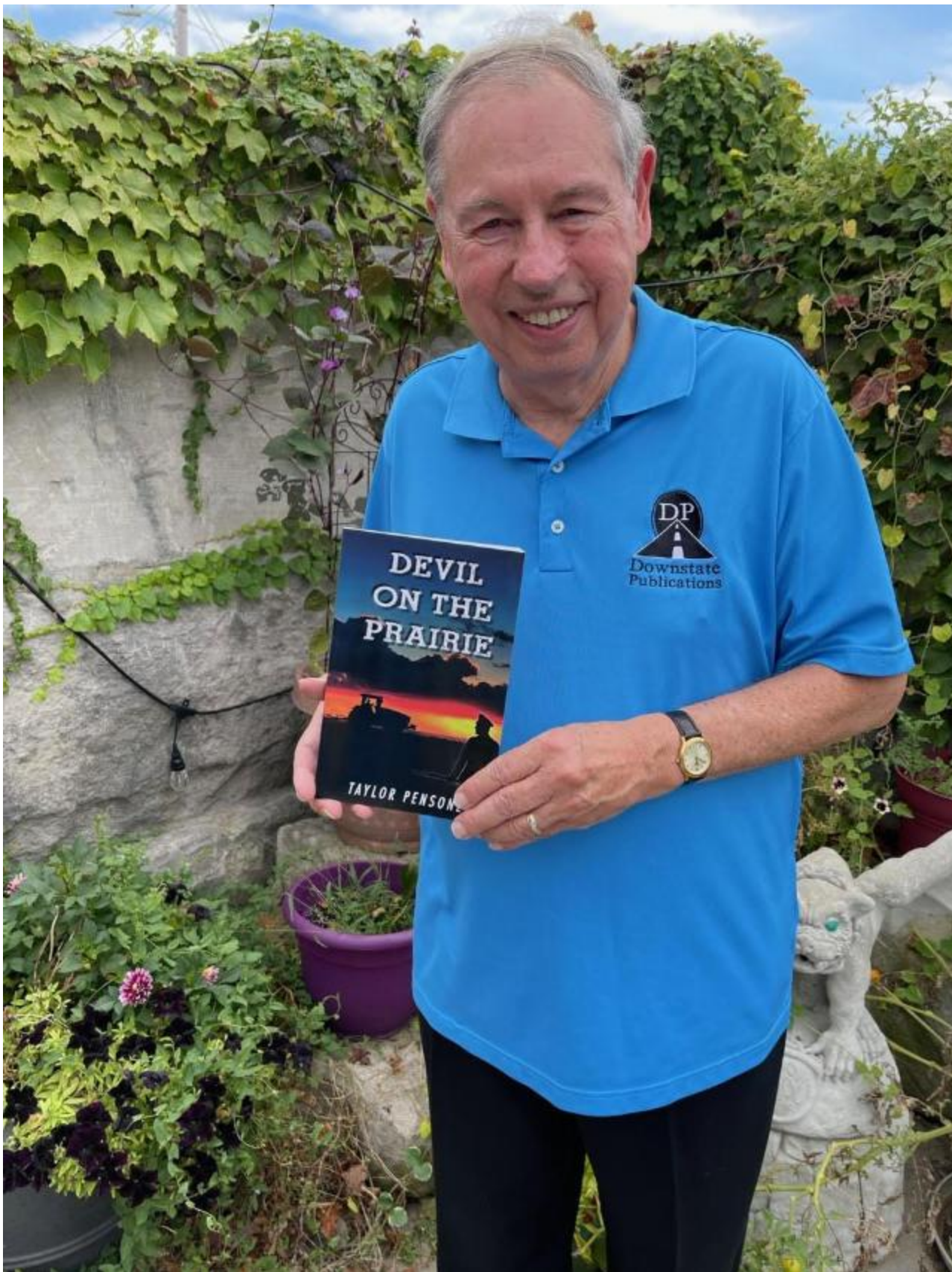


# **Noted Author Taylor Pensoneau will Discuss his Books on Notorious Criminals**

by Tom Emery  
October 18 2023 1:33 PM



CARLINVILLE – Taylor Pensoneau is still amazed at the popularity of his books on Southern Illinois gangsters, *Brothers Notorious: The Sheltons* and *Dapper & Deadly*.

“The response to my books on gangsters has been far beyond my expectations,” said Pensoneau, a former political writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. “I will go to my grave still cherishing the overflow crowds at the early book signings for both of them. At the coming-out signing for *Dapper & Deadly*, we sold over 1,000 books.”

Pensoneau will discuss his books on gangsters in a free program at the Carlinville Public Library at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday evening, Oct. 19.

The Shelton brothers were among the most famous of bootleggers in southern Illinois during Prohibition, and were described by the *Saturday Evening Post* as “America’s Bloodiest Gang.” *Dapper & Deadly* covers the life of Charlie Harris, another of southern Illinois’ notable gangsters who was allegedly tied to numerous murders, including some of the Sheltons.

A native of Belleville, Pensoneau now lives in New Berlin, Ill. with his wife Elizabeth, a former editor of *Outdoor Illinois* magazine. An accomplished speaker, Pensoneau’s previous engagements have been received by large and enthusiastic audiences, particularly when he is talking about gangsters.

“Speaking programs give me a great opportunity to interact with folks,” said Pensoneau, who is known for his down-to-earth, engaging personality. “They also serve to keep me on my toes, especially in the question-and-answer segments. And I just enjoy meeting new people.”

During his time at the *Post-Dispatch*, Pensoneau was assigned to the pressroom of the Illinois Statehouse from 1965-78, covering state government in a hyper-competitive atmosphere with writers from other major dailies.

Among his many duties, Pensoneau launched extensive investigations of fraud and other wrongdoing in Illinois government. He was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1972 with Ed Pound, then of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, who went on to national fame as one of the nation’s top investigative reporters.

In 1973 and 1974, Pensoneau was stationed in Washington, covering the Watergate hearings and the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

“I was among a handful of reporters in the room in Washington when the House Judiciary Committee voted for the first Article of Impeachment against President Nixon,” remembers Pensoneau, with obvious pride. “That’s one of my professional highlights, without question.”

He also covered five national political conventions, including the fiery 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

After leaving the *Post-Dispatch* in 1978, Pensoneau worked for the Illinois Coal Association, retiring after a five-year stint as president in 2003.

While at the ICA, he embarked on a book-writing career that continues to this day. Pensoneau has authored four non-fiction political works, including acclaimed biographies of former governors Richard Ogilvie and Dan Walker.

In addition to his biographies of politicians and gangsters, Pensoneau has also created four well-received works of fiction, all surrounding the life of hard-boiled investigative reporter Jacob Brosky of the fictitious *St. Louis World* newspaper. The first work on the Brosky series, *The Summer of '50*, was released in 2004, while the most recent, *Corruption Incorporated*, was released this August.

"I'm really looking forward to my appearance at the Carlinville Library," said Pensoneau. "I enjoy talking about the legendary downstate Illinois gangsters. But I also enjoy discussion of the very interesting modern era of Illinois politics. And, I am always willing to delve into the inside facets of writing and publishing books."

"I look forward to entering into any of these topics at Carlinville," concluded Pensoneau. "It should be a really fun evening."

For more information on Pensoneau and his program, contact the Carlinville library at 217-854-3505 or [mail@carlinvillelibrary.org](mailto:mail@carlinvillelibrary.org).