

Wandering Indiana ~

It is truly amazing what you can find while wandering! Do you take the time to wander? I suggest you take up this activity. It is relatively inexpensive and very rewarding. As a youngster, I would grab a free Indiana State map at a rest stop and purchase a Wayne County map from the Surveyor's Office for one dollar. I would challenge myself to travel every road in the county, traveling every state road or visit every city/town, state park or reservoir. Whatever was on the map, it was my goal to visit that place or travel on that road.

To this day, as best I can, I still mark off roads I have traveled or cities and town I have visited. Because of this obsession, it leads to many adventures and leads to finding many unique and different places.



This past weekend, my wife and I ventured to [Turkey Run State Park](#). For those that are interested, during this time of the year you can spend two nights for the price of one. Pretty sweet deal. Go to [IDNR](#) website and get the details. Turkey Run is a fabulous place and especially great this time of the year when no one is there. Ever been there in the summer? It can get crowded, but it is still fun.

Our trip this time allowed us to take in several new trails and geologic features. The Ice Box, Ladders, Punch Bowl, and Wedge Rock are the typical places to visit. These are all awesome features, but we took in some new sites on this trip. We hiked through Falls Canyon, Boulder Canyon and Turkey Run Hollow. Places we had never ventured to before and areas that appear to not be as well traveled. Those are the places to wander while on a hike.



Getting to Turkey Run requires taking in gravel roads, interesting scenery and all sorts of "unexpected" sites. Traveling through the backroads of Putnam, Clay and Parke Counties on the way can be quite adventurous. At least that is the way we travel and wander. It is amazing, if you try, how many Covered Bridges, Water Falls, Caves, interesting outcroppings you can find. They aren't necessarily anything special, but they are sites you will likely see if you wander.

One of my favorite things to do is drive through all of those little towns off the beaten path. Why are they there? What prompted their existence?

Imagining what these little burgs looked like back in the day, the hustle and bustle, their reason for existence, that just fascinates me. There is likely that old school building, storefront in downtown or old mansion. Reelsville, Carbon, Lena, Diamond, Perth, Cardonia – why are they there and what is their history?

Another favorite is to take those windy curvy roads along rivers and creeks. You never know what you will find – eagles' nests, old mines, bridges, and lowland forests with unique vegetation. One of the best is taking that dead-end road. Why is it a dead end? You never know what little gem you might find.

Go wander, take the time and create an adventure. Let me know the places to go visit.

~ Jeff Banning