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# Depot Shines Light On Dexter's Heritage

AUGUST 15TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

## Depot Shines Light On Dexter's Heritage

*By Annabeth Miiler,  
ShowMe Times Editor*

In its heyday, the railroad depot in Dexter was a center of activity. Folks boarded the train, headed for visits or business on up the rail line; salesmen and family arrived at the busiest and fastest-growing town in the county. Goods made in Dexter were shipped out of the depot; new goods arrived for the growing community right at the depot.

Dexter - the city - was actually created by the railroad. In a history of the community written for Dexter's Centennial in 1973, it was noted that the Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad Company (CAT) planned to build a depot along what would be Main Street ... and thus the depot had a home in Dexter.

It was around this depot that Dexter grew.

“The railroad company laid out the town, and the sale of lots began on the 4th of July,” wrote the late Wilson Jarrell in a history published in the Dexter Centennial Cookbook in 1973. Jarrell wrote that on the day of the sale – July 4, 1873 - “the largest crowd ever assembled in Stoddard County gathered in Dexter to witness and participate in this sale. Even though much of the land was covered with water, a good deal of the land was sold.”

Dexter was born, and the hub of the city was established – at the depot.

Now, after years of being overlooked and in disrepair, the Dexter depot has come alive again as the Dexter Welcome Center – complete with displays of Dexter’s past and the people who helped make the community a special place.

“I just love this building,” said Angie Williamson, Tourism/Marketing Director for the Welcome Center. Williamson is enthusiastic about the center and about the history that is now showcased in the 'new' depot.

Through years of careful work, the depot has been restored – the hardwood floors are now brilliant, the walls painted in subtle tones, windows replaced and now gleam, and displays showcase Dexter’s heritage.

“This is my favorite photo,” Williamson said as she proudly stood by a photograph of the first Miss Dexter and her court. It’s a striking photo of five young Dexter women – the queen and her court from the first contest held in 1934 at the old Weeks Theater. Featured is the first Miss Dexter - Veda Pruitt and her court, Isa Sharon Smith, Pauline Burton, Irene Gaines, and Mary Irons.

Displays are currently featured that highlight the sacrifices of Dexter’s veterans, as well as displays on local businesses and institutions.

“Now, this receives a lot of comments,” Williamson said as she led the way to an old-fashioned machine used for giving women permanents in their hair. Actually, the gizmo looks a little creepy – almost something out of an old black & white horror movie.

“They say the smell was horrendous. Women who’ve come in here say if you ever smelled a permanent from one of these machines you won’t ever forget it,” she said.

Williamson has big plans for the Welcome Center and wants to highlight not only Dexter’s heritage, but be a hub of activity – just as the depot was in the heyday of rail traffic.

“I want the Depot to be busy – full of people,” she said. Plans are on the drawing board for activities this fall to open the doors of the depot and invite the community in for events, open houses, and meetings. In addition, plans are in the works for local model railroad enthusiast Pete Parysek to install a model railroad in the facility.

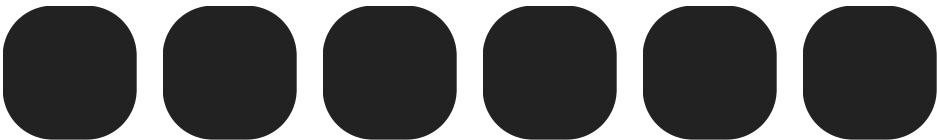
The Dexter Welcome Center and Depot is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., and on Saturday from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The Depot is

located at 10 S. W. Main Street in the Downtown Dexter district.

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# Teachers Win Prizes At Luncheon

AUGUST 12TH 2011 BY NEWS

Teachers Win Prizes At Luncheon

A special luncheon was held for Dexter faculty, staff and administration to “kick off” the new school year on the right foot. The luncheon was held Thursday, Aug 11 and the Dexter school staff was treated to a fine noon meal and had the opportunity to win a pair of gift baskets designed just for teachers.

Winners of the Montgomery Bank school baskets were April Aldridge and Chasity McLaughlin. The baskets were filled with those things that many teachers used – like dry-erase markers, hand sanitizer, and more.

The value of each of the two baskets was \$100. Montgomery Bank staff was on hand to greet the teachers, staff and families who attended the luncheon.

Teachers had an opportunity to relax and enjoy each other's company after the summer break and before the start of another busy Bearcat year.

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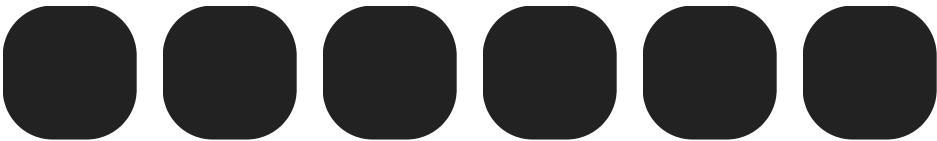
Teachers and staff report for professional development meetings on Tuesday, Aug. 16. The first day of classes for students in the Dexter schools is Thursday, Aug. 18 with a half-day of classes; first full day of classes is Friday, Aug. 19.

*Photos Above: Top photo - Chasity McLaughlin was one of the winners of the special prize baskets fro Montgomery Bank at Thursday's luncheon. With Chasity are Lindsay Emillo (left) and Sarah Gibson of the Montgomery Bank staff; Bottom Photo: The winner of another basket of goodies for the classroom valued at \$100 from Montgomery Bank was April Aldridge. With April are Kyle Christian and Lindsay Emillo of the bank's Dexter staff.*

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# Blood Drive Set In Stoddard County

AUGUST 11TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

## Blood Drive Set In Stoddard County

*A SMT News Report*

The American Red Cross will hold three blood drives in Stoddard County in August, and thanks to a new partnership donors will have a special treat.

Upcoming blood drives in Stoddard County include:

- Friday, Aug. 12 at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 13583 Old Highway 25, Dexter, from 2 – 7 p.m.
- Monday, Aug. 15 at the Life Chapel Assembly of God, 22443 State Highway 51, Puxico, MO, 3 – 7 p.m.
- Friday, Aug. 19 at Mingo Job Corps Center, 4253 State Highway T, Puxico, MO, 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Thanks to a new partnership between the Red Cross and Keebler, donors will now receive Keebler cookies after giving blood.

“We truly appreciate this donation from Keebler”, said Scott Caswell, CEO, Missouri-Illinois Region. “Offering a delicious Keebler? cookie to our blood donors is our way of thanking them for their time and generosity.”

The partnership between the Red Cross and Keebler is a natural one. Both organizations believe in the value of recognizing those individuals who selflessly give of themselves to help those in need.

“We hope that our giving back to the people that give to others will inspire even more simple acts of kindness,” said Todd Penegor, Kellogg President of US Snacks. “Keebler believes in the value of doing uncommonly good deeds and is joining the Red Cross to encourage all eligible people across America to give blood.”

The Red Cross, through the dedication of its donors, provides blood and blood products to 79 hospitals across the region and needs nearly 800 blood donors to come forward each day to roll up a sleeve, make their summer blood donation and enjoy a tasty Keebler cookie.

While blood donations are up from seriously low levels in May and June, blood products continue to go to area hospitals just as quickly as they are coming in. The sweltering heat waves that have baked much of the country this summer have hurt blood collections, too, as triple digit temperatures made it extremely difficult to recruit enough donors to go out and give blood.

In effort to thank blood donors who choose to help with this summer's blood shortage, the American Red Cross has launched a "Be Extraordinary" campaign so donors can turn their typical summer day into an extraordinary gift for a patient in need.

As an extra incentive this summer, anyone who presents to donate blood with the Red Cross by Sept. 5 is automatically entered into a drawing for a \$250 gas card, and will also have an opportunity to purchase discounted Ram's tickets. On Labor Day weekend, anyone presenting to donate Friday through Monday is automatically entered into a drawing for a \$1,000 gas card.

Plus, anyone who presents to donate blood through Wednesday, Sept. 14 is automatically entered into the Red Cross Racing "Summer Drive Sweepstakes" to win a brand new 2012 candy red metallic Ford Fiesta SE, courtesy of Ford Motor Company. One winner is selected by random drawing on Monday, Sept. 19.

***Photo Above: Cory Bennett prepares to give blood at an American Red Cross Blood Drive earlier this year at Dexter High School.***

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## New Teachers Join Richland Staff

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AUGUST 09TH 2011 BY NEWS

### New Teachers Join Richland Staff

ESSEX - Teachers, staff and administrators are busy this week preparing for the arrival of students and the start of the 2011-2011 school year on Thursday.

Seven new teachers and administrators have joined the Richland team for the new school year. They include:

? **Frank Killian**, superintendent; 1993 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University;

? **Stephanie DePew**, physical education teacher, assistant volleyball and softball coach; 2005 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University;

? **Lisa Gerlach**, high school science teacher, 2010 graduate of Truman State University;

? **Elana Ison**, K-12 Counselor; 2012 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University;

? **Hayley Jennings**, business teacher, 2004 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University;

? **David Reynolds**, boys physical education and boys basketball coach, 2010 graduate of Williams Baptist College;

? **Kayelean Vance**, high school special service; 1993 graduate of Southeast Missouri State University;

? **Carrie Wyman**, second grade teacher, 1997 graduate of the University of Missouri.

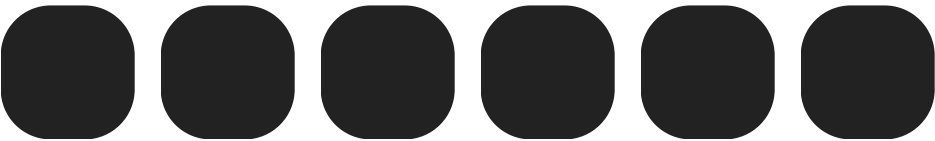
School bells will ring for Richland students this Thursday, Aug. 11 with a full day of classes beginning at 8 a.m. Buses will run the first day of school.

*Photo above: New teachers being welcomed at Richland Schools include (seated, from left) Stephanie DePew, Lisa Gerlach, Haley Jennings, Kalelean Vance, Carrie Wyman; (standing, from left) Frank Killiam, Elana Ison, David Williams. (SMT photo by Annabeth Miller)*

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# Thousands Cool Off at Current River

AUGUST 06TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER



## Thousands Cool Off at Current River

**Van Buren, MO** - As the temperatures soar and the summer nears an end, there are more and more people headed to Van Buren for a weekend getaway. It doesn't take long to understand why people absolutely fall in love with the cool waters of the Current River.

From Big Springs State Park to the infamous Jolly Cone, all ages find a great time in Van Buren. But at the end of the day, the river floating and camping are the number one attractions to the area.

A large group of area residents from Dexter, Dudley and Essex have begun to find their way to "*The Current*" on a more regular basis. You will find these groups located on all parts of the river and enjoying the river in their own ways.

Some have vacation homes, some stay in campers and some simply make a day trip to "*The Current*".

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However the plan is laid out, a trip to "*The Current*" always equals fun.

However, life on the river has changed to some degree. A major upgrade to the styles, sizes, and colors of floating tubes can be found parading down the river. Typical canoes and regular tubes are still popular, but you will also find large river rafts, kayaks, and river jet boats. There are even occasional jet skis that are running different parts of the river.

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Of course, there are literally thousands upon thousands river floaters loading into group transports to move upriver to find their way down the river. Many floaters take their floating cooler loaded down with provisions for the group, and others even adapt their Dewalt radios to play music as they lazily move down the river.

A quick lunch of hot dogs and cold cuts set up on a gravel bar is always a must. There is simply nothing that taste better than a meal on the riverbank.

One of the best areas is found with the tent canopies that line the gravel bars. You will normally find these to be larger groups of friends that meet at these specific locations each weekend. These groups normally hold tight to these areas and visit with all the passing floaters.

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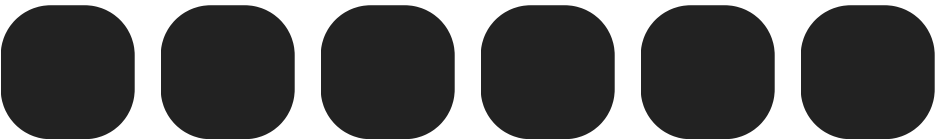
If you haven't been to the river lately, there is still time. It's a beautiful attraction that is

approximately a one-hour drive from Dexter with the Hwy 60 improvements. It's worth the the trip and don't worry, the kids can sleep on the way home.

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