

Ask  
Ken  
Beck



## Bobbie Gentry left the limelight years ago

**Dear Ken:** Whatever happened to country singer-songwriter Bobbie Gentry of "Ode to Billy Joe" fame?

Gentry, who was born Roberta Lee Streeter in Chickasaw County, Miss., is now 65 and lives a quiet life out of the public eye. She last performed publicly on Christmas night of 1978 on "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson." In August of 1967 her "Ode to Billy Joe" album knocked the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" off the top of the American charts. She was married twice, first to Desert Inn Hotel manager Bill Harrah and then to singer/songwriter Jim Stafford. Each marriage was short lived. At last word she lived in the Los Angeles area.

**Dear Ken:** What nationality was Audrey Hepburn? I loved her in "Breakfast at Tiffany's." Did she have any children and what would be several more of her best movies?

The actress was born in Belgium, but her mother was a Dutch baroness and her father was a British banker. She has a son and daughter, Sean and Luca.

Among her many fine films were "Roman Holiday," "Funny Face," "Sabrina," "Love in the Af-

ternoon,"

"The Nun's Story," "Charade," "My Fair Lady" and "Wait Until Dark."

Hepburn died in 1993 of appendicular cancer at the age of 63. You would most likely enjoy "The Audrey Hepburn Story," a 2000 TV movie that stars Jennifer Love Hewitt.

**Dear Ken:** Where was the late, great newscaster Walter Cronkite born and raised?

He was born in St. Joseph, Mo., and lived in Kansas City, Mo., until the age of 10 when his family moved to Houston, Texas.

**Dear Ken:** How old is Fess Parker, who played Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone on TV?

The tall Texan recently turned 85. A businessman for many years now in Santa Barbara, Calif., Parker owns the Fess Parker Winery and Wine Country Inn & Spa Resort Bed & Breakfast in Los Olivos, Calif. The actor once said, "There have been several turning

points in my

life, but the most important one came the day I stepped before the cameras as Davy Crockett. The way I look at

things, a man's life story isn't his alone, but it belongs to a lot of people who have influenced him and done things for him that he can never repay."

If you have a trivia question about actors, singers, movies, TV shows or pop culture, e-mail your query to Ken Beck via [www.sherlocksbooks.com](http://www.sherlocksbooks.com) where you can also find classic films and TV shows on DVD or visit Sherlock's Book Emporium in Lebanon, Tennessee.



Fess Parker

# Architect Manous plants his designs on Lebanon

By KEN BECK  
Special to The Wilson Post

Slowly but surely, the distinctive fingerprints of Michael Manous are appearing across Lebanon and other Tennessee towns.

The Knoxville native and architect with a bent toward New Urbanism has had his designs on Wilson County since he made Lebanon his home base 16 years ago.

He and his associates have designed or re-created more than 70 projects in the county during the past two decades. Besides two dozen homes, Manous Design worked on The Jimmy Floyd Family Center, Roxy Cinema, Sherlock's Book Emporium, High Street Quarter, Lebanon City Hall (formerly the main building at Castle Heights), Maple Hill church of Christ, the Henry W. Preston Fire Station, the Lebanon/Wilson County Chamber of Commerce, the Mitchell House and Cedar Creek Yacht Club.

"When I was in school, everybody's dream was to go to Chicago or Atlanta and work on big high rises," said Manous last week from his office about five miles outside of Lebanon and a football field length off of South Cairo Bend Road. "I learned that's really not where it's at.

"Where it's at in my profession or what gives me the greatest satisfaction is being able to live and work in a community like Lebanon where I can see through the years the additive process of what we're trying to do as a team: The team being my designers and our clients and the city administration. I'm beginning to see all these pieces start to mesh together and to me that's really satisfying, driving down the road and seeing project after project we've done, and all of them weave together a better place in my view."

At 46, his tanned visage offers proof of his hours spent cycling and on the water. He wears a yellow Livestrong wristband on his left arm, an homage to one of his sports heroes, Lance Armstrong, and a wooden necklace keeps memories fresh of a boating trip in the Virgin Islands. A fan of the Discovery and History Channels, he also enjoys watching football on TV.



Michael Manous set his designs on Lebanon and Wilson County after searching with his wife for a place to build a home and a business in the early 1990s. When he spotted no architects in the Lebanon Yellow Pages, he knew this was the ideal place to plant roots.

KEN BECK / The Wilson Post

The license plate on the back of his truck reads: RKEYTEK.

And it as an architect that Manous is just hitting his stride. He confesses that the final quarter of 2008 and first half of this year were notoriously slow, but today things are happening.

### Three projects call for optimism

"Recently we have had a tremendous surge and upswing in business. We have three projects coming before the planning commission this month here locally," he said.



The home of W.P. and Leanne Bone

"Those represent maybe \$15 million in total investments in Lebanon. I'm very optimistic that we are on the uphill side of things. We see an entire group of clients that are stepping up and seeing the tremendous value to be had in the construction market right now."

The trio of projects includes:

1. Permobil, a Swedish company that manufactures mobility devices for handicapped or disabled people.

"The total investment is going to be between \$10 and \$12 million onsite, hopefully adjacent to Wilson Central High School down on 840 and highly visible," the architect said. "This will be a very sustainable design. We have made a commitment for a 60-kilowatt solar rate and will have a roof which takes sunlight and turns it directly into electricity. We understand that will be one of the largest private instal-

an old-town style building with the idea of getting close to the street and being very pedestrian friendly. It will have some interesting architectural character that relates to the area," Manous said.

3. A new building for West Haven Baptist Church on Highway 70 near the railroad bridge east of Highway 109.

"We've help develop the land master plan from scratch," said Manous, who has partnered on projects with about a half dozen churches in the county.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee School of Architecture, Manous knew that he wanted to be an architect by his early teen years. "Maybe my career path was preordained," he said. "My parents always equipped me with Lincoln Logs, Legos and building blocks. That was always my favorite activity as a child, building with those blocks."

### Hitting the right spot

Manous and his wife Rhonda found Lebanon their new home of choice after driving in every county and city surrounding Nashville.

"We located this neighborhood up here, just a gravel road with no other houses. The land was affordable and we could get a lot for our money. It was a natural," he said. "My wife and I were both working in Nashville, and this was a bedroom community to us.

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CedarStone Bank



The Mitchell House (formerly part of Castle Heights campus)

## Wilson Living Today Almost one year of Wilson Living

It's hard to believe it has only been two weeks since our latest issue came out. Probably because we are so busy trying to complete the November/December issue. We want to make it extra special since we will be celebrating one year of bringing you the best of Wilson County.

Before getting to what we're working on this week, let us fill you in on what we did last week. Unless you've been hiding under a rock, you've probably heard about Sherry's Run.

Sherry's Run is a 5k run/walk

charity started in memory of the late Sherry Whitaker, who lost her very brave battle with colon cancer more than five years ago. Funds raised from the run are used to help people in Wilson County suffering from the disease, from paying for doctor visits to covering various living expenses.

If you haven't participated, you are missing out. Not only do you get a good workout on the certified course, but you get to enjoy the excitement of a live auction and the positive energy that's created by thousands of people working

together sharing a common goal.

Wilson Living Magazine was one among more than 78 teams participating. We can't wait until next year's race.

Ok on to the next issue. Ever think about a little nip or tuck? If you're like any middle aged, warm blooded man or woman, you probably have given it at least a thought.

Well, we got the inside scoop on everything you ever wanted to know about having cosmetic surgery from an expert. Wilson County's resident Plastic Surgeon,

Dr. Dwayne Lett, shares with Wilson Living reader's things to consider before meeting with a plastic surgeon.

While Dr. Lett is passionate about his profession, it's his role as devoted husband and father that makes his story so captivating. You won't want to miss our interview with Dr. Lett in the next issue.

The Wilson Living Holiday Expo is rapidly approaching. Held on Nov. 6 and 7 at The Mill of Lebanon, this will be an event you will not want to miss.

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