ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Alex Sandy Primm has been an oral historian for 40+ years in the Ozarks. Beginning his journalism career in Vietnam and Pennsylvania, he realized his reporting was often the final account for many peoples' experiences. Gradually he developed the practical skills of a public historian. His projects have ranged from an oral history of a World War II US Navy ship to a multi-media project documenting people's feelings about trees. His recent book 'Ozark Voices: Oral History from the Heartland' is being made into an audio book for the blind via the Library of Congress.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

MISSOURI'S NATURAL HEROES

During our state's recent bicentennial many appreciated famous people living in our state. But which other Missourians have been heroic? What does it mean to be a hero now? This presentation will describe little heralded Missouri heroes. It will also ask the audience to describe their heroes. We live in a time where we need heroes, especially in rural areas. This program's particular heroes are conservationists. Thanks in part to several state agencies, Missouri has been a renowned pioneer in restoring wildlife and protecting our environment. Many private citizens have helped establish a tradition of appreciating our natural heritage. Among individual conservation heroes: Thomas Hart Benton, artist; Daniel Boone, early explorer and friend to native people; George Washington Carver, agricultural pioneer, Leonard Hall, conservationist and farmer, Lloyd Stark, governor and nurseryman; Laura Ingalls Wilder, agricultural journalist and novelist. Others too depending on audiences. We will also explore Missouri’s natural areas inspiring these conservationists. Missouri has great parks, sensible development regulation, protection of farmland, drinking water and natural resources. We need to appreciate those who created a heritage of conservation respected around the world. We need to focus on what we value about rural Missouri.

ORAL HISTORY FOR EVERYONE

Drop modern Greece into the middle of America. That's roughly the size of the Ozarks: 50,000 square miles. But the Ozarks has one-tenth the number of residents. I've spent 40 years working as an oral historian traveling from Sallisaw, Oklahoma, to Saint Louis; Little Rock to Columbia and many towns in between. Here are my most inspiring stories. I want to share people I cannot forget. I hope to encourage others to interview families and friends. Oral history is a natural trait. We all appreciate true struggles. Local history influences everything we do. In early 2022 McFarland Co., an academic publisher in North Carolina, brought out my 'Ozark Voices: Oral History from the Heartland'. Some 60 chapters share accounts sponsored by the U.S. Army at Ft. Leonard Wood, the Forest Service, Geological Survey, National Park Service along the Ozark National Scenic Riverways and other institutions. This program on Ozark oral history will offer stories and encourage people to record their family history to make it useful for the future. Modern technology makes oral history possible for everyone. But it has to be done right to make it valuable. This foundation is what I offer.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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