

FEBRUARY 2023 | ISSUE 4

THE RED-EYED RAVEN GAZETTE

The Official Newsletter of the Author Tim Ritter



WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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WELCOME!



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So here we are at the end of February already! Does this mean 2023 is going to fly by as quickly as 2022 did?

Last month I promised I would reveal how this newsletter got its name. Have you guess yet?

Naturally I needed to find a way to incite a little bit of my literary hero, Edgar Allan Poe, into this effort. Of course using a raven was an easy choice. I continued looking around my office for some sort of inspiration, and it quickly became apparent. I have three plastic crows in the office that look pretty close to ravens. For fun I colored their eyes red to add to their imposing look. The moment I looked at the one sitting on my scanner (see photo), I knew the name I wanted to use. And thus the Red-Eyed Raven Gazette was born!

As always, thanks for your encouraging messages sent when these newsletters are released. Your support is very much appreciated.

Sarah Burning News

For you *Sarah Burning* fans, here's something extra-special that is exclusive for newsletter subscribers...

Last month I shared some photos that were developed in December of 1955 and appeared to have been taken when the house received its upgrade, including a roof over the new concrete porch. It's such a neat series, I thought you'd like to see the rest of the pics taken that day.

As a reminder, the first one below is the one I shared last month, with Ray standing on the pile of lumber. Neil stands nearby and Sarah is visible to the right, shielding her eyes from the sun.

The second pic shows Sarah's parents, C.C. and Lydia Seals, next to Orville, Sarah, and young Dennis. Based on the way C.C. and Lydia are dressed, it would lead one to believe that the day of this photo was a Sunday. C.C. was a preacher, so they most likely dropped by after church.

The third photo shows Sarah sitting on the lumber pile with Norman's wife (Dennis' mother) Jerry, Dennis, and lastly Virginia, who appears to be getting up. Note the shadows on the ground in front. You can see one in the middle that appears to be holding the camera, but others are scattered to the left and right, indicating that several family members were standing nearby.

The fourth photo shows Norman hanging on tightly to Virginia, with Jerry walking behind the car. While this photo does not have the "Dec 1955" mark on it, it is clear that it was taken the same day, as the two ladies are wearing the same clothes and the trees look the same. Norman loved Virginia as if she was his true sister, which was proven by the fact that he continued to check on her often in the years after the fire.

The fifth photo is an interesting group shot. Once again, the "Dec 1955" mark is missing but the clothes are once again the same. This pic gives us an idea of who else was present that day. We see from left to right Sarah, Virginia holding Dennis who is mugging for the camera, Jerry, and two of the daughters, Wanda and Margaret, dressed in nearly matching outfits.

The last one is a dandy. Norman had a great sense of humor and liked to be silly. Here he is, mugging for the camera, with Sarah heartily laughing nearby. This pic is special to me, seeing her laugh, as that is one of the things I remember about her. When she laughed, it went all the way down to her toes, and I swear the room always got brighter.

One other note: that last picture with Norman being silly must have been taken immediately before or after the first pic of Ray on the pile of lumber. Note Sarah is sitting in pretty much the same location in each pic.

I love this series of photos, and the fact that the result of all the material and hard work was that Orville got to sit on his new porch and watch every sunset.

SITE PHOTOS



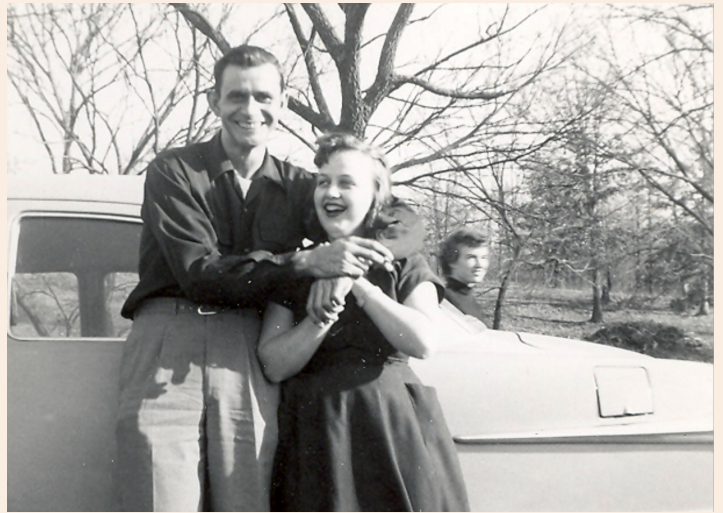
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"CHASING THE CHADWICK LINE" UPDATE

Another writing project that I haven't talked about in a while is my "Chasing the Chadwick Line" book, which has been simmering on a back burner for quite some time. It's coming back to the front burner, as I'm continuing work on it when I need a break from the Sarah and Orville prequel.

If you are not familiar with the story of the Chadwick Railroad, it was a train that ran daily between Springfield, Missouri and the nearby town of Chadwick, where the local lumber industry produced thousands of ties for the railroad. The train operated from the 1880s until about 1933, and was the lifeblood for several communities along the route as the rails wound through the Ozark hills.

I first learned about the railroad in about 2011. Then when my wife Lisa and I started dating, I discovered her dad was an old railroad guy who knew all about the train and its history. He and I then embarked on several "tours" where we drove around and located remains of the roadbed, and learned more about the train and its impact on all those little communities it served.

Now several sections of the roadbed are being permanently preserved as a walking/biking trail. To celebrate the preservation of the route, ***Chasing the Chadwick Line*** will be a narrative to tell the tale of the train and the journey to find its remains.



PRESENTATION UPDATE

If you or anyone you know belong to a group needing speakers, please give them my contact info!



Every month in this section I will highlight one of my current presentations. Here's another one:

The Tornado Outbreak of April 18, 1880

April 18, 1880, is most commonly remembered in southwest Missouri as the date of the Marshfield Tornado, which destroyed nearly every building in the town. Sadly forgotten is the fact that there were several tornadoes in Missouri that day, as April 18 was the beginning of an outbreak of twisters that spanned several states. By the end of the day, no less than eleven tornadoes touched down in Missouri alone, one county experiencing three within one hour. Leaving behind 152 deaths and unimaginable destruction, April 18, 1880, stands as one of the deadliest natural disasters in the history of Missouri. This presentation examines each twister that touched down and its path.

SCHEDULE OF APPEARANCES

March 18, 2023 - 10:30 a.m.

**Republic Branch of the Greene County
Library, Republic, MO**

Presentation: *The Northfield Bank Robbery*

April 28, 2023 - 11:30a.m.

**University Heights Baptist Church Senior
Education Program
Springfield, MO**

**Presentation: *Sifting Through the Ashes (30-
minute version)***

July 11, 2023 - Time TBD

**Glenstone Avenue Baptist Church Senior
Education Program
Springfield, MO**

Presentation: *Battle of Springfield*

*My presentation at the Between the Pages
Conference has been postponed until the June 2024
event.*

My regular speaking engagements, twice each month, continue at the three Elfindale senior living facilities in Springfield. Now plans are underway to begin presenting at The Preston Senior Living Facility, also in Springfield. I'm excited to bring my presentations to this new group!