

# Ohio River Scenic Byway

*America's Story ... Your Story*







# Rhonda's letter

Greetings Dear Byway Friends,

"Sittin' on the Riverbank by myself  
Thinkin' bout you and nobody else" .....

So began a tune once inspired by merely looking out across the beautiful Ohio River in Southernmost Illinois. Just as it continues to inspire and be a driving force for me so it has for many who have gone on before.

The Creative outlets that have sprung from the Ohio River Scenic Byway region in the form of Music, Poetry, Books and Film date back decades and in some cases as much as a century. The Mighty Ohio is such an aw inspiring energy force that anyone with an appreciation for cultural arts will find it fascinating.

Whether it's writing a song, this welcome letter to hopefully encourage you for a visit, or helping to inform the public about the Historic significance and economic value this part of our wonderful country has once held and continues to harbor, I hope you will enjoy this issue of "America' Story – Your Story". This issue is dedicated to help give a glimpse into our 188 mile Ohio River Scenic Byway's Cultural Arts History and its Future.

As Always,  
"I'm Thinkin' Bout You On The Ohio"

**Rhonda Belford**  
Ohio River Scenic Byway President

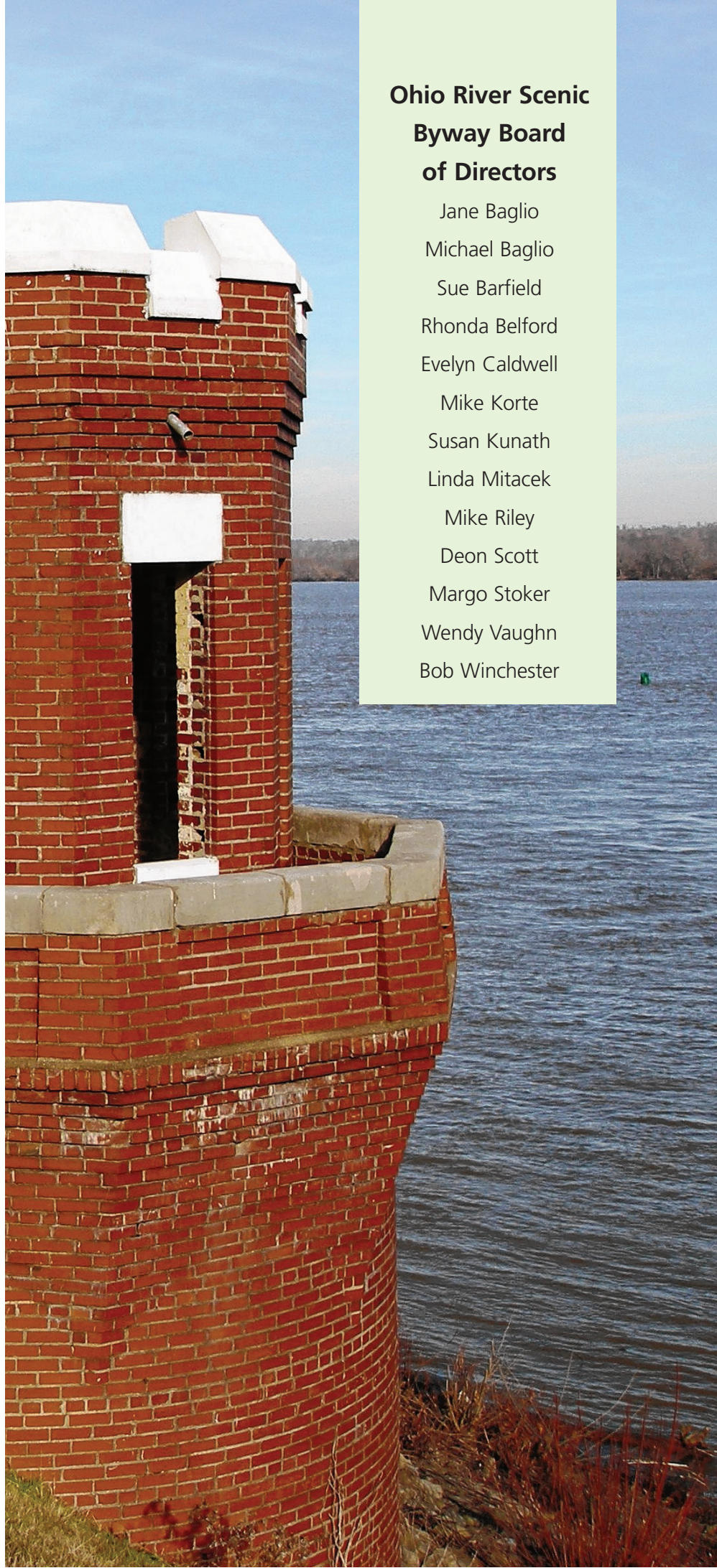
"Ohio" © R. Belford Whoopie Cat Mtn. Music BMI

Engraved with the motto of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Essayons" a French word meaning "Let Us Try" ... the turret of the pump house at Dam 51 sits on the shore of the Ohio River at Golconda.

Photo by Ben Walker

## Ohio River Scenic Byway Board of Directors

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### PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

- 2 cups sugar
- 2/3 cup milk
- 2 cups marshmallow crème
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Cook milk and sugar in pan, to a rolling boil, stirring constantly. Boil for approximately 5 minutes, or to soft ball stage, and continue stirring. Remove and stir in marshmallow crème, peanut butter, and vanilla until mixed well. Pour into a buttered 8 inch square pan or dish. Cool and cut into squares. You may use either smooth or crunchy peanut butter.

### VANILLA FUDGE

- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2/3 cup evaporated milk
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 12 oz. package white chocolate chips
- 1 1/2 cups chopped nuts (I like pecan)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Cook butter, milk and sugar in pan, to a rolling boil on medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil 4 1/2—5 minutes, continuing to stir. Remove from heat; stir in marshmallows, morsels, nuts and vanilla. Stir vigorously until melted.

### PUMPKIN ROLL

- Beat:
  - 3 eggs for 5 minutes
- Add:
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 2/3 cup pumpkin
- Mix together and add:
  - 2 teaspoons cinnamon
  - 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
  - 1/2 teaspoon salt



Pumpkin Roll with Cream Cheese Filling.

- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 cup flour

Put in greased jelly roll pan (deep cookie sheet-15 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 1). Sprinkle with: 1 cup chopped pecans

Bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes, until toothpick comes out clean. Remove from oven and let cool until almost completely cool, but not quite. Lay out a clean dish towel and dust it heavily with powdered sugar. Loosen from the pan and dump the cake, nut side down onto the dish towel. Roll up and cool completely. Unroll and spread filling over top; then re-roll.

#### Filling:

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

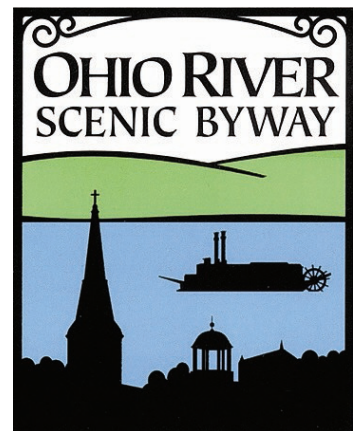
Cream together butter and cream cheese; then add vanilla. Add powdered sugar in small amounts, mixing thoroughly with mixer, until all is added.

Getting the roll off of the dish towel is tricky, as sometimes it wants to fall apart. The best advice I can give is don't panic... transfer onto saran wrap and roll up tightly. I like to wrap this again in freezer paper and freeze for a later date.



Mary McSparin

Mary (Willie) McSparin spent most of her growing up years in Hardin County, attending grade school in Rosiclare and graduating from Cave-In-Rock High School. As a fourth grade student, her interest in cooking began when she attended 4-H meetings held at the homes of leaders Ruth Lamar and Catherine Hurford. Mary's love for cooking has grown over the years and she is happiest when she is cooking a meal for somebody else! Mary recently wrote her first book: *Taste & See: A Devotional Cookbook*. She works full time in Harrisburg, and she and her husband, Tom, live in Eldorado. Mary is the mother of two adult sons.



**Ohio River Scenic Byway**

**PO Box 746  
Rosiclare, Illinois 62982**

Visit us at  
[www.OhioRiverScenicByway.net](http://www.OhioRiverScenicByway.net)

Email us at  
[Ohioriverscenicbywayillinois@gmail.com](mailto:Ohioriverscenicbywayillinois@gmail.com)

5M/12-2014

**Photo by Mike Korte**

The Ohio River Scenic Byway assisted the Friends of Fort Massac obtain a grant to purchase the old Laidlaw Buildings in Metropolis. In upcoming months, the buildings are slated to be used as the site of filming some scenes for a new movie. Later, the buildings will be demolished making room for the development of a pioneer village, enhancing Fort Massac State Park.



## Quarterly Magazine

Winter 2014

## Content Contributors

Alli Armstrong  
Rhonda Belford  
Lauren Bishop  
Michael Korte  
Jennifer Lane  
Jennifer McIntosh  
Mary McSparin  
Debbie Moore  
Jennifer Rhodes  
Julie Smith  
Ben Walker

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## FROM THE COVER

Front Cover Photograph  
Provided by Ben Walker: Guitar  
with Ohio River and a Barge in  
the Background



# The Wicked Six

## Alli Armstrong

If you live in Southern Illinois, chances are you either hunt or know someone who hunts, such as a family member or friend.

For most families here, hunting is a tradition and is a very common past time. Hunting provides a great opportunity to spend quality time in the outdoors with your family and friends all while learning some life lessons.

My family is one of those families who have taken advantage of this opportunity.

We take deer hunting very seriously, from October to January chances are, we will be in a tree stand. The four of us are always on the lookout for deer and we can't wait to hear about everyone's hunting stories.

Whether the result is successful or not, we enjoy listening to the hunt and how excited the storyteller is. I believe every hunter likes to hear these stories because they have either been in the same position and know how the other hunter feels or they can learn from the other hunter's success or mistakes to better themselves as hunters. Sometimes, hunters can encounter the same deer and have stories about the deer that can make these particular deer famous among the hunters who are in pursuit.

It is amazing to think how far a deer can travel and where he can show up in a matter of just a few days. Trail



**Alli with Deer:** Alli with a buck she had previously harvested on the farm where she lives that had also been seen on the trail cam.

cameras have especially helped to keep track of deer and where they travel.

We like to keep track of what stays on and passes through our farm by checking our trail cameras. Last fall, after an unsuccessful evening of bow hunting, my family and I came home from the woods and sat down to eat supper. While we were talking

about the evening's hunt, the phone rang.

The call was from my friend Dalton who lives a few farms away.

He had shot a nice buck and was calling to tell us about it and to see if we would take pictures of it for him. (His mom is a wonderful photographer but she was out of town at the time.) We

were very happy for him as he told us the story of his hunt. He and his friend went bow hunting that evening and just like us, the deer weren't moving.

They had only seen one doe walking to the tree stand and didn't see anything else all evening until right before dark.

Finally, they heard a deer walking through the woods and when they could see it, they realized it was a great buck that they had nicknamed the "Wicked Six". With only about five more minutes of shooting light, Dalton took a 45-yard shot on the buck.

The Wicked Six was down in no time! Dalton said he had trail camera pictures of this deer before but they were all a side view of him. Once he got up to the deer, he realized how unique the buck was.

He said he was a three and a half year old, tall-tined six point and the tines almost crossed like fingers at the top.

We couldn't wait to see the buck and finally Dalton arrived at the house to get pictures with his unique deer. As soon as he let the tailgate down we all knew exactly which buck it was.

We had watched him all summer at our farm! It really is amazing how much deer can move throughout the year from place to place. Usually by the time deer season arrives we have a pretty good idea of the quality





Side view trail camera Picture: Alli caught the side view of this buck on her trail camera at his summer home on the Armstrong farm.

and quantity of deer we have running around since we monitor the deer movement with our trail cameras.

Of course, there's never a guarantee since they are wild animals and have their reasons for traveling, especially during the rut. From about the middle of June, we started seeing this deer pretty regularly on the trail cameras around the farm.

He liked to stay in one of our clover fields and spend the evening there until dark.

We got used to seeing him and then around the middle of October he just disappeared. We hadn't seen him in person or on the trail

camera since then.

It's so amazing to see how far this deer traveled which was about 6 miles and that someone we knew was able to successfully harvest him.

While sitting in my tree stand I can't help but think about some of the great deer that have come and gone from our farm and there's no telling what happened to them.

Some of them might even be back later on.

At the same time, I look forward to seeing the deer that will travel to our farm that we may have never seen before and the opportunities I might have to put my tag on them!



Dalton with Deer (front view): Dalton was so proud of his one of a kind buck!



# Volunteers are Devoted to the Ohio River Scenic Byway

## Debbie Moore

Last fall I was invited to speak to a group of volunteers who work in Gallatin County! When I arrived at the Ohio River Scenic Byway Visitors Center in Equality, I was amazed to see that it had been transformed into a banquet hall ... and the volunteers were celebrating their good works. The good food was only outshined by the welcoming people! I made new friends and was happy to see them all again, a few months later, when I provided a little hospitality training for them. These fine volunteers are members of the Gallatin County Tourism Committee, which was formed in 1991 specifically to promote tourism and economic development in southeastern Illinois. Mark York, President of the group, recently told me that their primary accomplishment was building and opening the Byway Visitors Center and they work tirelessly to maintain it, which includes staffing it. They are, often times, the first contact our Byway visitors have with local residents.



Fort Massac Encampment Volunteers (L to R) Joan Wientjes, Bonnie Grace and granddaughter Hanna and Sandy Dailey.



They also serve as strong lobbyists for improvements and have focused a lot of their attention on Pounds Hollow. They spearheaded the drive to get a water supply to the Crenshaw House and they received a Governor's Commendation for their efforts and success. They host local events and tours, and most recently, have partnered with the Shawnee National Forest to host the popular "Ozark Tours".

My work along the Byway provides lots of opportunities to meet new people and make new friends.

I've learned to not show surprise when I find out how much volunteer service they provide. It is clear that our Southern Illinois communities benefit greatly from the efforts of many dedicated people who don't care about being recognized for their efforts, but instead, care about improving our quality of life.

When I got acquainted with Joan Wientjes a few months ago, I learned that although she was originally from North Dakota, she had certainly made Metropolis her home. Joan was describing the things she would do as children's games at the Fort Massac Encampment and began talking about the fact that she coordinated the children's tent and stage activities every year at the Superman Festival, hosted by the community's Chamber of Commerce. I began wondering how much



Rita Mathews and Angie Wallace portraying "Rose and Clare"

volunteer work this busy CPA actually does, so I asked her! She told me that the first group she joined, when she and her husband moved to Metropolis in 1986, was Beta Sigma Phi, an organization that hosts several charity events including the annual community Easter Egg Hunt. They raise funds to support their projects by selling smoked turkey legs at the Fort Massac Encampment each year, and that is a big job!

Joan is a member of Friends of Fort Massac, an organization that supports activities at the State Park and is currently preparing to demolish old buildings west of the park, so they can

construct a pioneer village. She is a member of Save-The-Massac, an organization working to restore the 1938 Art Deco historical theater in Metropolis. She is a member of the local chapter of Rebuilding Together, a group that raises money and uses it to renovate homes for the elderly, low income and disabled residents of the community. Joan Wientjes is an example of the kind of volunteers that I meet on a regular basis.

The Alexander County Tourism Group hosts a variety of events every year. One of their biggest events is the annual Tour de Shawnee bike ride, held in October. Their annual quilt show is a fantastic event that showcases beautiful handmade quilts typically made by local residents.

I've learned that a group of employees from Liberty Utilities in Harrisburg (a big supporter of the Ohio River Scenic Byway) are regular volunteers for community events and projects.

They have a Relay for Life team and hold several fundraisers to support that effort. They cook and sell sandwiches for the annual Bluegrass Festival. They host an event called "The Pink Event" to raise funds for their Relay for Life team. They host a golf tournament and two gun shoots every year.

The Rosiclare Improvement Committee is an example of a group of volunteers who

work tirelessly to raise funds for projects to make their community a better place. They've hosted bazaars and dances and use the funds they raise to support community improvements. Well known at community events are "Rose and Clare" who portray Rosiclare's namesakes! Rita Mathews and Angie Wallace are community volunteers who work hard to get the job done and have fun while they are doing it!

There are hundreds of volunteers who work along the Ohio River Scenic Byway. Their efforts are important and their successes are many. The Ohio River Scenic Byway is a totally volunteer organization. The members of the Board of Directors are dedicated to creating success in the entire Byway region. They work tirelessly to make sure that our quarterly magazines and other promotional materials are distributed in our Byway communities and in the tourist information centers along our interstate highways. They serve on committees, work to raise matching funds for the grants we have, help generate publicity and work to strengthen partnerships with our communities and other not-for-profit organizations.

They willingly share their time and resources to make the Byway a beautiful place that welcomes travelers and visitors in the best possible ways.



# By the By ... Way!

## ***Guess what's coming to the Ohio River Scenic Byway?***

In upcoming months, you'll begin to see the addition of 46 big, new bike racks along the Ohio River Scenic Byway route! The ORSB was pleased to be a part of a state-wide partnership with all the other National Scenic Byways in Illinois, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Department of Transportation. This project has taken over three years to come to fruition.... But, good things come to those who wait, right?

The other agencies involved weren't the only important partners, though! Byway Board Member, Michael Baglio solicited the partnership of the Wabash Valley FS. They provided the truck, fuel and driver to accompany Baglio as they traveled the 400-mile round trip to Girard, Illinois where the racks were made.

The Wabash Valley Farm Service Company is a local, farmer owned agricultural cooperative serving producers in Crawford, Edwards, Gallatin, Hamilton, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne and White Counties in Southeastern Illinois and in Posey, Gibson and Vanderburgh Counties in Southwestern Indiana. While they aren't in the bike rack business, they are in the business of supporting the Ohio River Scenic Byway because they understand the



Bob Winchester (left to right) and Mike Riley, Byway Board Members and Larry Douglas, Friends of Fort Massac at the Fort Massac Encampment.



importance of the economic impact of the work done "By the By .... Way"! Their partnership is important, and certainly appreciated — Thank you!

There are many important partnerships along the Ohio River Scenic Byway! Recently, the Friends of Fort Massac shared exhibit space with the ORSB at the annual Fort Massac Encampment. Byway members were selling raffle tickets for a Henry

Repeating Arms Silver Boy 22 Long Rifle. The raffle generated funds that will be used as match for important grant projects.

Members also distributed Byway magazines, educational coloring books and heritage guidebooks to the crowd that topped 208,000 this year!

Golconda Main Street invited Byway members to sell raffle tickets and distribute promotional materials at their annual Shrimp Festival and at the annual Deer Festival, sponsored by Rotary.

The Fluorspar Festival Committee in Rosiclare worked with the ORSB to include the Miners' Memorial

groundbreaking in their recent weekend event. They invited the ORSB to distribute promotional materials as well.

Hardin County Main Street and Gallatin County Tourism partnered with the Shawnee National Forest to host the annual "Ozark Tours" and distributed the Byway's educational coloring books, heritage guidebooks and quarterly magazines.

Johnson County Tourism hosted their 100-mile run and distributed Byway materials. Alexander County Tourism hosted their Tour de Shawnee in October and Byway Board Members helped with the event. The bike event





Unloading the bike racks are Chris Wargel (left) FS Manager and Michael Baglio, Byway Board Member.

organizers shared Byway promotional materials with all the participants.

A local unit of Team Red, White and Blue has expressed interest in helping the Byway install some of the bike racks! Team Red, White and Blue is a national organization with a mission of enriching the lives of America's veterans by connecting them to their communities through physical and social activity. The Byway is thrilled with this opportunity.

Partnerships occur when businesses interact because they have a common interest. In the tourism industry, there are numerous nonprofit



Byway Board Members Bob Winchester (left to right), Linda Mitacek, Mike Riley, Margo Stoker and Michael Baglio inspect bike racks.

entities responsible for luring travelers into specified

geographic regions. Retailers, restaurants, lodging facilities

and public access natural areas join the nonprofits in attempting to lure their share of the market of potential visitors. Sometimes, totally unrelated business and organizations join in, simply because they know the value of the economic impact of tourism.

The Ohio River Scenic Byway Region is made healthy by the creation of partnerships between this variety of businesses. The value of the tourism product increases as these partnerships develop and evolve. Special thanks to everybody who helps the Byway achieve its many goals.



# Groundbreaking!

## **Ohio River Scenic Byway Board and the City of Rosiclare Break Ground for Fluorspar Miners' Memorial**

On October 4, 2015 at twelve o'clock noon in Rosiclare, Illinois residents could hear a faint whistle in the background of the sounds of this chilly, blustery, windy day. It was a sound that youngsters in the community had never heard and a sound that old-timers hadn't heard in a couple decades.

Cold as it was, the sun shone brightly on a group of about a hundred people, bundled in their winter coats, gathered at the Main Street Pavilion, waiting for something very special to happen.

Shortly after noon, Byway Board President, Rhonda Belford welcomed the group and introduced a young man with a family heritage significant to the event.

—Danny Mahoney stood reverently, lifted his trumpet and played “God Bless America”. Named for his Fluorspar miner grandfather, Danny Mahoney on hand that fateful day and was thankfully not one of the seven fluorspar miners killed in the Barnett Mine disaster on April 12, 1971.

Belford continued to speak, and moved many in the crowd to tears as she listed the names of the miners: Bill Long, Wayne Long, Gale Bates, James Lane, Orval Holbrook, Jerry Jenkins, and Randel “Jock” Belford. She described how the men went into the



**Belford identifies the location of the statue.**

depth of the mine, one after the other, in an attempt to rescue the lost and how ... in the end ... all their lives were lost.

When she asked the members of the audience to raise their hands if they had worked in the Fluorspar industry or were related to someone who had been injured or lost, almost everyone present raised a hand, demonstrating just how wide the impact actually was.

Belford described that whistle at the Ozark Mahoning plant. She said that it was part of our lives. People knew

when to get up, eat lunch and when the shift was over. She detailed what it meant to grow up in a place where mining was so important to the economy. She talked about the mine tragedy and how it not only changed the lives of local residents, but helped create the Federal Mine Safety Legislation that impacted the lives of our nation.

The dignitaries at the event included ... Reverend Lowell (Butch Gowins) opened the ceremony with prayer and read scripture from John 15:13. Deb Detmers spoke on behalf of Congressman John

Shimkus and Steve Miller Field office Supervisor spoke on behalf of Mines Safety and Health Administration.

Everyone there knew the most important people on this day were Jane Stunson and Linda Spivey, who were left as two young widows when their husbands were killed in the Barnett Mine disaster. Although difficult to relive, these ladies remained strong as two who remain, willing and able to be recognized at this ceremony. They were also celebrated as grand marshals for the Fluorspar Festival Parade, because of their struggles and resilience since losing their husbands in the mine accident.

Rhonda Belford addressed the audience and told them that the memorial would include a bronze statue, a granite monument listing the names of the lost and interpretive kiosks that would not just tell the story of the tragedy, but would tell the story of the fluorspar mining industry and the history of the region. She invited the audience which consisted of many family and community members to join her as she used a very special gold shovel to break the ground for this very special long awaited Fluorspar Miners' Memorial.

Jennifer Lane, of the Hardin County Independent, contributed to this article.





Jane (Belford) Stunson (left to right) and Linda (Jenkins) Spivey, surviving wives of two miners who lost their lives in the accident — Jerry Jenkins and Randel Belford.



Danny Mahoney plays 'God Bless America'.



A group of people at the ground breaking included Rhonda Belford and Rosiclare Mayor Roy Tolbert shown doing the honors. Also present include Deb Detmers, Steve Miller, Commissioners Robinson and Steward, family and community.



# Shining Star, Jennifer Rhodes, Visits Hometown!

Jennifer Rhodes, probably best known for her role as Grams in the popular television series *Charmed* (1998-2006), has had steady acting work since she left college to study acting in New York and soon after landed her first job in an Off-Broadway play. From there she moved to Los Angeles, where she currently lives and works. But first, she was a Rosiclare girl named Janice Wilson. Younger by more than a decade than her older brothers, Janice was almost an only child. As she describes her Rosiclare days, we can see clearly the roots of the adult actress' strong work ethic and creative flair. And we see the affection Jennifer Rhodes retains for the Rosiclare of her youth, a place that remains as vibrant and young as the girl who grew up on High School Hill, the daughter of a miner and a hairdresser. Here is her narrative, based on her answers to questions about

her background.

When I think of home (all the years I've lived in Los Angeles and I still think of Rosiclare that way), my first thoughts are of my parents Ben and Clara Wilson. Dad worked in the mines, and we lived in a company house on High School Hill. Every year he planted a huge garden. Mother canned the vegetables, but I was the one who had to wash those nasty canning jars in the cellar that were filled with spiders. Mother had a beauty

shop (\$1.00 for a shampoo and set), and she organized the fundraiser shows for the March of Dimes, subjecting everyone to Little Janice doing the Hula Dance. Later, the Sparkettes (Mary Ann Potts, Janet Creamer, and I) tap-danced in these shows. Neighborhood Canasta games at our kitchen table would be paused so I could tap-dance "Yankee Doodle Dandy" for

## Riverside Reflections

When "Grams" Was Young  
By Jennifer Rhodes  
Submitted by Lauren Bishop



Byway Board President Rhonda Belford with Jennifer Rhodes (right) at the Fluorspar Festival.



them. So you see, I had a stage mother and didn't know it, but living in Rosiclare, my dancing career never got beyond the linoleum floor of our kitchen.

I have very early memories of the Ohio River. Dad put out trot lines and nets and I went with him in the rowboat to collect the catfish. Every Sunday we had a fish fry and pitched washers. I don't think I really appreciated the beauty of Southern Illinois when I lived there; I can see now why people who visited always talked about how beautiful it was. I loved the Capitol Movie Theatre, with its black-and-white tile floor, classic marquee, and Tiny's next door, where the burgers cost 20 cents. The shows changed every two days, with a double feature on the weekends. Everybody went—families, teenagers, everybody. We didn't have a car when I was very young and Dad said he carried me home asleep on his back from the picture show until my feet dragged the ground! In high school, I remember wearing my hair in pin curls and a scarf to the matinee so it would look good for the evening. I had a picture taken in front of the theatre with "Closed" on the marquee; I was so sad to see that beautiful old building torn down. The Last Picture Show (1971) always makes me think of Rosiclare.

Rosiclare really was a wonderful little town. The movie theatre, Tiny Pritchard's, Merker's and



Travis' Drug Stores, the bank, the pool hall (which we weren't allowed to go into), the post office, library, Goetzman's Clothing Store, the Dairy Dream where we all hung out, the wonderful YMCA which housed everything social in town, and of course, Clara's Beauty

Salon. We had everything we needed!

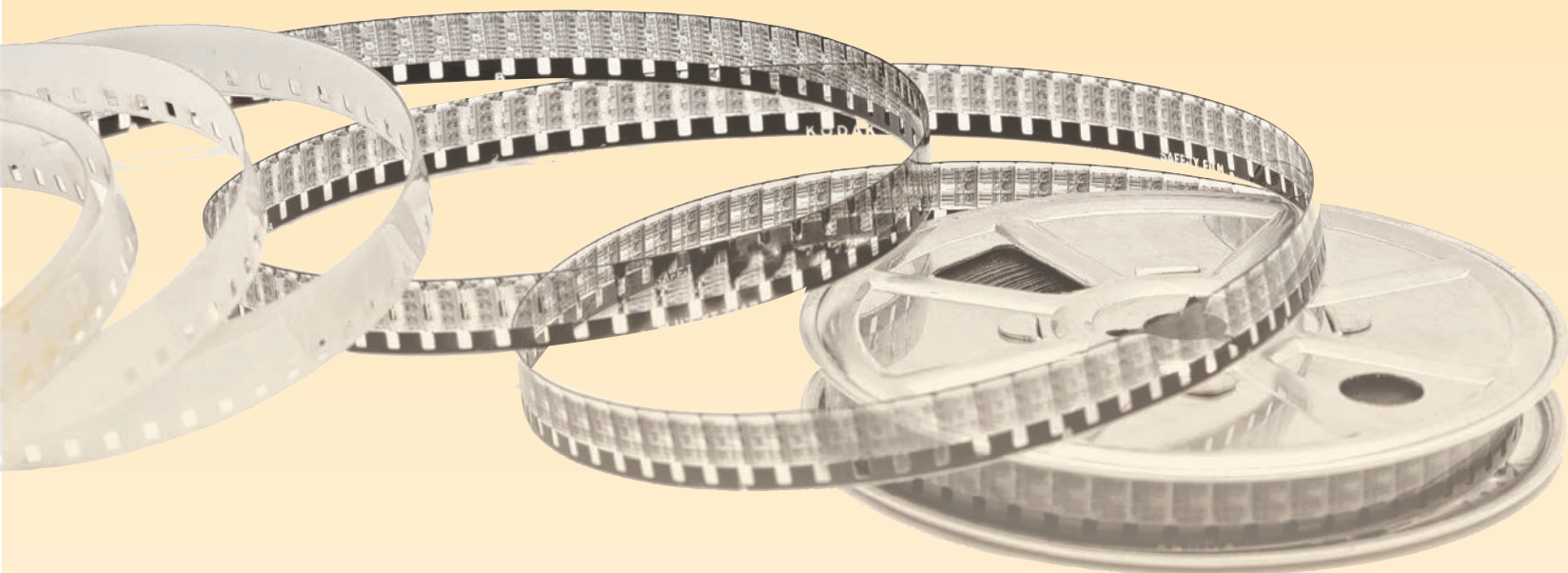
I remember the mothers taking turns driving us girls to roller skate in Harrisburg in the 8th grade, and then in high school, we'd go to Foster's Night Club with Marilyn Mick and George Paul Blatter and "Greek. My



Jennifer Rhodes is a Rosiclare native.

friends and I were staunch supporters of the school basketball team. Dad said he could always tell when Rosiclare lost because I would come storming into the house mad as an old wet hen! My favorite teacher was Mrs. Harrison (Home Ec.), and I remember Miss Hamp, the Science teacher who said that "teenage pimples were caused by inward heat and no outlet." I feel the need to get back every so often. I've remained in contact all these years with several friends, including Jim Hobbs, Paula Turley, Susie Knight, Karen Turley, Judy Anderson, and Ann Pruett, among others. I visit my parents in the cemetery, and I drive around, remembering. I don't recognize our old house and most of what I remember is now gone, but the feeling is still there of some of the best times of my life.

**\*\*This article was first printed in October 4, 2014**



# Hollywood

## Comes to the Ohio River Scenic Byway!

### Julie Smith

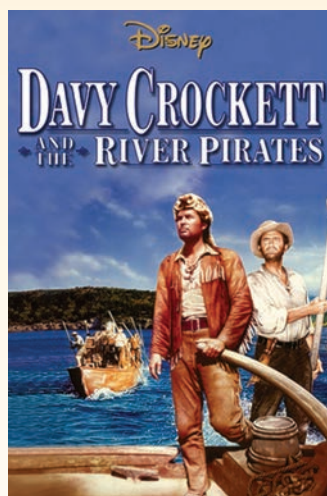
Movie producers have been drawn for decades to the Ohio River towns of Southern Illinois with their splendid scenery. What better place to stage a setting for legendary frontiersmen, westward pioneers, merciless pirates, and conniving criminals than the rocky bluffs, rolling hills, mysterious cave and the mighty river!

### Davy Crockett

Walt Disney Studios brought a ruggedly handsome, mild mannered actor, Fess Parker, to Southern Illinois and western Kentucky in 1955. The tall Texan portrayed Davy Crockett in two films, Davy

Crockett and the Keel Boat Race and Davy Crockett and the River Pirates. Crockett's trademark, the coonskin cap, became a best seller in Cave In Rock where the townspeople welcomed the actor with open arms. The Hardin County Independent reported, "Fess Parker is being adopted by nearly every town along the Ohio River from Cave In Rock to Evansville, but Cave In Rock believes Crockett belongs to them."

Ken Garland, a Cave In Rock merchant, built a 19th century keel boat and displayed it in front of his store. He put a deckhouse on his 14-foot jon boat and authentically constructed details such as hatches into



living quarters. He used painted nail kegs as deck cargo draped with rope, which was the typical appearance of

the early river boats.

The local Kiwanis Club displayed a banner, "Davy Crockett, Welcome to Cave In Rock".

Local boatmen, Dom Marlow, Lester Shores and Claude Barnard provided transportation for the cast and crew to and from location. Marlow and his wife were from Herrin but had a summer home known as the "Rod and Gun Club house" near the cave. Amos "Candy" Hill, owner of the Cave In Rock ferry, recommended Marlow for the job.

Hill provided a spare ferry, which was used by the movie producers to shoot background scenery along the river from Dam 50 to





Clem Bevins (left to right), Fess Parker and Buddy Ebsen in *Davy Crockett and the River Pirates*.

Shetlerville. The ferry was also used to transport the movie group from Uniontown Kentucky at 7 a.m. each morning to a particular location of filming for the day. Work ended at 7 p.m. when the group was returned to Uniontown on the ferry and drove to headquarters (nightly lodging) at Morganfield, Kentucky.

On one particular day, Hill, his wife and Mrs. Marlow visited on location by driving to Uniontown and taking a fast boat up river. The Independent reported, "Crockett was carrying on a running fight with one Mike Fink, an undesirable character, who had a keel boat similar to the hero's." Walt Disney Studios brought two 36-foot keel boats from California for the films.

Walt Disney Studios scheduled filming for three days at Uniontown, one day at Dam 49, three days at Shawneetown and three days at Caseyville, Kentucky. The movie producer, John Grubbs, asked Hill if Cave In Rock could supply Indians for scenes, and Hill assured him



there would be some willing amateur actors. However, it was not clear from newspaper accounts if any local residents appeared in the films.

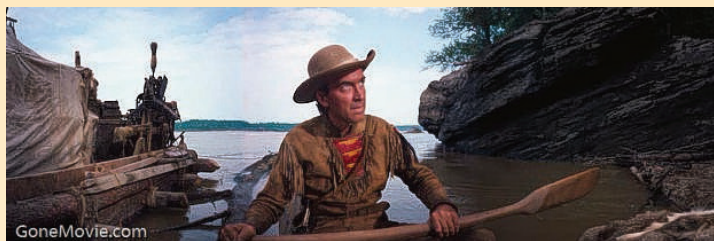
Each day film footage was sent by air express to Hollywood where it was seen by Disney. He was highly pleased by the acting, as well as, the picturesque Ohio River setting, it was reported.

Hill wanted Fess Parker to come to Cave In Rock on the 4th of July and greet people on the ferry barge, but Producer Grubbs said Parker

was booked solid for several days. Grubbs did arrange for Parker to make an appearance at Cave In Rock on July 10th. Illinois Governor Stratton had given orders for signs to be put up from Norris City to Cave In Rock directing traffic.

Robert G. Miley, superintendent of Illinois state parks, introduced Parker to a large crowd of people, and James G. Gullett served as master of ceremonies. Parker christened Route 1 in Illinois from Cave In Rock to Norris City and Route 91 in Kentucky across the river from Cave In Rock to Hopkinsville, Kentucky as the Davy Crockett Highway. Obliging, he signed his autograph for many children who asked or for their parents.

Filming was completed and on the day that Parker and the crew were to leave the area, Ken Garland and Lambert Patton made a special trip to Caseyville in hopes of



Mountain man (James Stewart) Linus Rawlings is traveling east to Pittsburgh to trade his furs when he meets a group of settlers.



GoneMovie.com

getting a glimpse of the star. As they were walking down the river bank, they saw Parker and Buddy Ebsen (of the highly successful Beverly Hillbillies television series) nearing the shore in Lester “Leo” Shores’ boat. Parker posed for pictures taken by Garland and signed a wooden board Garland had made with the words “To The Kids” on it. The two stars then departed for Evansville. Parker was going to appear later that week in the dedication of Disneyland in Hollywood.

The Independent reported that the color film was to be presented on ABC-TV on September 14 (1955), and if a success, it was to be combined into a full-length wide screen movie. The news release stated, “scenes in the film included a fight between Davy Crockett and Mike Fink and

the Harpe brothers, whom history shows used the cave as a headquarters to prey on boats coming down the river.”

### *How the West Was Won*

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer spared nothing in the production of *How the West Was Won* in 1961, a recounting of American expansion to the west, experienced by four generations of a pioneer family. The movie was the first full-length feature to be shot in Cinerama. According to an article on the Internet, “a sometimes cumbersome and onerous system utilizing three different cameras, Cinerama had been perfected in the early 1950s as one of the various wide-screen processes developed at the

time by Hollywood to combat the encroaching influence of television and lure audiences back into the movie theatres ... Cinerama used three interlocked 35 mm cameras recording the same scene from a slightly different angle and projected it on an enormous curved screen with an aspect ratio of 3 to 1, which approximately corresponds to the eye’s complete field of vision. With the addition of stereophonic sound ... the effect was uncanny and, real or not, convinced audiences that they were actually experiencing something close to real life.”

The movie was filmed in actual locales throughout the United States as it traced the movement of pioneers from the east to the west coast covering the period 1840 to 1890. It starred James Stewart

and Debbie Reynolds, but many other fine, well-known stars were featured throughout the movie.

The first part of the movie concerns a group of pioneers who leave their eastern homes, reach the Ohio Valley – gateway to the west, and move downstream on rafts. The Independent reported that sites were to include Cave In Rock, once headquarters for river pirates like the



Harpe or Harper brothers and Smithland, Kentucky, an old picturesque town on the Cumberland River.

The first fifteen minutes of the movie were filmed on the farm of Milton "Jack" and Doris Lewis near Battery Rock upstream from Cave In Rock, where a complete movie set was built. The Lewises resided on the farm with their three young children, Jackaleen, Douglas Ray and Sonny.

Some, or all of these actors stayed at the Holiday Inn in Paducah, Kentucky for filming at Cave In Rock: James Stewart, Debbie Reynolds, Agnes Moorehead, Karl Malden, Walter Brennan, Andy Devine, Tudor Owen, Caroll Baker, George Peppard, Brigid Bazlen, Mamie Ross, Mark Allen, Barry Harvey, Kim Charney and Bryan Russell.

The actors came by way of Kentucky to cross "Candy" Hill's ferry into Cave In Rock. They were driven by car on Route 1 to Lamb Road where the Lewis farm was located, and some drove from Paducah on this side of the river.

Mrs. Lewis remembers very well the daily routine of movie making on their farm. She was there every single day taking pictures of the stars, their stand-ins, the equipment, and the general activities. She and Jack chatted with the stars and took meals with them in a big tent at noon. Fine food such as prime rib of beef, Swiss steak, chicken and salads were served to the stars on dishes; the personnel used paper plates! The first thing every morning, the crew made 20 gallons of coffee. Iced tea, punch and beer on ice, as well as, gallons of water were kept on hand for the rest of the day. Imagine the heat and humidity of Southern Illinois on a typical June day.

The stars of the movie had stand-ins for many of the scenes, Mrs. Lewis said, except when there were speaking parts. Most of the cast was friendly, she said, especially James Stewart who sat and talked with the Lewises after shooting a scene. Debbie Reynolds was remembered as a bit standoffish. Mrs. Lewis said Reynolds had her two children with her on the set.

The June 8, 1961 issue of the Independent described the chaos of visitors trying to get to the movie set on a one-way lane, which was made passable by Road Commissioner Alva Watson especially for MGM. Heavy trucks used the narrow road to carry in a portable generator, a mobile kitchen, and other movie making paraphernalia. Water was hauled in daily from Paducah for use on the set, and a sound truck was taken back to Paducah every day to have the batteries charged. Visitors were not being admitted, the local men, C.T. Cochran, Lester Shores, Leo (Bobby) Wade Angleton, and Ollie M. Scott were hired by MGM to keep them out. "Shores has radio equipment to notify possible passage of the one-way, winding, up and down, hilly rural road into the place, and Scott is watchman at night for possible visitors who arrive by boat on the Beautiful Ohio," the Independent reported.

Mrs. Lewis said claims made by some people in the business world are false concerning use of the cave at the state park in the movie. To her knowledge, there was no filming at the cave. She said backwater was in the cave at the time. She said quite

a bit of creative camouflage and construction was used on the set at the farm. For example, a block building, which had toppled over the bluff, was made to look like a large rock. Mrs. Lewis said the inside was used to tutor three children on the set. In fact, the Independent reported that the building was covered with paper mache, shaped, and painted. The set was described as follows, "The background of the picture at the river's edge will show a small cave, towering cliffs of rock, waterfalls (water is being dammed up now to furnish water for the walls when shooting begins), tents (shelter halves), rafts made of newly-cut logs and tied together with rope, pots and pans, with tall trees shading it all, with an aluminum canoe camouflaged to look like a birch bark canoe waiting for use in the river. A cement block cottage has been camouflaged realistically to resemble a huge sandstone boulder, which had fallen from the cliff above. Plants and vegetation were planted around it to make looks more realistic."

Henry Hathaway was the director for scenes shot at Cave In Rock. Hathaway was a demanding director who ordered scenes shot over and over to meet his satisfaction. At Cave In Rock, he was seen coaxing actors to get in the mood for particular scenes as some of them were seemingly uninterested or unmotivated. Perhaps it was one of those sultry days when the air was not stirring and the humidity could nearly smother a person.

A mishap occurred at one point on the Cave In Rock set when a dump truck used to haul rock into the area rolled



backward over the bluff and onto the set. There were no injuries and the truck owned by a local contractor was towed away. All equipment was moved to Tradewater, Kentucky for scenes after completion of filming at the Lewis farm. Several local residents were sought as movie extras but actually never were filmed, either at Cave In Rock or Tradewater, although they were completely outfitted in 1840s attire.

The movie producer asked Sheriff Oren Gross to choose several extras. They were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lampert, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Rigsby, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Oxford, Jerry Douglas and Jim Frailey, all of Cave In Rock; Mrs. Oren Gross and son Gary, Mrs. Paul Patton, Miss Nancy Barnerd, and Mike Gullett, all of Elizabethtown; Mrs. Freeman Hurford and daughter Ruth Ann, Mrs. Harvey Cullison, Mrs. W. H. Birch, Bob

Brown and Don Lewis, all of Rosiclare.

Another mishap occurred which more accurately could be described as near fatal for some movie hopefuls. The headlines in the Independent say it all: "Five Local Movie Extras Dunked in Ohio River. All were rescued; some personal property was lost or ruined by water." The extras were being transported in small boats from the Cave In Rock ferry barge anchored in the Ohio River to the "River Queen", a boat from Paducah made up to resemble an old time river boat when the accident occurred. The extras were to be used as passengers on the River Queen while stopped to pick up Debbie Reynolds. They were Mrs. Freeman Hurford and daughter Ruth Ann, Mrs. Harvey Cullison, C.T. Cochran and Alben W. Barkley II (a Paducah resident and grandson of the late U.S. Vice

President Alben W. Barkley).

Wash from a passing motorboat sank Bob Garland's boat that the extras were riding in. A life preserver was thrown to the three women who couldn't swim as they were dressed in long, heavy 1840s style clothing. Garland stayed with the women and Cochran attempted to swim to shore. When the rescue boat arrived, the women were so tired they couldn't lift themselves into the boat and had to be assisted by the boat pilot. Mrs. Cullison said, "the dunking ended her movie career." After the mishap, the director said the scene was going to be filmed elsewhere, and that disappointed the extras who had waited patiently for their opportunity to be in the movie.

MGM continued to lease the Lewis farm for several weeks after filming was ended which afforded thieves the opportunity to steal props

from the abandoned set. Tents, old stools, a chair, a keg, wood cages, wooden buckets with lids, buffalo hides, a wooden tub, a coffee pot, a gas stove and an oven disappeared. The Lewises had been watching the area and after they discovered the thefts, they moved what was left to their house. It was easy to access the former set from the river.

The music for *How the West Was Won* was described as "a classic example of film music at its very best". Production notes were written as follows: "Recorded in more than 125 studio hours over a period of 18 months, this wonderful score called for an impressive array of participants which included at one time or another a 75-piece orchestra, several percussionists, some solo instrumentalists, the 31-strong Ken Darby Singers, the Whiskeyhill Quartet and Debbie Reynolds.



## River Rats

A small portion of the movie, *River Rats*, was filmed in 1983 in Pope County. The location was the old Clark mansion on Route 146 west of Golconda. Although the dilapidated mansion appeared to be only barely standing at the time, it met its demise in May 2003, when a major tornado finished it off and destroyed many homes and buildings.

The late R. J. Brenner, owner and editor of the *Herald-Enterprise*, wrote about the filming, which took place at the Clark mansion. His version published in his weekly column, *Hello Neighbor*, deserves a reprinting: There have been many interesting and exciting incidents to occur in Pope County through the years, but the current “happening” is outstanding. Deep River Productions has traveled all the way from California to produce at least a part of a motion picture in our county and in Paducah, Kentucky.

If you have wondered at the unusually bright lights in and around the old Clark mansion at the “horse farm” on Route 146 just west of Golconda, wonder no more. For years, Tom Rickman a Paducah native and a talented writer who received an Oscar nomination for his screenplay of *Coal Miner’s Daughter* has had a burning desire to bring to the screen a story with a Western Kentucky and Southern Illinois setting.

His dream has become a reality. Not only did he write the screenplay, but he is directing a film, *River Rats* in these areas. Deep River Productions is shooting scenes in Paducah, on the Ohio River, and in the Golconda area, and Rickman is pleased and excited with the venture.



Greed, gothic trappings, coming of age, pervasive evil – all are traditional elements of Southern literature, and all are present in the contemporary context of *River Rats*.

Star of the film is Tommy Lee Jones as Billy McCain, newly released after 13 years in prison for a murder he did not commit. Newcomer Martha Plimpton makes her feature debut as Jonsy, a daughter Billy has never known. Nine-year-old Shawn Smith is Jonsy’s friend Wexel, and Brian Dennehy is Doc, a venal prison official intent on forcing Billy to reveal the whereabouts of a huge amount of stolen cash.

“The story,” said Rickman, “on one level is adventure in the classic sense, and on another is a contemporary morality piece on how easy it is to be evil, and how difficult it is to remain innocent.”

The old Clark mansion, once a thing of beauty and a joy to behold but now fast deteriorating, racked by the ravages of time, is a perfect setting for many scenes in the picture. The ancient structure with its

“Greed, gothic trappings, coming of age, pervasive evil – all are traditional elements of Southern literature, and all are present in the contemporary context of *River Rats*.”

imposing pillars and Southern plantation type architecture, but with its once-elegant interior dark, dank, dirty, and unbelievably cluttered with broken furniture, its floors rotted in places, its windows boarded and its once-beautiful wallpaper hanging dejectedly in sad futility, as I understand is the home (in the movie) of an elderly recluse lady who purportedly has a great amount of money somewhere in the house.

Suddenly, a figure leaps through a window in the drawing room and dashes up the still stable staircase. Shots ring out and the figure rushes back down the stairs, clutching what appears to be a large amount of money in one hand, and in the other several boxes of cat food. (She is a cat lover.)

It is interesting to watch a film production crew at work. One can’t tell the players without a program. You might be talking to a star, a prop man or woman, a script person, an electrician or the top man himself. I have found these film folks at all levels, to be friendly, interesting, “different” and dedicated to the arts.

I know three Pope Countians who are working on the film. They are Charles Hughes, Scott Shales and Joey Hicks. It’s told

that Charlie Hughes is the stand-in for the sheriff in the movie. I suppose that means that he’s the guy who really gets blown away so the actor can live to perform another day! – End of *Hello Neighbor* by R. J. Brenner

## U.S. Marshals

Bay City on the Ohio River in Pope County was chosen by a Warner Brothers studio location manager in 1997 for the filming of some scenes for *U.S. Marshals*, a sequel to *The Fugitive*, starring Tommy Lee Jones, Wesley Snipes, and Robert Downey, Jr. In one scene, a plane carrying federal prisoners crashes in the shallow water of the Ohio River at Bay City, practically in the front yard of Roy Willy’s Barbecue. U.S. Marshal Sam Gerard (Tommy Lee Jones) and deputies try to track down a prisoner who survived the crash and escaped. As word of the crash spreads, journalists arrive at the scene, seeking information from the authorities.

Lei Landini, Paducah Sun features editor, wrote, “The scene is supposed to look as if the jet crashes down the hillside on the curve, skids across the road while losing its



parts and then plummets into the river below.”

A special effects foreman for the movie and his crew were to set 40 fires to produce a great amount of smoke after the crash. A staged car crash was also filmed on an iron bridge on the Eddyville blacktop for one scene in the movie.

The Bay City area suited the script perfectly and the residence of Buck and Eulalia Butler fit right into the scenes, also. The couple gave permission for their home to be used for the movie. Their ranch style home with a two story side structure formerly used as a general store was transformed by production crews into a restaurant called Roy Willy's World's Best Bar-B-Que. The part of the building that was once a general store was built in 1915 by N.L. Golightly. C.R. Weeks bought the store and building in 1922 and operated it for many years. The Butlers bought it from Weeks' widow. They operated the general store until the 1970s when they sought other employment.



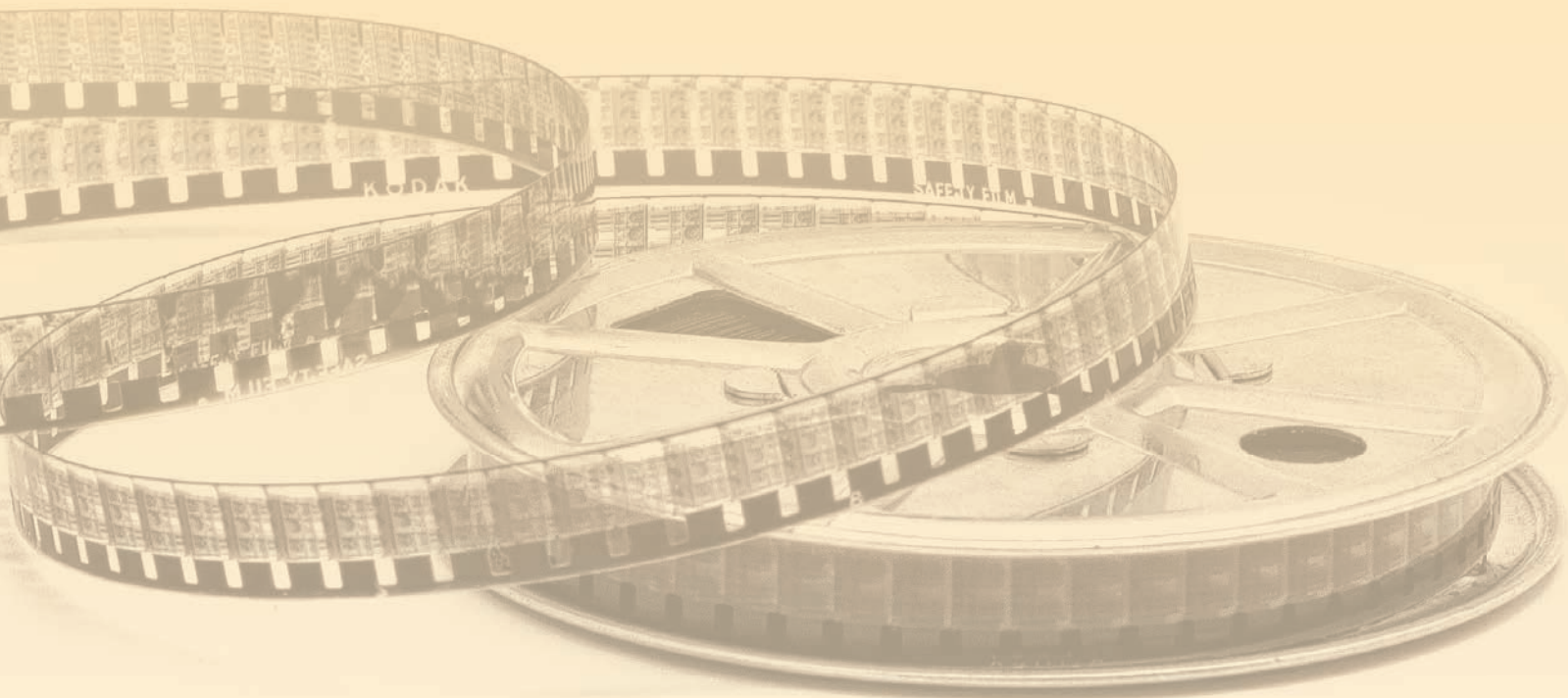
Roy Willy's BBQ movie set for U.S. Marshals.

The Butlers played the restaurant owners in the movie. Joan Davidson, Phyllis Simons and Karol Brooks, daughter of Joan and R.C.

Davidson, had parts in the movie as restaurant workers. Davidson was a grandson of N.L. Golightly. Jimmy Evitts and Mike

Boglino of Pope County were chosen as extras in the film. Sandra Cowsert, production supervisor for the Herald-Enterprise in 1997 (now





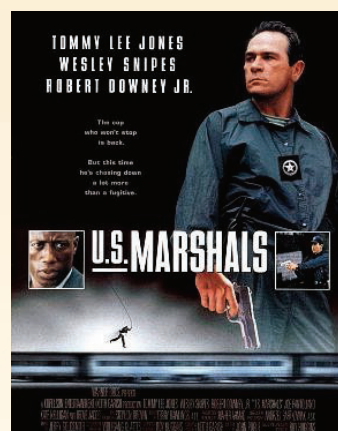
A 727 is lowered into the Ohio River on the set of the movie *U.S. Marshals*.

owner of the newspaper) joined other pressmen on site and observed the any crew members in action during scenes being filmed at Bay City.

Cowsert wrote in the August 7, 1997 issue of the *Herald-Enterprise*, "I seemed to miss what the "stars" were doing for watching all the scurrying that was going on behind the scenes." Her brief contact with the main man, actor Tommy Lee Jones, left a definite impression. She

wrote, "Mr. Jones, who is being flown in by helicopter daily, arrived on the scene in his black Lincoln. He stepped out of the car wearing a Roy Willy's T-shirt and khaki trousers. As he walked through the anxious group of journalists, he was asked for a quote. "I am busy, I'm working," he said. The question that lingered in my mind was what we were all doing there? Working!"

Joe Pantoliano, also a member of the cast, said



*U.S. Marshals*, a sequel to *The Fugitive*, starred Tommy Lee Jones.

he was enjoying the food in the area, and stated, "Those mosquitoes down here, you could saddle them up and ride them to the set." He also said most every actor is paid for waiting because they wait more than they actually work. Actors Tom Wood and Dan Roebuck said the people of the area were very nice. The 727 that rested in the edge of the Ohio River had been purchased from a salvage yard. The plane was taken to Chicago in two pieces and painted and

distressed. It was barged from Chicago to Southern Illinois.

Much of the river bank was burned and power poles and trees were broken to resemble the area where the plane crashed. Cowsert reported that plane debris was brought in and scattered over the area. "Believe it or not, plane debris can be bought by the pound." Cowsert witnessed one scene shot repeatedly. She wrote, "You could tell the number of times the scene was shot by counting the number of props on the ground. In the scene Joe Pantoliano was gnawing on an ear of corn, and when my legs gave out from standing on the hot asphalt, I counted eight ears of corn on the ground.

The bulk of the movie was shot in Chicago, Brookport, Metropolis, Benton, Kentucky and northwest Tennessee at Reelfoot Lake. The \$60 million movie premiered in the Kentucky Oaks Theater in Paducah on March 6, 1998.

**Reprinted from a 2005 issue of the Hardin County Independent**

# Beautiful Notes along the Ohio River Scenic Byway!

**Debbie Moore**

The Ohio River Scenic Byway Region is filled with music about our towns and people and about the river! In 2016, we can celebrate the 100th anniversary of a Top Ten Billboard hit, "When you Drop Off at Cairo, Illinois."

*"Out is Cairo where the sun beats down with all its might  
Out is Cairo where a big red moon shines ev'ry night  
Where the balmy breezes are blowing  
Where the rippling waters are flowing  
To my native land if you are going  
Don't forget to take in all the sights  
Down where the Ohio flows to the Mississippi  
You'll find a new kind of joy  
A brand of sunshine you will find  
That's hotter than the Egypt kind  
When you drop off at Cairo, Illinois  
When you drop off at Cairo, Illinois  
When you drop off at Cairo, Illinois  
A delegation at the station will meet you  
You're bound to like each Cairo girl and boy  
Each native's manner is so hale and hearty  
It's like a family party"*



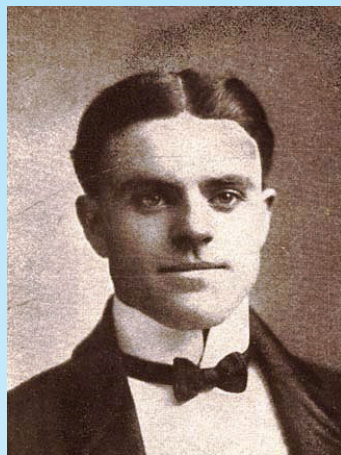
“When you Drop Off at Cairo, Illinois” was written by E. Ray Goetz and Cliff Hess. Hess was born in Cincinnati in 1894 and probably knew a little bit about the Ohio River, but the song is really all about getting off the train in Cairo and enjoying the people and the place. The lyrics go on to describe cigarettes and other things “Egyptian”, whatever that might have meant in 1916!

The score was a part of a Broadway two act musical, “Step this Way” but the man who made the song popular was jazz musician Billy Murray. Murray’s list of Billboard hits would fill pages, and you might know some of his more popular recordings like, “You’re a Grand Old Flag” or “Alexander’s Ragtime Band”, but he was on top of the music industry for decades.

In 1900, the population of Cairo was 13,000, a sizeable number.

The city was the hub for several railroad lines used for shipping cargo and for transporting people. There were wealthy merchants and shipping magnates in Cairo in the early 1900s and stepping off the train in Cairo in 1916 would have been an exciting thing to do. Travelers might have been headed from Chicago to Memphis or on to New Orleans, and Cairo would have been about the half-way point. Cairo was filled with night life, beautiful mansions, a healthy business district and plenty of entertainment that, according to this song, included cigarettes!

It should not go unnoticed that Cairo has often been the topic of songs. “Way Down in Cairo” was composed by Stephen Foster, the great American songwriter of



Jazz Musician Billy Murray 1877-1954

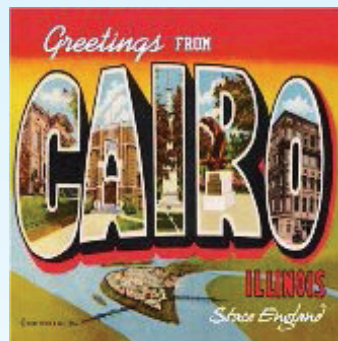
the 19th century. “Cairo Blues” was written by Henry Spaulding in 1929 and was performed by Henry Townsend and later by Geoff Muldaur and the Texas Sheiks. The 1974 film “Huckleberry Finn” has a song called “Cairo, Illinois”, which is sung by Jeff East (Huckleberry) and Paul Winfield (Jim). It was written by the Sherman Brothers. “Road To Cairo” was composed by cult American singer-songwriter David Ackles and was later covered by Julie Driscoll (Trinity). Josh Ritter’s “Monster Ballads” also refers to Cairo. The town of Cairo mentioned in the song “Saint Louis Blues” is most likely Cairo, Illinois. The musician, Stace England, produced a concept music CD called “Greetings From Cairo, Illinois” (2005), inspired by the city’s turbulent history. “Cairo, Illinois” was performed by Pokey Lafarge, from his solo album, “Beat, Move, and Shake” (2008).

It must be in the water as the Byway Region continues to inspire and produce musicians from the confluence of the Mississippi to its far Southeastern tip to this day.

Kyle Lehning, also a Cairo native, is an award winning



Step this Way playbill.



Stace England's CD Cover.

musician and record producer who has

produced albums released by Randy Travis, Dan Seals, George Jones and Bryan White.

Golconda native, Chuck Hughes, wrote its anthem “Golconda My Home Town”! Even our own Byway Board of Directors President, Rhonda Belford, is a singer songwriter who is passionate about singing the story of the importance of the Ohio River! Some of her original tunes have been recorded by other artists in the music Industry as well.

Interesting places and beautiful times are what songs are made of and the Ohio River Scenic Byway provides plenty of inspiration ... where the balmy breezes blow and the rippling waters flow!



Cast of Shrek the Musical, performed in the Summer 2014 by Jr. Falcons, directed by Hannah Drake.

# Southeastern Illinois College Brings Theater to the Byway!

**Jennifer McIntosh**

*"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being."*

—Oscar Wilde

I have always enjoyed going to the Theater. It's personal,

heart-felt, and emotional. All of your senses come alive, from the visually stunning costumes made by hand to the smell of fresh paint on the props. But what really makes a production so enchanting are the human beings. The artistic directors, the stage hands who make the scenery, the seamstresses who make

the costumes, and of course, the actors who work for months to bring you their best possible portrayal of a character. You can laugh, cry, and fall in love, all the while sitting in a huge open theater full of strangers. When you leave you feel a connection to the other people in the audience, as if you were part

of a lucky few who witnessed something magical.

Many people think you have to go to St. Louis to get an experience like this. But a few miles outside of Harrisburg, IL sits a small 2-year community college called Southeastern Illinois College. They have a theater in the George T. Dennis Visual and Performing



Arts Center where they host many wonderful productions every year. I have seen several performances there and I highly recommend buying a ticket and checking them out. The college has a wonderful theater department who put on four productions every year. Director of Theater and Co-Division Chair for Humanities, Allan Kimball, said their productions are open to the community and almost always sell out. They recently completed their fall production, *Cinderella*, which sold out all three nights. The college also hosted a Pampered Princess Party that started a few hours before one of the productions. Girls were able to meet Cinderella, learn about good etiquette, and enjoy a royal princess makeover.

Their annual Madrigal Feaste Dinner Show performed the first week of December, so mark your calendars for next year! In early 2015, they will have a Murder Mystery Dinner Show is on Valentine's Day weekend and on April 24-26, you can watch *Morticia & Gomez Addams in The Addams Family*. The theater department also hosts Dramacon, giving high school students from around the area a chance to attend workshops, get to know the department, and watch a production. Their music department and art department are also active and have many things to offer the community such as art shows and concerts.

SIC is wonderful in trying to help the community and bring everyone together. They host local high school



From *Cinderella*, production by SIC Theater Department. Sierra Harrell as Cinderella and Kyle Upchurch as Prince Charming in the Fall 2014.

productions throughout the year. Hannah Drake, Harrisburg High School Band, Drama, and Choir Director, has all her productions at the theater. "The college theater gives us a place to have a big production with all the bells and whistles that we otherwise wouldn't have access to. The high school doesn't have a theater so being able to use

SIC's theater is very important. It offers high school students a professional setting to perform in, they get to experience what college theater would be like, and it builds a relationship between them and the college," says Mrs. Drake. They have performed very successful performances such as *Wizard of Oz*, *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*,

*The Diary of Anne Frank*, and *Seussical the Musical*. Most of the shows were sold out and the community has grown to like watching local kids perform. On March 20-22, 2015, they will perform *Beauty and the Beast*.

For more information and to order tickets, call the Harrisburg High School at (618) 253-7637.

Another great program that the college offers, which is sponsored by the SIC Foundation, are the summer productions of the Jr. Falcons. This is also directed by Mrs. Drake and is open to ages 5-18 from all over the area. "It gives kids a chance to perform in a theater setting who otherwise may not get to. Many schools do not have a theater department and Jr. Falcon is the bridge for them to experience that. They also get to meet kids from other schools who are also interested in drama. I am even a product of the SIC children's productions," she says. Many of the shows have over 60 kid performers and the shows are almost always sold out. Past productions include *Cinderella Kids*, *Annie Jr.*, and *Shrek the Musical*. They have yet to pick a show for summer 2015 but rehearsals will start in May and the production will be in mid-July.

I hope I have opened your eyes and heart to a new way to get your thespian fill. It's a truly magical, entrancing, beautiful experience. You will not be disappointed!

For more information and to order tickets for the SIC theater productions, call 618-252-5400, ext. 2486.





Mary's Peanut Butter and Vanilla Fudge.

# What's Cookin'?

## Mary McSparin

The holidays bring lots of good memories about family and traditions, and we find ourselves enjoying the company of others around a table of food.

Many folks make special recipes year after year, passing those traditions down to the next generation. Goodies, goodies, and more goodies; we give them as gifts, or maybe use this time as a

reason to stop watching the calories, and enjoy them ourselves.

I remember my mom making chocolate fudge, called "old fashioned" fudge. It was the kind that you had to beat over and over until it got to the right consistency. That was a recipe that involved simple ingredients we always had on hand.

Christmas was a time when my grandmother in Kentucky would load up her car with

lots of food; corn on the cob, baked apples, chicken, and a cake with 7 minute icing, as well as presents for all of us kids; something for each of us.

We had this huge meal, and retired to the living room to sing hymns out of the songbooks she brought along.

One very special Christmas we received candy, nuts and gifts from the First Baptist Church in Rosiclare; it was indeed a year we

remembered. As I make my goodies this Christmas season, I am thankful for the abundance I have in my life; for the plentiful ingredients in my kitchen cabinet, and for the love of family and friends. More than all of that, I am thankful for the reason for the season.

What holiday traditions do you remember? Are you abundantly blessed? Maybe this year you too can make a memory for someone else.