

Top 15

Things to do before leaving JMU

Story by
staff writer
Kelly Lyon

Art by
art editor
Nate Tharp

Whether you're a freshman wondering what to do in Harrisonburg or an upperclassman looking for a fun way to spend your spare time, this list is intended to show you what JMU and its surrounding area has to offer students.

5. Have Your Picture Taken with the James Madison Statue

At 4,398 feet, Reddish Knob is the highest point in northern Virginia. About an hour drive from JMU, Reddish Knob offers visitors a spectacular view of Virginia and West Virginia mountains. Serious bike riders might even consider biking to the top. From Harrisonburg, take Route 42 south to Dayton. Follow Route 257 west through Ottobine and Briery Branch. Pass the Hone Quarry and bear right, following Route 257 until it turns into Route 924. Drive until the road ends and you're there!

If you're lucky enough to be here during a snowstorm, this activity is a must. Sledding anywhere on campus is guaranteed fun, especially with a large group of people, but huge hills such as the one outside ISAT will give you a thrill ride. If you're unable to buy a proper sled, garbage can lids and dining hall trays suffice.

Every year, the Women's Resource Center, in conjunction with other campus organizations, sponsors the Clothesline Project and "Take Back the Night." Both events are dedicated to raising awareness of violence against women and sexual assault. The Clothesline Project is a visual display of t-shirts made by those affected by violence against women in the JMU and Harrisonburg communities. Anyone can make a t-shirt and students are encouraged to read them. "Take Back the Night" activities include musical performances, speakers and a speak-out, which allows survivors of sexual assault and others an opportunity to speak about their experiences. For more information, visit www.jmu.edu/womensresource.

While this is just a short list of ideas for things you should see and do while you're at JMU, it is by no way definitive or complete. Keep an open mind and try as many activities as you and your friends can find — most of the things on this list cost little or no money, so being a broke college student is no excuse for not making the best of your college years. Get out and have some fun!

1. Eat Kline's Ice Cream.

Famous in the 'Burg for its amazingly delicious ice cream, Kline's Dairy Bar should be on every student's to-do list. With a different flavor featured every week and classic delights including milkshakes, floats and banana splits, Kline's has become a spring and summertime hot spot. Flavors such as mint Oreo, chocolate peanut butter and pumpkin keep a constant stream of JMU students lined up everyday, so you'll always be able to find someone to go with. Located downtown at 58 East Wolfe St., Kline's is open Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Sunday noon to 10 p.m.

2. Go to a Football Game.

Even though the Dukes haven't seen the same success as that school two hours south on Interstate 81, football games are always exciting. Games are Saturday and everyone from the Marching Royal Dukes to Duke Dog are there to help cheer on the home team. Extra points for painting your face purple at Homecoming. Go Dukes!

During the weekend before fall classes, thousands of students can be seen flocking to a townhouse complex known as Forest Hills. Whether you plan on celebrating the fact that you're back in the 'Burg with all your friends or if you just want to see what all the fuss is about, a Forest Hills block party is the place to see and be seen.

3. Go to a Forest Hills Block Party.

Even if you've only set foot inside UREC to fulfill one of your wellness passport activities, you have undoubtedly seen UREC's climbing wall. The focal point of UREC's atrium area, the wall almost always has someone climbing it. For more information on hours and available classes, see www.jmu.edu/recreation/adventure/wall.shtml.

4. Climb the UREC Climbing Wall.

Located on the CISAT side of campus, the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum is a popular place to catch some rays, study for exams, picnic or take a date. Offering a running trail, coy fishpond and hundreds of beautiful plants, the arboretum becomes a haven for students and parents alike during warm weather.

6. Spend Time at the Arboretum.

Located next to Kinko's just outside of campus on Main Street, the experimental theater in Theatre II is where you'll find many of JMU's budding actors and directors. Offering about 20 plays a year, Theatre II productions are entirely student-run, and most shows cost just a couple dollars.

8. See a Play at Theatre II.

Students looking for a free-fall adventure can fill their adrenaline fix an hour Southeast of the 'Burg at Skydive Orange Skydiving Club in Orange County, Va. Grab a friend and face your fears for a rush you won't soon forget. Remember to purchase the video of your dive — you never know when you'll need a good laugh at the face you made right before your leap into the wild blue yonder. Check out www.skydiveorange.com for more information.

10. Skydive the Friendly Skies.

This is a must. With a ski resort just 10 miles up the road, you have to go at least once.

Massanutten is a popular spot among JMU students, as it offers reduced student prices on certain nights and specials on snow days. If you're a beginner, Massanutten is an excellent place to learn. For those who aren't necessarily interested in skiing or snowboarding but enjoy outside winter weather, the resort also offers snow tubing.

11. Go Skiing, Snowboarding or Snow Tubing at Massanutten.

A little-known spot by a river located in the mountains of Virginia, Blue Hole is an excellent place for swimming and relaxing. About 25 minutes outside of Harrisonburg on Route 33 West, it is literally located down a hill on the side bank of the river can serve both as a sunbathing spot or diving board. There is also a small beach-like area on the other bank. If you go, expect to find a few students and townies enjoying the chilly mountain water.

When the weather outside is beautiful, the Quad is the place to be. Students often study or nap between classes, play frisbee and football games or play with their dogs. Another place to see and be seen, the Quad is a place to scope out hotties, eat lunch or talk with your friends. A variation of this recommendation could be to streak the Quad — but you decide which sounds more fun.

Undoubtedly, your parents and older friends who have attended college have already told you this, and although you may have blown off their advice, being a part of a club or an organization can be a beneficial and enjoyable part of your college career. JMU offers hundreds of groups to choose from, with almost any purpose or function that you can imagine. Be sure to check them out at [Student Organization](http://StudentOrganization) Night held each semester or go to www.jmu.edu/ucenter/sos/clubs/current/index.htm.



14. Sit or Play Games on the Quad.

15. Join a Club or Organization.