



Ballet celebrates 50th anniversary
The Joffrey Ballet, which started in New York in 1956 and is now in Chicago, remains vibrant under the artistic leadership of co-founder Gerald Arpino



Mike O'BRIEN

Nervous tycoons could fill downtown gap in a snap

Until a couple of weeks ago, the biggest hole in Jordan Valley Park plans was the former quarry at National and East Trafficway.

Add the lot between the Expo Center and the parking garage in the 700 block of St. Louis Street.

That tract had been — still is, actually — reserved for an arena. But John Q. Hammons, long thought to be a patron of the project, has chosen to instead jump-start a new arena at Missouri State.

It's no use stewing over John Q.'s seeming about-face, although some may feel the city paved the way for nearby Hammons Field with the tacit understanding that John Q. would chip in toward the downtown arena.

Truth to tell, John Q. spent more dough than he had to on that magnificent baseball stadium, then convinced the Cardinals to roost here. We came out OK on the deal.

No, if we want prosperous business people to participate in public projects, we need to adopt a more businesslike approach. I wrote as:

In 2004, I was of rumors that Bass Pro was reeled in as a Brenson Landing tenant only after officials hinted that rival outdoors outfitter Cabelas also was on the line. Nobody challenged the story.

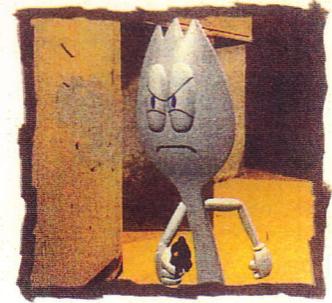
So, now that prospects for a JVP arena seem bleak (Drury University, an early backer, also has withdrawn), why not go after, oh, say, a fancy hotel to fill that vacant lot?

If an outfit such as Westin or Hilton or Hyatt could be attracted, great! Or, the prospect of a competitor so close to his own two downtown hotels might rekindle interest by John Q. in the location. We would win either way.

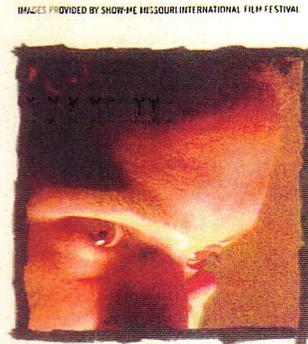
Heck, just someone thinking about putting a fountain on that site might be all it would take to turn John Q. around. Imagine if word were put out that, oh, say, Empire Gas founder Robert Plaster has one on the drawing board that features not only water jets but also propane-fired flames.

(Not to remind of a sore subject but, if all else fails, the spot could be turned back into a car sales lot. Hello, Thompson Boys?)

Creative tension could be a strategy to solve the quarry quandary, too. If we could worry Johnny Morris that Cabelas is eyeing the quarry as an urban



Festival films include (clockwise from top): "Red Ink," "Sporky," "Decoding Aliel," "Troubadours," "Expectation" and "Billy."



IMAGES PROVIDED BY SHOW-ME MISSOURI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Screen this

Show-Me Film Festival debuts in Springfield

• Schedule of events for the Show-Me Missouri International Film Festival. 7C
• True/False Film Festival takes place in Columbia. 6C

For nearly a year, Byron Smith has been editing the feature film "Running With Scissors," starring Annette Bening, Gwyneth Paltrow, Joseph Fiennes, Alec Baldwin and Jill Clayburgh. Smith, who graduated from Missouri State University's film program, is not just one editor.

At 29, he is the editor. This weekend, he and other professionals share their industry experiences at Missouri Film Alliance of Springfield's inaugural Show-Me Missouri International Film Festival. Speakers also include Ozarkers Adrienne Wilkinson, aka Livia/Eve, daughter of "Xena: Warrior

Princess"; Joe Bauer, visual effects supervisor for "Elf" and "Zathura"; and Lisa Rhoden Boyd, a producer and director whose latest project involved Marc Anthony and Jennifer Lopez. Also on hand: Producer and talent agent Steven Nash and successful international filmmaker Slava Tsukerman.

Participants "will have a chance to interact with these people, to get insights about the industry," says Mark Biggs, an associate professor at MSU

and active Film Alliance member. "How do they set up deals, talk with actors, deal with cinematographers and other folks in the industry chain?"

Nash, of Los Angeles, will talk about producing independent films: "What can a filmmaker in Missouri conceivably develop that would have a potential in the commercial market? Because it is doable," he says. "The world is changing rapidly, so there will be new opportunity for localized markets as a result of the

technical revolution."

The main event is a slew of competing and exhibition films. Nearly 60 were submitted, with the festival committee selecting 20, says festival coordinator Elizabeth Allen, a former Hollywood professional who moved back to the Ozarks with husband and acting coach Scott-Arthur Allen — president of MEAS. For a first-year effort, that's a huge turnout, she says.

The festival's purpose: "To promote the film alliance and to promote Springfield as a wonderful city to visit," she says. "And to promote Missouri as a filmmaking Mecca."



Byron Smith

How did Byron Smith wind up in an editing room being visited by the likes of Annette Bening (who lives up the road from him), Gwyneth Paltrow (plus Coldplay's Chris Martin, her husband) and producer Brad Pitt? It's been an interesting journey for this 29-year-old Ozarker.

Q. Where did you grow up?

A. I was born in St. Louis,

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Adrienne Wilkinson

Adrienne Wilkinson fell for cute rocker-dog Ray Bennett (aka actor Shane West) in last year's "ER" season finale. Well, a stunt double actually did the falling.

But it was Wilkinson who spoke the lines as Ray's dirty friend when a high-rise deck collapsed. She's also played roles recently on "Charmed," "Days of Our Lives" and "Angel."

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Lisa Rhoden Boyd

Lisa Rhoden Boyd was born in Ozark, grew up in Springfield and studied theater and dance at Missouri State University where she graduated in 1987.

Today she works as a producer, director, writer and actor in the film industry, primarily on low-budget films that have attracted big names, including Benjamin Bratt, Mandy Patinkin and Jennifer Lopez. She's been married for three years to

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Joe Bauer

Ozarker Joe Bauer, whose mother, Betty, still lives in Springfield, is all over behind-the-scenes footage in the just-released "Zathura" DVD.

Not surprising since the Springfield Catholic High School grad supervised a team of 100 to create visual effects — a prime element of the movie.

He also turns up in the "Elf" (Will Ferrell) DVD, another movie for which he was visual effects supervisor. As he was for

See Bauer Page 7C