

Approved 2/27/90
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The meeting was called to order by Senator Lana Oleen at
Chairperson

1:35 ~~am~~ p.m. on February 19, 1990 in room 531-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Gaines - Absent
Senator Doyen - Absent
Senator Moran - Absent

Committee staff present: Julian Efird - Research
Fred Carman - Revisor

Conferees appearing before the committee: Richard Ross, Reporter, Kansas Supreme Court/
Cour of Appeals
Senator Ed Reilly
Senator Ben Vidricksen
Jerry Jones, Department of Commerce
Harland Priddle, Department of Commerce

A motion was made by Senator Bogina to approve minutes of the February 12 and 13 meetings: seconded by Senator Francisco. Motion carried.

Hearing on:

SB 623 - Establishing Kansas Film Services Commission

Richard Ross testified as a private citizen who is interested in improving the image of Kansas. Mr. Ross spoke of his experience as an extra in a film recently produced in Kansas. Upon completion of filming, the people involved from out of state left with very positive remarks about the citizens of Kansas and environment as an exceptional place to work. Mr. Ross feels this image will trickle down to influence the film businesses to consider sites in Kansas. The Film Commission is doing an excellent job with a limited staff and budget. A legislative mandate to establish the Film Commission was recommended. (Attachment 1)

Senator Reilly stated he has been associated with the Film Commission since being appointed to it several years ago. Senator Reilly spoke of the stars who have performed here during the past year and that production revenues totaled \$5,937,000 in 1989. It appears 1990 will also be lucrative with productions. Presently the Commission is existing under executive order and official recognition is needed to give it the authority and status it needs to function at the best level. (Attachment 2)

Makeup of the commission would involve many entities that can contribute information to fill needs of production companies and the Arts Commission was proposed as a member of the commission.

Senator Vidricksen related to the Committee his positive relationship with the Film Commission as their enthusiasm and willingness to work hard has placed Kansas in a competitive position with other states. The dedication of the many organizations, businesses and individuals to encourage and bring film production to Kansas needs the support of legislation to support their ongoing endeavors.

Harland Priddle stated this bill basically ratifies and establishes a formalization of the Commission and this is a great step forward. The economic impact affects many areas and businesses not just a single location. Action on this bill would place Kansas on a par with other states in this competitive arena.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION,
room 531-N, Statehouse, at 1:35 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on February 19, 1990

Jerry Jones presented a one-minute commercial to demonstrate how it was produced in Kansas and emphasized the benefits to a variety of local entities. Mr. Jones stated that economic development is the primary reason for its existence and the benefits are millions of dollars added to the economy each year from out of state sources, plus publicity of immeasurable value. There has been approximately \$21 million come into the state from out of state surces in the past three years. An extensive network is employed to scout for locations, historic sites and properties. The entire process of setting up and filming was given to the committee. This commission is the envy of other states as the Advisory members wish to be working advisors and do so at their own costs. The proposed bill specifically continues this policy of non-reimbursement. It is important to keep this diligent and hard working group of people as a recognized commission. Their endeavors are bringing the motion picure industry to Kansas and the benefits are enormous for the state.
(Attachment 3)

Discussion was held on publicity and legal agreements with individuals, businesses and the production companies. Competition is very strong with states that have built production studios for just this purpose.

Chairman Oleen informed the committee she has received a request for introduction of a bill by the Public Employee Retirement Board to provide changes in the Administrative Procedures Act regarding the Public Employees Retirement Board.

A motion was made by Senator Bogina to introduce legislation concerning change in the Administrative Procedures Act regarding the Public Employees Retirement Board; seconded by Senator Francisco. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be February 20, 1990.

GUEST LIST

COMMITTEE: SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

DATE 2-19-90

NAME	COMPANY / ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS
Jean Barbee	Travel Industry Assn.	Topeka
Mary Lou McNeil	Travel + Tourism Div.	"
Jacqueline O'Neil	Leavenworth City Hospice	Leavenworth
Gayle Edwards	Leavenworth Co Gaspec	Leavenworth
Rick & Lori Schneider	First National Bank	LEAVENWORTH
D. WAYNE ZIMMERMAN	KDOC	TOPEKA
Harland Ruddle	KDOC	Topeka
Julie H. Lee	KDOC/KFC	Topeka
Jerry Jones	KDOC/KFC	Topeka
M. Hawes	Coastal-Southern	"

February 19, 1990

Senate Bill No. 623

Act establishing Kansas Film Services Commission

Richard D. Ross

Reporter of Decisions, Kansas Supreme Court/Court of Appeals

I support Senate Bill 623 to establish the Kansas Film Services Commission. I am speaking today, not in my professional capacity, but as a private citizen who is interested in improving the image of the state as a great place to live and to locate new businesses and industries.

Cast as a juror (an extra) in last summer's filming of "Cross of Fire," I had eight days to observe first-hand the film industry and its potential economic benefit to Kansas. I also had a chance as a self-appointed ambassador of the state to become well-acquainted with some of the cast and crew, to welcome those persons to our great state, and to dispell some of the myths by which our state is labled. Most obvious of those, of course, is the black and white image of Kansas portrayed in the otherwise glamorous movie "The Wizard of Oz." One evening, while we were filming a courtroom scene in Ottawa, a tornado touched down one mile from the city. All 200-plus extras, the cast, and the crew orderly assembled in the basement of the courthouse. There I told David Morse, the prosecutor in the film, that one of my worst fears had just occurred--that the Wizard of Oz image was coming to life to these non-Kansans. He remarked that that should not be a fear to me, but a reality; in fact, he said that whenever someone tells others that he or she is coming to Kansas, the stock response is, "Don't forget to take your ruby red slippers." I can guarantee you, however, that when those actors, crew, and directors left the state one and one-half months later, they were not discussing tornadoes in Kansas--they were discussing how friendly Kansans were, how cooperative Kansans were, and how reliable Kansans were. One assistant director told me that he was not known for handing out compliments, but that without a doubt in his mind, the extras in Kansas were the finest, most intelligent, and most cooperative group of extras that he had ever had a chance to work with in 25 years of film-making, and that he would not hesitate to do a film in Kansas again.

All of this translates to me as a positive image for the state--one that will spread not only in the film industry but one that will trickle-down to other non-Kansas industries which are seeking new locations for their businesses. The present film commission has done an excellent job with a limited staff and on a limited budget. Let's support that effort and support a growing industry in Kansas. Let's establish a Kansas Film Services Commission by legislative mandate and let's put dedicated Kansans on that commission to promote our great state.

S.G.O.
ATTACH 1
2-19-90

SAT 10/14/89

Kansans impressed Landon

LAURENCE — At a press conference in the Crystal Ballroom of the Eldridge Hotel preceded and followed by an informal autograph session, Michael Landon talked about reasons why he brought his NBC movie-of-the-week production to Kansas.

Principal shooting begins Monday at Eighth and Orange in Baldwin for "Where Pigeons Go to Die," a story about a boy and his grandfather who develop a close relationship raising homing pigeons. Set in the late 1940s, the two-hour film will be broadcast on NBC-TV sometime in 1990.

The film with a budget exceeding \$3 million, according to Landon, will film here through Nov. 3. Locations include Baldwin, Lawrence and Overland Park.

Landon said he decided to come to Kansas simply because of the enthusiasm shown by the Kansas Film Commission and the feeling of welcome he received when he visited several weeks back.

"We have received terrific cooperation from the film commission all the way down to all the residents in the community," he said from the podium during the news conference.

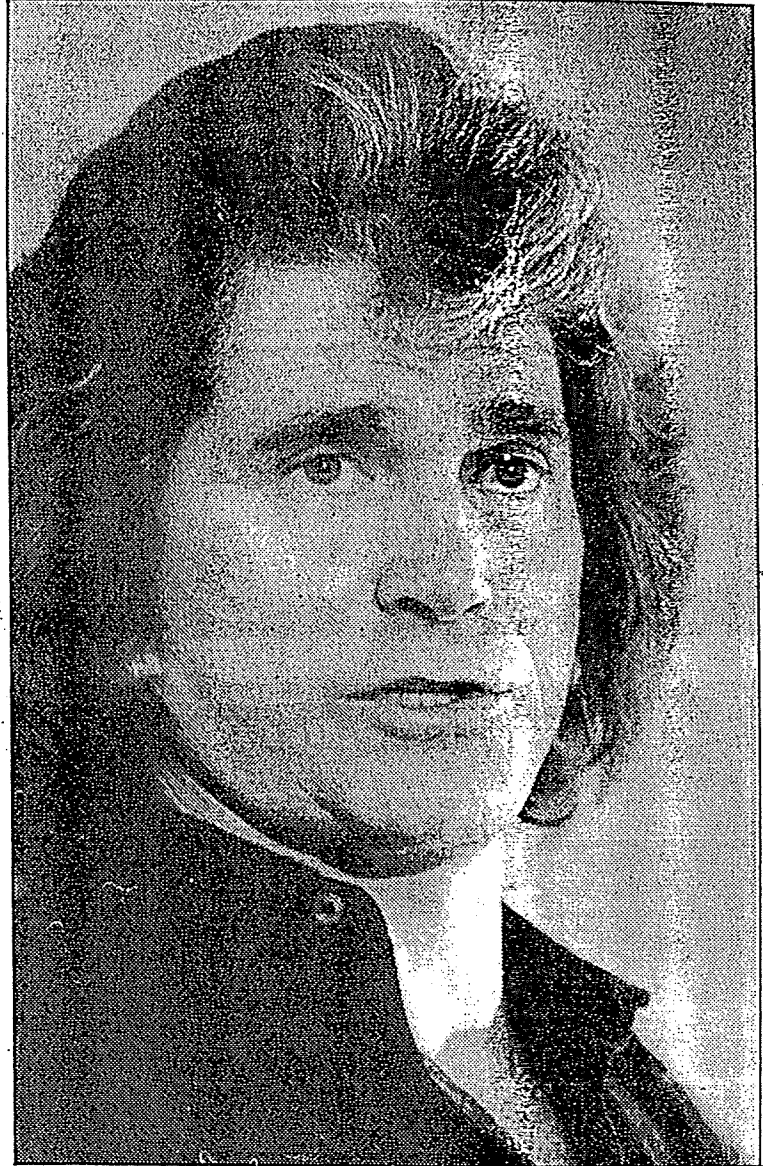
"People don't always realize how much it means to go into someone else's home and be made to feel welcome, as we have here," he continued.

He said he was persuaded to consider Kansas because it was the first state that responded to his request for possible sites for use in the film.

"In this business you put out feelers and wait to see what the response might be. You (referring to Kansans) were the first to answer. Not only that but your people were anxious to show us the things we might want to use."

Landon said the lay of the land and the fall colors were particularly right for his film. "I just hope the color stays just where it is," he said.

Landon said NBC has talked about changing the title, which



—Staff/John Bock

Michael Landon told reporters at a Lawrence news conference Friday he chose Kansas as the site of his new film because of the enthusiasm of the state's film commission and the warm welcome he received. Filming begins Monday.

comes from the title of a book by R. Wright Cambell. "They said they thought it was too long and they didn't like the word die in the title," he said. "Maybe they wanted to call it 'Welcome Home Grandpa.'"

Without a pause, he said, "The title won't change."

The air date could change. "They first gave me a Dec. 18 air date, but that would mean I would only have five weeks to do post production. I told them I couldn't make that date," Landon explained. "Now, if it turns out to be really terrific, it may be on in

February."

Art Carney, Cliff DeYoung and Robert Hy Gorman also star.

Landon will play the boy as an adult. He also penned the script and will direct.

It is his first directorial job since ending five years with "Highway to Heaven."

Landon is also known for his "Little House of the Prairie," for which he was producer, director and actor. He began writing and directing when he was Little Joe Cartwright on "Bonanza," which began in 1959 and ran until January 1973 on NBC.

S.G.D.
ATTACH 2
2-19-90



Landon has a reputation as a "hands-on" director. Here, he set up the angle for the next shot.

Hollywood's 'Mr. Clean'



Landon looked with a cameraman as they lined up a shot in which Hugh — played by Robert Hy Gorman — ran across a bridge and out of the frame.

Michael Landon: 30 years in front of the cameras — and a success with his clothes on

Russet leaves swirled across the damp gravel as the bright blue car rolled slowly up in front of the kneeling man in the brilliant red down jacket and olive trousers.

Adjusting his sunglasses, he looked up toward the aging granary nearby. He cupped his face in his hands, peering through his fingers as if they were the frame of a picture. The wind caught his long brown hair.

"That should do it. Pull the shot up tight on this and it will block the street light," he said, rising and fingering the gleaming hood ornament of the 1937 Dodge coupe.

Suddenly all around were aware that the modern street light looked out of place for a scene from the late 1930s.

This was the last scene before lunch for "Where Hicuous Go to Die" last Tuesday in Baldwin.

It was Halloween.

It was also Michael Landon's 53rd birthday, and once the crew moved, he would find a few birthday surprises along with lunch at a remote location north of Lawrence, where he has been filming since Oct. 18.

The company finished Nov. 2, a day early. That's not unusual for Landon, who is known as one of the fastest working producers/directors in the business.

Landon contends it's his veteran crew that makes for quick work. "They know what to do and everyone does what they do best," he said.

A crew member believes it's Landon who brings about the positive feeling that pervades the circumscribed entourage. "He knows what he wants. He doesn't have to waste film trying to satisfy several other producers," said one of his long-time hands.

Born Eugene Orlovitz Oct. 31, 1936, on Long Island, N.Y., Michael Landon has invented more than three decades in creating positive "good guy" television.

He's gone beyond stereotypes and opened viewers' eyes to the vulnerability and courage of the human spirit. In his series, he has dealt with physical and mental impairments, blindness and deafness, even some of the more subtle human failings like selfishness and materialism.

With each installment of "Highway to Heaven" or "Little House on the Prairie," we

Continued on next page



Landon explained a scene to two young actors as veteran script supervisor Erna Wambler listened.



Photography Director Haskell "Buzzy" Boggs listened as Landon explained the shot he wanted. Boggs has worked with Landon off and on since the long "Bonanza" series.

by LINDA LAIRD
photos by THAD ALLTON



A mockup of Da's house (a character played by Art Conney) was built at 95th and Metcalf with skycrapers in the background.

'We had a nice time'

Continued from preceding page

were prompted to make an effort to be nicer to our fellow man.

Six years ago, NBC unquestioningly gave Landon a go-ahead on his "Highway to Heaven" series because they trusted him, though network officials had little faith in the show itself.

A contract clause stipulated that when the ratings proved the public was not interested in seeing the good in people, Landon would go back and do a series about reality.

Instead, he and those many middle-American viewers convinced the network there is an audience for "good" television.

"Please step back," came the bull horn-amplified voice of silver-haired Maury Dexter, first assistant director. Nearly 100 Baldwinites crowding a chilly street quietly stepped back a couple hundred feet.

"Thank you very much," came the answer. "Where is he?" came a whispered inquiry from behind.

"He's there in the red jacket by the camera," came the equally hushed reply.

"Gee, he looks just like Jonathan Smith! (the character Landon played on "Highway")" came the return.

Landon has always played the nice guy on television. The town of Baldwin expected that image, and Landon and his crew followed through, giving almost everyone a "real good time," as one grandfather put it after spending a day watching Landon's crew work. Landon never failed to provide autographs whenever someone asked.

He spent 15 minutes of his 42-minute lunch break one day answering questions from local elementary school students. He had turned down many other invitations, but thought he owed the children in Baldwin, since he was using some students and the building for a scene. He answered questions about his age and the fact that he dyed his hair promptly and honestly.

"My hair turned white by the time I was 21," he told one youngster. "So, I dye it."

He talked about the reasons he brought his NBC movie-of-the-week production to Kansas at a press conference before filming began.

The two-hour film will be broadcast on NBC-TV sometime in 1990. The movie, with a budget exceeding \$3 million, was shot at locations in Baldwin, a farm north of Lawrence and on a special set built in Overland Park.

It is Landon's first directorial job since ending five years with "Highway to Heaven" a year ago. He has been re-editing 111 episodes of that series for syndication this fall.

His production this time is what he calls a "soft" piece. In the business, it means that it has no violence, only a little conflict, and deals more with relationships and characters than with action.

"Where Pigeons Go to Die" is about the relationship of a small boy and his grandfather, as they raise and race homing pigeons.

It is also about life and death and the dignity and sometimes indignity that we place upon those who grow older. And it is about the right of the dying to remain at home.

It was originally intended as a feature film, but "Soft films don't jam the lines at the box office," Landon explained. "Television tends to work best for this kind of story."

Melissa Sue Anderson, who portrayed his eldest daughter on "Little House of the Prairie," had dinner with Landon one night last spring and brought "Where Pigeons Go to Die," by R. Wright Campbell, with her. "She said, 'Here's something you should do.' And she was right," Landon said.

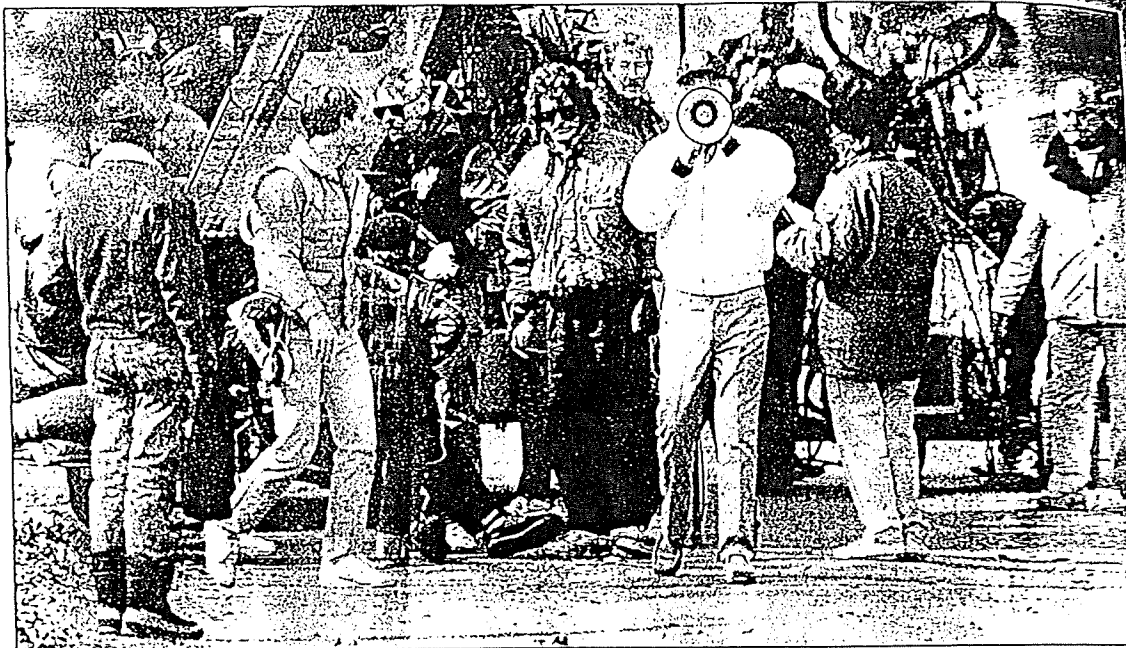
"What attracted me to the story was that running narrative and the flashbacks of the man who 40 years ago had spent much of his time with his grandfather, whom he called 'Da'."

Landon said he came to Kansas because of the enthusiasm shown by the Kansas Film Commission and the feeling of welcome he received when he visited the first time.

"People don't always realize how much it means to go into someone else's home and be made to feel welcome, as we have here," he said.

But he also liked the lay-out of the land. "We checked weather records over the past 30 years, trying to figure what time of the year was the best to get the beautiful fall foliage," said McCray, producer for Landon productions.

Filming began during the area's first week of cool, wet weather. The work, which Landon said



Maury Dexter, the first assistant director on the set, used a bull horn to announce lunch time for the cast and crew.

was more costly to do on location, was not without its minor difficulties, which were being handled as they arose.

"The rain has bothered us some, but not that much," McCray said.

McCray, who deals with the day-to-day problems of a location shoot, has worked with Landon since "Bonanza" days. His wife, Susan, is casting director on this film — the same job she had for "Bonanza" years before. "We've known each other 27 years. I was best man for Michael at his wedding and he at mine," McCray said.

At 53, the 5-11 star stays a trim 160 pounds with good diet and workouts at the gym.

He also sneaks smokes, a habit he doesn't seem to want noticed. He doesn't want to be a bad example for people who look up to him. He doesn't carry his own cigarettes and is always trying to quit.

Married three times and with a total of nine adopted and natural children, Landon's family extends much farther. Not one negative was voiced by his crew. Many of them had good things to say of almost 30 years in front of and behind the camera.

Haskell "Buzzy" Boggs, director of photography, has worked with Landon 33 years.

In 1984, I retired from the business. I had to cancel a couple of shows that year because it was difficult getting care for my wife, who was ill," he said, tears filling his eyes. "She died Jan. 18, 1985. I was making arrangements and figured I would be a small service, 'cause I hadn't seen many people I'd worked with for months," he explained.

"But Michael closed down the show and brought everyone to the service. It was beautiful. You can't believe how much that meant to me.

"Then he began calling me, telling me, 'You're

coming back to work.' He started sending flowers, knowing that I'd have to call him back to say thank you," he said. "Then he could ask me again when I was coming back to work."

Boggs was back to work on the last two seasons of "Highway to Heaven." A veteran of 60 years in the business, he said, "I'm 82 now. I've worked with the best. I'm proud to say I've seen a young individual develop into a genius. Michael is a genius."

"I know what he's done for people. And it's plenty," Boggs said, looking around toward Landon who was then standing in line with other crew and actors, awaiting a hot meal from the catering wagon.

"Michael makes my work so easy it almost isn't work anymore. He works everything out and he'll look at me and say just what I'm thinking."

When Boggs was asked why he thought Landon was becoming a symbol for the nicest guy in Hollywood, he said, "Anything Michael does comes from the heart. Lots of things make tears come, and no one can make films that do it better."

Erika Wernher believes in his sincerity. Landon's script supervisor off and on for close to 30 years, Wernher said he makes work fun. "I always learn something new each day, and I always look forward to getting up in the morning. You can't beat that," she said.

Landon seldom needs more than a set up, a rehearsal and a take. He's often there to help do set up, carefully watching the camera angles. When working with young actors, he often talks them through a difficult scene, then congratulates their efforts afterwards.

When someone asks, "We need to have that door closed, please," it's the star/director/executive producer who grabs the door, saying, "I'll get

that."

"We're all equals here. We all have our jobs to do, but we're all in this together," said McCray. But although Landon insists each specialist be allowed to do their job, he finds it hard to delegate authority on his own ideas.

"Michael is pleasing himself. He knows what he wants. They (people at the network) know what to expect from him," said John Warren, location manager, who has been on the team a number of years.

In a way, Landon was born into show business. His father was a publicity writer and his mother a musical comedy singer. Growing up in Collingswood, N.J., Landon had his first success in 1944, when he became national high school champion in the javelin throw.

Athletics earned him a scholarship at USC, which brought him to Los Angeles and the start of film making and television.

His early credits listed numerous appearances on "Playhouse 90," a classic of television, and his first film, "I Was a Teenage Werewolf," which may have been ahead of its time. Finally, he was tapped to become Little Joe Cartwright on "Bonanza," which ran on NBC for 14 years and continues to run in syndication around the world.

He might have continued being just an actor except for a script problem during one of the early seasons on the "Bonanza" series.

"There was no script to be shot," said Harry Flynn, a Landon publicist.

"Michael, then 23, had never written a script, but he went home and labored over an idea he had, turned in a complete script (written by hand) to producers on Monday and the crew was in production on that script by Wednesday."

Landon knew the writer has control over the words an actor says. A director/writer has even more control. He began directing during his "Bonanza" days. He followed that now-classic western with nine years of "Little House on the Prairie."

Landon followed "Little House" with "Highway to Heaven," in which he played an angel of sorts named Jonathan Smith, with a sidekick played by Victor French, who died this past June.

"I can't go back and do any more 'Highways to Heaven.' Not without Victor. It wouldn't be the same," Landon said, a bit of a break in his voice.

French had worked with Landon back in "Bonanza" days. He had moved on with him and filled a regular spot on "Little House" and then became his on-camera partner in "Highway."

French's philosophy about Landon was simple. "No one can say anything bad about him. If they do, they've got a problem. Sure, Michael expects 110 percent from everyone around him, but you don't mind giving that much of yourself, 'cause you know he's giving 200 percent."

"He always gives back. He always appreciates," French said in an interview several years ago about Landon's work on "Highway to Heaven."

Who could ask for a better testimonial?



Most of the fifth graders at Baldwin Elementary School were used as extras.

Senate Bill # 623

Governmental Organization Committee

Testimony

February 19, 1990

S.G.O.
ATTACH 3
2-19-90

The present Kansas Film Services Advisory Council -- commonly called the Kansas Film Commission -- began in 1982, when ABC-Circle Films came to Kansas to make the television movie The Day After. The tourism division of the Department of Economic Development assisted the production, and a staff position evolved, devoted to nurturing film productions in Kansas.

In 1985, the advisory council was expanded to include ex-Kansans who were pursuing successful careers in the industry. As you consider legislation to mandate a Kansas Film Commission, let me give you a brief background on the film commission: why we exist, how we operate, what benefits result, and the important role that the advisory council plays.

Economic development is the primary reason for our existence. The motion picture industry last year ranked second in the United States, behind the aerospace industry, in amount of trade surplus. Producers spend billions of dollars each year to create theatrical films and television programming.

Southern California at one time had a virtual lock on the motion picture industry, but as costs began to escalate and community cooperation dissipated, producers began to go elsewhere. In fact, from 1980 to 1985, production revenues in California fell by a full fifty percent: filmmakers were finding more cooperative locales to make their motion pictures. As producers took their projects out-of-state, alarmed California officials dubbed them "runaway" productions. Since 1980, these "runaway" productions have infused billions of dollars into state and provincial economies throughout North America.

Twenty years ago, Colorado recognized the potential of revenues generated by film productions and created the first state film commission. Today, all fifty states have film commissions, as do over a hundred U.S. cities. We belong to the Association of Film Commissions International, with over 270 members worldwide. Five other members are also

from Kansas: the cities of Lawrence, Manhattan, Salina and Topeka; and the twelve-county region of southeast Kansas.

The benefits are: millions of dollars added to our economy each year, usually from out-of-state sources, and publicity that is immeasurable in value. In the past three years, producers have come to our state and spent about \$21 million. These dollars are spread throughout the communities to a variety of businesses and individuals.

We get from five to six hundred requests for information each year. Our initial response is to send a copy of our directory -- a 250 page guide of equipment, personnel, services and other resources pertinent to a filmmaker -- and a copy of our full color photo location guide.

Out of nearly 600 requests last year, about a hundred and twenty-five required specific information and photographs of potential locations. Typically, a producer will send us a copy of the script. We'll read it and highlight each of the locations; usually, a feature length script may have anywhere from fifty to eighty different locations. Then we'll determine which two or three of these are the key locations. If our key locations, in the producer's eyes, are better than those submitted by other states, then we most likely have another production coming to Kansas.

To find those locations, we network extensively. We contact convention and visitors' bureaus and chambers of commerce throughout the state. We'll call on legislators, mayors, county officials, sheriffs, county extension agents, geologists, livestock associations, real estate agents: just about anyone we can think of who might have ideas about potential locations. We rely heavily on the media and on public response. And, of course, this is one area where we get a lot of help from our in-state advisory members. They may do their own networking, or they may go out and scout for locations themselves.

As we gather ideas for possible locations, we'll photograph these possibilities, put them in a panoramic format and send them to the producer as quickly as possible. Until a producer tells us otherwise, we continue to search for locations and send photographs.

If the producer likes our photographs, he'll usually send the location manager, and perhaps the production designer, to view the locations in person. If the sites are reviewed favorably, the producer then wants to know about the local availability of freelance crew, acting talent, equipment, lodging, cooperation of officials, and other similar details. If we've landed the project, then we can usually expect a production team to come into the state four to eight weeks before the first scene is filmed.

We're extremely busy during this period, helping with preparations that may include setting up temporary offices, getting phone systems installed on short notice, arranging for streets or highways to be temporarily closed, looking for the other fifty or more sub-locations, assisting with auditions, locating props, and literally hundreds of other details. Once again, we're dependent upon our network, contacting countless Kansans -- including our advisory members -- for assistance.

Once filming begins, we are on the set as much as possible in case any problems arise. When filming ends, the production manager and production accountant usually remain for a week or more to wrap up and settle accounts.

Each production is unique, but that's a general idea of the process. Basically, we work with a very large industry and represent a very large state. To be effective, we rely heavily on the help of others, particularly those who are on the advisory council.

I've mentioned the help we get from our in-state advisory members when we're working with a production. Let me mention also the help we get from out-of-state members in marketing Kansas to the film industry. For example:

Buddy Rogers -- from Olathe, who starred in the very first film ever to win an Academy Award, Wings, and who would later wed actress Mary Pickford -- has, at his own expense, twice hosted receptions for us at his Pickfair home in Beverly Hills, inviting producers and studio executives who were considering Kansas for locations;

Mike Robe, from Arkansas City, and Steve Mills, from Russell, were instrumental in bringing the 1986 mini-series production Murder Ordained to Kansas: Mike as the writer-director and Steve as the CBS vice-president in charge of the production;

Producer Doug Curtis, from Dodge City, brought a feature film production to Lawrence in 1986;

Actress Marj Dusay, from Russell, has served as chairman of the commission for the past four years, and both Marj and Doug have traveled to Kansas from California at their own expense to help with film commission activities.

Very honestly, our commission is the envy of a number of other states, whose members are serving, in reality, in name only. Across the board, we have members who want to contribute and work hard on behalf of the film commission.

One of the most impressive things about this advisory board is that the members participate at their own cost: they are not reimbursed for travel, meals or lodging when they attend meetings, and several of them each year assist us at our trade show in Los Angeles, paying their own way. Later this week, in fact, we'll depart for that trade show, and we'll be accompanied by twenty other Kansans who will help represent us to the film industry, all at no additional cost to the state. There will be a Kansas reception on Saturday night, where we'll invite prospective producers, and that reception is being paid for with donations from Kansas and California members of the advisory council. The proposed legislation, incidentally, specifically continues this policy of non-reimbursement.

We have been fortunate to have a diligent, interested and hard-working group of people helping us bring the motion picture industry to Kansas these past eight years. The millions of dollars spent by producers in Kansas attest to their effectiveness. It's important to keep these people, and others like them, deeply involved with the commission.

The expense is extremely small, the benefits are enormous.

Thank you.

From grandfather to grandson

Michael Landon, a grandfather in real life, plays Art Carney's grandson in made-for-TV movie

By Glenn Esterly

NBC is scheduled to present "Where Pigeons Go to Die" on Monday, Jan. 29, from 9 to 11 P.M. (ET). Check local listings for time and channel in your area.

"Hey, Norton! Norton! Norton, get out here. I wanna talk to ya, Norton!" Inside his motor home on a movie location in Lawrence, Kan., Ed Norton—a.k.a. Art Carney—looked up from his script, startled, and hustled to open the door to see who was doing the dead-on Jackie Gleason/Ralph Kramden impression. Outside he found his costar, executive producer and director on the NBC film "Where Pigeons Go to Die." Michael Landon continued: "I wanna see ya out here now, Norton!"—then broke up with his familiar rat-a-tat laugh. Carney broke up, too.

It was Landon's way of breaking the ice with Carney, who admits to being "very introverted when I'm first around new people."

Carney, perhaps best known as Jackie Gleason's bumbling sidekick, Ed Norton, on *The Honeymooners*, was lured to Kansas for one of his infrequent performances these days by a script that the Oscar winner ("Harry and Tonto") found to be "a beautiful picture of a relationship between a kid and his grandfather and the rest of the family. Maybe it's old hat, a tear-jerker in some places. Maybe it's corn. But there's nothing wrong with good corn."

Landon, who wrote the script for the

movie, first became aware of *Where Pigeons Go to Die* when his *Little House on the Prairie* costar, Melissa Sue Anderson, mentioned the novel one night while visiting. "I just read a book that's really your cup of tea," she said. She was right; it's a beauty," says Landon.

By R. Wright Campbell, the book tells the tale of a grandson (played by Landon as the adult) returning to Kansas City to sell the house of his grandfather (Carney) four decades after the old man's death. Overcome by the memories, he reminisces about how they worked together to train and race homing pigeons—and how the experience taught him lasting lessons. "Not that we try to drive them in, but there are any number of messages in it," Landon says. "How important home is, provided home is a loving place where people respect each other. How fragmented families have gotten—even at that time, in the late '40s. How so many times things are just taken for granted in life, until moments—and people—slip away before you can appreciate them."

A year and half after wrapping up production on *Highway to Heaven*, Landon, 53—and a grandfather himself—has had time to reflect on his own life and to put into perspective a total of 29 years of network series work. He's recently moved his family onto a new 10-acre Malibu "ranch" (it's not as big



Tony Costa/Quilling

as *Bonanza's* Ponderosa but it's more valuable). In terms of work, he only pursues what he feels like doing now. "My guess is that if it weren't for my involvement, this movie never would have been done," he says. "This is not the kind of film that grabs people in a 15-second promo. But I felt, as I have for a long time, that there's an audience for things like this."

Directing 9-year-old Robert Hy Gorman, who plays Landon's character as a young boy, was no problem. "I've always had great rapport with kids," he says. "I was playing with my grandson, little Robert, last weekend. He said he

likes hanging around with me because I'm a little crazy. All kids like that."

Landon is sitting behind his desk in the Malibu office of Michael Landon Productions, several minutes down Pacific Coast Highway from his new acreage. Behind him, through the window, the Pacific sparkles on a perfectly clear, spectacular day. Although he'll be in an editing room before long, working on "Pigeons," Landon seems loose on this Wednesday afternoon. "Last night *The Wonder Years* showed an excerpt from 'I Was a Teen-age Werewolf' [one of his early movie roles, 1957]. If things ever get really bad, I can always go back to that—30 years from now I could do the sequel. . . but I'd have no teeth. It's hard to get traction on the neck that way." He cackles.

When his interviewer produces a huge pile of clippings, stories done on him going back to his start on *Bonanza*, Landon—who hasn't gotten along particularly well with the press over the years—actually suggests rereading some of the headlines. "I'd like to hear some of the gut-wrenching stuff," he says, grinning. "About the *demons* in my body."

Okay: "Michael Landon *must* have control. Why the star-writer-director-producer of 'Little House' seems so obsessed with being in charge" (TV GUIDE, 1982).

This personality profile reminds him that network executives wanted to change the title of "Pigeons" to something catchier. "I just wouldn't do it because I think the author is entitled to have the same title on the film version. That's not a control battle—it's doing the right thing."

Another headline: "Samson and →

the Javelin" (*Inside Sports*, 1987). Landon can't have any problem with this one; it carries his byline. "I was positive I was Samson," reads the subhead. "How else could a 126-pound guy be the best javelin thrower in the United States? I was sure that if I lost my hair, I'd lose my strength." And he did. Taunting athletes at USC cut his long hair, and he couldn't throw a javelin after that to save his life. Now he says: "It's *my* head. I've just always liked long hair. I think I've had more reviews on my hair than I have on my films. There have been little snotty remarks in a lot of reviews. When *Little House* came out, somebody said, 'It's very unusual to have a series where the leading man is prettier than the leading woman'."

A newspaper clip: "Landon Joins First Lady on Drug-Abuse Special." Nancy Reagan has called him on a fairly regular basis through the years, says Landon. "Say what you want, Ronald and Nancy Reagan are the *only* two people in politics who ever called my home and *never* asked me for anything. The first time Nancy called me, she had seen an episode of *Little House* and was crying so hard that she just handed the phone to Ron."

After his stepdaughter went through a drug-addiction period in the '70s, Landon volunteered his time and efforts for the White House's anti-drug campaign. In retrospect, he says, "Well, I think it was a starting place. I was doing this [speaking out against drugs] long before that, but I'm not so sure that our [government's] attack on drugs [has been] done in a proper fashion."

"See, I'm not sure legalization of drugs would not be a good thing," he continues. "I mean, my kids don't take drugs. And if drugs were legalized tomorrow, my kids wouldn't take drugs. People who take drugs take drugs. So to spend billions a year trying to find out where somebody's growing a marijuana plant, I think is ridiculous."

One more clipping: "Like so many perfectionists, he had tried and failed to

Art Carney: a shy guy— except in front of the camera

When Art Carney arrived in Lawrence, Kan., in October to film "Where Pigeons Go to Die," Michael Landon recalls leading him to "the biggest, most elaborate motor home that exists, just a monster. Art asked me, 'What's this?' I said, 'It's your motor home.' And he shook his head and said, 'Gleason would have loved that.'"

Having been inactive in show business for the most part in recent years, Carney arrived in Kansas feeling nervous and insecure about playing the grandfather role, says Landon. "That surprised me," Landon says. "I mean, this is *Art Carney*. But once we started working, he was exactly what you'd want him to be. In the beginning, he told me, 'I'm afraid I'm not going to give you everything you want.' I said, 'Just give

me Art Carney.' And he did."

swim against the dark tides of his own nature. . . . He felt a rage that . . . was always there, a defense against whatever slight, real or imagined, Michael Landon thought might be coming" (TV GUIDE, 1985).

"Ooahhh, there we go with the evil spirits inside me. I almost paid \$70 to lie down on a couch after that one and talk to a shrink," Landon says, laughing. Instead, he routinely talks to himself, a practice that occasionally still catches his third wife, Cindy, by surprise. It's a habit he started as a lonely kid named Eugene Orowitz in Collingswood, N.J., a boy who had to deal with antisemitism even, he says, from his own Catholic mother. His father wound up a broken man, both in business and at home. "He let people walk all over him," Landon says. "I still use him in acting. All I have to do is think of him"—Landon's eyes mist over so

slightly—"and I can cry. Or, if I want to portray fury, no problem—I just think of how people were dishonest with my dad. I've been accused of an arrogant attitude at times; it's not arrogance, it's insisting that the other people be honest with me.

In fact, the role of the grandfather in this film was perfect for him. "I've got six grandchildren," Carney says. "Everything fell into place."

His recent absence from Hollywood is partly out of choice, partly because he's diabetic. "I have been for several years. It's called diabetic neuropathy," he explains. "It's damage to the nerve ends, and at the start it hurt like hell just going over a bump in the car. But that seems to have subsided, and I'm okay as long as I stick with my insulin shots and behave myself."

Carney, who lives in Connecticut with his wife and is visited frequently by his three children and the six grandchildren, "becomes someone else when I do take a job," he says. "At parties, I'm likely to sit in a corner and not say much. But put me in front of a camera and there's no stopping me."—G.E.



Carney and his young costar, Robert Hy Gorman, in "Where Pigeons Go to Die."

and mountainous terrain. "I've got more time for everybody now that I'm not doing a series," he says.

When he is at work now, Landon is less demanding of himself than in the past, according to Kent McCray, a producer who's worked with the star since 1962. "He's mellowed," McCray says. "The small things don't get taken quite as dramatically."

Asked point-blank about this mellowing, Landon says: "Oh, sure. I have a better attitude about my work. I'm not as upset looking at it the first time as I used to be. First time in my life I've felt that way. I'm not as hard on myself anymore. Let's face it, this business is a lot of fun. I'm pretty lucky." (END)

Glenn Esterly is a frequent contributor to TV Guide and the author of *The Talk Book: The Intimate Science of Communicating in Close Relationships* (Rodale Press).

News Release



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For Immediate Release

Monday, February 12, 1990

FILM COMMISSION SEARCHES FOR LOCATIONS

Topeka, KS - The Kansas Film Commission is looking for a few good banks to rob. After that, they would like to find a nice, dingy bar.

Actually, the commission is looking for a number of locations, not for vacation possibilities, but as settings for two new projects, one a feature film and the other a television movie.

The TV movie is set in the 1930s. The producers are looking for 1930's style banks, and buildings around the bank must also be from the 30's. Bank interiors should reflect the layout typical of the era (teller's cages and vaults). It doesn't matter what the building is used for today, as long as it has the basic design and architecture of the original bank.

Another important location is a hunting and fishing lodge set in a heavily wooded area. The lodge should be near a lake and

-MORE-

be from the 1930's or earlier.

The third major location is a tourist court: a row of individual cabins that would often be found on highways at the edge of cities in the 1930's.

The feature film requires present-day industrial, rural and suburban settings. A number of scenes are set in an old, damaged building, with a garage equipped for motorcycle repairs, in an isolated area, surrounded by a 10-foot privacy wall.

A second key location is a hill overlooking a suburban community filled with well-manicured lawns.

A few scenes also take place in "dingy" bars. One such bar is needed for interior and exterior shots and should have a jukebox.

Two industrial sites are needed for the project: an abandoned automobile plant and a tool and dye plant.

If you are aware of settings which fit these requirements, and would like to help bring another film production to the state, please contact the Kansas Film Commission at 1-800-2-KANSAS (in-state) or (913) 296-4927.



KANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Mike Hayden
Governor

Harland E. Priddle
Secretary

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Michael F. O'Keefe, Director of the Budget
FROM: Harland Priddle, Secretary of Commerce
DATE: February 14, 1990
RE: Senate Bill No. 623

(1.) Analysis of the proposed legislation:

Senate Bill No. 623 proposes to establish the Kansas Film Services Commission and provide for the appointment and authority thereof. This bill as proposed will formally mandate the commission and replace the current Kansas Film Services Commission as was created under an Executive Order by a prior administration.

(2.) Effect on agency operations.

The agency foresees no additional effect on agency operations as a result of this bill.

(3.) Dollar effect on agency operations.

The agency foresees no additional dollar effect on agency operations. As Section 1.(b) points out: "All legislative members and members appointed by the Governor shall serve without compensation".

(4.) Basis for cost estimates.

The proposed legislation does not change in any manner what is currently in place within the agency and respective division.

(5.) Implementation

Since there is already in place within the agency and division a similar informal program, there will be no further effect on the agency and respective division.

(6.) Long range fiscal effects.

The agency anticipates no additional long range fiscal effects.