

WE'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE...WE REJOICE IN THE RETELLING.



THE REGISTER

AUGUST 2019 NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings! MO-TELL sponsored a great Liar's Contest in Columbia, MO, this summer. Many thanks to the Columbia Public Library and Sarah Howard for all they did to make this event so wonderful.

There were so many great stories, I know the judges had a difficult time deciding the winners. We had a special guest too, Dr. Ron Turner, Founder of the St. Louis Storytelling Festival, who spoke. The board voted to make Ron a lifetime member because of his years of service to Missouri storytelling. Thank you, Ron.

Members of MO-TELL told their stories in the Missouri state parks and historic sites in May and July this year. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Missouri Arts Council to make this possible, as well as funding from individual donors and the Department of Natural Resources to make this possible.

As we head into Fall, there will be storytelling in the Missouri state parks and historic sites once again. As we know the dates and places we will post them in the newsletter. We are proud of this program as it satisfies our Mission.

Our annual meeting will take place in January at the RAPS Chicken Festival in Paola, KS. I hope to see you all there.

We want to expand our board of directors. Will you join our board and bring new ideas to the organization? We need you.



A THOUGHT FOR YOUR DAY:

"Stories create community, enable us to see through the eyes of other people, and open us to the claims of others."

*- Peter Forbes
photographer and author
Works: *A Man Apart**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SAVE THE DATE!

January 24, 25, 26, 2020

River and Prairie Storyweavers will host its 27th Annual Chicken Festival at the Paola Community Center (905 E. Wea Street, Paola, KS, 66071). The Chicken Festival is a combination of community outreach & storyteller retreat. Attendees are those who love stories, whether you are a storyteller or a story listener, all are welcome. Instead of one or a few featured tellers, YOU are the featured storyteller when you tell your story.

As part of the community outreach, we will tell stories in the local schools, libraries, and senior centers on Friday, January 24, and present a community storytelling concert on Saturday, January 25. Those interested in volunteering their talents to tell in the community should contact Gary Kuntz as 816-896-8611.

Friday evening, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning storyteller will share their favorite stories and music. Yes, there is a time slot for chicken stories. Keep checking www.riverandprairiestoryweavers.org for updates on The Chicken Festival.

The Nitty Gritty: Chicken Festival registration is \$30 for RAPS members or \$60 for non-RAPS members. RAPS annual member is \$25, \$35 for a family. Contact the Paola Inn and Suites (1600 E. Hedges Ln. Ct., Paola, KS, 66071) At (913) 294-3700 by 12/24/19 for the fabulous RAPS room discount rate of \$70 (plus taxes). Don't delay! Don't call too late for reservations to the Chicken Festival only to find yourself completely plucked.



Bill Clevien



Cameron Collins



Amanda Doyle



Calvin Riley



Carol Shepley



Ed Wheatley

*What's the best way
to learn about a city?*

Listen to its stories!

Experience St. Louis like never before.

7 p.m., August 29
Missouri Athletic Club



**STORY LOUNGE:
"BEACONS OF HOPE"**

*A collaborative
storytelling show with
Arts & Faith St. Louis
and the St. Louis
Storytelling Festival*

AUG
22

Story Lounge: Beacons of Hope

Public · Hosted by St. Louis Storytelling Festival and
Sophie's Artist Lounge & Cocktail Club

★ Interested ✓ Going

➔ Share ▾ ...

🕒 Thursday, August 22, 2019 at 6:30 PM – 8 PM

📍 Sophie's Artist Lounge & Cocktail Club
3224 Locust St., 2nd Floor, St. Louis 63103

Show Map

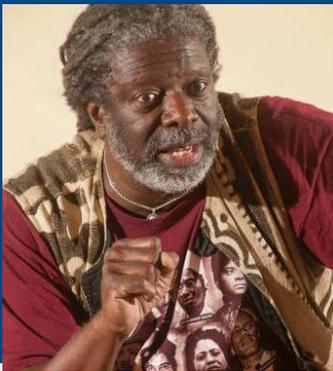
**A BIT OF ST. LOUIS
STORYTELLING**



SAVE THE DATE!

November 13-16, 2019

THIS YEAR'S FEATURED TELLERS



Michael D. McCarty



Laura Packer



Dovie Thomason



Andy Offutt Irwin



Musical Storytelling
Performance by
Mike and Nancee Micham

MCC

816.604.3011

KCSTORYTELLING.MCCKC.EDU

Metropolitan
Community College



MAPLE WOODS



2nd Annual
Story Tree®

At the American Legion Hall

Saturday, Aug. 17, 2019

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Free Admission for this drop in Event

For the 2nd Year Storytellers of the Ozarks will be presenting a wide range of stories for your listening pleasure.

Brand new this year our first ever

Story Slam

Don't miss this new event!!

American Legion Hall located at 115 S. Spring Park Blvd. Mt. Vernon, MO, (leave I-44 at exit 49, drive west for 2 miles. At "T" turn left and drive 1 mile. American Legion is on right side of road next to Meek's Lumber.)

For information call 417-413-6720 or e-mail: rcrotser48@gmail.com

Please thank these friends of Storytelling for their support

American Legion Post #137

A BIT MORE OF ST. LOUIS STORYTELLING



CAMPFIRE 27 WITH THE INTRO TO STORYTELLING CLASS

WED AUG 21 8:00PM

3524 Washington Ave
Saint Louis, MO 63103
314.664.3955

 THE STAGE AT KDHX  

Campfire is hosting a showcase of students who went through our Intro to Storytelling Class and crafted stories around Moving Beyond Labels. Campfire's mission is to bring out the natural public speaker and storyteller that lives in each of us.

* Campfire starts at 8:00 pm, but doors open at 7:30 pm. Please arrive early to grab a drink and hang out with us before the show!

* The event is free and open to the public.

Campfire invites you to hear stories about life and how we live it during Season 9 at The Stage at KDHX. Our live events can best be described as TED without the data, The Moth but interactive, and Church but without the religion.

What is Campfire?

Campfire provides storytelling and public speaking training in new and innovative ways. We are developing the next era of public speaking rooted in a more human, strengths-based, and accessible curriculum.



The (As-Far-As-We-Know) Fifth Annual

2019 MISSOURI STATE LIAR'S CONTEST THE RESULTS ARE IN!



First Place, Spoken Category
Rich White
"Chicken Delivery"



First Place, Written Category
Alice Nathan
"How Branson Became the
Music Capital of the Country"



Second Place, Spoken Category
Gary Kuntz
"Henry the Rooster"

Second Place, Written Category
Larry Brown - "Wings"



Third Place, Spoken Category
Larry Brown
"Take Flight"

Third Place, Written Category
Carol Kariotis - "The Ecolet"



Rachel Kelly
"Just What I
Needed"



Linda Kuntz
"Mark Fell in
the Pond"



Allen DeBey
"Fishing with
Spiderwebs"



Roger Rose
"My Name is Joe"

Other Written Contestants

Allen DeBay -
"Fishing with Spiderwebs"

Cosy Wright -
The Greedy Squirrel with the
Bad Attitude"

Gary Kuntz -
"The First"

**Want to see
& hear the stories?
Search for
"MissouriStorytelling"
on YouTube.com!
Be sure to subscribe!**



The (As-Far-As-We-Know) Fifth Annual 2019 MISSOURI STATE LIAR'S CONTEST



MANY THANKS TO OUR HONORED JUDGES



Amy Darnell,
Associate Professor
of Communication,
Columbia College

Alex George,
Executive Director of
the Unbound Book
Festival, and Author

Adam Brietzke,
Artistic Director at
Talking Horse
Productions



MO-TELL'S MEMBER PROFILE

GREAT PEOPLE COMPOSE THIS GREAT ORGANIZATION!
EACH MONTH'S MO-TELL REGISTER FEATURES ANOTHER TO THE MEMBERS.

TIM MANSON



Tell a little about yourself and your family? What is your vocation and your hobby?

I'm a farmer, kinda, but mostly a tractor tire salesman, mostly a salesman. I guess that would be my vocation. I live in Tonganoxie, Kansas, and I'm married to Janet Manson. I have two sons and a daughter. I have grandkids. Hobby - I like storytelling and painting and drawing. I like to bake, too. I do that at work.

Why did you decide it was important to be a member of Missouri Storytelling?

Missouri Storytelling is pretty much an extension of Kansas City Storytelling (RAPS). I wish I could say I have supported all storytelling.

What is your interest in storytelling? How did it begin?

I like to tell stories. As a salesman, I give you something and you give me money. The thought of you giving me money and my giving you "Blue Sky and Clear Water" is amazing. That's what storytelling is for me. So I would say it's a hobby. I have spent a lot of money but been paid seldom. It's a really nice hobby. I have been to lots of places, have the best friends I've ever had, own more books, read more kids' storybooks than any adult should, taken more literature classes, writing classes, all done with the same excuse, to be a better storyteller. It all probably made me a better person, Dad, Grandpa, and salesman.

What tellers have been influential in your life?

This is a really hard question. There are a lot of storyteller who have influenced me. Priscilla Howe with her stories, Tracy Milsap and Dennis Rogers telling in tandem. Maybe Maxine Clausen who made me stand up and sing as she played the piano, Jim Wallen in Bethany asking the kids how many knew what a dun horse was or it might have been Deb Swanegan showing me how powerful an old folk tale is. Ron Adams from St. Louis scared the bejesus out of me at St. Charles and Anthony Clark scared me by telling the Train Whistle in Leavenworth. It could be Larry Brown every time he tells another tale that's better than the last one he told. Deb Wallen helped me with her pages of critiques. Jean Hatfield's tale of McSkeeters and her nose getting longer was a tale to remember. I know every storyteller I know taught me how to be better.

What is your favorite story?

Geneva Greenfield tells one of my favorites. It's the one with the two white mules.

Anything else you'd like to add?

I am sure that the best times of my life happen at the Chicken Festival. My favorite memories of that festival are Jim and the center fold, Greg's ashes sent up in the bottle rocket, Gladys and the plastic spiders and the time we were snowed in in Clinton, MO.

ALWAYS REMEMBER, NEVER FORGET

**IF YOU WANT TO REACH
EVERY PERSON IN THE
AUDIENCE, IT'S NOT
ABOUT BEING BIGGER,
IT'S ABOUT GOING
DEEPER.**

— SANFORD MEISNER

And then, on July 26th,

PERRIN STIFEL

**BROUGHT HOME THE NSN ORACLE AWARD
FOR REGIONAL SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP.**



The stellar Jackie Wright introduces & honors Perrin.



Perrin Stifel receives the award with grace & aplomb.



The attendees honor Perrin with lasting applause.

Surely, an honor to which we all can aspire.

Huzzah for Perrin!

Long may he wave!

RIVER AND PRAIRIE STORYWEAVERS

August 2019 Calendar

Thursday August 1, 2019, 7:00 pm - RAPS Main Meeting

Indoor Picnic and Election of Officers

Theme for Stories: You will volunteer and then be given a topic to create a story on the fly.

(Those familiar with Toastmasters will recognize this as a table-topic.)

You will have three minutes to tell the story.

Trailside Center

99th & Holmes Rd.

Kansas City, MO 64131

Saturday August 10, 2019, 2:00 pm - RAPS North Meeting

Theme for Stories: Hot and Steamy

Woodneath Library Center / Storytime Barn

8900 NE Flintlock Road

Kansas City, MO 64157

Saturday August 24, 2019, 10:00 am - RAPS John Knox Meeting

John Knox Village, Missouri Room

(Inside Lakeside Grille)

600 NW Shamrock Ave.

Lee's Summit, MO 64081

STORYTELLERS OF THE OZARKS

August 22, Thursday, 2:00 p.m. at Montclair Independent Living, *Inspirational Stories*
August 24, Saturday, car poll to Diamond, MO for Storytelling Days at George Washington Carver Park, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Contact Nancy Shelton, storytellersoftheozarks@gmail.com or 417-849-5859 for more info.

Additional opportunities in southwest Missouri

August 17, Story Tree Festival, Legion Hall in Mt. Vernon, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

August 23, Storytelling Days at George Washington Carver Park, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

August 24, Storytelling Days, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Variety of interpretive tellers

RIVERWINDS STORYTELLERS

No news at time of publication.

GATEWAY STORYTELLERS

Gateway has no activities planned for August.

MAGNET
HERE

FOR YOUR FRIDGE

MAGNET
HERE

STORIES, GATHERINGS, AND STORY GATHERINGS
AROUND OUR FAIR STATE.

RAPS

August 2019 Calendar

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Theme for Stories: You will volunteer and then be given a topic to create a story on the fly. (Those familiar with Toastmasters will recognize this as a table-topic.) You will have three minutes to tell the story.

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RIVERWINDS

No news at time of publication

GATEWAY

Gateway has no activities planned for August.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE WOODNEATH...

CLASSES FOR STORYTELLING CERTIFICATION!

AUGUST 2019 CALENDAR

Story Swap!

Thu, Aug 15 2019 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Woodneath Storytime Barn Story Center

EVENT REGISTRATION REQUIRED

An open-mic storytelling event that's open to anyone! Put your name in the hat for a chance to share a seven-minute story or just come to enjoy the show.



Members of MO-TELL told their stories in the Missouri State Parks and historic sites in May and July this year. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Missouri Arts Council to make this possible, as well as funding from individual donors and the Department of Natural Resources.

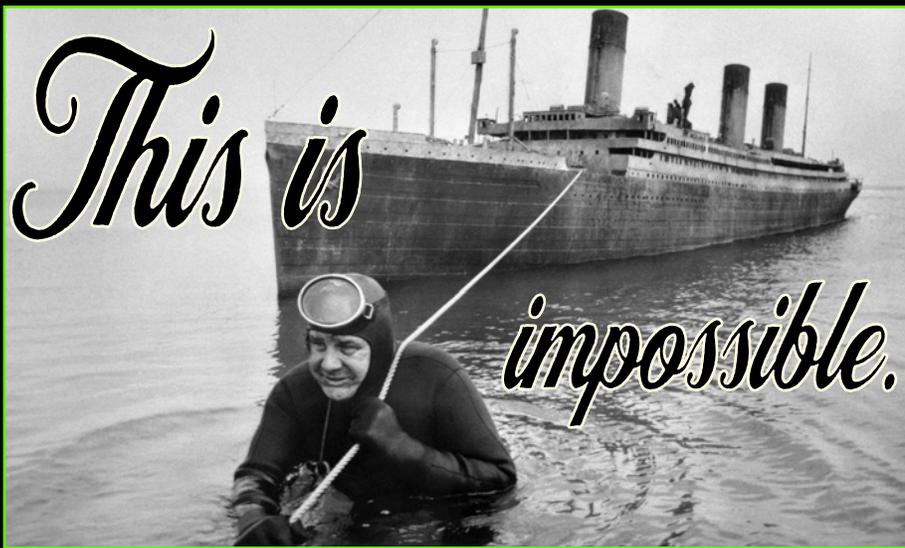
As we head into Fall, there will be storytelling in the Missouri State Parks and historic sites once again.

We are very proud of this program, as it directly fulfills MO-TELL's mission, and we hope to participate for years to come.

OUR PEOPLE WILL BE ENTERTAINING AND ENRICHING THE PEOPLE AND PARKS OF MISSOURI.

QUICK! WRITE DOWN THESE DATES AND MAKE A POINT TO GO AND SEE THEM DO SO!

- 09/07/19, Roaring River State Park, Fran Stallings
- 10/05/19, Towosahgy State Historic Site, Marilyn & Larry Kinsella
- 04/25/2020, Bennett Springs State Park, Mike and Nancee Micham
- 05/09/2020, St. Francois State Park, Marilyn and Larry Kinsella
- 05/16/2020, Crowder State Park, Br. John Anderson
- 06/06/2020, Stockton State Park, Raelene Crotser



**ONE
CAN'T.**

No matter how mythic.



**MANY
CAN.**

No matter how human.

**MO-TELL NEEDS YOU TO PULL.
WHICH COMFY HARNESS FITS YOU?**

Serve on the Board of Directors?
Represent MO-TELL from other Missouri areas?
Coordinate, plan, and manage events?
Write grants? Help with accounting?
Contact any existing Board Member with your ideas.

HOW BRANSON BECAME THE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

THE TRUE STORY

An award-winning story by Alice Nathan.
Used with permission. Please contact her for use or reprinting.

People wonder how Branson got to be the Music Capital of the country, a town that grew into a Mecca for millions of tourists each year. There are several stories of how it all began--mostly outlandish notions by folks not from Branson. But Branson natives of the 1970's know the true story

It all began with my Sunday afternoon drive in my new 1972 Ford Mustang convertible. The roof was down; my hair blowing in the wind; headed west of downtown on Highway 76. The sun, high in the cloudless sky, reflected beautifully off my baby blue car.

I decided I would look more sophisticated if I were smoking, so I stopped at a gas station. Behind the young man at the counter were rows upon rows of cigarettes. So many choices; so many decisions.

"I'd like some cigarettes," I told the young man.

"What brand?"

My mind kicked into high gear when I realized I knew absolutely nothing about buying cigarettes.

My eyes zeroed in on "Virginia Slims." Nice name, even sophisticated, so I replied, "Virginia Slims."

"Menthol or regular?"

What in the world did that mean?

"Menthol, I reckon."

"Soft-side or box?"

Do the questions ever end?! I wanted to scream that I didn't care! I just wanted to buy cigarettes! But, one cannot look cool while screaming at a young man behind the counter, so I said, "Box."

"Do you want just one or a whole carton?"

"Just one."

I paid the young man and grabbed a free book of matches stacked beside the cash register on my way back to my shiny blue car.

I lit my first cigarette, threw the car into gear and continued my drive on West Highway 76. I was cruising along, puffing on that cigarette, and feeling quite sophisticated and sporty. Nothing says sophistication like a lady driving a blue Ford Mustang convertible with the wind blowing through her hair and a cigarette dangling from her lips.

Yes, I was thinking mighty high of myself right then, not realizing I was about to be a supreme example of the Ozarks saying: "She thinks she's hot snot on a silver platter, but she ain't nothing but a cold booger on a paper plate."

I struck another match to light a second cigarette, when the car in front of me suddenly swerved. This distraction caused me to miss the cigarette and stick the burning match up my nose, singeing the nose hair. That's why I didn't notice the bags of shredded paper falling out the back of the truck ahead.

Without time to swerve, I hit the bags head-on. When I didn't see any in the rear view mirror, I realized they must be stuck under the car. I panicked when I saw smoke beginning to rise from under the hood. My panic turned into full-throttled terror when flames came shooting out.. That's when I lost control of my pretty blue Ford Mustang convertible.

I tightly held the steering wheel as the car veered off the side of the road and jumped a ditch, my hair blowing in the wind. Flying through the air with the greatest of ease--no-- terror, I saw before me Billy Bob Joe Jack's fireworks stand. I quickly surmised that the prudent thing to do at that moment was to jump from the car, in the same spirit as a pilot ejecting his crashing plane.

I successfully exited the burning, flying car and saw it smash into the fireworks stand. This, of course, would not end well.

The explosion of fireworks was spectacular! The loud pop-pop-popping, the sparklers sparkling, the cherry bombs booming. Then the rockets' "red glare bursting in air." If only the big one, the 24" Thunderbird Rocket hadn't taken off for what would surely be an even more spectacular sight.

About this time, Grandpa was exiting their outhouse. He had unwisely eaten a third bowl of Grandma's beans and prize-winning cornbread. His activity in the outhouse resulted in a nice pocket of methane gas that just sat there waiting for detonation.

Sure enough. That Thunderbird Rocket was headed right for the outhouse. The explosion lifted the outhouse into the air, and I watched in disbelief as the flaming outhouse--now a 7-foot-tall rocket-- soared through the air, passing over the trees and then began its inevitable downward arc. It, of course, fell through the roof of the Holy Smoke Charcoal Factory.

The Holy Smoke Charcoal Factory covered 2 1/2 acres and held over 7,000,000 bags of briquettes. The building was gone by the time the Branson volunteer fire department arrived thirty minutes later. The fire chief decided that the best course of action was inaction at this point. Just let the briquettes burn themselves out.

You've heard the saying, "If life gives you lemons, make lemonade." So, the city leaders decided to turn that 2 1/2 acres into a gigantic barbeque grill for the entire community to enjoy.

Now, Sam Summers lived about five miles out in the country, and his neighbor, Floyd, had a pig farm. Floyd didn't keep his fences up, so those pigs had been getting out and rooting up Sam's yard off and on for about a week. Sam complained to the county prosecutor, but learned his only legal course was to hold the pigs on his property until the dispute could be settled in court; however, Sam would be legally responsible for each pig while awaiting his day in court.

Sam came up with a more practical and quicker solution: the next time Floyd's pigs got out, Sam would shoot them.

Sure enough, the pigs got out and scattered about Sam's yard. Sam grabbed his gun and commenced firing. Those pigs were smart--as pigs are--so they began running home. But, Sam shot faster than those critters could run. Most fell dead on the spot, but one managed to crawl back onto Floyd's property, bleeding like a "stuck pig," and then collapsed dead.

When Floyd got home and saw his dead pig, it didn't take him long to figure out what happened, so Floyd called the sheriff.

Sheriff Holland drove out to Sam's place and told him he needed to somehow settle this dispute with his neighbor. The sheriff managed to convince Floyd to be satisfied with Sam paying \$20 for each dead pig. Sam was also satisfied with this--it was, after all, better than jail.

Another problem presented itself at this moment--Floyd did not want all those dead pigs. So, upon hearing about this incident, the town leaders requested the pigs be promptly delivered to the former site of the Holy Smoke Charcoal Factory so they could hold the first big BBQ event for the community.

Well, word traveled fast, and practically the entire town came with dishes like potato salad, pie, cake, lemonade, and beer. The roasted pigs were stretched out with apples in their mouths and cherries for eyes. It was all a sight to behold!

The event was considered a huge success and a proper christening for Branson's new community center. The new site was named the "Holy Smoke Park."

Mayor Collins organized the transformation of their new park. Underbrush was cleared around the 2 1/2 acres; flower beds were planted; picnic tables and benches were brought in; and they even built a gazebo for special events like weddings. And with optimism and great forethought, the council brought in Porta-Potties so folks wouldn't have to hide behind trees to do their "business."

The Fourth of July was rapidly approaching, and naturally the festivities would be held at the new park.

Again, a huge cook-out was planned, this time with every local meat to be barbecued. They had deer, goat, squirrel, and, of course, possum, the local delicacy.

A parade led by Mayor Collins circled around the park, complete with floats, the high school marching band, horses, and kids riding their decorated bicycles. Prizes were awarded, and a king and queen were crowned.

As the sun set, the day ended with a huge fireworks show, thanks to Billy Bob Joe Jack. This time the "rockets red glare bursting in air" was a beautiful site to behold!

The Holy Smoke Park was popular that summer with families having picnics, reunions, and Shirley Mae and her beau, Randy, exchanging vows in the decorated gazebo.

A BBQ Sauce contest was held on Labor Day to officially end the summer festivities. Delbert Dingerbottom won hands-down with his "Holy Smoke! That's Hot! BBQ Sauce."

After about five years of community fun-filled festivities at the Holy Smoke Park, the briquettes finally began to stop smoldering. Branson thought it was losing its prize 2 1/2-acre park, but they were just about to find out what Billy Bob Joe Jack had been up to.

(Let me clarify for you outsiders: Billy Bob Joe Jack is one person, not four. If you don't know someone's name in the Ozarks, Billy Bob Joe Jack will probably cover it. Said quickly it sounds like one word.)

You see, Billy Bob Joe Jack had a habit of drinking too much too often. This was no great cause for alarm; after all, many folks in the Ozarks did the same thing. But not everyone had Billy Bob Joe Jack's wild imagination.

He loved watching Monster Truck on TV, and he began to envy the power those men had driving Monster Trucks. He could just see himself sitting atop all that power and running those huge tires over junk cars, smashing them to smithereens.

During a particularly bad binge one night, Billy Bob Joe Jack was inspired. He picked out the best old pickup in his front yard, slapped on four of the biggest tires he could find, and drove that make-shift Monster Truck to the Holy Smoke Park. That 2 1/2 acres were the perfect arena in his eyes. For two hours, he drove that truck over more than 50 junk cars that only he could see in his drunken stupor.

A few days later Billy Bob Joe Jack came up with an improved scheme. He scouted around, made a bunch of phone calls, and finally found some truly huge tires that would turn his pickup into the biggest, baddest Monster Truck in all the world. He drove to Tim's Tire Shop and made a deal with Tim to buy four tires.

The next weekend in the middle of the night, Billy Bob Joe Jack drove his new and improved Monster Truck onto "his" private arena. Sure enough, he was the star and champion of his imaginary Monster Truck contest, in spite of his tires smoking a bit. He won first place: an imaginary 6-foot-tall bronze trophy. It would look so pretty sitting in his trailer house; indeed, it was the first time he had ever won anything, and no one could have been prouder.

Sheriff Holland got a late-night complaint call about noise at the park, so he drove out there to investigate. There was Billy Bob Joe Jack driving the silliest looking pickup around and around in circles on the briquettes.

As the sheriff approached, he noticed something shiny on the ground. He picked up a stone of some sort that just seemed to shine so bright and pretty. Sticking it in his pocket, he arrested Billy Bob Joe Jack for driving while intoxicated--not his first offence.

The next day Sheriff Holland pulled that shiny stone out of his pants pocket and looked at it very closely.

"I wonder if there might be more of these at that park," he said to himself, so he drove out there to look. Sure enough, as he walked over the 2 1/2 acres, he found hundreds, maybe even thousands of stones reflecting the sunlight in every direction. He gathered up a whole handful and headed to the high school to show them to the chemistry teacher, Mr. Gooch.

"Where did you say you found these?" asked Mr. Gooch as he slowly turned a stone over and over, eying it very closely.

"Out at the Holy Smoke Park," said the sheriff.

"You say there's more of these out there? Just how many more?"

"Well, it looked like the whole park was sparkling with them."

After intense inspection and consulting a couple of textbooks, Mr. Gooch proclaimed: "I do believe these are diamonds."

"What do you mean? Diamonds?"

"That's exactly what I am saying. These are diamonds. I'm sure of it."

"But how could that be? I found them amongst those smoldering briquettes."

"That explains it!"

Mr. Gooch told the sheriff that under intense pressure coal turns into diamonds. "This is a scientific fact," he said.

Well, Sheriff Holland ran to the mayor's office and told Mayor Collins that the town owned a diamond field.

Talk about "word traveling fast!"

The town leaders quickly implemented a plan to excavate all the diamonds from their Holy Smoke Park. They also made plans how to use this newfound wealth to benefit and improve Branson.

They began building streets on hillsides stretching along Highway 76. They bulldozed off the top of two hills and moved the dirt into the valley between them. Now they had a long, flat piece of land that could serve as a runway for a new airport.

Construction was everywhere--new hotels, restaurants, recreation, music theatres. It didn't take long for big-name stars to flock in. Names like Dolly Parton. Andy Williams. The Osmond Brothers. The Lawrence Welk Band. George Lindsey. Jim Strafford. Mickey Gilley. Loretta Lynn. Conway Twitty. Oak Ridge Boys. And many, many more.

Yes, sir. That's how Branson became the Music Capital of the country--a Mecca for millions of tourists each year.

And it was all because a girl took a Sunday afternoon drive in her pretty blue Ford Mustang convertible.

Oh, I almost forgot...I never smoked the second cigarette. NEVER!

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Missouri Storytelling, Inc (MO-TELL) is an organization of storytellers and other interested person dedicated to spreading the joy and art of storytelling throughout Missouri.

MISSION STATEMENT

We envision that every Missourian will hear and share stories and keep the oral tradition alive.

VISION STATEMENT

President: Joyce Slater, joyceslater20@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sue Hinkel, shinkel@mail.win.org (Membership)

Secretary: Jim "Two Crows" Wallen, jimtwocrows@att.net

At Large: Gary Kuntz, galirahi@aol.com

Emeritus: Perrin Stifel, pstifelstl@earthlink.net

www.mo-tell.org

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Our mailing address: 7338 Belleview Ave, Kansas City, MO 64114

THE MO-TELL BOARD