



DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA

See beyond.



GUIDEBOOK



Discovery Park of America should enhance education for children as well as adults and do it in an entertaining way. I hope it will be a destination that people will visit again and again and walk away each time with an expectation for continued innovation.”

Robert Kirkland,
Founder of Discovery Park of America

Discovery Park of America is a 501(c)(3) public charity funded by generous individuals, corporations and foundations including its principal funder, the Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation.



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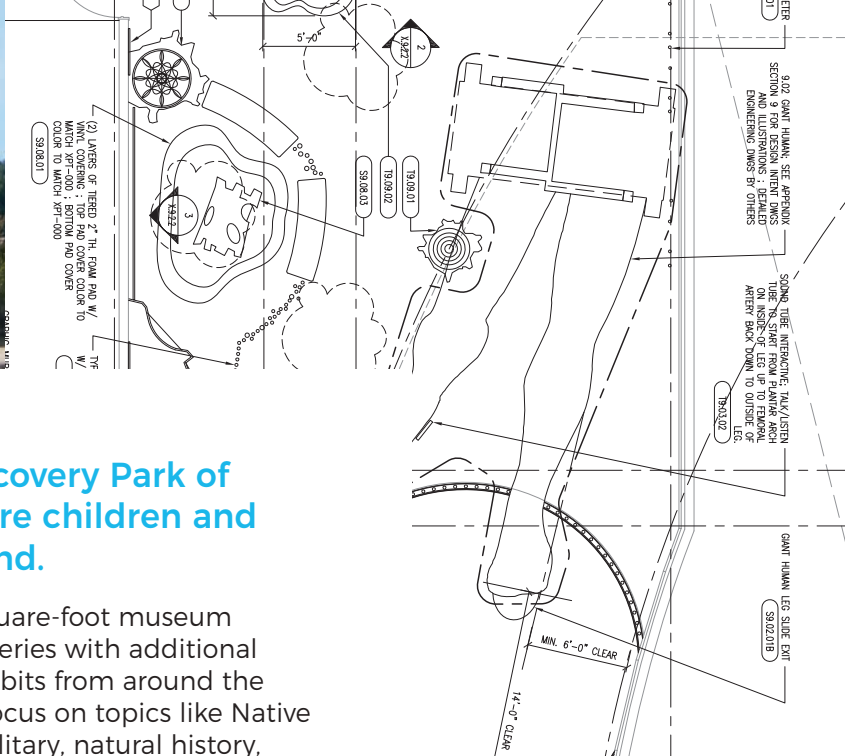
Discovery Park of America provides a one-of-a-kind, transformational experience first envisioned by Robert and Jenny Kirkland. The location was chosen as a way for them to give back to Union City, their small West Tennessee hometown.

When Robert Kirkland held his first public meeting to explore the creation of a center of culture and education in Union City, more than 250 members of the community showed up to declare their desire to be part of his mission. Eventually, more than 350 volunteers contributed more than 20,000 hours to the planning and construction of Discovery Park.

The combined efforts of experts, novices and volunteers were fully realized on Nov. 1, 2013 as the red ribbon was cut and the doors of Discovery Park were opened. The public was impressed from the start. Not only had there never been anything like this in Obion County, there had never been anything quite like Discovery Park in the world.

Although Robert and Jenny Kirkland have both since passed away, their vision has been realized, and since opening, millions of guests have experienced this 100-million-dollar masterpiece now sitting in what was once a quiet cornfield.

Robert Kirkland began his business with a rented office on First Street in Union City, Tennessee. For a desk, he had an old door set atop a pair of sawhorses. Whatever he may have lacked in furniture, Kirkland more than made up for in determination, inquisitiveness and work ethic. He grew his business and made his fortune in home décor, first in retail, then in imports. His career allowed him to travel the world, exposing Kirkland to sights, sounds and ideas that many live a lifetime without ever experiencing. As his business and fortune continued to grow, Kirkland and his wife, Jenny, committed themselves again and again to supporting their community in powerful ways. Today, Discovery Park of America stands not just as a life-changing gift to West Tennessee, but to the entire world.



The mission of Discovery Park of America is to inspire children and adults to see beyond.

Included is a 100,000-square-foot museum featuring ten exhibit galleries with additional space for temporary exhibits from around the world. Exhibit galleries focus on topics like Native American history, the military, natural history, regional history, science, space, technology, art, transportation and more.

In addition to more than 20 unique indoor and outdoor experiences, the 50-acre outdoor heritage park features a man-made river flowing through the extensively landscaped property, along with waterfalls, bridges and other water features.



Discovery Park of America's iconic building, Discovery Center, was designed by architects from Boston-based Verner Johnson, Inc. The exhibits were designed by Thinc Design of New York and fabricated by New Jersey-based *kubik maltbie*. The aquarium was designed and installed by Tenji of California.

For some of Discovery Park's younger guests, a visit to the museum includes their first ride on an escalator or elevator. Both were designed to include cutaways so curious minds can discover how these devices actually work.



Dinosaur Hall

The large fossil reproductions of dinosaurs and marine reptiles that dominate Dinosaur Hall, part of the Natural History Gallery, are all from the Mesozoic Era. The dinosaurs on display include a *Triceratops*, *Tyrannosaurus rex*, *Apatosaurus*, and *Appalachiosaurus*.

The bones you see in the Natural History Gallery are scientifically correct reproductions; this means that real bones were used to create the molds from which our skeletons were made.



The marine reptiles on display include two mosasaurs, "Ian" and "Kimberly." Unlike most of the specimens in the Natural History Gallery, Ian and Kimberly are real fossils, not reproductions. Kimberly was found by Aaron Scott, a University of Tennessee at Martin student during a dig co-sponsored by Discovery Park of America and Triebold Paleontology. He named the fossil after his mother. Scott has visited Discovery Park several times to speak with guests about the dig and the process of unearthing a fossil.





Natural History Gallery

The Natural History Gallery focuses on two scientific disciplines: geology, the study of the earth, and paleontology, the study of prehistoric creatures.

Surrounding the WLJT Discovery Globe are physical examples and graphic displays that tell the geologic story of our planet. Much is told about what is now the state of Tennessee with specimens from across the state among those on display. Graphic panels illustrate the planet's formation and provide a cut-away view revealing the structure of the earth.

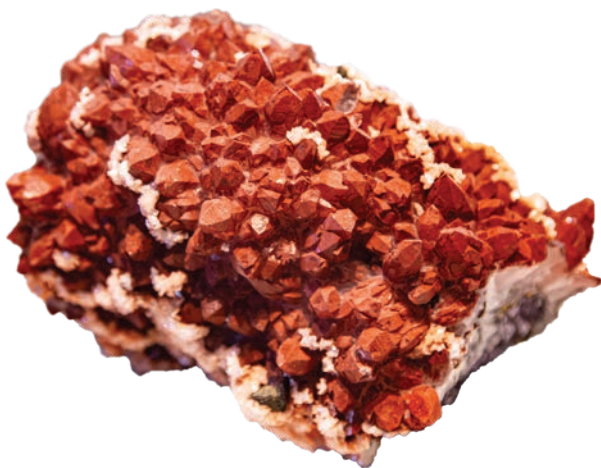
The WLJT Discovery Globe is four feet in diameter. Visitors can choose what aspect of the earth they would like to see via the touch screen display. Educators find it useful for providing a visual demonstration of concepts like plate tectonics.



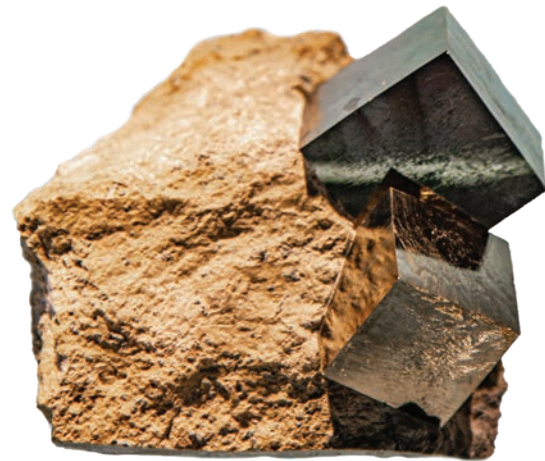


The Dinosaur eggs on display beneath the *Edmontosaurus* are from Robert Kirkland's personal collection. They are real hadrosaur eggs from the Late Cretaceous Period, but the nest is not real or correct. Afraid of damaging the eggs by altering the nest, we chose to leave them as they were.

In May of 1967, alert construction worker John Henson uncovered fossils of a herd of prehistoric pigs 1.5 miles southwest of Hickman, Kentucky. The five pigs, known as peccaries, were all lying in a row, virtually undisturbed since their deaths some 34,000 years ago. Paleontologists have determined that the peccaries were killed by a storm of loess – fine particles of sediment blown from the base of glaciers about 200 miles away.



Red Quartz with Dolomite and Calcanpyrite



Pyrite

END OF SAMPLE

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of America
Official Guidebook.**