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Keokuk IOWA

Keokuk welcomes visitors with a wide array of attractions.

The community is rich with history and maintains an eye to the future.

Keokuk's history extends back to the days of trappers and Native American Sac and Fox tribes. The city is named after Chief Keokuk, a Sac Indian. A statue of the chief is located in the city's Rand Park and overlooks the Mississippi River.

Rand Park also features shelterhouses, extensive flower gardens, a pond, play and picnic areas and a challenging disc golf course. In 2009, the Rand Park Pavilion was completed and now plays host to a number of concerts and special events.

Keokuk has many parks dotting the city with green space and places to play or relax with a state-of-the-art aquatic center that opened in 2009 in Tolmie Park. The park also is adding handicap accessible playground equipment and features tennis courts, a nine-hole disc golf course, skate park and a shelterhouse area for family get-togethers and picnics. Kilbourne Park includes a rocket slide constructed in 2009 that is popular with youngsters.



Gateway Park welcomes visitors entering the city from Illinois. A walkway leads to the former Keokuk-Hamilton Bridge, featuring an observation deck on the Iowa side of the river and great view of Lock 19, the dam and hydroelectric plant and other riverfront attractions. The lock and dam celebrated their 100th anniversary in June, 2013. The lock, dam and powerhouse at Keokuk were designed and engineered by famed architect Hugh Cooper and finished in 1913.

Visitors are encouraged to take a drive along the riverfront and enjoy the many attractions, including the George M. Verity located in Victory Park. The retired S.S. Thorpe is

a well-preserved vessel that was used to move barges from St. Louis to St. Paul in the 1920s. The riverboat museum is located below the Keokuk-Hamilton Bridge.

Municipal boat ramps are located downriver below Hubinger Landing. The Southside Boat Club has a clubhouse at Hubinger Landing. Camper hookups also are located along the riverfront south of the boat club.

Not forgetting its rich history, the city acquired the former Keokuk Union Depot on the riverfront in 2011. Work is under way to restore the structure. Through the efforts of the city-appointed Keokuk Union Depot Commission and Keokuk Union Depot Foundation, many volunteers have obtained grants to begin the work of bringing the depot back to life. The building is available for events.

One-of-a-kind pictures of the structures' construction are on display at the Miller House Museum, 318 N. Fifth St., Keokuk, along with a display of historical Keokuk and area memorabilia. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln appointed Samuel Miller of Keokuk to the U.S. Supreme Court. Miller served until his death in 1890. The museum is Miller's former home. Today, it is maintained by the Lee County Historical Society.



Keokuk was home to several military hospitals during the Civil War. Wounded Union and Confederate soldiers were brought up the Mississippi River by riverboat for care in Keokuk's military hospitals. The largest was the Estes House at Fifth and Main streets, now the site of Estes Park.

A large mural depicting elements of Keokuk's history is displayed on the side of the Heritage Center bordering the downtown park. The mural was created for the city's sesquicentennial celebration in 1997.

Civil War soldiers who died here due to their wounds are buried in Keokuk National Cemetery, one of the first national cemeteries to be established west of the Mississippi River. The features the cornerstone of the Estes House.

The Keokuk Veterans Memorial stands near the entrance to the historic portion of the national cemetery and at the entrance to Oakland Cemetery, the community's city cemetery, recognizing area men and women who have served in the military.

Keokuk has numerous special events throughout the year. People from far and wide are attracted to Bald Eagle Appreciation Days in January. Eagles flock to the open waters below the dam and hydroelectric plant each winter for easy fishing. Observation sites with viewing

telescopes are set up for a closer look at the national bird, and the local mall is filled with eagle-related activities and information.

HOUSING

Keokuk and the surrounding area have a diverse selection of housing available ranging from new construction to historic mansions.

Nursing homes, independent living and assisted living facilities as well as senior apartment complexes allow extended families to live safely and comfortably in close proximity to one another.



RECREATION

Keokuk's annual Civil War Re-enactment held its last event in April 2015 in Rand Park, paying tribute to key battles during the conflict. Other highlights included a military ball, tours of the encampments, a ladies style show and tea, and a worship/memorial service at Keokuk National Cemetery.

The Keokuk Municipal Airport-Lindner Field plays host each year for the L-Bird Convention and Fly-In, bringing World War II reconnaissance airplanes and pilots to the skies, ready to swap stories.

August is the month of the Rollin' On The River Blues Festival in Victory Park. The musical event is the town's longest running festival.

Each December, Rand Park is transformed into a winter wonderland with City of Christmas. Thousands of lights and many special holiday displays fill the park. The number of lights and displays expands each year. In 2014, the City of Christmas was highlighted in a national magazine as one of the top 30 places to experience.

The Grand Theatre was built in 1924 and has been restored to its original glory. Today, the theater houses a wide variety of amateur and professional shows and productions. The city has an active and talented group of actors associated with the Great River Players, a local theater troupe.

The Keokuk Concert Association brings cultural experiences to the area in the form of orchestral music, dance troupes, opera and more. In addition to underwriting the arts in Keokuk, the Keokuk Fine Arts Council sponsors various presentations, such as Opera Iowa.



EDUCATION

A variety of educational choices are available in the Keokuk community, ranging from private to public. Keokuk also is home to Southeastern Community College's south campus located on Messenger Road. The main campus is located in West Burlington.

The Keokuk School District recently completed a \$15 million, taxpayer-funded renovation project at the high school and elementary schools. The district also features a middle school that was built in 2002. Keokuk Catholic Schools and Keokuk Christian Academy also provide students with an array of educational opportunities. Midwest Academy is a private boarding school located in rural Keokuk.

BUSINESS

Keokuk's business district runs along Main Street and also includes the two blocks on either side. It is pedestrian friendly with convenient parking, period lighting and inviting shop windows. The district is anchored by a shopping mall at the southeast end of town and extends to a mega store on the northwest corner with numerous small businesses located throughout the community, many of which are service-oriented.

GOVERNMENT

Keokuk's city government is led by Keokuk's mayor and city council, a system that engages office holders in city leadership as well as community and economic development.

County offices are located in the historic South Lee County Courthouse at Seventh and Blondeau streets. The federal building, completed in 1910, is on the National Register of Historic Places and is used daily for district court and county services.

INDUSTRY

Industries range from agricultural to rubber. Keokuk's industries provide employment opportunities for residents of Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. Hennings Automotive, the community's largest industrial employer, is producer of vehicle window molding and other products.

Other Keokuk factories, such as Roquette America Inc., a French-owned, corn-based industry located on the Mississippi riverfront, and AMSTED Rail, a globally known manufacturer of cast iron locomotive wheels, are known for excellence throughout the world and show the

diversity of industry already in the area.

Keokuk's Kindustry Park is zoned for major industry and provides instant access to the U.S. Highway 61 bypass and the many other forms of transportation available in Southeast Iowa.

GEOGRAPHY

Located near the heart of the nation at the confluence of the Mississippi and Des Moines rivers, Keokuk borders Illinois and Missouri, forming the Tri-State Area region. Barges regularly transport products from grain to coal through Lock 19 at Keokuk, making the trip from the head of the Mississippi River in Minnesota to the Gulf Coast. The completion of the Avenue of the Saints from St. Paul, Minn., to St. Louis, Mo., adds to the existing highway network formed by U.S. Highways 61, 136, 336 and 34 in the region. The Highway 61 bypass on the outskirts of Fort Madison opened in 2011, providing more convenient access to the Burlington area.

Amtrak provides passenger train service in Fort Madison and Macomb, Ill. Keokuk Municipal Airport-Lindner Field is four miles northwest of Keokuk. The airport is open to public use and offers, fuel, air frame service and parking.

HEALTHCARE

Keokuk and its surrounding communities offer a full range of high quality personalized health care options. Keokuk Health Systems provides a comprehensive medical campus anchored by Keokuk Area Hospital. The campus includes KAME, a full service medical equipment provider, and Tri-State Medical Medical Group. Southeastern Renal Dialysis and numerous physician and dental offices complete the campus.



WORSHIP

The spires of several historical churches have long dominated the Keokuk skyline, and newer structures continue to add to the city's religious landscape.

The many places of worship offer spiritual opportunities to Keokuk area residents that range from main line Christian denominations to independent Christian congregations. An active ministerial association draws together several denominations and congregations to participate in the city at large.

Keokuk has it all.