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JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH 2016



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LETTER TO READERS

Looking ahead at what's coming in 2016

The dawn of the new year always has been one of my favorite times. After the stress of the holiday season and wrapping up all the loose ends of the previous year, the new year has always given me the promise of a blank page. Since I'm in the publishing business, perhaps you can understand why this makes me happy.

2016, though, presents me with a little more optimism than usual. In no small way, that's because this year marks the start of our first full year of publishing *Hannibal Magazine*.



Since last summer, we have enjoyed meeting and working with our contributors, and we have enjoyed even more carrying on this magazine's wonderful tradition of being the most complete entertainment guide in Northeast Missouri.

Based on feedback we have received from readers and advertisers, that positive feeling isn't just limited to us.

In this issue, you can read about a group of property owners working to revitalize Broadway in the city's historic downtown. We also have features about the ever-growing Bluff City Theater, upcoming events coordinated by the Historic Hannibal Marketing Council, key developments at Hannibal Regional Hospital and information on the always-popular Golden Eagle chili cook-off and the annual Wing Ding at the Admiral Coontz Recreation Center.

Looking ahead into the coming year, it's obvious that Hannibal and the surrounding area have a bright future, and we look forward to helping tell that story, right here in *Hannibal Magazine*.

Thank you for reading, and we hope you will continue to do so.

Ron Wallace

Hannibal

M A G A Z I N E

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**Submit events and calendar items
to hannibalmagazine@qni.biz by
March 1 to be included in April issue.**

Copyright © 2016 by Hannibal Magazine
Published monthly by Quincy Media Inc.
130 S. 5th St., P.O. Box 909, Quincy IL 62301
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Bobbie Altiser rides his bike on the half-pipe he built in the Fidelity building on Broadway in Hannibal.

On Broadway

Owners working to return historic downtown street to previous glory

By **KENNETH MARKS**

After a 10-hour shift of construction work, or when he seeks a stress release, Bobbie Altiser drives over to Broadway in Hannibal. Instead of frequenting a bar, he grabs his BMX bike and practices on a half-pipe. However, this cyclorama can't be found in any downtown park – it was built by Altiser himself on the second floor of the Fidelity building, one part of the recent movement to transform the economic hopes of the venerable street that empties

into the Mississippi River.

Restoration of buildings along Broadway's lower end began in earnest in the early 2000s; early attempts, when successful, would save a structure but not translate into a movement. Within the last few years, however, investors have gravitated to this street in hopes of bringing back some of the traffic that once filled the district. The efforts are not necessarily coordinated, and the backgrounds and motivations of the owners do not fit a singular mold for success – except a collective belief that Broadway is coming back.

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RIDING OUT A LENGTHY TIMELINE

For Altiser, as with other recent Broadway investors, the low price of the building was difficult to resist. In 2014, Altiser, who works full time in the construction business, had been searching for a new place to live; he found that purchasing a building to convert into living space would cost less over time than renting a house. Inspired by friends who were involved with restoring buildings in Quincy, he purchased the Fidelity Building at 611-621 Broadway, a 1913 four-storefront structure at less than \$10 per square foot, a price consistent with other unrestored buildings in the area. Because the first floor of the building was already functional and filled with renters, the revenue they generated would help fund the overhaul of the second floor where outdated offices could make way for living space.

Since then, Altiser himself has conducted the work — occasionally with a friend's help. At times, he says, "It can be overwhelming," with debris and unrecyclable materials filling six dumpsters, and then some. The biggest repairs, so far, have focused on the roof, one of the most common issues facing buyers of older commercial buildings; the foundation, because a car slammed into the building's southeast corner; and masonry tuck-pointing. He has not moved into the building, and may never do so, but the second floor may still be converted into living space.

"I need to get it back to its normal layout," he says, "before I see what I can do with it — office space, storage — I just like uncover-

“ I need to get it back to its normal layout before I see what I can do with it — office space, storage. ... I just like uncovering the old woodwork, finding traces of the past.”

BOBBIE ALTISER, building owner

ing the old woodwork, finding traces of the past." In nearly every room excavated upstairs, imitation-wood paneling has given way to prismatic glass panels, 6-inch thick plaster walls, tin ceilings or transom windows.

One facet of Altiser's plan nearing completion converts the storefront at 613 Broadway, formerly the long-running Haug Music, into ped'lers, a bicycle retail, rental and repair shop covering all makes but emphasizing road- and BMX-designed models. The business is slated to open this spring adjacent to another recent tenant

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Big Muddy BBQ is owned by Todd Rourke at the corner of Fourth Street and Broadway.

change, Jungle Fever, an exotic pet store. The brevity of the first floor vacancies speaks to the viability of the area for businesses.

Altiser cautions, “Find out what your (commercial) taxes are going to be first” before assuming the costs of taking on a such a project. Although the interior cosmetic work has taken longer than anticipated, he says, “If I had to do it over again, I’d still do it. But, I’d concentrate more on the major things first, like the roof.” No matter the amount of due diligence before acquiring an old building, local rehabbers agree, surprise likely is lying in wait.

GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Robert “Bobby” Boland, vice president of Tom Boland Ford and head of Boland Properties, is accustomed to surprises – including what lay beneath the surfaces of the three-story structure at the southwest corner of Broadway and Third Street.

“Until you get it all taken apart, you really don’t know what you have,” Boland explains. “The (demolition of unsuitable materials) is the easy part....I don’t like to cobble things together. I probably overspend, but I like to completely redo the electric and plumbing – those buildings are over a 100 years old, so they’ve been patched and blotted over. We like to get back to basics.”

Boland is in the midst of this discovery process at 301 Broadway. It is one of several buildings along the south side of the 300 block built by hardware merchant Philander Hickman between 1865 and 1869 in anticipation the boom Hannibal would experience after the Civil War’s end. In the last few years, Boland has invested in multiple downtown commercial properties – also speculating that the recent gradual economic gains will continue. Having already owned the property at 215 N. Third, where his business Integrity Auto Sales is situated, Boland in 2014 invested in the neighboring property, Becky Thatcher’s Diner. He turned his attention to Broadway in late 2015.

Boland’s involvement in reopening the diner led him to take stock in improvements throughout downtown.

“Hannibal’s done very well on North Main Street, and I think the flow of that restoration process is to come up Broadway,” Boland says. “Once I looked at the building, and saw what it could become....”

“The historic district, the possible Viking Cruise ships, and the development that was already going on” influenced Boland’s decision to buy. The 1,800-square-foot main level, replete with exposed brick walls, will be ready for occupation within the year. The second

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and third floors, slated to be available as a loft and conventional apartments, will require more time. Having an in-house construction crew helps; a consistent set of workers across multiple properties allows him to reset any restoration timelines and budget of the property without losing the crew to outside work. Boland expects at least \$100,000 in restoration costs outside the purchase price to make the entire space functional.

As with other property investors, Boland is not anticipating swift dividends; the return-on-investment target may be as far as 10 years out. Boland's purchase of the property on Broadway created quite a stir, and some believed that his willingness to invest in the 300 block signaled that Broadway was on the brink of a renaissance. A look at Boland's record of quality restoration work, his financial steadiness and his status as a notable native Hannibalian add to the credibility of Broadway's chances for resurgence.

COMING HOME TO HANNIBAL

A reason for optimism in the district? The surge of activity emanates from multiple investors who come from a variety of backgrounds. For Wesley Yargus, it has been a homecoming. Originally from Hannibal, Yargus established a successful career in information technology both in the United States and Canada before resettling here with his partner, retired publisher Joe Anderson. Since their first visit back to town in fall 2012, the two have dedicated



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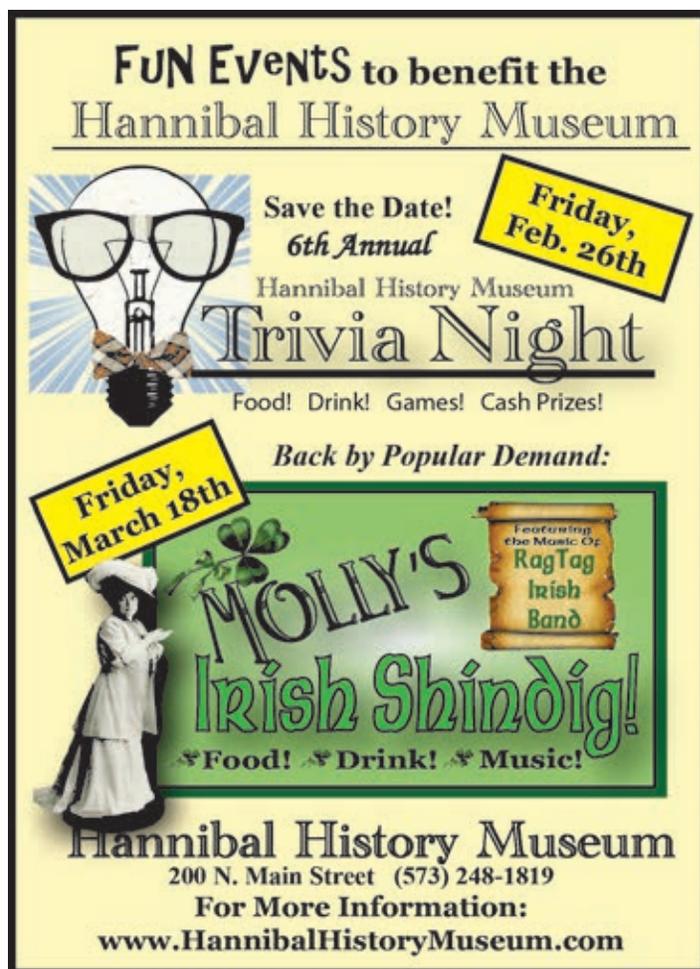
“Hannibal's done very well on North Main Street, and I think the flow of that restoration process is to come up Broadway.”

ROBERT 'BOBBY' BOLAND, head of Boland Properties

themselves to myriad rehabilitation projects across three neighborhoods.

Anderson brings years of experience in economic development honed while living in Barrie, Ontario. It was his experience in nonprofit work that enabled him and Yargus to transform the 1910 Farmers and Merchants building at 212 Broadway into Bluff City Theater within a year and a half. That acquisition in May 2013 is only one of three properties on the street owned by the couple, who are concentrating their efforts in drawing more traffic and business back to his portion of the downtown area.

Since March 2013, Anderson and Yargus have set their sights closer to Central Park by taking over two 1860s structures at 313-315 and 403 Broadway. The latter building demonstrates how the pair is able to manage multiple rehabilitations. Because such a building



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often may not hold enough equity at the sale price, Anderson says, the work can't be financed via the building itself. Instead, equity from another, finished property may be necessary. In addition, some portion of the structure needs to be functional and drawing revenue to offset some costs. In this case, the first floor has been leased to long-term tenant York Uniform while the upper floors are converted to a loft and two-bedroom apartment for extended-stay rentals. When the planned relocation of York Uniforms occurs, Yargus and Anderson will commence a full restoration of the ground floor.

Broadway property prices appear low, they maintain, because they reflect current commercial activity instead of potential revenue, and the values take into account the amount of repair work necessary to realize those values. Though the building may cost \$5 to \$10 per square foot to own, they say that they budget about \$50 per sq. ft. for the structure to bring it up to building codes and raise revenue on all floors, still arguably one third of the cost of new construction for a similar space. Anderson notes that the third floor of 403 was "uninhabitable," a common thread considering that many 19th and 20th century merchants would use upper floors to warehouse goods.

Consequently, a new owner may find an entire building or whole floors lacking one or more functional systems; the roof, electrical circuits, heating/cooling and plumbing may need repair, expansion or replacement, and, in some cases, complete rewiring may be a safer and, perhaps, less expensive option than work done piecemeal.

If all of this sounds daunting, consider this: At the end of a one- to two-year process, a 4,000-sq.-ft, three-story structure with a \$50,000 purchase price could have a real price tag of \$150,000 to \$200,000. Yet if revenue from the finished product could generate \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year, the building has paid for itself with interest within 10 years, give or take a few fallow spots for business. Moreover, the building's equity may be used to offset leveraging necessary in financing the work. In this scenario, one successful rescue of an old commercial building could create the resources to save its neighbors – or the entire block.

A PROJECT WITH A PURPOSE

An element of successful rehabilitation is a reliable workforce with the time available to perform the work. The best contractors often have a long wait list, and bids may be inconsistent because of the unpredictability of working with an antique structure. The choice may be to hire a full-time general contractor or to serve as one's own, which may be advisable only if the owner also is willing personally to take on a good portion of the work.

At the corner of Fourth Street and Broadway sits an example of a notable do-it-yourself approach. Big Muddy BBQ, owned and operated by Todd Rourke, was cited by multiple Broadway investors as

continues on 10 ►



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influential in giving the neighborhood a needed and inspiring boost. Rourke in April 2014 purchased 401 Broadway, part of a line of three-story buildings erected about 1869 for William T. League during a commercial boom. In less than seven months, Rourke opened the restaurant in the midst of a tour-season lull and without advertising. Conventional wisdom had maintained that within the last decade too many Broadway restaurants failed and that potential customers would be more likely to visit a restaurant in a strip mall off Highway 61 than an eatery three blocks from the river. Rourke responded by serving more than 18,000 customers in his first year of operation.

As a resident of the Central Park Historic District, Rourke says he would routinely drive by the closed storefront and wonder why some business didn't take advantage of its proximity to the park, City Hall and the busy intersection of Third Street/Highway 79 and Broadway. Its low list price allowed him to fill what he saw as a need for more restaurants or food sources in the downtown area. He maintains the local crowd — not tourism — sustains the eatery, adding that “90 percent of all my business comes from 10 percent of Hannibal.”

Rourke's approach to the restaurant mirrors his regard for handling the restoration.

“I don't go into a project without having a specific purpose,” he says — not revamping a space on speculation that someone with a business plan will come forward. He approached 401 Broadway secure in the knowledge that the ground floor would house his restaurant. Because he himself completed much of the work from materials and commercial kitchen equipment he found on sale or at auction, he doesn't have a firm number on the cost of the transformation. He says the restaurant's start-up cost was a fraction of what it might have been had he purchased fixtures and furnishings at retail value.

“Shoemaker, stick with your last,” Rourke maintains, invoking an idiom better known now as “stick with what you know.”

He limits his menu to about a half-dozen entrees and even fewer side dishes so that each selection is served as fresh and well prepared as possible. Low overhead and a straightforward setup allow profits to aid in finishing restoration of his historic residences nearby. Running a barbecue joint may appear incongruous with his other professions as rehabber and art/antiquities dealer, but to him the effort behind the three comes from the same motivation — to do as well as possible with opportunities that present themselves. Economic opportunity

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may draw buyers to the downtown properties; but patience and passion for the task are key in weathering the process.

REINVENTING A CLASSIC FOR A NEW PURPOSE

The speed at which Hong and Bob Kilmer are nearing their goal belies obstacles in remodeling 603-605 Broadway, known as the former Rialto movie theater. Most recently, the building had functioned as a pool hall adjacent to – yes – a second pool hall named Rookies; inevitably, someone had to give. By August 2015, when the Kilmers took over the site, the building had been empty for months.

The Kilmers took a different approach — saving the Rialto was as important as its eventual purpose. The interior’s open interior would accommodate large gatherings, and the couple determined an events center would be the clearest path to a viable investment. The past century’s many alterations, including joining the two buildings and excavating the cellar in the late 1930s to create the slanted theater floor, led to the first floor renovation being more of a gutting and remodeling job in order to meet modern building codes. Upstairs, evidence of the twin buildings’ past are recognizable – a shoe advertisement on the east wall circa 1905-1908 — 603 had been damaged by fire, and, for a brief time, the interior wall was visible from the street — two different floor patterns, and a series of 28 Edison-style light fixtures intended to light up the front façade of the Rialto.

The budget has been stretched by two factors — the extent to

which the first floor was remodeled from scratch and the cost to restore the front façade, the building’s most distinctive feature. The front’s tiles are porcelain over metal, and saving the pieces would be preferable to sourcing modern replacements. Hong Kilmer says the greatest expense has been in repairing the façade and bringing back the theater’s original colors.

“It cost thousands of dollars more than what we had budgeted; it took more labor than we thought, once we had started,” Kilmer adds, and that work, alone, constitutes well more than a third of the original budget. The couple offset some of the costs by cleaning and troubleshooting the lighting system, changed to LED, that beams through 28 Art Deco-era glass block windows.

Although Hong Kilmer admits the work has taken longer than desired, she says event space will be ready for booking by the end of February, a short turnaround from its prior vacancy. She says they experienced difficulty in coordinating freelance contractors, desired based on their strengths.

“Sometimes, we would have someone who could do one thing well but not as much on other work we needed,” she says. “So we would have to wait for this or that person to become available before we could go any further.”

By opening the Rialto and its neighbor, 601 Broadway, as facilities for a range of public and private events, the Kilmers are hoping that more Hannibilians visit the downtown area and appreciate the history it provides. ■

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Historic Hannibal Marketing Council plans spring events

By **KENNA BOGUE, KATY WELCH** and **LISA MARKS**

Sixth annual Chocolate Extravaganza

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Great Girlfriend Getaway Weekend

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Downtown Hannibal

Spring brings two popular events to downtown Hannibal — the Chocolate Extravaganza and Great Girlfriend Getaway, both presented by Historic Hannibal Marketing Council.

The sixth annual Chocolate Extravaganza will take place Saturday, March 12, throughout downtown Hannibal. Participants acquire a Chocolate Extravaganza Passport that serves as a guide to the event and contains five chocolate tickets. Tickets are redeemable for a selection of chocolate treats including candies, mochas, martinis, muffins, cupcakes, pies and more. Tickets also may be used toward admission to special in-store events or toward chocolate-themed merchandise such as chocolate soaps, cashmere scarves, spa treatments and more. One passport will include a golden ticket that is redeemable for a one-of-a-kind prize. In addition to the passport giveaways, the Chocolate Extravaganza weekend will feature live music, gallery art walk, make-and-take classes and chocolate demonstrations.

The Mark Twain Museum will host first Museum and the Chocolate Factory family event during the Chocolate Extrava-

ganza with chocolate games and prizes based on characters from the classic 1971 movie “Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory.” The event will run from 1 to 4 p.m.; admission is one chocolate ticket from the passport or \$5 at the door.

Chocolate Extravaganza passports will be available for purchase by mid-February at the Mark Twain Museum Gallery Gift Shop. Advance passport sales are available at the Facebook page, Chocolate Extravaganza – Historic Down Hannibal or at www.ChocolateExtravaganzaHannibal.com. More information is available by calling Dena Ellis at the Mark Twain Museum at 573-221-9010, ext. 403, or Kenna Bogue at the Mark Twain Dinette at 573-221-5511.

Coming April 22 through 24 is the Great Girlfriend Getaway Weekend, a time of shopping and dining with friends.

Restaurants and shops in downtown Hannibal offer activities, special offers and events, including the Great Girlfriend Getaway Pub Crawl on Saturday, April 23.

An addition to this year’s Great Girlfriend Getaway is a Shopper’s Survival Tote, a high-quality tote containing coupons and discounts to many participating businesses and restaurants. An event t-shirt also will be available. The \$20 tote must be registered

for in advance; t-shirts may be purchased ahead online or during the event.

More information is available by visiting www.GreatGirlfriendGetaway.com or contacting Katy Welch at Java Jive, 211 N. Main St., at 573-221-1017. ■



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Familiar husband and wife team again in Bluff City Theater's season opener

'Lady With All the Answers'

OPENS FRIDAY, FEB. 19 • BLUFF CITY THEATER, 212 BROADWAY

Theater-goers in the Hannibal/Quincy area may find a few familiar faces to lead the Bluff City Theater's 2016 season in David Rambó's witty homage to advice columnist Ann Landers. Lenny Bart and his wife, Tricia Bart, worked together professionally many times over the years, including nine years at the 12 Miles West Theater Company in Rutherford, N.J., where Lenny Bart served as artistic director from 2001 until 2010.

During his tenure there, he built a reputation for his energetic leadership and enthusiasm, as well as for the respect he garnered from colleagues.

Since relocating to the area, he served as managing artistic director of Quincy Community Theater before assuming the role of executive director of Quincy Society of Fine Arts.

Lenny will direct Tricia in "Lady With All The Answers," which opens Feb. 19 at the theater at 212 Broadway in Hannibal.

The couple said working together again in professional theater is a treat. Lenny has directed Tricia in five productions and has acted with her in four.



"It's wonderful to be able to work this closely with my husband," Tricia says. "Since we've worked together so many times, we have a natural shorthand."

Lenny laughed about this project because, "we both love to read Ann Landers & Dear Abby, and then we comment on the answers, so my wife is already a pro at giving advice!"

Lenny and Tricia have worked with professionals from Broadway, regional theater and film, including Tony-winning arranger Larry Hochman, known for "Spamalot" and "Book of Mormon," and Emmy winners Elaine Bromka and Heather Tom.

"The Lady With All The Answers," based on the life and letters of Landers, is set at a point where, after having dispensed wit and wisdom to countless couples around the globe, she must face her own personal crisis. Audiences will find the play funny and poignant and, if of a certain age, likely will recall many of the letters.

Performances will run Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from Feb. 19 to 27 at the theater in Historic Downtown Hannibal. Early reservations are recommended since each performance can accommodate only 90 people.

A single ticket is \$25; a four-ticket flex-pass is \$89 and may be purchased online at bluffcitytheater.com or by calling the box office at 573-719-3226. ■

Event to raise money for Thatcher House

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum trivia night

SATURDAY, MARCH 5 • 6 P.M.

SHIRLEY BOHMAR COMMUNITY CENTER

The Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum will host its fifth annual trivia night to raise funds for the Becky Thatcher House. Proceeds from the event support permanent exhibits, and the Becky Thatcher House will provide children, as well as adults, a look into childhood of the 1800s.

The event will be held Saturday, March 5, at the Shirley Bohmar Community Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. with rounds of trivia beginning at 7 p.m. A silent auction will be held during the event with announcement of winners following trivia rounds.

Trivia teams consist of 10 players with a \$100 team entry fee. There will be 10 different categories with 10 questions each and one category on Mark Twain trivia. The winning team will be awarded a prize. Beverages will be available for purchase.

Donations for the silent auction as well as sponsors for rounds of trivia are sought. To register a team, donate items to the auction or sponsor the event, contact at 573-221-9010, extension 404. ■

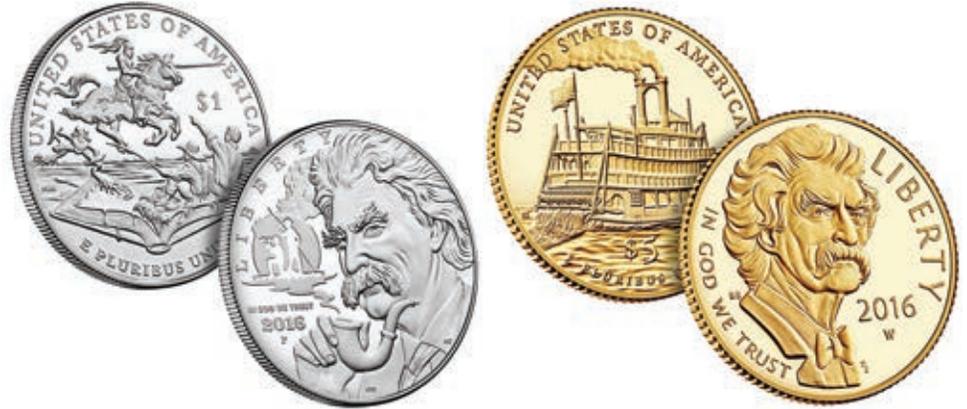
Mark Twain Commemorative Coins

The United States Mint's Mark Twain Commemorative Coins for 2016 are available. Both coins — a one-dollar silver coin and a five-dollar gold coin — depict images of Mark Twain on the obverse and images relevant to Twain on the reverse.

The commemorative coins are available from the United States Mint through its website, usmint.gov, and also through the office of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum, which is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Credit cards may be used through the mint website or by cash or check when purchasing at the museum.

The Mark Twain coins will be available throughout 2016, with sales from the United States Mint ending Dec. 31. Unsold coins will be melted down, as the mint is not permitted to distribute coins after the year dated on them. The museum should have the coins available throughout the year as well.

Sales of the coins are limited by 2012



legislation, which authorizes 100,000 of the gold five-dollar coins and 350,000 of the silver dollars to be struck.

Each coin sold has a surcharge figured in the sale price. By law, the surcharges are to be collected and distributed to four Mark Twain sites: the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum in Hannibal; the Center for Mark Twain Studies, Elmira, N.Y.; the Mark Twain House

& Museum in Hartford, Conn.; and the Mark Twain Project at the University of California, Berkeley.

The price of the gold coin is about \$360; the silver coin is about \$45. The gold market fluctuates widely and the price of the gold coin is subject to revision throughout the year. More information is available by calling the museum at 573-221-9010, extension 401. ■

THE MUSEUM AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

CHOCOLATE extravaganza HANNIBAL

GOLDEN TICKET

Greetings to you the lucky person invited to The Mark Twain Museum's Chocolate Factory

Saturday, March 12th

Gates open at Museum Gallery from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Family Fun for all ages with Chocolatey Games & Prizes

Entry with Chocolate Extravaganza Ticket or \$5 at door.

120 N. Main, Hannibal, MO
573-221-9010 ext. 404
www.marktwainmuseum.org

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Mango and Dango, based in San Diego, will be featured again at the 33rd annual Golden Eagle Distributing chili cook-off.

33rd annual chili cook-off set for Feb. 20

Golden Eagle Distributing chili cook-off

SATURDAY, FEB. 20 • REGISTRATION IS \$25

Registration forms may be picked up at Golden Eagle Distributing at 9669 Hwy 168, Hannibal, MO 63401 or by calling 573-221-0908 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Golden Eagle Distributing will host its 33rd annual chili cook-off Feb. 20 at the Admiral Coontz Armory. Doors open at 11 a.m.

Area restaurants, service clubs and individuals will compete for the title of “Best Chili” in the Tri-State area. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three placing teams — first place, \$1,000, second place, \$500 and third place, \$250.

In addition, registered teams will be judged for best costumes based the theme “Days of Disco” — first place, \$250, and second

place, \$150.

Entertainment will include Mango and Dango from San Diego, who performed at the 2015 event.

Last year, Golden Eagle began a partnership with the Great River Honor Flight program, and proceeds from the 2016 Bud/Bud Light Chili Cook-Off will benefit the program as well as the projects of Hannibal Jaycees.

Teams are encouraged to register soon; 18 teams participated in last year’s event, and the event can accommodate 25 teams. Cost is \$25; registration forms may be picked up at Golden Eagle Distributing at 9669 Hwy 168, Hannibal, MO 63401 or by calling 573-221-0908 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to have a form sent.

Admission is \$5 per person at the door. Attendees must be 21 years old with a valid, state-issued driver’s license.

Centennial Circle of Kings Daughters will be handling additional food service and soda, coffee and water. ■

Wing Ding returns Jan. 30

Hannibal Jaycees 12th annual Wing Ding

SATURDAY, JAN. 30 • DOORS OPEN 11 A.M.
ADMIRAL COONTZ RECREATION CENTER

The Hannibal Jaycees will host the 12th annual Wing Ding on Saturday, Jan. 30, at the Admiral Coontz Recreation Center in Hannibal.

Doors will open at 11 a.m., with wings served at 1 p.m. Judging will take place at 4 p.m. First place will be awarded \$1,000, second place \$500 and third place \$250. This year's theme is "'50s Wing Hop." Teams are encouraged to dress in 1950s attire and decorate their booths accordingly. The best-decorated booth will be awarded a cash prize of \$100.

Team registrations are being accepted, including commercial registrations for teams with access to a commercial kitchen. The Jaycees will provide the chicken wings for all contestants. Commercial fryers and oil are available upon request for any teams that will be using non-battered wings. Teams can sauce, season, rub or barbecue their wings.

Entries must be submitted by noon Friday, Jan. 29. Commercial team registration is \$250; individual team registration is \$150.

Wing Ding rules and entry forms are available by calling Jamie McCoy at 573-999-5073 or Rhonda Stevenson at 573-248-6833 or by emailing jamiemccoy11@hotmail.com.

The Wing Ding is a smoke-free, adults-only event. No one younger than age 21 will be admitted.

The Jaycees is made up of young men and women between the ages of 18 and 40 who join together to improve their lives and their communities. Their goal is to provide leadership training through community service. By chairing local projects, young people can practice organization, delegation, time and resource management, public relations and motivational skills.

Over the years, the Hannibal Jaycees have contributed to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, the American Red Cross, the Hannibal Nutrition Center, Avenues, the NEMO Humane Society, youth sports, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Special Olympics, the Glad Tidings/Adopt-A-Family program, the Douglass Community Center, Kids in Motion, Pinkie Pals, the Erma Ruth Home, the American Cancer Society—Wigs for Cancer Patients, Affordable Community Education and many other charitable organizations that serve the area.

For membership information, contact McCoy. ■



live work play

TBHS Show Choir Invitational
February 6th

Kiwanis Valentine's Dance
featuring Butch Wax & The Hollywoods
February 13th

Rotary Shrimp Boil
March 5th

City Wide Yard Sale
April 2nd

MAYB Youth Basketball Tournament
April 9th

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Race Director Angie Wilcoxson poses with 2015 Cannibal logo contest winners David Diekamp and Cheresa Stelle and Wendy Harrington, president and CEO of the Hannibal Regional Hospital Foundation.

Hannibal Cannibal seeks artists

By **ANGIE WILCOXSON**, race director

Hannibal Cannibal logo contest

ENTRIES DUE FEB. 25 • WINNERS ANNOUNCED MARCH 11
Design requirements available at www.hannibalcannibal.com or call Hannibal Regional Hospital Foundation at 573-629-3577

During the annual National Tom Sawyer Days, Hannibal Regional Hospital Foundation sponsors the Hannibal Cannibal, a 5/10/15k run and 5k walk. Again this year, the foundation will give local artists the opportunity to design the Hannibal Cannibal logo and the children's Fun Run logo.

The winning Cannibal logo will be displayed on the runner t-shirts, volunteer t-shirts, stage backdrop and marketing materials including newspaper, magazine and television advertisements and entry packets. The winning Fun Run logo will be on children's t-shirts and the volunteer shirts. During the last three years the race has averaged more than 1,900 participants, representing more than

30 states and several foreign countries.

The 2016 Hannibal Cannibal will be held at 7 a.m. Saturday, July 2, and will mark the 21st anniversary of the race.

The race is so named because of Lover's Leap, nicknamed "the Cannibal," which is part of the race course.

This year's race will benefit the Foundation's Back to BETTER Campaign, which is raising money to assist in offering inpatient rehabilitation services at Hannibal Regional Hospital. The introduction of these services is an important service in meeting health needs of the community, and helping patients get back to better.

Logo contest entries must be received by Feb. 25, and winners will be announced March 11 and recognized during the race awards ceremony with a trophy, \$50 Hannibal Chamber of Commerce gift certificate, free entry into the race and a free race t-shirt.

A full list of design requirements is available at www.hannibalcannibal.com or calling Hannibal Regional Hospital Foundation at -573-629-3577. ■

Hannibal Regional Medical Group

SPECIAL SECTION

PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT



HANNIBAL REGIONAL MEDICAL GROUP WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS

Endocrinology – Purvi Parikh, MD
Pulmonary/Critical Care – Pranav Parikh, MD
Otolaryngology – Kevin Imhof, DO
Urology - Steven Cockrell, MD

PROVIDER Directory



HANNIBAL REGIONAL MEDICAL GROUP WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS

New physicians have joined the Hannibal Regional Medical Group and you may already know them. **Pranav Parikh, MD, Purvi Parikh, MD, Kevin Imhof, DO, and Steven Cockrell, MD** will have offices located in the three-story medical office building connected to Hannibal Regional Hospital.

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. "We are excited to have these physicians join Hannibal Regional Medical Group," notes C. Todd Ahrens, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hannibal Regional Healthcare System. "Join us in welcoming them to Hannibal Regional Healthcare System."

Pranav Parikh, MD

Dr. Pranav Parikh is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine for Pulmonary Disease. It was recently announced



that Dr. Parikh became the Chief Medical Officer at Hannibal Regional Healthcare System. Along with his duties as CMO, he will continue to see patients. He has enjoyed caring for patients in our community for the past 15 years and looks forward to many more years to come. He specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of problems relating to the lungs including: sepsis, COPD and lung cancer. He also helps patients with sleep disorders. To make an appointment with Pranav Parikh, MD, please call: 573-629-3400.

Join us
March 22, 2016 | 11am - 1pm
Diabetes Alert Day

More than 8 million people—don't know they have diabetes.

Take the **FREE Diabetes Risk Test** any time between 11am - 1pm.

At 1pm, join us for a walk on the Healthy Way Trail
and free healthy snacks.



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**Hannibal Regional
Medical Group**

6500 Hospital Drive | Hannibal, MO 63401

Purvi Parikh, MD

Purvi Parikh, MD is a board-certified endocrinologist with over 15 years of experience and she specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the endocrine system including the thyroid, parathyroid, pancreas, ovaries, testes, hypothalamus and adrenal glands.



Her areas of interest are thyroid issues, adult diabetes, bone disorders and reducing obesity. To make an appointment with Purvi Parikh, MD, please call: 573-629-3400.

Kevin Imhof, DO



Kevin Imhof, DO is a board-certified otolaryngologist. He has 30 years of experience practicing for the past 26 years in Hannibal, Missouri. As an Otolaryngologist, Dr. Imhof diagnoses and manages diseases of the ears, nose, sinuses, larynx (voice box), mouth, and throat, as well as structures of the neck and face. Commonly treated disorders include: dizziness, ringing in the ears, hearing loss, sinusitis, nosebleeds, tonsillitis, chronic ear infections, sleep apnea and snoring. In addition, Dr. Imhof will be working in conjunction with Audiologist Linda Carleton to assist patients with hearing aids.

Dr. Imhof is committed to helping his patients on their journey to optimal health. To make an appointment, please call: 573-629-3301

Steven Cockrell, MD

Steven Cockrell, MD is a board-certified Urologist and his areas of focus include prostate cancer, urinary stone disease and benign prostatic enlargement, but also treats urinary tract infections, incontinence, and sexual dysfunction.



This year, Dr. Cockrell will celebrate 25 years in the Hannibal community as a physician. To make an appointment, please call: 573-629-3500.

For more information about Hannibal Regional Medical Group events, physicians and news, visit hannibalregionalmedicalgroup.org and “like” the Hannibal Regional Healthcare System on Facebook or call 573-629-3400.

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY



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Hannibal Regional Medical Group PROVIDER DIRECTORY

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AUDIOLOGY

Ph. 573-629-3301

Linda Carleton, MS, F-AAA

CARDIOLOGY

Ph. 573-629-3300

Pervez Alvi, MD

Sathish Kodali, MD

Richard Valuck, MD

Kim Bernard, AGPCNP-BC

ENDOCRINOLOGY

Ph. 573-629-3400

Purvi Parikh, MD

FAMILY PRACTICE

Ph. 573-629-3440

Adam Samaritoni, DO

Kim Shaw, FNP-BC

Diane Slough, NP-C

Sherry Masterson, FNP-BC

Jeanette Greving, FNP-BC

Tatyana Rains, NP-C

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Ph. 573-629-3400

John Greving, DO

Kim Peters, ANP-BC

OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

Ph. 573-629-3330

OPHTHALMOLOGY

Ph. 573-406-5730

Larry Wood, MD

Vision Institute

175 Shinn Lane, Hannibal

OPTOMETRY

Ph. 573-406-5730

Marshall Munch, OD

Kent Wolber, OD

Vision Institute

175 Shinn Lane, Hannibal

OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Ph. 573-629-3301

Kevin Imhof, DO

PLASTIC SURGERY

Ph. 573-629-3500

Schuyler Metlis, MD

PAIN MANAGEMENT

Ph. 573-629-3363

Luvell Glanton Jr., MD

Cindy Hess, NP-C

PODIATRY

Ph. 573-629-3500

Edward Cline, DPM

PEDIATRICS

Ph. 573-629-3440

Deborah Baumann, MD

Barbara White, DO

PULMONARY/CRITICAL CARE

Ph. 573-629-3400

Pranav Parikh, MD

UROLOGY

Ph. 573-629-3500

Steven Cockrell, MD

OTHER CLINIC LOCATIONS

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Ph. 573-231-0660

Sherry Masterson, FNP-BC

Jeanette Greving, FNP-BC

Tatyana Rains, NP-C

CANTON/LAGRANGE

FAMILY PRACTICE

Ph. 573-288-5360

Michael Tentori, DO

Connie Dochterman, FNP-BC

MONROE CITY

FAMILY PRACTICE

Ph. 573-735-2506

Dale Zimmerman, DO

Karen Grawe, DNP, FNP-BC

SHELBYNA FAMILY

PRACTICE

Ph. 573-588-4131

David Ouellette, MD

Lyreva Clark, NP-C

PIKE MEDICAL CLINIC

Louisiana

Ph. 573-754-5555

Jennifer Chandler, FNP-BC

Jan Onik, DO

Phillip Pitney, MD

Sean Weaver, NP-C

Bowling Green

Ph. 573-324-2241

Jennifer Chandler, FNP-BC

Jan Onik, DO

Phillip Pitney, MD

Sean Weaver, NP-C



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Hannibal Regional
Medical Group

hannibalregionalmedicalgroup.org

*Proud to serve Hannibal
and our surrounding communities!*

First Hannibal Regional Inpatient Rehabilitation patient enjoying life again

After his surgery at Hannibal Regional Hospital, William “Bill” Berry went straight to the newly completed Hannibal Regional Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit, where he was the facility’s first patient.

For too long and before his surgery, Berry suffered through pain in both hips and upper thighs.

“It was excruciating,” he said. “Before my surgery, I could only move about 50 yards before I would be paralyzed with pain. It was interfering with my life.”

After an MRI of his spine, Bill was diagnosed with spinal stenosis, and it was determined that this was the cause of his pain. Despite his physician’s telling him surgery was elective, they agreed that it likely would enhance his quality of life.

With an emphasis on rehabilitation, the Hannibal Regional Inpatient Rehabilitation unit provides individualized and goal-oriented programs to assist patients in returning to a normal lifestyle. The rehabilitation professionals include occupational therapists, certified occupational therapist assistants, physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, speech-language pathologists, nursing staff and physicians.

Berry again is enjoying life, and, he says, “The Inpatient Rehab facility met all my expectations and more. I don’t know how my rehab experience could have been any better than at Hannibal Regional. But it’s not just about the facility, it’s about the people, and their passion to help you get back to better. The staff that took care of me were very positive and reinforcing and encouraged me every step of the way.”

Inside the unit, patients are surrounded by a group of trained professionals who are dedicated to guiding them to a return to a more normal life. This calming environment helped Berry take on the task of getting better without added stress.

“The staff were so supportive and took their time with me. I wanted to do it for them; I pushed myself and endured pain for two days. I got out of my chair. I got out of my walker,” Berry says.

After seven days of physical and occupational rehabilitation for three hours a day, Berry was ready to return to his life. “Hannibal Regional met all of my expectations and more,” he says. “I don’t know how my rehab experience could have been any better.”

Hannibal Regional Healthcare System serves residents of the Tri-State area from more than 10 locations and includes Hannibal Regional Hospital, Hannibal Regional Medical Group, Hannibal Regional Hospital Foundation and the Center for Advanced Medical Research.

Hannibal Regional Hospital is a 99-bed acute-care hospital providing comprehensive health and wellness services and has been



Kara Brewer, physical therapist, guides Bill Berry through a routine at Hannibal Regional Inpatient Rehabilitation.

recognized by Healthgrades as a 2013 and 2014 Outstanding Patient Experience Award recipient – ranking HRH among the top 10 percent in the nation for patient care. In addition, Hannibal Regional is the only hospital in Missouri to be a recipient of the Healthgrades Joint Replacement Excellence Award and Outstanding Patient Experience Award in 2014 and a Five-Star Recipient for both Total Knee Replacement and Total Hip Replacement in 2015. Hannibal Regional Medical Group is a growing multi-specialty physician group delivering primary, specialty and express care services at multiple locations in Northeast Missouri. For more information on Hannibal Regional Healthcare System, visit www.hannibalregional.org. ■

Hannibal Parks & Recreation Events

By MARY LYNNE RICHARDS

www.hannibalparks.org

Indoor Archery

6:30-9 p.m. Wednesdays at the Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

\$5 per visit or \$50 for a season pass

Participants under 16 must be accompanied by an adult

Ice Bowl

Jan. 30 at Huckleberry Park disc golf course

Registration at 9 a.m., tee-off at 10 a.m.

\$10 entry fee with proceeds donated to The Buddy Pack Program

For more information contact Aron Lee (573-221-0154) or Don Crane (512-774-1319)

CHART Teen Task Force Health Fair

11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday Feb. 6 at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

Free food, prizes, booths about health and safety for teenagers

Keep in Touch

More information on all events and facility maps are available at www.hannibalparks.org

Follow Hannibal Parks on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HannibalParksRec and @Hannibalparks on Twitter at twitter.com/HannibalParks and Instagram at [instagram.com/hannibalparks](https://www.instagram.com/hannibalparks)

Polar Plunge

Feb. 27 at Hannibal Marina

Take a dip in the Mighty Mississippi to support Special Olympics

<http://somo.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1145588>

Job Fair

5-7 p.m. Feb. 29 at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

Learn more about seasonal employment with Hannibal Parks & Recreation and Hannibal Street Department

Applications will be available

Toddler Tuesdays

9-11 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

Imagination Playground blocks, games, balls and puzzles available

Indoor Walking

Admiral Coontz Recreation Center is open for walkers

12 laps equal 1 mile

7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday

7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday

Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7:30-5 p.m. Friday

Attendant on duty

Afternoon times are designated for activities to avoid conflict:

- Monday and Friday 3:30-5 p.m. basketball
- Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-5 p.m. pickleball

Evening activities at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

Mondays: Sports practices

Tuesdays: Sports practices

Wednesdays: Special Olympics practice and Indoor Archery

Thursdays: Youth BB Gun League

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NO HUNGER

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SERVICES FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Play Without Boundaries Sensory Room

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

Senior Adult Dances

Noon-3 p.m. Wednesdays at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

New Pickleball Courts

Outdoor pickleball courts now at Norfolk & Southern Multisports Complex, at the corner of Warren Barrett Drive and Seventh Street

Born Learning Trail

New interactive series of 10 outdoor games around Huckleberry Park playground

Several new pieces of all-inclusive playground equipment, including two handicap-accessible swings and musical instruments

Scavenger Hunts

Scavenger hunts at Central Park, Nipper Park, Mark Twain Memorial Lighthouse Trail and Huckleberry Park (free)

Prizes from Big Muddy B-B-Q, Chocolaterie Stam, Paddlewheel Popcorn and Logue's Restaurant. Clues at HPR office at City Hall, 320 Broadway; and HVCB office, 505 N Third St.

Disc Golf

Huckleberry Park 18-hole course is open during daytime hours

Discs and Frisbees can be used (free)

Dog Park

Dempsey Dog Park at Sixth and Ely Streets has separate areas for small and large dogs

Open every day from dawn to dusk

Shelter reservations

8 shelters can be reserved for picnics, parties, reunions

hannibalparks.org/shelter-reservation-calendar/

OTHER ACTIVITIES COMING UP:

Hannibal Jaycees Wing Ding

Jan. 30 at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

HannibalJaycees.org

Hannibal Jaycees Annual Chili Cook-off

Feb. 20 at Admiral Coontz Recreation Center

HannibalJaycees.org ■

The Drive Home
with
BRODIE
Celebrate the New Year
with
KICK-FM
UPCOMING EVENTS
18th Bridal Expo - January 30th
March Bids - KHMO - March 8th - 25th
KICK-FM 97.9
TODAY'S BEST COUNTRY

EXHIBITS



BEAUTIFUL MINDS: Mental Health and Healing

ATTENTION AREA ARTISTS: Those living within a 50-mile radius of Hannibal are invited to submit works for BEAUTIFUL MINDS: Mental Health and Healing. Full exhibit description, registration form and labels available at the gallery page of hannibalarts.com or stop by Hannibal Arts Council for a copy.

Greg Celenze – Painting

**OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY,
FEB. 13, 5-8 P.M.**

Hannibal Arts Council, 105 S. Main St.



Timeless Treasures

MARCH 5-27

Best of Missouri Hands Invitational
Quinsippi Needleworkers
Hannibal China Painters
Sharon Knickerbocker – Doll costume collection

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 5, 5-7 p.m.

Second Saturday

SECOND SATURDAY GALLERY NIGHT

SATURDAY, FEB. 13, 5-8 P.M.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 5-8 P.M.

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.

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.

Arty Party

FRIENDS. FUN. SPIRITS.

No painting experience required!

Arty Party programs are for those looking to have a fun time while creating art. It's simple! We provide the art supplies and a professional artist, Brenda Beck Fisher.

\$25 for HAC members/\$35 for non-members
Must be 21 or older to participate. High risk of selling out. Reservations: 573-221-6545 or reservations@hannibalarts.com Hannibal Arts Council, 105 S Main St.

BIRCH BARK

12" x 12" Paintings on Canvas

Friday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.

ABSTRACT WAVE

12" x 12" Paintings on Canvas

Thursday, Feb. 4, 6 p.m.

HANNIBAL Arts

MISTY SILHOUETTE

12" x 12" Paintings on Canvas

Friday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.

BUTTON TREE

12" x 12" Painting/Button Collage on Canvas

Thursday, March 3, 6 p.m.

CALLA LILY

12" x 12" Painting on Canvas

Friday, March 18, 7 p.m.

First Friday Art Adventures

First Friday Art Adventures are an opportunity for children ages 6 to 12 to create hands-on projects, nurture their creativity and make something that is cool and fun.

Sponsored by George H. Riedel Private Foundation and Missouri Arts Council

PANDA PAINTING

FRIDAY, FEB. 5, 4 P.M.

**HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL,
105 S. MAIN ST.**



\$10 (HAC Members \$5)

Space limited.

High risk of selling out.

Registration required: 573-

221-6545 or

reservations@hannibalarts.com

Participants will work with Hannibal artist Brenda Beck Fisher and complete a 12" x 12" acrylic painting on canvas.

TANGLE MONOGRAM DRAWING

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 4 P.M.
HANNIBAL ARTS COUNCIL,
105 S. MAIN ST.



\$10 (HAC Members \$5)
Space limited.
High risk of selling out.
Registration required: 573-221-6545 or reservations@hannibalarts.com

Participants will work with Hannibal artist Becky Evans to complete a personalized tangle drawing featuring their monogram using Sharpie markers.

Hannibal Concert Association

FRANC D'AMBROSIO
FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 7:30 P.M.



Parker Theatre, HLGU
Roland Fine Arts Center
Without season ticket: \$20 adults/\$5 students
Tickets available at the door. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
Season tickets available at the door, too.
Franc

D'Ambrosio is best known for his portrayal of the Phantom in Andrew Lloyd Webber's Tony Award-winning musical "The Phantom of the Opera." He was awarded the distinction as the "World's Longest Running Phantom" and retained this title for more than a decade. You might also recognize D'Ambrosio from "Godfather III," in which he portrayed Anthony Corleone, the opera-singing son of Michael Corleone and Kay Adams.

Hawaiian-themed party

The Hannibal Arts Council will host a Hawaiian-themed fund-raiser Saturday, April 9, at Quality Inn & Suites. A social hour will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner and entertainment at 7:30 p.m. More information is available by calling the council at 573-221-6545. ■

It's Not Too Early To *Think Spring!*

FRIDAY, MARCH 4
5-9 P.M.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5
10 A.M. - 7 P.M.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6
NOON - 4 P.M.



Down Country works to raise awareness of learning styles



Down Country uses Down syndrome as the voice for the heart of how every child learns. It is a rural awareness and education initiative to provide training and education for all abilities.

Founded Sept. 14, 2011, in Taylor, Mo., Down Country is 501(c)3 non-profit that has no paid staff members, but is volunteer run.

Down Country operates on three principles, as follows:

- Every child is a gift.
- Every child can learn
- Every child learns differently

Down Country uses Down syndrome to provide an overview of disability awareness for the entire differently abled/exceptionally gifted Tri-State community that learns outside of the box. Down Country operates as an umbrella educational and positive awareness information-share uniting the differently abled/exceptionally gifted community in Missouri, Illinois and Iowa.

Down Country operates with two goals, as follows:

- To promote positive awareness for individuals with disabilities/exceptional abilities in the Tri-State area
- To facilitate the education/specialized training of teachers, therapists, administrators, doctors, nurses, support staff, families and rural residents working with differently abled/exceptionally gifted people within the Tri-State rural community.

Down Country is dedicated to helping provide training and to promote positive awareness for individuals of all abilities.

Among its programs is the iLearn Scholarship, which is open Sept. 1 thru Nov. 1. Each year 10 iLearn Scholarships are awarded and announced at Down Country's Rhinestones & Rodeo Art Auction & Dance, which is held in February. The scholarships provide five years of national conference funding at \$2,000.00 per year with a maximum of \$10,000.00 over five years per scholarship. The initial conference is chosen by the Down Country board of directors; subsequent conferences are to be in the recipient's area of interest pending approval by the Down Country board. All Tri-State area residents — family members, therapists, teachers, administrators and community members — are eligible.

Down Country's iLearn Scholarship program has sent more than 319 Tri-State area residents to national and international conferences such

as Tourette Syndrome Association, American Academy of Cerebral Palsy & Developmental Medicine, Missouri Assistive Technology Conference, Autism Intervention Conference, National Association of State Special Educators, National Down syndrome Congress Convention, International Reading Association, Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference, The Young Child With Special Needs Conference focus on Autism & Developmental Challenges, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Ed Tech Teacher Conference, CHADD Annual International Conference on ADHD, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Closing the Gap Conference on Technology, Wired Differently and more.

According to Down Country, iLearn Scholarship recipients are required to pay forward in what they learn in order to maintain their scholarships, which run for five years.

More information is available by emailing info@upatdowncountry.com or visiting www.upatdowncountry.com.

Another program, iSPEAK, brings nationally recognized speakers and exhibits to the TriState area and hosts local experts on educational, technology and/or medical issues. Down Country's iSPEAK program has brought more than 15 different national speakers or displays to the Tri-State community.

The goal of another program, iCARE/iPAD, which is open March 21 through Aug. 21, is to put iPad/tablet and other technology or experimental technology in the hands of Tri-State

Area educator/therapists. Another goal is to work with and encourage district technology plan development and aid districts in the acquisition of technology.

At www.upatdowncountry.com, individuals can find nationally recognized resources and links to education and training on disabilities/exceptional abilities designed for professionals and families in rural communities and pre-screened for an emphasis on education and positive awareness. It uses and is used by its linked organizations as a conduit for sharing information. It also lists workshops of audio training, links to meetings and events of interest, computer applications, inspirational readings and videos and merchandise.

Those wishing to donate may do so online at www.upatdowncountry.com, by calling 217-617-3568 or by mailing a check to Down Country 5028 County Road 304 Taylor, MO 63471.

Members of the Down Country board of directors are Meghan Karr, Keely Ragar, Craig King, Kate Dougherty, Brad Kurz, Whitney Holliday, Kim Triplett, Alysha Barnett, Stephanie Demien and Tony Dougherty. ■

Since March 21, 2012,
Down Country has
donated more than 310
iPads to Tri-State area
teachers, schools and
therapists.



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February 13, 2016

Doors open 5:30pm

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- Sorry, I am unable to attend but enclosed is a contribution in the amount of \$_____ Name _____
- Please Charge my card for \$ _____
Name on Card _____
Card Number _____
C.C. Type _____ Sec. Code _____ Exp Date _____
Phone: _____

Down Country is a 501C3 organization and donations are tax deductible. Please make checks out to Down Country.

All proceeds benefit training/education on disabilities, positive awareness, and "outside the box" learners

Thanking you in advance the Board of Down Country:

Anthony & Katherine Dougherty, Whitney Holliday, Kim Triplett, Stephanie Demien,
Alysha Barnett, Keely Ragar, Craig King, Meghan Karr, Brad Kurz & Special Friends: Jeff & Lisa Neisen

www.upatdowncountry.com • info@upatdowncountry.com
217-617-3568 • 5028 CR 304 Taylor, MO 63471

Photos of Connie Stephens on display at Alliance Art Gallery through Feb. 12

Connie Stephens exhibit

**THROUGH FEB. 12 • ALLIANCE ART GALLERY,
1112 N. MAIN ST., HANNIBAL**

Alliance Art Gallery will feature the work of one of its newest members, Connie Stephens, through Feb. 12. Stephens is a well known Hannibal photographer. She finds inspiration for her work in nature's beauty and the world around us.

Stephens has always owned a camera. She began taking pictures of family and friends on her Brownie camera when she was a child. With the birth of her first grandchild in 1999, she purchased her first high-end camera, a Canon PowerShot G9. Stephens said that purchase was a turning point in her true exploration of photography as an art form. She began her self-education through books, the Internet, YouTube "classes" and lots of practice.

Retiring in 2003 from the Missouri Department of Social Services, Stephens began challenging herself to create photographs that are enjoyable and stimulate one's imagination. She began taking pictures of local interest and Mark Twain-related subjects, then creating pictures and cards as keepsakes for people visiting America's Hometown. In 2007, she bought her first DSLR camera and expanded her techniques. Stephens said she wants people to enjoy her photos and to see the beauty she observes every day.

Stephens is a member of the Hannibal Photo Club and the Hannibal Arts Council. She has exhibited at Hannibal LaGrange University and the Hannibal Arts Council. She has received several awards throughout her career and was published in the "Best of Photography for 2002," an annual publication from Photographer's Forum Magazine.

Alliance Art Gallery is located a 1112 N. Main St., Hannibal, MO. For more information visit its website at allianceartgallery.com. ■

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Ice Bowl helps fund Buddy Pack program

10th annual Ice Bowl

JAN. 30 • 9 A.M., HUCKLEBERRY PARK DISC GOLF COURSE

The 10th annual Ice Bowl, sponsored by the Hannibal Parks & Recreation Department, will be Jan. 30 at Huckleberry Park's disc golf course.

Registration will begin at 9 a.m., with tee-off beginning at 10 a.m. Participants will play two rounds. Food will be provided and prizes awarded.

Registration is \$10 with proceeds funding the Buddy Pack program, which benefits more than 500 Marion County schoolchildren — allowing children to take home backpacks containing free food each Friday. Backpacks include juice, soup, cereal, peanut butter and other staples. The goal is to make sure low-income children stay fed, healthy and productive.

Ice Bowl disc golf, held in January or February, has a mission of increasing awareness of disc golf by raising money to combat hunger, according to the national Ice Bowl website. In 2015, 238 events raised a record \$344,184. The goal for 2016 is to raise \$350,000. Since

1996, Ice Bowl has raised more than \$3 million..

Last year's Hannibal Ice Bowl had nearly 30 participants from Missouri, Illinois and Iowa, playing in windy and cold weather. Tournament coordinator Don Crane says the tournament fits its name.

"Conditions were very challenging with high wind and very cold temperatures last year," he said. "It makes it more challenging but they [the golfers] love it," he said.

"You will be able to see some really great throws with a lot of finesse and accuracy," Crane says, adding the Huckleberry Park course has evolved over the years.

"In 2007, when we first started, we didn't even have tee-pads," he says. The tee-pads were installed two years later. "Currently we are in the middle of an expansion to add six additional tee-pads this spring to add more challenge to the course."

He says the Ice Bowl is Hannibal's most popular tournament. In 2009, there were 47 participants, including the former women's world champion.

More information is available by contacting Aron Lee at 573-221-0154 or alee@hannibal-mo.gov or Crane at 512-774-1319 or musicman4655@hotmail.com. ■



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Mark Twain Lake to host antler shed hunt

Mark Twain Lake plans to host its annual children's antler-shed hunt starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at the M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center. The event is cosponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Monroe City Whitetails Unlimited Chapter, the Mark Twain Lake Visitors and Educational Resource Center Committee and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Younger children, ages 2 to 12, will be part of a hunt along the new Eagle Bluff Trail at the center; sheds will be placed along the trail to give the children an idea of what a hunt involves/ Monroe City Whitetails Unlimited Chapter will provide a lunch of hot dogs, soup and chips.

The free event is for all age groups; pre-registration is required by 4 p.m. Feb. 5 and may be made by calling 573-565-2112 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Participation will be limited to the first 150 registrants and their parents.

Volunteers are needed, and donations of sheds will be accepted at center up to the date of the event.



Cancer group raffling off two-bedroom house

Community Cancer Crush, as its third annual fund-raising event, is raffling off a two-bedroom house in Quincy, Ill.

Called Community Cancer Crush — House of Hope Raffle, the event will award four additional prizes.

Community Cancer Crush was founded by Luke Tappe, who lost his father, Ted Tappe, to cancer four days before the initial event in April 2014, which raised \$50,000 for local cancer patients; \$75,000 was raised the second year.

The house, 1506 Manor Hill, has an appraised value is \$152,500 and was provided by Sherry Hills, Cancer Crush committee member and real estate broker, who lost her husband, Scott Garner, to cancer in 2012.

A brick ranch, the house has two full baths, a full, finished lower level and an attached two-car attached garage. It has been completely redone with new hardwood floors, new kitchen cabinets, stainless steel appliances, carpet, paint, light and plumbing fixtures and other updates.

Services donated by local vendors included the appraisal by Redd Appraisal; home and radon inspection by Quincy Home Pro, John and Sherri Bertoni; termite inspection by Mark Albright; virtual tour by Vision Quest Virtual Tours, Greg and Paige Mitts; ticket printing by Royal Printing; and banners by Mississippi Belle (Miller-Lite). The title work and closing will be donated by the Title Center of Quincy.

Second prize is \$10,000 in cash; third prize is \$5,000 in cash; fourth prize is \$2,500 cash; and fifth prize is choice of an iPad or \$500 in cash.

Tickets are \$100 each; and 100 percent of the proceeds are awarded



to local cancer patients.

Winners need not be present to claim the prizes.

The minimum number of tickets that will need to be sold is 2,000, and the maximum number to be sold is 3,500. Should the minimum to be reached, the raffle will become a 50/50 drawing with a single winner.

The drawing will take place March 25 at the Community Cancer Crush event at the Ambiance, which will be 6 p.m. to midnight Friday, March 25. Admission, which is \$25 per person in advance or \$30 at the door, includes a full dinner and enter-

tainment by Madd Hoss Jackson. Private tables are also available for \$300, and sponsorship tables also are available. The event will include a raffle for a playhouse, and a pool or spa, provided by Paradise Pool's & Spas, or a Honda 4-Wheeler, provided By Smith Brothers Power Sports.

Raffle tickets may be purchased at the following locations: Davis and Frese Inc., Realtors, 2310 Broadway; Ted's Shirt Shack at Eighth and Kochs Lane; the Attic at 1401 Broadway; Smith Brothers Power Sports, 5005 Broadway; and Paradise Pools and Spas, 4813 Broadway.

An open house will be held 1-3 p.m. every Sunday at the house on Manor Hill.

Community Cancer Crush is a partner with the Blessing Foundation and a fully tax deductible 501(c)3 foundation.

More information is available by contacting Tappe at 217-430-8076 or info@cancercrush.org or Hills at 217-740-6820 or shrealtor2002@yahoo.com.

Donations of merchandise are being sought for a silent auction. ■



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16" 2-topping pizza and 2-liter bottle of soda from Cassano's (**see page 4**).

Dirt Cheap offers 10 percent off case pricing (**see page 5**).

Hannibal History Museum is hosting a trivia night Friday, Feb. 26, and Molly's Irish Shindig Friday, March 18 (**see page 8**).

Hannibal Parks & Recreation is hosting Polar Plunge Feb. 27 (**see page 9**).

Splash Landing offers a season pass for only \$59 per person (**see page 11**).

WGEM offers a free StormTrak weather app, available on Google Play and the App Store (**see page 12**).

Golden Eagle Distributing is hosting its chili cook-off Feb. 20 (**see page 13**).

The Mark Twain Museum is hosting a chocolate party Saturday, March 12 (**see page 17**).

Troy Convention center is hosting several events in the next few months (**see page 19**).

Hannibal Regional Medical Group will offer a free diabetes risk test March 22 (**see page 22**).

Oakley-Lindsay Center will host the Home & Living Show March 4-6 (**see page 29**).

Down Country will host Rhinestones & Rodeo art auction & dance Feb. 13 (**see page 31**).

NEMO Orthodontics offers free consultations (**see page 32**).

Hannibal Parks & Recreation is hosting a spring pickleball league (**see page 36**).

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Spring Pickleball League

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PARKS & RECREATION
DEPARTMENT



Mondays

March 21-April 25

**Admiral Coontz
Recreation Center**

\$35 per team

Must be registered by March 14



Jan.-Feb.-March

ONGOING EVENTS

Through Feb. 12

Connie Stephens photography exhibit. Alliance Art Gallery, 1112 N. Main, Hannibal. allianceartgallery.com. See story on page 32.

Thursday, Feb. 11 through Feb. 14

“Agnes of God” theater production. Culver-Stockton College, Mabee Little Theatre, Canton. \$6 for adults; free admission for C-SC faculty, staff and students; other students \$5. Thursday, Friday and Saturday production 7:30 p.m.; Sunday production 3 p.m. 573-288-6346.

Feb. 11— Feb. 14

“My Way: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra.” Mark Twain Brewing Company. 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday. \$25. Special dinner, \$28.99, available Friday and Saturday. 573-406-1300.

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, Feb. 18-27

“The Lady With All The Answers” theater production. Bluff City Theater, 212 Broadway, Hannibal. 573-719-3226, or visit bluffcitytheatre.com. 573-719-3226. See story on page 16.

March 18—20

“Thumbelina” theater production. Hannibal Middle School Auditorium. 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday.

LOCAL EVENTS

Saturday, Jan. 30

11 a.m.: Hannibal Jaycees Wing Ding. Admiral Coontz Recreation Center, Hannibal. Doors open at 11 a.m.; wings served at 1 p.m.; judging at 4 p.m. 573-999-5073 or 573-248-6833. See story on page 19.

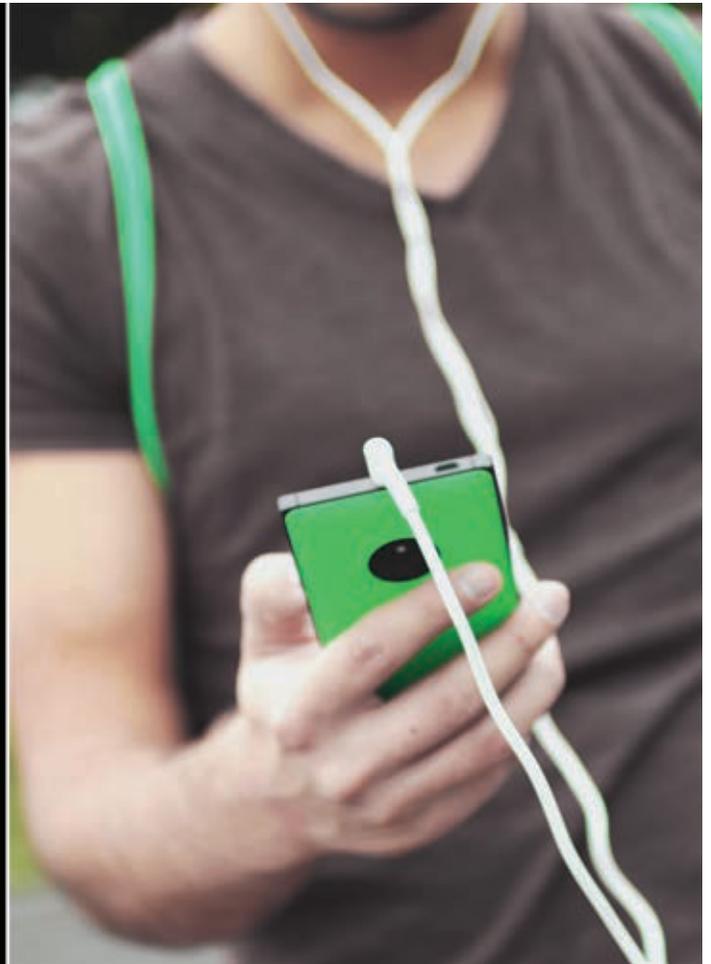
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LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan.-Feb.-March

Saturday, Feb. 13

5-8 p.m.: Second Saturday Gallery Night. Stroll Hannibal's downtown galleries — art, wine, friends and special events.

7 p.m.: Valentine Jam. With 4th Street Warehouse Jazz. Lewis Street Playhouse, Canton.

Saturday, Feb. 20

11 a.m.: Annual Chili Cook-Off. Sponsored by Hannibal Jaycees and Golden Eagle Distributing, Admiral Coontz Armory, Hannibal. 573-221-0908 See story on page 18.

3 p.m.: Culver-Stockton College band-tour preview concert. Location TBA.

9 a.m.: Antler-shed hunt. M.W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center at Mark Twain Lake; free for all ages; pre-registration required by Feb. 5, 573-565-2112.

Friday, Feb. 26

Hannibal History Museum Trivia Night. 200 N. Main, Hannibal. 573-248-1819. www.HannibalHistoryMuseum.com.

Wednesday, Feb. 27.

2 p.m.: Polar Plunge. Hannibal Boat Ramp, Hannibal. 573-221-0154 or visit HannibalParks.org

Saturday, March 5

6 p.m.: Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum Trivia Night. Shirley Bohmar Community Center. Trivia begins at 7. Proceeds benefit Becky Thatcher House. 573-221-9010, ext. 404. See story on page 16.

Saturday, March 12

Chocolate Extravaganza. Downtown Hannibal. Use a Chocolate Extravaganza passport, \$20, for treats, in-store events and merchandise. Music, gallery art walk, make-and-take classes and chocolate demonstrations. www.ChocolateExtravaganzaHannibal.com. Phone: (573) 221-9010 Ext. 404. See story on page 14.

1-4 p.m.: Museum and the Chocolate Factory. Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum. Chocolate games and prizes based on characters of "Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory." \$5 or one passport ticket. See story on page 14.

5-8 p.m.: Second Saturday Gallery Night. Stroll Hannibal's downtown galleries — art, wine, friends and special events.

Friday, March 18

Molly's Irish Shindig featuring the music of the Rag Tag Irish Band, Hannibal History Museum, 200 N. Main. www.HannibalHistoryMuseum.com. 573-248-1819.

Friday-Sunday, March 18-20

Hannibal Middle School with be presenting the play Thumbelina March 18th, 19th, and 20th, 2016. The Friday and Saturday productions will be at 7pm and the Sunday matinee is at 2pm. All performances will be held in Hannibal Middle School Auditorium.



March 26 & 27

50 Miles of Art. Artisans in Hannibal, Louisiana and Clarksville open their studios. www.hannibalarts.com. 672-221-2477.

Friday-Sunday, April 22-24

Great Girlfriend Getaway Weekend. shopping and dining in downtown Hannibal. Pub crawl April 23. 573-221-1017. www.GreatGirlfriendGetaway.com.

For Hannibal Free Public Library Events, visit hannibal.lib.mo.us

For Hannibal Parks & Recreation calendar, see Page 26.

REGIONAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Jan.-Feb.-March

ONGOING EVENTS

Mondays and Wednesdays through Feb. 29

5:45 p.m.: Karate — Beginner and Advanced. The Salvation Army Kroc Center, 405 Vermont, Quincy. www.krocquincy.org/arts-education.

Feb. 1-27

Daily: Tri-State Art Teachers/Student Invitational Exhibit. Brenner Library: Gray Gallery, Quincy University, 1800 College, Quincy. Free. 217-228-5432 or 217-228-5371. Library is open 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday.

March 1-April 4

Daily: Michael Hopkins X-ray painting exhibit. Brenner Library: Gray Gallery, Quincy University, 1800 College, Quincy. Free. 217-228-5432 or 217-228-5371. Library is open 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday.

REGIONAL EVENTS

Wednesday, Feb. 3

7:30 p.m.: The Minguett Quartet. St. John's Church, 7th and Hampshire, Quincy. Culver-Stockton College faculty, staff and students admitted free with C-SC ID.

Thursday, Feb. 4

5:30 p.m.: Magic class. Kroc Center, 405 Vermont, Quincy. 217-231-5639 or visit www.krocquincy.org/arts-education/.

Friday, Feb. 5

6 p.m.: Art Crawl. 217-223-5900 or visit quincyartcenter.org.

continues on 40 ►

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REGIONAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan.-Feb.-March

Saturday, Feb. 6

Noon: Creative Dramatics. Kroc Center, 405 Vermont, Quincy. 217-231-5639 or visit www.krocquincy.org/arts-education/.

Monday, Feb. 8

8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.: Jazz Fest. Robert W. Brown Performing Art Center, Culver-Stockton College, One College Hill, Canton.



Tuesday, Feb. 9

6 p.m.: Family Friendly Mardi Gras Party. Quincy Museum, 1601 Maine. \$2.

Thursday, Feb. 11

5:30 p.m.: Art and Appetizers. Kroc Center, 405 Vermont, Quincy. Call Sandra for registration, 217-231-5639, or visit www.krocquincy.org/arts-education/.

Saturday, Feb. 13

5:30 p.m.: Rhinestones & Rodeo. Down Country's benefit auction/dance. Ambiance, 5225 Koch's Lane, Quincy. Food, cash bar, silent and live auctions, Gigi's Playhouse Million Voices Gallery. 217-617-3568. www.upatdowncountry.com. See story on page 30.

Sunday, Feb. 14

3 p.m.: Winter Daydreams. Quincy Junior High School. Quincy Symphony Orchestra concert will feature Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 1. Concert will include winners of Young Artists Competition.

Thursday, Feb. 18

4 p.m.: Cook's Night Off. Quincy Senior and Family Resource Center, 639 York, Quincy. Price: \$7. 217-223-7904 or 800-252-9027.

Friday-Sunday, March 4-6

WGEM Home & Living Show. Oakley-Lindsay Center. 5-9 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and noon-4 p.m. Sunday.

Saturday, March 5

7:30 p.m.: Hooray for Hollywood. Quincy Symphonic Chorus will present cinema classics including "Hooray for Hollywood," "Anything Goes" and music from Disney's "Frozen." Salem Church, 9th and State, Quincy.



Friday, March 18

8 p.m.: Comedian Ron White. Burlington, Iowa, Memorial Auditorium. VIP packages \$265 and \$155; reserved seats \$76, \$56 and \$46. www.BMA-Live.com; Ticketmaster 800-745-3000.

Saturday, March 19

7:30 p.m.: The Melodores. A capella men's ensemble of Vanderbilt University. Quincy Senior High School, 3322 Maine, Quincy.

Friday, April 1, and Saturday, April 2

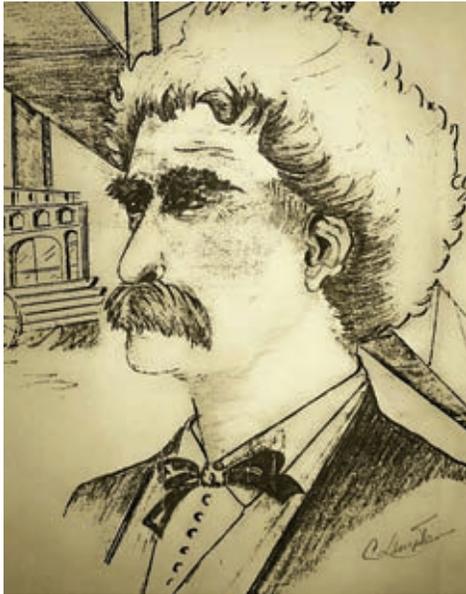
7:30 p.m.: "Harvey." Campbell Auditorum, Culver-Stockton College. Adults, \$8; CSC faculty, staff and students, \$4; other students \$5. 573-288-6346.

Sunday, April 3

3 p.m.: "Harvey." Alexander Campbell Auditorum, Culver-Stockton College. Adults, \$8; CSC faculty, staff and students, \$4; other students \$5. 573-288-6346. ■

Mark Twain portraits

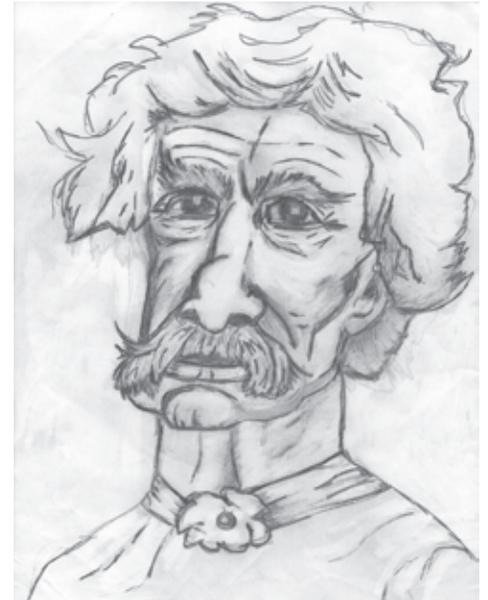
In November and December, we asked readers to submit portraits they have made of Mark Twain in honor of the writer's 180th birthday. Here are some of their submissions.



By Carol Lampton



By Dennis Dean



By June McGrew

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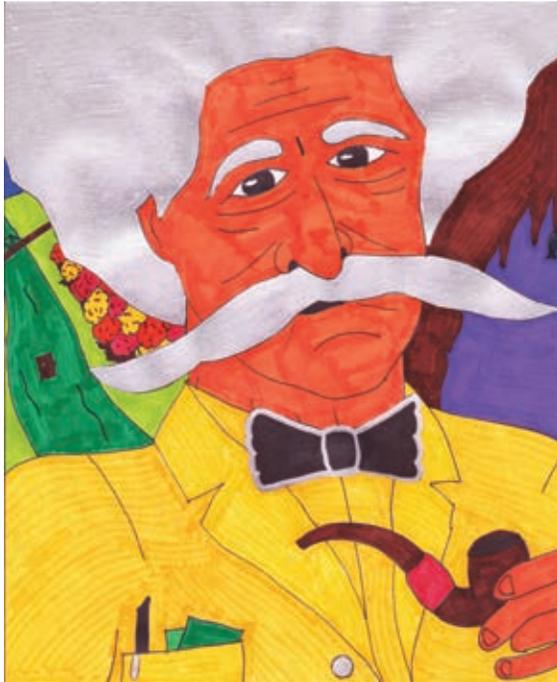
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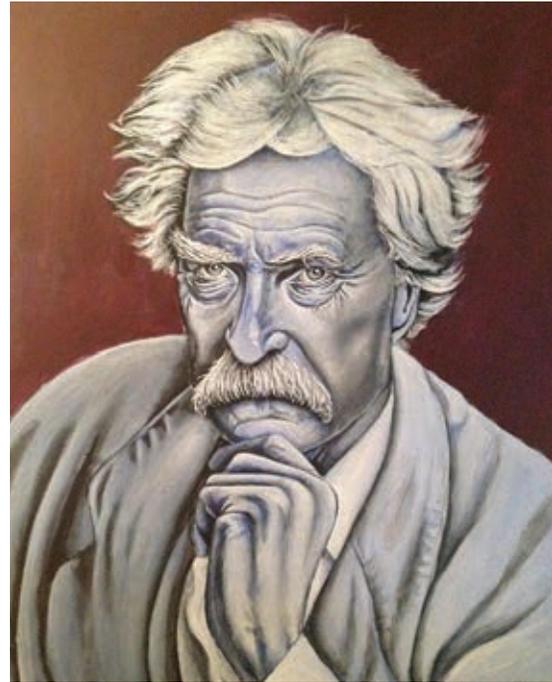
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Mark Twain portraits

In November and December, we asked readers to submit portraits they have made of Mark Twain in honor of the writer's 180th birthday. Here are some of their submissions.



By Lauren Burkhardt



By Nevin McNally

An advertisement for BoodaLu restaurant. The background is a vibrant orange and yellow sunburst pattern. In the center is a large white lightbulb containing the BoodaLu logo (a red cat) and the text "EXCEPTIONAL FOOD SERVICE & AMBIANCE". To the left is a large black silhouette of a fork, and to the right is a black silhouette of a city skyline. A road with yellow lines leads from the bottom towards the lightbulb. At the bottom, there is a black banner with white text: "117 Hampshire, Quincy, IL - 217.222.3100 - BoodaLu.com" and "LUNCH: Tues-Fr 11-2p DINNER: Tues-Sat 5-10p". A blue "facebook" button is on the right side of the banner.

Saying ‘no’ isn’t always the easy thing — but often it’s the right thing

By MEGAN DUNCAN

His eyes filled with pangs of injustice that trickled down his puffed out cheeks. I bent down — my eyes even with his — and I wiped the tears from his face, speaking directly into his suffering heart. “You cannot have my ice cream.” It was fudge ripple, if this helps my case with any of you; it certainly didn’t

with him.

Now forgotten were the spoonfuls of fudge ripple he gulped down after lunch because he just couldn’t wait until the evening to have his bowl of ice cream. I sufficiently warned him that if he chose to eat it now, he would not get another bowl with the rest of us after dinner — no matter how big a fit he threw. His 6-year-old head bobbed as we shook hands in agreement.

A deal he now believes was made with the devil.

That’s right. In my rather out of shape, 30-something body, which just can’t pull off the leggings with boots look no matter how hard I try, is the manifestation of pure evil. Spreading sorrow through unreasonable demands like putting on pants (even on Saturdays) and regular bathing, but my most powerful weapon is the word “no.”

N-O — these two letters come together to bring a powerhouse of pain to small children everywhere as a relentless tool in a mother’s ultimate goal to make her kids miserable.

“Mom, can I stay up late and watch Netflix?”

“No.” It is a school night, and I have a “Property Brothers” and chocolate marathon starting at 9:30.

They don’t even have to ask me anything and I will just sense a no-moment — I see a casually tossed lid on the counter, and I

know exactly what is going on three rooms away.

“No eating peanut butter from the jar with a spoon!” I am just hoping for the spoon part.

The thing is, being the bad guy isn’t fun, and I have no agenda other than to do my best at raising kids who won’t one day be a detriment to society. There is no perfect formula to this that I know of, which is why parenting is so confusing at times.

I recently read an article stating too much discipline can make a child prone to rebellion or depression and anxiety. Another article stated that children who are not disciplined enough will struggle in the real world and also could end up suffering

from depression and anxiety.

Now I am depressed and anxious, because is it even possible that I am getting this parenting thing right?

Evidence shows I must be doing something right. At his school play when he stood before the crowd to say the line he had nervously practiced for weeks, his eyes scanned the room and then lit up when they rested on my face.

Even when the littlest one is in mid-tantrum he throws his arms around me — the person he knows will never turn him away.

But now, as he stands before me pleading for my fudge ripple, I know it is time to be the bad guy. This way he will know that even a moment’s pleasure comes with sacrifice, and he will take on the world ready to face even the hardest days.

We don’t always get what we want, and I want that hard lesson first to come from me.

And, well, let’s be honest here — I shared my womb with the kid for nine months, do I really have to share my ice cream too? ■



Seasons change

By HICK FINN

Enter the year 2016. My first question has to be, “Where did 2015 go?” Time truly waits for no one. I am always amazed by how long it takes me to become accustomed to the change of the year on checks and documents, only to realize it is time to change again.

Someone once said, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” I can see

some reflection of my youth in certain styles of clothing. I have even noticed a small resurgence in the “Hippie” movement. It is hard to imagine, but apparently tie-dyed clothing is still a thing.

There are some things, however, that will never be the same. Grabbing a soda or some candy at the neighborhood grocery store, and hanging out with a group of neighborhood kids by the soda cooler is no longer the same. There were no plans being made for gang-related activity, unless a pick-up game of football, basketball, baseball or bike-riding is considered gang-related.

I can safely conclude that going to Bud’s Golden Cream for a nickel ice cream cone is no longer possible. Buying a nickel cone anyplace is not a possibility — not even an empty cone, minus the ice cream. Grabbing a slice of pizza or broasted chicken and potatoes from Leon’s Pizzeria is only a memory, too. A milkshake and fries from Sandy’s would certainly work for me right now.

Children delivering newspapers or knocking on doors to mow grass, rake leaves or shovel snow are things not often seen. People are instilled with fear and afraid to let their children out of their sight, for fear that a child predator is lurking.

You won’t see children learning those business skills and then taking their earnings to the local five-and-dime to buy a really neat toy, like a balsa wood airplane or a pea shooter.

Speaking of toys, when did someone decide that the best toys in life have to be electronic? If you aren’t a computer savant by age 8, you are unable to communicate with all of your school friends after school or during the summer break.

Our best toys when we were children were bicycles. There wasn’t a bike in my neighborhood that had less than a thousand miles on it.

Communication has changed to the point of no return. We called friends on a house phone. A busy signal meant a walk to their house to rattle a door.

If friends were unable to play, or they were not at home, we moved on to the next friend’s house. We could usually find someone to do something with or a pick-up game of ball already underway. Seldom today can you look down a local street and see a child on a bicycle, neighborhood kids playing a game or, sometimes, a child

outside at all. I noticed the school playgrounds absent of children, and that never happened.

I do see plenty of children sitting around inside their homes, watching children on television being active, while they talk and text their friends on cellphones.

Facebook and SnapChat have become the new places to gather and make plans. Daily exercise comes from video games where you learn problem-solving skills, like what are the best weapons to kill people with, or how to resolve confrontation with violence. We want to be furious with the gaming industry, and yet we are the people who put most of these systems in our children’s world. Getting upset with why things are different from the childhood you remember is as simple as looking in a mirror, sometimes.

We all want better for our children, as our parents did for us. It is natural to strive for that. I think at some point we became blinded by retailers, succumbed to peer pressure, and decided that “bigger is better” and the more we spend on a child, the more our love is expressed.

Somehow we became involved in a lie, fueled by greed and technology, which are spiraling out of control with no end in sight. Just pause for one moment and reflect on your youth and the many fond memories and stories you hold close to your heart.

I bet on occasion you still share these stories with family and friends from the old neighborhood. I can honestly reminisce for a moment about various things that happened in my youth and begin to smile. Memories should be the gold in life we all seek. I just have to wonder if the computer and gaming generation is going to be able to look back in reflection with the same types of grand memories we hold from our youth. I will say there will be some fond memories, but I doubt if one of them will involve a video-gaming experience.

Maybe I am just behind the times, but I certainly would like to see children rediscover the outside of their homes. Maybe there is a balance between new and old that can be reached. My parents forced me inside daily, because I wanted to be outside with my friends.

Today you must force children outside to play, because their friends are all plugged into electronics or on the other end of a cellphone conversation.

Children today refer to our youth as “back in the day.” When I think about being “back in the day,” I can only smile and wish that I had a time machine to introduce them to a different world.

It wasn’t a perfect world, but I wouldn’t change it. Seasons change and times change.

Sometimes change isn’t always for the better. ■



cheers to a new year

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And before his wife arrived from Monroe City by car at Blessing, Bill was in recovery and on his way to a new life.

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