

## “Moon Over Minden”

Harvest Festival will celebrate Halloween past

MINDEN, La—Remember the old stories about Sallie Baker’s grave. The legend of Sallie Baker’s grave is probably the best-known ghost story in Webster Parish, according to John Agan, parish historian. One unifying factor for teenagers from the Bienville Parish line all the way to the Arkansas border is the tales of the odd happenings at Sallie Baker’s grave near Cotton Valley. The stories of midnight visits to the site have been passed among the youth of our parish for several decades. Many different versions of who Sallie was are commonly told. Most involve her killing multiple husbands, attacking unsuspecting trespassers and in general terrorizing all who came near. Sallie Baker ghost has been spotted each year during “Moon Over Minden” and is expected to be there again this year. “We have it on good authority, that she’s talked some other colorful characters from the past to join her,” comments Julie Vogel, president of Cultural Crossroads and sponsors of this year’s “Moon Over Minden” Harvest Festival. “Bonnie and Clyde will be there along with some other scary gangsters from the 1930’s.

“I know we can all conjure up different memories of Halloween as a child,” adds Miss Vogel. “And it’s those memories that we want to embrace while we offer up opportunities for new ones.” Minden’s noted arts community will once again bring us a spectacular weekend of fright lights, haunted hay rides and haunted garden tours. The organization’s four acre Farm will be transformed during the months leading up to the October event. Cultural Crossroads Harvest Festival will include a variety of events all month long as part of a bigger celebration called “Triumph over Tragedy” Commemorating the Great Depression and New Deal Era. The 21 parish commemoration

of the Great Depression will be remembered in Minden while art groups across the state have tailored their annual events to fit the depression theme or sponsor new ones.

Starting with the official lighting of the Farm on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, followed up by an outdoor showing of “The Grapes of Wrath,” on October the 10<sup>th</sup>, the Farm will be the place to be in October. The haunted gardens and haunted hayrides will open to the public on Friday, Oct. 30 and Saturday, Oct. 31 from 8pm to 11pm. “This year’s special feature will include a tour of the old homestead,” State Chris Broussard, festival chairman. “The house hasn’t been unoccupied for more than a quarter of a century,” adds Mrs. Broussard. “The modest house was built in 1933 following the tornado that devastated the town. Since the house was built during the great depression, we thought this would be a great time to include it in the tour. This will be the first time we’ve opened the house to the community.” The house and the lot at the corner of East Union and Talton will light up the beginning of October as a reminder that the best is yet to come.

According to organizers, the hayride and the haunted house and garden tour are separate but folks can choose to do one or both. The cost of each tour is \$8 or \$15 for both. Concessions will be open offering hot chocolate, hot cider, snacks and special haunted dishes to delight the pallet of every goblin and ghoul in attendance. For more information about Cultural Crossroad, the Farm or Moon Over Minden, visit their website at [www.artsinminden.com](http://www.artsinminden.com).