



Gazette



Harvey Jones Day in Arkansas - July 30

In 1988, then-Governor Bill Clinton declared July 30 as “Harvey Jones Day” in Arkansas, in recognition of Harvey Jones’s immense contributions to the region through philanthropy, education, healthcare, and civic leadership.

In 1968, Harvey, and his wife Bernice, established Har-Ber Village, a unique open-air pioneer museum in Grove, Oklahoma, that today spans over 100 historic buildings and attracts visitors from across the country.

[Read the *Only in Arkansas* article](#)



Friends of Grand Lake Audubon Society

Young Birder's Club



The Friends of Grand Lake Audubon Society (Grand Lake Birders) supports a Young Birders Club, offering educational and bird-watching experiences for youth in the Grove/Grand Lake area.

Grand Lake Birders partnered with local groups—such as the Grove Rotary Club Foundation and Grand Lake Home Educators—to launch the Young Birders program.

Educational Backpacks Available

Har-Ber Village offers Young Birders Educational Backpacks for families to borrow at the Visitor Center. These backpacks provide educational materials, field guides, and binoculars to encourage exploration of the museum's nature trails and local habitats. The backpacks and club support are part of a broader effort to foster conservation interest among youth.

The backpacks may be used on the Nature Trail free of charge, usual admission is required for the Village. Learn more at:

Grand Lake Birders

Village friends in NW Arkansas & Tulsa



Har-Ber Village is working on a couple of special events this February in Tulsa and NW Arkansas, and we're looking for enthusiastic friends and volunteers to help us host and make it a memorable experience for our community. Whether you can lend a hand with planning, setup, activities, or simply spreading the word, your support would mean so much!



If you're interested or know someone who might be, please reach out. Let's make this February event a wonderful success together!

Thank you for your
support!

Debris from Noel, MO Train Wreck - August 3, 1969



This debris is located across from the Mayor's home, Exhibit 91.

□ Overview & Timeline

- Just about 56 years ago, around 4:03am on Sunday, August 3, 1969, a Kansas City Southern freight train (Train#77) passed through Noel, MO, about 22 miles east of Har- Ber Village, with a flat car carrying sealed containers of ammonium perchlorate (a propellant chemical).
- Brakes on the car caught fire while braking into town. After a small warning

burst, the engineer stopped too close to town instead of pulling away, allowing the fire to grow. Attempts to control it failed—and then a massive explosion occurred.

□ Devastation & Impact

- The blast sent metal and train debris—rails, wheels, bolts—flying through the air and caused a fifteen-foot-deep crater. Windows, houses, and buildings were damaged across a six-block area, especially along Sulphur Street, which lies parallel to the tracks.
- One person was killed: beautician Roxa “Roxie” Adeline Miller, who was struck by glass and metal in her upstairs apartment as she ran to retrieve her purse.
- Another resident, Bruce William Green, an elderly man, died of a heart attack the next afternoon, likely induced by the shock and anxiety of the catastrophe.
- Approximately 40 people were injured, many with severe cuts from flying glass shards.

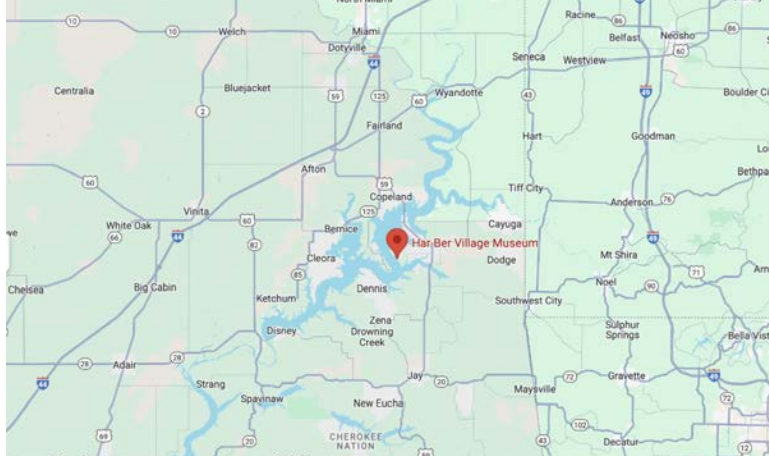
□ Aftermath & Recovery

- Federal investigations determined that the cargo (ammonium perchlorate) was volatile and the initial brake fire should have triggered safer emergency procedures.
- Property damage across Noel was significant. Insurance payouts exceeded \$2 million, enough to rebuild the town multiple times over at its 1969 scale.
- Aetna Casualty led claim settlements on-site, with even famous attorney Melvin Belli offering to assist residents who held out for larger claims.
- Aid came quickly: the American Red Cross and Salvation Army set up relief stations offering meals and assistance as people recovered and rebuilt.

□ Personal Accounts

A vivid first-hand account by “Pa Rock” (a local resident) captures waking to a red glow outside, losing windows, structural damage at home, and chaos unfolding as townsfolk rushed out. His detailed narrative covers fears about propane tanks, tree-ring wheel debris crashing through roofs, and scenes of volunteer aid across town.

Visit the Village
[Map](#)



Current Ways to Support the Village

Due to your generous support, Har-Ber Village will be able to preserve and restore historic buildings like the Village Drug Store, expand hands-on educational programming, and improve our hiking trails and outdoor spaces. As a vital economic driver and regional tourism anchor, Har-Ber Village draws thousands of visitors to Grove each year—supporting local businesses, strengthening community partnerships, and enhancing quality of life. Thanks to you, Har-Ber Village continues to be more than a museum—it's a gathering place, a learning hub, and a proud symbol of why Grove is such a great place to live, work, and visit. Here are some ways you can help the Village thrive:

Leave us a review | Free: One of the best ways to let others know about the Village is to leave us a review! This enables them to see our pages on sites like Google and Facebook. [Click here to leave a Google review.](#)

Become a donor | \$5+: You can now become an official Har-Ber Village resident. Donations and memberships directly benefit the Village. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Come to our events: One of the main goals of the Village is to provide a place for the community to come and gather. By participating in events, you help us meet that goal. [Check out upcoming events.](#)

Spread the word! | Free: Do you enjoy the Village? Tell your neighbors or share pictures on social media! Tag The Village in your social posts so we can hear about your great time and your friends can see it, too! [Facebook link.](#)

Tour the Village with the Mayor

Jeff McSweeney has joined the Village as Mayor (aka Development Director). Reach out to Jeff for a personal tour of the Village campus to learn what we do for the community, our vision for the future, and how you are crucial to the Village's long-term success.





Jeff McSweeney - Mayor
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