

# Corn, Beans, Pigs and Kids

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O'Brien County is located in the Northwest corner of Iowa. As of the 2020 census it had a population of over 14,000. One thing we noticed about the community is the pride that everyone takes in their towns, homes and businesses. Every part of the county has something unique to explore.

## Things to Do

### Prairie Heritage Center 4931 Yellow Ave. - Peterson



Our family loved exploring at the O'Brien County Prairie Heritage Center. As soon as you walk in you'll see a giant bison and lots of interactive displays explaining the history, nature and animals of the area. On the first floor our family loved looking out at the rolling hills of the Little Sioux River Valley, using their binoculars to check for wildlife and checking out the pull-out drawers near the bison. We encourage families with children to head to the bottom level to check out all of the hands-on displays and activities. We also loved going on the trails around the center. Don't forget to keep an eye out for the bison that live at the center while on your walk!

### Mill Creek State Park Hwy 10 - East Side of Paullina

Mill Creek offers a variety of activities for all ages. You can go camping, boating, canoeing, fishing, swimming, biking, hiking and go on their 13 mile trail that loops around the lake. Our family loved grabbing some ice cream at the concessions stand, playing on the playground, and sitting next to the lake. We would love to come back on a nicer day to enjoy some time at the beach, go swimming and fishing! We were impressed with all of the amenities and rentals offered at the state park.



### Sheldon City Park Between 4th and 6th Ave - Sheldon

Speaking of parks, our kids favorite park was the Sheldon City Park with its large, wooden castle playground. The kids had so much fun playing and using their imagination at the park. The park also offered a nice shelter house, restrooms, picnic tables and grills, skate park and basketball court.



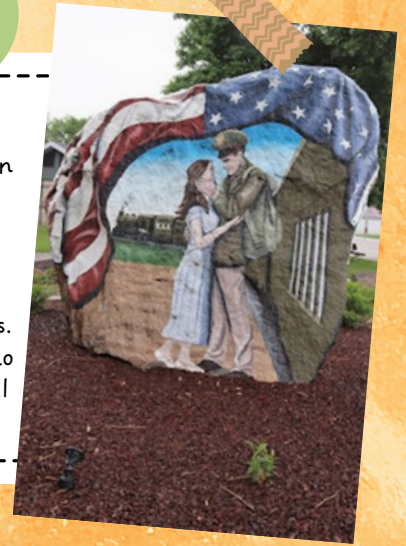


### Locomotion Lanes 205 Main St. - Sanborn

We had a great time bowling and eating pizza at Locomotion Lanes in Downtown Sanborn on our family weekend getaway. This small town bowling alley has been updated with all modern features and you can tell how much pride the staff, including owner Bert van Dam, take in their business. This is a great spot to check out anytime of the year!

### O'Brien County Freedom Rock 698 Main St. - Sanborn

One of our favorite ways to explore communities in Iowa is by checking out the different county Freedom Rocks. O'Brien County's is located in Sanborn, on the south side of Hwy 18, next to Sanborn's Aquatic Center and the Sanborn Caboose in the City Park. The O'Brien County Freedom Rock includes three murals, as well as the American flag painted draped over the top. The north side of the rock pays respect to the town of Sanborn's railroad heritage and features a soldier and a woman saying goodbye at a train depot before his departure for war (seen below). The west side of the rock (shown above) honors victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. And on the south side of the rock is a mural of Daniel Pippinger from Sanborn who was a Civil War veteran. I love how artist Bubba Sorensen shares the stories of local veterans through his murals, including this county Freedom Rock.



# Places to Eat



## Hide Out 4811 Oak Hill Ave. - Germantown

The Hide Out is a restaurant and bar located in the unincorporated town of Germantown that is known for their broasted chicken and fries! Owners Fritz & Buzzard have a packed house each evening Monday - Saturday with people calling ahead for their table and their chicken. Our chicken was prepared by owner Fritz and came out hot and fresh! And since we were first time visitors we got to put a pin on their map that shows where patrons from all over the country and world have come from. And don't forget to have your complimentary shot of peppermint schnapps to end your meal! The Hide Out is a fun and hidden local favorite that you need to check out!

## Mill Creek Concessions 5660 460th St. - Paullina

Mill Creek Concessions is a seasonal food and ice cream stand located next to the lake at Mill Creek State Park. This is a great place to grab a sandwich, wrap, snack or sweet treat during the summer! Our family was impressed with the large menu available and recommends grabbing a bite to eat and then picnic near the lake. Mill Creek Concessions is popular among the campers and boaters at the state park, as well as locals just wanting to grab some hot food or ice cream.



## Jay's Restaurant & Lounge 120 W 7th St - Sanborn

Another local favorite restaurant you need to check out is Jay's Restaurant & Lounge in Sanborn. Our family enjoyed stopping at Jay's for breakfast. I'd recommend trying any of their omelets. My Denver omelet was delicious and hit the spot. Our kids would recommend getting their pancakes! Go with a stack of five, fluffy kiddie cakes, or go with the Mikey Mouse cake that has a chocolate chip nose and smile with blueberry eyes. Jay's has delicious food served all day from a friendly staff!



## Frosted Cupcakes 106 Eastern Ave - Sanborn

A special treat we got when we arrived in O'Brien County was a box of Frosted Cupcakes! Owner Beth Wolfswinkel creates a variety of amazing flavors of her homemade cupcakes (Monster Cookie, Moose Tracks, Oreo, Salted Caramel, Birthday Batter, etc.) that you can purchase directly from her or at several local establishments. We ate our first dozen so fast that we had to make a run to the local grocery store Sanborn Foods before we left for the weekend so we could bring some home! (And we enjoyed them so much I don't have a photo to share...)



## Where to Stay

### Miller Park Cabin 1002 Sanborn St. - Sanborn



The Miller Park Cabin was the perfect place for our family to stay during our weekend getaway. Located next to the Sanborn Golf & Country Club, this large cabin sleeps up to 10 people and is available for rental all year long. The cabin includes a living room, furnished kitchen, bathroom, downstairs master bedroom with a queen bed and an upstairs loft that includes 2 queen beds and 4 twin beds. Our kids had fun spreading out between all of the beds in the upstairs loft and I appreciated that all of the beds included linens. The only thing we needed to bring for our stay was our own towels. Next to the cabin you can walk to the neighboring playground, go frofing at the Sanborn 18 hole frisbee golf course, or take a walk on the well maintained, paved nature trail that goes around Miller Park and the Sanborn Golf Course. You can make a reservation by contacting the Sanborn City Hall at 712-930-3842.

We had a great weekend getaway in O'Brien County and would like to thank everyone that we met for being so welcoming to us as we explored the area. A special thanks to O'Brien County Tourism for inviting us to come and visit!

Check out Val's blog at [cornbeanspigskids.com](http://cornbeanspigskids.com)



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Tour O'Brien County



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