

Tourism Bureau To Launch New “Heartbeats” Video Series

by Stephanie Tate

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ALTON - A new video series focusing on the heart and soul of southwest Illinois will debut in January – but a sneak peek is available on the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau’s Facebook page starting today.

“Heartbeats” showcases ordinary people across southwest Illinois who have a passion and dedication to their communities and the region. Eight episodes will make up the ‘Heartbeats’ series focusing on residents, business owners, the fine arts, live music and healthy living. Each episode will be five to seven minutes long.

The Bureau is planning an extensive ad campaign around the videos including paid social and digital ad buys.

“Southwest Illinois is a special place. And what makes it so special is the people who live here, raise their families here and do business here,” said Cory Jobe, President/CEO of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau. “Because of these people, we have a destination that people not only want to visit, but also where people want to live. ‘Heartbeats’ will showcase that and more.”

Each week starting today, the bureau will highlight different aspects of ‘Heartbeats’ on its Facebook page in preparation for the full launch of the video series. <https://www.facebook.com/RiversAndRoutes>

The tourism bureau has partnered with Shift Agency of Alton to produce the videos which will be released in early January.

Each of the eight episodes will have a different focus and theme. The series includes:

- Rory Morse who developed a pop-up pizzeria in Alton at the start of the COVID pandemic. Deep beneath the surface of this journey is a desire to bring more people to a table where ideas, community and inspiration are shared.
- Denise Knight of Calhoun Ferry Company who roots and pride of the region run as deep as the mighty Mississippi River itself.
- Collinsville BBQ Supply, a retail shop with roots in the backyard and professional barbeque community but also built to give back to those who serve.
- Take a deep dive into the creative scene of southwest Illinois with a focus on the fine arts including Opera Edwardsville, The Macoupin Art Collective and Alton artist Michael Snider.
- Jesse Riley, an assistant football coach at Alton High School, who see more than touchdowns and tackles – he understands the power of positive influences and how words can impact athletes both on and off the field.
- Music moves the soul and live music has a home in southwest Illinois seven days a week. Discover local venues with a passion for music, musicians and fans.
- Brenda Whitaker – a former steel worker -- whose entrepreneurial spirit has helped build the infrastructure of a blooming downtown district.
- Farm-to-table takes on a new meaning between the orchards, organic farms and local scratch kitchens which grow nutrient-dense crops in the backyards of southwest Illinois.

“We are fortunate to have the creative talents of Shift Agency guide this video series. It captures what truly is the heart and soul of southwest Illinois,” Jobe noted. “Everyone should stay tuned for this extraordinary video series.”