundance in Brown County.

Shopping

On a warm Indian summer afternoon, walking the streets of Nashville can be tiring.

But since 1977, Miller's Ice Cream House has been mixing up cool ways to beat the heat.

Handmade concoctions are mixed on site, as they have been for the past 31 years.

Jennie Sue Whetstone has been with the store nearly as long. She started working there part time in 1980, answering an ad asking for a "mom to work weekdays."

"I said, 'I'm qualified. I'm a mom,'" the former Franklin resident said.

Whetstone manages the store. She said Miller's has had a busy summer that probably won't taper off for another couple of months.

"We had a record July and a record August.

(SEE SHOPPING, PAGE C3)

Art

Any mention of art in Brown County usually starts with T.C. Steele.

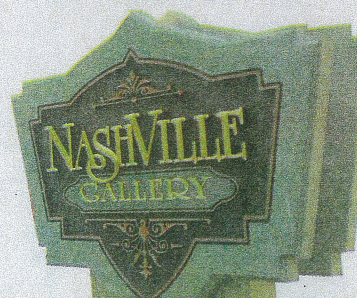
The late 19th- to early-20th century impressionist painter spent the final 19 years of his life on a partly wooded, abandoned farm in the southwest part of the county. The landscape served as his inspiration and drew other talented artists to the area.

Lyn Letsinger-Miller is president of the Historic Brown County Art Gallery board and wrote a book outlining the area's contribution to the arts.

The county's rustic feel yet relative proximity to art centers such as

(SEE ART, PAGE C3)

Nashville Gallery features paintings, pottery and photography by local and regional artists.



The Ferguson House in Nashville, built in 1873, has been a private residence and a boarding house. Now it's an antique shop catering to tourists.

History

Visitors driving on State Road 135 just south of the small crossroads town of Bean Blossom might miss the brown sign marking Covered Bridge Road.

But those who veer right onto the narrow lane will find a Brown County landmark: Bean Blossom Covered Bridge.

The red timber structure, built in 1880 and one of only two covered bridges still standing in the county, is one of the area's many historic features.

History is everywhere in Brown County, from the Ferguson House antique shop, built in 1873, to the courthouse in the center of

(SEE HISTORY, PAGE C3)