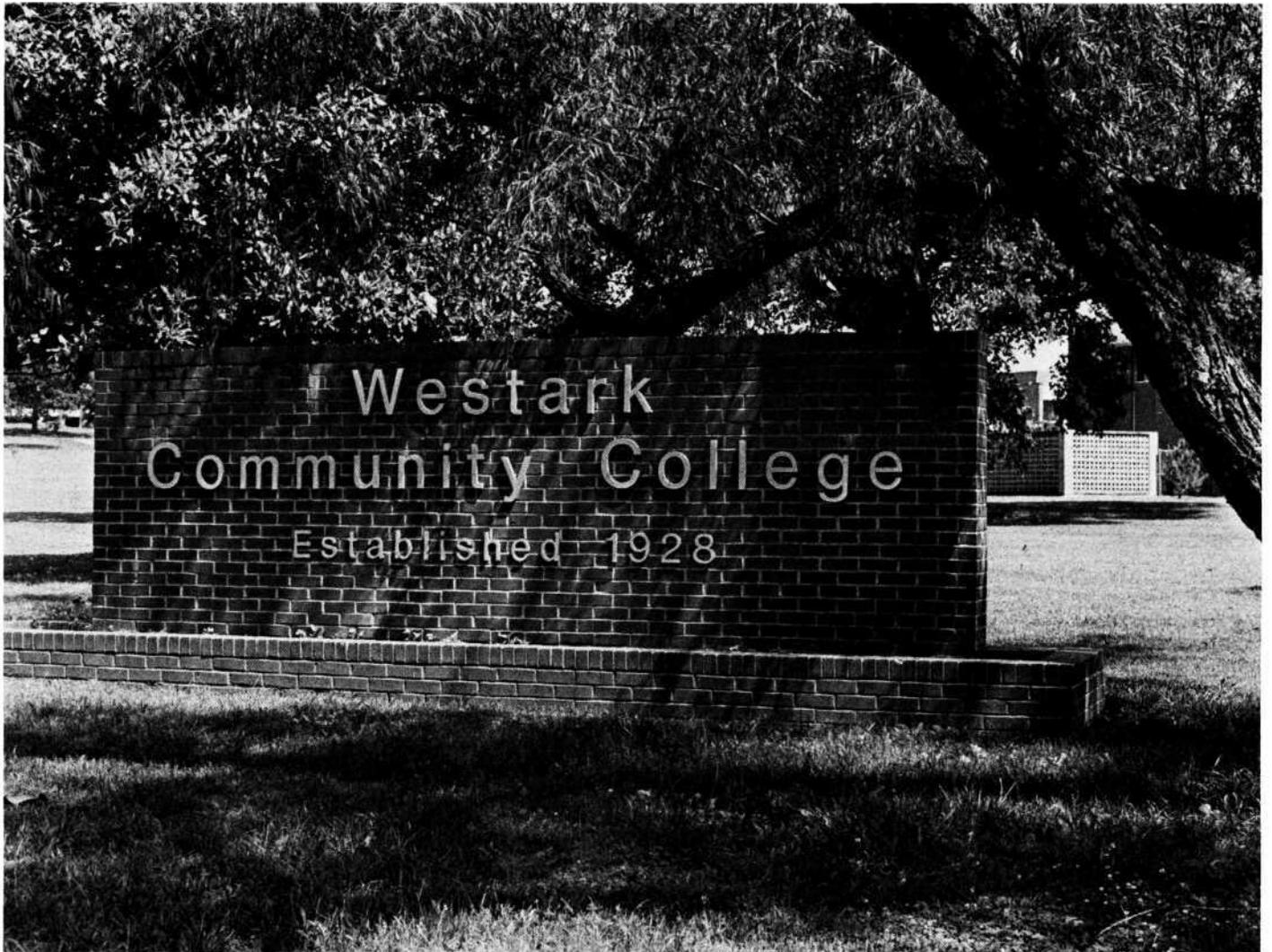


# The JOURNAL



Vol. 15, No. 1, April, 1991

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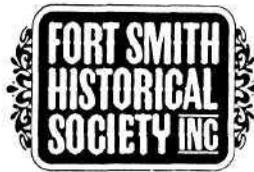
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# Editor's Notes

**1991 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FORT SMITH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 25 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**AT TROLLEY MUSEUM, 100 SOUTH 4th STREET**

**A SPECIAL TREAT WILL BE A RIDE ON THE TROLLEY**

Thanks again to all of our members and other contributors. The FSHS continues to be funded entirely by membership dues and contributions. In addition to your membership, remember gift memberships, memorial contributions, bequests, etc. All contributions are tax deductible and all money goes to actual operating expenses of the society — all labor is volunteer. We remind you again that many corporations will match tax-free contributions of their employees. Check with your employer to see if this is a company policy at your place of employment.

FSHS and Associate Editor Sarah Fitzjarrald McCullough have received a certificate and letter of appreciation from William D. Vines, mayor of Fort Smith, for publishing the historical report on the Fort Smith water system. We quote from the letter, "This report, as well as other articles and items presented in *The Journal*, will serve as valuable reference tools for future generations."

We welcome five new guest writers for this issue of *The Journal*: Judy Massey, Bliss Alexander, Sue McCain, Jan Eddleman and Margaret Pace.

Featured is the history of Westark Community College by Judy Massey. A companion story, "A Day to Remember" by Bliss Alexander, tells of the visit of the great jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie to Westark and the history of the jazz music program at Westark. Jan Eddleman contributes "Fort Smith Time Line", and the biography of Mayor Jack Foster Pace is written by his daughter, Margaret.

The Fort Smith Historical Society suffered a great loss in the death of Christine "Chris" Allen. Chris was one of the founders and a past president of FSHS. Sue McCain, one of her many friends and co-workers, has compiled and written the "Loving Memory" for Chris.

Both postage and printing costs have continued to rise — and now, with much regret, membership dues to the FSHS must be increased to meet expenses.

1992 dues will be:

Annual .....	\$ 15.00
Annual Contributing .....	25.00
Annual Sustaining .....	50.00
Annual Business Sponsor .....	50.00
Life (individual) .....	150.00
Back issues of <i>The Journal</i> will be \$5.00 plus \$2.00 mailing charge per copy.	

Amelia Martin, Editor

# Westark Community College

Westark Community College today is a comprehensive institution that serves over two-thirds of the students enrolled in college from Sebastian and surrounding counties. Larger than any private college or university in the state, Westark is the fifth largest of the state's 21 public colleges and universities and offers a complex variety of education programs and services.

It was not always so. The following is a history of the College that highlights its development over the past 63 years, as compiled by Judy Massey, with background information provided by Sondra LaMar, Richard Hudson, and many former students and faculty.

## The Beginning

In 1923, Grover C. Hardin, Fort Smith attorney and school board member, first proposed to establish a junior college as a part of the Fort Smith public school system. His proposal was based on the realization that many graduates of the Fort Smith public schools would not have the opportunity for formal education beyond high school.

Hardin's foresight and belief that a junior college would flourish in Fort Smith was not widely accepted initially. As several cities the size of Fort Smith began to establish junior colleges around the country, J.W. Ramsey, then superintendent of Fort Smith public schools, began to support Mr. Hardin's proposal.

After much deliberation and study, Fort Smith Junior College (FSJC) was officially organized and established in a summer meeting in 1928, five years after Mr. Hardin's initial proposal.

## Classes Started — 1928

That September 1928, the College officially opened. Classes were held in what was then the Fort Smith High School building at North 15th and Grand Avenue, now Darby Junior High. This was a temporary arrangement until the new senior high school building was completed on North 24th and B Streets. During the Thanksgiving holidays, the newly established college moved with the three senior high grades (10-12) to the new building, which now houses Northside High School.

Initially, the College had the same Board and administration as the high school, and all the college teachers also taught some high school classes.

Eight instructors in seven departments formed the faculty: Rolfe Whitlow, English; Clarence McGinn, math and education; J. Harley Waldron and Sara Beauchamp, social science; Victoria Krumsick, science; Ruth Hamilton, Latin; Gene Blackburn and Ben I. Mayo, physical training. All instructors had at least a bachelor's degree, several with master's or equivalents.

The superintendent of Fort Smith schools served as president of the College, and the principal of the high school served as college dean. School board members doubled as college trustees.

That first fall of 1928, Fort Smith Junior College enrolled 34 students. In November 1928, the student association selected blue and white as the school colors and the white rose as the official college flower.

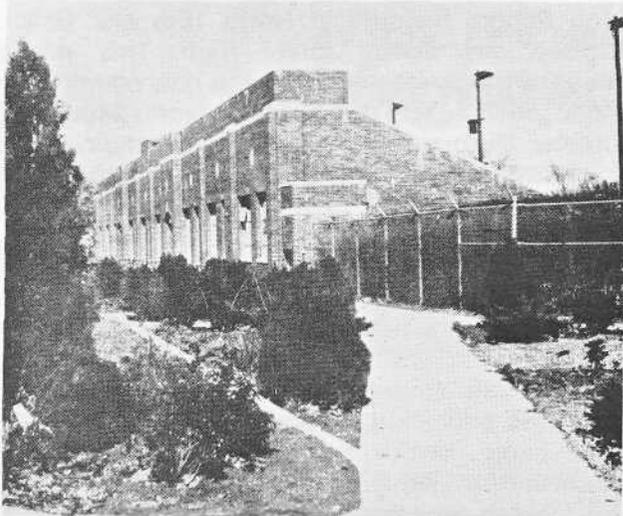
Only freshman work was offered the first year, with a library underway and second year courses planned. Two departments, psychology and foreign language, were added a year later, and the faculty totaled nine.



Site of Fort Smith Junior College for first few months, 1929. Now Darby Junior High.

### **Public School Era: 1928-1950**

The College remained located with the Fort Smith high school for 24 years. As the high school enrollment grew, and more and more space was needed for their operations, college classes met in five rooms under the stadium bleachers, beginning in 1936 up to 1952.



**Under the stadium at Fort Smith High School**

Enrollment levels during the 1928-1950 period grew slowly, reaching a peak of 211 students in 1946. Financing was precarious, with funding coming from a small share of the public school budget and very modest tuition and fees.

On July 1, 1950, the state attorney general rendered an opinion that the use of public school funds and facilities for the College was inappropriate. That, in addition to the need for more space for both college and high school classes, prompted a decision to separate the junior college from the high school.

### **Private College Era: 1950-1965**

In 1950, the College became a private institution, with its own Board of Trustees. Due to the increased enrollment of the high school, the College had to find a place to move or to close entirely.

A drive to raise \$35,000 to establish a separate campus began in 1952, headed by Carnall Gardner. Booklets containing pledge cards were sent home with 9,000 school children, and more than 200 volunteers joined the fund-raising effort. The money was used to acquire the Grand Avenue and Waldron Road location of the Sebastian County Farm, where indigent people were taken to live out their last years.

The College started the fall term in 1952 on the new campus, the "old folks" having moved into more appropriate quarters on Wildcat Mountain Road the day before the junior college moved in. To make the buildings acceptable for classes, students, faculty, and staff scrubbed and painted the two county farm buildings, which became "Old Main" and the administration building. During the summer of 1953, the two buildings were completely renovated.

As a private college, the College was now in a precarious financial position, since the public school no longer shared any funds, and the College now had its own buildings and grounds to maintain.

To cope with those first years as a private college, the College had to substantially increase tuition, which was set at \$125 per semester, or \$8 per credit hour. Modest though that sounds today, the increased tuition was at least partially responsible for the fact that enrollment that first fall in the new county farm location totaled only 108.

The faculty in the fall of 1952 was made up of ten instructors, eight full-time and two part-time. The following year, 1953, enrollment rose to 160, with 12 full-time faculty.

The mid-to-late 1950s saw enrollment shoot up, from 208 in 1954 to 822 in 1960. Enrollment growth was much faster than revenue growth. The staff had grown to 34 in 1958, and the tuition was increased to \$140 per semester, or \$15 per semester hour. The tuition was supplemented by a yearly fund drive, which in 1958 aimed for \$150,000. The faculty and Board of Trustees helped sustain the College with their private gifts.



**The old farm building and the new Ballman-Speer building.**

Space became a problem with the enrollment growth. For example, the library was housed in a tiny room in the administration building, where there was room to seat only 14 students and to hold only 6,000 volumes. The first new building to be built on the former county farm, the current campus, was a new library building, the Holt Building, completed in 1961. The new building had 7,000 square feet and was named for Charles and Katherine Holt.

### **Technical Programs Begin**

Up to 1960, the College was a liberal arts college offering only courses appropriate for the first two years of a baccalaureate degree, culminating in the award of an Associate of Arts degree.

In 1960 the College expanded the scope of its programs to begin offering technical and occupational programs. A steel building was erected at the corner of Kinkead and Waldron to accommodate industrial electricity and drafting as the first technical course offerings. Enrollment had reached 1,000 at this time, taught by 24 full-time faculty members.

### **Public College Era: 1965-Present**

The example set by Fort Smith Junior College resulted in the beginning of a statewide system of community colleges and a third phase for the institution. Leaders from all parts of the state endorsed the concept of the community college and amended the Arkansas constitution so that the general assembly could authorize the creation of community or junior college districts. The amendment was approved in 1964, and an enabling act was passed early in 1965, permitting municipalities, counties, and groups of counties to create such districts by popular referendum.

In an election in November 1965, the local electorate approved the creation of the Sebastian County Community-Junior College District, along with a tax levy of 2.75 mills on the real and personal property of the county to provide capital funds for additional property and facilities.

This act changed the status of the College from private to public and meant that the state would begin providing some support for operating funds. To govern this fledgling state two-year college, Governor Faubus appointed an initial public Board of Trustees for the institution, and the name of the College was soon changed from Fort Smith Junior College to Westark Junior College to reflect the new county-wide service area boundaries. This occurred in February 1966.

This development into a state institution brought about improvements which had not been possible during the private era, when the only sources of income were tuition, fees and gifts.

Thus ensued a period of sustained growth. In August 1968, a new science building was completed, along with a new combination administration and classroom building which was dedicated as the Vines Building.

A second name change of the College occurred in 1972, reflecting the new status as a community college, now with 1,900 students, this time to Westark Community College.

Also in 1972, Westark saw the completion of the Carnall "Tiny" Gardner Vocational-Technical Building.

### **Accreditation**

Westark received initial accreditation in 1973 from the North Central Association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Enrollment reached 2,453 students that year.

In 1975-76 Westark accepted responsibility for education programs for the 50,000 Indo-Chinese refugees housed at Fort Chaffee while awaiting resettlement. This international event allowed Westark to help the refugees prepare for a future in America by their study of the English language and American culture. Westark's then dean of students, Harold Cameron, served as project director. With an enthusiastic staff of people and no guidelines, as nothing like it had ever been done before, classes were set up to accommodate various learning levels. It was a successful program and one that allowed Westark to put into practice the community college philosophy of helping solve community problems.

In May 1976 the Board decided to name the new fine arts building for former college president Shelby Breedlove. At the dedication, Governor Bumpers said that Breedlove had prompted him to pass the 1973 legislation that led to a major expansion of community colleges in Arkansas.

The computer age came to Westark in 1970 with the installation of a mainframe computer. In 1976 a more powerful one with numerous terminals took its place. This began a trend that has resulted, by 1990, in more than 340 other personal computers located in classrooms, labs, and offices on campus. A word processing revolution also occurred in the 1980s for the benefit of students, faculty, and office personnel.

### **Growth**

Enrollment first topped 3,000 credit students in 1975.

### **Decade of the 1980s**

The decade of the 1980s was a period of growth, quality improvements, expansion of programs, services, and service area for the College.

In 1985 North Central accreditation was reaffirmed for ten years, with a glowing report on the College's strengths.

During the years 1985-87, the Echols campus and several peripheral properties were purchased for long-term expansion room. Renovations were completed in 1986 on the Fullerton Union, named for former college dean Thomas E. Fullerton.



**Library built in 1987, the newest building on campus.**

A new 29,000-square-foot library was dedicated in 1987, tripling the size of the library that was housed in the Holt Building for more than 25 years.

Since the fall of 1986, students have been able to take selected classes via television through telecourses on the Westark Channel, with travel to the campus only for orientation, lab work, review sessions, and exams.

The college enrollment passed 4,000 for the first time in the fall of 1988, with an enrollment of 4,308 credit students.

During the latter half of the 1980s, the College has made a concerted effort to be responsive to the needs of the Greater Fort Smith-Western Arkansas areas it serves.

The College has added programs to meet community needs as they are identified and has dropped programs no longer in demand.

A specific commitment to building the community was the initiation of Leadership Fort Smith, an issues-oriented leadership development program co-sponsored by Westark and the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce, started in 1986. It was designed to inform, motivate, and challenge selected future leaders through seminars and interaction with community and state decision-makers, for the purpose of building a cadre of leaders to help build the future of our area.



**Inside New Library**

Classes are composed of individuals who demonstrate leadership potential through significant accomplishments in their careers and other endeavors, and who are committed to positively shaping the future of metropolitan Fort Smith.

### **University Center at Westark**

In 1989 the Arkansas General Assembly passed legislation granting authority to establish a University Center on the Westark campus. The purpose of the University Center is to meet the needs of working people in the Fort Smith metropolitan area who desire education at the junior, senior, and graduate level but cannot leave the area to attend state universities full-time. The legislation requires Westark to provide facilities for four-year institutions to hold upper-level undergraduate, as well as graduate, classes at the Westark campus. Legislative work is underway at this writing to obtain state funding for the universities and Westark to hire the faculty and staff for these programs. Programs offered on the Westark campus in 1990 include a Master's of Business Administration and a Master's of Education from the University of Arkansas, a bachelor's degree program in elementary education from Arkansas Tech University, and a bachelor's in business from the University of the Ozarks. Exploration of ways to add a bachelor's degree program in secondary education, a bachelor's degree in business administration, a bachelor's in liberal arts, and a bachelor's in manufacturing technology is currently underway. Given state funding support, the College plans to put these programs in place in the fall of 1991 and 1992.

### **Westark Today**

As of January 1991, the Westark College campus is composed of 65 acres, with 19 classroom and office buildings on and around the old county farm area.

Enrollment in credit programs for the fall of 1990 showed a head count of 5,240 students. In addition, the College annually enrolls over 8,000 persons in community and continuing education courses and provides on-site training to 3,000 industrial workers per annum in area manufacturing plants and business. Another 20,000 area residents come to the campus each year to attend plays, concerts, sporting events, meetings, seminars, workshops, and extension classes.

The College today offers comprehensive programs for area citizens. These include academic transfer programs which lead to an Associate of Arts degree, with a choice of 31 different majors, which allow students to transfer two years of course work to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions; technical/occupation programs which provide direct employment skills and lead to two-year Associate of Applied Science degrees in 19 different technical specialties, as well as 11 one-year certificate programs; a program of general education courses designed to give students knowledge in a variety of subject matter areas leading to an Associate of

General Studies degree; adult and continuing education programs to meet the ever-changing needs of today's society for occupational upgrading and retraining; community service programs to meet the cultural and vocational needs of the community; a developmental education program to help students acquire the basic skills needed to experience academic success in college; and direct training support to area business, industry, and service enterprises through the Business and Industrial Institute. In addition, it is acting as a broker to bring in bachelor's and graduate programs.

Through many years of growth in enrollment, programs, and facilities, high quality has been the accepted standard. From the assessment tests given to entering students to the student evaluation of instructors, from technological advancements to the development of new programs, the quality of the Westark product has been validated by the North Central accreditation report, several awards for excellence from various state departments, licensing and certification examination results, and the records of graduates and former students. Further, the College has been cited for its strength and singled out as a model by numerous published reports in the late 1980s, to include reports from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Arkansas Business Council, *Fortune Magazine*, an external program review team brought in by the Department of Higher Education, and a special broadcast of CBS Evening News.

The acid test of the quality of Westark's service to the expanded community it serves was the support the community gave the College with private gifts in 1989 and the overwhelmingly favorable vote of 64% that county citizens gave to the College's request for additional capital funds (millage) on May 1, 1990.

The simple goal set out for the College in the late 1920s has and is being met and exceeded. The College today seeks to provide, at reasonable cost, a comprehensive array of education and training programs to help area citizens attain their potential. It recognizes the changing educational needs of the community, seeks to enhance the economic development of the region it serves, and strives to foster the cultural development of the area and to improve the quality of life.

In short, Westark Community College strives to be a community-building institution and will continue to stretch, and reach, to meet the needs of Fort Smith and Western Arkansas — whatever it takes.

### **INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

From the inception of Fort Smith Junior College, the College has had both intramural and intercollegiate athletics.

With a student body that never grew beyond 200 students in the early years, the College had insufficient students to field a strong intercollegiate athletic program. Nonetheless, from the first year

there were strong men's and women's basketball and tennis intramural programs. Succeeding years in the first decade saw the rise and subsequent demise of boxing, bowling, women's softball, and archery programs. In 1931, a football team was organized, with F.M. "Dick" Keith as coach. The football "Lions" hit the line for the College for three years; after which intercollegiate football was discontinued in 1934.

As the College slowly grew, its intramural and intercollegiate sports programs continued to improve, but very slowly, due to the slow growth of enrollment while the school was connected with the public schools and through the private era (1950-1965).

Area coaches who had a hand in early Fort Smith Junior College teams included Gene Blakeburn, Ben Mayo, John Thompson, Jimmy Charles, Ted Skokos, Shelby Breedlove, and Harold Callahan.

After the College became a state college in 1965, the resources slowly became available to hire sufficient faculty to allow growth in the size of the student body to the point where adequate numbers of students were available to field more competitive athletic teams.

Joining the College in 1965, Bill Crowder began to build a strong baseball program at the College. In his 25 years as head baseball coach at Westark, Bill Crowder has compiled a record of 785 wins and 326 losses. He has produced eight All-Americans, 21 pro ball players, and more than 180 major college athletes. Coach Crowder has established a reputation for a clean, disciplined, fundamentally sound program that prepares young ball players for continued success both on the playing field and off, his former players having established enviable records of career success after playing days are over.

Westark's men's basketball program was recently (1990) listed in Dick Vitale's *Basketball Magazine* as one of the top 10 junior college basketball programs in the country, which is quite an accomplishment considering there are 1,220 two-year colleges in the nation.

While the men's basketball program had had intermittent success in earlier years, it was the legendary Gayle Kaundart who brought the program to the pinnacle of success.

Joining the College in 1974, after 19 very successful years at Fort Smith-Northside High School, Kaundart and assistant coach Jim Wyatt immediately built a winning tradition, with a 57-12 win-loss record in their first two years at the College. That began a decade of building teams that dominated Arkansas-Oklahoma junior college competition, with seven state championships, seven conference championships, three regional championships, and an outright National Junior College Championship in 1981.

Coach Kaundart, with the able assistance of Jim Wyatt, built a winning tradition for the men's basketball program at Westark that is the envy of the state and nation. The foundation they built, assisted and supported by the Westark Century Club, brought the college athletic program to a new plateau.

Current Lions basketball head coach Bobby Vint, assisted by Coach Doc Sadler, have continued that winning tradition. In their second year, 1990, the team won the Arkansas State Championship and were runners-up in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Bi-State Conference Championship. The team that beat them in that tournament went on to win the national championship. With a three-year win-loss record of 51-17, at this writing the Westark Lions are ranked No. 6 in the nation.

The current era of women's basketball at Westark began in 1976 with head coach Mari Ann Graue.

The present Lady Lions coach Louis Whorton has put his team in the top 20 in the National Junior College Athletic Association rankings this year, after having brought home in 1990 the first state championship title the College has ever won in women's basketball.

Coach Whorton is building a winning tradition in women's basketball that today rivals the success of the men's program.

Ron Richard, in his 22nd year as Westark golf coach, is an outstanding golfer in his own right. He has been honored as the Arkansas State Golf Association Player of the Decade, two-time winner of the Trans-Miss Championship in California, yearly player (since 1975) on the Arkansas cup team, and winner of three Arkansas State Public Links Championships and four Arkansas State Amateur Championships. Seven times he has been a semi-finalist in the USGA National Public Links Championship.

His personal credentials have almost been equaled by his teams, which have won four regional titles, placed second in Region II five times, and represented Region II in the national tournament six times. Several former Westark golfers hold positions as pro, assistant pro, golf course superintendent, and player on the Mini-Tour.

Fort Smith Junior College-Westark athletic teams have always reached for and achieved excellence on local, state, and national levels, and they receive support from Westark students, faculty, and staff, as well as numerous community fans.

Westark's present-day athletic teams engage in intercollegiate competition in men's and women's basketball, baseball, and golf. The College is a member of the Bi-State Conference, Eastern Division, and Region II of the National Junior College Athletic Association. The Bi-State Conference has produced the men's national championship winner in three of the last ten years in basketball and is considered the nation's toughest conference in baseball.

Scholarships are awarded for participation on all intercollegiate teams, with walk-ons encouraged to try out. During the decade of the 1980s, 373 students represented Westark in NJCAA athletic programs: 185 in baseball, 103 in men's basketball, and 85 in women's basketball. Athletes come to Westark from high schools in Arkansas (73.1%), Oklahoma (13.8%), and 14 other states and Canada (13.1%).

The 90s promise to continue the focus on excellence in Westark athletics as represented by the current coaching staff, their winning records, and successful attainment of educational goals by the College's student athletes.

### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR THE COLLEGE**

With no split between "town and gown" in evidence, Westark Community College today enjoys, perhaps more than any other college of its kind in the nation, widespread support from the citizens and expanded community it serves.

Since the beginning, local philanthropists and friends to education have kept the College alive, especially when it was struggling in its early years and during its private era.

Melanie Holt Speer was one such patron. She was a leader in the community who was known for getting things done. Having a great interest in education, especially in the arts and humanities, she provided the bulk of the money to build the first library building, named the Holt Building at its dedication in 1960 for her parents, Charles and Katherine Holt.

She was a major donor, along with Ed Louise Ballman, to the construction of the Ballman-Speer Building in 1956, the first building the College built on its own, a turning point in that it proved the College was here to stay. Mrs. Speer's husband, Ralph Speer, continues to be a friend of youth, education, and Westark.

Ed Louise Ballman was always a bedrock of the institution. She donated a great deal of money, much of it anonymously, in a pattern of giving that began when she became a Board of Trustees member in 1953. She retired from the Board in 1964 and served on the Foundation Board in the 1970s. She was recognized as one of Fort Smith's best known benefactors of civic, cultural, and educational endeavors.

Many other local advocates of the College gave generously. Records of those early years are not complete, and no one knows everyone who gave and how much. One thing is known, however — everyone associated with the College pitched in to see that it was able to survive.

A formal program dedicated to building the College's future through solicitation and investment of gifts was established in 1957 as the Westark Community College Foundation, Inc. The duties included raising endowment funds, soliciting outright gifts and scholarships, obtaining property for future expansion, and helping Westark's friends with

estate planning. After the College became a state institution, the Foundation was alternately active or relatively inactive over the years since 1965, depending on whether the College was undergoing a financial crisis or not at the time.

As state funding of College operations began to decline in the mid-1980s, concurrent with quantum increases in enrollment, the Westark Foundation was rejuvenated and expanded in response to the College's needs for instructional equipment and scholarship money for students.

For the first time in the College's history, a formal Alumni Affairs and Development Office was established and staffed in 1987. It is charged with expanding friends and supporters for the College, providing ways for people to become involved with the College through gifts and bequests, and establishing an endowment for the future of the institution.

The first major gifts campaign was planned, carried out, and finalized between May 1988 and May 1989. The commitment of the college leadership, the willingness of nearly 400 volunteers, and the generosity of 660 individuals, corporations, and foundations made it possible to surpass the \$5 million campaign goal. This endowment has been permanently invested, and only the annual interest earnings will be used to provide college scholarships, equipment, and other measures to improve quality of instruction.

Such unselfishness has led to Westark's current ranking in the top 10 of two-year colleges in the country in private fund-raising, according to a report published by the Council for Aid to Education in July 1990.

The benefits of funds raised through the current Foundation and all the college friends, past and present, are in evidence throughout the College, which is indeed a college of the community.

### WESTARK STUDENTS

They numbered 34. And they made history.

When the Charter Class of Fort Smith Junior College entered the stately castle-like building on the corner of Grand and North 14th in the fall of 1928, they were college freshmen at a new junior college in Fort Smith, Arkansas, a totally new concept. Their early dedication to education has lasted until the present day, with several of those original class members still visiting and supporting the College in the 1990s.

These were the members of that Charter Class: Nellie Mae Barrow, Francis Kelly Bell, Beatrice Belzung, Kenneth Brown, James John Buchanan, Margaret Carpenter, Gordon James Cullen, Arthur Cunkle, Pauline Czarlinsky, Byron Dobbs, Sybil Dobbs, Claude Eggleston, Laws Galloway, Earl Orvis Garner, Judson Lemuel Greer, Virginia Hawkins, Hazel Holder, Nellie Joyce, Ronald Earl Leininger, Leona Marsh, Harold Edward Mott, Doris Ann Newcomer, Harold Pickney, Gene Reynolds,

Irene Schmiedling, Fanny Fern Scott, Emma Stafford, Gladys Stone, Mary Louise Stough, Jack R. Templeton, Margaret Whittlesey, Gordon Wilcox, John Stafford Wilson, and Foster Yadon.

In the 1928-29 yearbook, *The Pioneer*, Beatrice Belzung forecast the ideal school:

In the year two thousand five hundred, when an English teacher assigns a theme to a student, he will not have to worry and ponder. He will go home, and press the button marked "English Compositions." Before going to school the next morning, the pupil will open the drawer... and extract his theme, neatly written, well organized, and employing correctly the words of the English language. Then, it will not be a competition between the best minds in the class, but between the best mechanical devices. Thus it will be in all classes.

Miss Belzung's 1928 version doesn't miss the mark of our 1990 computer age very much, and there are still 510 years left to reach the end of her projected time period. She and all associated with the College that first year foresaw a successful College.

That first class chose as its motto "Through Diligence to Victory." And they followed it. They presented a play in November 1928, a brilliant success; they organized a chorus, one of the main projects of the first semester, after a suggestion at a class picnic; they formed a four-member debating team; and they began an athletic tradition with basketball and other sports.

By 1930 the yearbook was called *The Numa* and was dedicated to G.C. Hardin "as a means of expressing our regard for you and our appreciation of the effort you have expended in behalf of Fort Smith Junior College."

The school newspaper, *The Lion's Din*, was founded, an extracurricular activity since there was no journalism class. (In 1950 a new newspaper, *The Lion's Roar*, was published. The name was later changed to *The Collegian* and even later to *Lion Pride*.) The 1930 yearbook also shows the formation of Sigma Chi Gamma, a girls' society, and Sigma Delta Chi, a boys' fraternity.

Students in that first decade were, like the rest of America at the time, having to cope with the Great Depression. Nonetheless, students took active part in activities at the College. More sports were added such as football and bowling. New clubs were formed: The Sword and Fish Club, the purpose of which was to encourage the right kind of school spirit; Sock and Buskin, for drama enthusiasts; Les Demons Francais, for students of the French language. Other organizations included a band, a chorus, a Home Economics Club, and a Chess Club.

In fact, the College's entire history reflects strong participation by students in activities. Many clubs indicate their changing interests through the years: Red Cross Club, Art Guild, Young Republicans, Young Democrats, Dinner Music Club, and Phi Beta Lambda (a business club), just to name a few.

One local student was Hazel Presson, now retired from her position as journalism teacher and publications sponsor at Northside High School. Miss Presson, as an early student at the College, was very active on campus, serving as editor-in-chief of both the school newspaper and yearbook and playing girls' basketball.

Presson continued her education and then began to share it with hundreds of students during her teaching years. Her publications always received national honors. She authored textbooks as well, books still used by some aspiring journalists.

The students she taught over the years have spread the world over, some in pure news journalism positions and others in management roles, but all using those analytical skills Presson instilled in students. She still lives in Fort Smith and maintains contact with some former students, spending extra time writing, which is still her love.

Zed Gant attended the College in 1931 for its convenience and economy as well as ease in making the change from high school to college. Being from Van Buren, which had a fierce rivalry with Fort Smith at that time, Gant was impressed with the friendliness of the Fort Smith students. As a student he was vice president of the freshman class, circulation manager of the school paper (*Lion's Din*), member of the history reference club (The Forum), and cast member in the play "Mis' Nelly of N'Orleans."

Gant went on to the University of Arkansas Law School, graduating in 1936, and served as attorney for the Veteran's Administration in Arkansas, Chancery Judge of the Second Division of the 10th Chancery District of Arkansas, and an attorney in private practice in Van Buren.

These were but a sample of the quality of the College's students and graduates of that first decade of College operations, the students of a fledgling college trying to get off the ground in the midst of the economic privation caused by the Depression.

## World War II

As the second decade of college operations opened, the College and its students faced the impact of World War II.

Dr. Bill Klusmeier of Fort Smith was a Westark student in 1941 when classes were held in the stadium building of Fort Smith High School. Staying in Fort Smith for financial reasons, Klusmeier quickly became impressed with the caliber of instruction: The instructors had a job to do and they did it well. Klusmeier continued his education at the University of Arkansas and Washington University Dental School in St. Louis and graduated in 1944. He also earned a master's degree at the University of Iowa and spent time in the Navy. He later had a private orthodontics practice in Fort Smith until his retirement in 1988. He also served on Westark's Board of Trustees and is today serving on the Westark Foundation Board.

Other students of Fort Smith Junior College during that decade were caught up in the war, beginning a long-standing connection between the College and the nation's military services and operations. Among the many former Fort Smith Junior College students to serve in World War II were five who became ace fighter pilots: Bill Dickson, Joe Durham, Maurice Fitzgerald, Ben Mayo Jr., and Pierce McKennon.

After the war, the College enrolled many veterans. For several years, Westark hosted a Veterans Club. Begun in 1946, the aim of the club was to help the veterans know each other and to solve any problem that the veteran might have in his school life. The club was active for several years, with Claud Yancey sponsoring it in the mid-50s.

The 1947 Westark yearbook, the *Numa*, was dedicated "to the veterans of World War II enrolled in our college — to those who helped make it possible for us to seek education in a free country."

Dr. Jim Burgess, a Greenwood native, is an example of a student whose life was affected by the College and the military in the 50s. A student in 1952, he then spent two years in the Navy. He then attended the University of Arkansas and went on to complete dental school at the University of Missouri. Always proud of the people at Westark, Burgess today serves on the Board of Trustees of the College.

World War II, the G.I. Bill and post-war adjustment, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War — all made a big impact on the lives of students and college operations.

The impact of the Vietnam War was felt at Westark long after the war, with 1,054 students receiving G.I. Bill benefits in 1975.

Westark today is a member of Servicemember Opportunity Colleges (SOC), an organization designed to meet the special needs of military personnel trying to obtain college educations. SOC is a unique civilian-military partnership that includes 13 national higher education associations, some 600 member institutions, the Defense Department, and the military services — all cooperating to offer credit courses for servicemembers and their families on more than 500 military installations.

Even today, Operation Desert Shield, the military maneuvers that occupied the news from Saudi Arabia during the second half of 1990, and Operation Desert Storm, the current conflict with Iraq, have had an effect on Westark students who were members of the military. Many could not complete their classes in the fall of 1990 and spring of 1991. In response to the situation, the College issued a directive that three options were available to the students: receive an incomplete grade with the possibility of completing the course after military service, complete final assignments early and receive a final grade, or withdraw from the course with full refund of tuition.

Since its inception, the College has welcomed and supported those students who have given a portion of their lives to military service. And in the uncertain future, it will continue to work with them to complete their educational goals.

Whether impacted by the military or not, thousands of Fort Smith Junior College-Westark Community College students have gone on to complete their education and to establish successful careers.

Throughout the 63-year history of the College, graduates and former students have distinguished themselves. Many have gone on to successful careers as educators, with alumni numbering several who have become college and university presidents, professors, and scientists. Emmet Field, Class of 1946, served a distinguished career in education culminating in the presidency of Vanderbilt University; Dr. Betty Uzman, Class of 1940, went on to become a medical professor at Harvard University. These are but two examples.

Many other graduates went on to become doctors, dentists, attorneys, and judges, establishing successful professional careers of service, while others became successful business men and women.

As important as the graduates and former students who became leaders and professionals, since the 1960s, thousands of Westark graduates have completed technical training programs at the College and have gone on to form the backbone of the supply of electronics technicians, computer programmers and operators, and machinists who keep area industry productive.

The makeup of today's student body at Westark is far more diverse than that of the formative decades. Only 40% of the 5,200 students who enrolled in the fall of 1990 were of the traditional college age group of 18 to 21 years. Another 40% of the College's students of today are in the 25-40 age group. The college students also reflect a variety of educational goals, with 35-40% desiring to finish the first one or two years of a bachelor's degree; 30% wanting to obtain a technical certificate, degree, or license; and another third wanting to take only a few courses to upgrade their occupational skills.

Eighty-seven percent of today's students are from Arkansas towns and cities, 10% from Eastern Oklahoma, and the balance from other states and nations. Over half of today's students attend part-time, while working full-time to maintain and support families.

The thousands of graduates and former students who have peopled the classrooms, labs and lecture halls of the College over the last six decades have gone on to take their places as productive citizens throughout the region and nation.

The present students in the 90s have years of such tradition to build on and live up to. The facilities, the programs, the faculty, and the very atmosphere of Westark have attained the high goals of the mission of the College: to provide quality education and

training that is responsive to the educational, cultural and economic development needs of Sebastian County and Western Arkansas.

## **PIONEERS AND LEADERS**

Fort Smith Junior College, Westark Junior College, Westark Community College, by whatever name, the College has had many opportunities to "die" during its 63-year history, and a myriad of chances to be less effective and important to the community than it is today.

The fact that it survived and is today recognized throughout the state and the region as perhaps the premier institution of its kind is a tribute to the pioneers and leaders who led the way. Following is a list of some of those pioneers and leaders and their contributions.

### **Founder Grover C. Hardin**

Grover C. Hardin, Fort Smith attorney and school board member, is credited with being the man with the vision of the need for higher education opportunity in Fort Smith. He persevered, pushed, and prodded from 1923 to 1928 to "sell" the idea of the College and, in the end, was successful. Father of Hugh Hardin of today's Hardin & Jesson law firm, he would be pleased to see the people-serving institution known as Westark College today.

### **Presidents**

#### **J.W. RAMSEY — 1928-1952**

J.W. Ramsey was the first president of Fort Smith Junior College, a role he assumed in 1928 in addition to being superintendent of Fort Smith's public school system. Mr. Ramsey supported Mr. Hardin's idea of a junior college after a trip to an education conference at Columbia University, where he found colleagues from all over the country who reported that cities like Fort Smith were starting junior colleges. Mr. Ramsey served in the dual role of superintendent of schools and president of Fort Smith Junior College from 1928 until 1952, when the college moved to its current location. Today's Ramsey Junior High School is named after him.

#### **ELMER COOK — 1952-1958**

Elmer Cook was the second president of Fort Smith Junior College. He was principal of Fort Smith High School when the College was founded and assumed the role of dean of the College as an additional duty. He served as dean from 1928 to 1952, when the College moved to its current location and became a private institution.

All who know the history and background of the College and its early development credit Mr. Cook with saving the College when efforts to disband it were made in the early 1950s. He was the driving force who rallied private support from the community to find a new campus when the College became private and lost its space in the high school, and who led efforts to keep the College alive in its early years as a private institution. An elementary school is named in honor of Mr. Cook.

**E.T. VINES — 1958-1967**

With Cook's retirement in 1958, Dr. E.T. Vines, who had served as business manager and dean since 1952, became the College's third president. During his tenure, the College expanded to include a technical division. Technical training was initiated in 1961, and early programs were machine shop, electronics, auto mechanics, welding, and drafting. He saw to it that the College accumulated surplus industrial property to equip the early technical programs, leading many "expeditions" to acquire surplus Defense Department milling machines, lathes, and machine tool equipment. He is quoted as having a driving desire for technical programs to offer an alternative to the coal mines of South Sebastian County for the young people of the area.

Vines also helped engineer the initial enabling legislation for the establishment of a state system of junior colleges in 1965, which was successful. Dr. Vines died an untimely death at age 53. The Vines Building was dedicated to him when completed in 1968.

**SHELBY BREEDLOVE — 1968-1974**

Dr. Shelby Breedlove was appointed the fourth college president in 1968 at Vines' death and served until 1974. He wrote a dissertation, which was submitted to the Department of Higher Education, proposing the establishment of an expanded network of community colleges in Arkansas, and worked hard for state community college legislation. Gaining the support of then Governor Dale Bumpers, he was successful in his effort. Breedlove led the further development of Westark into a more comprehensive community college. He believed in the future of the College, calling it "a great institution that will continue to grow and prosper."

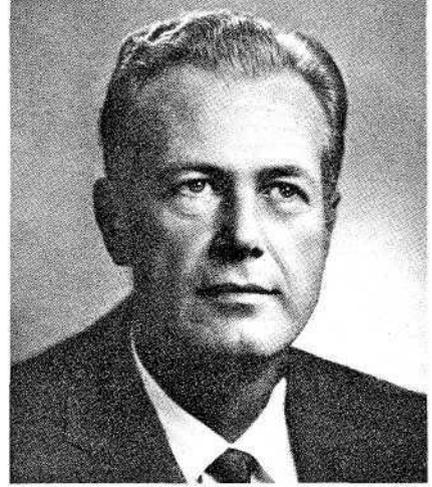
He was very proud of the full accreditation of Westark by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, gained, as a result of his efforts, for the first time in 1973, shortly before his untimely death in 1974 at the age of 44. The current Breedlove Auditorium was named for him.



**J.W. Ramsey, 1928-1952**



**Elmer Cook, 1952-1958**



**E.T. Vines, 1958-1967**



**Shelby Breedlove, 1968-1974**



**James M. Kraby, 1975-1983**



**Joel R. Stubblefield, 1983 to Present**

#### JAMES M. KRABY — 1975-1983

Dr. James M. Kraby became the College's fifth president in 1975. During his tenure as president, the College was challenged to cope with the "baby boom" generation and burgeoning enrollments. In 1975, his first year, enrollment reached 3,000 for the first time, and it was that same year that the College was asked to assist in the Indo-Chinese refugee resettlement.

During his tenure, the new fine arts building was completed in 1976, which was named for Dr. Breedlove, and several modifications were made to the campus buildings for handicapped access. Another notable achievement during Dr. Kraby's presidency was the development of a strong community service and continuing education program.

Dr. Kraby resigned in April 1983 to become president of Central Arizona College, a multi-campus, two-year college in Casa Grande.

#### JOEL R. STUBBLEFIELD — 1983-Present

In April 1983, local native Joel R. Stubblefield was appointed acting president and, in September 1983, was named the sixth president of the College. He had served as vice president for finance and administration at the College from 1980 to 1983, after twenty years' service as an officer in the U.S. Army.

Mr. Stubblefield has focused his energies on enhancing and strengthening the College's delivery and reputation of top-quality instruction and student counseling, with a growth of 52% in enrollment thus far during his tenure, the College having enrolled 4,000 students for the first time in 1988, and passing the 5,000 student mark in 1990.

To provide for adequate classrooms and labs, and parking for current and future growth in student enrollment, during his tenure the College has acquired the former Echols Public School and some fifteen pieces of private property on the periphery of the campus on 50th Street, Grand Avenue, Kinkead Avenue, and Waldron Road. In addition, a new library was built in 1987, several older buildings have been renovated, and construction has started on a new 82,000-square-foot Math-Science/University Center building to be completed in June 1992. A master plan for the campus for the next 25 years has been developed.

Other notable accomplishments of the college staff during Mr. Stubblefield's tenure have been several community-building efforts, such as a major thrust by the College's Business and Industrial Institute to retrain the existing work force in area businesses and manufacturing plants, and the initiation of the Leadership Fort Smith program.

In terms of ensuring the long-term ability of the College to provide all of the area citizens with the quality education programs they need, there have been two other major accomplishments of the College under Mr. Stubblefield's tenure: one was the establishment of a formal development program and the successful conduct of a major gifts campaign in 1989, which garnered the College \$5.3 million in private gifts and pledges to establish a permanently invested endowment fund.

The second major accomplishment was his successful leadership in 1990 of a campaign to gain Sebastian County voter approval of a 3.75 mill increase for capital funds to build and equip several buildings and additional facilities for the College's enrollment growth.

Perhaps the most significant College accomplishment of Mr. Stubblefield's tenure, in terms of long-term strategic payoff for Western Arkansas and the Fort Smith area, is gaining enabling legislation to establish a University Center on the Westark campus. Just off the ground, this initiative will offer selected bachelor's degree and master's degree programs to area citizens who cannot afford to go off to college, citizens who have long been denied the opportunities common to many smaller communities.

#### **Dedicated Faculty — 1928-1991**

Westark has always been blessed with a dedicated, highly competent faculty.

Perhaps born of necessity when the Great Depression swept the country shortly after the College was established, the Fort Smith Junior College/Westark College faculty have been characterized by a level of dedication, caring, and giving that has differentiated them from the norm and has been the major factor in the College's survival and success. Several instructors from the early years exemplified this dedication and caring.

None were more dedicated — or enduring — than Miss Luella Krehbiel. Miss Krehbiel was a loved and loving teacher at the College for approximately 30 years. The yearbook was dedicated to her several times, with these comments in the 1941 and 1948 *Numas*:

... gracious lady meets every problem brought to her with patience and understanding ... her kindness and consideration of others ... a person who strived to make our school a better one ... among the kindest, most understanding, and the fairest of all teachers ...

Miss Krehbiel's English classes influenced her students to the extent that her students from the 30s and 40s are still sending memorial gifts to the College in her memory in the late 1980s.

Dr. Sidney H. Blakely's long-standing relationship with the College began in the early 30s as a student. In 1932 he was editor-in-chief of the yearbook. He returned to campus years later, bringing with him three degrees, including a doctorate, and a great love of language and literature which he imparted to his students. His tenure in the English department as instructor and later as department chair and his subsequent position as associate dean for arts and sciences ended with his retirement in 1980. His was a lasting influence on the students he taught, and he is noted as one of the outstanding scholars to have served on the faculty.

The music of Dr. Hattie Mae Butterfield filled not only Westark but also the entire community. Her many years of teaching, performing, and supporting the College's music program were a strong legacy to subsequent Westark musicians. Dr. Butterfield, a formidable advocate and defender of the arts, left the College in 1968.

Another very strong educator who gave 44 years of her life to educating young people was Miss Lucille Speakman. Miss Speakman retired in 1976 after 28 years at Westark. She felt she had the best years there, the College's growing years. Her dedication to the College as a classroom teacher — with late service as dean of women and dean of students — saw Westark through the years when teachers never knew from year to year what their salary would be, as well as the move to the new campus at Grand and Waldron, when she and other teachers worked after classes to paint and make the buildings safe for students.

Students flocked to her Western Civilization classes in the 50s to hear her stories of her annual travels to Russia and many other foreign climes in the summer, and her enjoyment of teaching her classes lasted until the very last class she taught. Even after her retirement, she was still vitally concerned with Westark, and was elected to the Board of Trustees, serving until her death in 1989.

Another Westark faculty pioneer was Claud Yancey, who retired in 1981 after 28 years as a college accounting instructor and administrator. He began at Westark in January 1954 when he also pitched in to get the buildings ready for classroom use at the new location. He saw Westark grow to a point where there were more people on the faculty than there had been as students. His pride was in the institution and the people, both students and members of the staff. Yancey was responsible for starting the College's data processing instruction, now the Computing and Information Systems Division.

Ruth Gant came to the College in 1953 and immediately set out to broaden the business department when she found only 11 old manual

typewriters for her students. She pursued donations of money and equipment such as calculators, tape recorders, dictaphones, and a mimeograph machine, and every year she saw the department become larger and better.

In those early years, Gant taught the entire business department, which included typewriting, shorthand, and office machines. Teaching 18 to 21 semester hours of classes and hoping the College had enough money for salaries were just two of the many challenges she faced. She also worked in job placement for the secretarial division and applauded the Fort Smith industry and business people for being good to the College and giving students jobs.

The sky was the limit for Westark, according to Gant, who was thankful for daily improvement and enrichment on campus.

These are but a few of the pioneer faculty who led the way for the fledgling College, who worked for less than \$5,000 per year, who gave of their time and personal resources to buy supplies, paint, and fix up dilapidated facilities. Space doesn't permit an all-inclusive list of the unsung heroes who have peopled the faculty of the College over the years. For example, during the College's private era, the entire faculty gave up one month's pay each year for an eight-year period, helping to provide the glue to hold the College together for the young people it serves.

That spirit of dedication to the College and its students lives on, as at this writing, most Westark faculty carry class loads 50% greater than the norm for colleges and universities, in order to serve students who could not otherwise be served due to the lack of state funds for sufficient teachers. In addition, in 1989 Westark faculty collectively gave \$78,000 out of their pockets to help supplement the college's budget for scholarships and equipment. That caring attitude carries over to the classroom and the work with students far beyond that found in the typical college or university classroom and is the prime reason for the College's continued growth and success.

Today's students are served by a dedicated faculty with 124 full-time members. The present staff and faculty holds 324 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from more than 100 colleges and universities in 27 states. They are recipients of numerous awards and honors for their teaching excellence and are active in community and civic affairs. They are backed up by scores of adjunct faculty from the community, who, for little recompense, perform a labor of love for the College and area students. These part-time teachers provide a leavening to the College curricula that enriches the students' education.

## Trustees

Throughout the history of the College, one of the primary strengths has been the outstanding quality of its Board of Trustees. These Board members have always been community leaders who have given of their time and expertise to provide guidance and support for the College's efforts, men and women who provided the linkage between the College and the communities and constituents it serves, and who, when necessary, have reached into their personal pocketbooks to help the College survive crises.

Early Boards were comprised of elected public school board members. Then Governor Orval Faubus appointed the first public-era Board in 1965, a nine-member group. Subsequent members have been elected by popular vote of all Sebastian County citizens, to six-year terms.

All of these Board members and community leaders have kept alive the vision of G.C. Hardin, and the community has reaped immeasurable rewards from their service.

### Former Board Members

#### Public School/College Board Era (1928-1952)

G.C. Hardin	Sam Phillips Sr.
C.E. Leininger	Mrs. Tom Cutting Sr.
J. Rudolph Woods	Franklin Hawkins
Randolph Jones	Bill Brader
Fount McGee	Karl P. Willard
Garvin Shipley	Mrs. Ander K. Orr
C.N. Geren	Hugh Hardin
Dr. Charles S. Holt	William Slates
John P. Woods	Raymond F. Orr
Victor Anderson	C.M. Wofford
W.L. Curtis	Dr. Ralph Crigler
J.R. Miller	Delmar Edwards
Frank W. Dyke	Ralph Speer Jr.
Dr. A.A. Blair	J. Fred Patton
Bill Lewis	Mrs. W.D. Powell
S.E. Evans	Bruce H. Shaw
Fred Alexander	Sam Tressler
Collier Wenderoth Jr.	Dr. Thomas Foltz
Rev. John E. Shoemaker	Frank Beckman
Curtis Goldtrap Sr.	

#### Private College Era (1952-1965)

J. Sam Wood	Collier Wenderoth Sr.
Clyde Randall Sr.	Mrs. Ralph Speer Jr.
R.A. Young Jr.	Mrs. C.A. Lick
James A. Ward III	Don Flanders
T.L. Hunt	Gordon Brott
Miss Ed Louise Ballman	Mrs. E.Z. Hornberger

#### Public College Era (1965-1990)

Clyde Randall Jr.	Dr. T.A. Feild III
E.S. Stephens	E.R. Breshears
Chris Corbin	Eugene Rapley
Means Wilkinson	John Sullivan
Woodson Holbrook	Dr. T. Wayne Lanier
Herman Udouj	Dr. William W. Klusmeier
Mrs. Thomas B. Gallaher	Bill Thompson
Carnall Gardner	Shanon Bridges
Tom Null	Nancy Llewellyn

Current Board Members (1991) are: J. Michael Shaw, Carl D. Corley, Larry Clark, Edward C. Sanders, Sam Sicard, James Burgess, D.D.S., Conaly Bedell, Linda Schmidt, and Eileen Kradel.

### Foundation Board of Directors

One of the primary assets of the College is the members of the Board of Directors of the Westark Community College Foundation, Inc. Dedicated to raising the funds and friends necessary to provide the resources and community support the College needs to rise above mediocrity and provide quality programs, this group of community leaders is taking the lead in developing the College's alumni and development program.

Collectively, the members of this Board, and the Board of Trustees of the College, gave over \$1 million in personal and corporate gifts to the College in 1989. They are playing a key role in building the future of the College.

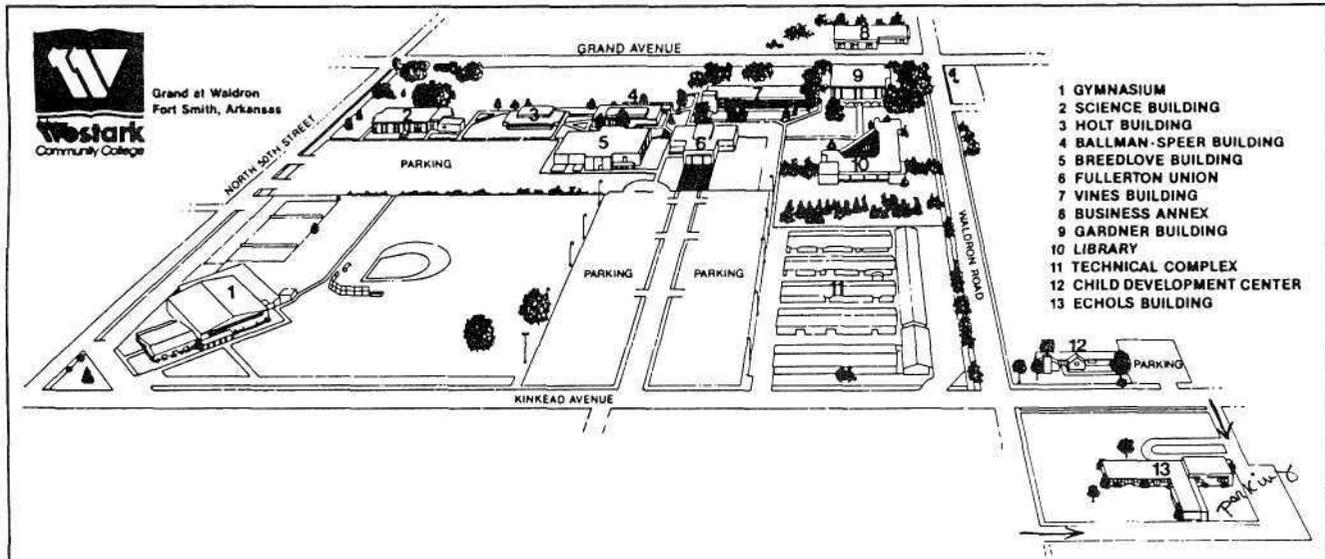
Current Foundation Members are: Carl D. Corley, W.R. "Bill" Walker, J. Franklin Hawkins, Eugene Rapley, J.C. Alexander, R.S. "Bud" Boreham, Tom Curtis Jr., T.A. Feild III, M.D., Don Flanders, Rose Mary Holmes, William Klusmeier, D.D.S., Bill Larsen, Bruce McNeill, Robert E. Miller, Nancy Orr, Sam Sicard, Betty Wilkinson, and William H. Wilson.

### COLLEGE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM

Westark has a history of being responsive to the needs of the health care community and is a major producer of health care workers.

Since 1970 the College has trained more than 2,500 registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and surgical technician who provide quality health care in the community.

Prior to 1967, Sparks Regional Medical Center and St. Edward Mercy Medical Center provided training for nurses. Then a movement began across the country to establish in community colleges an associate degree program which prepared registered nurses. Administrators of Sparks and St. Edward decided to close their diploma schools, and Westark assumed the responsibility for registered nurse preparation.



Westark Community College Campus Today

The director of the school at Sparks, Carolyn Moore Branch, started Westark's Associate degree Nursing program in the fall of 1968. There was a year of planning — acquiring the faculty, the class, and the accreditation — before the first class began in 1969. Forty-three graduated in 1971. Sparks, St. Edward, and Crawford County Memorial Hospital provided monetary support for the first six years, from 1968 until 1974.

In response to the community need, admitting changes have occurred over the years. In 1978 admission of new students was twice a year to accommodate larger numbers. Then, in 1984, recruiting efforts slowed because of a flooded market and lowered census in acute-care hospitals.

The 1987 nursing shortage saw Westark launching a recruitment campaign. To date, almost 1,600 registered nurses have completed the program which serves as a model throughout the country and is accredited by the National League for Nursing.

In the early days, licensed practical nursing was taught in the public school system. It came under the auspices of the College in 1969. This program has more than 500 graduates, many of whom have returned to school to become RNs.

Westark's pass rate on the national licensing examination is 99% for both ADN and LPN programs. These high rates, which occur in other programs as well, are the result of an excellent and stable faculty, selected students, excellent clinical facilities, and administrative support.

Other programs have been established in response to community need and the request of area health agencies.

The Basic Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) program, a forerunner in the state, began at Westark in 1973 with an advanced program added for the fall term of 1987 and an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree option added in 1990. The paramedic graduates have a 100% pass rate on the certification examination.

Another innovative program, Surgical Technology, began in 1973 with an A.A.S. option added in 1990. Graduates are eligible for the national certification examination which qualifies them to work in any state. This program is accredited by the Committee on Allied Health and Accreditation of the American Medical Association.

The newest program, Medical Laboratory Technology, began in the fall semester of 1990 with the first class scheduled to graduate with an A.A.S. degree in December 1991. Graduates will be eligible for the national certification examination. Local medical centers have provided laboratory training and financial assistance for the program, showing again Westark's partnership with the community.

The Health Occupations Division continues to grow. From its start in the Science Building with a move to the Gardner Building after it opened in 1972, the division has been housed in the Echols Building since 1987. The division now has a faculty of 16 full-time (two of whom are from the original 1968 faculty) and 15 part-time members in its five programs.

Westark's Health Occupations Division is a prime example of a college meeting community educational needs, and meeting those needs in a top-quality fashion. The graduates of these programs are vital, producing members of the health care community.

See September 1991 issue of *The Journal* for photograph of Fort Smith Junior College 1931 football team (which includes Vincent Narisi of the Narisi family featured in this issue) and Fort Smith Junior College first graduating class.

# A Day To Remember

Bliss Alexander

John Birks Gillespie? Sound familiar? Probably not, not unless you are a student of jazz. Dizzy Gillespie? Ah now *that* name is familiar, even to those who know little *of* or care little *for* American jazz. Someone might ask, "Do you mean the guy that plays the *bent* trumpet with his cheeks filled with air like balloons?" The answer is, "Yes, that's the guy — *that* trumpet player."

It is easy to describe him in such a manner if you feel like saying that the Grand Canyon is a ditch, that Luciano Pavarotti is a singer, that Pablo Picasso was a painter, or some other absolute understatement.

John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, this genius of American music, particularly jazz, is a living legend in music circles in this country and throughout the world. This Afro-American has influenced and affected the world of music as few have done, as profoundly as Picasso did with the visual arts.

This "trumpet player", on the evening of March 8, 1990, performed in concert with the Westark Community College Jazz Band, at the Fort Smith Civic Center, to a "sold-out" audience. It was quite a night! I know because I was there *on stage*, in almost disbelief, playing bass trombone with the band and "Dizzy". *Wow!*

The concert was the "jewel in the crown" for the Westark Jazz Band and the instrumental music program that was begun about ten years before.

In the fall of 1979, a young teacher who had just completed his Master of Music degree at the University of Tennessee, was hired for the position of "Artist in Education" at Westark Community College. This was the first year that this position would have a *musician* as artist. Walter Minniear had been largely responsible for the on-going grant application that funded the position. This young teacher was charged with the responsibilities of starting or in fact, creating an instrumental music program with emphasis on jazz at the college and to promote jazz in the public schools, since nothing existed in any manner for jazz education.

The pioneer? Henry Rinne. His first experience in the formation of a jazz group found him in the position of "building" an ensemble with... well... one trumpet, one tuba and a valve trombone, and with players who had *no* jazz experience. Fort Smith in the past has been called a frontier town. Henry found that the frontier still existed.

An article about Henry Rinne and the new program in jazz at Westark appeared in the *Fort Smith Southwest Times Record* newspaper. Several members of the former Fort Smith Jazz Ensemble came to his assistance. Some of the "older folks" felt as I did.

Along with Henry's work with the jazz band, he was also a director of the wind ensemble, as well as a classroom instructor.



John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie

But good results and good sounds came forth. Public support began to grow. Some seasoned older performers with roots and experience from the Big Band Era assisted — Cleo Toran, Ed Hoffman, Herb Brock — names that evoke strong and pleasant thoughts because of their support for Henry and the program.

Concerts were given at the Westark campus Breedlove Auditorium. In the beginning I believe there were as many, if not more, players on stage than there were members of the audience. In time that would change.

Henry worked and performed in most of the area elementary schools "planting seeds" for some future harvest. Some students from area schools enrolled in this new program and a few are now *professional musicians*. They found their participation in the jazz program most valuable in their personal growth. The pioneering was working. The young were being exposed to, and being a part of, a culture that was uniquely American — jazz!

In the fall of 1984 a special concert was given at Breedlove Auditorium, a commemoration of the work of Alphonso Trent. (For a feature story on Alphonso Trent see the April, 1984, issue of the *Journal*.) This Fort Smith musician was a musical giant of an earlier time. He was one of the *first* in Big

Band Jazz and his influence was outstanding. Today, few in this area know his name or have heard of him. At the concert was his dear widow. I believe that she knew that the light which had shown from him many years earlier still glowed and once again glows more brightly.

The Westark Jazz Band "arrived" when it appeared as a contestant at the Green County Jazz Festival. This was held at Northeastern University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in 1984. The band was awarded first place in the college division. The judges' comments were, "The band played *jazz*; the soloists were very good!" We were very proud. The former doubts that the band members had about their playing ability were left at the festival.

Henry Rinne had a chance to enlarge his educational opportunities, and the interest that he discovered with "Al" Trent enabled him to attend Howard University for some work toward a Ph.D. That study led him to a sabbatical for two years to accomplish his personal goals.

The members of the band were uncertain about their future. As it was said, "Henry will be a hard act to follow!"

When a way has been shown and a good work has been done and the course is true, others will come to guide and to continue the good work. Henry and members of the faculty looked for and found his replacement.

The band was uncertain about the new director until he arrived. He introduced himself simply, "I'm Don Bailey."

Bailey picked up where Rinne had left off and generated new movement and innovations. More students enrolled. More concerts in area schools and in Breedlove Auditorium continued. The band made their first recording. (There are now five tapes available, on sale at Westark Community College.)

The Administration Department of Westark gave strong support to the music program, thanks in great part to Joel Stubblefield, the school's active and forward-looking president, and several members of his staff.

Some of us older members measured the growth of the program by the greater numbers of young musicians being drawn to Westark. And we looked to the future. We thought, "Wouldn't it be great to provide full scholarships to student musicians from a wide area, top students, much in similarity to the basketball program, and house them in the community until the time when Westark has dormitories, and be able to compete fully for the exceptional student players?"

Student Activities Director Stacey Jones lent support. The Jazz Band's spring concert became a part of Westark's "Season of Entertainment". The band would perform the annual spring concert at the Fort Smith Civic Center and have a major guest artist as a featured performer. Fall performances would be held at Westark's Breedlove Auditorium.

In the spring of 1988, Ed Shaughnessy, the gifted drummer from "The Johnny Carson Tonight Show Band", was the first to appear. As part of the educational aspects of the program a clinic was given on the afternoon of the concert. It was

attended by some of the area band directors and students. Those who attended were treated to a master musician! The lessons learned should remain.

With the hard work done by Bailey and members of the band there was more improvement and wider acceptance from the public. The infant program was growing!

The spring concert of 1989 presented another member of the Carson Show Band, Ross Tompkins, whose evening concert was truly successful.

Who would be the next guest artist for the spring of 1990? Rumors began circulating — it would be a major star of international importance!! Dizzy Gillespie? The rumors proved true and it *would* be "Diz"! Some asked, "Do you think Diz would come to Fort Smith and play with us?" If Diz should come and perform with the band it would be the *most* important musical undertaking of all, a giant step for the forward progress of the band and a cultural first for the jazz program in Fort Smith. Diz was going to be our guest performer!

When one has a desire to accomplish or to achieve a new goal, the energies, the work and the anxieties are often overlooked at the time of inception... Then reality dawns! The Westark Jazz Band was going to be "in concert" with one of the greatest contributors to jazz in the history of music. Anxieties? Yes... oh, yes!

The band usually rehearses three times per week, one hour each on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. But to meet this challenge additional time for volunteer rehearsals would have to be found. The band members found the time.

The first half of the program would be relatively simple for it would be taken from more familiar music arrangements (charts, as they were called) from the published works for college level bands.

We knew Dizzy's music would be Dizzy's music, strictly *professional caliber*. What would it be and when would we receive it to practice? Could we "cut it"? The answers to those three questions didn't come for two weeks (six weeks before the concert). When the music arrived we found that yes, it was professional and that we would have to work. If you want something badly enough and work hard enough, and have the ability to attain your desires the chances are in your favor that you will succeed.

The band, under its very fine and capable director, decided they could do it and the final answer would be at 7:30 p.m., March 8, 1990. *Everybody worked!*

In the meantime, Henry Rinne had returned from his doctoral studies about a year and a half before. He was actively involved in his teaching classes in humanities, as well as resuming his post as conductor of the wind ensemble. He was to lend his musical expertise to the jazz band, which was of invaluable assistance.

It was a warm and satisfying feeling to see the two "principals", Don Bailey and Henry Rinne, in the development of the Westark Jazz Program, to be able to share in the success of their work, on stage with a truly master musician.

Dizzy Gillespie arrived at the Fort Smith Civic Center about 2:00 p.m. The members of the band had been in their places for some time, trying to be

as "cool and collected" as they could be. Diz entered on stage, in front of the band. It was for real! The legend was here!

There were two or three hundred young musicians with their band directors (and other adults) who "came to see Diz work". Members of the press were there to record this "historical cultural event" but the reporters were disappointed.

Diz felt that his purpose was to work with and instruct the band during the relatively short time available, and that is exactly what he did, without any interviews. We all knew "That Trumpet" really cared! For me, the rehearsal was one of the most *musically* and *humanly* satisfying experiences of my life.

Let me quote Don Bailey about the rehearsal: "The rehearsal was a success. Each member looked forward to the 'main event' at 7:30 p.m. There was little time to relax, get dressed (yes, *dressed* this time) and eat, for those who cared to, or were able to eat. But most of the pre-rehearsal anxiety had been abated. Diz saw to that!"

I knew that this would be my last playing experience with the band, and I had to find a way to show my appreciation and thanks to the band and the college for allowing me so much pleasure.

After previous concerts we had generally heard good comments about how the band played but comments about stage appearance were not so good. And it was to the "appearance" end that I felt that I could, or should, direct my attention and talent.

I designed a stage setting and supervised the construction. The "builders" were several members of the band, and Charles Julius and his staff. To say they worked beyond the call of duty is an understatement. It all came together but some of the paint was still wet when the curtain opened.

Susan Lieux, local graphic designer, jazz enthusiast and supporter of the band also donated her professional abilities to improve the visual aspects of the band's image. She designed an excellent logo for "Westark Jazz" that was an integral part of the staging, as well as giving to it its own graphic identification. The logo was also adopted for use on "tee" shirts, a very successful venture in that many were sold locally and out-of-state and are still available for sale and still popular.

In combination with the new staging and logo the band would be formally dressed for the first time, anywhere. Tuxedos! With all of these improvements the great appearance could have been Las Vegas or New York, but it was Fort Smith and we knew that we had to play better than ever.

The band delivered — with fervor. And they *looked* good. The first half of the program was to be the band without Gillespie. Carolyn Long, of one of the local television stations, provided some pleasant moments with her vocal rendition of "Stormy Weather", much to the warm reaction from the audience.

Well into the program a number was to be selected and when Bailey "kicked it off" the band would not respond. There would be total silence. He had remarked many times, "What if I counted the beat and no one responded?" We wanted him to find the answer to that question and this was the time to try the joke. The idea was that in that moment of silence

Diz would walk out and count the tempo, much to Don's and the audience's surprise. Would Diz do it?

Many of the "great" artists would refuse to make any premature appearance — it had to be the grand opening or presentation. But not Diz. He fell right in with the stunt and it was one of the really great "fun" moments of my life.

The second half of the program would be "Dizzy Gillespie, Ladies and Gentlemen!"

The magic was still very much in evidence. There are few performers who can match his stage presence. His trumpet still "sounded" like Diz. Maybe some of the bravado of the part was missing but there were all the necessarily wonderful sounds to show his musical continuum, and his mastery of the instrument and the idiom. Usually, keyboard and string players perform as long as they live and their health remains good. Brass players, usually in their sixties, find it is easier to put their horns in the cases instead of to their lips. But not Diz, who is in his seventies — not as long as he can "fill those cheeks with air".

Nice moments, other than musical, occurred on stage. Presentations from Mayor Bill Vines and County Judge "Bud" Harper, and gifts from the band gave Diz some idea of how much we cared.

We played two of Diz's compositions, "Night in Tunisia", and "Manteca", as well as Monks' "Round Midnight" and "Lover Come Back to Me", a very old standard. All were performed well, but in my memory, which will always linger, was that last number of the night. Diz and the rhythm section only — his horn, his voice and the "blues". (Did it have a name?) It put everything together.

All the qualities that made Diz...were in the rendition...from his African roots which have a veritable jazz history, to his own personal warmth. In so short a time, he put it all together...and gave it to us.

Designer Lieux was in the audience with her 13-year-old daughter (rock-oriented, of course), enjoying the experience. Lieux remarked later, "Krista cheered and cheered and exhibited more actions of joy than if she was attending a rock concert or an athletic contest at her school, only it was Diz doing the blues. It seems that the generation gap closes in the presence of great artistry, great music and great men. The concert ended with tumultuous applause. And a great moment remains in the memories of the band. We had the extreme pleasure of working not only with a great musician but also a greater man. It was and will continue to be... A Day To Remember.

*Editor's Note: What Alexander does not reveal in his story is that he has contributed much time and energy to the Westark Jazz Program since its beginning ten years ago. A talented musician in his own right, he had his own dance band in the Big Band era in Houston, Texas, from 1940 until 1943, when he entered the United States Army and served in the ETO as a demolitions expert in World War II.*

*At their fall performance on November 13, 1990, the Westark Jazz Band awarded Bliss Alexander a plaque, expressing their gratitude and appreciation for his years of service to Westark Community College and the Westark jazz Program (which, incidentally, is growing larger and stronger with each year and each concert).*

# The Narisi Brothers Businessmen — Citizens

Sarah Fitzjarrald

Jacob J. Narisi came to America in 1888. He was twelve years old and completely alone. He left his home in Bisacquino (near Palermo), Sicily, and was going to St. Louis where his two uncles lived. They were the Caldarera brothers; and Tom Caldarera, who established Taliano's Restaurant in Fort Smith, is a grandson to one of them. It had been arranged that Jacob was to be met in New Orleans by some people who would then get him on his way to St. Louis. Unfortunately, Jacob lost his uncles' address. The people who met him did not have the address either, so they took him home to live with them until the uncles could be located.

With his New Orleans hosts writing to Sicily for the St. Louis address and the uncles writing to Sicily, trying to find out what had happened to the boy, there was a lot of confusion. It took six months for the trans-oceanic mail to get through, during which time Jacob was put to work on the plantation where he was living with his benefactors. He went to the fields with the men and worked as a water boy.

Finally, he proceeded on to St. Louis. The Caldareras were in the fruit business. In that era being in the fruit business meant more often than not owning fruit stands.

Jacob became a part of their business. While he was there he became acquainted with a judge who was somewhat aghast that Jacob's family would allow him to work instead of going to school and getting an education. But Jacob had another goal in mind. He wanted to save every penny he could so that he could bring his two younger brothers, Joseph and Dominick, to America. So the judge took him in hand and taught him to read and write the English language. Joseph, born in 1877, was a year younger than Jacob; and Dominick, born in 1879, was three years younger.



Narisi brothers and sister, left to right: Jacob, Ouida, Joseph and Dominick. Photo courtesy Rosalie Narisi Bryant.

Jacob remained in St. Louis until he was almost sixteen and moved to Springfield, Missouri, where he started his own fruit business. He was there only briefly when he learned that Fort Smith, Arkansas, because of the railroads being built, was to become a "great" distribution center for goods and trades.

In 1893, he came to Fort Smith by wagon train, the journey taking an entire week. (The Caldareras also came at that time.) He set up business and prospered. In 1901 he sent for Joseph and Dominick, who were also accompanied by their sister.

In 1909 Jacob returned to Sicily and married Maria Stella Sardegna. At that time his sister also returned to Sicily with him — to stay. Joseph married Vincenzina Piccatolia, and Dominick married Mary Culla.

The Narisi Brothers' two confectionery stores were known as "Narisi's #1 and #2". Narisi's #1 was at 906 Garrison Avenue and Narisi's #2 was at 912 Garrison. The stores had the old fashioned soda fountain and marble-topped tables where customers



Wives of the Narisi brothers, left to right: Mrs. J.J. Narisi (Maria Stella Sardegna), Mrs. Joseph Narisi (Vincenzina Piccatolia) and Mrs. Dominick Narisi (Mary Culla). Photo courtesy Connie Narisi Smith.

P. M. G. O. Form No. 68.

REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE.

To whom it may concern, Greetings:

THESE PRESENTS ATTEST, That in accordance with the proclamation of the President of the United States, and in compliance with law,

*Jacob Joseph Narisi*  
 (First name) (Middle name) (Last name)

*101 N. 12*  
 (No.) (Street or R. F. D. No.)

*Fort Smith Ark*  
 (City or town) (County) (State)

has submitted himself to registration and has by me been duly registered this *12* day of *Sept*, 1918, under the supervision of the Local Board designated on the back hereof.

*Chris D. Clie*  
 Registrar.

3-6172 (Place stamp of Local Board on back of this card.)

Jacob J. Narisi's Voter Registration Certificate

AUTHORIZATION CARD

This is to certify that

*Jacob J. Narisi*

HAS BEEN FULLY APPOINTED AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN THE W. S. S. PLEDGE CAMPAIGN IN ARKANSAS

*Moorehead Smith*  
 Dir. W. S. S. Campaign

*W. S. S. Pledge Solicitor*  
 Secretary of the Treasury

*John W. Thompson*  
 County Chairman

*John W. Thompson*  
 Town Chairman

Jacob J. Narisi's W.S.S. Authorization Card

could sit and enjoy ice cream sodas and all the usual delights offered, including fruit, candy and the other delectables of the time.

Narisi Brothers' Store #2 also offered toys. Both stores sold fireworks on the 4th of July and at Christmas time. And they were the only stores in town that sold fireworks.

The Narisi brothers bought Brun's Confectionery at the location on Garrison Avenue where the Boston Men's Store later opened. It too had a soda fountain and marble-topped tables. Ice cream was served in front, and it was made in the back of the store. In the basement was a bakery and equipment

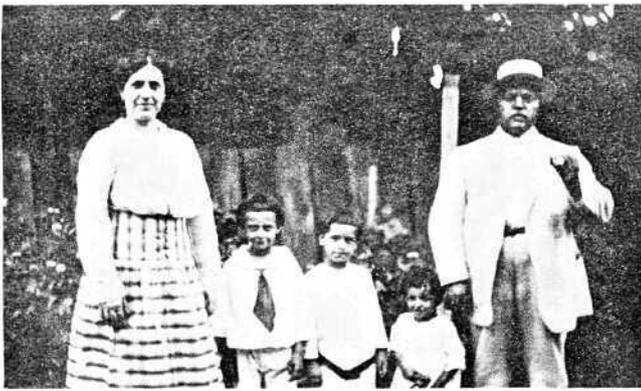
for candy making. The name "Brun's Confectionery" was kept. (Mr. Brun was Mrs. George Carney's father.)

The Narisi were not only businessmen but also active and important members of the community. Jacob was an early member of the Democratic Party when it was in its infancy in Fort Smith, and also worked diligently with the Chamber of Commerce. During World War I he traveled miles from his home city, selling war bonds. His two sons, John and Vincent, served in World War II.

Joseph Narisi, Jacob's older brother, had five children; and Dominick, the younger, had four children.



Narisi Confectionery Store. Tom Calderera, left, and Dominick Narisi, right. Photo courtesy Connie Narisi Smith.



Jacob J. Narisi family, left to right: Maria Stella, John, Vincent, Concettina, and Jacob J. Photo courtesy Connie Narisi Bianchi.

8		
	<i>Dr.</i>	<i>Cash</i>
	<i>Favored</i>	
<i>McD 27</i>	<i>Cash Register</i>	<i>320.91</i>
		<i>158.10</i>
		<i>3363.01</i>
<i>McD 28</i>	<i>Mr. Mill Taylor</i>	<i>50</i>
	<i>Chas Bennett</i>	<i>770</i>
	<i>Pearl Starr</i>	<i>2.50</i>
	<i>Ray Woods</i>	<i>1.00</i>
	<i>Cash Register</i>	<i>77.80</i>
		<i>31152.51</i>

Section of page from Narisi Cash Journal. Courtesy Narisi family.

The Narisi family were all active in civic affairs and in their church, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. They were an integral and supporting part of the building of the original St. Edward Mercy Hospital, St. Anne's Academy and the Immaculate Conception School.

In the spring of 1946 there was only one store left and it was sold to Marion and J.D. Narisi, Dominick's sons. Jacob Narisi died on December 12, 1946. He was preceded in death by his brother Joseph and was succeeded in death by his other brother Dominick. Maria Stella Sardegna Narisi died on June 24, 1951.

Narisi Brothers' Stores were THE meeting places on Garrison Avenue. The page illustrated here, from their cash journal for the year 1910, shows only a few of the names of the people who dropped in for sodas, or bought supplies for one reason or another. Among the mayors, businessmen, ordinary citizens and different organizations and churches, there was

Pearl Starr. (Note the clear and legible handwriting of the former teenager who missed school so that he could save money and bring his brothers to America.)

1910 was a good year for Jacob Narisi. But an impersonal cash journal could never portray the character and stamina of the young bridegroom about to become a father, who worked hard and diligently and whose office had only one chair, and that one for visitors only. He remarked that he stayed busy and kept on his feet.

The Narisi name is gone from Garrison Avenue. But the remaining family who still reside in Fort Smith are notable for their dedication to church and community. There is still a Narisi business in town, Narisi Realty Company at 541 North Greenwood.

Jacob and Maria Stella would be proud — and the rest of us are not surprised.

We gratefully express thanks to the following for the Narisi story: Mrs. Robert (Connie Narisi) Smith, Mrs. L.L. (Concettina Narisi) Bianchi, John Narisi, Vincent Narisi and Curtis Landers.



**FOUNTAIN MENU**

**NARISI BROS**  
912 Garrison Avenue  
FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS

**SUNDAES**

Banana Split	30c
Pineapple Fruit	15c
Strawberry Fruit	15c
Cherry Fruit	15c
Nut Sundaes	15c
Pineapple Nut	20c
Cherry Nut	20c
Marshmallow	15c
Marshmallow Nut	20c
Chocolate Nut	20c
All Syrup Sundaes	10c
Chocolate	15c

\*\*\*\*\*

**ICE CREAM SODAS**

Chocolate and other flavors	10c
Malted Milk (all flavors)	15c

**FRUIT DRINKS**

Limeade	10c
Lemonade	10c
Orangeade	10c
Grape Juice--pain	5c
Grape Juice--straight	10c

\*\*\*\*\*

**FANCY MIXED DRINKS**

Milk Chocolate	10c
Milk Shake--all flavors	19c
Milk Shake, with Ice Cream	15c

\*\*\*\*\*

**BOTTLED DRINKS**

Coca-Cola	5c
Plain Sodas--all flavors	5c
Budweiser	15c
Country Clul	15c

THANKS CALL AGAIN



Fountain Menu of Narisi Brothers, 912 Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith, Arkansas. Photo courtesy of Connie Narisi Bianchi.

# Jack Foster Pace

## Mayor 1945-1953 and 1957-1961

Margaret Pace

Jack Foster Pace, twice mayor of Fort Smith, 1945-1953 and 1957-1961, was born April 19, 1890, in a rural community of Jackson County, Alabama, the son of Jack and Annie Carter Pace. He was married to Mary Elizabeth Stovall in 1910 and they had three daughters, Myrtle, Edna Earl and Margaret, and one son, Paul. The family attended the First Baptist Church in Fort Smith.

Mr. Pace was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, American War Dads, Albert Walton League, Knights of Pythias, Woodmen of the World, Kiwanis Club, various bodies of the Masonic Order, etc. He died on June 14, 1964, after more than twenty-six years of official service to the city of Fort Smith and Sebastian County. He was a man of high integrity in administering the affairs of the city. Also, he had the enviable record of never having been defeated in a political race. In fact, an editorial in the daily newspaper commenting upon his retirement stated that "he has been one of the best mayors, if not the best, the city has had in its one hundred eleven years of incorporated history."

Mr. Pace's early years were spent on his family's farm in Alabama. In 1911 he moved to Fort Smith where he located his permanent home and entered into the life of the community. For several years his employment was with local furniture factories and the Frisco Railroad. After this, he entered the field of insurance where he worked for about eight years. Through the contacts he made in this business, he became well known around town and was encouraged by others to become interested in politics.

He served Sebastian County as Constable of the Upper Township from January 1, 1927 to January 1, 1935, and performed many of the duties later assigned to the Sheriff's Department. His law enforcement experience and good reputation led him to seek and win election for Sheriff and Collector of Sebastian County. He served three terms in that office, January 1, 1935 to January 1, 1941.

After engaging in the real estate business for some years, in 1944 he was encouraged to run for mayor of Fort Smith. At that time the city government was under commission form, consisting of the mayor and two commissioners, all elected by the people. Mr. Pace won the race for mayor and served three terms in that position. His philosophy, as he expressed it, was to do the best he could for everyone and treat everyone equally. He invited people to talk with him personally any time about things pertaining to the city business. He made himself an "available" mayor, and was recognized as a man of high integrity in administering the duties of his office.

As a former workman, county official and businessman, he was in position to know the needs of



Jack Foster Pace

Fort Smith and its citizens and he dedicated himself to meeting these needs. However, he realized he could not alone accomplish what was necessary. His cooperation with the members of the commission, as well as his good judgment, soon proved his sincerity and contributed to many worthwhile achievements for the city.

During his tenure of office some of the accomplishments include: construction of airport terminal building; runways extended and improved; lighting installed; commercial air transportation inaugurated; flood wall on Arkansas River built and maintained to protect valuable property; four new fire stations built and equipped; annexation of land to the city, adding thousands of people to the population; new industries brought to Fort Smith; Health Center bought and maintained; and many other projects which contributed to the welfare and growth of Fort Smith.

# Invitation To Coronation



The Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Imperial India  
and the British Colonial Possessions beyond the Seas  
Greet thee and command thy presence at the Abbey of Westminster,

in the Ancient City of London

on the twenty-eighth day of June

Anno Domini one thousand nine hundred and two, Anno Regni one thousand and two

on the occasion of the solemn ceremony

## The Coronation

of the son and heir of the reigning house and prince of the blood royal

Albert Edward George Plantagenet William St. Leger Henry Guelph  
James Bitingee Gower Melkin Fitzmaurice

Knight of the Garter, Knight of the Bath, Knight of the Golden Fleece

and possessor of numerous and various other most noble and exalted titles

as

Edward VII by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great

Britain and Ireland, King Defender of the Faith

and Emperor of India.

*Hæc pro amicitia nostra.*

Invitation to attend the Coronation of King Edward VII of England received by W.J. Johnston in 1902. This should have been printed on page 22, Volume 14, Number 2, September 1990 issue of *The Journal* in the story about Mayor William Joseph Johnston. Through error an invitation to sit on the platform with the President of the United States was substituted for this invitation and the error was not detected before going to press. We apologize to our readers, and especially to the Johnston family.

Amelia Martin, Editor

# Poets and Poetry

Sarah Fitzjarrald

With this issue we are reviving the feature, "Poets and Poetry" which began with the first publication of the *Fort Smith Historical Society Journal* in September, 1977. This begins a series of vignettes of the present members of the Fort Smith Branch of the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas.

The Fort Smith Branch of the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas was chartered in 1962 with May (Mrs. T.V.) Gray and Eloise (Mrs. W.D.) Barksdale as co-founders. (For the complete story see the April, 1988, issue of *The Journal*.)

Charter members of the local group were Margaret Montague, Gretchen Youmans, Christina Alter, Kathleen Knox and the aforementioned founders.

The group added members through the years and the complete list is as follows: Adele Moore Jarman, Gretchen Youmans,\* Kathleen Knox, Emily Montague Rollwage,\* Betty Calvert,\* Christina Alter, Mary Minniear, Sarah Jane Farris, Katherine Price Bailey,\* El Wanda Flurry, Julia S. Porter,\* Margaret Montague,\* Mary Frances Romaine Beasley, Zella Murphy, Robby Vaughn, Margaret Wills, Dorothy Douglas, Mary Ann Evans, Judith "Judy" Ferguson, Lena Bryan Cornelius,\* Doris K. Ferguson, Amelia Whitaker Martin, Sarah Fitzjarrald, and the founders, Eloise Barksdale and May Gray.

Eloise Barksdale was featured in the first issue of *The Journal* (September 1977) and May Gray in the October, 1978, issue. Margaret Montague, Emily Rollwage and Gretchen Youmans were also featured in former *Journals*, with Betty Calvert's memorial published in April, 1989, with her silhouettes reproduced on the cover.

## MARY FRANCES ROMAINE BEASLEY

The first vignette of our current series begins with Mary Frances Romaine Beasley, who is now serving as president of the Fort Smith Branch of Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas.

Mary Frances lived and was educated in southwest Arkansas, at Stamps high school and Magnolia A & M College (now Southern State University). In 1942, as a bride, she moved to Fort Smith where her husband, Charles A. Beasley, was employed as Assistant United States Attorney. He served in the United States Navy during World War II. In 1988 he retired from First National Bank of Fort Smith where he was Senior Vice-President and Trust Officer.

Beasley has enjoyed reading poetry and writing verse for years. Her membership in the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas and the Fort Smith Branch of the organization is a credit to both organizations.

\*Deceased.



Mary Frances Romaine Beasley

Mary Frances and her husband are active members of First United Methodist Church. She is also a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution; Chapter F, P.E.O.; the Methodist Village Auxiliary; and Friends of the Library.

Her poetry will be included in the fall issue of the *PRA's Anthology*, and she has published a book on her family genealogy. Of all of the poetry she has written, the following is one of her favorites.

### HOME

Home is a place where life begins,  
Where joys and sorrows never end,  
Where little hurts are kissed away,  
And a bit of the heart will ever stay.

Home is a place where loved ones stay,  
A warm retreat at close of day,  
Where night-time prayers are always said  
As little ones are tucked in bed.

Home is a place where right is learned,  
Where mother and father share much concern  
For those they guide each day.

Home is a place where there's an open door,  
A welcome mat and food in store  
For friends who come to call.

Home is a place where goodbyes are spoken;  
Where tears displayed are not a token —  
But heartfelt love expressed.

Home is a place to which we all return,  
Though we live away, our hearts still yearn  
To touch the joys of youth.

Mary Frances Beasley

# In Loving Memory

## CHRISTINE ELMORE ALLEN

By Sue McCain

Christine Elmore Allen was born June 17, 1920 at Milltown, Sebastian County, Arkansas to Denver Bue McKinley Elmore and wife Elsie May Cottingham. She died April 28, 1990 in a Fort Smith hospital.

Christine was, first of all, the wife of Samuel Bell Allen and the mother of Betty Jo Haygood, Christie Lou Waggoner, Andy Elmore Allen and Tom Wayne Allen. There were seven grandchildren. She was also an artist, a historian, and a genealogist.

Christine was a member of the First United Methodist Church, where she was a member of the Aldersgate Sunday School Class.

Christine was one of the pioneers in the formation of Fort Smith Art Center and was instrumental in the purchase of the Vaughn-Schaap House where the art center is located. She served the Fort Smith Art Center as president in 1955, 1964 and 1965. She was one of the founders of the War Eagle Arts and Crafts Fair and exhibited there every year.

A love of history began when Christine was a student of J. Fred Patton in high school. That love has been shown throughout the years by her service to many historical organizations. She served as president of the Fort Smith Historical Society, Regent of the Fort Smith Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, State Corresponding Secretary DAR, Registrar for United Daughters of the Confederacy as well as for Colonial Dames, Belle Point Chapter.

Christine served many hours over the years as a volunteer at the Fort Smith Public Library in the Genealogy Room that she helped establish. Here she diligently collected and compiled family histories of Sebastian County families. She and her family copied cemeteries in the area and have three bound volumes in the library. Chris, as I knew her, also spent many hours identifying old photographs connected with Fort Smith. She was a Certified Genealogical Record Searcher and did research for people all over the country. She taught courses in genealogy for several years at Westark Community College passing on her love to others.

Christine's work in the genealogy room at the Fort Smith Public Library will serve others for many years to come. That was her thought as she sought to preserve the history of our day for others. She was a very special lady with many special talents which she shared with those around her. Her legacy will live on.

Funeral was in Roebuck Chapel of First United Methodist Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas, May 1st, with burial at Dixon Cemetery, north of Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

## BILL STANCIL

Bill Stancil, 66, died Tuesday, February 12, 1991. He was athletic director for Fort Smith Public Schools and a former coach.

Bruce Stanton, *Southwest Times Record* Sports Editor, said, "Maybe no one will ever really know how much of an effect Bill Stancil had on high school athletics in Arkansas. But one thing is for sure, the effect he had is too big to measure."

He took the head coaching job at Fort Smith High School in 1957 and his teams amassed a 111-12-3 record with three state titles and three undefeated seasons. Included in that record is a 33 game undefeated streak from 1966 through 1969. With all of this, he was known not only because of athletics, but because of the care he had for students in every way, and he helped make integration successful in the Fort Smith School District's athletic programs. Rodney Toombs, who played football for Stancil in 1968-70, said, "He treated everybody as an equal. He didn't look at you as an Indian, black or white. He was a disciplinarian, and he was like a father figure."

He pioneered the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in the Fort Smith area; was a member and former deacon of Southside Baptist Church; and a Navy veteran of World War II.

He was former assistant football coach for Blytheville High School, former head basketball coach for Blytheville Junior High School, former head football coach and athletic director for Northside High School, and president of the Arkansas Athletic Directors Association from 1984 to 1986. He was on the Executive Board of Directors for the Boy Scouts of America, the Arkansas Multiple Sclerosis Board, the Sparks Regional Medical Center Advisory Board and the Arkansas Tech University Alumni Board. A member of the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce, he was an Easter Seals chairman, and a member of the Arkansas House of Representatives.

He received several awards, including the Fort Smith Sertoma Club "Service to Mankind" Award, National High School Athletic Coaches Association "Coach of the Year" (District 5) Award, Arkansas High School Coach of the Year, Butterfield Trail "Distinguished Service" Award (Boy Scouts of America), 1975 Outstanding Athletic Director of Arkansas, Eagle Scout, 1983 Arkansas Athletic Director of the Year, and 1983 Southern Regional Athletic Director of the Year.

He is survived by his wife, Maxine; two daughters, Staci Moore of Oklahoma City and Sandy Hodges of Forrest City; a son, Bill III of Fort Smith; two brothers, Dr. Arthur Clark Stancil of Little Rock and Hal of Conroe, Texas; and one grandchild, Mary Hoshall Hodges of Forrest City.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Southside Baptist Church Building Fund, 2400 Dodson, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

#### RICHARD SUGG

Richard B. Sugg, 51, former member of the Fort Smith Historical Society Board, died October 12, 1990. A real estate counselor for Jimmie Taylor Realtors, he served as president of the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce from 1986 to 1988, manager of the chamber from 1984 to 1986 and assistant manager from 1973 to 1983.

While serving as the chamber's president, Sugg implemented programs such as Business After Hours, 59-Minute Box Lunch seminars for small business, and Leadership Fort Smith. During his time in office, he also organized funding for the Grand Avenue widening project.

He was a graduate of North Little Rock High School, Little Rock University and also attended the Arkansas' pre-medical program. His professional training included the Institute for Organization Management, University of Houston; and the Arkansas/Oklahoma School of Real Estate.

He is survived by his step-daughter, Allison Weathers of Phoenix; his son, Chris of Fort Smith; his stepson, Jeff Argo of Orlando, Florida; and his mother, Eva of North Little Rock.

#### CHRIS CORBIN

Chris D. Corbin Sr., 81, died October 29, 1990, in Fort Worth, Texas. He was a retired superintendent of Fort Smith Public Schools and a member and elder of First Presbyterian Church.

Corbin served as superintendent from 1954-71. His career as an educator spanned 45 years, 29 of those in the Fort Smith Public School system. He was assistant registrar at the University of Arkansas; served as assistant to the president of Westark Community College from 1973-76 and continued as athletic director at the college on a part-time basis until his retirement in 1982. Corbin was a charter member of Westark College's Emeritus Board, an honorary position awarded to him by the college's Board of Trustees for his years of service.

He is survived by his wife, Irmgard; his son, Tom of Mansfield, Texas; a half-brother, Marshall P. Alexander of Richland, SC; and six grandchildren.

#### LUCILLE ROBINETT SPEAKMAN

Lucille Robinett Speakman, 83, a longtime member of the faculty and Board of Trustees at Westark Community College, died January 12, 1991 in Duncan, OK.

She received a BA degree from Southwestern State Teachers College in Weatherford, OK, in 1930 and an MA degree in 1942 from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in Stillwater, OK.

In 1945 Speakman became a faculty member of the social studies department at Fort Smith Junior College, now Westark, where she taught until retirement in 1976. She was elected to the college Board of Trustees in 1982 and served as a member of the board until 1988.

She received many honors including the 1942 Phi Kappa Phi, Honorary History Society and Kappa Delta Pi, Honorary Education Society; the 1966 Golden Apple Award from the Fort Smith Classroom Teachers Association; an honorary doctorate in human letters from Geneva Theological College in Maine; 1970 Woman Achiever of the Year from the *Southwest Times Record*; was inducted into the Westark Hall of Honor in 1987.

Her community service affiliations included leadership roles in AAUW; Soroptomist Club; Board of Stewards at First Methodist Church; League of Women Voters; Chapter AD, P.E.O.; WYCA, and leader of an intermediate Girl Scout troop.

She is survived by two brothers, Alton B. Speakman of Duncan and W.J. Speakman of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and by four sisters, Louise Sager, Ruthann Coleman and Roberta Pollard, all of Duncan, and Billye Ofenstein of Port St. Lucie, Florida.

Memorial contributions may be made to Westark Community College Foundation's Lucille Speakman Superior Teaching Endowment Fund.

#### DR. RONNIE JIM "RON" FORMBY

Dr. Ronnie Jim Formby, 47, of Fort Smith died Friday, December 21, 1990, in a Fort Smith hospital. He was former director of counseling at Westark Community College, member and former deacon of Central Presbyterian Church. He also was a former math teacher at Northside High School. He received his doctorate, masters and undergraduate degrees from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He was a former counselor at Rich Mountain Vo-Tech in Mena, and Arkansas Tech University in Russellville.

He is survived by his wife, Liz; his son, Jason of the home; two stepsons, Curtis and Greg Ivey, both of Van Buren; his mother, Juanita Formby of Fort Smith; two sisters, Diane Jones of North Little Rock and Melissa Humphreys of Van Buren; and one grandson. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Amy Beth Formby.

#### C.H. "DOC" MILLER

C.H. "Doc" Miller, 88, died November 2, 1990. He was a retired musician, photographer, former owner and operator of the "Doc" Miller Photo Services, founder of the Fort Smith Explorers' Club, former news broadcaster and member of FUMC, the Kiwanis Club, the Exchange Club and the Elks Club.

He is survived by his wife, Estelle; two daughters, Peggy Peppers of Herculaneum, Missouri, and Aynn Walker of Fort Smith; one sister, Myra Hellmick of St. Louis; 8 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

See pages 14-15 of Volume VIII, Number 1, April, 1984 issue of *The Journal* for the story of Doc Miller's Orchestras.

#### C. GRADY SECREST

C. Grady Secrest, 87, well-known Fort Smith civic leader and contributing supporter of the Fort Smith Historical Society, died January 9, 1991. A member of the First United Methodist Church, Secrest was the president and general manager of Secrest Printing Co. from 1932 to 1987.

A recipient of the Exchange Club's Golden Deeds Award in 1987, Secrest was a past president of the Fort Smith Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Exchange Club of Fort Smith, McDonald Builders and Uplifters Classes of First United Methodist Church, Methodist Mens' Club and the Fort Smith Boys Club. He was a former member of the Official Board of First Methodist and the Westark Council of Boy Scouts of America.

He was a member of the Belle Point Lodge No. 10, Amrita Grotto, Western Arkansas Scottish Rite and UCT. Secrest also served as business manager for the Fort Smith Giants baseball team from 1946-1950, Fort Smith Indians from 1951-1952 and Fort Smith-Van Buren Twins in 1953.

He is survived by his wife, Helen; two sons, C. Grady II of Fort Smith and Larry of Austin, Texas; three grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

#### LURABEL BROOKS BROCCCHUS

Laurabel Brooks Broccchus, 87, died January 21, 1991. She was a retired hostess of the Old Fort Museum and retired owner of a drug store in Tipton, Oklahoma; a member of First United Methodist Church, the Uplifters Bible Class and board member of the Fort Smith Heritage Foundation and the Clayton House; a patron of the Fort Smith Art Center; a life member of the Fort Smith Trolley Museum and a charter member of the Fort Smith Historical Society. She was also a member of the Bonneville House Association, the Salvation Army Auxiliary, the Frisco Club, Tipton chapter 292 Order of the Eastern Star for 60 years, Personalities of the South, RSVP, A.A.R.P. and Project Compassion, past president of National Garden Clubs and former Cub Scout den mother.

She is survived by her husband, Charles G. Broccchus Jr.; two stepdaughters, Sammy Wepfer of Hot Springs and Martha E. Forgey of Richardson, Texas; one stepbrother, Wilbur DeSelms of Oklahoma City; four stepgrandchildren and four stepgreat-grandchildren.

#### ELISE CAMPBELL

Elise Huie Hess Campbell, 78, of Fort Smith died Friday, November 30, 1990, in a Fort Smith hospital. She was a retired teacher and a member of First

United Methodist Church, United Daughters of Confederacy, and Retired Teachers Association of Oklahoma.

She is survived by a son, William of Salt Lake City, Utah; two sisters, Jane Huie Gabbie of Port St. Lucie, Florida, and Doris Huie of Arkadelphia, Arkansas; a brother, W.L. Huie Jr. of Orlando, Florida; and two grandchildren.

#### CLIFTON "JACK" GRACE

Clifton "Jack" Grace, 72, of Fort Smith died July 2, 1990 in his home. He was a retired teacher from Fort Smith public schools, a member and elder of Central Presbyterian Church and a member of the Retired Teachers Association.

He is survived by his daughter, Pat Hunter of Linn Creek, Missouri; his son, Dr. Larry Grace of Fort Smith; five sisters, Inez James of Houston, Texas, Elizabeth Fink of Dardanelle, Anna Lee Richardson of Hot Springs, Mary Roggenkamp of Chicago, Illinois, and Sarah Whitford of Vilonia; six brothers, Ben, Frank and Charles of Dardanelle, Glen and William of Russellville, and Lloyd of Van Buren; and four grandchildren.

#### LOMA LEE WINTERS CLEAVENGER

Loma Lee Winters Cleavenger, 78, of Fort Smith died Friday, September 28, 1990 in a Fort Smith hospital. She was a retired teacher, a member of St. John's Episcopal Church, and a descendant of Samuel Putnam who became a resident of Fort Smith ca 1817 whose biography was featured in Volume 12, No. 2, September 1988 issue of *The Journal*.

She is survived by two daughters, Carolyn Harper and Martha Zemel, both of Fort Smith; her son, Carl of Fort Smith; her sister, Martha Gammon of Arlington, Virginia; and one grandson, Roger Zemel of Fort Smith.

#### SISTER MILDRED DUNN

Sister Mildred Dunn, 92, of St. Scholastica Monastery died July 20, 1990, in the monastery. She taught music at St. Boniface School, St. Edward in Little Rock, St. Joseph in Fayetteville and at St. Scholastica. She was a member of the Musical Coterie, Arkansas Music Teachers Association, National Guild of Piano Teachers and National Music Teachers Association. She professed her vows in St. Scholastica Monastery in 1918.

She is survived by her sister, Marie Moss, Richmond, CA; and brother, John Dunn, Napa, CA.

Memorial contributions may be made to Senior Citizens Continuing Care, in care of St. Scholastica Monastery, P.O. Box 3489, Fort Smith, AR 72913.

#### LOUISE RICHARDS

Martha Louise Richards, 69, died Friday, July 10, 1990. She was well-known for her work with AIDS patients and their families, a registered nurse for 50 years and a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

Richards began her career as an Army nurse during World War II and went on to work as a nurse in the Fort Smith school system and with the St. Edward Mercy Medical Center Hospice Program. She was a founding member of the Fort Smith Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect program and a volunteer with the Red Cross, the Vietnamese Relocation Project and the Fort Smith Hospice Program.

She was one of eight Arkansans to receive the 1990 Arkansas Community Service Award, presented by Gov. Bill Clinton, for her work with the Fort Smith AIDS program and SCAN. She was also awarded the prestigious 1990 Shuffield Award by the Arkansas Medical Society which is the highest honor given by the medical community to a non-physician.

She is survived by her husband, Bill; two daughters, Teri Richards Overbay and Margery McClanahan, both of Fort Smith; a son, Steven of Booneville; and four grandchildren.

#### SISTER FINTANA GILMORE

Sister Fintana Gilmore, 97, died January 7, 1991 at St. Scholastica Monastery. She professed her vows on October 5, 1911, and retired to the monastery in 1960. She taught school for 10 years, was a former business manager of St. Scholastica as well as a former administrator of St. Joseph's Orphanage in Little Rock.

She is survived by several nieces and nephews.

#### VIRGINIA LOUISE FOSTER

Virginia Louise Foster, 83, died August 19, 1990. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, the Fort Smith Chapter of the D.A.R., the Fort Smith Historical Society, the Wednesday Club and served on the Old Fort Museum Board.

She is survived by her brother, Herbert P. Foster of Richardson, Texas; two nephews, Presley Foster Jr. of Anchorage, Alaska, and Ted J. Schwink of Dallas; and four grandnieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Fort Smith Historical Society or the charity of the donor's choice.

#### REV. MURL WALKER

The Rev. Murl Walker, 77, died October 10, 1990, in his home. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister having served churches in the Arkansas and Oklahoma area as pastor, associate pastor, staff evangelist and interim pastor. At the time of his death he was staff evangelist for the North Park Baptist Church in Van Buren.

Six new churches have been established in the two-state area under his leadership. They are Southside Baptist Church in Poteau, Eastside Baptist Church, Windsor Park Baptist Church, all in Fort Smith, Roland Hills Baptist Church in Roland, and North Park Baptist Church.

#### MARY JO CRAWFORD

Mary Jo Crawford, 51, died October 22, 1990, in a Fort Smith hospital. She was founder and president of the Fort Smith Lupus Foundation of America and an alternate delegate to the National Republican Convention.

She is survived by her husband, Allen; a son, Mike of Dallas; her mother, Lorena Villines of Harrison; four brothers, Jimmy Villines of Berryville, Jess and Terry Villines, both of Fort Smith, and Jerry Villines of Florissant, Missouri; and one granddaughter, Sarah Michelle Crawford of Dallas.

#### DOROTHY C. RUCKER

Dorothy C. Rucker, 75, of Fort Smith died November 27, 1990. She was a homemaker, an original founder and retired director of SCAN, director of Voluntary Action Center, treasurer of Tri-Delta Sorority, past president of Sparks Womens' Board and Council of Social Workers, a member of First Presbyterian Church.

She is survived by a son, James of Fort Smith; a sister, Martha Metcalf of Fort Lauderdale, Florida; a nephew, Michael Metcalf of Fort Lauderdale; and a niece, Linda Nelson of Colonial Heights, Virginia.

#### RUTH DYRHOOD

Ruth Amanda Dyrhood, 95, of Fort Smith died January 17, 1991, in Fort Smith. She was a homemaker and a member of the Lutheran Church.

She is survived by a daughter, Gayle Jones of Houston; a son, Julian of Fort Smith; a sister, Lenore Campbell of Anaheim, California; 12 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

#### PAULINE PLUMMER

Katheryn Pauline Rush Plummer, 64, died February 7, 1991. She was an employee of Westark Community College, box office manager for Season of Entertainment and business manager with Miss Westark School Pageant for 10 years. She was awarded Outstanding Classified Employee at Westark.

She is survived by three daughters, Joyce Katheryn Plummer Faulkner of Strongsville, Ohio, Maeva Lee Plummer Mayes of Fayetteville, and Margaret Ann "Micki" of Arlington, Texas; an aunt, Frances Brown of Fort Smith and four grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to Westark Community College.

# News and Opportunities

## FORT SMITH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, April 25, 1991, 7:00 p.m.  
Fort Smith Trolley Museum

Program will feature short ride on Car #224 (which will be dedicated and begin regular operation on May 19) and a review of the development of the Trolley Museum and restoration, by Art and Bradley Martin.

Anyone welcome to attend! Come! Bring friends and family for a fun meeting!

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It is with deep regret that the board of the Fort Smith Historical Society announces that postage and printing costs have forced a raise in FSHS membership dues. 1992 dues schedule will be:

Annual .....	\$ 15.00
Annual Contributing .....	25.00
Annual Sustaining .....	50.00
Annual Business .....	50.00
Life .....	150.00

Price of back issues remains the same (except for mailing charges), \$5.00 plus \$2.00 mailing charge per copy.

Please note that Life Membership has been increased to \$150 from \$100, but until December 31, 1991, the Life Membership will remain at \$100. If you have considered becoming a Life Member, now is the time to save yourself \$50.

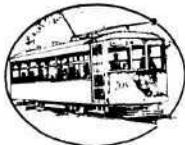
A limited number of the *Composite Index, Volumes I thru IX*, are still available at \$20 per copy, plus \$2.50 mailing charge for mail orders.

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## ARKANSAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

The fiftieth-anniversary annual meeting of the Arkansas Historical Association will be in Little Rock on April 4, 5, and 6, 1991. Headquarters will be at the Excelsior Hotel and sessions will be in the adjoining University Conference Center. Theme of the meeting is "Hopes and Realities: The Question of Leadership in Arkansas History". For more information contact American History Association, Department of History, 12 Ozark Hall, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

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## VINTAGE FORT SMITH STREETCAR RUNS AGAIN

DEDICATION OF STREETCAR 224  
WILL BE AT 2:00 P.M., MAY 19, 1991

The first streetcar service in Fort Smith since November 15, 1933 will be May 19, 1991. This is the result of a twelve year effort of the Fort Smith Trolley Museum to collect, restore and operate former Fort Smith Streetcars.

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Car 224 is the first of the two cars being restored by the Fort Smith Trolley Museum to be completed to operational status. This car had been stripped of its motors and controls when it was taken out of service. It was then sold to become a diner in Ashdown, Arkansas, and later it was purchased by Louis Hennick of Shreveport with the intention of restoration. The Fort Smith Streetcar Restoration Association bought the car in 1979 when it was advertised for sale. It was located during the preparation of the history of the Fort Smith Streetcar system by Charles Winters of Kansas City, which was published by the Fort Smith Historical Society.

The museum was able to restore the car to operational condition after it purchased a similar Birney car from the Ohio Railway Museum that had originally been Kansas City Car 1545. Parts from the 1545 were refurbished and installed on 224.

Jay Wiechert donated the engineering, construction and many of the components for the 600 volt DC substation to power the streetcar. Paul Averdung of Waukesa, Wisconsin supplied the rectifier bridge and transformers. This excellent power source is just another example of the importance of inkind donation and volunteer labor to the trolley project. All components and labor for construction and installation were donated to the museum.

Final preparations are being made on the track and overhead wire to be ready for the opening to the public on May 19. The trolley will operate daily thru the tourist season. Fare will be \$1 adults and \$.50 children. Membership cards will be honored for rides. A brief history of the former streetcar system will be given on each ride. All rides free on May 19, the dedication day.

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## TROLLEY MUSEUM DINNER TRAIN

The Trolley Museum will host a second Dinner Excursion Train trip on Friday, June 28, 1991. The trip will begin with cocktails and a streetcar ride at the museum at 5:00 P.M. At 6:00 P.M. we will board the Boston Mountain Excursion Train at the carbarn. The train will then proceed across the scenic Arkansas River bridge and on through the hills and valleys of Crawford County along the historic Frisco route across three high trestles and through the 1716 foot railroad tunnel to Winslow. A gourmet dinner catered by Jerry Neel will be served in three seatings in the Yellow Rose dining car. For your entertainment, the Arcadian Night Hawks will be playing music from the 1920s and 1930s. Tickets for the tour are \$100 per plate. \$50 of this is deductible since this is a fund raising event for the trolley restoration project. Reservations may be made by calling 783-1237 or 783-0145 for the 6:00 P.M., 7:30 P.M. or 9:00 P.M. seating, and mailing payment to Fort Smith Trolley Museum, 2121 Wolfe Lane, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

## WAR DECLARED ON IRAQ

Early Thursday, January 17, 1991, the United States and its allies mounted a massive attack on Iraq, hurling a mighty air armada against an Arab power that for five months had held Kuwait in defiance of the rest of the world. "Operation Desert Shield" became "Operation Desert Storm" about 12:50 a.m. as F-15 fighter bombers took off from the largest United States air base in central Arabia and streaked north to begin the liberation of Kuwait.

The crisis began August 2, 1990, when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein sent troops to invade Kuwait.

Many Fort Smith men and women in National Guard and Reserve units were called to active duty to join regular military units in the "War in the Persian Gulf", while we at home "supported our troops".

Thursday, February 28, 1991, President Bush declared the war won and announced, "Kuwait is liberated. Iraq's army is defeated."

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## FORT SMITH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE UNITED STATES MARSHALS DAY

The big event for the spring is a three author book signing on Friday, March 22, from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Art Calhoun, author of *Black, Red and Deadly: Black and Indian Gunfighters of the Indian Territory, 1870-1907*; Ted Calhoun, Historian, United States Marshals Service, author of *The Lawmen: US Marshals and Their Deputies, 1789-1989*; and Glenn Shirley, author of *Law West of Fort Smith: A History of Frontier Justice in the Indian Territory 1834-1896*; will be present to sign books and answer questions. Authors will also offer half hour seminars during the day. Art's book will be hot off the presses; Ted's book was published in commemoration of the Marshals Service bicentennial in 1989; and Glenn's book is a standard reference for anyone interested in Fort Smith history.

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## FORT SMITH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE WELCOMES NEW CHIEF RANGER

With the transfer of Tom Crowson to Padre Island National Seashore last summer, Park Ranger Mardell Plainfeather, formerly of Custer Battlefield National Monument, took over that position in the fall. Mardell began her National Park Service career as a seasonal at Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, Fort Smith, Montana, while pursuing an education. She graduated with a degree in history from Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana, in 1979 and had worked at Custer Battlefield until her promotion to the position at Fort Smith.

Her former position at Custer involved interpreting the story of the Little Bighorn Battle, the tragic fight in Montana where the Sioux and Cheyenne wiped out five companies of the 7th Cavalry, including their flamboyant leader, Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer. Being a Crow Indian herself sometimes placed her in an uncomfortable position occasionally, because members of her tribe served as military scouts for the army during the Sioux Campaign of 1876.

Mardell looks forward to working at Fort Smith, learning about the historical events in this area and meeting the many visitors who visit the two forts and courtroom and gallows of Judge Parker. She is most anxious to learn about a different era of history of the United States and the settlement of Arkansas and Oklahoma.

At the national historic site, she will be supervising all ranger programs, including interpretation, historical research, visitor protection and cultural resources management. She and her husband Dan and two children, Lorena and Laramie, have chosen Sallisaw, Oklahoma as their home.

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## FORT SMITH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CELEBRATES THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 75th ANNIVERSARY

Sunday, August 25th, marks 75 years since the establishment of the National Park Service. Plans are being developed for a historic seminar to mark the anniversary.

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## NEW FORT SMITH BROCHURE

What does Fort Smith have to offer? The Fort Smith Advertising and Promotion Commission answers that question in a new brochure entitled "Live the History". Look for your personal copy of this brochure which is enclosed in this issue of *The Journal*.

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## 911 EMERGENCY SYSTEM

Fort Smith and Sebastian County are now on the 911 Emergency System. The first official call made in Sebastian County was made on Friday, November 30, 1990 to report a kitchen fire at Juan's Mexican Restaurant in Fort Smith.

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## C. RAY BAKER, JR., ELECTED MAYOR

On Tuesday, November 6, 1990, C. Ray Baker, Jr., a Southside High School history teacher and nine-year veteran of the city board of directors, was elected mayor of Fort Smith over his opponent, Buddy Coleman, in a big dollar, highly publicized race. Baker captured 64% of the votes. He took his oath of office and began his official duties January 1, 1991.

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## SISTER-CITY WREATH



Cisterna, Italy's Deputy Mayor Porcelli (left), Fort Smith Mayor-elect Ray Baker, and Fort Smith Mayor Bill Vines lay a wreath at the grave of Gen. William O. Darby on November 9, 1990. Porcelli was one of about 70 dignitaries who visited Fort Smith to pay tribute to Darby, who commanded four battalions during the liberation of Italy in World War II. Photo by Carrol Copeland, courtesy *Southwest Times Record*.

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## DARBY LADIES

The Darby Foundation has organized a group called Darby Ladies — a volunteer group that will reach out the arm of fellowship and offer condolences and help to those burying someone in the National Cemetery. Announcement of the new group was made to coincide with the 80th birthdate of Gen. William O. Darby. President of the group is Lynn Dockery and the honorary president is Doris Darby Watkins, Darby's only living sister, who lives in Cleveland, Mississippi.

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## FORT SMITH SCHOOLS HONORED

All of Fort Smith public school's secondary schools have now been honored with the state's prestigious Arkansas Schools of Excellence Award. The most recent award winners are Northside High School and Darby and Ramsey junior high schools. This award identifies and gives public recognition to outstanding public and private secondary schools across the United States.

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## BANDMASTER HONORED

Richard Peer, sophomore band director at Southside High School, has received the Bandmaster of the Year award from the Arkansas Bandmasters Association.

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## FORT SMITH/VAN BUREN HONORED

Between 40,000 and 50,000 individual caring acts of citizen participation and good neighboring have made Fort Smith/Van Buren the volunteer capital of Arkansas and won Arkansas Volunteer Community of the Year awards for both communities.

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## WEBSTER UNIVERSITY - FORT CHAFFEE

Webster University at Fort Chaffee conducted its first graduation ceremony on December 5, 1990. Guest speakers were Dr. R.L. Qualls, president of Baldor Electric Co., and Dr. Joseph Olszewski, associate dean of the graduate school at Webster University in St. Louis. Graduating students were Ronald Baker, Dwight Borges, Diane Fagan, Bob Gale, David Nelson and Beverly Watkins.

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## WESTARK RECORD ENROLLMENT

1990 fall enrollment at Westark Community College reached an all time high with a cumulative head-count of 5,240 students enrolled. This is five percent more than last year's fall enrollment of 5,009.

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## GOLDEN DEEDS AWARD

John Bayliss, retired Methodist minister, was recipient of the Noon Exchange Club's Golden Deeds Award in recognition of his years of compassion and service. The award was made at the club's 49th Annual Book of Golden Deeds Award dinner on January 27, 1991.

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## WCC VICE PRESIDENT RECEIVES DOCTORAL DEGREE

Jim Underwood, vice president for finance and administration at Westark Community College, has received his doctoral degree in higher education administration from the University of Arkansas.



He holds an associate's degree from Central Nebraska Community College, a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a master of business administration degree from the University of Arkansas. A lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves, he serves on the boards of the Salvation Army, the City Library and the Comprehensive Juvenile Services Commission. He is treasurer of the Old Fort River Festival, finance chair of the First United Methodist Church, a 1989 graduate of Leadership Fort Smith and member of the Downtown Sertoma Club.

Before coming to Westark he was vice president for administrative services at Central Community College in Grand Island, Nebraska.

# Genealogy and Inquiries

NATIONAL BOURLAND-LOVING  
SOCIETY REUNION  
April 19, 20, 21, 1991  
Fort Smith, Arkansas

For more information contact Joe and Trecia  
Lloyd, 1426 Maple Shade Road, Alma, AR 72921.  
Phone 501-632-4728.

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The Genealogy Department of the Fort Smith  
Public Library has added many new books and  
microfilm during the past year. Some of them are:

*International Vital Records Handbook* contains  
application forms and ordering information for the  
vital records needed for driver's licenses, passports,  
Social Security, etc. The forms can be photocopied  
and used to request birth, marriage and death  
certificates of ancestors.

*Ethnic Genealogy* provides sources for American  
Indians, Asian-Americans, Black Americans and  
Hispanic Americans with basic research steps for  
each ethnic heritage.

*Meyer's Directory of Genealogical Societies in the  
U.S.A. and Canada, 8th Edition.*

*Newspaper Genealogical Column Directory* by  
Anita Cheek Milner.

*A Bibliography of American County Histories*  
compiled by P. Wm. Filby is a comprehensive list of  
5,000 county histories published to date.

Other books have been added that relate to  
specific states, emigrants, soldiers and militiamen of  
different wars, etc.

Many books currently out of print are available on  
microfilm. Also, the microfilm collection has grown  
by the addition of censuses as well as film relating to  
the Revolutionary War and the War Between the  
States.

The Genealogy Room is open 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.  
Monday and Wednesday through Saturday and 9:00  
a.m.-9:00 p.m. Tuesday. A staff member is available  
during regular hours and a volunteer will help  
researchers on Tuesday night.

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## TWO FAMILY PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Diese Heiss Zeit*, the quarterly newsletter of the  
Fred William and Mary Kathryn (Hall) Heiss family of  
Fort Smith, Arkansas, is published quarterly by the  
Heiss Family Archives. Price, \$10 annually. Direct all  
correspondence, articles for publication, and  
inquires to Heiss Family Archives, c/o Harry G.  
Heiss, 280 Nutmeg Lane, Fenton, Mo 63026.

*The Tomkins-Tompkins Times*, published by  
Robert H. Tompkins, native of Hartford, Arkansas  
and former resident of Fort Smith, is published  
January, April, July and October, 1991. Price \$50 for  
the four editions. Address: *The Tomkins-Tompkins  
Times*, Tompkins Square Station, P.O. Box 20187,  
New York, NY 10009.

\*\*\*\*\*

STANDIFER-DAVIS: Need parents of Jessie  
(Standifer) Davis, born 17 January 1876; lived in the  
Massard area near Fort Smith. — Mary E. (Douglas)  
Gentz, 4524 East 25th Street, Tulsa, OK 74114.

\*\*\*\*\*

EPPLER: Researching family of Judge John  
Eppler. His sons listed on 1860 census in the Fort  
Smith/Van Buren area were: Henry T., Wiley Clark,  
Malcolm M., Harmon R., Andrew M., John V., and  
Johnathan A. — Robert A. Eppler, 17802 No. 19th  
Avenue, #22, Phoenix, AZ 85021.

\*\*\*\*\*

WOOD/WOODS: Need place of birth or any  
information on William Simon Wood. Served as  
deputy U.S. marshal under Judge Parker late 1800s.  
Lived in Pontotoc County Oklahoma until his death  
in 1928. Married to Nancy Deliah Lee. Had 6  
daughters. — Helen D. Bland, 700 Sowell Lane,  
#1411, Texarkana, TX 75501.

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## Annual Business Sponsors

Beals Advertising Agency  
220 North Greenwood Avenue  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901

City National Bank  
1222 Rogers Avenue  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901

Cooper Clinic  
P.O. Box 3528  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913

Jim Grizzle Tire Company  
3002 Towson Avenue  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901

Holt-Krock Clinic  
1500 Dodson  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72902-2418

Network Title of Arkansas, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5437  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913

Oklahoma Gas and Electric Co.  
P.O. Box 17008  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72917

Planters Lifesavers Company  
P.O. Box 1868  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901

Spiro State Bank  
Spiro, Oklahoma 74959

Taliano's Restaurant  
201 North 14th Street  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901

# A Fort Smith Time Line

Jan Eddleman

The following dates are those in which political boundaries for Fort Smith changed. Fort Smith was a part of the political units given during those times.

1541 - Desoto explores part of Arkansas. Records in Spanish archives, Madrid, Spain.

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1673 - French explore, claim and settle Mississippi Valley. Official name, Arkansas District, Province of Louisiana. Check also the records of John Law's Mississippi Company. Records in French Archives, Paris, France. Some records and copies in Natchez Trace Library in Louisiana.

\*\*\*

1763 - Treaty of Paris returns control of Louisiana to Spain. Records in Spanish archives, Madrid, Spain.

\*\*\*

1800 - Louisiana secretly returned to France, but France did not take administrative control.

\*\*\*

1803 - Louisiana Purchase... Louisiana Territory

1804 - Upper District of Louisiana

1805 - District of New Madrid, Louisiana Territory

1806 - District of Arkansas, Louisiana Territory

1812 - Arkansas County, Missouri Territory

1817 - First Fort Smith founded

1818 - Pulaski County, Missouri Territory

1819 - Pulaski County, Arkansas Territory

1820 - Crawford County, Arkansas Territory

Records of Arkansas Territory are in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., as are the records of the first fort.

\*\*\*

1836 - Crawford County, Arkansas. Records could be in the Crawford County courthouse, Van Buren, Arkansas, or in the archives of the Arkansas History Commission, One Capitol Mall, Little Rock, Arkansas.

1859 - Sebastian County, Arkansas. Records could be in the county courthouses in either Fort Smith or Greenwood or the Arkansas History Commission.

1868 - Federal Court of the Western District of Fort Smith founded. Records are in the National Archives at Fort Worth, Texas.

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## News Highlights of 1990

From the *Fort Smith Southwest Times Record*

Jack Moseley, Editor

Extracted by Sarah Fitzjarrald

### JANUARY

The city directors for the first time established a uniform 4 percent excise and franchise tax on all public utilities.

Ray Baker, city director and Southside High School history teacher, was voted by *Southwest Times Record* readers as exerting the most positive influence on the city and its people during the decade of the 1980s.

Sponsorship of the Old Fort River Festival moved from the Junior League to a community-based board of directors.

The Veterans Administration announced that expansion of the National Cemetery may require five years to complete.

Lack of rain kept the levels of Lakes Fort Smith and Shepherd Springs dangerously low.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Washington gave Fort Smith the go-ahead to begin actual construction of a hydro-electric dam on Lee Creek.

Governor Bill Clinton released a water study on the Arkansas River indicating the possibility of mixing river water with fresh water from the Lee Creek dam (under construction) for use in homes, businesses and industries.

The city government learned it was \$1.7 million short of funds necessary to widen Waldron Road between Rogers and Grand Avenues.

### FEBRUARY

A steady, 4-inch rain raised the level of Lake Shepherd Springs between 4 and 5 feet, easing the city's water shortage problems. The lake had been 32 feet below the top of the dam of the municipal water supply, and city officials said much more rain would be needed to get the city out of water rationing danger.

A \$3 million Army Reserve training center at Barling was named in honor of Fort Smith hero General William O. Darby, founder of Darby's Rangers in World War II.

The Fort Smith School Board tabled action to decide whether use of the Confederate flag and the song "Dixie", as symbols of Southside High School, are offensive.

## MARCH

Ninety-eight percent of residents responding to a survey by city officials in two test neighborhoods responded favorably to sorting their garbage for recycling.

Beverly Enterprises, the world's largest operator of nursing homes, revealed that it had chosen Fort Smith as its national corporate headquarters.

Heavy rains brought the Arkansas River to 3 feet above flood stage at the Garrison Avenue bridge.

The National Historic Site announced plans to reopen the fort's military commissary, built in 1838, as a major exhibit.

Holt-Krock Clinic announced plans to build the largest dialysis unit in Arkansas.

Kyle Parker, Fort Smith attorney, invented a sophisticated computer program, enabling lawyers to reduce weeks and months of research to a matter of seconds.

Fort Smithian Dee Carroll was named the city's first full-time director of the Advertising and Promotion Commission, which is charged with promoting tourism.

Fort Smith City Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution supporting a 3.75 mill increase in taxes to expand Westark Community College.

## APRIL

The first bucket of concrete was poured at the Lee Creek dam project on April 6th.

Fort Smith Board of Directors announced that it wanted Congress to return regulation of cable television services to local governments.

Governor Bill Clinton proclaimed April 17, 1990, Amelia Martin Day in the state of Arkansas, honoring Amelia Martin, Editor of the *Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society*, for her work in historical preservation.

For the first time, Fort Smith Baptists and Methodists are cooperating in a joint effort to provide sex education through a grant from the Arkansas Health Department to educate parents in the best ways to inform their children about responsible sexual behavior.

Training at Fort Chaffee was reported to intensify as 14,000 Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard troops engage in summer training activities at the fort.

Westark Community College president Joel Stubblefield announced that the college would not ask for another tax increase for 20 years.

Whirlpool Corporation disclosed that it would invest more than \$120 million in equipment, expansion and training over the next three to five years.

## MAY

Sebastian County voters overwhelmingly approved a 3.75 mill tax increase to expand Westark Community College.

For only the fourth time in more than a hundred years, record rains in Western Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma closed dozens of roads and businesses in the area, forcing evacuation of families from homes. The Arkansas River, still rising, approached 500,000 cubic feet per second.

The floods inflicted more than \$2 million in damages.

President Bush approved disaster aid for Fort Smith area flood victims.

Whirlpool recalled 200 workers from lay-off.

More rain and hail. A downtown portion of Towson Avenue caved into a giant sink hole, due to underground saturation of former rains.

Sanitation officials distributed more than 500 trash containers to be used in 3 neighborhoods in the sorting of trash for recycling.

## JUNE

Hiram Walker and Sons, Inc. disclosed it would more than double production of liquors with the addition of Scotch and standard whiskey to its internationally distributed line of cordials. A \$5 million expansion of the plant was to be completed in December.

Ward's Ice Cream plant, which had produced cold sweets in western Arkansas for more than a half-century, was put out of business by a \$1 million plus fire. Cause of the blaze was unknown.

On June 18 John Edward Swindler was electrocuted for the murder of Fort Smith police officer Randy Basnett on September 24, 1976.

Sizzling hot weather roasted the area and water supply lakes fell to below 100 percent capacity, necessitating water conservation Phase 1, restricting water usage to all Fort Smith residents.

Fort Smith's Old Fort River Festival had its three-day run with hot weather, crowds and entertainment, featuring the international Up With People.

Four Fort Smith men were arrested for vandalizing an inflatable dam at Lake Shepherd Springs and costing the city a 10-day supply of water for 130,000 people.

## JULY

Whirlpool made the final \$4,000 payment that gave the appliance manufacturer ownership of the largest manufacturing plant west of the Mississippi River.

The Sebastian County Quorum Court informally agreed to spend \$279,000 to remove bodies from the 13-acre paupers' cemetery on the south side of Fort Smith and relocate them to an undisclosed property the county has yet to acquire.

Fort Smithian Rita Hartley, 63, made history by testifying for the first time ever before the U.S. Senate Select Committee (or any other congressional committee in Washington) from her home by satellite TV link. This was accomplished with the help of KHBS-TV (Channel 40).

The *Southwest Times Record* took writing, design and photography awards among the state's largest newspapers in the annual competition of the Arkansas Press Association.

The U.S. District Court of Appeals in Washington unanimously overruled environmental groups in their efforts to block construction of the Lee Creek Dam and a new water supply for Fort Smith.

## AUGUST

Hudson Foods announced the lay-off of 391 workers at two poultry plants because of declining sales of chickens.

Arch Glenn, Fort Smith's first city administrator, turned 90 years old and was still going strong as a member of the Fort Smith Public Housing Commission.

Troops trained at Fort Chaffee's Joint Training Readiness Center reportedly were high on President Bush's priority list to join U.S. and U.N. peacekeeping forces in Saudi Arabia, threatened with invasion of the million-man armed forces of Iraq that totally overran the nation of Kuwait last week and took control of 20 percent of the world's oil reserves.

Fort Smith city administrator Strib Boynton and Sebastian County prosecutor Ron Fields took the wraps off plans to allow first-time convicted felons to remain at home instead of going to prison. The convicts would do public service under guard by day and live at home by night.

Fort Smith city directors revealed plans to keep non-residents' garbage out of the city landfill.

A Fort Smith jury sentenced 30-year-old Rodney Utley to 80 years in prison for robbing a sandwich shop of \$73 with a toy pistol.

Black activist physician Dr. Harry McDonald announced his retirement and plans to leave the city after almost 40 years. He was the first of his race to be accepted into both Sebastian County and Arkansas Medical Societies, and led a successful fight to desegregate Fort Smith public schools.

The Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce announced a \$550,000 fund drive to remodel the Donoho building on Garrison Avenue for the new Chamber headquarters.

The first Good Times on Garrison attracted thousands of participants and spectators for two days of street dances, music, bed races, car races and other activities to kick off the United Way campaign.

Westark Community College reported a first-day fall semester enrollment of 5,263 full-time students, a 5% increase of the 1989 enrollment.

## SEPTEMBER

City administrator Strib Boynton said that he would tell a congressional committee on public works and administration that Fort Smith has invested \$116 million of its own money in rebuilding its infrastructure during the past five years but will need \$175 million in the next five in order to grow and prosper.

Fort Smith officials said they found 2,584 housing units the U.S. Census missed in the 1990 national head count.

Opponents to the Lee Creek project did not file an appeal for a rehearing of a U.S. district court's decision to allow the project to continue during the appeal period allowed by law.

Mr. Peanut, trademark of Planter's Peanuts, found a home in Fort Smith. The 35-foot-tall figure, originally built in 1956 in Peabody, Mass., was erected on the grounds of the Planters plant on the south side of the city.

Ron Russell, president of the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce, was elected president of the Industrial Developers of Arkansas.

First National Bank of Fort Smith, with more than \$400 million in assets, filed with the Federal Reserve board to purchase the National Bank of Sallisaw (Oklahoma) with over \$69 million in assets.

## OCTOBER

Fort Smith Fire Department Capt. Curtis Massey was named the city's best firefighter of the year.

Fort Smith National Historic Site was closed to the public as Uncle Sam began shutting down non-essential services in the wake of Congress' failure to reach a budget deficit agreement.

The Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce reported the \$40 million annual boost to the local economy from Fort Chaffee could jump to \$150 million a year if the military base is selected as the permanent home for the Joint Readiness Training Center.

Area insurance companies reported a boom in sales of earthquake insurance as a result of predictions that a major quake would occur along the New Madrid Fault in early December.

More than 600 members of the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce toured the business organization's new \$500,000 offices on Garrison Avenue. David Banks, chief executive officer of Beverly Enterprises, spoke.

The Veterans' Administration in Washington released \$250,000 to expand the Fort Smith National Cemetery, a match of \$10 for every \$1 contributed through the *Southwest Times Record's* readers.

The Fort Smith Symphony kicked off its 51st season at the civic center with guest artists Dr. Kent Brown and Bill Harper performing.

The Fort Smith Library Board announced 97-year-old Leah Cohn Arendt of Oklahoma City, who died October 19, willed all but \$100,000 of her estate (estimated to be well over \$3 million) to the downtown library.

Chris Corbin Sr., Fort Smith school superintendent between 1945 and 1971, died in Dallas after a long illness.

Fire at the OK Foods plant at 3900 Reeder Lane caused between \$500,000 and \$750,000 damage, injuring two employees.

## NOVEMBER

Ray Baker was elected Fort Smith mayor over his opponent, Buddy Coleman, by vote of 13,486-7,180. (The present board of directors are: Bernice Kizer, Nan Bartlett, Carter Hunt, Steve Lease, Rick Griffin, Ben Shipley and Ray Stewart. Ed.)

After the state-wide elections, Governor Bill Clinton and Mrs. Clinton danced down Garrison Avenue in the rain to keep his campaign promise to dance down Garrison Avenue if he carried Sebastian County.

City officials offered free testing of water from homeowners for possible lead content caused by lead pipes used in older home construction.

Fort Smith and Van Buren jointly became the volunteer capital of Arkansas through more than 40,000 to 50,000 individual acts of volunteerism that were recognized by the Governor's Office of Volunteerism at the Arkansas Municipal League Convention in West Memphis.

The Fort Smith School Board voted to close all high school campuses, meaning students would not be permitted to drive or walk off school grounds during off-periods and lunch hours.

While some Fort Smith area businesses reported feeling the pinch of a national recession, others said business was better than ever, prompting the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce to begin distributing badges that read: "Business is Good — Spread the Word."

Fort Smith became the first city in Arkansas to convert to the 911 emergency telephone system on schedule and within budget.

A survey of Arkansas public schools revealed that Fort Smith teachers have the highest average salary in the state — \$25,940.

## DECEMBER

Crowds of area families turned out for the annual Fort Smith Christmas Parade down Garrison Avenue. And a capacity crowd attended the annual Christmas concert of the Fort Smith Symphony.

Winter arrived with 30 mph winds and temperatures in the lower 30s.

To comply with new state regulations that require mainstreaming of learning-disabled children, Fort Smith public schools said that the Rogers Center School would be closed, although some parents opposed the move.

Although the Arkansas Wildlife Federation lost its fight to block construction of Phase 1 of the Lee Creek water reservoir for Fort Smith, it said the war is not over, and it will continue to oppose development of Phase II and a longterm water supply for the region.

State Senator Travis Miles of Fort Smith said he would introduce legislation in 1991 to force more state support of Westark Community College, particularly in the area of new construction.

Fort Smithians remembered Pearl Harbor, the beginning of World War II, and the current threat of war in the Middle East with a Wall of Honor at Central Mall. The wall contained the names of all area men and women in military service in the Persian Gulf crisis.

Fort Smith police cracked down on shoplifters in area stores.

International performer, Fort Smith native and Northside High School graduate Walter Gregory Ahart, speaking of his hometown: "A lot of people profess Christian values, but I find in Fort Smith, Arkansas, people actually practicing them."

Winter storms hit the area on December 21 and continued through Christmas. Many streets were impassable because of snow and sleet.

Although city streets remained covered with ice, hearts were warm as thousands of *Southwest Times Record's* readers again signed the annual Christmas card, contributing more than \$18,000 to feed and shelter the homeless, provide tools to volunteers who teach adults to read and write, help Habitat for Humanity build a new home and provide day care for the elderly.

The last weekend of 1990 ended with a thick layer of ice, sleet and snow on Fort Smith streets and area roads. Forecasters said the stuff would not melt before the New Year's parties and warned motorists to stay home if at all possible.

But Sebastian and Crawford counties welcomed 1991 without a single auto fatality on New Year's Eve.

And not surprisingly, the *Southwest Times Record* named the mobilization of Arkansas National Guard and Army Reserve units for possible combat in the Middle East the top area news event of 1990.

# 1891 Newspapers

FORT SMITH ELEVATOR  
March 6, 1891 - June 5, 1891

Extracted from microfilm at the Fort Smith Public Library by Mary Lou Jacobsen. Typed by Juanita Dyrhood.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

January 1, 1891

No newspapers available January 1, 1891 through March 5, 1891.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

March 6, 1891

LEGISLATURE

In the Senate, Mr. Clement introduced Senate bill No. 229 to prohibit sale of intoxicants within five miles of Chicotah Academy in Yell county. Read twice and referred to the committee on temperance.

Senate bill No. 229 to regulate the licensing of tipping saloons and whiskey houses was read twice and referred to the committee on temperance.

In the House, Mr. Weaver introduced House bill No. 207, to authorize and empower the school board of the school district of Fort Smith to buy, own, lease, control, and sell real estate in said city of Fort Smith.

In the House several bills were introduced to regulate the sale of intoxicants in certain localities and within certain distances, varying from three to ten miles of school houses and educational colleges.

House bill No. 273 is to prevent the sale of intoxicants where the sale has been prohibited by law or in any other manner. This is sort of "gilding refined gold" legislation that existing laws should render obsolete.

— • —

GREAT SALE

of white goods and other  
spring goods commencing  
Monday, March 2nd  
at the  
Boston Store!

Direct from the mills to our House 2000 yards of White Nainsooks in short lengths, 5¢ per yard, positively worth 10¢.

1000 yards of white goods, plaids at 8½¢, positively worth 15¢.

25 pieces curtain scrim at 4½¢, good value at 10¢.

25 pieces of Fancy Dress Biege for dresses only 4½¢, positively worth 10¢.

1075 yards of soft finish Nainsook, extra wide at 10¢ never sold by us for less than 20¢.

TREMENDOUS BARGAINS

Table Linens, Towels and Carpets for less money than they can be bought in New York.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

March 13, 1891

THE INDIAN TERRITORY

Tom Aden was killed at a dance in the Chickasaw Nation about the 29th of February 1889, and at the time there appears to have been no notice taken of it. About a week ago Lem and Gus Shipman and John Gardener were arrested and taken to Paris, charged with the killing and the evidence appears to be very strong against them.

— • —

DEATHS IN THE CITY

A VICTIM OF CONSUMPTION

Miss Nanale Vaughn, aged 25 years, died of Consumption at the residence of her father in this city, on Wednesday evening, March 4th and was buried the day following.

Miss Nanale was born in Washington, Hempstead county, and from there came to this city with her parents nine years ago. She leaves a father, brother and one sister, Mrs. Bear of St. Louis, all of whom were with her in her last hours. The hand of affliction has been laid heavily upon this family the past year or two. First, Mrs. Julia Marshall, sister of Mrs. Vaughn passed away, then Miss Pinkie, sister of Miss Nanale was called and was soon followed by the mother who died only a few months ago. Miss Nanale fully realized her approaching death and patiently awaited its coming. Peace to her ashes.

— • —

PERSONAL MENTION

Matthew Maddox, one of the promising young men of this county, has gone to Arizona to try his fortune.

Miss Maggie Bloomberg, who teaches school at Waldron, visited her parents last Friday and Saturday.

Dr. W.W. Bailey was called to New York last week by the serious illness of his brother, Dr. Joe Bailey.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

March 20, 1891

The question of raising the state taxes is being talked of in legislature. We are not in favor of any such measure, and suggest that some other means be devised for paying the expenses of the state. Let the taxes alone.

— • —

The people of Van Buren are agitating the question of putting in water works and extending the corporate limits of the town.

— • —

## BRIDGE CELEBRATION

The mass-meeting at the court room Monday night, called for the purpose of determining whether or not Fort Smith should celebrate the completion of the big steel bridge across the Arkansas, was well attended and the same enterprising spirit which always characterizes our people when matters of vital importance are at stake was manifested.

— • —

## DECLAMATORY CONTEST

The Opera House was well filled on Friday evening just to witness the declamatory contest between pupils of the high school of this city, and the audience was well entertained. The first prize for boys was won by William Clayton, son of John M. Clayton and the second price by Edward Hunt, Jr. The first prize for girls was carried home by Miss Lizzie Barnes, daughter of Col. Thomas H. Barnes, while Miss Verda Parke, daughter of Mrs. Parke, took the second prize. The prizes were appropriately presented by Hon. John H. Rogers.

— • —

## COUNTY NEWS

Mrs. S. Barbee of Hackett City died last week after a lingering illness.

Jensea is improving considerably. There are several buildings now in construction there.

The Greenwood Grand Jury has indicted all the saloon men of Huntington for selling liquor to minors.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**April 3, 1891**

## STATE NEWS

It is claimed that only three deaths occurred in the town of Clarksville during the two years ending Dec. 31st, last.

The Fayetteville Democrat reports many horses dying of the blind staggers in that section, and mention the fact that Bob Stone lost a \$600 nag last week.

One night last week a book agent at Warren, Bradley county, was set upon by unknown parties who egged him out of town. Some of the hen fruit used was too old to smell pleasantly.

— • —

## THE BRIDGE

Will be open for Business about the 10th of this month.

At 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon last the draw span of the big railroad and wagon bridge over the Arkansas River at this place was swung into position, the event was witnessed by a large number of our citizens. A large number of hands are now at work on both sides of the river, grading the approaches, and the bridge will be finished so as to accommodate railroad business by the 10th of the present month, but it will not be ready for wagon traffic before the 1st of May, and perhaps a little later. Wagons and horses will cross on the same floor used by the railroad, and will have to "look out

for the cars," but pedestrians can cross at any time on a foot bridge constructed against the lower side of the main bridge.

This is one of the longest bridges in the United States, the bridge proper measuring 3,379 feet from approach to approach. Three million, eight hundred thousand pounds of iron and steel have been used in its construction, which has occupied one year, the Union Bridge Company of St. Louis, being the builders.

The opening of this bridge is a big thing, indeed for Fort Smith, and that this fact is duly appreciated by the citizens will be demonstrated about the 1st of May by a Grand celebration now being gotten up in honor of it.

— • —

## CITY ELECTION

Before another issue of the *Elevator* the city election will have occurred, the result of which will no doubt be the election of the entire democratic ticket, headed by C.M. Cooke for mayor. The election will take place on Tuesday next, but up to the present writing there has been but little enthusiasm manifested, notwithstanding there is an opposition ticket in the field. However, we predict the election of C.M. Cooke for mayor, Chas. H. Eberle for Police Judge, and T.C. Davis for Treasurer, by a large majority, as they are all good men, were duly nominated by their party and there is no necessity for any Democrat to vote against them, but few, if any, who will.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**April 10, 1891**

## ALBERT PIKE

Gen. Albert Pike, well known all over America, and especially in Arkansas and the Indian Territory, died in Washington City on Tuesday night last week. Gen. Pike was 81 years of age and distinguished as the greatest Mason in the United States, his official title at the time of his death being Grand Commander for the Southern Jurisdiction of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Free Masonry, this being the mother council of the world. Pike was a man of extraordinary ability, a grand lawyer whose accomplishments were most versatile, and a writer of great force. He has many friends among the older settlers in this section, where he was quite a character in years gone by.

— • —

S.B. Adams died Monday at his home in the suburbs and was buried Tuesday. He was 63 years of age.

Julia Barnard, aged 27 years, died Sunday at her home in Cherokee Nation, opposite this city, of dropsy.

Charles Miller, a stranger in these parts, died Tuesday of penumonia at his boarding house on the river, and was buried Tuesday night at the poor farm. He was 21 years of age.

— • —

Mr. Tony Meyer and Miss Barbara Welfenberger were married Tuesday evening by Rev. L. Smythe of the Catholic church. After the ceremony a reception was held at the residence of the bride's parents.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**April 17, 1891**

WATCHMAKERS and JEWELERS  
710 GARRISON AVE, FORT SMITH, ARK.  
KLEIN & FINK

— • —

#### DEATH OF WILEY COX

Wiley Cox died last Monday afternoon from the effects of a shot received at the hands of James McNally on the 10th of last October. No man has ever made a braver struggle for life than he did after receiving a wound which ordinarily would have been death to most men. From the time he received McNally's shot until he died it was a struggle between himself and the grim monster. He recovered sufficient strength to enable him to get on his feet and move about among his friends and on his accustomed walk but about a week ago, while in the court house, he became ill and had to be assisted home. Medical aid was summoned but the fact developed that blood poisoning had set in, he continued to grow worse until he expired.

Wiley Cox was about 41 years of age. He was born in Clarksville, Johnson county. He came to Sebastian county about 16 years ago. Shortly afterward he removed to Fort Smith, since which time he has been in public service in one capacity or another. He was an excellent officer, a first class detective and though a man of some wealth, possessed to an enviable degree the traits of generosity and courage — traits that in themselves cover a multitude of sins.

His funeral took place Tuesday at 3 o'clock p.m. Rev. A.J. Kincaid, of the First Baptist church conducting the obsequiem.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**May 1, 1981**

Dick Liddell, once a member of notorious Jesse James gang has been arrested in Richmond, Mo., on a charge of murder committed 10 years ago.

— • —

#### MUSICAL CONVENTION

The eighth session of the Sebastian County Musical Convention will be held at Union Grove, 5 miles south of Greenwood, commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in May at 9 o'clock a.m. and closing Sunday. There will be a free concert on Saturday night and a grand time is anticipated. All the music teachers in Scott county have been invited to attend.

— • —

#### SAD SUICIDE

Mrs. Amelia Harmen Hangs Herself with Binding Wire.  
Because Her Husband First Robbed  
and then Deserted Her.

One of the saddest suicides it has ever been our lot to chronicle occurred in this city last Monday, when Mrs. Amelia Harmen, sister of Adolph and Moris

Schultze, took her own life in a stable loft on her own premises.

Five or six years ago Henry Harmen came to this city from Nebraska. He wooed and won Amelia who was the mother of one child and who by her own industry had built her a comfortable home.

About two years ago Harmen induced his wife to mortgage her home for \$600, and this money he soon squandered in some way, no one knows how. About three weeks ago he secured another loan on the property for \$400 and immediately set about to rob his wife and family and everybody else from whom he could obtain credit. As soon as he had secured all that he could he packed his trunk and skipped out, no one knows where. His conduct and the possibility of the poor wife losing her home so prayed upon her mind that her reason seems to have been destroyed. On Monday she left her four children in the house, the two youngest being twins about seven months old and going to the barn, got up in the loft where she was found by neighbors an hour or so later, stone dead, hanging by the neck to a wire taken from a bale of hay which was made fast to a rafter. It was apparent that she had first tried to kill herself by cutting her wrists with a butcher knife, and had made two attempts to hang herself with wires before she succeeded. Her clothing was full of blood and blood stains appeared at different places in the loft. Kind neighbors gathered in and after the coroners inquest took charge of the remains and the children.

She was prepared for burial and on Tuesday was laid to rest in the city cemetery.

The children have been provided for but are scattered being taken by different families.

Harmen, the villainous brute, who first robbed his wife and then murdered her, as it were, should be hunted down and punished for his wickedness. Hanging is too good for him.

— • —

#### THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING

On last Monday, April 27, Mr. and Mrs. Melchior Euper celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. Fifty years ago in the city of Vienna, Austria, Mr. M. Euper was married to Miss Eva Herold. Ten years later they removed to this city where they have since resided, sharing alike the joys and sorrows that go to make up life. Here their children grew up and three of them are still here, while three, Edward, Frank & Theodore, have passed away, all of them dying away from home. The other three, Mrs. Henry Minchart, William L. and Henry Euper were present on this anniversary, which will be a memorable event in the pages of their life's history. Mr. Euper is 74 years of age while Mrs. Euper is 69. We have known them intimately for thirty years and advance the hope that they may live to see their diamond wedding.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**May 8, 1891**

Gargoyle: It was in the summer when Eve was created.

Mrs. Gargoyle: How do you know?

Gargoyle: I infer it from the fact that it was before the fall.

— ● —

Arkansas has a school enrollment of 223,071 and the total expenditure per capita is \$4.57.

— ● —

The mystery of the disappearance of Miss Lena Owens from Des Arc last week has been explained. It now turns out that she was not abducted, as first supposed, by villains bent on securing her property, but by a lover who was bent upon marrying her, and who succeeded in his design.

— ● —

THE BRIDGE CELEBRATION

To be the Grandest Event Fort Smith ever had.

Many Eminent Speakers to be present.

The Bridge Celebration committee are hard at work getting things ready for the 27th and much enthused over the prospects for their efforts being crowned with success. Among the many orators to be present are Hon. Clifton R. Breckenridge of the second district, Hon. W.L. Terry of the 4th, Gov. James P. Eagle, J.J. Ingalls of Kansas and many others.

The trades procession will be the grandest thing of the kind ever witnessed in Fort Smith.

Invitations are being sent out in every direction and are an excellent advertisement of Fort Smith and her advantages in themselves.

Reduced rates have been secured over all railroads — half fare, or one fare for the round trip.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**May 15, 1891**

Fort Smith is at present revelling in the luxury of beautiful flowers to an almost unlimited extent. No city of the same size anywhere can boast of a greater quantity or surpass us in quality. Nearly every door yard shows the care and attention bestowed and the result is at once beautiful and gratifying.

— ● —

REAL ESTATE FOR CATTLE

Any person having cattle to trade for Fort Smith property improved, should call on or communicate with John Harrington at once.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**May 22, 1891**

A FORT SMITH MAN MAKES A BIG DEAL

We clip the following from the Arkansas Democrat of the 16th.

Mr. M.J. Clay of Little Rock, is one of the heirs of the Robert Edwards estate in New York.

Robert Edwards was his great uncle. The estate which is valued at \$205,000,000, will have to be divided among scores of relatives. Mr. Clay has sold

his interest in the estate to Harry E. Kelley, of Fort Smith, for \$100,000. Mr. Kelley will take steps at once to establish his claim and secure his portion of the estate. This is a big deal, and if successful will place Mr. Clay in excellent circumstances.

— ● —

WANTED

A good healthy boy fifteen or sixteen years of age to learn the trade of a carriage maker. Apply at the carriage factory of Armbruster & Krueel, Junction of Catholic Avenue and Mulberry street.

— ● —

Deputy Marshall Paden Talbot isn't nearly so dead as reported several days ago. He was able to bring in two distillers of "Mountain Dew" Monday from Newton county. McPherson and Schinner are the guilty parties. They were captured in the mountains of Newton county. They had stolen a still from the Millsap gang of moonshiners after their capture, and gone into business as amateurs.

— ● —

Your Mother's Maiden Name can be given by spiritual influence through the interpretation of Mrs. M.A. Tabor, the renowned spiritual Medium, Room 5, Southern Hotel, Fort Smith.

— ● —

PAVING OF SIXTH STREET

All indications are favorable to the early paving of Sixth street and when this is done that thoroughfare will be a source of pleasure to our citizens. The Paving Commission has labored and is still laboring under the great disadvantage occasioned by the fact that there are several valuable pieces of property on this street not subject to taxation. Among them being the Belle Grove school property, St. John's church and the Masonic Temple. The school board is investigating the legality of making an appropriation to help the work along, and it is probable now that such action will be taken.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**May 29, 1891**

GRAND PICNIC

There will be a grand picnic given by the colored citizens of the Choctaw Nation on June 18th, 1891, six miles south of Fort Smith at Coleman Crossing on the Frisco Road. Everybody is invited. All kinds of refreshments will be on the ground.

Committee: W.H. Hays, W.M. James, M. Donni, W.F. Williams.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**June 5, 1891**

Our city council is receiving considerable gratuitous advertising over the state for its generous action in appropriating \$650 for the purpose of uniforming our fire department. Their action is being held up as an example worthy of emulation by the city fathers of other towns in the state, notably Little Rock and Pine Bluff.

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NOTES: il - some sort of graphic is used, other than a portrait.  
 por - a portrait of the person(s) named is on page indicated.  
 (----) - for such as title, marital status, degree, etc.  
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