

RESTAURANTS NEWS & TRENDS

New spring Lexington tradition: Dining with goats

BY ROB BOLSON *CONTRIBUTING WRITER*

MARCH 16, 2022 6:00 AM



Angie Siemer of Lancaster, Ohio, petted "Ethel" while visiting Picnic with Goats in Lexington on Saturday, March 5th. Photo by Rob Bolson. ROB BOLSON

"The goats came marching one by one, hurrah! Hurrah!"

So goes the nursery rhyme, sort of. And so goes the experience at [The Horse Lodge](#) in rural Fayette County where you can enjoy a unique alfresco brunch, lunch, or

dinner experience in a tranquil, unspoiled setting surrounded by pastoral woodlands — with goats.

🔒 This story is a subscriber exclusive

Yes, goats. Five of them, in fact.

“Lucy.” “Ethel.” “Archie.” “Wilma,” and “Maryann.”

Picnic with Goats was the brainchild of Jan Roehl. She and her husband Alan love to dine out in Lexington but during the COVID-19 pandemic found themselves with few options to choose from while many local restaurants suspended indoors dining. Accordingly, they opted to eat at home more often.



Jan Roehl, owner of Picnic with Goats, leads two of her goats to the picnic area. Rob Bolson



The picnic area at The Horse Lodge, which lets you pick your menu from Lexington restaurants to eat on the farm with their goats. You can pet and feed goats too. Rob Bolson

Coincidentally, the Roehls had purchased several goats to help clean out the sizable underbrush in a wilderness area of their 12-acre farm on Athens-Boonesboro Road. Goats are voracious foragers and the Roehls' goats eagerly spent the next 18 months feasting on invasive plants, brush, and weeds.

Eventually, it was mission accomplished. The goats had successfully cleared away the underbrush, and were, in essence, out of a job.

“I thought about selling them,” noted Jan. “But that wasn’t going to happen. They are super sweet.”

Friends suggested starting a goat yoga business. But Jan was not sold on that idea. “That was too much work. I said, ‘What if we just served wine and cheese and simply enjoyed them?’”

Thus, the idea of Picnic with Goats was born.

At the end of the driveway at The Horse Lodge awaits the perfect escape for a private picnic — located only 15 minutes from downtown Lexington — complete with covered picnic table under pergolas, Adirondack chairs, a hammock, lawn chairs, and of course, the goats.



"Ethel" is named for the TV character of the same name on the "I Love Lucy" television show. Rob Bolson



With her solid red coat, "Lucy" is named for Lucille Ball. Rob Bolson



“Archie” is one of five goats available to interact with at Picnic with Goats in Lexington. Rob Bolson

The breakfast, brunch, or lunch picnic and goat experience costs \$59 per person with a 2-person minimum that includes your choice of several tasty food items brought in from popular Lexington restaurants such as omelets, waffles, pancakes, quiche of the day, burgers, a variety of sandwiches, fresh salads, and more.

Breakfast is available daily from Josie’s or DV8 Kitchen starting at 9 a.m. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m., provided by Malone’s or City Barbeque.

Dinner begins daily at 4 p.m., provided by Sutton’s Restaurant or City Barbeque and menu options include ribs, brisket, pulled pork, lasagna, eggplant Parmesan, chicken marsala, and more. The dinner and goat experience are \$69 per person. Full dinner for four is \$259. A special discount of 15 percent off is available for groups of 5 or more. All meals must come from the same restaurant.

The picnic area is accessible to all ages and abilities and parking is only 100-feet away. Tables can be set with wheelchair accessible seating, and it is all in an

inviting, quiet spot that is just right for a secluded picnic. The picnic area can accommodate groups of up to 20 for special events such as birthday parties, baby showers, anniversaries, and other special occasions. At last count, there has been a dozen marriage proposals on the grounds.

(No word on whether the goats will be invited to the respective weddings.)



Want to picnic with the goats grazing at The Horse Lodge in Lexington? You can. And you can pick your menu from several Lexington restaurants. Rob Bolson

“Bruno,” a rescue burrow from the Bureau of Land Management will soon be joining the farm and the experience, according to Jan.

Bottled water, fresh fruit, and snacks for the goats are provided at no additional charge. You are also welcomed to bring your own additional drinks and alcohol.

But the epic attraction is, of course, the ability to interact with the goats.



Visitors Angie Siemer and Jeff Marvin of Lancaster, Ohio, prepare for their picnic lunch at Picnic with Goats on a breezy Saturday afternoon in Lexington on March 5, 2022. Rob Bolson

The friendly, lively goats are tied to trees in the picnic area so there is no need to worry about them invading your meal. But Jan points out that they are always eager for treats and petting.

It is a 90-minute private dining experience unlike any other offered in Lexington and there is also the option of a professional photo shoot with the goats at an additional charge.

The experience is highly rated on [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com) with almost all “excellent” reviews.

On a recent Saturday, Jeff Marvin and his companion Angie Seimer, both from Lancaster, Ohio, visited the facility on a scheduled picnic. The couple were in town for the weekend to attend a comedy concert at Rupp Arena and looking for other things to do while visiting. Marvin surprised Seimer with the experience.

“She was so excited when we pulled in and she saw the goats. I did good.”

Rob Bolson is a local foodie who prides himself on eating out. Often. Follow him on Instagram at [@RobbieBolson](#).



Angie Seimer and Jeff Marvin of Lancaster, Ohio, visited Picnic with Goats in Lexington for an afternoon picnic on Saturday, March 5th. Photo by Rob Bolson. Rob Bolson

PICNIC WITH GOATS

Price: Breakfast, Brunch, or Lunch: \$49 per person; Dinner: \$59 per person.

Address: The Horse Lodge, 6990 Athens-Boonesboro Road, Lexington.

Hours: Call for available bookings.

Call: 859-559-1409

Online: picnicwithgoats.com

Menu choices:

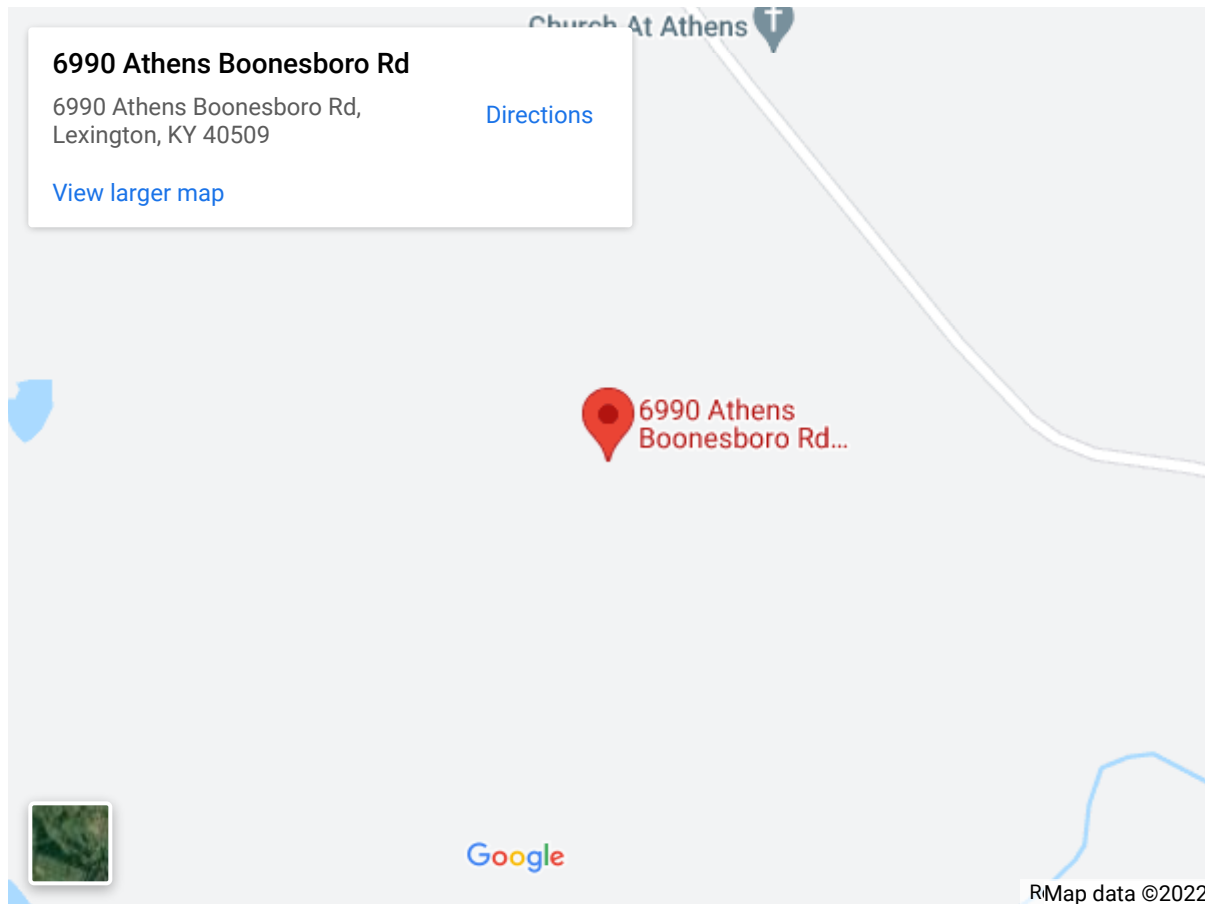
[Josie's Breakfast Menu](#)

[DV8 Kitchen Menu](#)

[Malone's Menu](#)

[Sutton's Pasta Dinner Menu](#)

[City Barbeque Menu](#)



Conversation

Your voice matters. Discussions are moderated for civility. Read our guidelines [here](#)

Commenting as **Guest**

[🔔](#) [Log in](#) [Sign up](#)