



**South County
SPOTLIGHT**

St. Patrick Catholic Charities - Tolono IL Free Food Pantry Every Monday from 5-6:30 and Friday 9-10:30 -Located at the Parish - providing Fresh produce, meat and pantry items. Serving all of Champaign County

The Giving Place is open every Wednesday from 4pm-6pm in Tolono to help families in need with food items.

3rd Thursday of every month - Tolono Fun Day Committee meet at 6:30 @ Police Station

VFW of Villa Grove Bingo Every Friday Night @ 7pm

4/21 Village of Sidney Special Board Meeting @6:30

4/22 Earth Day

4/24 RAINDATE Re-Scheduled Easter Egg Hunt for kids under 12 hosted by SIG 1:00pm @ Witt Park Ball Park in Sidney

4/25 Heritage FFA Plant Sale Behind Heritage High School at the Greenhouse from 4pm-7pm

4/30 Tolono Junior Trustee Applications Deadline

4/30 Village of Sidney Dumpster Days 7am-11am

5/1 Steak Dinner Fundraiser for Catholic Charities @ Philo Tavern, Philo: Cash bar @4pm Dinner at 5pm

If you have an upcoming event that you would like to see featured in Spotlight email us at: jamie@thetuscolajournal.com

Easter Celebration; Golden Egg Hunt at Arbor Rose



Dorothy Burr was greeted by the famous bunny on April 16th during the Arbor Rose Easter Celebration. Dorothy has just celebrated her 100th birthday. Photo courtesy Diane Ducey.



Lily takes photos with the Easter Bunny after she found the Golden Egg filled with money at the Egg Hunt hosted by Arbor Rose in Tolono on April 16. Photo courtesy Diane Ducey.

Birchfield and Walters Building For the Future

By Tony Hooker
Staff Writer

Chances are, you've driven by a pole building that was built by Dennis Birchfield and his team at Walters. After over 2 decades in the business, he and Walters have put their stamp all over the Midwest. I recently caught up with Birchfield, Villa Grove's unabashed "car guy," to talk about the state of his business.

How did Walters Buildings come to be located in Villa Grove?

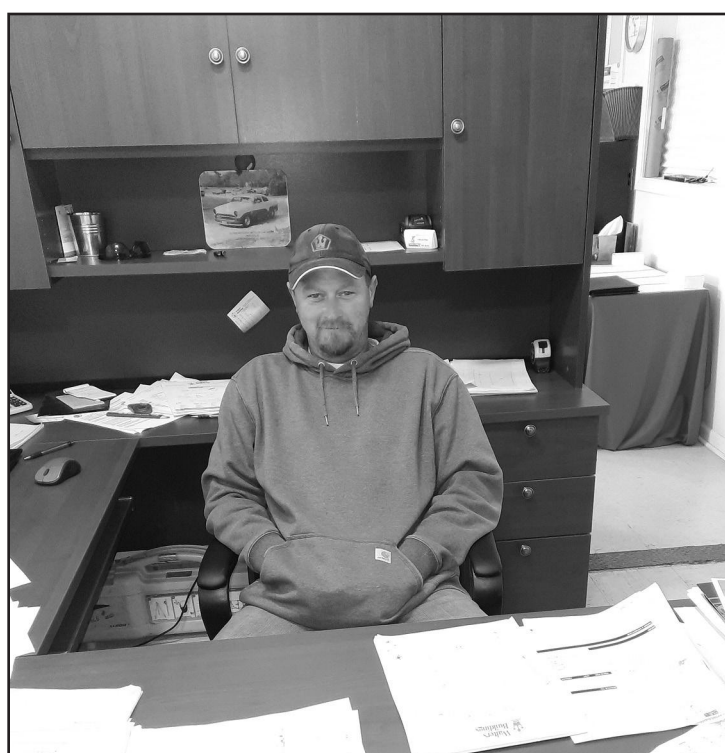
I worked for Walters right out of high school, around 1989 or 90, I was building pole barns. Then they became the FS (building) dealers in the area. Where I worked became an FS dealer. Then, after 21 years, I decided to start an office and work for the company. So, I went to work for the company and started it her. We've been in the area; it just had an FS sign on.

Walters started in Wisconsin?

The main plant is in Allenton, Wisconsin, but we also have a plant here in Fairfield, Illinois. We have crews in Ohio, Kentucky, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa.

Chances are, if you see a pole building in the area that has an FS tag on it, it's probably a Walters building?

That's correct. We've had this office going for three years this August, and it's



Dennis Birchfield

been going great. We build a great, heavy built barn.

Do you do more agricultural or residential these days, or is it a 50/50 split?

It's starting to split a little bit, these days, with all these post frame homes. They're becoming very popular. We have two that we're building this year, one in Tuscola and one southwest of Urbana. We also do a lot of ag, a lot of famer's buildings also. They're both good.

What's the biggest building you've ever built, square

foot-wise? Square foot-wise? 20,000. We've built some 80x200's and some 96x150's.

Were those just for agricultural applications?

One of them was Steve Winkler Chevrolet, in Paris. That entire building was a Walters project, years ago. We did an 80x80 in Tuscola.

What's the smallest one you've ever done?

We're doing a 20x30 this year, but I've done them as small as 10x16.

Are material prices as bad

as I've heard?

They are, and that's not just in pole buildings, that in homes and all types of construction.

Do you see that ever coming back down?

That's a trick question! <laughs> It's like I tell everyone, play the lotto! Sometimes you win, some times you don't. <smiles>

Is it a lack of material or a lack of shipping?

I've heard it was forest fires. I've heard it was a glue factory that they use to glue plywood together burning down. I've heard that things are stuck on containers. It's tough to say.

What's the best part of your job?

I like it because I get to work outside. I get to travel all over and we're not in one place very long. They're good barns. I'm not going to the cheapest guy out there, but I don't want to be, either.

Are you one of those guys who drives your family by and says, "I built that one?"

Well sure! <smiles> Not so much anymore, but I've got crew guys that still do that. They're proud of their buildings. I enjoy this. I enjoy doing it and working with customers. I have fun. It's easy to do when know what you're doing.

Do you think that the future holds more of the post frame

homes?

I've got 5000 hours of work already on the books, and I'm working on several more. I don't see it slowing down. I would have told you a year and a half ago that we were going to crash, but it isn't happening. Money's cheap right now, I guess.

Do you see yourself moving more toward the home side, or do you think you'll stay with the barns?

We'll do a couple homes a year. There's a lot of involvement, wit subcontractors and all that, and an 80x120 for a farmer, two weeks and you're out of there. Those are things I'm more interested in. There seems to be a lot of leads, a lot of bidding, and a lot of people who are buying.

Did the pandemic bring you to a slowdown?

For the most part, we went right through it. There were some instances where our guys got exposed to it and had to sit out for two weeks or whatever, but company-wide, people were still building barns.

That's interesting to me.

It is to me too, but my theory is that at the beginning of the pandemic, if you went into a lumber yard, you saw that there was no lumber in there. There was no treated lumber in there. People were at home and weren't working. The construction

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Diamond Rio Headline the 91st Moultrie-Douglas County Fair

Feudin' Hillbillys to kick-off the evening

The Moultrie-Douglas County Fair Board is excited to announce Diamond Rio in concert for the 2022 county fair. This Grammy-Award winning country group has sold over 10 million albums and will be coming to Arthur on Saturday, July 9. Local favorite Feudin' Hillbillys are set to open the show at 7:00 pm. followed by Diamond Rio at 8:30.

Tickets for the event are \$20 in advance and are on sale now at www.moultriedouglascountyfair.com. Tickets the day of the concert will be \$25.00.

Diamond Rio was formed in 1989 in Nashville, Tennessee. The band consists of Gene Johnson (mandolin, tenor

vocals), Jimmy Olander (lead guitar, acoustic guitar, banjo), Brian Prout (drums), Marty Roe (lead vocal), Dan Iruman (keyboards), and Dana Williams (bass guitar, baritone vocals).

They recently released I Made It, their tenth studio album. The title track was co-written by the band's lead guitarist Jimmy Olander and features 11 new songs. Produced by Olander and Mike Clute, I Made It is available on iTunes and www.diamondrio.com.

Diamond Rio signed to Arista Records and in 1991 with the release of "Meet In The Middle" became the first country music group in history to reach No. 1 with a debut single. The band is also known for their hits "How

Your Love Makes Me Feel," "One More Day," "Beautiful Mess," "Unbelievable," "In A Week or Two," and more. They released their first-ever autobiography, Beautiful Mess: The Story of Diamond Rio on Thomas Nelson in 2009.

The band known for playing every note on every album recently celebrated their 25th Anniversary, has sold more than 10 million albums, won a Grammy Award, a Dove Award, six Vocal Group of the Year wins (CMA and ACM), released two Greatest Hit albums, a live and Christmas project, earned five multi-week no. 1 singles, 22 Top 10 singles, three certified Platinum and five gold albums, released an autobiography – and with zero band member

DIAMOND RIO
JULY 9TH
ARTHUR ILLINOIS
WITH FEUDIN' HILLBILLYS
WWW.MOULTRIEDOUGLASCOUNTYFAIR.COM

changes. Known for their charity commitments including long-time spokespersons for Big Brothers Big Sisters,

the band has raised over \$1,000,000.00 for non-profits and received the Minnie Pearl Humanitarian Award.

This year's fair dates are Tuesday, July 5 through Saturday, July 9.