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Wrestling Event At Stoddard County Fair Provides Homecoming for Former Dexter Resident

SEPTEMBER 18TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Wrestling Event At Stoddard County Fair Provides Homecoming for Former Dexter Resident

Dexter, Missouri - When the superstars of World League Wrestling (WLW) bring their form of family entertainment to this year's Stoddard County Fair on Sept. 23, the event will have special meaning for one Southeast Missouri native.

Brian Thompson, a 1999 graduate of Dexter High School, is the regular ring announcer and play-by-play commentator for WLW, a professional wrestling organization based in Troy and operated by the legendary Harley Race. Thompson, who now resides in Lebanon, said the event is a "dream come true for him."

"I am excited that WLW is coming to the Stoddard County Fair this year," said Thompson. "This is the first time I've been part of a wrestling show, as a performer, in Dexter in nearly 10 years."

Thompson grew up in Dexter and as a child became a pro wrestling fan, idolizing some of the business' greats such as Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, Sting, Bret "Hit Man" Hart and "Stone Cold" Steve Austin. Upon high school graduation, Thompson was able to become involved in the unique world of pro wrestling as a ring announcer for Gateway Championship Wrestling (GCW), an organization based in St. Louis at the time.

He has since spent the last 15 years traveling across the United States performing in the business that he loves primarily on weekends. He works in the field of economic development at what he calls his "regular job" during the week.

"I've been very blessed to travel to more than 28 states during the last 15 years doing what I love to do," said Thompson. "However, there is just something extra special about coming 'home' to Dexter and doing a show right here."

Thompson, who is also a graduate of Three Rivers Community College and Arkansas State University, said the opportunity to perform in front of friends and family still living in the Dexter area makes the event even more meaningful. His parents Jimmy and Thelma Thompson still live in Dexter as well as his aunt Brenda Williamson.

The WLW Wrestling event at the fair will be held at Arena A and will begin at 7 p.m. Wednesday. Featured wrestlers include “The Legacy” Leland Race, “The Ego” Dustin Bozworth, Roy Lewis, “Black Hand Warrior” Dave Delorean, Karim Brigante, Brandon “Espy” Espinosa, “The” Ace Hawkins and more. Admission for the event is \$5 per person. Fans age 5 and younger will be admitted to the event at no charge.

For more information on WLW Wrestling, visit www.harleyrace.com.

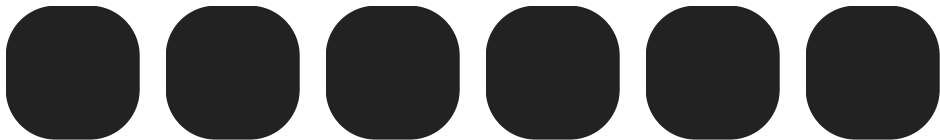
For schedule information on this year’s Stoddard County Fair, visit www.stoddardcountyfair.com

Photo Credit -Joshua Mashon Photography.

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Students Attend Harding University Honors Symposium

AUGUST 15TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Students Attend Harding University Honors Symposium

Searcy, Arkansas - Three local students from Dexter and Bernie attended the The Harding Honors Symposium.

This is a two-week academic program on the Searcy campus designed to challenge, encourage, and uplift rising high school Seniors. Students from all across the nation come together for the purpose of growing spiritually and academically. Three hours of university credit are awarded to all who successfully complete the Symposium.

Admission to the Symposium is based on ACT score, GPA, and a letter of recommendation from the student's school outlining academic ability and leadership roles.

The typical day involved lectures, discussion groups, and interactive classes. Students participated in HUT, which is a poverty simulation. Students were grouped arbitrarily into nationalities and lived as these people would for approximately 12 hours, including overnight. Some students, including Kalee Howard and Zac Tanner, were refugees who had to stand in line for several hours filling out paperwork and then had to sleep overnight in a makeshift refugee camp tent that they had to put up. They were given enough "money" to buy cornmeal, a potato and an onion to cook and feed the 6 members of their "family".

Tyler Stevenson's "family" picked blackberries for two hours to be paid to purchase food. They were able to buy 1 potato for their "family" of six.

HUT is a 2 week unique missions training village at camp Tahkodah under the direction of Harding University.

Other activities the students enjoyed included a day of service in the community, rock wall climbing, and a one day canoe trip to finish out their two week experience.

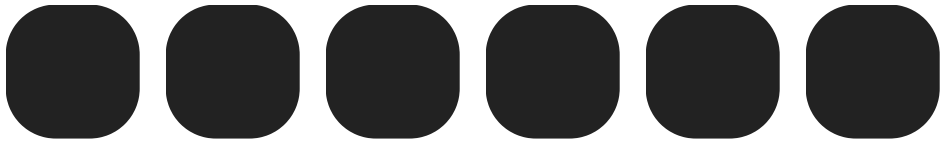
Shown in the photo are from left to right: Zackary Tanner of Bernie, Kalee Howard of Dexter, Abby Stinnett of Quincy, IL, and Tyler Stevenson of Dexter.

Submitted by Kay Stevenson.

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A Tribute to Our Heroes of the Vietnam War

AUGUST 11TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

A Tribute to Our Heroes of the Vietnam War

Dexter, Missouri - A special ceremony paid tribute to veterans who served in Vietnam was held on Sunday afternoon. A heat advisory was in place, but that did not stop the hundreds who came out to pay their respect and honor those who fell in combat so many years ago.

The ceremony opened with the Presentation of Colors by the American Legion Kenady-Hanks Post #59 Honor Guard followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by Boy Scout Dylan Long, son of Misty and Tony Long of Dexter.

Members of Dexter High School band performed our National Anthem followed by Lauren and Caroline Powers who sang God Bless America. They are the daughters of Chuck and Felicia Powers of Dexter.

Rev. Justin Sponaule performed the Invocation as well as the Benediction.

Mayor Joe Weber had the honor of hosting the ceremony and introduced Brigadier General (Ret.) Charlie Kruse, featured keynote speaker for the event.

Kruse quoted two songs that he felt reflected the memory of the soldiers who lost their lives fighting for our freedom.

The first song he quoted was by Tim McGraw called "If You're Reading This". "If you are reading this my Mommas sittin' there. Looks like I only got a one way ticket over here. Sure wish I could give you one more kiss....."

"Many men did get a one-way ticket to Vietnam, 58,220 men and women never returned to give their momma a kiss," commented Kruse.

The second song Kruse quoted was by the Statler Brothers called "More Than A Name on A Wall".

"I saw her from a distance as she walked up to the wall. In her hand she held some flowers as her tears began to fall. And she took out pen and paper as to trace her memories and she looked up to heaven and the words she said were these....., "Lord my boy was special and he meant so much to me and oh, I'd love to see him just one more time You see. All I have are the memories and the moments to recall. So Lord could you tell him he's more than a name on a wall."

Kruse recognized veterans and especially Vietnam Veterans in the audience as they were asked to stand or waive to the crowd. He also spoke of numerous volunteers who helped bring The Moving Wall to Dexter.

He finished by saying how proud he was to live in Dexter and how proud and honored he was to speak today and be a part of the ceremony.

The Stoddard County Honor Guard performed a Gun Salute followed by Adam Clark and Cody Jinkerson who performed Taps together.

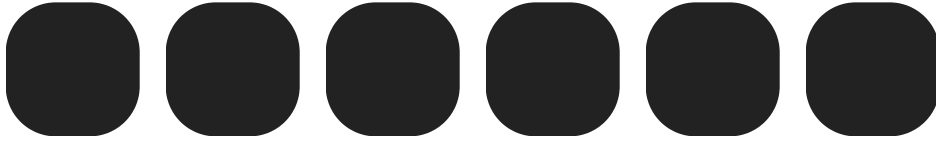
"It is the ultimate honor to be on the wall," commented one participant. "The Wall is a place to heal and reflect. I am so glad it came to Dexter, so proud of our community."

Many spectators were moved to tears today.

Those on the wall from Stoddard County are Sgt. Jimmie Joe Butler and WO John David McCluskey of Bernie; SP4 Jesse Ray Huges, Jr., and PFC Carroll Leon Welty of Bloomfield; Sgt. Curtis Dean Eskew, PFC George Alan Kiger, SP4 Donald Richard Mayberry, LCpl Kenneth Wayne Parker, 1Lt. and George Kenton Sisler of Dexter.

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Hahn Family Nets \$10,000 Fish in Salmon Tournament

AUGUST 05TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Hahn Family Nets \$10,000 Fish in Salmon Tournament

Dexter, Missouri - Mark Twain said, “Do not tell fish stories where the people know you; but particularly, don’t tell them where they know the fish!” A local Dexter family has a whopper of a fish story to tell!

Brad Hahn of Dexter, Missouri was fishing with his brother Mark on a 21-foot Bayliner Trophy working their magic in the vicinity of Cana Island on Lake Michigan. Brad’s son Eric, age 14, and Mark’s son Joseph, age 15, were also fishing in the Kewaunee/Door County Salmon Tournament.

Nothing seemed to be biting and the day was getting away from them. A few tunes on the radio, some dance moves, and even idle chit-chat didn't seem to entice the fish into the boat! Even a few stares at the line and a little prayer, but nothing seemed to get the fish biting until.....

In one fail swoop, Brad yelled, "fish!" and handed the rod to Eric who handed it to Mark who handed it to Joseph. It was like a hot potato, but with a little teamwork the Hahn family knew they had to the monster fish in the boat quickly.

From there, a fish tale of immense proportions grew out of the lake. Within 10 minutes they had the fish in the boat weighing in at 31.41 pounds and 40 inches long.

The fish was winner. Weighing more than six pounds than second place earned Team Hahn a \$10,000 cash prize, a free mount of the winning fish, and a custom-made salmon ring!

A record 2,974 tickets were sold at the 33rd Annual Kewaunee/Door County Salmon Tournament. They paid out more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes going down 157 spots to a 17.13 pounder.

The Hahn family said their path to the winner started in 1979 when their dad read an article about Door County salmon fishing in a Field & Stream magazine.

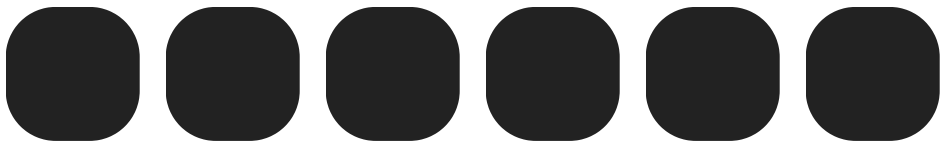
Cousins Joseph and Eric Hahn are pictured with the winning catch. Others who attended the family reunion/fishing tournament were Brad Hahn and son Eric of Dexter, Missouri; Mark Hahn and son Joseph of Carlsbad, California; Paul Hahn of Los Angeles, California; and Neil Hahn of Fenton, Missouri.

The Hahns are originally from Minnesota and fishing on Lake Michigan just part of growing up! They return annually to fish in the tournament, but this year will go down in the history books as one of the best experiences on the lake!

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Volunteers Needed for Moving Wall

JULY 25TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Volunteers Needed for Moving Wall

Dexter, Missouri - The wheels are in motion for The Moving Wall and volunteers are greatly needed for the half-scale version of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The Moving Wall will be on display at East City Park in Dexter near the Parks and Recreation gym beginning Thursday, August 6th through Monday, August 10th with a “Run to the Wall” escort parade and ceremony slated to take place on Sunday, August 9th.

Actual placement of the memorial replica requires a significant amount of manual labor. A platform must be constructed and put into place on Tuesday, August 4th and Wednesday, August 5th.

Volunteers are also needed on Monday, August 10th at 1:00 p.m. to dismantle The Wall.

“We need some muscle and some skill to help with this effort,” stated Mark Stidham, Dexter City Administrator who is spearheading the project.

A plan is in the works to utilize some of the Dexter High School Football Bearcats, but more volunteers are required. If you would like to help please contact Mark Stidham at (573) 624-5959 to help build the platform, etc.

When The Moving Wall visits our community, it will remain on display and open to the public 24 hours a day. Between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. volunteers are needed to man a couple of computers and help direct visitors in finding names on The Wall. The names are not in alphabetical order, but rather in order of the date they perished. For that reason, navigation is sometimes an issue for visitors.

Mary Worley is organizing the volunteer list for the visitor's tent. Two to three volunteers are needed for one-hour shifts beginning Thursday, August 6th through Monday, August 10th. Tents will be available for shade as well as chairs, tables, water, and electric fans for those who would like to volunteer.

Please contact Mary Worley at (573) 624-6995 or drop by her office at Dexter Realty, 3 W. South Main, across from the Depot in downtown Dexter.

Other items are needed to make this event a success. These items include pop-up tents, bottled water, and Gatorade. The tents will be available in the parking lot for people to rest, cool down, or sit and visit during the heat of the day. If any businesses or residents would like to donate cases of water and Gatorade that would be most appreciated by the volunteers as well as the patrons visiting The Wall.

For storage purposes, the Parks and Recreation office is going to have their building available prior to the event. The office is open Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and will take drop-offs throughout the day. If you need someone to pick up donations, please contact Dee Loflin at (573) 614-4804 and she will deliver them for you.

“Run to the Wall” Sunday, August 9th 1:15 p.m. Hickory Log

The “Run to the Wall” is not a foot race, but an escort to the Ceremony to commemorate the Moving Wall display.

The “Run” will begin at 1:15 p.m. at the Hickory Log on Business 60 and will travel East on Business Hwy 60 to East Park. The City of Dexter police department will escort motorcycles, cars, and trucks to the ceremony. Riders are asked to display American Flags! All veterans are encouraged to ride in the Run to the Wall event. Area businesses along the route are asked to display their American flags and even stand along the street to waive and support our Veterans.

Hand-held American flags will also be distributed to the participants who gather at Hickory Log parking lot to show their support. Parking will be available at the fairgrounds behind East Park so it is encouraged that people get in groups for the "Run to the Wall" to decrease parking issues.

"We hope to have several golf carts in place to transport guests from the parking area at the fairgrounds to the display," commented Mark Stidham. "This is another area for volunteers to help."

Anyone who has a golf cart and doesn't mind putting it in play at the park, or even better volunteering their time to shuffle guests to and from vehicles should contact Mark Stidham (573) 624-5959 or Dee Loflin at (573) 614-4804 and leave a message.

At The Wall and Ceremony

Speaker Brigadier General (Ret) Charles Kruse of Dexter will briefly address the gathering. Other veterans yet to be named at the present time will be on hand to represent this area's veterans from the Vietnam era.

Respect

It is important to maintain a dignified and respectful atmosphere at The Moving Wall. No vendors within 100 yards are permitted and no forms of entertainment are allowed. It is asked that you turn CELL PHONES OFF! No smoking at the event and no animals are permitted with the exception of service animals.

Special paper and lumber crayons will be available at the wall for those who wish to make "rubbings" of names. VISITORS ARE ASKED TO MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE OF SOLEMNITY AND RESPECT AT ALL TIMES WHEN IN THE VICINITY OF THE DISPLAY.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Manual Labor – Tuesday, August 4th at 8:00 a.m. (Contact Mark Stidham)

Manual Labor – Wednesday, August 5th at 8:00 a.m. (Contact Mark Stidham)

Tent Volunteers – Thursday, August 6th – Sunday, August 9th 8 am – 8 pm and Monday, August 10th 8 am – 1 pm (Contact Mary Worley)

To Donate Water and Gatorade (Contact Dee Loflin or drop at Parks Office)

To Help with Golf Carts (Contact Mark Stidham or Dee Loflin)

To Donate use of pop-up tents (Contact Mark Stidham)

To Drive in Run to the Wall (Be at Hickory Log 12:45 pm Sunday, August 10th)

To Donate money for flags (Contact Dee Loflin)

Manual Labor – Monday, August 10th 1:00 p.m. (Contact Mark Stidham)

Photo by Jessica Loflin on a recent trip to Washington, D.C. 2015.

LAST UPDATED ON JULY 25TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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