

Missouri Folklore Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 1757, Columbia MO 65202
<https://missourifolkloresociety.org/>

Volume 49, Nos. 3-4

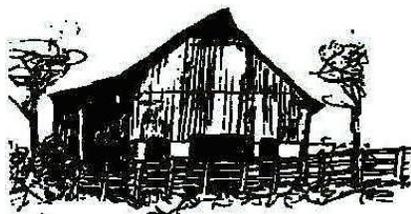
Fall 2025



2025 Annual Meeting in Springfield

The Society gathered at the fabulous mansion at Elfindale, the rich history of which we learned from the staff — once the home of a railroad baron, later a Catholic girls' school. The event, November 7-9, was organized by Ginger Hendrickson and Rachel Gholson. Our keynote address was “Rooted, Practiced, Sustained — Missouri’s Traditional Arts,” by Lisa Higgins, Director of the Missouri Folk Arts Program.

In this portion of the newsletter, we normally include the minutes from the Board meeting (usually Thursday) and the General Membership meeting (Saturday). This year, the first meeting was brief and routine; report follows. The second meeting took quite an unexpected turn. This has been a year of stock-taking and agenda-setting, and so this issue of the newsletter, in trying to document these developments, will be unusually text-heavy!



Minutes from Board Meeting: Thursday November 7, 2025

Call to order 4:30, by Rachel Gholson and Ginger Hendrickson

present: Rachel Gholson, Ginger Hendrickson, Adam Davis, Julie Henigan, Betsy Delmonico, Neal Delmonico, Mary Jo Herde, Evelyn Rogers, Susan Bryson, Lyn Wolz, Carol Fisher, John Fisher, Liz faries, Dave Para, Scott White

- Reports of Secretary and Treasurer (Davis and Para)
- Minutes from 2024 meeting shared
- funding streams and journal embargo? Our major overhead cost is simply the website

- Announcements regarding meeting (Ginger Hendrickson, Rachel Gholson)
- Rachel discussed QR code cards, computer stickers we can do merch on the website

- Plans for meetings in 2026 and beyond
Woodneath again? They are booked after 1st of November. Is Chris Otto interested? Locations on 63N – Moberly, Macon, LaPlata, Kirksville. Ste Genevieve?

Dates? Officers, organizers?

Publications reports (Davis) – MFSJ, newsletter, website
publications – Tegtmeier thesis published, Belden volume published, two volumes in process

New Business: Liz Faries has some cassettes with historic interviews to donate – Lyn says that the SHS would be interested.

Spring meeting – online – date?
Saturday 18th April 12 noon?

Sandi Greene-Baker, giving a crankie presentation on Saturday!

Adjourn ... 5:08 pm Lyn thinks she has the gavel someplace

Minutes: General Meeting, Saturday November 9, 2025

Present: Ginger Hendrickson, Rachel Gholson, Carol Fisher, John Fisher, Adam Davis, Andrea Davis, Lyn Wolz, Susan Bryson, Scott White, Betsy Delmonico, Neal Delmonico, Jahnavi Delmonico, Chris Drew, Evelyn Rogers, Julie Henigan, Betty Craker Henderson, Dave Para, Erika Gerety, Judy Domeny Bowen, Margot McMillen.

So much happened so quickly, and we did not move through the agenda in a consistent way (no matter; most of that simply replicated the Thursday meeting. Treasurer Dave Para reported that the meeting looked like at least a break-even, with some new memberships). the secretary was able to take only minimal notes. So, reporting in a general way

We mingled the Saturday morning meeting's agenda with a scheduled discussion of the future of the Society. Our issues are the simple fact that our core membership is elderly, and for whatever reasons, our efforts to get younger people on board have not provided for a new generation.

And then, the miraculous! As we talked over where to meet next year, and the difficulty of finding a location with someone able to take on the daunting task of organizing the meeting (we recognized the heroism here of Ginger Hendrickson and Rachel Gholson), the suggestion was made that we meet again in Springfield, perhaps even at Elfindale, if possible. And with that decision made, by a process of courting, badgering and cajoling, Jahnavi Delmonico and Chris Drew were brought to agree to be co-presidents.

Further conversation was refreshingly optimistic, and concrete about next steps.

It was resolved that we value this annual gathering and want to continue it. The center of the revived society was in Columbia in the 70s through the 90s, and Kirksville was prominent for a time; why not let it be homed in Springfield now? There's a very big and promising constituency here, with lots of opportunities for collaboration.

Next year is our 1120th anniversary, the year after the 50th for the revived Society.

We need to print more brochures (updated) and get them to members for further distribution.

Margot emphasizes networking: county historical societies, small museums, jam sessions, farmers' markets, craft associations. We need members to recruit locally.

It's suggested we make the meeting an "event" in social media (e.g., Facebook). We do now have an instagram account (nothing posted yet...)

Important: if we are to grow, we need to message clearly that our interests go far beyond the Scot-Irish of the Ozarks Plateau (though those remain near and dear).

We scheduled a zoom meeting to be hosted by our new leaders, to talk over plans and set goals for the coming year. We want to emphasize outreach and recruitment. Minutes from that virtual gathering follow.

We adjourned in a mood of renewed purpose and possibility.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Davis

Planning Session for 2026, online.
December 3, 2025, 6pm CST

Present: Jahnavi Delmonico, Chris Drew, co-presidents. Scott White, Dave Para, Rachel Gholson, Adam Davis

We set the Spring board meeting, via Zoom, for April 18, 12n CST. Adam will arrange.

The 2026 annual meeting is at least tentatively set for the first weekend in November – if it's a Thursday-Saturday run, that would be November 5-7. We need a proposal and a final decision from the exec committee, though Jahnavi and Chris understand that, as the leaders, they have a lot of latitude for decision-making.

Judy seems ready to be done with auctioning – after years of wonderful service! We might do a silent auction, or price things in the book room (for which Phil Howerton has volunteered).

We need to get an updated email list to Jahnavi. If she can get the current spreadsheet from Dave Para, she can easily extract it. It will certainly include non-current members. Adam has other lists to share: one that includes all kinds of non-member well-wishers and interested parties.

Notes record references to on-demand printing services: Redbubble and Uberprint. Recorder is not sure what we were talking about – journals?

There was discussion of the forms we need to file – our nonprofit Form 99-EZ (Dave has been doing this), and our biennial registration with the Secretary of State (Adam has been doing this).

There was discussion of the usefulness of small grants. Jahnavi is very familiar with the process, and Betsy has done it many times, and can provide templates. Lisa can point us to numerous sources. We must of course decide what we would want to do with those funds – typically it allows us to include (and support) local artists.

Meeting adjourned about 6:30

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Davis

Editor's note: the meeting(s) resulted in a detailed and orderly report on initiatives to be undertaken in the coming year. Please see the "special section" towards the end of the newsletter.

On October 11, organizers of the annual meeting met online to discuss progress and preparations. In planning a broader discussion of the future of the Society, conversation ranged more widely, as recorded here:

Condensed 10/11/2025 meeting minutes—email distribution

Subject: Missouri Folklore Society — Executive Summary of October Discussion

Dear Members and Friends,

Our recent meeting centered on the future of the Missouri Folklore Society and how we can adapt to sustain its mission, community, and spirit.

Key Points and Outcomes:

Shared Challenges: Many members expressed burnout, health strains, and the difficulty of maintaining the current annual conference model.

Proposed Changes:

- o Consider conference format changes.
- o Set smaller, achievable goals between meetings.
- o Continue using Zoom for board and planning sessions.
- o Financial Stability: The Society remains secure, with healthy reserves, but we must balance sustainability with available energy and participation.
- o Focus on bringing in new (board) members

Focus on ways to use the conference to increase society funds

Offer workshops to community attendees?

Consider alternate formats of existing materials to increase society funds

CDs versus currently popular on-line music sales?

Offer a discount to walk-ins with our PR materials?

Membership and Renewal:

The group emphasized attracting *younger and mid-career members* while continuing to value long-term contributors.

Revisiting and refreshing the mission statement and bylaws were identified as priorities.

Outreach and Visibility:

Strengthen social media presence (hashtags, tagging, short videos, and modern graphics).

Create new promotional materials (cards, stickers, QR codes).

Explore collaborations with musicians, artists, craftspeople, and regional folklore and arts programs.

Community and Connection:

Members affirmed that *in-person gatherings remain vital*, but online workshops and talks can supplement outreach.

Legacy and Opportunity:

As the Society approaches the 50th anniversary of its 1976 revival, we have a unique moment to celebrate our heritage and reimagine our future.

Next Steps:

Draft an updated mission and vision statement.

Develop branding

3 word description: *Community – Creation – Culture*

possible on-line tags: #MO Lore, #Folklore Rules, #MoFolkloreFun

Plan the next meeting to focus on concrete action items for revitalization.

Create a formalized planning committee with a specific mandate

Together, we remain proud of our long-standing history and shared commitment to preserving and celebrating Missouri's living traditions and look forward to both next year's anniversary of our 1976 revival and the anniversary of the society's 125 year in 2031!

Looking forward to seeing you all in a few weeks in Springfield,
Rachel Gholson

THE MISSOURI FOLKLORE SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1757
Columbia, MO 65205-1757
(phone 660.382.7821)

Officers and Board of Directors

President: <u>Jahnavi Delmonico</u> Chris Drew	Ray Brassieur, Lafayette LA Sharon Brock, Columbia Adam Davis, Kirksville Andrea Davis, Kirksville Betsy Delmonico, Kirksville Neil Delmonico, Kirksville
Vice President:	Liz Faries, Terre du Lac Annie Fuller, St. Louis
Executive Secretary: Adam Davis	Rachel Gholson, Springfield Debra Greene, Jefferson City
Treasurer: Dave Para	Sam Griffin, Columbia Holly Hobbs, Columbia Roger Jungmeyer, Jefferson City
Corresponding Secretary:	Leon Keens, Kansas City Austin Krueger, St. Louis Julie McCollum, New Haven Meredith Rau, St. Charles Loretta Washington, Florissant Hester Wise, Rolla
Archivist:	
2023-2026 Gary Buxton, Doniphan, MO George Caudle, Bonne Terre Jan Caudle, Bonne Terre Jim Caudle, Bonne Terre Gladys Coggsell, Kansas City Judy Domeny Bowen, Rogersville Gene Edson, Richmond John Fisher, Kennett Carol Fisher, Kennett Betty Henderson, Monett Antonio F. Holland, Kansas City Donna Jurich, Tucson AZ Gordon McCann, Springfield <u>Mettazee Morris</u> , St. Louis Lynn Morrow, Jefferson City Frank Nickell, Cape Girardeau Annette Richter, Moorhead, MN Paul Schwartzkopf, Quincy IL <u>Lyn Wolz</u> , Lenexa KS Curtis Copeland, Ozark <u>Kaitlyn McConnell</u> , Springfield <u>Jahnavi Delmonico</u> , Springfield Chris Drew, Springfield H.D. Caballa, Springfield Sandi Green Baker, Springfield Erika Gerety, Albuquerque, NM	
2022-2025 Anthony Bodnar, Troy, IL Jean Brand, Columbia Susan Bryson, Lenexa, KS Ken Burch, Sikeston Janelle Burch, Sikeston Norma Cantu, Kansas City Don Carlson, Leavenworth KS Mim Carlson, Leavenworth KS Howard W. Marshall, Fulton Patrick McGlasson, Mississippi Margot McMillen, Fulton Dave Para, Albuquerque, N.M. Barbara Price, Kirksville Bruce Scovill, Jefferson City John Shewmaker, Columbia Richard Shewmaker, Columbia Debra Thompson, Harrisburg Scott White, Belleville, IL Julie Henigan, Springfield Joe Slama Evelyn Rogers, Boonville	
2021-2024 Jeanelle Ash, Kimberling City	



<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1604545877578309>



A special treat: Sandi Green Baker performed her Crankie version of the traditional ballad, “Lady Margaret,” featuring her own original art on this early form of animation. She was assisted, literally behind the scenes, by Ree Baker. Stun-ningly sung by Charlei Becker. The event was co-sponsored by CreativeRe-Use Marketplace, a Springfield locus for artists to access donated and discarded materials, and its “Listening Room” music venue.

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1878523036099470>

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So what exactly is a Crankie?

A 19th Century form of popular story-telling, a traditional Crankie is a long, illustrated scroll (also called a “moving panorama” or a “moving backdrop”) that is wound onto two spools, and loaded into a box which has a viewing screen. The scroll is then hand-cranked while the story depicted upon it is presented.

The pictorial presentation is usually accompanied by singing and a simple instrumental accompaniment. How elaborate such aural accompaniments may become is entirely up to the presenter. The viewing screen can be as large or as small as the artist/maker of the Crankie box wishes. The scroll is either back or front lit.

Visually, the scroll itself is illustrated with whatever the artist decides will best convey the intended story. Free hand original art work (in any style), silhouettes, and/or photographs are often used in a scroll's illustration.

Shadow puppetry [operated by additional pairs of hands] as well as other forms of puppetry, can add another layer of visual experience.

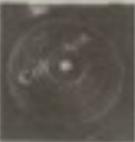
58¢ Your Page One

Springfield, Mo.

Monday, February 19, 1980



Doc Casher, a local composer and recording artist, holds a picture of the young man who inspired him to write the song "The Young Man" which he recorded in 1954.



"I believe I worked at least once in every nightclub in town that was going in my time...and I've sang at most of the churches, white and colored."

- Doc Casher

Doc

By [unclear]

Doc Casher, a local composer and recording artist, has a unique story to tell. He was born in Springfield, Mo., and grew up in a neighborhood where music was a part of the fabric of life. He began playing piano at a young age and was inspired by the blues and gospel music he heard in the clubs and churches of his hometown.

His early experiences in the music business were both challenging and rewarding. He worked in nightclubs and sang in churches, gaining a reputation for his soulful performances. It was during this time that he met a young man who would become the inspiration for one of his most famous songs, "The Young Man."

The young man's story was one of tragedy and hope, and it struck a chord in Doc's heart. He was determined to tell the story through his music, and he wrote "The Young Man" as a tribute to the man whose life he had come to know and love. The song was recorded in 1954 and became a local hit, capturing the hearts of many listeners.



Doc Casher, a local composer and recording artist, is shown here in his home studio. The picture on the piano is of the young man who inspired him to write the song "The Young Man" which he recorded in 1954.



Doc's music has continued to resonate with audiences over the years. His songs tell stories of love, loss, and the human experience, and they have become a part of the musical heritage of Springfield, Missouri. He remains a beloved figure in the local music scene, and his work continues to inspire new generations of musicians.



Springfield Leader

'Nothin Sinful About the Blues'

To The Editor:

A certain element of Springfield Negroes needs to get "hep" to the fact that the blues songs are not bad. The blues were taken from the Negro spirituals, which are the mother of all the American folk songs. The plantation songs, known as spirituals, are nothing else but the blues. They were spontaneous outbursts of intense, religious fervor, and had their origin chiefly in camp meetings, revivals, and other religious exercises. They were never composed but sprang into life--all put together from the white heat of religious fervor during some protracted meetings in camp or church, as the simple, ecstatic utterance of wholly untutored minds; and are practically the only music in America that meets the scientific definition of "folk songs."

During World war number one, Bessie Smith left Atlanta, Georgia, and went to New York, with her two hundred and fifty pounds of human emotion packed behind a powerful voice, and made the northern white people understand what the blues are. The Negro sings them every day about something or other, but still some of them will shriek when a blues singer sings them in actual words and music.

Well, I'm not ashamed of the blues and I know it's not any harm to sing them, and I shall go on singing them wherever I can. If the recent motion picture, "Syncopation," that was shown here didn't wake the Negro up about the blues, let him sleep on. In that picture the white man tried to show him that the blues are real music. It "burns me up" when some narrow-minded religious Negro leader, who thinks that a dollar raised by some one singing W.C. Handy's St. Louis Blues on a benefit program, would not go just as far towards buying a ton of coal for the church or paying the light bill as a dollar raised by some one singing "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" would.

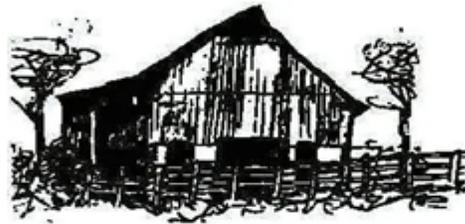
"The world needs music and more music! Music builds the morale of boys in the camps--it inspires our fighting men to new goals--it refreshes all of us, young and old alike, as we move forward in our daily tasks." These are the sentiments of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

DOC DASHER,
Springfield.

Editor's Note: "Syncopation" showed at the Landers theater January 31-February 1 this year; it showed the origin of swing music in the Negro south.

Springfield Leader and Press (Springfield, MO), Sunday, May 23, 1943

The program for the 2025 annual meeting:



MFS Annual Meeting 2025 (Nov 7-8)

Theme: Folklore and 21st Century Identity

Thursday NOV 6

4pm board meeting

5pm dinner on your own

7-9 pm Come join fellow conference-goers in an informal setting! Take turns playing tunes, singing, and sharing the stories you carry—how you introduce yourself, moments from your life that have shaped you, and experiences that connect you to your community. Your Voice or tune is part of the conversation, and we want to hear it!

Friday --NOV 7

9 am

A

B Lyn Wolz, coffeehouse memories

C Philip Howerton, "Poetry in Place"

10:15 am

A John Fisher: From Slavery to Philanthropy: The Charles and Betty Birthright Story

Kaitlyn McConnell: Seeing Community Through the Lens of *Ozarks Alive*

B Evelyn Rogers, reading from her new novel, *Marcia Farrar and Mr. Whiskey Time-Travel to 1997*

C Julie Henigan, Judy Domeny Bowen and Dave Para: Max Hunter and his Legacy in Song (pt I)

11:15 am

A

B Liz Farries: The Clarinet, the Two-Dollar Piano and the Cello in the Corner

Rachel Gholson: Ozarks Folkways and Film: A Select History

C Julie Henigan, Judy Domeny Bowen and Dave Para: Max Hunter and his Legacy in Song (Pt. II)

12:30 pm

Lunch, followed by featured speaker **Sandi Green Baker:**

A Ghostly Love Story in Motion: The Crankie of Lady Margaret

2 pm

A Carol Fisher: Thanksgiving Memories

B Mike Calvert: The World War Two History of the Women at the Lake City Army Arsenal

C Michael Fraser: Remembering Master Ozark Square Dance Fiddler, the late Bob Holt, and his Contributions the Missouri Folk Arts “Master/Apprentice” Program.

3:15 pm

A Julie Henigan: The Irish Keening Tradition as Performative Poetry

B Hayden Head and Curtis Copeland: In Randolph’s Footsteps: Recording the Ozarks for a New Generation

C Dave Para: Mysterious Life and Song of the Doodlebug

Susanna Reichling: Examining the Folk Wisdom of Springfield’s Bluesman, Doc Dasher

4:15 pm

C: *Spooky Horse* in concert!

5:30 pm

Dinner, followed by keynote speaker Lisa Higgins, PhD:

Rooted, Practiced, Sustained—Missouri’s Dynamic Traditional Arts

7 pm auction by Judy Domeny Bowen! Interspersed with music, until they throw us out! Bring your instruments. "Some just clap their hands, or paws, or anything they got"

SAT --NOV 8

9-10 am

A: roundtable: the future of MFS: What we've tried, where we are, things to think about; brainstorming, concrete plans

10:15 - 11:15 am

A: Rachel Gholson's MFS oral history session

B: Chris Otto: Native Americans' Presence and Legacy in Missouri

11:30 am - 1 pm

A: Lunch & meeting (planning for 2026 or 2027?) We need a venue and organizer(s)

After the meeting: **Jim Vandegriff's celebration of life** will be held Saturday afternoon in Richland, MO (80 miles/ 1.5 hrs. away from Springfield, via I-44 East towards Rolla; take exit #145):

American Legion Hall, 1100 North Pine. 3:00 social time 3:30 Military Flag Ceremony & Remembrances



Our current plan is to meet the first weekend of November, 2026, again in Springfield. Watch <https://missourifolkloresociety.org/> and follow us on Facebook —

Editor's note: This has been a year of hard leave-taking. We lost two of our stalwarts, our pillars, our Old Reliables, our dear friends. Brett Rogers' eulogy was written by his wife, Evelyn. I wept when I heard her read it, and again as I share it here. Jim Vandergriff composed much of the text here himself, over the last few years. We shall not see their like again.

Brett Scott Rogers *October 19, 1958– August 5, 2025*



Over the years Brett often said he wanted me to speak at his celebration of life because I was the person who knew him best. I don't know if he thought about how hard that would be, or about how hard it is to say who someone was when you've spent almost every day with them for close to forty years. Brett in his twenties was not Brett in his sixties, but there were some constants—he was always funny and always came through in unexpected ways. Here are a few other things you might not know about Brett:

Previous page: Brett when he participated in the re-enactment at Gettysburg; below, in front of the Diego Rivera mural at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The year we got married, I was thirty-one and Brett was thirty, and we were both graduate students. Not long after our wedding, something happened that brought me the closest to depression I've been, and it took me months to recover. Brett was a night owl and usually came to bed later, but all during that time, when I got in bed for the night, he came and sat with me for a while and said funny things that made me laugh.



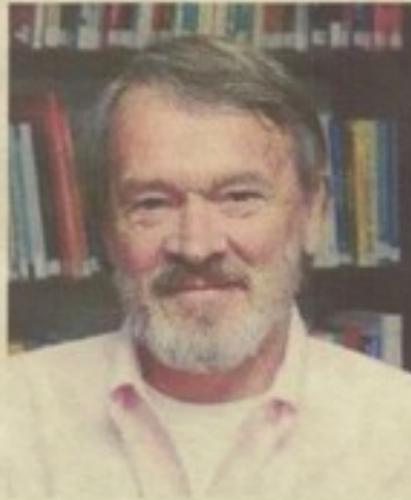
He didn't explain why he started doing it, but I knew it was because he didn't want me to be sad, and he knew I knew. That was Brett: he was sensitive and intuitive, but he was also oblique about things that were hard to talk about. If you know our daughter Marnie, you know that side of Brett in her, and you also know his love of the natural world, which she shares.

https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/brett-rogers-obituary?id=59148984&utm_source=copiedlink&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=obitshare

Something you might not know about Brett: he gave very unconventional or even downright weird gifts. Our kids could tell you about alien bath towels, pink resin pigs, a musical saw, or a handmade plaster wall pocket that he found at a flea market. The year I asked for a jean jacket, he gave me a primitive folk painting of Black Moses coming down from Mount Sinai with the tablets. That was Brett: a giver of unique gifts that you realized later you wanted because he was the one who had given them to you. If you know our son Noah, you know that discerning side of Brett in him, and you also know how much Brett enjoyed surprising people and making them laugh, a trait Noah shares.

Because he was eccentric in many ways, it was easy to overlook the fact that Brett was a historian who dealt with facts as his vocation. Though he was creative and offbeat, it was tempered with a lot of practicality. Several of us in our family tend toward impulsiveness, but Brett was the common-sense brake when he thought we were heading into something that was not a good idea. Except for a few small blind spots, he was a logical decision maker. Over the years, I valued that more and more. We talked about and agreed on all the big decisions, and I already miss hearing his voice of reason. If you know our daughter Phoebe, you know that paradox of Brett in her: the mix of creative soul and sensible judge—and also you know his visual gifts and sense of style and color, which Phoebe shares.

Brett relished being different. He had a heart for underdogs and outsiders. He was shy and unsure of himself, but he also craved an audience. He was intellectual and artistic but down to earth. He was romantic about many things, but a realist at heart; he was a free spirit but not flighty. If he loved you, he was loyal. He was a great friend and advocate. He adored his family, and they were the center of his world. He especially adored his granddaughter, Daphne, and we're so glad he was able to know her. He could be a handful to manage because he was very particular, but he made the world magical, and he was easy to love. In his final months that was clear from the way our children and his brother, Shawn, surrounded him and helped me care for him. You can say this about any human being, but it was doubly true of Brett: there was absolutely no one else like him.



Jim Vandergriff
August 14, 1942 – May 2, 2025

*Husband, educator, father, folklorist,
grandfather, poet, great-grandfather,
linguist, brother, veteran, handy person,
academic, friend, neighbor, and cat lover*
Jim enjoyed his life to the fullest.

Jim (James Harley) was born August 14, 1942, on the little Vandergriff farm near Stoutland, Missouri. His parents were Oliver Wyatt Vandergriff and Mary Ella Vandergriff nee Perkins. Jim had four siblings: Robert Lee (Bobby, died 1962), Jerry, John (died 2020), and Beverly (Bev).



Jim dropped out of high school after the 11th grade and joined the Navy in 1959. He served honorably for four years. Jim enjoyed his Navy years, serving as an ordnanceman, and traveling to Hawaii, the Philippines, and Japan. Trained to work with bombs and missiles, Jim left the Navy when he was told to attend courses on nuclear weapons. Jim wanted nothing to do with nuclear weapons.

After completing correspondence courses while in the Navy, Jim received his high school diploma and started college at Central Missouri State College. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1968 with a teaching certificate. Then, in 1972, he received a Master of Arts. While completing his Masters of Arts, he taught college English for a year beginning his career as a college professor.

Jim continued to teach for another 38 years in various places - Missouri, Kansas, Oregon, Illinois and Arizona. While he taught in middle and high schools, for the majority of his career he taught in higher education. His courses included English, Latin, folklore, science fiction, and teacher preparation.

Jim earned a doctorate in Teaching and Teacher Education with a focus on secondary English teacher preparation and professional development in 2001. During that time, he met and married the love of his life, Donna Jurich.



Jim had one daughter, Amy (Vandergriff), by his first wife (Judy Weitkemper); four grandchildren (Jacob Albin; Gabriella Albin; Emma Belcher; Allison Belcher); two great grandchildren (Bryer Spender; Tatum Spencer) and two nieces he raised for a time (Nita McGraw; Debbie Penn, with whom he shared a special relationship). He loved them all deeply. Jim is also survived by numerous nephews, nieces, great nephews, great nieces, and second cousins whom he enjoyed being in contact with and sharing their lives and family history.



For most of his adult life, Jim was an active member of the Missouri Folklore Society (MFS), serving as President one year, journal editor for about 15 years, book review editor for about 10 years, and organizer of the book and exhibits room for many years. He was a member of the MFS board for about 50 years. Jim, also, published several articles for the MFS journal and presented at the annual meeting often - in-person, streaming, and asynchronously.

In November of 2015, Jim suffered a massive stroke, and in July of 2016, he broke his left hip. Both left him unable to do many things he used to and loved to do. He did find a new avenue to express himself – albeit somewhat reticently - cooking and breadmaking. Many friends and family enjoyed his delicious meals.



Jim was able to spend his last days at home, often sitting on the porch appreciating all the desert creatures that visited the garden – round tail squirrels, antelope squirrels, a rock squirrel, quail, sparrows, cardinals, cactus wrens, doves, hawks, and the neighborhood owl – all with one of the cats on his lap and blue grass playing in the background.

Jim loved national parks and the work of the Missouri Folklore Society. In lieu of flowers, please donate in Jim's memory to:

- Saguaro National Park
(<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/friendsofsaguaro>) or
- the Missouri Folklore Society (Adam Davis adavis@truman.edu)

Remember Jim & his motto – live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, leave the rest up to chance.

*Written by Jim, undated, prior to 2019, and edited by Donna
October 2025*

Missouri Folklore Society

Springfield, Mo.

Nov. 6, 2025

Financial Statement from December 31, 2024 to October 31, 2025

	INCOME	
	2024	2025
Membership Dues	\$765.00	\$40.00
Annual Meeting	\$1,970.00	
Auction	\$520.00	
Donations, Grants	\$300.00	\$85.00
Sales		
Interest	\$1,176.56	\$106.29
Miscellaneous		
Refund		
Total	\$4,211.56	\$231.29

	EXPENSES	
Journal Printing		
Newsletter Printing		
Annual Meeting	\$1,810.46	
Refunds		
Postage	\$194.00	\$107.00
Awards		
Supplies		
Miscellaneous	\$224.87	
Total	\$2,229.33	

Checking Account Balance 12-31-2024	\$7,724.13
CD 12-31-2024	\$20,808.69
Schroeder Endowment Fund CD	\$15,610.32
Total Account Balance 12-31-2024	\$44,133.14

Checking Account Balance 10-31-2025	\$7,624.13	
CD 10-31-2025	\$21,030.29	@3.55% matures 09/20/26
Schroeder Endowment Fund CD	\$16,096.15	@ 3.55% matures 08/20/26
Total Account Balance 10-31-2025	\$44,750.37	

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Para



 **Missouri Folklore Society**
Published by Betsy Delmonico · November 8 · 🌐

Congratulations to Jahni Delmonico and Chris Drew, new co-presidents of the Missouri Folklore Society! ❤️!

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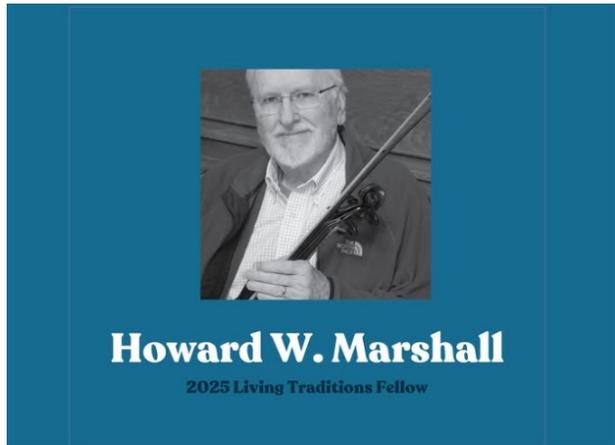
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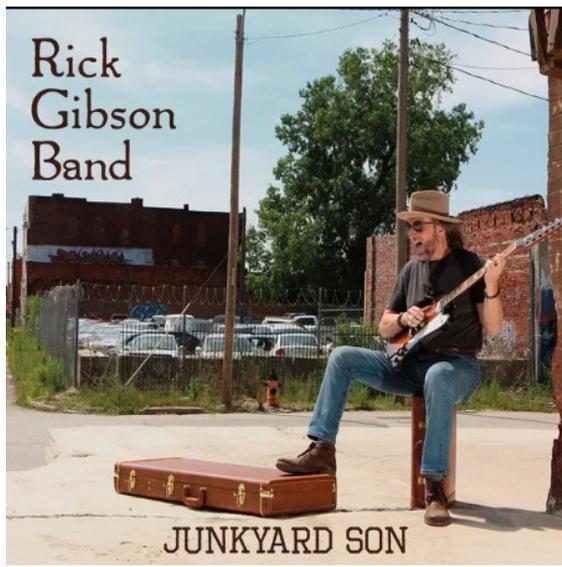
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Congratulations, Rusty!



New member profile:

We are happy to welcome **Rick Gibson** to the Society.

We'll be making space at the website for members to promote their folklore— and folklife-related products and services, and to link their personal websites. Get in touch with adavis@truman.edu

Hi, I'm Rick Gibson. I am a songwriter and a storyteller; I write Ozark songs that tell stories—and Ozark stories that often turn into songs. Let me explain.

Scattered across the landscape of time are the stories of courageous people who faced long odds, persevered, overcame, and put down roots. Sadly, many of these stories are fading as the years pass. The people, places, and moments captured in my musical and literary works aim to preserve this vanishing legacy.

Preserving American cultural history through story and song is a powerful way to inform, inspire, and captivate both current and future generations. *The Ozark Anthology* was created with that purpose in mind. Since 2012, I've been writing music and lyrics that reflect Ozark life, lore, and history. And now, in 2025, I've expanded that work to include full literary narratives to accompany the music.

The first musical-literary production by Ozark Anthology is *The Life and Times of Curtis Lee*—a serial drama presented first as an episodic audio story, then a book, and eventually a full audio drama. Blending history and fiction, it follows the life of my grandfather, Curtis Lee Halford from his early 20th-century Tennessee roots across the decades to the Missouri Bootheel. It's a deeply felt, faith-infused historical narrative with strong moral and emotional underpinnings. Curtis's journey takes him through Depression-era Memphis, an Ozark-based WWII prisoner-of-war camp, and ultimately into the racially charged Ozark bootheel of the 1960s.

Accompanying the saga is a seven-song soundtrack, *The Book of Ozark*. This concept album brings to life the mood, emotion, and environment of the Curtis Lee story. Its original Americana-Ozark sound invites you to step inside the narrative and experience it firsthand. After more than a decade of writing and performing, I launched *Ozark Anthology* this year to provide a legacy for the Ozarks. These first works will be released in early 2026, beginning with the music and followed soon after by the episodes of *The Life and Times of Curtis Lee*. You can follow the progress and join the journey on the Ozark Anthology Facebook page or at www.ozarkanthology.com, where I share updates, commentary, photos, and videos. As we approach release season, I'll be announcing where you can subscribe or purchase the work. If you have questions, you can email me at rick@ozarkanthology.com.

In the end, it's all about Ozark people, places, and things—and preserving their stories for generations to come.

Important special section: initiatives for the Society in 2026

Missouri Folklore Society Annual Meeting

Date: November 8, 2025

Location: Elfindale Mansion, Springfield, MO

Session Title: *Planning for the Future*

Presiding: Missouri Folklore Society Officers and Members

Recorder(s): Rachel Gholson & Erika Gerety

1. Communication, Outreach, and Public Relations

Discussion

- A **spreadsheet** could track who prefers snail mail versus electronic communication, to help coordinate outreach and publicity efforts.
- **Erika Gerety** asked whether the conference was listed as a **Facebook event**; **Adam Davis** confirmed that it is.
- **Adam Davis** will send the **email list** to **Erika Gerety** for newsletters and reminder messages.
- **Dave Para** holds the **snail mail list** and will provide it to **Judy** for postcards.
- **Julie Henigan** and **Chris Drew** will collaborate on **press releases**.
- **Sandi Green Baker** will be asked to design both the **reminder postcard** and an **Instagram graphic**. [Can we pay her?]
- PR strategies discussed included outreach to **universities, folk events, cultural centers, libraries, and music shows**; plus **Facebook sharing** with a consistent logo.
- **Erika Gerety** volunteered to handle some **Facebook sharing** and reminder emails.
- Members discussed the importance of developing a **unified visual identity** across all MFS platforms and promotional materials.

Decisions

- MFS will continue expanding its digital and community outreach, using coordinated branding across formats.

Press releases and social media graphics will be created to promote upcoming meetings and initiatives.

Action Items

- **Sandi Green Baker:** Ask to design the conference poster/reminder postcard and Instagram graphic.
- **Judy Domeny:** Mail postcards once she receives the mailing list.
- **Dave Para:** Provide physical mailing address list to Judy.
- **Adam Davis:** Create Instagram account for MFS. Send updated email list to Erika Gerety for newsletters and reminders.
- **Julie Henigan and Chris White:** Write press releases and coordinate PR with local media.
- **Erika Gerety & Adam Davis:** Share Facebook announcements and reminder newsletters.

2. Expanding Membership and Community Connections

Discussion

- Members stressed outreach to **West Plains** and **Ava**, possibly through **Emily Hawkins/Haskins** (sp).
 - Recognized the importance of connecting with **Filipino, Hispanic, Marshallese** and **Vietnamese** communities whose traditions are now part of Missouri's living folklore.
 - **Yolanda Lorge** was mentioned as a contact for Hispanic community outreach, and connections to **Marion Days** were suggested for Vietnamese engagement.
 - Discussion of **workshops** (e.g., foraging) as potential "hooks" to draw new members.
 - The **Welcome Wagon** initiative will greet and orient new members and attendees.
- The Society aims to treat all participants as **members and collaborators**, not as exhibits or "shows."

Decisions

- Expand engagement with culturally diverse communities and develop inclusive programming.

Launch the "Welcome Wagon" for future meetings.

Action Items

- **Welcome Wagon Volunteers:** Judy Domeny, Carol Fisher, Erika Gerety, Liz Faries, and Evelyn Rogers.
- **Sign in desk:** Liz Faries & Evelyn Rogers
- Ask **H.D.** to be part of the Welcome Wagon.
- Ask **H.D.** to be part of the Welcome Wagon.

Outreach team: Connect with Yolanda Large and Marion Days organizers.

3. Conference Planning for 2026

Discussion

- The next meeting will again be in **Springfield**, Missouri.
- The **Elfindale Mansion** may not accommodate larger attendance; new venue options will be explored.
- Members discussed keeping the conference in Springfield for several years for consistency & focused membership building.
- **Jahni and Chris Drew** will serve as co-presidents and lead planning, assisted by Springfield-area members: **Rachel Golson, Judy Domini-Bowen, Julie Hennigan**, and **Scott White**. **Mike and Tenley Frazier (new MFS members) will be asked to join this group.**
- The **Call for Papers** needs to be sent earlier, ideally by winter. April latest.
- Tentative **dates:** first full weekend in **November 2026**. (6-8?)
- **Format:** All-day Friday and Saturday, possibly extending into Saturday evening or move all forward one day with the start being a Friday board meeting
- Potential **themes:** "*What Are You Doing?*" "*Show me MO!*"
- Suggested **workshops** may focus on music, folklore skills, or cultural practices (e.g., foraging).

- Members discussed scheduling: keeping the **business meeting on Saturday**, possibly moving the **jam session** to late morning or afternoon before dinner.
 - **Evelyn Rogers** proposed that sessions be **roughed out in advance**, though no one has yet taken on that task. Each person taking a focus (ex. Music, literature, etc.). This approach could be joined with outreach endeavors.
- Smaller, topic-focused **Zoom meetings** were suggested throughout the year for planning and connection.

Decisions

- Conference will remain in Springfield, with a new venue to be determined.
- Dates tentatively set for the **first full weekend of November 2026**.
- Call for Papers to be issued earlier than in past years.

Auction to continue (see Section 4).

Action Items

- **Conference Committee:** Secure Springfield venue and finalize schedule.
- **Program Committee:** Release Call for Papers by early winter/April latest.
- **Jahni Delmonico and Chris Drew:** Draft workshop ideas and coordinate with local hosts.
- **Evelyn Rogers:** Consider having an advance session planning process. Have someone take each presentation area (ex. Music, literature, etc.)

Zoom Conference Planning: Organize short virtual meetings throughout the year.

4. Auction Discussion

Discussion

- **Judy Domeny Bowen** questioned whether to continue the annual **auction**, noting reduced revenue and items going for lower amounts.
- Members agreed the auction still raises some funds and builds community but needs stronger support.
- Alternative models discussed:
 - Fixed-price system for books and records.
 - Silent auction for smaller or lower-value items.
 - Post-meeting conversation emphasized the need for helpers during the live auction to group and circulate items.

H.D. volunteered to assist Judy in organizing and managing the process next year.

Decisions

- The auction will continue for 2026.
- Support will be provided to Judy to improve process and visibility.

Action Items

- Plan 2026 auction logistics
 - How to handle books/records
 - Addition of a silent auction for some items
 - What help does Judy need!?

Review feasibility of fixed-price or silent auction options before next meeting

5. Merchandise and Visual Identity

Discussion

- MFS aims for a consistent logo and look across postcards, posters, merchandise, and social media.
 - **Scott White** volunteered to coordinate **merchandise creation** and has design contacts.
 - **Sandi Baker** will be asked to assist with graphics.
 - o Need volunteer to make the ask. Rachel Gholson is not the person as she said membership did not mean more work when discussing Sandi joining the MFS board.
- A coherent logo or “merch graphic” will strengthen the Society’s identity and recognition.

Decisions

Proceed with creation of a unified logo and merchandise line.

Action Items

- **Scott White:** Coordinate merchandise design and production.
 - **Sandy Baker:** Design graphics for social media and merch.
- Judy Domeny Bowen:** Oversee distribution of physical materials (postcards).

6. Public Relations and Regional Media

Discussion

- **Chris Drew** and **Julie Hennigan** will lead PR and press efforts, supported by local Springfield members.
- Emphasis placed on outreach to cultural centers, libraries, universities, and local media outlets.
- **Chris Drew** has connections with **Ozarks Public Radio** and experience writing press releases.
- Members reiterated the idea that “**The Ozarks still have something to lose,**” reinforcing the Society’s mission of preservation and renewal.

Outreach efforts will include **contra and square dances, jams,** and folk events as entry points for community engagement.

Decisions

- Chris Drew and Julie Henigan to lead PR coordination and utilize regional media partnerships.

Action Items

- **Chris and Julie:** Draft and circulate press releases to media outlets and local organizations.
- PR Team:** Share announcements via Facebook and other channels using new logo and graphics.

Additional names to be confirmed on **Dave’s updated list.**

Action Items

- **Dave Para:** Update and circulate official board roster.

Secretary: Record election results in 2025–2026 membership records.

8. Fundraising and Ongoing Activities

Discussion

- Food items remain the most successful auction category; members suggested emphasizing these donations.

- Book and record donations need clearer organization and pricing structure.

Members agreed that the **business meeting** should remain on **Saturday** regardless of schedule adjustments.

Decisions

- Maintain Saturday business meeting tradition.

Strengthen structure for book and record donation handling.

Action Items

- Evaluate donation and auction processes.

Adam Davis: Confirm Saturday business meeting in next year's schedule for conference & the spring board meeting April 18 at noon.