



NEWS RELEASE

June 17, 2009

A front row seat to the filming of a Prohibition Parade

Olean, NY - Everybody loves a parade, especially a historical hometown parade with the color and pageantry of the Prohibition era coming to life on the streets of Olean on Saturday June 27.

The re-enactment of this historical event will be part of a two-hour documentary that will air on national television. The parade will have all the zest and sparkle of a holiday celebration with food and music and will offer a front row seat on an educational journey to a rich and memorable part of American history.

Filmmakers from WAR Entertainment, Batpack Studios and Allegheny Productions (all from Pennsylvania) will visit Olean during the last week of June to produce a documentary titled, *Prohibition; A Historical Epic*. The documentary is a derivative work under Executive Producer Carl Veno of the feature film "Little Chicago" continuing in development.

Many may ask: why the subject of prohibition and why Olean?

"The theatrical-release film Little Chicago will introduce a panoramic view into the history of Prohibition," says Executive Producer Corey May from WAR. WAR Entertainment is the company of seventeen-year NBA veteran Dale Davis from the Indiana Pacers and Detroit Pistons.

"When I realized the incredible historical development already completed for the film "Little Chicago", I thought that it would be a shame not use the groundwork for educational purposes. Olean provided the perfect setting for the 1920's period," states May.

"The people of Olean are very film-friendly and accommodating to the industry of fine arts and entertainment," said Christine Smith, Production Designer formerly of Beverly Hills. "We visited the local stores and found the merchants and sales people very helpful for wardrobe and found production assistants in Olean who graduated from film schools in the area. We are excited to be here."

Jenny DeLong of Jennylin Antiques of Johnsonburg consulted with the wardrobe staff to share her knowledge and abundant collection of wardrobe, jewelry and props of the time period, which will be used for the documentary and the featured music video performed during a steam engine train shoot at Rock Hill Furnace near Altoona, Pennsylvania.

The team, led by Christofer Lombardo of Batpack Studios, will have Andrew Mclean as Director of Photography. They are no strangers to documentary, media development and feature films. Batpack Studios is a major studio in the Pittsburgh area. Lombardo and Mclean scoped the block for the recreation of the "We Want Beer" Prohibition protest parade scheduled for noon on Saturday, June 27th along Union Street.

"We have prepared a parade line of the times during the Great Depression when many people wanted to repeal the 18th Amendment. The parade line exemplifies how the "wets" viewed the importance of repeal for the sake of the economy," explained Lombardo.

John Anast of Allegheny Productions was instrumental in organizing the communities of central Pennsylvania to participate in the parade. The filmmakers have

picture vehicles, horse drawn carriages, antiques, authentic props and vintage clothing to portray a historical slice of life. “We are looking for historical society members, families and kids who like to march and help us document this event. As our staff organizes the parade line, we have found many people from other communities excited about visiting Olean and participating in the documentary.”

“Little Chicago” has been instrumental in producing the documentary and aiding the documentary makers to get the real feel of the time, says May. “This documentary preserves the sociology of the time period which is often lost when only a historical time line is presented in film work. We are providing extensive detail to leave a legacy of visual details. Storytelling doesn’t always give the true picture,” added May, who was a teacher in Chicago for fifteen years. “Kids today need to get the visual behind the story.”

The Mayor of Olean, David Carucci, is pleased to see the focus on Olean. “Any time we can do something positive in Olean that has never been done before, it is good for the community,” he said. “I have no problem in helping the filming be exciting to the community. I think that it is great that Olean was chosen to be a location for the filming,” he added. “Olean will be on the map for something good instead of the opposite. I hope that [the filming] will draw hundreds of people to the downtown next weekend.”

Veno, of Little Chicago LLC, noted, “Parts of the Olean scenes and the parade are expected to be used for a music video. We are hoping to see history merge with the pop culture of the times and have the area receive the attention it deserves, since it once was known as ‘Little Chicago’ because of the Prohibition-era activities here.” Veno added that Little Chicago’s partnership with WAR for the current documentary will be the second documentary that Little Chicago has produced. The first was a 46-minute show entitled “The Last Prohibition Witnesses,” which has been completed.

The crew plans to shoot the “funeral of John Barleycorn” (symbolizing beer) and the preacher Billie Sunday’s crusade against alcohol on Thursday, June 25th and Friday June 26th in Olean. Restaurateur Milo Belvees will lend his authentic historical bar for a scene on Friday to help the documentary makers get the “real deal” right.

Andrew Mclean said, “Just visiting the Village Green was very informative for the cinematography of the documentary. Mr. Belvees provided a great lesson in the rich history of Olean from the original pictures that he has displayed in his establishment.”

He also noted that the crew will shoot on state-of-the-art film cameras and as an added feature for authenticity, he has collaborated with Kodak to shoot on film with the old-style “crank” cameras as were used in the 1920s.

May noted, “The recreating of history is a major effort and very difficult accomplishment for even the most experienced professionals in our industry. It can never be accomplished without the political cooperation of the city government and the help of the community.” Her staff agreed that Olean has been especially helpful and welcoming.

Sanzo Beverage Co., Inc., is helping to promote the activities in Olean. Its president, Chris Sanzo, said, “The filming of this documentary in Olean is not only good for our local economy, but brings excitement to the community. Sanzo Beverage Co., Inc. is proud to help bring attention to Olean and the fact that the first post Prohibition case of beer was delivered to the White House by the Budweiser Clydesdales. My great grandfather started Sanzo Beverage Co. that very same year and I’m proud to be a 4th generation beer man.”

At the train scene to be filmed in Pennsylvania, music will be featured. The documentary producers have teamed with KOKOLO, a New York City based jazz- Afro-rock band that has just returned from a European tour. The combination of contemporary drumbeats with Big Band jazz is expected to be incredibly attractive to youthful music listeners. KOKOLO members wrote the original Big Band-style song for the documentary titled, “Don’t Need No Permission – It’s Prohibition.” Under the direction

of bandleader Ray Lugo, the band scored ragtime and Big Band jazz tunes into upbeat pop songs for a music video about the true life of Chicago gangster Al Capone. Dancers from Point Park College will perform Charleston dance styles for the video while the historical society from Beaver County, Pennsylvania, will portray the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

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Local students and movie buffs are always looking into the details of "how" the film producers do it. Here is a quick glance at the schedule.

Filmmakers' Schedule – Public Is Welcome to Attend

Monday, June 22 – East Broad Top Railroad in Rock Hill Furnace, PA for several scenes to be filmed at the authentically preserved railroad station, roundhouse and machine room. KOKOLO and the Point Park Dancers will perform for the music video and for inserted dance shots of the famous flappers of the 1920's.

Tuesday, June 23 – East Broad Top Railroad will fire up the trains for inserts of the authentic movement for prohibition lead by the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Mathew Craig of WQED, Pittsburgh folk singer and producer of Magic Woods, will perform an original version of "John Barleycorn" for the opening of the documentary.

Wednesday June 24 Thursday June 25th and Friday June 26th – On Wednesday, the company moves to Olean where the crews will begin the rigging for the Olean scenes. Production offices are stationed at the Country Inn Suites in Olean. On Thursday and Friday, the producers and crews will film all over Olean while preparing for the parade with the production assistance of local filmmakers and students.

Saturday June, 27 – The "We Want Beer" Repeal Parade will be filmed with the help of sponsorship Chris Sanzo of Sanzo Brewing and Budweiser (Anheuser-Busch). Budweiser, Coors, Miller, Pabst and some other major companies have contributed to the stock footage that is necessary to capture history.

The parade will begin with the lineup at 10:30 a.m. on Union Street and aim for a noon start. Participants are welcome, including children. The parade will march past Community Bank, Custom Shoe Repair and Total Video and turn west for a "wrap party" with the crew at the city parking lot. Community members are welcome.

Monday, June 29 – The Mansion of Mars, Pennsylvania, will be the location for the scenes of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The Mansion has been restored to its original upscale 1920s décor.

Tuesday, June 30 – The Saxonburg Hotel in Saxonburg, Pennsylvania will be the site for the scene "FDR gets the first beer." Caroline Gentile, the current owner, has decorated the rooms in the motifs of the time.