

Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard

Dr. James Paul, retired Kankakee Community College history and philosophy professor, Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society board member, Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee member and former Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commissioner, first performed this interpretive monologue at the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission's Momence Township Public Forum on Jan. 26, 2016. Six forums were conducted by the commission in 2016 throughout Kankakee County in order to increase public understanding of why historic preservation is so important. Among other sources, Dr. Paul used **Burt Burroughs' The Story of Kankakee's Earliest Pioneer Settlers; Introduction and Notes by Vic Johnson** (Bradley, IL, Lindsey Publications, 1986) in preparing this monologue.

Hello, my name is Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard. I was born in Windsor, Vermont, to Elizur and Abigail Hubbard on Aug. 22, 1802. When my father, a lawyer, lost his money around 1812 in speculative ventures, he moved the family north to Montreal. In 1818 at the age of 16, I was indentured to John Astor's American Fur Company on Mackinac Island for five years at \$120 per year and I arrived in Chicago that same year.

The fur company had a post to the southwest on the Bureau River, about a mile north of the present site of Hennepin, Illinois. I served as clerk there during the winter of 1818-19 when Illinois had just become a state. After the commander of the post died in the fall of 1822, I returned to take charge of the post, assisted by another employee of the American Fur Company: 23-year-old voyageur Noel LeVasseur (1799-1879).

LeVasseur became my right hand man in establishing trading posts at the mouth of Sugar Creek and the Iroquois River, near old Middleport, now a part of Watseka; and at Bunkum, now called the village of Iroquois. I then began traveling a new route to Chicago in 1822. This Hubbard's Trail branched to the north off the older, Danville-Chicago trail.

On this new trail, furs were carried into Chicago on the backs of ponies, and necessary supplies were brought back to Bunkum. The trail was best used by heavy wagons and yokes of oxen either in the winter when the ground was solidly frozen and the marshes and streams bridged by thick ice, or in very dry periods when all but the deepest streams and the most entrenched swamplands dried up.

While at the post at Bunkum in 1824, I married Wat-che-kee, niece of the Potawatomi chief Tam-in. I had already become the adopted son of Chief Waba of the Kickapoo.

One time, after I walked for 75 miles from Bunkum in a single night to warn the town of Danville of an impending Indian raid, I earned the nickname "Pa-pa-ma-ta-be", or "Swift-Walker". When a local Indian tribe questioned my ability to perform this feat, I challenged their champion walker to a race. My challenger lost by several miles and was unable to move the next day. I was unaffected. After two years of married life and the deaths of our two children in infancy, I found it convenient to divorce Wat-che-kee after the manner of the Potawatomi.

As the American Fur Company disbanded in 1827, I was able to acquire all the company's Illinois assets. By 1832, I sold all my trading posts and gave LeVasseur control of Bunkum. When the Black Hawk War ended in that same year, and terms of Potawatomi disengagement were spelled out by the 1832 Treaty of Camp Tippecanoe, I served as an interpreter for the U.S. government in the treaty negotiations, and signed the treaty as a witness. The treaty granted land reserves to Indians or persons of Indian descent. These reserves could then be sold to land speculators since the Indians were compelled to relocate west of the Mississippi. The northeastern part of Illinois now beckoned pioneer settlers. During this time, I was among those who acted as agents for land purchases. I also purchased land that the Potawatomi were willing to sell.

In April of 1833, Richard Hamilton purchased an entire section of land nearby (today's Momence area) which had been awarded by the government to Chief Yellowhead. The purchase cost to Hamilton was \$800. About this same time, a pioneer settlement known as Lower Crossing or Westport was established on the Kankakee River's north bank along my Hubbard's Trail. Enoch and Asher Sargent put up a cabin there in 1834. Phillip Worchester and David Perry built the first frame house, and around 1838, Perry and Asher built the first mill on the river. Soon, more cabins, post office and school house were built. By 1845, the incorporated village was renamed Momence. The village was named after Isadore Moness or Momence, a French-Potawatomi son of trader Pierre Moran. His Potawatomi wife Je-neir had been granted the land reserve that was incorporated into the village.

After 1834, I lived in Chicago, and became one of city's first trustees. I married Elenora who died in 1838, and then married Mary Ann who died in 1909. In the later 1830s, I served in the Illinois General Assembly, and continued my interests in the fur trade and also opened a meat packing plant. By 1860, I became an alderman in Chicago's 7th ward. I then entered the insurance business but nearly went bankrupt after the Chicago Fire of 1871. The fire also destroyed my 800-page autobiography manuscript. I rewrote the part up to 1829 before I died on Sept. 14, 1886 at the age of 84.

Thank you and goodbye.

The Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting local history. Monthly meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month March to December.

Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m., first and third Sundays of each month, March to December or by appointment.

Visit bourbonnaishistory.org, [facebook.com/bourbonnaisgrove](https://www.facebook.com/bourbonnaisgrove) or call 1-815-933-6452.



Riverside Healthcare welcomes AIM Hospitalist Group

Riverside Healthcare welcomed the Associates of Integrated Medicine (AIM) hospitalists group to Riverside Medical Center. AIM began in-patient hospital care in late October, 2016.

"Healthcare is always changing and it is essential to stay current with the latest trends while continually providing excellent care to our patients," said Kyle Benoit, vice-president of surgical and interventional services at Riverside.

"Riverside stands out because it is a community-oriented institution focused on quality and value for their patients. The investment in technology and safety for patients is second to none," said chairman of AIM Hospitalist Group and Bourbonnais native, Dr. Keyur Shah, MD. "I am impressed by the culture of everyone seeking ways to improve care."

Based in the Chicago area, the AIM hospitalists are a well-established group with board certified physicians in internal medicine and family medicine. AIM strives to provide inpatient care while emphasizing teamwork, leadership and commitment to their patients.

"It is very important to be part of a winning team," said

Dr. Jamal Daki, MD, CMO and co-leader of AIM Hospitalist Group. "By bringing two winning teams together everyone will be more successful."

Hospitalists are board-certified physicians, most commonly internists, specializing in the practice of hospital medicine. They work with primary care providers and specialists and see patients who have been admitted to the hospital. A hospitalist program has been in use at Riverside for over a decade to continually improve the quality of care provided for patients at Riverside Medical Center.

In addition to the existing in-patient hospitalist program that AIM will now be heading up, Riverside also recently added a team of around-the-clock in-patient pediatric hospitalists from Comer's Children Hospital through its partnership with University of Chicago Medicine and also has a neurohospitalist program in place to assist the neurologists and other physicians in delivering the highest quality care to patients at all times.

To learn more about Riverside Healthcare, the hospitalists programs and the care and services available, visit riversidehealthcare.org.

Metro funding issue

Three days a week, Jane Binner wakes up early to catch a River Valley Metro shuttle, her first step in a long commute to the University of Illinois at Chicago. "I will graduate in the spring with a bachelor of arts in English degree," Binner said. "It's been a rough journey, but the end is finally in sight."

Binner doesn't trust her aging car to get her to classes. She's one of thousands in the region who count on the availability and reliability of the River Valley Metro's shuttle service. Now, that service is jeopardized.

Binner joined State Senator Toi Hutchinson to tell her story at a news conference on Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2016 in response to news that the Metro transit agency would suspend bus service this year due to a lack of state funding.

River Valley Metro filed a lawsuit against the state of Illinois comptroller on Oct. 13, 2016 in the Kankakee County Circuit Court. According to Metro, the comptroller's office is not releasing funds to the downstate transportation fund, the money that funds the majority of Metro's operations.

The downstate transit fund revenue is generated automatically through the state gas tax. It is collected through the general revenue fund before being transferred into the dedicated fund for transit districts. That money is then disbursed to individual agencies around the state.

The fund pertains to trans-

portation districts in the state, except for PACE which operates in Chicago and seven other counties.

Of Metro's \$7 million annual budget, more than 65 percent comes from state funding.

"The people standing here today are just trying to live their lives, but once again, they are bearing the brunt of the ridiculousness in Springfield," said Hutchinson (D-Chicago Heights) said.

In an effort to extend bus services for as long as possible, River Valley Metro eliminated two bus routes and ended Sunday and holiday service. The changes will allow the agency to continue operating until the beginning of the year.

"The elimination of two service routes and the \$600,000 line of credit we are negotiating, does buy us some time, but it does nothing to remedy the fact that we haven't received any funding from the state since last year," River Valley Metro CEO Rob Hoffmann said. "At some point, we will run out of options and be forced to shut down."

River Valley Metro provided approximately 930,000 rides last year and has seen average annual ridership increases of 17 percent since 2004. The agency operates 12 fixed routes throughout the Kankakee urbanized area as well as commuter services to Midway Airport and the University Park Metra station and door-to-door services for riders with disabilities.

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