

Kiowa County Attractions

Featuring the communities of: **Greensburg, Haviland, and Mullinville**

Read more about this county using the [Kansas Guidebook 2 for Explorers](#). Order at kansassampler.org or buy at the [Big Well](#) in Greensburg. All information below is found in the guidebook.

• AROUND THE COUNTY

Haviland to Belvidere Scenic Back Road - From U.S. 50, 3 3/4 miles south on 51st Avenue, 1 mile east on M, 2 miles south on 53, 750 east on o, 5 1/2 miles south on 73, then 1/2 mile east and south on 76 to Belvidere. The back roads between the two towns offer some of the best jaw-dropping grassland vistas in the state. In this area that borders the High Plains and the Red Hills physiographic regions the scenery changes from slow-moving cattle on the road in front of you to a prairie spectacle of gently rolling hills offset by craggy stone outcroppings that seem to go on forever.

Belvidere to Wilmore Scenic Back Road - Going west out of Belvidere, you're on the road to Wilmore, and it's a goodie for explorers. From 76, 6 1/4 miles south and west on Dodge (becomes 70), just east on County Line, 1 1/2 miles south on 23, then 5 miles west and south on C. The red-sand route bordering mostly pasture is rugged in this area. You'll see more cattle than houses or humans, and although the road is relatively flat, the buttes and canyons are all around you. Look for Wilmore's grain elevator in the distance.

• BELVIDERE, unincorporated

Beautiful View - From Dodge Avenue, 1/2 mile north on 76, bear left at the fork and cross a cattle guard, then 1/4 mile west on 76 to a roadside pull over. A short way from town, this panoramic view of the breathtaking landscape gave Belvidere its name, which means "beautiful view" in Italian.

Old Schoolhouse, northeast corner of town. On this old schoolhouse, now the community center, notice the two doors—one was the entrance to the grade school, the other to the high school. An interior plaque memorializes Doc Carpenter, the lumberyard manager who cared for horses and trained his last horse at the age of 92. If you're a piano player, you might want to sit down and play a tune or two.

Halley's Junction, 101 N. High. It will be hit or miss if this old time store is open but if it is, step through the door and back in time. The old red-brick store with its creaky wood floor and pressed-tin ceiling gives you the feeling that time moves a little more slowly here. Old tools hang from pegboards, antiques and collectibles cover every surface. Owners, Hank Halley and his wife, Diana, hold court at a table in the middle of the large open room. If you need directions they are happy to point you down the right path and might share a story or two. Buy a cold pop, some snacks, or sandwiches from the freezer. 620.862.5234.

Soldier's Creek Cemetery - From 76, 1 1/2 miles east on Dodge (becomes Wilmore), just south on Sun City, then 1/4 mile east on unnamed road. You'll see many cowboy gravestones decorated with horses, ranch names and sentimental phrases. Look for the large chunks of petrified wood that have been used as markers, and handmade gravestones with hand-painted names.

• GREENSBURG, pop. 785

The Big Well (NRHP*; [8 Wonders of Kansas](#)) Museum and Visitors Center, 315 S. Sycamore. Completed in 1888 this 109-foot-deep by 32-foot-wide water well was excavated without machines, but with simple tools operated by hand—shovels, picks, half barrels, pulleys, ropes, and musels. It served as the city's water supply until 1932. Recognized as the world's largest hand-dug well, it was covered and opened as a tourist attraction in 1939 and operated until the 2007 tornado. The bigger and grander museum opened in 2012. Open all four days during the BKRT, 9am-6pm. Admission charge. 620.723.4102.

Memorial Plaza, northwest of the Big Well Museum. From 1915 to 2007 the Weaver and Emily (Beck) Fleener family home stood on the northeast corner of the block shared by the Big Well museum. After the 2007 tornado the Fleener-Beck family donated its property to the city for a plaza to memorialize this dramatic time in Greensburg's history that took their home and those of their neighbors. A gray granite marker lists the names of the 10 residents who lives were lost the night the devastating tornado hit Greensburg. Stop for a moment of quiet reflection the cost of that storm.

Water Tower Sculpture, southwest of the Big Well Museum. The old city water tower was a crumpled heap after the tornado and was purchased for scrap iron by the former Wichita-based Cater Iron Company. The company created a red and blue sculpture from parts of the water tower and donated it as a memory piece to Greensburg. The red ball is from the top of the old tower.

5.4.7 Arts Center, 204 W. Wisconsin. This ultra-modern community arts center is committed to presenting regularly changing fine art and photography exhibits, performances, and activities for community members and visitors. The building is the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum Certified Building in Kansas. It was designed and built by Studio 804, a nonprofit organization of University of Kansas Students. 5.4.7 is the month, day, and year that the EF5 tornado struck the town. NOTE: Special activities planned on Sat-Sun 10am-4pm. See event page. Open Thur-Sun 10am-4pm. 620.723.2600.

Kiowa County Commons Building, 320 S. Main. The city library, county museum and soda fountain, the K-State Research and Extension office, and a media center with an internet-based TV and radio station, all share space inside this 20,000-square-foot building. On the roof top a closed-loop geothermal system and thin-film solar panels provide the power. Whenever the building is

open, you're welcome to come inside, take the stairs to the top, and exit outside for a closer look at this example of green infrastructure. **NOTE:** Downtown walking tours on Saturday and Sunday during the BKRT will include this building and others. See the event schedule for those two day for more information.

Soda Fountain, 320 S. Main. Although the 1917 Hunter Drugs is no longer in business, its beloved 1950 soda fountain survived the tornado. The beautifully restored fountain, now a living history exhibit at the Kiowa County Historical Museum, serves your favorite ice cream and soda treats. A life-sized cutout of Hunter Drugs' long-time beloved soda jerk Richard Huckriede, better known as Dickie, stands next to the counter with his story. Open Thur-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm. 620.723.2331.

Kiowa County Historical Society Museum, 320 S. Main. The museum's exhibits burst forth in beautiful detail with large photo cutouts of historic figures including Donald "Cannonball" Green, the flamboyant stagecoach driver who operated the Cannonball Stage Line and for whom Greensburg is named; and Sheriff Mable Chase, who in 1924 became the first woman in the United States to be elected sheriff. During the BKRT open Thur-Fri 10am-5:30pm and Sat 10am-5pm. Admission charge. 620.723.1125.

Twilight Theatre & Community Auditorium, 200 S. Main. The curtains have risen on this plush new theater that shows first-run movies and includes a stage for live performances. The theater was built from the ground up after the original, constructed in 1916 as an opera house, was destroyed in the tornado. **NOTE:** See events page for special activities during the BKRT. 620.723.1092.

Kiowa County Memorial Hospital, 721 W. Kansas. The hospital is the first LEED Platinum Certified Critical Access Hospital in the United States. Designers created this first-of-its-kind energy efficient hospital, and visitors are welcome to visit the main lobby and lower level areas. Landscaping includes native plants such as sandhill plum, and signage informs readers of the reasons and ideas for environmental conservation. 620.723.3341.

Explorer Extras -

- **Several fragments and noticeable damage** are still visible from the 2007 tornado. The steps that once led into Fran's Antique Store (once housed inside the former First Christian Church) stand on their own at Sycamore and Wisconsin.
- **A bit of humor is needed** when devastation cuts into a community. Art was unleashed on a damaged tree stump by an unknown creator who sculpted it into a cowboy riding a tornado with the old water tower crumpled beneath it. See it at the Cannonball Golf Course, 200 block of S. Poplar.
- Find out more about the **exuberant character, Cannonball Green**, who helped found the town in 1886, on the historical marker in the rest area on the north side of the highway. From Main, 1 mile east on U.S. 50/400.

• HAVILAND, pop. 686

Haviland Hardware, 114 N. Main. This 1011 hardware store is a bond of the old and the new. Under original preset-tin ceilings, you'll still find hardware and groceries—and a place to hook up your wireless laptop at no charge. The coffee is always on! Mon-Fri 7am-4:30pm; Sat 7-10:30am. 620.862.5202.

Barclay College, N. Kingman. Haviland improbably the smallest town in the state with an institution of higher learning. Still operating today, the college dates to 1917 and promotes a Bible-centered environment for learning.

Beautification Project, Main and Walnut. Two murals seem to stretch all the way across the intersection with one depicting a rising sun, green prairie, clouds, and elevators on the horizon, inviting you to "come, and rest awhile" on the nearby patio with tables and chairs. The second mural continues with the same green prairie and includes images of a covered wagon and historic buildings.

• MULLINVILLE, pop. 251

Fromme-Birney Round Barn (NRHP*; 8 Wonders of Kansas [Architecture](#)). From U.S. 54, 3 3/4 miles south on 10, then 1 3/4 miles west on O Rd. ON its original site, this grand 1012 barn stands as a lonely vestige out in the country. You can imagine it filled with draft horses as you walk round and round on its dirt floor, looking at its stalls and tack, climbing the stairs to the loft, and hearing the wind whistle through the cracks. Shop for gifts and leave what you owe in the jar. Always open! Donations welcome. **NOTE:** Lots of activities will be happening here morning to night. Check the event listing for information.

M.T. Liggett Metal Sculptures, U.S. 400 west of town and U.S. 54 east of town. M.T. Liggett delivered extreme political statements on whirligigs and signs welded together from discarded machinery and anything else lying around his farm. His messages and motion displays draw plenty of attention, and his zingy signs in the shape of whimsical birds, demons, dragons, and bugs go on for more than a quarter mile both west and east of Mullinville. **NOTE:** Tours planned on Saturday and Sunday. See events page for more information.

Mullinville Compression Station, from Main, 3 1/2 miles east on U.S. 54/400. What happens at a compression station? Natural gas is highly pressured as it travels through an interstate pipeline. To ensure that it continually remains under pressure, compression is required periodically along the pipe. Thus the need for compressor stations, which are usually placed at 40 to 100-mile intervals.

Veterans Memorial, U.S. 400 and Main. This striking memorial to the veterans of Kiowa County is a countywide project, with residents from Greensburg and Haviland contributing to it. Nearly 1,800 names of county veterans, past and present, are inscribed on large gray granite tablets.

* NRHP - National Register of Historic Places

