

Historic Pawhuska Oklahoma

Pawhuska History

Pawhuska is located in central Osage County and is the county's seat and largest community. The town began in 1872 when Osage Agent Isaac T. Gibson established the Osage Agency on *Bird Creek* in what was then the Osage Nation, Indian Territory. The settlement was named in honor of Paw-Hiu-Skah (White Hair), chief of the Thorny Valley People, one of the tribe's five physical divisions, who dwelled nearby. The *Indian Herald*, the village's first newspaper, was started in 1875, and the Pawhuska post office opened in 1876.

Construction of the Midland Valley Railway reached Pawhuska in September 1905. Reserved from Osage allotment, the 195-acre townsite was surveyed, platted and appraised. Lots were sold at public auction starting on January 3, 1906. The town had a population of 2,408 at 1907 statehood. Businesses in 1908 included twenty retail stores and four banks. Cattle ranching was an important local industry.

Pawhuska was the scene of public lease auctions during the Osage oil boom of the 1910s and 1920s. Most sales were conducted by Colonel Ellsworth Walters beneath the Million Dollar Elm adjacent the Osage Agency. Oilmen, including Frank Phillips, Lee E. Phillips, Waite Phillips, William G. Skelly and Ernest W. Marland, attended the auctions. In 1920, near the peak of Osage oil-field production, Pawhuska had a population of 6,414. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway was extended from Owen in Washington County, Oklahoma, to Pawhuska in 1923. Pawhuska newspapers of that era included the *Osage Journal* and the *Osage County News*.

The 2010 census counted 3,584 people living in Pawhuska.

America's first Boy Scout troop was organized at Pawhuska in 1909. Pawhuska remains the location of the Osage Agency and is home to the Osage Tribal Museum. Dedicated in 1938, the Museum is the oldest tribally owned and operated museum in the United States. Annual community events are the Ben Johnson Memorial Steer Roping and the International Roundup Cavalcade, the world's largest amateur rodeo. Local listings in the National Register of Historic Places include the Immaculate Conception Church (NR 79002015), the Osage County Courthouse (NR 84003395), the Pawhuska Downtown Historic District (NR 86002355), and the Pawhuska National Guard Armory (NR 94000485).

The Tallgrass Prairie Preserve is located north of town. Scholar, author and historian John Joseph Mathews was a Pawhuska native. Others associated with the community are Osage Chief Bacon Rind, Ree Drummond and actor Ben Johnson, Jr.

Osage County Historical Society Museum 20

Housed in an old Santa Fe depot, the Osage County Historical Society Museum in Pawhuska takes visitors back in time to the state's early days. Learn about Osage County's landmark contributions to Oklahoma from pre-statehood to present day. Museum exhibits feature Western and pioneer life, early day oil industry, Native American heritage and Boy Scout displays.

Discover how Pawhuska was home to the first organized, uniformed Boy Scouts troop in America. Head to the oil display to read about famous oilmen and boom towns in Osage County, or view branding irons, saddles and a real ranch chuck wagon in the Western Life area. Step inside a restored one-room country schoolhouse to imagine what it was like to be a student in early Oklahoma.



Over the decades of time, three major ranches on The Osage remain: Drummond, Mullendore (now the Cross Bell Ranch) and Sooner Land and Cattle. The Osage was always highly valued by cattlemen, and many turned to the Osage Reservation to lease grazing lands before and after statehood in 1907. Located in the Museum there is a wall of Brands from ranches in The Osage:

Another interesting display is a Chuck Wagon, a most important part of any Cattle Drive. Also located in the Museum.

Visit this museum for a great Gift Shop, Library and many fascinating exhibits and displays all related to Osage County History and Pawhuska Area History.



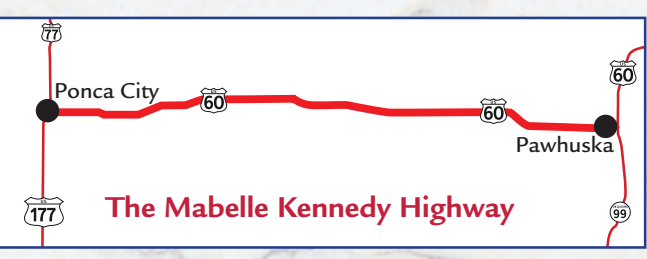
The Mabelle Kennedy Highway



When Mabelle Kennedy came to Oklahoma in a covered wagon with her parents and three siblings, her grandmother was sure the family would be killed by outlaws or scalped by Indians. Years later, the woman who became known as "the grand dame of Oklahoma politics" and who served in many political and governmental roles, told a reporter the period's often-rumored Indian Territory dangers remained just rumors. "It was a delightful trip," she said.

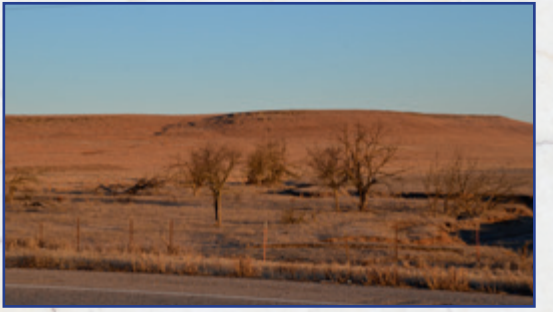
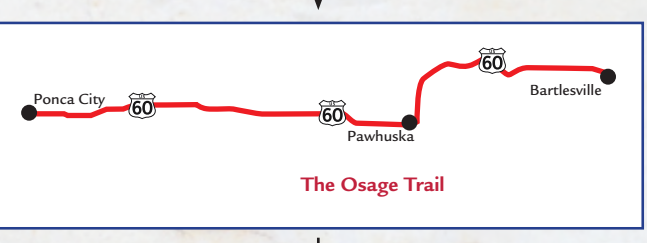
Kennedy spent much of her time raising five children until her husband died in 1936, leaving her the bank and five Osage County ranches. She was "deeply touched" in 1975 when a new highway replaced a 32-mile stretch of US 60 known as "Lizard Lane," and was named the "Mabelle Kennedy Highway." It was the first stretch of highway in Oklahoma to be named for a woman.

The opening of the Mabelle Kennedy Highway climaxed a 23-year fight to improve the road between Ponca City and Pawhuska. It remains today a part of the Osage Nation Heritage Highway from Ponca City to Bartlesville, Oklahoma.



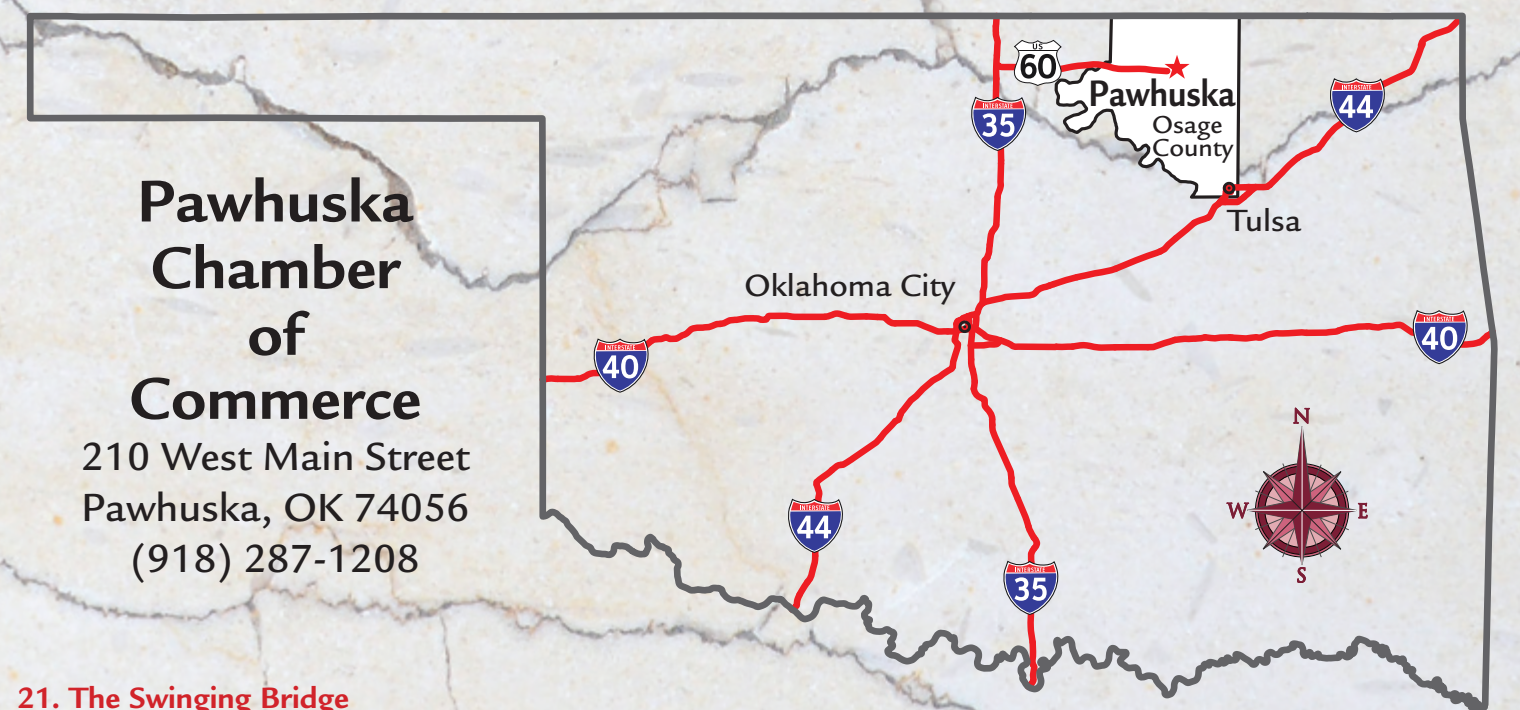
Osage Nation officially opens Osage Nation Heritage Trail Scenic Byway

This refers to the scenic byway along US 60, from Ponca City to Pawhuska to Bartlesville. The Osage Nation Trail was completed in 2019.



Pawhuska Events

- Uncorked Thursday before Father's Day
- Osage County Cattlemen present Ben Johnson Days
- Father's Day Weekend
- Freedom Celebration Parade
- Cavalcade Rodeo
- 3rd full week in July
- National Indian Taco Championship
- First Saturday in October
- Christmas Parade
- First Saturday in December.
- For more information: Call Chamber at (918) 287-1208



21. The Swinging Bridge
(Temporarily Closed)
The Swinging Bridge in Pawhuska, Osage County, Oklahoma was built across Bird Creek in 1926. It is located off Kihkehah Avenue, south of Main Street.

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Maps & Copy by Map Ink (405) 831-3858



2023 Chamber of Commerce Sponsors
THANK YOU!



Pawhuska Oklahoma



1. Ben Johnson Cowboy Museum
 (918) 287-9922 201 East 6th Street
 Travel through Oklahoma's Western film history at the Johnson Cowboy Museum. Dedicated to Oscar-winning actor Ben Johnson, this amazing collection features Osage County cowboys, cowgirls and Western heritage world-class art.



2. Osage Nation Museum
 (918) 287-5441 819 Grandview Avenue
 Visit the Osage Nation Museum to learn the story of the Osage people and celebrate their culture. Founded in 1938, this museum is the oldest tribally-owned museum in the United States.



3. Wolf Creek Ranch
 Experience the Osage at Wolf Creek Ranch, just minutes from downtown Pawhuska! Guided trail rides, hiking and a rustic venue space is available for weddings, parties and family gatherings. Learn more at www.wolfcreekranchosage.com.



4. Chief Fred Lookout Burial Site
 This is the burial site of Chief Fred Lookout and his wife, Julia. The scenic overlook has a 360-degree panoramic view of Pawhuska and Osage County. (See map for location)



5. Roaming The Osage: Historic & Scenic Tours
 (918) 440-5312 429 East Main Street
 Reserve a tour to experience Pawhuska in a whole new way - in a Mercedes Benz convertible bus. A 90-minute tour treats guests to spectacular views of Osage County, the Osage Hills, Tallgrass Prairie, Drummond Ranch and more. The bus seats up to 18.



6. Shop Historic Pawhuska!



8. Lake Pawhuska and Bluestem Lake
 Enjoy two lakes in the Pawhuska vicinity - great places to relax, fish and picnic. (see corner photo) Contact City Hall (918) 287-3040 or Police Department. (918) 287-4545

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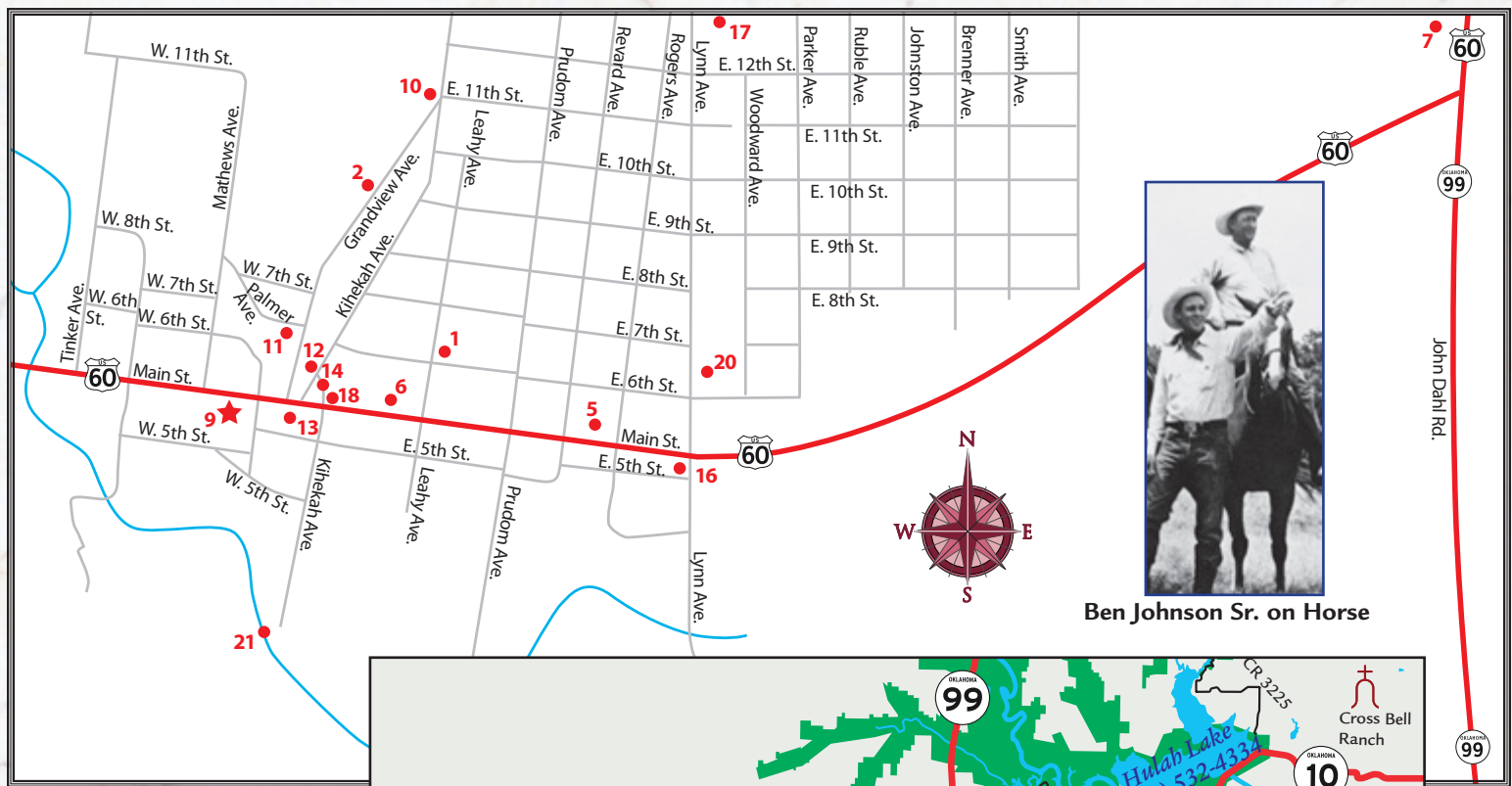
★9. Blacksmith House
 (918) 287-1208 210 West Main Street (currently the Chamber of Commerce). Built in 1871. This five-room house with native timbers and 18" thick sandstone walls was first to be built in Pawhuska. When the Osage were removed from Kansas, Sid Delarue, a Swiss blacksmith, was promised the house if he would care for their horses. The Blacksmith House was listed in the "National Register of Historic Places" in 1979.



9 ★ Chamber of Commerce office (Blacksmith House)



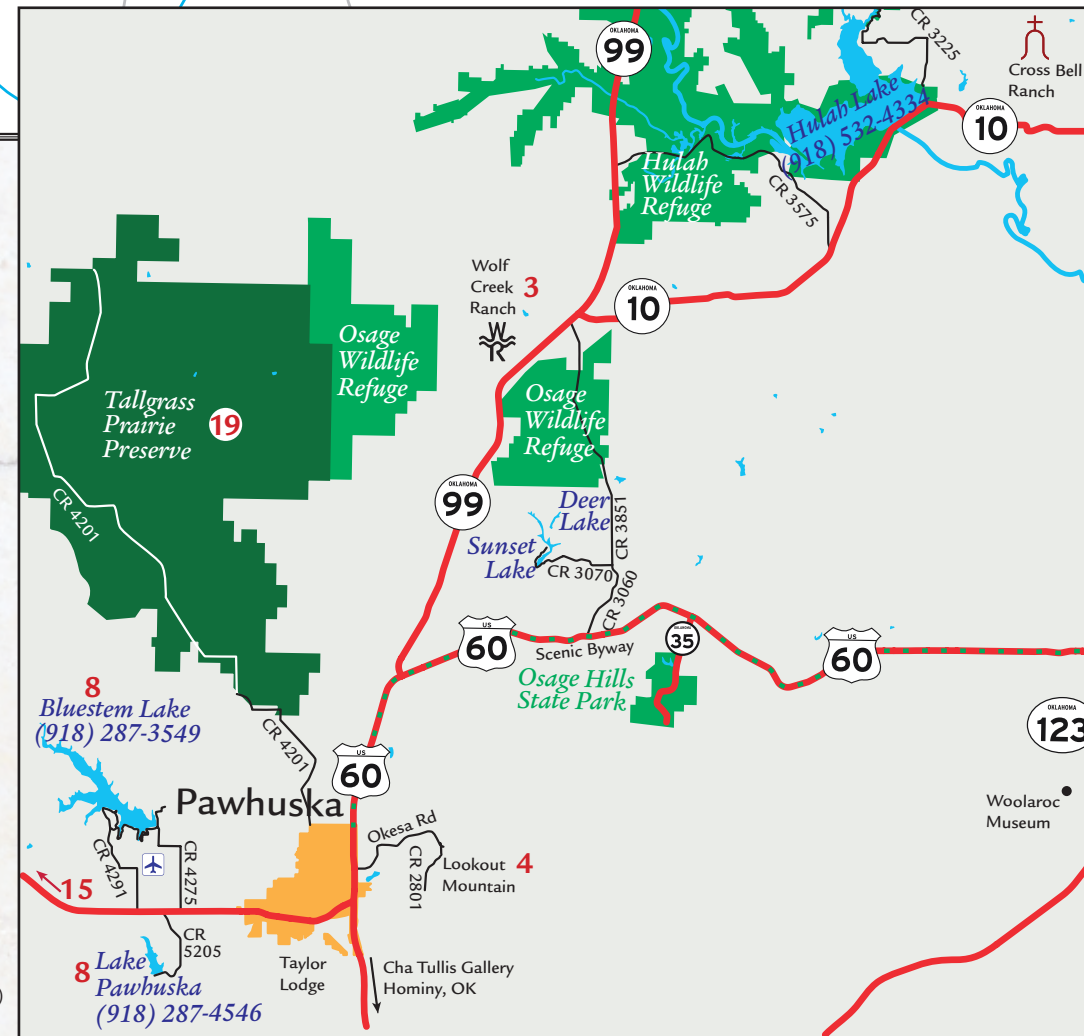
19. Tallgrass Prairie Preserve
 (918) 287-4803 15316 County Road 4201
 "One of the last remnants of tall grass prairie remaining in the U.S." The Preserve is a natural marvel. The vast expanses of pristine prairie are breathtaking. The Bison are a joy to see in any season. The Preserve has never been farmed and thus provides a true picture of how the land appeared before the onslaught of Western "civilization."



Ben Johnson Sr. on Horse

Pawhuska Disc Golf!

- Williams Park**
Park Course 9 Holes
- Timber Valley**
Course 18 Holes
- Wahzazhe Heritage Walking Trail**
Ni-U-Ko-ska Disc Course 18 Holes
- Lodge at Taylor Ranch**
 - 1) Island Course 18 Holes
 - 2) Moccasin Creek 18 Holes (thelodgeattaylorranch.com/disc-golf/)



10. James Bigheart Statue
 Located at 11th Street & Grandview Avenue
 The James Bigheart Statue is a statue of Chief Osage Principal Chief James Bigheart, who served from 1875 to 1906.



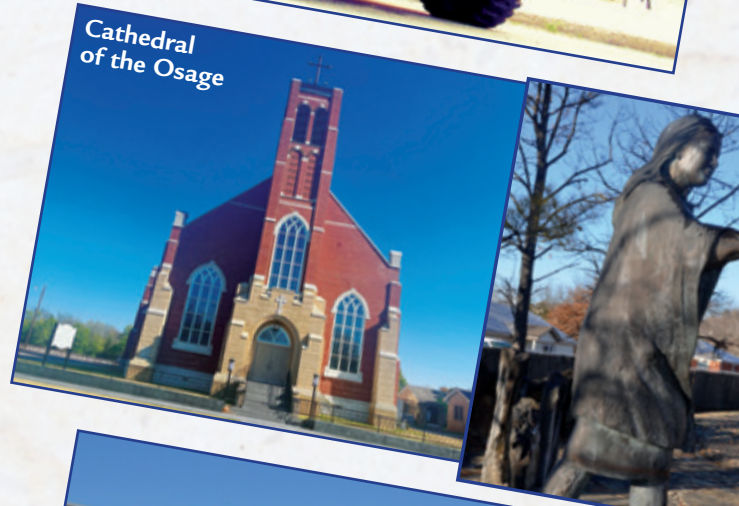
11. Osage County Courthouse
 The Osage County Courthouse is perched above the city of Pawhuska. From the pages of Bestseller *Killers of the Flower Moon*, the Osage County Courthouse was the location for the Oklahoma trial of the century. History has been made and recorded at the Courthouse on Grandview Avenue in Pawhuska. Located just one block west of Kihkeh Avenue, take a walk up the steps and stand where outlaws have been convicted and acquitted.



18. The Pioneer Woman Mercantile
 (918) 528-7705 532 Kihkeh Avenue
 The Pioneer Woman Mercantile is Ree Drummond's beloved restaurant, bakery and store in the heart of Osage County. The food is wonderful and the Mercantile sits in the heart of Pawhuska's growing and exciting retail district.



17. Cathedral of the Osage
 (918) 287-1414 1314 Lynn Avenue
 Known for its rare stained-glass windows, this 1910 French Gothic-style Catholic Church was the principal church of the Osage Tribe. The Cathedral features twenty-two stained glass windows.



17. Shrine & Statue Dedicated to the First Native American Ever Canonized as a Saint
 1314 Lynn Avenue
 The historic Immaculate Conception Catholic Church is known as the Cathedral of the Osage, and is home to a shrine dedicated to the first Native American ever canonized as a saint, Kateri Tekakwitha, also known as "Lily of the Mohawks."

16. Osage Nation Visitors Center
 (918) 287-0005 602 East Main Street
 Visit the Osage Nation Visitors Center in Pawhuska for a wealth of travel information.



15. Pioneer Woman Lodge
 The Pioneer Woman Lodge is where the *Food Network* show is filmed with *The Pioneer Woman*, Ree Drummond. The Pioneer Woman Lodge is located on the Drummond Ranch in Osage County and tours are available throughout the year. Tickets available: **The Pioneer Woman Mercantile (918) 528-7705** in Pawhuska.



14. Indian Taco Championship



13. Constantine Theater
 (918) 900-6161 110 West Main Street
 One of the oldest operating theaters in Oklahoma.



12. P-Town Pizza & Charlie's Sweet Shop
P-Town Pizza (918) 287-2314; **Charlie's Sweet Shop** (918) 528-7705; 515 Kihkeh Avenue.
 Located less than a block from the Mercantile, head over to the P-Town Pizza for a great meal. Charlie's Sweet Shop is a place to go for The Pioneer Woman's favorite desserts. Located directly below her pizza shop.

