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SOUTH CAROLINA'S FREE FARM AND ART TOUR IS THE LARGEST OF ITS KIND - PAGE 12
Terror 29 hopes to create unique haunted attraction experience

SIoux Falls, SD. - Horror movies and Halloween have always fascinated Zac Tenneboe. When he was in high school, his parents would set up a haunted house in the garage that he and his friends could walk through.

While he enjoyed the home haunt, he wanted to take it up a few notches. Watching the new ‘Halloween’ movie remake a year and a half ago, he decided to make this dream a reality.

Terror 29, Tenneboe’s new business located just off of exit 86 on Interstate 29, acts as his own garage of scares, haunts and spooks.

Terror 29 joins Twisted Nightmare and Jaycees Haunted House as the third haunted house attraction in Sioux Falls. Tenneboe said the thing that will set this attraction apart from the others is the element of magic, something he has been practicing for his entire life.

“No other house has the brainchild of a magician running it,” Tenneboe said. “Magic is all about psychology and misdirecting people. Maybe there is a lame animatronics that’ll grab your attention, but the real person is right behind you.”

Another element that Tenneboe said will set Terror 29 apart from the competition is a consistency of themes. The 3,800-square-foot attraction’s consistent theme: abandoned warehouse. A cage maze, trapdoors and an illusion hallway will also be included within the attraction.

The 20-minute experience ends in a oddity/horror memorable museum where patrons can buy gifts and check out the various attractions, such as a two-headed mummy.

Terror 29 started breaking ground in Sioux Falls in late May. 34 volunteers have constructed 75 wooden frames to divide up the 3,800-square-foot warehouse. Tenneboe said that everything from construction to talent are volunteer-driven.

“We’re always looking for people to help build and scare,” he said. “I’ll put out crew calls and some days we get three and some days we get 20. It’s really a group effort putting this all together.”

Tenneboe’s local connections have played a major key into finding talent for the attraction.

Full Article: https://bit.ly/2FuxtOv
Agritourism is working in Oregon

Editors Note: This piece is originally written by Robyn H. Smith for https://naturalresourcereport.com

OR. - What is agri-tourism? Simply put, it’s the practice of attracting travelers or visitors to an area used primarily for agriculture purposes. Attendees find themselves immersed in the beauty and nostalgia of the countryside while absorbing small gems of information about the farms and ranches that put food on the dinner table.

I was fortunate enough to be a part of such a tour – and what an outstanding example it was! On April 26, the North Central Livestock Association (NCLA), comprised of Wasco and Sherman counties, held their annual Bull Tour with four site visits in the beautiful, rolling, green hills near Condon and Lone Rock. With over 150 attendees, a caravan of cars and several reporters, it was easy to see this was much more than a bull tour. The first site visit took us down miles of gravel road to John and Phyllis Johnson’s ranch. John has been a life-long advocate and member of OCA and believes in continuing outreach and education to others, which he demonstrated as he presented three different stations of his ranch.

The second stop was a view overlooking the valley of Lone Rock, where we heard from Tom and Jason Campbell about the history of the town and the people who keep it alive. The Campbells also shared valuable information about the invading “Juniper forests” and the importance of controlled burns to manage the noxious tree.

Full Article: https://bit.ly/2RAJ43o
Putting the ‘farm’ in ‘farmacy’

BESSEMER, AL. - From a stuffy nose to trouble sleeping, depression, and help clearing out your lungs after years of smoking; you don’t need a pill. That’s the belief of a Bessemer couple who says Mother Nature gives us what we need to feel better.

Permaculture farmers Trevor and Joanna Mann own Walden Farms & Farmacy in Bessemer. The couple grows the plants and flowers on their farm, then processes them into syrups, teas, salves, and herbal teas.

The small-scale permaculture-style herb farm has not only pretty blooms, but they’re actually sustainable herbal medicines grown with families in mind. It’s all about the land being self-sufficient in the ecosystem, if you’ve never heard of permaculture. They grow several different species of plants together so there’s competition, creating what they call the most medicinal benefit.

When it comes to the apothecary portion, it’s really getting back to our roots. Before trained doctors were common, herbalists healed people with the natural elements around them. They brewed teas or took oils from the plants, blooms, or berries. Joanna Mann says the pendulum has swung and people are realizing there’s a lot of healing and care that can be done at home before a doctor is sought. Serious conditions certainly would still require medical personnel, but there are a lot of options growing wild. Most people might be surprised at how many things have multiple medical purposes.

While conventional farmers fight with weeds, the Walden Farms utilize them. Dandelion, ground ivy, and smart weed aren’t typically wanted in gardens and grass. However, dandelion is found in many detox and cleansing drinks. Violet is another grass invader with healing properties. The tiny bloom is good for coughs, colds, and flu.

“I believe the Creator made no mistakes. The plants we have here, we have here for a reason, whether it’s food or medicine,” says Joanna Mann. “It may just be a plant we haven’t discovered the purpose for yet. But, it’s all here for a reason.”

It takes several weeks to go from plants, to tinctures, to the finished product. Since the Walden Farmacy gives back to the earth, it also gives back to the community by donating a minimum of 1% of sales every quarter to a different non-profit.

Full Article: https://bit.ly/2X24gAD
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Extreme racing and hunting leases can help farmers tap into agritourism money

WITH commodity prices ever a concern, landowners across America are always hunting for ways to maximize returns from their property. Too often, those living in the rural zones take for granted the value of the lifestyle afforded their surroundings. Meanwhile, city folks are more than happy to spend a few dollars by way of agritourism.

In my own case, as owner of a farm in west-central Indiana, I’ve been able to incorporate a few of these ideas into my own property, having a little fun along the way, and covering more than the annual property taxes and insurance premiums. While specific ideas might not work for everyone, keep in mind that opportunities are born from ideas shared.

EXTREME XC RACING

The opportunity to host an extreme cross country race on my property actually came by way of my tenant farmer, who was himself first approached as the promoters sought a site. Cross country racing is an incredibly popular sport featuring quads and motorbikes. And participants like wooded farms. My own 200 acres happens to feature about 100 acres of woods, complete with a large creek, pond, and spill pile, which those in coal country know to be the pond left over from mining operations a century ago. The group that promoted the race on my farm, The Eel River Run, was an outstanding example of rural enthusiasts who happen to love the outdoors and the experience was positive on all fronts.

Because the event was hosted over Mother’s Day weekend, no soybeans had yet been planted in my fields, and so we used my front pasture and barnyard as parking. The landowner’s money comes from the gate collections, and this arrangement can vary by organization, league and landowner, whether that’s per head or per automobile collection. Granted, the event is highly weather dependent, and so revenue is the same kind of gamble to which farmers are long accustomed. But my own event brought in a little over 500 people from that Friday through Sunday, most of whom camped out. In addition to the racers, the organizers supplied their own port-a-pots and food vendors, making for a great carnival atmosphere, as well as a very profitable weekend enterprise.

A quick Internet search
under the terms “Cross Country Racing Series” will generate a number of organizers around the country. Interestingly enough, on my own Indiana farm, I noticed license plates from as far away as Texas. Make sure the league is properly vetted and carries liability insurance for the event, and in all ways perform due diligence, with the understanding that events such as these could generate for the landowner anywhere from $3,000 to $30,000 for a weekend, but the dangers of racing are ever-present.

**HUNTING LEASES**

In addition to one-time activities, landowners might consider leasing their property out to hunters or other sporting folk. Growing up in rural Indiana myself, I now know how spoiled I was as a kid with the blessings of my own parents’ and grandparents’ properties. I never dreamed that people would actually pay other people to hunt on their property. Years later, as the owner of property myself, I was quickly introduced to this by way of hunters’ offerings.

According to a recent Agricultural Marketing Resource Center report, public access hunting is nearly nonexistent in many states, and well over $10 billion is being spent annually by millions of sportsmen and sportswomen seeking land for hunting, fishing, and shooting. Lease prices vary by market and property, but studies suggest that the average acreage for hunting leases is about 900 acres with values ranging from as little as $150 up to over $60,000, with the average being about $10 per acre.

Landowners interested in this can search online for any number of hunting groups offering to lease ground at various rates. In my own case, I opted to go with some family friends who go in together to lease properties. To that extent, my own 200 acres brings me $1,600 annually for hunting rights, a little less than the national average. However, knowing the people who will be coming out to the property throughout various seasons is worth it to me. If you’re not a hunter, keep in mind, these folks take their sport quite seriously and some will be more litigious in terms of the agreement than others. As a producer, remember that deer season and harvest may coincide some years depending on the weather, and so having a group with whom you’re comfortable makes a big difference.

**OPTIONS ABOUND**

From corn mazes and pumpkin patches to roadside farmers markets and timber sales, landowners need to keep thinking about new ways to generate revenue outside the traditional crop cycle. Agritourism continues to boom throughout the country as urban sprawl makes more precious our parcels. These types of events tend to draw a straight cash revenue with little additional investment required. And you never know, a full secondary business could always be born from such an idea.

Full Article: https://bit.ly/2IKHedt
INDUSTRY NEWS

After a wet spring, strawberry season is here

PENN. - After a rainy spring, Ruth Jones of Lehman Twp. took advantage of the sunshine that came out last week and picked nearly 12 pounds of sweet, juicy strawberries at Whistle Pig Pumpkin Patch in Noxen.

“The berries are so good when you pick them fresh,” Jones said after showing her container filled with strawberries she picked in the patch off Dry Creek Lane. “We have a lot of good recipes for strawberries and then we freeze and we have berries all winter long. We take them out and use them for different recipes. Sometimes we just thaw them out and put them in a fruit salad.”

Jones’ recipes include a pretzel dessert which includes cream cheese, jello and strawberries.

“It’s absolutely delicious,” she said. “It’s a good dessert.”

Russ Wall of Monroe Twp. also came out to Whistle Pig and picked about 10 pounds of the popular and flavorful “Earliglow” strawberries which he said he plans to use to make jam.

Wall’s usual breakfast is peanut butter and strawberry jam on toast and he said the Earliglow strawberries are sweeter. When he picks strawberries fresh, he said they taste much better.

“Picking them like this is the best,” he said.

As long as the weather cooperates, people can pick strawberries at Whistle Pig Tuesday through Sunday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. until the end of June at Whistle Pig.

“We encourage people to try them because they taste so good out of the field fresh and ripe that they’ll come pick more,” said Joel Field, who owns Whistle Pig with his wife Stacy. “They have tremendous flavor.”

Strawberries cost $1.70 a pound at Whistle Pig and most people bring their own containers to pick them. Some bring bowls or baskets but for children, it’s easier to use a bucket with a handle to pick strawberries, said Stacy Field.

Of all the strawberries, she said Earliglow are the most requested because of their sweetness.

“A lot of moms who come out say their kids say they taste like strawberry candy. That’s how sweet it is,” she said. “They say they can’t keep them in the house because the kids just gobble them down.”

Whistle Pig also grows and sells other varieties of strawberries. Many people don’t realize there is more than one variety, Stacy Field said.
Pallman Farms in Clarks Summit

“Earliglow is an earlier variety but by the end of the season, these will be done and we will have other varieties that will be in,” she said. “Each one of these is just like having a different variety of apple. They all have their own distinct taste, size, flavor and the way the plants grow. It’s really quite extraordinary.”

Whistle Pig was one of a number of farms that opened last week for strawberry picking.

LaCoe’s Berry Nice Farm in Newton Twp. and Pallman Farms in Clarks Summit also opened after a rainy spring while Pumpkin Hill Produce Farms in Nescopeck opened early on June 3 for strawberry picking.

Weather permitting, Pumpkin Hill Produce Farms at 250 Wapwallopen Road will be open each day from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. and people can pick strawberries on nine acres of land, said owner Harry Roinick.

If the strawberries are “picked out,” Roinick said updates on hours will be posted on Facebook. It takes 24 hours for more strawberries to get ripe again and be ready for picking, he said.

LaCoe’s Berry Nice Farm at 10038 Valley View Drive, which offers a selection of pick your own berries throughout the summer, opened Tuesday for people to come out to pick sweet, juicy strawberries.

Regina LaCoe, who owns the farm with her husband Dick, said strawberry picking started about a week later than last year as a result of rain.

While heavy rainfall in the spring did not affect the strawberries, she said they lost a significant number of raspberries. There will be slim pickings of those when that season opens after July 4, she said.

The rain did not seem to affect blueberries and they will be available for picking at the end of June or in early July depending on the weather, she said.

LaCoe’s will be open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and LaCoe recommends people check the farm’s Facebook page for updates.

Strawberries cost $2.25 a pound and LaCoe said people can bring their own containers or purchase them. Buckets are available for $1 each. Pre-picked quarts of strawberries cost $4.50 each.

She said the number one reason people choose to pick their own strawberries right from a farm rather than purchase them is the taste. People also get exercise by picking strawberries themselves, she said.

“You get exactly what you want and you can see what the berries look like,” she said.

Pallman Farms at 1511 Summit Lake Road opened Friday for strawberry picking and will remain open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weather permitting, said farmer Craig Pallman. After the rainy spring, he hopes to get through the season without interruption.

It costs $2.10 a pound for strawberries for people who pick more than 20 pounds of strawberries at Pallman Farms and $2.35 a pound for people who pick less. People can bring their own containers but they also are available for purchase. Pre-picked strawberries should be available for $5.50 a quart, Pallman said.

In honor of strawberry season, Wilkes-Barre City will host its second annual Strawberry Festival Thursday, June 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Public Square and every vendor will have something strawberry to offer. The event features a performance by Strawberry Jam Duo from 12 to 1:30 p.m.

Source: https://bit.ly/2LnAWSK
This farmer is making some of the most coveted wines in America

BETHEL, VERMONT - Deirdre Heekin pioneered the quiet evolution of the Vermont wine world. La Garagista, her acclaimed winery and home farm, situated on Mount Hunger Road in Bethel, has mentored a handful of vigneron rising into the upper echelons of the national wine community. Since releasing her first vintage over a decade ago, Heekin’s bottles have spearheaded the transformation of Vermont’s wine reputation from a niche community of hybrid-relying vineyards to a nationally recognized community of hybrid-relying vineyards. Devotees include New York Times wine critic Eric Asimov and the James Beard Foundation, which nominated Heekin for Outstanding Wine, Spirits or Beer Producer in 2019. This year’s vintage is her 10th.

From a trio of biodynamic vineyards - one wedged into volcanic earth beside a rural chunk of the Green Mountains, while the others are tucked along a Lake Champlain coastline flush with limestone and clay - Heekin farms, ferments and bottles natural wines with zero chemical intervention from vine to vat. Twelve years after planting her first home-farm vineyard and making five-gallon buckets of wine in her bathtub, Heekin’s influence echoes far beyond state borders and into the shifting paradigm of how we talk about wine today and, of course, how we drink it.

A pillar of Heekin’s philosophy is ironclad: Wine is made in the vineyard. Fermentation is simply the sister to photosynthesis. My job is a shepherd, guiding and interpreting along the way, not imposing myself or a preconceived idea.”

Heekin’s approach to biodynamic wine growing and wine making oscillates on the principle that the vineyard is an ecological entity regarded from the soil up. Soil fertility, without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, is paramount. Nothing is added to the final product - like the blushing red or pétillant-naturel in your wineglass - to clarify, preserve or synthetically manipulate the taste. “The wine is ultimately guided by how I adapt the farming to the season and to my palate,” says Heekin. “Wine is a story of place, and of my place within the landscape.”

Heekin began making wine at home as a sommelier. It was an educational experiment of sorts - a way to better understand, firsthand, the process of fermentation to bolster her work tableside. It soon became clear that the home farm wasn’t temporary; it was something she could - and wanted to - live wholly. Yet, the question “Why Vermont?” is a fair one for a rugged climate that locals joke comes in five seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter, mud season and construction. “This is where I live,” she says. “I’m
lucky that Vermont happens to be an exciting place to grow wine. As a wine region, it has some of the oldest bedrock on the planet. The varieties we grow here are also fascinating to me. I love that we are at the frontier of a region. We have this moment of freedom to respond to what wine wants to be in Vermont, and the possibilities seem infinite."

“When I started La Garagista, no one talked about hybrids because of the disrespect they have endured for the past 100 years,” she says. “Now that it’s becoming recognized that serious, thoughtful wines can be made from hybrid varieties in a region like Vermont, we’re seeing the conversation shift to the varieties and to all they represent in terms of how the wine community will respond to the hard facts of climate change.”

The modern-day sommelier, she points out, is voracious and curious. Consumers and buyers are constantly seeking new frontiers, with an openness to taste something novel and approach wine with less baggage. An expansion of what the wine world views as “excellent” bottles, coupled with an increasing desire to know where and how wine is farmed, offers a global innovation in the current wine dialogue. It’s one that hasn’t happened on a mainstream scale since the so-called “Judgment of Paris” in 1976, when Californian wines bested France in two blind-tasted categories. Multiple wine writers have hailed 2019 as the “year of the hybrid.” Heekin’s response? “You have a dynamic movement beginning to ferment.”

Pun intended - and appreciated.

Source: https://bit.ly/2J45iHk
South Carolina's free farm and art tour is the largest of its kind in the United States

RICHLAND COUNTY, SC.
- The South Carolina Ag+Art Tour comes to Richland County for the first time this year. The month-long, free, self-guided tour of farms and farmers markets (agriculture) plus local crafts people (art) is the largest tour of its kind in the United States.

Each weekend in June features a different group of counties within the state – June 29 and 30 will feature Richland County.

John Newman, chairman of the Richland County Ag+Art Tour planning team, said the Midlands Food Alliance raised funds for the tour’s participation in this year’s event, and organizers have secured a grant from Richland County’s Hospitality Fund to continue participation in the 2020 tour.

Ag+Art Tours began in York County in 2012 and has grown every year since. Newman expects some counties in the Lowcountry to join the tour next year.

In Richland County, five working farms and over 30 artisans have signed up to participate. Along with fresh-from-the-farm produce and food stuffs, people taking the tour may encounter jewelry makers, woodworkers, painters, soap makers and more demonstrating their craft and selling wares.

A kick-off at Senate’s End in Columbia 5:30 p.m. Friday, June 21, will feature a meet-and-greet with farmers and artisans. The free event will also have food trucks selling prepared foods using products from the farms, and a wine and beer cash bar.

Ag+Art Tour hours are: 10 am – 4 pm Saturday, June 29; and 1 – 5 pm Sunday, rain or shine. Bring your family, a cooler and ice for your food purchases, hand sanitizer or wipes (it IS a farm tour), and water to stay hydrated.

Leave your pets at home!

PARTICIPATING FARMS INCLUDE:
Carolina Bay Farms: 5301 Lower Richland Blvd, Hopkins.

James and Sharon Helms raise heritage breed animals and organic vegetables on land that was originally settled by the family in 1764. Helms wants people to have a small working farm experience. Years ago, Helms said, “the world of getting in your car and going to the grocery store didn’t exist. People had no choice but to raise their foods.

“When people come out here, they can see where food comes from.”
The Ag+Art Tour coincides with Carolina Bay Farms’ regularly scheduled every-other-Saturday market, so expect to find chicken and duck eggs, fresh vegetables, and pork products for sale.

Demonstrations at Carolina Bay Farms include beekeeping with Hampton Hill Aviary, and goat milking; artisans include Ajoa Harris (soaps and aromatherapy oils), Jimmy Dinkins (kudzu baskets, wood sculpture), WRKingArt (handpainted glassware, and painters Bett Huggins and Lawandas Creations.

City Roots Farm: 1005 Airport Blvd, Columbia.

The father and son team of Robbie and Eric McClam have been farming in the heart of Columbia’s Rosewood neighborhood since 2009. Known for growing a variety of microgreens, City Roots began raising industrial hemp in 2019.

On Saturday and Sunday there will be free guided tours and planting demonstrations, and local beer and wine for sale; artisans include Harmony Acres Soap Co., Serglasio Arts (handmade jewelry), Scratch Cakes (homemade old-fashioned pound cakes), Stacy’s Gardens (container gardens and handmade jewelry), and painters Cheryl Nix and Backyardkoi & Art.

Full Article: https://on.wltx.com/2XCXipU
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Swank Farms offers healthy family fun

HOLLISTER, CA.- Bonnie and Dick Swank of Swank Farms will be the first to tell you that they never expected to have one of the most well-known corn mazes in the Hollister area.

Each fall, delighted customers pack their farm to pick pumpkins and have a good time. But right now, their focus is bringing fresh organic summer vegetables straight from the farm to local farmers markets. They grow a wide variety of vegetables: English peas, spring greens, summer squash, bell peppers, corn and tomatoes. Eight kinds of cucumbers, a mix of eggplant varieties, loads of beans, and year-round cauliflower and broccoli round out their crop selections. Their tomatoes are extremely popular because of the variety, quality and flavor.

Dick's grandfather, Bill Maggini, purchased the 60-acre property in 1928 in the northern part of San Benito County. Dick decided to raise his family on the ranch his grandfather started.

The original plum trees were pulled to grow vegetable row crops. They added some fruit trees, pumpkins, gourds and ornamental corn. Soon the ranch wasn't big enough to grow all they wanted, so they added 210 acres to the farm.

With the expansion came financial ups and downs, so they decided to go into agritourism and open a corn maze and fall pumpkin patch. They also opted to become organic and received certification from the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) association in 2006.

Full Article: https://bit.ly/2XvteMT.
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