



FRONTENAC MINING DAYS



JUNE 4, 2025

THE MORNING SUN

Frontenac Mining Days returns June 5

Staff Reports
news@morningsun.net

FRONTENAC, Kan. — An annual Frontenac tradition is back starting Thursday. Frontenac Mining Days returns to Raider Country, taking place from Thursday to Sunday, offering residents a wide variety of events to attend, focused on the town's rich history.

A four-day weekend for many, Frontenac Mining Days began in 1986 under the name of the "Frontenac Homecoming" when the city celebrated its centennial anniversary.

The event then struggled with finding volunteers, taking a hiatus for many years in the late 2000s. The event was revived in 2016 by a group of dedicated volunteers. Five years later, Frontenac Homecoming was relaunched as Frontenac Mining Days.

From a candy-filled parade to an arm-wrestling competition, many popular events return to this year's celebration with several new additions.

Kicking off this year's Frontenac Mining Days on Thursday is an ice cream social at 5 p.m. at Miners Park, sponsored by Granny's Chip Chocolate Ice Cream & Candy Shop, followed by food and craft vendors along McKay St. A Miners Park dedication and bust unveiling



A tradition at the yearly Frontenac Mining Days parade, a Bartos Idle Hour employee dresses up in a chicken outfit, tossing candy to kids. The annual event returns Thursday, June 5, with the parade taking place at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 7. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN

then takes place at 5:30 p.m. along with a silent auction that opens at Pallucca's Event Hall. Remaining events on Thursday are sidewalk chalk night (6 to 9 p.m., school parking lot), and Frontenac Mining Days Trivia (6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Pickled Pete's Bar & Grill).

On Friday, food and craft vendors will open at 5 p.m. as well as the Frontenac Historical Bus Tour, which has limited seating (RSVP required) at city hall. Heritage Hall also opens at Pallucca's Event Hall from 5 to 9 p.m. From classic to modern cars, car lovers can check out a line of hotrods along McKay Street from 5 to 9 p.m. as part of Rollin' Nostalgia Car Club's Cruise Night.

Looking for something for the kids? Inflatables (admission is free) are available from 6 to 10 p.m. on Friday. Closing

out Friday prior to a very busy Saturday are live performances from J3 Band, the Pittsburg Elite Demo Team, and Psychobilly Cadillac, beginning at 6:30 p.m. and lasting until 11 p.m.

Kicking off Saturday's long schedule of events are the dog races at Miners Park with registration beginning at 8:45 a.m. Food and craft vendors will then set up along McKay starting at 10 a.m., which is the start time for this year's parade that begins at the city ballparks. The SEK Humane Society returns to Miners Park as well for its adoption event starting at 10:30 a.m., ending at noon.

Remaining Saturday events are Heritage Hall (10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Pallucca's Event Hall), Pre-K Kids Games (10:30 a.m., Miners Park), alumni school tours (noon, Cayuga entrance), Frontenac Historical Bus Tour

FRONTENAC
Heritage Homecoming
MINING DAYS

JUNE 2025
5-8th



Thursday, June 5th

5 PM Ice Cream Social; Located in Miners Park and sponsored by Granny's Chip Chocolate Ice Cream & Candy Shop
5 PM Food/Craft Vendors
5:30 PM Miners Park Dedication/Bust unveiling
5:30 PM Silent Auction OPENS; Located in Pallucca's Event Hall
6-9 PM Heritage Hall; Located in Pallucca's Event Hall
6-9 PM Sidewalk Chalk Night; Illustrate our theme in the school parking lot
6:30-8:30 PM Frontenac Mining Days Trivia; Hosted by Pickled Pete's Bar & Grill

Friday, June 6th

5 PM Frontenac Historical Bus Tour - RSVP to City Hall - Limited Seating
5 PM Food/Craft Vendors
5-9 PM Heritage Hall; Located in Pallucca's Event Hall
5-9 PM Cruise Night; Hosted by Rollin' Nostalgia Car Club
6-10 PM Kids' Zone Inflatables; Free Admission sponsored by Unique Metal Fabrications
6:30-8 PM Street Dance - J3 Band; Located at the Miners Park Pavillion
8 PM Pittsburg Elite Demo Team Performance
8:30-11 PM Street Dance - Psychobilly Cadillac (east stage)

Saturday, June 7th

9 AM Dog Races; Located in Miners Park (small, medium and large breeds) (Register by 8:45 AM)
10 AM Food/Craft Vendors
10 AM Parade (Starting point at City Ballparks)
10:30 AM SEK Humane Society Adoption Event; Located in Miners Park - Adoption Event ends at 12:00 PM

Saturday Continued

10 AM-9 PM Heritage Hall; Located in Pallucca's Event Hall
10:30 AM Pre-K Kid Games (NO registration needed); Located in Miners Park and hosted by Guardians of the Children Borderlands Chapter
10:45 AM Kid Games (K-5) (must register by 10:30 AM); Located in Miners Park and hosted by Guardians of the Children Borderlands Chapter
12 PM Alumni School Tours - Cayuga Entrance (Hosted by USD 249 Admin)
2 PM Frontenac Historical Bus Tour - RSVP to City Hall - Limited Seating
3:30 PM Frontenac Historical Bus Tour - RSVP to City Hall - Limited Seating
5 PM BACA Bike Show
5:30 PM Arm Wrestling Contest; Located outside of Shooters
6-10 PM Kids' Zone Inflatables; Free Admission sponsored by Unique Metal Fabrications
8 PM Silent Auction CONCLUDES Winners will be contacted via text and/or call
8 PM The Dance Pitt Performance (east stage)
8:20 PM Medallion Hunt Winners Announced
8:30-11 PM Street Dance Members Only
10 PM Fireworks; Sponsored by Jake's Fireworks

Sunday, June 8th

8-12 PM Pancake Feed; Located and sponsored by the Frontenac Fire Department
10 AM-12 PM Fishing Derby; Located at City Park, sponsored by Albers Marine and hosted by Frontenac Cub Scout Pack 287
11 AM Pickleball Tournament; Located at Rotary Park and hosted by Frontenac Rotary Club and FHS P.E. Department
11:30 AM Frontenac Historical Bus Tour - RSVP to City Hall - Limited Seating
1-5 PM Free Open Swim; Located at Frontenac Pool

Our Medallion Hunt is back and still with little brother medallion!
\$250 Prize & \$100 Prize - Starts Tuesday, June 3rd - Follow our Facebook Page for Details.

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Most events will be held downtown unless otherwise specified.
Frontenac Mining Days T-shirts and programs are available inside Pallucca's Event Hall.

(2/3:30 p.m.), BACA Bike Show (5 p.m.), arm wrestling contest (5:30 p.m., Shooters), kids' zone inflatables (6 to 10 p.m.), silent auction concludes (8 p.m.), The Dance Pitt performance (8 p.m., east stage), Medallion Hunt winners announced (8:20 p.m.), Members Only street dance (8:30 to 11 p.m.,

McKay St.), and fireworks (10 p.m.). Closing out this year's Frontenac Mining Days celebration is the ever-popular pancake feed at the Frontenac Fire Department from 8 a.m. to noon. Kids can also grab their fishing poles and best bait to participate in the fishing derby at City Park

from 10 a.m. to noon. A pickleball tournament will also take place at 11 a.m. at Rotary Park. The final historical bus tour then takes off at 11:30 a.m. Lastly, there is a free open swim from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Frontenac Pool.
For more information, visit facebook.com/frontenachomecoming.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES



City's foundation laid on coal

By Neal McChristy
Morning Sun Staff Writer

It was May, 1886. Frontenac was not yet a city, and only later did it become a city of tents.

James Devore arrived in that month, and lived in one of those tents. The encampment would open the Sante Fe Number One Mine in 1886. This, the first of many mines to be sunk in and around Frontenac, was dug near where the waterworks is now located.

Coal was to become king of Crawford County. Mines would be opened, dug out, closed; the abandoned skeletons and heaps of tailing pipes from the mines would later dot the countryside around Frontenac.

It was grueling work. A pay slip for one of

the miners shows he received \$38.71 for two weeks work, with 32 tons of coal dug, and for two feet of "horseback." The "horseback" was rock in the coal seam, and "they got paid for digging that and putting it in their car," said Frank Bozick, 306 S. Jefferson.

The coal veins were sometimes two and one-half to three feet deep, and sometimes smaller.

"My dad mentioned lots of times working in 18-inch coal," said Charlie Cicero, 303 E. Carlton. "He had only 18 inches of room."

Miners sometimes had to go on hands and knees to get to the coal. Large rocks called "bell rocks" could fall from the mine ceilings and trap the miners underneath.

The miner was an independent producer.

"You just worked as hard as you wanted to or killed time as much as you wanted to," said Cicero.

The pit boss designated coal cars.

Children would work in the mines at times because of "half-turn," or half again as many cars as the father's, would be designated by the pit boss to the father in behalf of the child.

There was a shot-firer, who, at the end of the day, fired the shots of powder put in place by the miners. "... and that job was a very dangerous job, too," said Bozick. "They were very well paid."

The blasted coal was dug out the next day, and sometimes the miners used teams of mules

to haul the carts to the top of the mine.

"At first when they open up the mines, they would keep them (the mules) there all the time, but they passed a law so they couldn't do that," said Bozick. "A lot of them (mules) would go blind after they'd come back up, so they passed a law so they had to bring them up at night."

The Sante Fe Railroad formed the Cherokee and Pittsburg Coal and Mining Co. Mine Number 1 was opened in 1886. Later, the Cherokee and Pittsburg Coal and Mining Co. became the Jackson-Walker Coal and Mining Co.

The Number Two mine shaft was located south of the former Menghini Packing Plant, a plant that was east of Menghini Bros.

Distributors on N. Cayuga.

Mine safety inspectors operated mine rescue units for the mines. In 1912, Bosnick recalls that "Number Three mine had an explosion. He (my father) didn't work that day."

Miners lived in company houses — two-room houses for miners, and bought goods at the company store. The company miners could make an application for a coupon book, which came in \$10 books, used for merchandise at the company store.

"As a child — I wasn't very doggone old — I'd make application for a coupon book," said Cicero. "My dad was a miner and I was only 10 years old."

The paycheck would come from the paymaster's office on Linn Street (formerly Depot Street). Miners were paid on Saturday, when they worked only one-half day.

"Whatever you purchased from the company store was deducted already," Cicero said, adding that 5 percent was taken by the company, making a \$10 coupon book as a \$10.20

deduction from the miner's paycheck.

In the 1920's and the early '30s, "strip mining was getting more popular, and they got so they uncover as much coal as 300 miners," Cicero said.

"Around the 1920's the coal miners started to close," said Velma Devore, 110 S. Cherokee.

The demise of coal companies and deep mining in Frontenac began to wane with the Depression of the '30s, and strip mining would continue for awhile.

"There was no market for the coal, and the progress — in those days people were going to other fuels," Cicero said.

The last of the Western deep mines, Number 22, located north of Arma, was shut down in 1936 or 1937, said Aloysius "Wishie" Jones, 210 W. Leighton. Some of the miners then went to work in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, where they were still running the deep mines, he said.

"When the mines went down, that was it," Jones said. "At one time, that was the economy of Crawford County."

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

1888 explosion kills 47



Approximately 17 of those killed in the 1888 Frontenac mining explosion are buried in Highland Park Cemetery in Pittsburg on the southwest end, close to the exit onto Centennial Dr. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN

By Neal McChristy
Morning Sun Staff Writer

One of the worst disasters in the history of the area happened Nov. 9, 1888, when 47 miners were killed in an explosion of the Pittsburg and Cherokee Mining Co. Shaft Number Two.

The Headlight, the Pittsburg publication in 1888, headlines the disaster as "Horrible!" in one-inch headlines. The account states in part

"At the usual time, (about 5:30 p.m.) men were again ready to fire their shots and be hoisted into free air above and to return to their homes.

"With the first shot and before a man was hoisted, a terrible rumbling noise was heard above and a black cloud of dirt, slate, coal and dust shot into the air from the mouth of the shaft, tearing away the tracking or guides upon which the cages were hoisted and also the cribbing in the shaft to which the tracks were fastened."

The newspaper account also stated that "The explosion is accounted for in several ways. One is that there were a number of new men in the shaft who did not understand the work, and charged too heavy, and several being fired at once they ignited others, and the powder gas and dust igniting caused the terrible explosion. This explosion occurred on the east side, the west side remaining unharmed."

Initial reports showed that there were 46 people killed in the explosion, with one miner crawling out of the mine, who died later, upping the total to 47.

An inquest was made into the disaster, with a six-man jury determining the explosion was caused by powder and gas in the mine, and that the dry and dusty condition of the mine "contributed to the violence of the explosion." The jury also found that explosion was caused by the ignition of the powder, "the same coming into contact with other explosive properties."

The jurors stated it was their belief that "if the company had kept the entries well-sprinkled and paid more attention to the gas, the said explosion would not have been so great."

One miner owed his life to the birth of his son that day. Julius LaForte, who was a police chief and a community leader, was born the day of the explosion.

"He was born here on the day this disaster occurred," said Charlie Cicero, 303 E. Carlton, "and what saved his father's life was he was home while his son was being born." The mine was located south of the former Menghini Meat Packing Plant. This old plant is located east of the current location of Menghini Brothers Distributors.

The miners who died were entombed near the mine.

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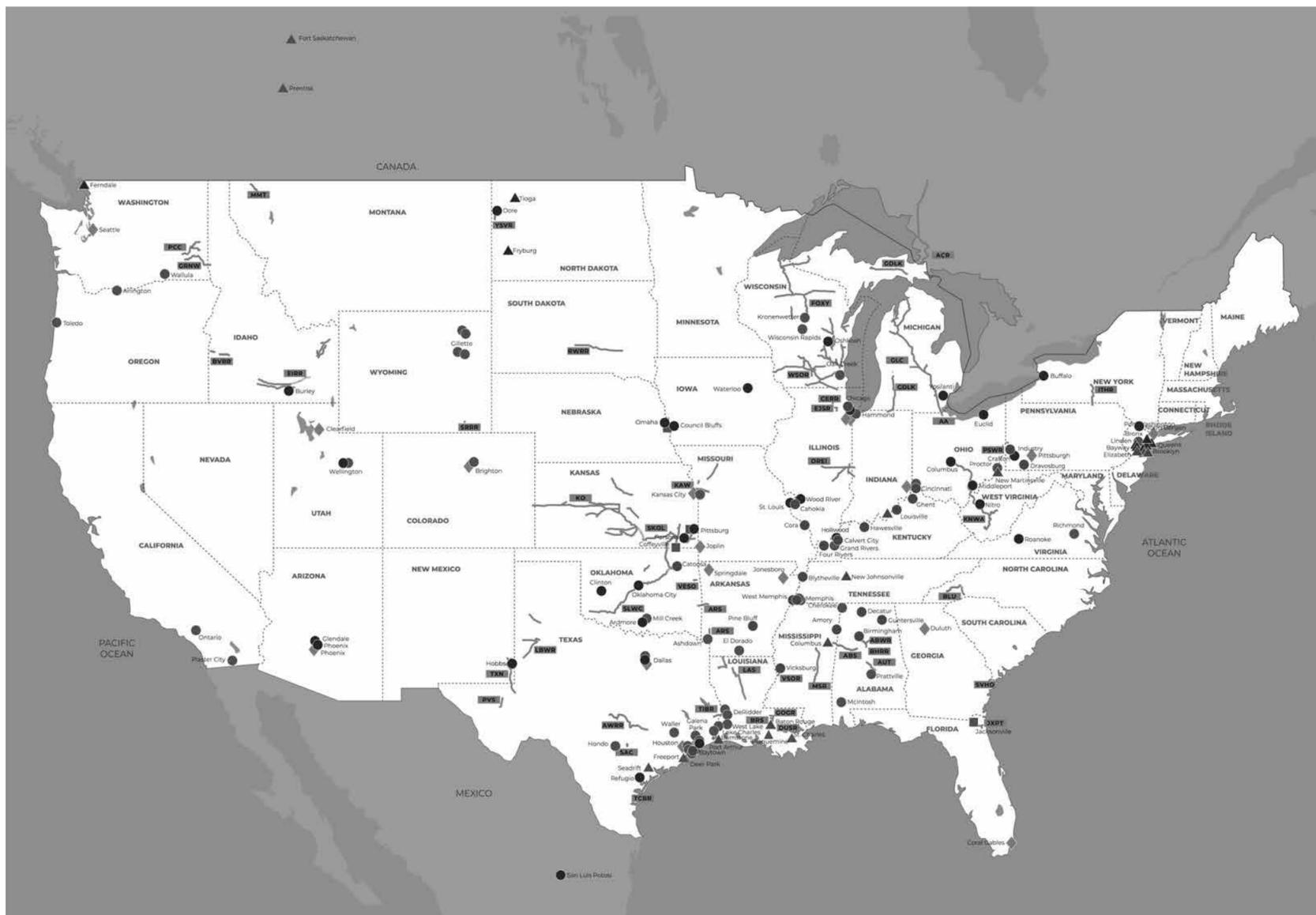
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Frontenac Mining Days 'Medallion Hunt' returns

Staff Reports
news@morningsun.net

FRONTENAC, Kan. — The Frontenac Mining Days Committee officially launched its annual Medallion Hunt on Tuesday as part of its annual hometown celebration.

On Monday, the committee released this year's rules for the event, which has served as one of the fan favorites as residents criss-cross the town, solving clues, searching for the prized medallion.

The Frontenac Mining Days Medallion Hunt began at 9 a.m. on Tuesday and will continue until 5 p.m. on Saturday or until the medallion is found, "whichever comes first."

This year's official medallion is hidden within the city limits of Frontenac on public land. Those who are members of Frontenac Mining Days, or those related to members, are not allowed to participate in the event.

"The Medallion can be found without trespassing, damaging, defacing land or property, or otherwise violating any laws," said the committee in its announcement.

Furthermore, the clues are posted each morning at 9 a.m. through Saturday on the Frontenac Mining Days Facebook page. Once found, the winner is posted to Facebook. However, if it is not found by noon on Saturday, additional clues will be listed on the page.

To claim the \$250 prize, the medallion must be presented in person to personnel in the Heritage Hall Museum in the Frontenac Public Library by 5 p.m. on Saturday. The \$250 prize is then presented Saturday night on the main stage across from Pickled Pete's.

For more information, visit facebook.com/frontenachomecoming.

PARADING AROUND FRONTENAC

Mining Days returns Thursday, June 5



Expected to make an appearance following a state championship victory is the Frontenac High School softball team, which received loud cheers from the crowd during last year's Frontenac Mining Days parade. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN



As is tradition, the members of the Frontenac American Legion John F. Derby Post #43 kick off the Frontenac Mining Days' parade, which is scheduled to take place at 10 a.m. on Saturday. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN



Frontenac High School band members showcase their musical skills during last year's parade as part of Frontenac Mining Days. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN



Miner's Hall Museum Foundation Chair Phyllis Bitner tosses candy to the kids during the 2023 Frontenac Mining Days parade that returns this weekend, starting Thursday. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN



The loud roar of emergency vehicles could be heard making their way slowly down McKay St. during last year's Frontenac Mining Days parade. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN



Heath Lord and Michael Hagerty of Past Time Antiques and Flea Market toss out Dum-Dums to the kids at last year's Frontenac Mining Days parade, scheduled to take place Saturday at 10 a.m. down McKay St. AARON PYLE / THE MORNING SUN

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