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7-11

#### VICTORIAN FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS

Month-long celebration includes parades, visits with Santa, holiday crafts, special deals, caroling and more.

12

17

#### PIECES OF THE PAST

As it completes The Becky Thatcher House renovation, Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum offers historic take-aways and a lineup of winter activities.

HOME, HEARTH & SOUL SATISFACTION

Alliance Art Gallery showcases wool-and-blanket penny rugs of Suzette Krummel.



**DECEMBER** 2016

#### **2 LETTER TO OUR READERS**

#### **3-6 CHRISTMASES PAST**

A glance back at traditions and trappings that characterized downtown Hannibal during the holidays in a bygone era.

#### 16 HOLIDAY CLASSICS

Mark Twain Chorale presents Christmas concert at Hannibal-LaGrange University.

#### **18 FIELD GUIDE HAS RICH HISTORY**

New edition of classic book, 'The Wild Mammals of Missouri,' is published.

#### 19 CANDLELIGHT TRIBUTE

Memorial service helps those experiencing loss in facing the holidays.

#### **20 THINKING OF THOSE IN NEED**

Applications accepted for food baskets and Toy Town outreach.

#### 21 'SEAMLESS FLOW OF CARE'

Hannibal Medical Group adds obstetrics and gynecology services to its offerings.

#### **24 DOWN AT THE CLOCK COMPANY**

Dave Miller talks about his timely passion.

#### 29 THESE GRANDMAS ARE TOPS

Grandmothers from Hannibal and Louisiana named among state's top 10 grandmas.

#### 35-43 LOCAL, REGIONAL EVENTS & EXHIBITS

Events in Hannibal and a bit beyond — visual and performing arts, Parks & Recreation and more.

#### **39 BEST BETS**

Offers and deals for December.

#### **44 BOB AND BEYOND**

Hick Finn has a message of hope for the holidays, and says, 'thanks for the memories.'

### No Appointment Necessary!

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Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, CLOSED
Saturday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, Open 8 am - 5 pm
Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, Open 11 am - 6 pm

For questions call: 573-231-0660
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hannibalregionalmedicalgroup.org





## New year brings with it new issue of Hannibal Magazine

ell, we find ourselves nearing the end of yet another year, looking back at the successes and opportunities that 2016 provided us.

This issue of Hannibal Magazine marks a key milestone for us at Quincy Media, as it completes our first full year at the helm of the publication.

Over the course of preparing this year's 10 issues, we have had the opportunity to meet so many more event planners, business owners, festival attendees and Hannibal dignitaries than we have ever known in Hannibal in the past. We are far better for those growing relationships.

We always have tried to listen to our readers and work to make sure we meet as many of their requests as we possibly can. It's been a source of constant pride for us.

One of the things that kept coming up this year was a desire from readers, event planners and advertisers to increase the frequency of our publication by adding an issue. And so, after careful planning and deliberation, I am happy to announce that we will

add a March issue of Hannibal Magazine in 2017, giving us 11 issues next year.

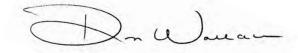
It has been with the incredible support from the community in Hannibal that we have been able to achieve great success, so we are quite proud to be able to offer this expansion.

We have some more news coming for you in 2017 but we will wait until the time is

right to make those announcements.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this issue and take part in the wonderful celebration of the holiday season that is the downtown Victorian Christmas. Store owners, reenactors and more will be working hard to spread holiday cheer and celebrate the Christmas season by transporting shoppers and passers by back to the Dickensian era.

Until we return in February 2017, we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and pray for blessings to find you and yours.



**Ron Wallace** 



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Read Hannibal Magazine online at www.hannibalmag.com

Submit events and calendar items to hannibalmagazine@qni.biz by January 1 to be included in February issue.

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### Christmases past in Historic Downtown Hannibal

By Lisa Marks

or nearly 200 years, Christmas has been celebrated in Hannibal. The first holidays were celebrated in log cabins; by the 1840s when the Clemens family arrived in Hannibal, churches had been established, and gatherings with friends and family included the exchange of small gifts wrapped in brown paper tied with string. Soon, front parlors were decorated with Christmas trees, with fruit, nuts, berries and candy hanging from their boughs lit by the glow of candles clipped to the tree.

As the snows came, children enjoyed ice skating on Bear Creek and sledding down Hannibal's steep hills. Some years, horse-drawn traffic was brought to a halt to allow those sledding down Seventh Street to pass; so severe was the street's slope that, with the right toboggan, a few adventuresome sledders could start at the intersection of Seventh and Hill and make it all the way to Lyon Street in one, long pass.

Eventually, candlelit trees gave way to fancy electric lights. Gift-giving became a more prominent part of the holidays, and jolly old St. Nick, now known as Santa Claus, delighted children with the promise of rewards for good behavior.

#### **Favorite spots**

During the postwar years of the late 1940s and early 1950s, before malls began to appear along Highway 61, downtown Hannibal was where people went to shop. Broadway and Main Street were considered the main shopping areas in Hannibal, and, during the holiday season, the downtown district became even more special — the day after Thanksgiving, stores transformed overnight into a holiday fantasyland.

At that time, eagerly anticipated was the opening of Santa's House at the intersection of Broadway and Main Street, where the Avenue of Flags is situated today. Children from throughout the region would wait in line to greet Santa in the small, square house decorated to look like Santa's front parlor.

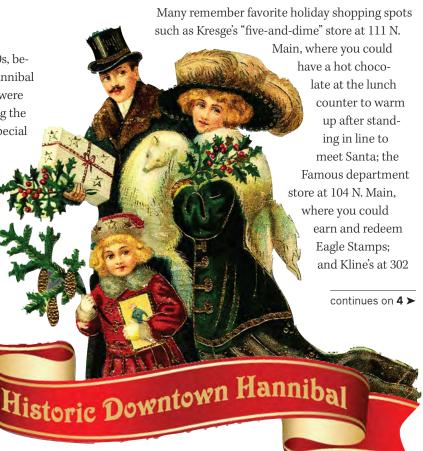
Once inside, near the pot-bellied stove lit to keep everyone warm, children would be greeted by one of Santa's helpers and brought to sit on Santa's lap to discuss their Christmas wish list. Each child would receive a piece of candy as they exited the back of the house.

During the holidays, the Hannibal Merchant's Bureau organized the downtown stores to stay open until 9 on Saturday evenings in December as well as the last four



shopping days before Christmas. Of course, all stores were closed on Sundays.

#### **Shopping destinations**



Broadway, a large store that covered the entire city block. All would entice shoppers with lavishly decorated windows and holiday sales.

Heiser's Jewelry Store at 115 S. Main, the phone number of which was 729, encouraged shoppers to consider Bulova watches and diamond rings. Stores on Main Street all did nice window displays; none was more exciting to youngsters than Hayden's Hardware Store, situated at 211 N. Main, which always had a grand toy display.

The glow of electric lights made the streets magical. Large lighted archways spanned Broadway and Main and Third streets. Residents gathered on the second or third block of North Main to listen as the Salvation Army band would play Christmas music, and churches would bring their choirs downtown to sing carols.

#### Nativity in the park

Central Park also featured holiday decorations and events. The Merchant's Bureau sponsored an elaborate nativity scene and several other displays, including lights strung around the fountain. During the early 1960s, Santa's house was located in Central Park.

Children in mid-century Hannibal were treated to a Christmas event at the Tom Sawyer Theater, now home to The Crossing church. At a party the Saturday before Christmas, Santa would make an appearance with bags of candy; sometimes there were



magicians on stage and cartoons between movies. The show sometimes lasted three or four hours.

During one event, in December 1950, the theater advertised Hadacol's Christmas Party. Hadacol's was a patent medicine marketed as a vitamin supplement — that just happened to have 12 percent

continues on 6 ➤







alcohol content, which was listed on the label as a "preservative." Children who brought a Hadacol's boxtop would receive free admission — "Ask Mom and Dad to Get You a Hadacol Box Top!"

On Saturday, Dec. 23, 1950, the Hadacol Christmas Party began at 9 a.m. and offered a full-length feature of Hopalong Cassidy, a Woody Woodpecker comedy and "Gifts for Every Child!"

In 1965, the Huck Finn Shopping Center opened on Highway 61, and the shopping habits of Hannibalians began to change. Downtown stores were no longer popular. Christmas in downtown Hannibal diminished over the years. Santa's House, the Central Park nativity display and the Tom Sawyer Theater are now just memories — fond childhood recollections of Hannibalians who now celebrate Christmas with their grandchildren.

#### Downtown's draw

The merchants of Broadway and Main Street hope to bring shoppers back to downtown Hannibal. The Victorian Festival of Christmas begins Saturday, Nov. 26, aka Small Business Saturday, when shoppers are encouraged to turn their attention from bigbox stores and make purchases at locally owned businesses.

Santa will be available each Saturday from Nov. 26 through Dec. 17, and downtown shops, restaurants, museums and other establishments will be open through Christmas Eve.



Enjoy the traditions of the season including carolers, the Salvation Army Band, the Jaycees Christmas Parade and Living Windows. Please plan to join in the festivities of Victorian Christmas and create new family memories — in doing so, you will be supporting merchants who work hard to continue these traditions and strive to preserve historic downtown Hannibal throughout the year.

From Our HOME to Yours

Strength and service continues

### Victorian Festival of Christmas takes over downtown

By Lisa Marks

ringing the spirit of Christmases of long ago to historic downtown Hannibal, the Victorian Festival of Christmas celebrates long-cherished holiday traditions — caroling, horse and wagon rides, sing-a-longs, visits with Santa Claus, beautifully decorated storefront windows, twinkling Christmas lights and so much more,

Sponsored by the Historic Hannibal Marketing Council, a consortium of downtown merchants, the festival runs from late November through Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24.

Just a few of the planned events are as follows:

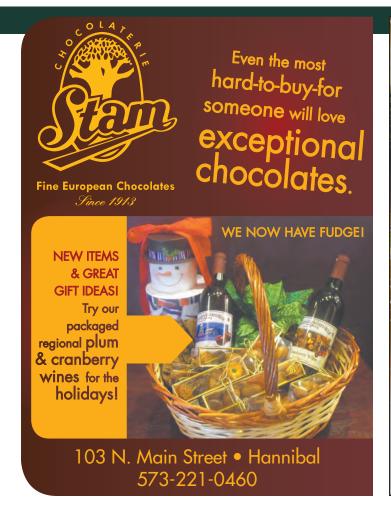
• Small Business Saturday, Nov. 26. The annual event encourages shoppers to visit locally owned small businesses; it is sponsored by Hannibal Chamber of Commerce and American Express. Many merchants will offer specials and events not only on Small Business Saturday but also through Dec. 24. Details of particular offers are on Pages 11 and 12 and on the festival website, VictorianChristmasInHannibal.com

• Mark Twain Birthday Celebration, Saturday, Nov. 26, at Mark Twain Home and Museum. The celebration will commemorate the



1835 birth of Hannibal's own Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Mustache competition, Masquerade Mask exhibit and contest and local artisan fair will be at the Mark Twain Museum Gallery, 120 N. Main. At 6 p.m., the Muddy River Theater Group will perform a radio theater adaptation of Orson Welles's 1940 radio broadcast of the "Adventures of

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Huckleberry Finn," "Huck." Tickets are \$15 general admission; \$10 for museum associate members. Call 573-221-9010, ext. 401, for reservations.

- Christmas Lighting, 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26. Gather on Main Street to witness the spectacle of the Christmas lighting ceremony.
- Annual Jaycees Christmas Parade, 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3. Commencing at The Wedge on Market Street and continuing to North Main Street. Spectators are invited to donate a new, unwrapped toy that will be collected during the parade for Toys For Tots.
- Christmas Gala Spectacular fundraiser for the Hannibal History Museum, 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 9, at Finn's Food & Spirits, 214 N. Main. Enjoy a fun-filled night of holiday food, music and comedy that celebrates the season in style. Silent auction, special gifts for attendees, Christmas karaoke and many more surprises. Tickets are \$25 or \$45 for couples; reserve yours by calling 573-248-1819.
- "Babes In Toyland" Parade, 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, sponsored by the Historic Hannibal Marketing Committee. Dress in your holiday fineries, decorate your doll carriage or wagon, bring your teddy bear or portray one of your favorite storybook characters. Fun for kids of all ages including parents and grandparents. Join Santa in a grand promenade down Main Street and bring your toys along for the ride. The parade begins at the north end of Main Street near the Tom & Huck statue and continues south to Broadway. Free to all participants and spectators.

- Living Windows, 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10. Downtown storefront windows come to life in celebration of the holidays. Stores will be beautifully decorated and feature real-life "mannequins" and entertainers in holiday-themed vignettes. Most stores have extended hours.
- Journey to Bethlehem, Thursday, Dec. 8, and contining Dec. 9, 10 and 11. An interactive walking tour presented by The Crossing church. More than 6,000 people made the journey in 2015; don't miss this spectacular re-creation of the walk that Mary and Joseph took to be taxed for the census as they prepare for the arrival of their newborn baby. The journey begins at the church, 425 Broadway, 4 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8, and contines 4 to 9 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Free admission.
- Dead Of Winter Ghost Tour, 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17. Special ghost tour of Old Baptist Cemetery; hear the remarkable stories of the people buried in the cemetery, learn of different ghostly experiences that have happened there during Haunted Hannibal Ghost Tours, and search for signs of paranormal activity. This special, one-hour guided tour is presented by Ken and Lisa Marks. Tickets are \$15 per person; reservations are recommended as seating is limited. Call 573-248-1819.

Many other events are planned for this special holiday festival − mark your calendars to visit historic downtown Hannibal throughout the Christmas season. ■





### Victorian Festival of Christmas schedule

Thursday, Nov. 24

**5 p.m.:** Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

Saturday, Nov. 26

All day: Small Business Saturday in Downtown Hannibal

10 a.m.: Mark Twain's Birthday Bash

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Local Artisan Fair at the Museum Gallery, 120 N. Main.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Take pictures with Santa at the Mark Twain Museum.

11 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Holiday Horse and Wagon Rides.

5 p.m.: Christmas Kickoff in front of Mark Twain's Boyhood Home

**6 p.m.**: "Huck." Tickets are \$15 general admission and \$10 for museum associate members. Call 573-221-9010, ext. 401, for tickets.

**7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.:** Live Original Music; Flatfoot Reed, with Fivefold and NOWAKE Live at the Mark Twain Brewing Company. Doors openat 7:30 show starts at 8. Free show; live original music.

#### Sunday, Nov. 27

**1 p.m. to 4 p.m.:** Come out to Sawyer's Creek for pictures with Santa and Christmas crafts for kids. For \$10 each child will get to make two crafts to give as gifts or to keep.

TBA: Classic holiday movies at Greater Days

#### Thursday, Dec. 1

**6 to 8 p.m.:** ARTY PARTY at Hannibal Arts Council; Santa painting. Instructed by Brenda Beck Fisher. Cost \$35 (\$25 HAC members). Registration required. Call 573-221-6545 or reservations@hannibalarts. com.

**7 p.m.:** Rudolph's Ride painting party at Lush n' Brush. Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$35.

#### Friday, Dec. 2

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe

Saturday, Dec. 3

**9** a.m. to noon: Holiday Bazaar at Twisted Juniper.

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Christmas Open House at Encore Emporium.

11 a.m.: Holiday Bow Making Demonstration at Mississippi Marketplace

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Take pictures with Santa at Java Jive.

**11 a.m. to 3 p.m.:** Holiday Horse and Wagon Rides in downtown Hannibal.

**Noon to 2 p.m.:** Holly Jolly Hands-On Holiday Workshop at Hannibal Arts Council; Participants will make a variety of hands-on holiday projects to use as gifts.

1 to 4 p.m.: Hannibal Elementary Carolers in Downtown Hannibal.

**3 to 5 p.m.:** Christmas Carols with Heather Luan Howald & Willy Phillips at Mark Twain Museum. Free with general admission ticket to museum.

**5 p.m.:** Stowell Elementary Strings performs their Christmas concert at Java Jive.

7 p.m.: Hannibal Christmas Parade in Downtown Hannibal.

7 p.m.: St. Charles County Symphony Concert. Free admission.

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

Sunday, Dec. 4

1 to 4 p.m.: Creative crafts at Sawyer's Creek. Cost \$10.

Tuesday, Dec. 6

**6 to 8 p.m.:** ARTY PARTY: Lemons into Lemonade; lemonade/picnic painting. Instructed by Brenda Beck Fisher. Cost \$35. Registration required. Call 573-221-6545 or email reservations@hannibalarts.com

Wednesday, Dec. 7

**7 p.m.:** Pretty Penguin painting party at Lush n' Brush. Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$30.

Thursday, Dec. 8

5 to 9 p.m.: Journey to Bethlehem at The Crossing.

**6:30 p.m.:** Share the joy with friends and family at the Hannibal Arts Council's soup and supper fundraiser.

**7 p.m.:** Jolly Ornaments Painting Party at Lush n' Brush. Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$30.

**7 p.m.:** Merry Christmas to Ewe painting party at Lush n' Brush. Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$25.

Friday, Dec. 9

5 to 9 p.m.: Journey to Bethlehem at The Crossing.

**7 p.m.:** Christmas Gala Spectaclur at Finn's Food & Spirits. Tickets are \$25 or \$45 for couples. Reservations by calling 573-248-1819.

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

Saturday, Dec. 10

**11** a.m.: Make Edible Ornaments at Mississippi Marketplace. Free admission.

11 to 2 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m.: Holiday Horse and Wagon Rides.

**11 to 3 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m.:** Take pictures with Santa at the Mark Twain Museum.

**3 to 6 p.m.:** Wine Tasting at Chocolaterie Stam. Free admission.

4 p.m.: Babes in Toyland Parade on Main Street.

5 to 6 p.m.: Music, Marshmallows, and Mistletoe at Y-Men's Pavillion.

5 to 8 p.m.: Living Windows on Main Street.

**5 to 8 p.m.:** Second Saturday Gallery Night at Downtown Hannibal Art Galleries.

5 to 9 p.m.: Journey to Bethlehem at The Crossing.

7 p.m.: Holiday Concert at HLGU Parker Theater.

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

#### Sunday, Dec. 11

**4 p.m.:** "Miracle on 34th Street" at Mark Twain Museum. Cost \$15 (\$10 for members). Call 573-221-9010, ext. 401, for tickets.

5 p.m. to 9 p.m.: Journey to Bethlehem at the Crossing.

7:30 to 9:30 p.m.: Benefit Concert for Kids in Motion at HLGU.

#### Thursday, Dec. 15

**6 to 8 p.m.:** ARTY PARTY: Wintery Tree; Winter scene painting. Instructed by Brenda Beck Fisher. Cost \$35 (\$25 HAC members). Registration required. Call 573-221-6545 or reservations@hannibalarts.com.

**7 p.m.:** "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" painting party; Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$25.

#### Friday, Dec. 16

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

#### Saturday, Dec. 17

11 p.m.: Take pictures with Santa at Mississippi Marketplace.

11 p.m.: Holiday Bow Making Demonstration at Mississippi Marketplace. Free admission.

11 to 3 p.m.: Holiday Horse and Wagon Rides.

Noon to 2 p.m.: Snowball Toss at Y-Men's Pavillion.

**5 p.m.:** Dead of Winter Ghost Tour at Hannibal History Museum. Cost \$15. Reservations recommended. Call 573-248-1819.

**5 to 9 p.m.:** Dinner and a Movie with Santa Claus at Mark Twain Dinette. Accepting donations.

**7 p.m.:** Monogram Ornament painting party; Step by step instructions and all materials/supplies provided. Cost \$20.

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

TBA: Ugly Sweater Party at Mark Twain Brewing Co.

#### Sunday, Dec. 18

**4 p.m.:** "Miracle on 34th Street" at Mark Twain Museum. Cost \$15 (\$10 for members). Call 573-221-9010, ext. 401, for tickets.

#### Friday, Dec. 23

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

#### Saturday, Dec. 24

TBA: Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.

#### Sunday, Dec. 25

**TBA:** Live music at Main Street Wine Stoppe.■



#### STOCKING STUFFER DEALS

#### **Alliance Art Gallery**

112 N Main St.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

10 percent off selected stocking stuffers.

#### **Aunt Polly's Treasures**

213 Hill St.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Buy one regular priced item and get a second regular priced item at 50 percent off. Free hot apple cider to all our shoppers on Saturdays.

#### **Ava Goldworks**

211 Center St.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Gumdrop Party, Special in-store deals on handmade gumdrop jewelry line

#### **Chocolaterie Stam**

103 N Main St.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

10 percent off any purchase of \$10 or more.

#### **Encore Emporium**

109 S 4th St.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

A \$25 gift certificate for \$20.

#### **Greater Days**

111 N. Main St.

Free brownie or three cookies with purchase of a sandwich. We will have holiday gift items available for purchase for Christmas and Hanukkah.

#### **Hannibal Arts Council**

105 S Main St.

99 Bucks...or less. Popular holiday exhibit and sale of local artists' work. All art priced under \$99.

#### **Hannibal History Museum**

200 N Main St.

Free fancy Post-It note stack with purchase of \$20 or more.

#### LaBinnah Bistro

207 N 5th St.

5 to 10 p.m.

Free glass of wine with entree purchase.

#### **Mark Twain Dinette**

400 N 3rd St.

6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

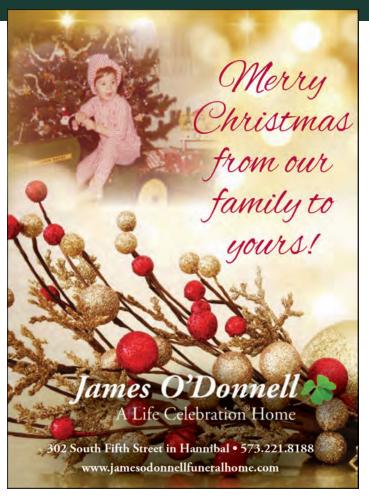
Free memorabilia coffee mug with meal purchase of \$20. \$5 off a \$30 gift card.

#### Mark Twain Museum

120 N Main St

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

\$1 off any Toysmith musical instrument.





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### SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY DEALS

#### **Ava Goldworks**

Buy any pendant, get a 16- or 18-inch silk cord half off (\$18 originally, \$9 on special) Christmas cheer! Enjoy wine and treats as you shop.

#### **Encore Emporium**

Unique gift baskets will be sold for \$30 and less.

#### **Hannibal History Museum**

Buy one, get one free on large soaps.

#### **Mark Twain Dinette**

\$5 off with purchase of \$30 gift card.

#### Mark Twain Museum

Free Big Little Fudge Bite with \$20 purchase. ■

### Museum ushers in winter

Tis the season for entertainment at the Mark Twain Museum with Christmas carols, holiday- inspired Living Windows, Radio Theater performances of "Miracle on 34th Street" and "Casablanca" and an evening of games with the museum's annual trivia night.



Singing since age 11, Howald regularly performs throughout the Hannibal area, including the Cannon Dam Opry, singing country, gospel



and other musical genres. Entry to the music event is free with general admission to the museum properties. Stay after the performance to enjoy the Hannibal Christmas Parade at 6:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Dec. 10, the windows of the Museum Gal-

lery will be among those along Hannibal's Main Street that come to life with whimsey with Living Windows.

The Museum Gallery will host the Radio Theater production of the holiday classic "Miracle on 34th Street" at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, and Sunday, Dec. 18. Tickets are \$15 general admission and \$10 for museum associate members. Seating is limited; Call 573-221-9010, ext. 401, to purchase in advance.





# Pieces of the past

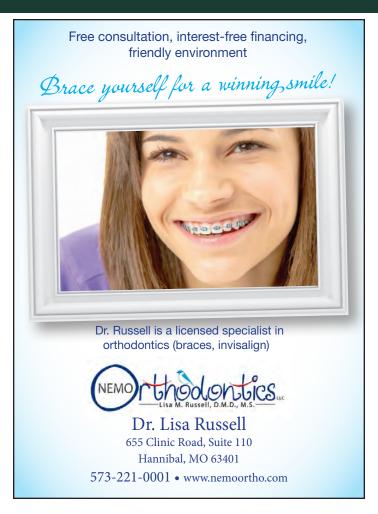
Charles Rickey, maintenance supervisor at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum, salvaged shutters and windows from the recently renovated Becky Thatcher House to create decorative household organizers, frames and mirrors that are available for sale at the museum gift shop. Rickey was instrumental in the Thatcher House renovation, as well as that of the Clemens justice of the peace office and the Pilaster House.

In all, the museum oversees five historic buildings, two museums and three museum shops:

- Mark Twain Boyhood Home: The house where the Clemens family lived from 1844 to 1853 and inspiration for "Tom Sawyer."
- The Becky Thatcher House: Home of the Hawkins family. Laura Hawkins provided the model for Becky Thatcher in "Tom Sawyer."
- John M. Clemens Justice of the Peace Office: Building used by Mark Twain's father while justice of the peace and holding court sessions.
- Grant's Drug Store or Pilaster House: Home of Dr. Orville Grant; first floor is outfitted as a period drug store.



• Huckleberry Finn House: Re-creation of a house where it is believed the Blankenship family lived; Tom Blankenship was the model for Huck Finn. ■





### Becky Thatcher House shows off renovations

The team behind the history and entertainment at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum is proud to show off recently restored and added exhibits at the Becky Thatcher House, which follows the 2007 opening of the reconstructed Huckleberry Finn House in historic downtown Hannibal.

"We are very pleased with the final exhibits in the Becky Thatcher House," said Henry Sweets, executive director of the attraction.

"PGAV Destinations guided us through our challenging project and helped develop it from concept to construction documents," Sweets said in reference to the St. Louis-based design firm PGAV Destinations, which was retained in 2005 to create new exhibits for two of the buildings that make up the downtown tour of author Samuel Clemens' early life, including the Interpretive Center, the Museum Gallery and new Boyhood Home Gift Shop.

Following its master plan, the team is working toward full restoration of the John M. Clemens Justice of the Peace Building and the Pilaster House.

Thatcher is the fictional love interest of Tom Sawyer, star and adventurer of American novelist Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." Sawyer spends much of the novel attempting to woo Thatcher through a variety of artistic, acrobatic and emotional means, eventually winning her over. Twain noted that the inspiration for Thatcher was his real-life pursuit of Laura Hawkins, who lived across the street from Twain in what is now known as the Becky Thatcher House.

"For nearly a century and a half, we've known Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher so well, through the vivid story-craft of Mark Twain," said PGAV Destinations vice president Diane Lochner. "But the new exhibits at the Becky Thatcher House provide a wonderful opportunity to learn about the true relationship between Samuel Clemens and Laura Hawkins, Becky's inspiration; the house itself; how the Hawkins



family used it; and what life was like in 19th Century rural Missouri."

The re-invigorated Thatcher House offers a look into social class and daily life; among new artifacts, graphics, media and interactives, Hannibal-based illustrator Brenda Beck Fisher has produced custom images of Twain's world-famous characters throughout the House.

### 'Casablanca,' trivia night highlight museum's January events

The holidays may fall behind us, but the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum keeps up the fun through January.

The classic movie "Casablanca" takes to the imaginary airwaves Friday and Saturday, Jan. 20 and 21, at the museum gallery. This radio theater production includes Frank Elmore as Sam, the role played by Humphrey Bogart in the film; KHQA television anchor Rajah Maples in the Ingrid Bergman role; and Clark Cruickshank taking on the rolls portrayed by of Claude Rains, Peter Lorre and Sidney Greenstreet. "Casablanca" incorporates live performers with video backdrops. Both productions begin at 7 p.m.

Tickets are available in advance by contacting the museum of-

fice at 573-221-9010, ext. 401. The cost is \$15 for general admission and \$10 for museum associates.

Trivia — Twain and otherwise — is on the table at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, with the museum's annual trivia night, now in its sixth year. Ten teams of ten compete in 10 categories with 10 questions each at the Shirley Bomar Community Center in Hannibal.

Entry is \$100 per team, with proceeds helping to support exhibits in the Becky Thatcher House. A silent auction will be held during the event. To enter a team or donate to the auction, contact Melissa Cummins, 573-221-9010, ext. 409. ■

### Sweets recognized with Legacy award

Henry Sweets III, executive director of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum, was featured in a recent edition of the Mark Twain Journal as the recipient of the Legacy Director and Curator award.

In announcing Sweets' selection, the publication said, "The Mark Twain Journal recognizes Henry Sweets of Hannibal, Missouri, as a Legacy Director and Curator, fifth in the series of Legacy awards. During 38 years of affiliation with the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum,

Henry Sweets has overseen the development of the historic site into a steadily enlarging district that replicates the riverfront era of the 1840s, recreates the family circle and social milieu that produced a great author and acknowledges the antebellum crime of human slavery."



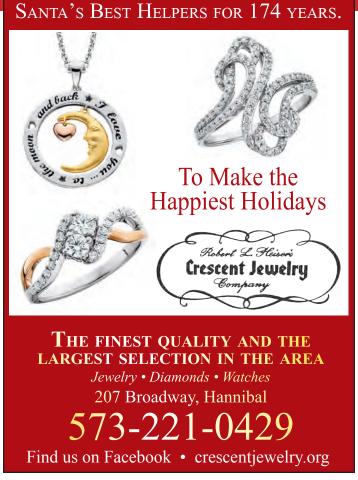
Sweets began his career with the Mark Twain Museum in 1978 as curator and now serves as executive director.

During his affiliation with the museum, he has overseen the restoration of the Boyhood Home, which began in 1990, as well as the projects of the Becky Thatcher House, J.M. Clemens Justice of the Peace Office and restoration of Grant's Drugstore. Sweets has also seen the expansion of the museum properties, developed educational programs and created The Fence Painter

publication, now in its 36th year.

He has helped host two quadrennial Clemens Conferences in Hannibal and leads annual teacher workshops that help educators develop a means of promoting Mark Twain in the classroom. ■





### Alliance Art Gallery welcomes home, hearth

By Bella Erakko

he words "home" and "hearth" come to mind when one sees Suzette Krummel's wool-and-blanket penny rugs and wool appliques. They have such a soul-satisfying quality about them. Suzette, a former member of Alliance Art Gallery, returns as our Second Saturday featured artist for December.

The timing couldn't be better as Christmas — and gift-giving — approaches.

What, you may ask, is a penny rug? Wikipedia succinctly explains that: "In the 1800s, starting around the time of the Civil War, thrifty homemakers would use scraps of wool or felted wool from old clothing, blankets and hats to create designs for mats or rugs. ... Sometimes a penny was stitched inside the mat to make it lie flat."

Suzette realized she was a born needle-worker when she ordered a crewel embroidery kit from a magazine at age 10. After that, a needle never left her hand. Coupled with her love of antiques and folk art, penny

 $\operatorname{rugs}$  and applique pieces seemed an inevitable outcome.

Each created piece blends warm colors, rich designs and practical use. Dying her "fulled" wools with natural or purchased dyes, using everything from marigolds to onion skins, pansies to pokeberries, Suzette cuts each piece and stitches by hand to make a one-of-a-kind design.

As a folk artisan, she ranks top in her field of handcrafted wool textiles, with a clear mastery of this art form as she embraces

heritage techniques and quality workmanship, according to the Directory of Traditional American Crafts and Early American Life Magazine. She often exhibits at folk life festivals and art fairs in the Midwest, and she is a member of the Great River Artisans in Quincy, Ill.

For the many people who have enjoyed Suzette's unique art when she was a member — and for those who love creating a warm

welcoming home environment — be sure to visit the Alliance Art Gallery in December to see what's new in her handcrafting world.

The Alliance Art
Gallery invites you
to enjoy its opening
reception honoring
Suzette Krummel's
work, 5 to 8 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 10. The
reception coincides
with Hannibal's Second Saturday Gallery
Night.

Throughout the month, the member artists of Alliance Art Gallery will feature unique holiday giftgiving ideas in every price range, from jewelry to pottery, scarves, original art, photography, inlaid woodwork, books and, yes, gift certificates.

Artists create beauty as a way of gifting the world; those who buy art create gifts-of-love for those they cherish. May this season allow beauty and love to nourish and nurture one another.

More information is available at Alliance Art Gallery, 112 N. Main in Hannibal or by calling 573-221-2275 or visiting allianceart-gallery.com. ■

### Rich history of guide to wild Missouri mammals

Beginning as a series of 47 abstracts of species published in the Missouri Conservationist from July 1953 to September 1957, "The Wild Mammals of Missouri" has a long, rich history.

Naturalists Charles W. Schwartz and Elizabeth R. Schwartz compiled the text and detailed illustrations from their original fieldwork and observations, as well as several other sources.

The University of Missouri Press released the first edition of the book in 1959 as the third book of the original books published by the press; it was printed in Kansas City. It was jointly published with the Missouri Conservation Commission.

For nearly 60 years this book has been regarded as the definitive guide to the identification of the animals. Charles Schwartz's technically accurate drawings capture the spirit of his subjects. Many researchers and college classes have used the text.

More than just a taxonomy guide, however, this book also describes the mammalian relationships to each other and to humans and concerns of ecology. Management concepts and economic considerations also varied over this span of half a century.

This book went through six printings before the Schwartz family revised it in 1981. Two other revisions followed, one in 2001, and most recently, the third revised edition appeared in 2016.

Larry R. Gale, director of the Missouri Department of Conservation, wrote this in the 1981 foreword: "During the past 21 years, this scientific yet popular publication by Charles and Elizabeth Schwartz has been widely acclaimed as the definitive work on its subject. The book has been adopted as a standard text by many universities and colleges, and it has become a frequently cited reference for mammal research. Sustained sales over the years prove it is equally popular with nonprofessionals wanting to know more about wild animals."

Each edition has stayed current with habitats, increased numbers of species, and nomenclature changes through the years. The fields of social communication and behavior

#### THE WILD MAMMALS OF MISSOURI

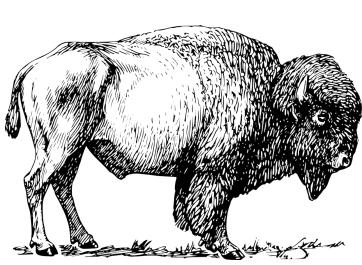
The Wild Mammals of Missouri, Third Revised Edition Charles W. Schwartz and Elizabeth R. Schwartz, Edited by Debby K. Fantz and Victoria L. Jackson ISBN 978-0-8262-2088-2 | Paperback | 396 pp. | 8.5 x 11

To order call 800-621-2736 or email orders@press. uchicago.edu.

added further research to the first revision. The number of mammals in Missouri described in the book has increased from 63 species in 1959 to 72 in 2016.

Even though both of these conservationists have died — Charles in 1991 and Elizabeth in 2013 — they left an invaluable mark in their field. The authors won national and international recognition for their films of the mid-20th century.

"Only this collaboration of wildlife biologist, artist, photographer and writer could have made this book possible," wrote William E. Towell, director of the Missouri Conservation Commission, in the 1959 foreword. ■





### Candlelight memorial service set for Dec. 4

SUNDAY, DEC. 4 • 2 p.m.

James O'Donnell Funeral Home, 302 S. Fifth St.

The holiday season often is less joyful for those who may have lost a loved one, whether it be a family member or friend.

To help ease the holidays for those who may be missing someone close to them, James O'Donnell Funeral Home hosts an annual candlelight memorial service.

The service will be 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4, at the home, 302 S. Fifth. The free services is open to everyone, not just those families

served by the O'Donnell Funeral Home.

During a candlelight ceremony, the names of the deceased will be read and recognized with a keepsake ornament provided by the home.

The Rev. Mike Quinn of Hannibal's Holy Family Catholic Church and the Rev. Tim Goodman of Clover Road Christian Church of Hannibal will lead the service, and Clover Road church will provide music.

Reservations for the service may be made by calling the funeral home at 573-221-8188. More information is available at jamesodon-nellfuneralhome.com.





### Applications being accepted for food baskets

Applications are being accepted in Hannibal for Christmas food baskets and Toy Town for the 2016 holiday season.

Applications may be made through Thursday, Dec. 4, at either the Salvation Army, 302 Broadway, Hannibal, or Douglass Community Services, 711 Grand, Hannibal.

Distributions will be made 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14, at the former Family Dollar Store at Steamboat Bend Shopping Center near County Market.

The annual Bucket Blitz will be 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7, at the shopping center. Those wishing to help in the bell-ringing campaign may register at ringbells.org. More information is available by calling Matt Schmidt at 217-506-0236.

Chairing the campaign are Joseph and Sharon Welch.

General information is available by calling Heidi Welty, Salvation Army regional social services director, at 217-231-5718. ■



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#### - STORE HOURS -

9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to Noon on Saturdays



### Hannibal Regional Medical Group adds OB/GYN specialty

Hannibal Regional Medical Group has added obstetrics and gynecology services to the range of care it offers.

The staff includes Dr. John Bennett, Dr. Laura Maple and Dr. Julie Viehmann.

Bennett and Maple both are board certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and are fellows of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Viehmann is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the American Osteopathic Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

"With the obstetrics and gynecology services now being offered at Hannibal Regional, the women of our community will have a seamless flow of care, particularly new and expectant mothers, as their doctors will now be under the same roof to both deliver their babies as well as provide their pre- and post-natal care," Todd Ahrens, Hannibal Regional CEO, said. "We are very grateful that we have a new team of specialists joining us to better serve the needs of our patients."

Bennett completed medical training at Southern Illinois Medical School in 1993, a family practice residency in 1996 and his OB/GYN residency in 2000. He moved in 2000 to the Hannibal area.

Maple completed medical training at the University of Texas in 1997. Her residency was conducted at the University of Virginia, after which she worked at the Women's Clinic in Wichita Falls, Texas.

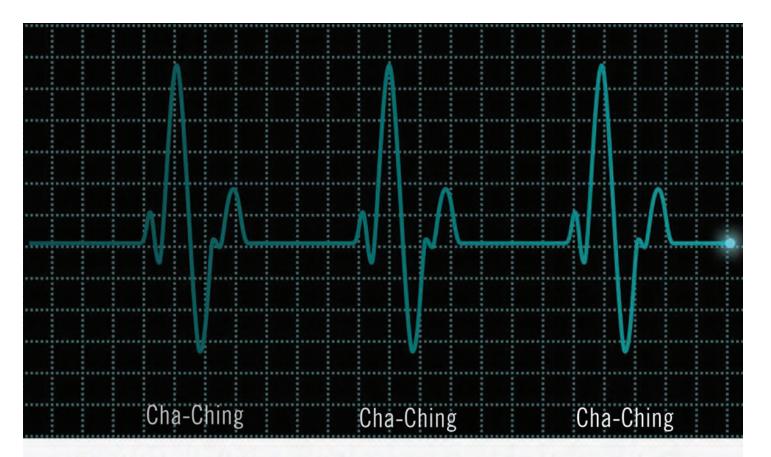
She moved to the Hannibal area in 2005.

Julie Viehmann completed medical training at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in 2008. She went on to graduate training at Genesys Regional Medical Center in Grand Blanc, Mich., and has been practicing in the Hannibal area since 2012.

OB/GYN services will be situated on the third floor of the Medical Group building.

More information is available by calling Hannibal Regional Medical Group at 573-629-3500.

As part of the Hannibal Regional Healthcare System, the Hannibal Regional Medical Group is a growing multi-specialty physician group continuing to expand primary and specialty care services to meet the health needs of northeast Missouri and west central Illinois residents. HRMG family and specialty physicians deliver a range of acute, chronic and preventive medical care services. In addition to diagnosing and treating illness, they also provide preventive care, including routine checkups, health-risk assessments, immunizations, screening tests and personalized counseling on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Hannibal Regional Medical Group has locations in Bowling Green, Canton, Hannibal, Louisiana, Monroe City and Shelbina, as well as an Express Care clinic and a Vision Institute in Hannibal.



### Is life without insurance changing the way you see health care?

The Missouri Health Insurance Marketplace is a website where individuals and families compare and purchase an affordable health insurance plan.

At no cost, a trained assister can help you enroll in insurance coverage and provide information about the Marketplace plans available to you and your family.



For questions or to enroll in health insurance, call Serena Brown at 573.629.7922 or visit covermissouri.org.





### Mark Twain Chorale to present holiday concert

The Mark Twain Chorale will present its 56th annual holiday concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, at Parker Theater on the Hannibal-LaGrange University campus at the Roland Fine Arts Center, 2800 Palmyra Road, Hannibal.

There is no admission charge; a freewill donation will be accepted.

Under the direction of Lori Scott, with Janet Ferguson as accompanist, the group will feature a variety of holiday classics. Guest soloists will be Ella Wilburn, vocalist, along with Linda St. Juliana and Andrea Reinwald, flautists. Other guests of the chorale will be the Hannibal String Orchestra under the direction of John Ferguson. ■





### Artists win chance to tour caves

Winners of the Sodalis Nature Preserve art contest were announced in October during grand opening events at the 185-acre park. Winners will have the opportunity in February to accompany U.S. Fish & Wildlife endangered species biologists into the former mines, which are gated to keep out people while still allowing bats to fly in and out.

Winners were as follows:

- 1. Ages 18 and older, Therese Marie Nolan of Hannibal.
- 2. Ages 13 to 17, Kearsten Creason of Hannibal.
- 3. Ages 12 and younger, Nalei Taeoalii, 10, of Hannibal.
- 4. Kyliah French, 11, of Hannibal.

The contest was sponsored by Hannibal Parks & Recreation and Hannibal Arts Council, and the winning artwork will be displayed at the new bat and cave exhibit at the Hannibal History Museum, 200 N. Main.

The park property was given to the city of Hannibal this year to preserve endangered bats. It is now Hannibal's second-largest park. The trailhead is at 819 Ely. ■











### Tournament honors memory of Don Crane

It was a beautiful day for disc golf, but sad, perhaps, for those who remember the man the tourney honored.

The Don Crane Memorial Huck Finn Open, held Nov. 5, drew 63 players to Huckleberry Park.

Before tee-off, a ceremony was held to remember Don Crane Jr., for whom the course is named. The ceremony was attended by Crane's son, Dylan, and parents, Don Crane Sr. and Donna Crane.

"It is really great to have his family here. Don was so instrumental in everything that has happened in the disc golf arena in the Tri-State area," John Shaw of Excitement Disc Golf, the event promoter, said.

The course, which opened 10 years ago, and a recent expansion were designed by Crane, who organized tourneys and taught lessons.

"Don would have loved to see the amount of people supporting the sport he loved. The reason disc golf has become so popular in Hannibal is largely due to him and his enthusiasm," Aron Lee, assistant director of Hannibal Parks & Recreation, said.

Tournament winners were as follows:

- Open Division: Ryan Anderson of Ottumwa, Iowa, first; Colin Poe, Wappelo, Iowa, second; Derrik Helling, Fort Madison, Iowa, third.
- Grandmasters Division: Eddie Kruse, Fort Madison, Iowa, first; Brad Allen, Wentzville, second; Richard Sheets, Fort Madison, Iowa, third.
- Advanced Women: Debbie Polkinghorne, O'Fallon, first; Bailey Polkinghorne, O'Fallon, second.
- Advanced Masters: Roger Beachy, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, first: Stanley Balke, Eugene, second; Don Moellenbeck, Old Monroe, third.
- Intermediate: Bill Young, Fort Madison, Iowa, first; Brett Mell, St. Louis, second; Mike Urbanc, Peoria, Ill., third.
- Recreational: Dane Jansen, St. Louis, first; Mike LeVart, Wentzville, second; Rodney Schild, Quincy, Ill., third.
  - Junior Girls: Virginia Polkinghorne, O'Fallon, first.



### Clock company's Miller wishing he had more time

By Edward Husar

ave Miller has become a victim of his own success.

Miller, who owns the Ralls County Clock Company, is a woodworker at heart. But he doesn't get to spend as much time working with wood as he'd like because the clock company has grown and keeps him too busy.

"It's nuts around here," Miller said inside his company's retail store and repair shop at 207 N. Main in downtown Hannibal.

The telephone kept ringing as customers continued walking through the door to inquire about having clocks serviced or repaired.

Miller isn't complaining. He's glad to see the company's clock-repair business doing so well. He just wishes he had more time to spend hand-crafting wall clocks, desk clocks and mantle clocks using the woodworking skills he has honed through the years.

According to Miller, the Ralls County Clock Company is now the only clock manufacturer in Missouri. And he wishes he had the time to make even more clocks than he does. "We used to manufacture quite a bit. But the problem is the company has grown so big," he said.

Miller and his staff stay plenty busy fixing old clocks and selling new, high-end clocks built by some of the big names in the business, such as Howard Miller, Ridgeway and Sligh — along with an array of high-end cuckoo clocks from Germany that Miller also repairs.

But when he finds a little extra time, "which is almost never anymore," Miller says he will head to the workshop at the back of his store and start to turn out some hand-crafted pieces for the wooden clock cabinetry he likes to build.

"I love the woodworking," he said.

Woodworking is what prompted Miller to retreat from the corporate world in the late 1990s to a 128-acre farm near Rensselaer that's been in his family since 1832. He started using his woodworking skills to build a series of antique clock reproductions along with some of his own designs.

Miller employed technicians to install the clock's inner work-



ings, known as its movement. He also worked with the technicians to repair clocks from customers throughout the region.

As business picked up, Miller started expanding his operation. He opened a shop in Hannibal in a rented space. Then he later bought the historic structure where the business is now housed — a one-time funeral home, built in 1865 — and filled the place with new and old clocks that he sells to clients around the country.

Miller opened a second store in Jefferson City in January 2015. He also previously operated a shop in Quincy, Ill., for a couple of years.

Miller said he likes operating a shop in the heart of Hannibal's downtown historic district. He said tourists from around the world stop in to see what he has to offer, and he frequently ends up serving clients in far-flung locations.

Miller said one thing he learned from being in the clock-repair business is that many families have an old clock they consider precious because it's part of the family's heritage. So when people step forward to have heirlooms put back into working order, he feels a big responsibility to do the job right.

"Our bread and butter is antique restoration and repair. That's our real claim to fame," he said. "You have to know what you're doing."

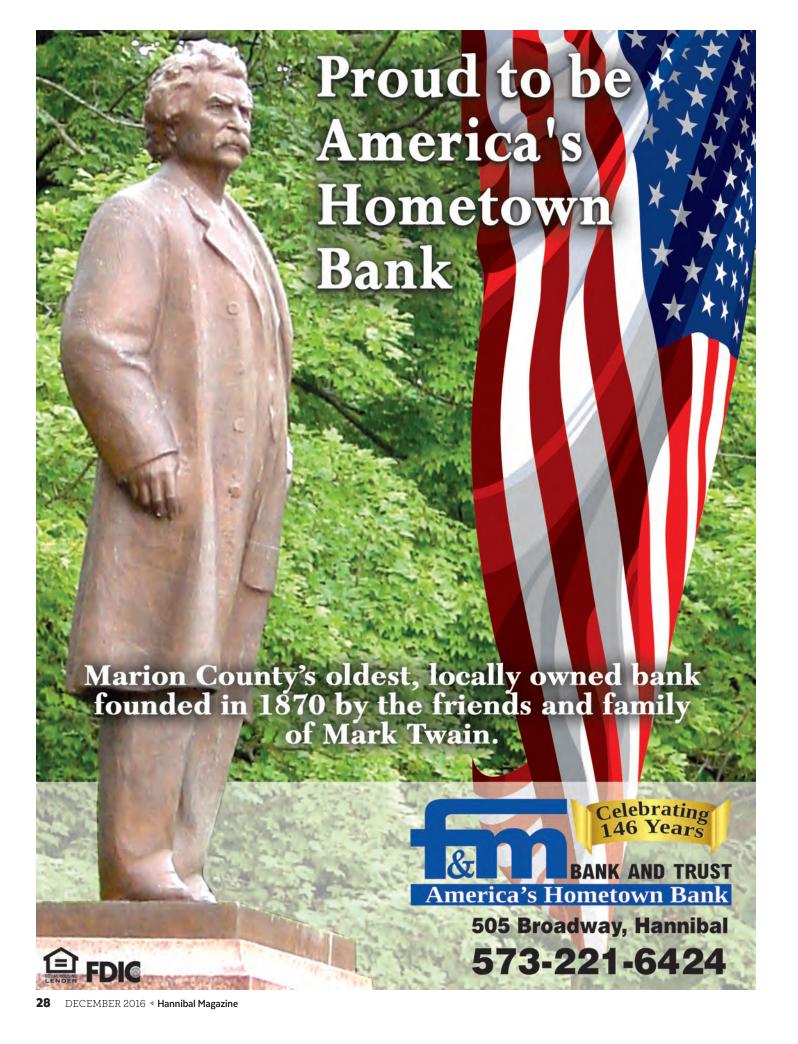


Miller said he's glad he got into the clock-making and clock-repair business because it's been a fulfilling career, even though it keeps him busier than he would like.

"I'm very fortunate," he said. "I would do it again in a New York minute."

More information about the Ralls County Clock Company is available at rallscountyclockcompany.com. ■







Tricia Suter with her grandmother, Nelta Young. | Photo by Phil Carlson

### Area grandmas recognized as top 10

By Ashley Szatala

Many grandmothers drink from mugs emblazoned with "Best Grandma," but not every grandma has an official award naming her one of the top 10 grandmas in Missouri. That honor belongs to Neleta Yount of Hannibal and Rita Reeves of Louisiana, Mo., chosen from more than 500 entries by the Magic of Marceline Development Co. as part of the company's 2016 class of Missouri's 10 best grandmas.

Yount and Reeves were nominated by their respective granddaughters, whom they raised their from an early age.

The company chose the winners based on their positive attributes and values and awarded each of the women with a \$500 cash prize for themselves, \$250 to be donated to any charity, a glass pie pan award etched with their name and an awards ceremony and dinner in Marceline.

#### **NELETA YOUNT**

Yount has raised her granddaughter Tricia Suter since Suter was a baby.

"She became my primary parent when my parents (through health and life choices) did not have the ability to raise me," Suter said. "She took me in and raised me as her own."

It was an act that Yount never second guessed.

"It would have been like abandoning my child," Yount said. "We have always been a close family, and we help each other out when somebody's having a tough time."

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Yount, who has seven children, 16 grandchildren and 32 great-grandchildren, has never turned away any of her grandchildren when they want to come over or need a place to stay.

"They all feel like my daughters and sons instead of grandchildren," Yount said. "My husband always worked hard, we had a big house, and they always had a room. We downsized eight years ago, and we still find a place for them to lay their heads."



Lydia Mackey with her grandmother Rita Reeves. | Photo by Phil Carlson

the kind of life a child should lead."

Mackey's mother dropped her off at her paternal grandparents' house for them to take care of her.

"My parents had issues and weren't ready to raise a child," Mackey said. "At least my mother had the common sense to leave me with people who could take care of me. She (Reeves) stepped up to bat for a dirty-faced 5-year-old little girl who needed her the most."

Mackey remembers her grandmother best at a more somber time.

A week before Mackey's 13th birthday, her mother died in a car acci-

dent. On the day of her birthday, Mackey rode with her grandmother to Virginia to attend the funeral.

"To have to go to my mother's side of the family takes a little bit of courage in and of itself, having not seen them in years," Mackey said. "The fact that she stood by me during a rough time I bet she preferred not to be in -- that takes a lot of guts in order for your granddaughter to have some closure."

"She became our daughter on her 13th birthday," Reeves said.

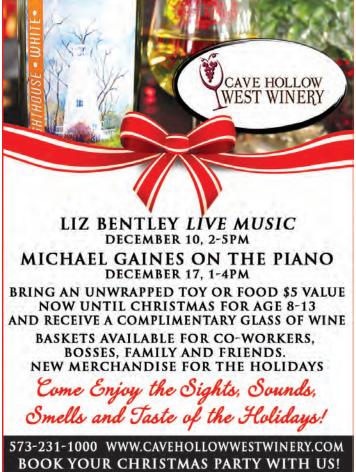
#### **RITA REEVES**

When Reeves' son, James, separated from his wife, Deborah, neither parent could care for 5-year-old Lydia Mackey.

Mackey remembers going into bars with her mother, being homeless at times and sleeping in cars.

"I was in a bad situation before they got me," Mackey said. "It wasn't





### F.A.C.T. offers help to obtain health care

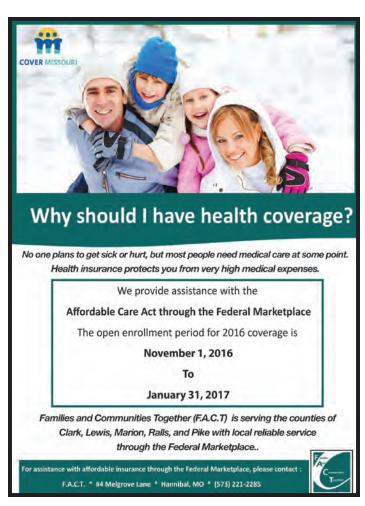
The Affordable Healthcare Act was created to make it easier and more affordable for Americans to have quality health insurance and increase the focus on preventive care.

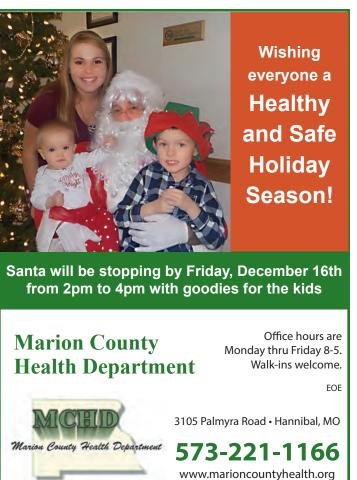
Many Americans now are required to have health insurance. If you are uninsured or do not have access to affordable insurance through your job, you can enroll in the Missouri Health Insurance Marketplace. It is an online marketplace where you can buy a Qualified Health Plan or Catastrophic coverage from private insurance companies.

Open enrollment in the marketplace started Nov. 1, with health insurance coverage starting Jan. 1. If you're eligible, the marketplace can help you find affordable coverage. Most people who apply qualify for premium tax credits and other savings based on income. If you already have 2016 Marketplace coverage, you'll be receiving information about how to keep your coverage for 2017.

Families And Communities Together offers free assistance to consumers with purchasing insurance through Federal Marketplace, healthcare.gov. If you need assistance, call the F.A.C.T. office at 573-221-2285.







# 'ATEAM EFFORT'

### Boland has portion of U.S. 61 named for him

By Doug Wilson

There was a standing-roomonly crowd when Tom Boland, a Hannibal businessman and longtime highway advocate, was honored at the unveiling of Tom Boland Highway, a 5.8mile stretch of U.S. 61 named after the former chairman of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

Boland didn't want to make the event all about him, though.

"This was a team effort," Boland said shortly after showing off a shiny new green highway sign with his name on it. "There's been a lot of help

and support from the Tri-State area. ... I don't want to take all of the credit here."

Boland used his time on the Highways and Transportation Commission to help bring transportation issues in Northeast Missouri to the forefront. He was a commission member from 1992 to 1998 and started a four-year stint as chairman in 1994. It was during that time that he helped found the Tri-State Development Summit in 1996.

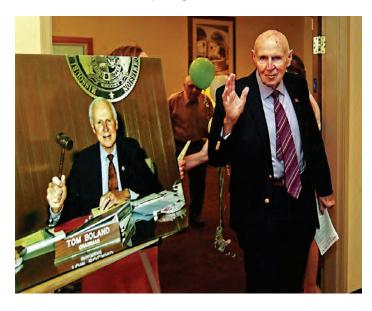
Boland said that it was lessons he learned while serving on the commission and the Missouri Economic Development Board that helped him get things done.

Boland said he learned to "never be afraid to ask, "to speak up," and "learn to influence people over which you have no control."

Boland spoke up, asked and influenced enough people to help create a road system in America's Hometown that now sees three major highways flow through it.

State Rep. Lindell Shumake, R-Hannibal, has lived in town since he was 8. Shumake remembers when the Tom Boland Highway was a far cry from what it is now.

 $^\circ$ I remember there was a four-way stop I think at West Ely and McMasters and another four-way stop at Route MM," Shumake



said. "But there weren't any lights."

The Tom Boland Highway is part of the Avenue of the Saints, a four-lane highway that connects the area to St. Louis to the south and St. Paul, Minn., to the north. The signs were paid for with donations.

Thomas A. Oakley, publisher of The Herald-Whig, was one of several people who spoke during last summer's ceremony. He and Boland have worked hand in hand since 1984 on regional transportation issues.

"When we started this, we didn't have a four-lane highway within 100 miles," Oakley told the crowd. "We have changed the face of the Midwest, and we've all had a part in that."

After the ceremony, Oakley spoke about how much Boland has done since their first meeting in 1984.

"We picked 10 projects we wanted to get done, and nine are finished," Oakley said. "The only one left is the Hannibal Expressway, which is very important. Tom has been a visionary on every aspect of getting the job done."

Shumake helped get a bill through the Missouri Legislature to honor Boland.

"It's well-deserved because of all that he's done for transportation in the area over a long period of time," Shumake said. "It's still a concern, and he's still engaged with these issues."

"I really didn't think (a highway designation) could ever be done," Boland said.

Boland's automobile dealership is situated along the Tom Boland Highway.

"I'm so glad that we were able to play a role in getting (that road built)," Boland said.

## Dumas, now abandoned, reportedly haunted

By Ed Husar

More than a century ago, the tiny hamlet of Dumas was a thriving railroad community in northeast Clark County.

Then in the 1920s and 1930s, residents started moving away, businesses closed and buildings fell into disrepair and gradually vanished.

About the only thing remaining in Dumas today are the ramshackle remains of the original train depot, several concrete foundations, a timeworn cemetery and a legend that refuses to die.

The legend involves a headless female ghost that reportedly wanders each night in the vicinity of a brick-lined tunnel that runs beneath the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway tracks passing through what remains of Dumas.

Mary Elwell knows all about the ghost story. The 91-year-old Clark County native has heard it all her life.

Elwell lives in Revere about three miles west of Dumas. Her grandparents ran a boarding house in Dumas "way back when," she said.

"They handed down the ghost legend to my mom, and my mom handed down the legend to me," Elwell said.



There are multiple variations of the ghost story.

"The one I have heard the most is there was this bad train wreck, and several of the bodies had been thrown in the river. Then they found one woman's body, and her head had been severed. So that's where the legend came that this headless woman wanders around Dumas searching for her head." Elwell said.

"My girlfriend and I used to ride horses, and we would look for her," Elwell added. "It's a good thing we didn't find her. I don't believe in ghosts,

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**Board Certified Rheumatologist** 



but it's fun to go along with it."

Ronnie Harrison, who lives down the road from Dumas, also is familiar with the ghost story.

"I heard it all my life," he said.

Harrison, 72, said people from throughout the Tri-State area come to Dumas to look for the ghost. Some take it seriously. Others regard it as pure folly.

Harrison has had fun with the legend throughout the years. Not long ago, for example, he put up a sign along his fence in the shape of a headless ghost. The sign's arm pointed down the gravel road in the direction of Dumas.

"It wasn't there two weeks, and somebody ripped it off one night," he said.

Harrison has a collection of historical photos and records that trace

the history of Dumas. He said the town got its start around 1887 when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad built a single-track bridge over the Des Moines River to allow trains to cross between Iowa and Missouri. This opened the door to intense rail traffic that continues to this day along that corridor.

The original Dumas depot was built near the single track. A second depot was built later

after a second set of tracks was constructed in 1911.

By then, Elwell said, "Dumas was a bustling little city."

Elwell said dwellings were located on both sides of the tracks, and the community had a post office, sawmill and tavern -- in addition to the boarding house her grandparents operated.

"At one time it was thriving," said Elwell, who writes the "Revere Coffee Gang News" column for two local newspapers.

"There was even a hat millinery shop there, and there was a pickle factory, a quarry, a church and two schools."

All of that has vanished.

"It's just a ghost town now," she said.

Harrison said no one lives in Dumas anymore. The last resident, who lived near the tunnel, died a while back when his vehicle got stuck while he was crossing the flooded Dumas Creek. The man got swept away and drowned.

"The headless ghost is the only one left anymore," he said.

The ghost legend emanated from an actual railroad disaster in Clark County. It happened on May 5, 1892, when the Santa Fe's California Express — comprised of seven rail cars — was crossing a truss bridge spanning a ravine one mile east of Revere. The bridge's center span washed out during a torrential downpour as the train was going across, and six cars plunged into the abyss at 1:45 a.m., a report in the May 6, 1892, edition of the Chicago Daily Tribune said.

The story said seven people were killed initially and many others injured, but later stories that week indicated the death toll had reached nine and could climb higher. Some reports in later years suggested as many as 13 people may have died.

Among the initial dead were a Mrs. K. Brush of San Bernardino, Calif., and her 1-year-old baby, whose bodies were found inside a sleeper car.



Ronnie Harrison at the buggy tunnel in Dumas. | Photo by Jake Shane

or limbs." The story made no reference to anyone losing their heads. Instead, the story reported: "None of the

"The little

mangled." Nonethe-

less, the headless ghost story lives on -- even as the town of Dumas continues to disappear gradually.

Harrison recently led a reporter and photographer through the remains of the original depot, which is falling apart by the day.

"This is the only original place left," he said.

Harrison also led the visitors through the town's dilapidated cemetery on a hilltop near the tunnel, where at least 11 graves have been counted.

The tunnel, however, continues to be the biggest attraction in Dumas. The passageway — spray painted countless times by vandals and local artists — apparently possesses a certain sentimental charm to some visitors.

"My daughter was down there this summer and had her twin sons with her on the four wheeler, and she had to apologize to this couple" they encountered in the tunnel, Harrison said.

"The guy was down on his knees asking the girl to marry him." 💻

### **EXHIBITS**

### HANNIBAL ARTS CLUB

#### 99 BUCKS...OR LESS ART SALE!

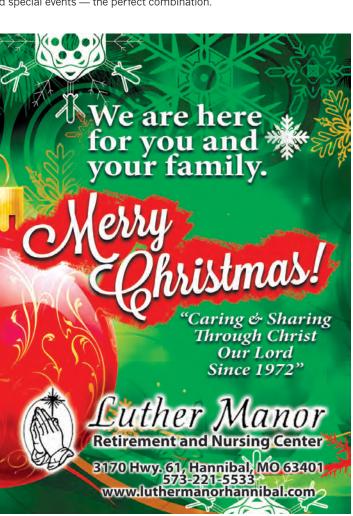
2016 Featured Artists: Brenda Beck Fisher, Roger McGregor, Martha Adrian, Vicki Gottman, Nancy Binns, Anita Little, Mary Ann Brinkley, Becky Evans, Linda Lucke, Connie Stephens, Shelley Campbell, Deidre Klassen, Angie Brown, Marghie Young, Michael Cole, Ann Frye, AVA Goldworks, Russ Toolate, Willy Richmond, Linda Hinds, Nan Poage, Nick Sorrill, Kimberly Shinn, Kevin Warning, Bill Awbrey



# SECOND SATURDAY GALLERY NIGHT

#### SATURDAY, DEC. 10, 5 TO 8 P.M.

Consider purchasing one-of-a-kind gifts for your loved ones, or yourself, this holiday season. Support local artists, shop local and shop creatively! Give yourself and treat, get out of the house and stroll Hannibal's beautiful Downtown galleries each Second Saturday - art, wine, friends and special events — the perfect combination.





#### HANNIBAL ALLIANCE ART GALLERY, 112 N.MAIN

Drawing for a piece of artwork at 6 p.m.

#### HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL, 105 S. MAIN

Drawing for a piece of artwork at 6:30 p.m.

#### **GALLERY 310, 310 N. MAIN**

Drawing for a piece of artwork at 7 p.m.

#### **ARTY PARTY**

No painting experience required! Paint a painting in 2 hours. Hannibal Arts Council Arty Party programs are for those looking to have a fun time while creating art. We provide the art supplies and a professional artist to

continues on 37 ➤







lead you. \$25 for HAC members/\$35 for non-members. Must be 21 years of age or older to participate. Hannibal Arts Council, 105 S Main. Reservations: 573-221-6545 or reservations@ hannibalarts.com

#### **DECEMBER PROGRAMS**

#### I BELIEVE IN SANTA

Thursday, Dec. 1, 6 to 8 p.m.

#### **LEMONS INTO LEMONADE**

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 6 to 8 p.m.





#### **WINTERY TREE**

Thursday, Dec. 15, 6 to 8 p.m.

#### HOLLY JOLLY HANDS-ON HOLIDAY WORKSHOP

#### SATURDAY, DEC. 3, HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL, 105 S MAIN

2 sessions: Noon to 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. \$10 per child. \$5 each additional child per family. Scholarships available upon request. To

continues on 38 ➤









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2016 projects include: Wrapping Paper Flower Décor, Swirl Painted Ball Ornament, Holiday Paper Garland, Yarn Wrapped Ornament, Note Card and Wrapping Paper Station, Santa Napkin Holder, Window Wonderland and Creative Snack Station.

#### HOT HOLIDAY JAZZ

# SUNDAY, DEC. 18, 6 P.M. HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL, 105 S. MAIN

Featured artists: Bill Morrison, Sean Hennessy, Bob Deboo, Marty Morrison. Step inside the cold and warm up with some hot jazz at the Hannibal Arts Council at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 18. The performance will feature holiday favorites



with a jazz twist by Hannibal pianist Bill Morrison. Joining Morrison are Columbia jazz guitarist Sean Hennessy and bassist Bob DeBoo and Morrison's son, Marty Morrison on drums. Morrison will perform on the

Kawai grand piano graciously on loan to the Hannibal Arts Council from the family of Jason Dugger. \$15 General Public (\$10 HAC members). Information: 573-221-6545

#### CULTURAL CAFÉ: SHARE THE JOY

## THURSDAY, DEC. 8, 6:30 P.M. HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL, 105 S. MAIN

Soup and Dessert
Fundraiser. Music and
Visual Art Performances
with Special Guests. Share
the Joy combines two great
things, food and art. It is
an opportunity to escape
the hustle and bustle of the
holidays for a moment. Enjoy
some amazing homemade
soup and desserts to warm



the body and sit back and relax to music and visual art performances to warm the soul. \$10 HAC members/\$15 non-members Reservations required by Dec. 7 at 573-221-6545 or reservations@hannibalarts.com

# Hannibal Parks & Rec Calendar

www.hannibalpark.org

#### **Upcoming events**

#### **Hannibal Jaycees Christmas Parade**

6 p.m. Dec. 3 in downtown Hannibal

The theme is Christmas Movies, entry is one unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots, elves will be picking up toys along the route. Register at hannibaljaycees.org/parade-registration.html.

#### Missouri Department of Conservation Fishing Instructor Training

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3 at Missouri Department of Conservation Hannibal office, 8965 U.S. 36, Suite 1. Register by calling 573-248-2530

#### **Journey to Bethlehem**

Interactive walking tour starts at 5 p.m. Dec. 8 to 11 at Orpheum Theatre. More than 300 costumed characters along with an animal menagerie take part.

#### **Music, Marshmallows and Mistletoe**

5 to 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, at Y Men's Pavilion. Enjoy the holiday music of Eugene Field Pirate Singers and roast marshmallows by the fire.

#### **Snowball Toss**

Noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17, at Y Men's Pavilion. Win a prize for pitching the "snowball" into the wreath

#### **Holiday House Decorating Contest**

Entries must be entered by 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20. Judging will take place Tuesday, Dec. 22.

Show off your stuff if you deck the halls for the holidays. Anyone who decorates their home for the holidays is encouraged to enter and have

### **Keep in Touch**

More information available at **hannibalparks.org** Sign up for bimonthly e-newsletter Follow Hannibal Parks on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

their address on a list of decorated homes in Hannibal. They will also be entered in a contest. Winners will receive a prize donated by SC Data, along with a sign donated by Park Place Sign Systems. Rules can be found at hannibalparks.org/files/Parks\_Rec/Documents/Holiday\_House\_Decorating\_Contest\_Rules.pdf.

#### **Toddler Tuesdays**

9 to 11 a.m. Tuesdays at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center. Each adult is allowed to bring no more than four children and must sign in with the attendant.

#### **Play Without Boundaries Sensory Room**

Games, puzzles and Imagination playground blocks for all-inclusive indoor play for adults and children at the Admiral Coontz Recreation Center.

#### **Senior Adult Dances**

Noon to 3 p.m. Wednesdays at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center; Music provided by Uptown Strings.

#### **Admiral Coontz Recreation Center**

Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Basketball, pickleball, games, puzzles, sports with equipment available for use. ■

# Best Bets DECEMBED

Mississippi Marketplace offers in-store specials and holiday demonstrations. See page  ${\bf 4.}$ 

Enjoy special offers on food and drinks at Cassano's. See page 4.

Enjoy special chocolates and drinks at Chocolaterie Stam. See page 7.

Grooming dales offers experienced grooming and Christmas gifts for your pets. See page 9.

Come enjoy the Victorian Festival of Christmas with activities Nov. 26 through Dec. 24. See page 11.

Hannibal History Museum has one-of-a-kind gifts for anyone on your list. See page 13.

Danni Nicoles now carries Christo by Brighton, the perfect gift for the lady on your shopping list. **See page 14.** 

The finest quality and largest selection in the area at Crescent Jewelry. See page 16.

19th Annual Bridal Expo at the Ambiance. See page 19.

Hannibal Regional offers free assistance to enroll in insurance coverage. **See** page 22.

St. Louis' premier winter destination at Steinberg Skating Rink. **See page 25.**Quality Inn hosts New Year's Eve Boot Scootin' Party. **See page 26.** 

Farm & Home Supply is your Under Armour headquarters. See page 27.

Come enjoy the sights, sounds, smells, and taste of the Holidays. See page 30.

Norwoods Golf Club season passes are available, plus 25 percent off all shoes and clothing. **See page 30.** 

Families and Communities Together offers assistance with health care applications. See page 31.

Marion County Health Department hosts Santa 2 to 4 p.m. Dec. 16. **See page 31.** Pleasant View Assisted Living Festival of trees. **See page 33.** 

Shottenkirk Toyota has winter maintenance packages and tire specials. See page  ${\bf 35.}$ 

A snowball toss will be held by Hannibal Parks & Recreation noon to 2 p.m. Dec. 17. See page 37.

Enjoy holiday music and roasting marshmallows 5 to 6 p.m. Dec. 10, sponsored by Hannibal Parks & Recreation. See page 41.



#### **REGIONAL** CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# December

# ONGOING EVENTS

#### Through Thursday, Dec. 15

Howard Kuo art exhibition, Mabee Art Gallery, Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Mo.

#### Saturday, Nov. 26, through Saturday, Dec. 24

Victorian Festival of Christmas, downtown Hannibal. Special events including parades, living windows, home tours, music, marshmallows and mistletoe, holiday music and Santa and Mrs. Claus. Details: 573-221-2477. For full schedule of events, see Pages 10 and 11.

#### December

"Hearth and Home" exhibit by Suzette Krummel, Alliance Art Gallery, 112 N. Main, Hannibal.

#### Thursday, Dec. 8, to Sunday, Dec. 11

Journey to Bethlehem, an interactive walking tour that transports visitors to the night Jesus was born. Tours start at the Orpheum Theater, Fifth and Broadway, Hannibal. Doors open at 4 p.m. and the first tour starts at 5. Free. 573-719-3216.

See Page 30-31 for Hannibal Parks & Recreation events.

### LOCAL **EVENTS**

#### Saturday, Nov. 26

8 a.m.: Holiday shopping season kickoff, downtown Hannibal. Shopping specials throughout Hannibal.

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Mark Twain's Annual Birthday Bash. The day's events include a fair featuring local artists, a moustache competition and masquerade mask competition. marktwainmuseum.org.

#### Friday, Dec. 2

4:30-7:30 p.m.: Soup Supper with live entertainment and silent auction, Solid Rock Baptist Church, 11047 Mark Twain Drive, Hannibal. Also known as the Lake Hannibal Clubhouse in Rensselaer. The soup supper is free; donations are appreciated. A guilt made by church members and other items will be auctioned to raise money for church renovations. Local musicians will feature Bill Brooks at 5:30 and Seth Wade at 6:30.

#### Saturday, Dec. 3

8 a.m.: Hannibal Jaycees' Christmas Parade, downtown Hannibal. Decorated floats and Santa are sure to please the whole family.

#### Sunday, Dec. 4

2 p.m.: Candelight memorial service, James O'Donnell Funeral Home, 302 S. Fifth, Hannibal. The names of the deceased will be read and recognized with a keepsake ornament provided by the home. Reservations: 573-221-8188. Information: iamesodonnellfuneralhome com

#### Thursday, Dec. 8

7 p.m.: Holiday Concert, Parker Theater in the Roland Fine Arts Center, Hannibal-LaGrange University, 2800 Palmyra Road, Hannibal. Various groups from the **HLGU Music Department** will be featured.

#### Saturday, Dec. 10

8:30 a.m.: Breakfast with Santa, Hannibal Children's Center, 150 Medical Drive, Hannibal Regional Auxiliary hosts the event, which includes breakfast, storytelling, crafts and more — and there will be an appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus. Tickets are

limited. Proceeds benefit Hannibal Regional Auxiliary. Information: 573-248-5272. Adults are \$5. Children 12 and

5-6 p.m.: Music, marshmallows and mistletoe, Y Men's Pavilion, Hill Street, Enjoy the holiday music of Eugene Field Pirate Singers and roast marshmallows by the fire. Sponsored by Hannibal Parks & Recreation.

5-8 p.m.: Opening reception for Suzette Krummel's "Hearth and Home" exhibit, Alliance Art Gallery, 112 N. Main, Hannibal, coinciding with Second Saturday Gallery Night. allianceartgallery.com.

7 p.m.: Historic Hannibal Living Windows, downtown Hannibal. Shop windows come alive with magical scenes of the season, from classic to comic. Free.



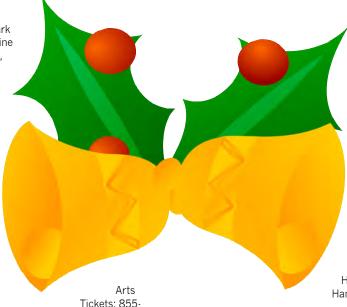
#### **REGIONAL** CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

7 p.m.: 56th annual Holiday Concert of Mark Twain Chorale, Parker Theater of Roland Fine Arts Center, Hannibal-LaGrange University, 2800 Palmyra Road, Hannibal. No admission charge; freewill donation will be accepted. The chorale will be under the direction of Lori Scott, conductor, with Janet Ferguson, accompanist. A variety of holiday classics will be featured. Guest soloists will be Ella Wilburn, vocalist, along with Linda St. Juliana and Andrea Reinwald, flautists. The Hannibal String Orchestra under the direction of John Ferguson also will perform.

#### Sunday, Dec. 11

7:30-9 p.m.: The Texas Tenors: Deep in the Heart of Christmas, Hannibal LaGrange University's Roland Performing Center, 2800 Palmyra Road, Hannibal. 755-7328 or selectaseat.com. All proceeds Motion.



benefit Kids in

#### Saturday, Dec. 17

Noon-2 p.m: Snowball Toss, Y Men's Pavilion, Hill Street. Win a prize for pitching the "snowball" into the wreath. Sponsored by Hannibal Parks & Recreation.

7 p.m.: Tom Johnson's Saints Avenue Opry, Hall's Chuckwagon Hall (old Ben Franklin Building), 220 S. Main, Palmyra. Traditional country music and home-cooked food. Reservations by 4 p.m. show days by calling 573-769-2403. Price: \$8.

#### Tuesday, Dec. 20

7 p.m.: Hannibal Coin Club, HomeBank, 3817 McMasters Ave., Hannibal.

continues on 42 ➤





#### **REGIONAL** CAI FNDAR OF FVFNTS

# December

#### Wednesday, Dec. 21

6:30 p.m.: Mark Twain Postcard Club, Hannibal Arts Council. 105 S. Main, Hannibal.

### )NGOING **EVENTS**

#### Through Thursday, Jan. 12

Mary S. Oakley-Lee Lindsay Artist Showcase, Quincy Art Center, Quincy, III. Works by local and area artists in all media. Galleries open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

#### Thursday, Dec. 8, to Sunday, Dec. 11 and Friday, Dec. 16, to Sunday, Dec. 18

"Peter and the Starcatcher," Quincy Community Theatre, 300 Civic Center Plaza, Quincy, III. This musical based on the best-selling novel by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson is a grownup's prequel to "Peter Pan." For show times and tickets, go to 1qct.org or call 217-222-3209.

#### Thursday, Dec. 15 to Saturday, Dec. 17

7-8:30 p.m.: Hughes Brothers Christmas Show, Legacy Theater, Carthage, III. Information: Matt Saunders, 217-357-9479.

### REGIONAL EVENTS

#### Thursday, Dec. 1

10 a.m.-8 p.m.: Carthage Christmas Open House. Carthage merchants along the Main Square offer specials and unique gifts for the holiday season.

5:30-8:30 p.m.: The District Loft Tour. Tour upper-level living spaces downtown Quincy buildings. Begin your evening at the Park Bench with complimentary cocoa and coffee, and proceed to the five lofts at your leisure. Loft locations: 117 N. Fourth, 504 Jersey, 117 S. Eighth, 634 Maine and 119 N. Sixth. Tickets may be purchased the night of the tour for \$15 at any of the tour locations and the Park Bench. Advance tickets available for \$12 online or at For Home & Her, 644 Maine; State Street Bank, 801 State & 4820 Broadway; Kirlin's Hallmark, 532 Maine & Quincy Mall; The Park Bench & Cellar 21, 121 N. Fourth; the District, 128 N. Fifth. thedistrictquincy.com. 217-228-8696.

#### Friday, Dec. 2

2 p.m.: QU POLIS Class "Criminal Profiling and Lone Wolf Terrorists." The cost of POLIS membership is \$15 per semester, and each two-hour class is \$4 to attend. Anyone is welcome to bring friends and attend one class free of charge. Information or registration: email polis@quincy.edu with a name and address, call 217-228-5594, or visit quincy.edu/polis.

6-11 p.m.: Sixth annual Christmas Banquet/Party, State Room, 434 S. Eighth. Meal provided by Patio Restaurant. Elsenpeter Productions brings Longhorn Comedian, J.R. Frohn Christmas Carols, Katrina Brown and Rod Reyes entertainers. Cost is \$37.50. 217-335-3338.

Friday, Dec. 2, and Saturday, Dec. 3

Nauvoo Christmas. The city of Nauvoo comes alive for the Christmas season. Downtown merchants offer unique gifts and specials. beautifulnauvoo.com.

#### Saturday, Dec. 3

1 p.m.: 16th annual Teen Gingerbread House Competition, Quincy Public Library, large meeting room. The structures will be judged in the following categories: most traditional, most original and most creative. Winners will be displayed in the Children's Department during December.

3 p.m.: Holiday Festival Family Concert featuring Quincy Symphony Orchestra, Chorus and Youth Chorus, Quincy Junior High Morrison Theater, 14th and Maine. 7 p.m.: Crossroad Country Opry, Unity High School, Mendon, III. Sponsored by Loraine Lions Club. Tickets: \$7.50 in advance, \$8 at the door. Information: Johnny Anderson, 217-242-0972.

#### Sunday, Dec. 4

2-5 p.m.: Generational Christmas sponsored by Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County at John Wood Mansion, 425 S. 12th, Quincy. Celebrate a Victorian Christmas by making a craft and decorating the mansion, hire a horse and carriage tour, and see Santa in the log cabin. 217-222-1835. Thursday, Dec. 8



#### **REGIONAL** CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# December

6-8 p.m.: Quincy University Hawk Express Jazz Band Christmas Concert, Quincy Mall, 3347 Quincy Mall. The band will perform "Swing the Songs of Christmas," "Santa Rocks the House" and "My Favorite Things." Vocalist Racin Coehlo will join the band for a fun arrangement of "White Christmas."

#### Friday, Dec. 9

2 p.m.: QU POLIS Class "Criminal Profiling and Lone Wolf Terrorists." The cost of a POLIS membership is \$15 per semester, and each two-hour class is \$4 to attend. Anyone is welcome to bring friends and attend one class free of charge. Information or registration: email polis@quincy.edu with a name and address, call 217-228-5594, or visit quincy.edu/polis.

5-8 p.m.: Midcentury Modern Christmas, the History Museum, 332 Maine, Quincy. Arrive in your coolest Mad Men party clothes, cozy up to the martini bar and enjoy 1950's retro-d-oeuvres. Bring a toy from your past to the midcentury exhibit. Information: 217-222-1835.

#### Sunday, Dec. 11

3-7 p.m.: Quincy University Christmas Choir Concert, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," conducted by Amy K. Stollberg with Laura Kammerer and Matthew Cornwell on the piano. Connie Niemann Center for Music, 1729 Seminary Road, Quincy, III.

#### Monday, Dec. 12

7 p.m.: QND/PMO Christmas Choral Concert, St. Peter Church, 2600 Maine, Quincy, III. Quincy Notre Dame and Parochial Music Organization choirs present "Christmas With Friends." More than 100 students from QND and four Quincy Catholic elementary schools will sing a variety of Christmas and holiday music, with Handel's "Halleluijah Chorus" as the finale.

#### Saturday, Dec. 17

6-8 p.m.: John Wood Mansion Candlelight Tours, 425 S. 12th, Quincy. The mansion is decorated for the holidays, plus acoustic guitar sounds of Kayla Obert and stories of Christmas long ago. Free. Information: 217-222-1835.

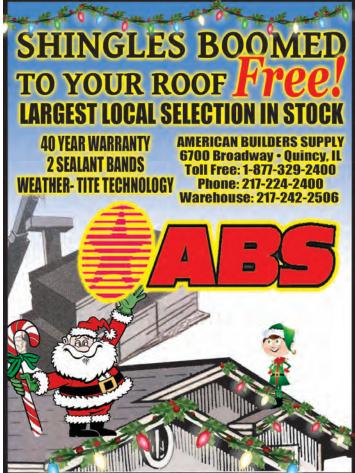
#### Sunday, Dec. 18

3 p.m.: Quincy Park Band Christmas Concert, Salvation Army Kroc Center Worship Theatre. In addition to the concert, the Salvation Army will collect non-perishable food items. Information: quincyparkband.com and the Park Band's Facebook page.

#### Thursday, Dec. 22

7-11 p.m.: Beaux Arts Ball. Oakley-Lindsay Center, 300 Civic Center Plaza, Quincy. Fundraiser for Quincy Art Center. Tickets are \$20 in advance and may be purchased from any queen candidate. Tickets will be \$25 at the door.





# THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE

#### By Hick Finn

I remember in great detail every Christmas of my childhood. Christmas was such a special time. It was the one time of the year when the family was certain to be reunited. Just the excitement of all of us being together was the only present my mom ever needed.

Many Christmases were interrupted for local families who had loved ones serving in combat in Vietnam. Some of those families had Christmas change forever when their soldiers never returned home.

One of our Christmas season traditions was watching Bob Hope doing his USO tour special for our troops overseas. It was always great to watch the laughter and smiles of the soldiers so far away from home and safety. I guess you might say that Bob Hope was appropriately named, because he was a little ray of hope to those troops fighting in the jungles and rice paddies in a hopeless political war.

I learned as a child from watching these shows that Christmas was about giving. I learned from my parents that Christmas was about togetherness.

I never remember Bob Hope passing out presents to the troops. I just remember him sharing laughter, music, entertainment and good times with our military. What Bob was able to give to so many could not possibly fit into a box. He had to love our troops and country to do what he did.

I guess you could say that in some respects he influenced me a great deal. He is possibly more responsible for the path my life has taken than even I realized before starting this article. I saw how important humor and laughter were to the world through his eyes.

Bob was a star, but, more importantly, he was a patriot. He was a gifted comedian, and he shared his talent. He sometimes put on shows in close proximity to combat. Today many of those shows would not happen, because many "stars" have contract clauses that forbid them to take on risky ventures.

Bob came from what we now call the Greatest Generation. The nation was full of patriots during World War II, and through their dedication, determination, pain, suffering and loss, we were able to defeat the Third Reich and the Empire of Japan. People from that generation of Americans had invested so much in the United States of America, that they felt almost contractually bound to see this country flourish at all cost.

Bob Hope was a bridge between generations of warriors, and he selflessly shared his talents. He was so connected to Hollywood that some of the biggest names in entertainment joined him on many USO tours. Being asked by Bob Hope to serve the troops was an honor to most, I'm certain.

Now that I am officially a senior citizen, I see so much that disturbs me. Children are taught to want more and more. Parents go overboard on Christmas, buying extravagant gifts and crippling their



Photo via IMDB

household budgets. Children are being taught that love equals how much you buy me.

Christmas is rapidly becoming Christobember. That is when Christmas decorations go up in retailer displays before Halloween even begins. To cast a negative light on Thanksgiving, we go to stores before Thanksgiving ends or the wee hours of the following day to buy, buy, buy for Christmas. It is a retail marketing trap that we all fell into decades ago. We think we can make every Christmas better than the last with material things and spending more.

Jesus brought love to this world. We really need to focus for a moment on the true "reason for the season!" Without love, we really don't have a reason or will for being. Love fuels this world, not material things. Love is the greatest gift, the best gift, and the true gift. Anything beyond that amounts to worthless accessories.

Join a loved one, your family, or those you care about this holiday. Remember to share love, joy and peace with each other. Build and share a lifetime of treasured memories. I myself will share all these things with my family. When I recall my youth, I will have one more gift to share with them this year and that is hope.

Merry Christmas! I hope it's a special one.

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Holiday Cheer

pread-one Hour peppermint Massage \$50 - ONE HOUR EMINENCE Cranberry Facial \$50

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