

Statues by the Road

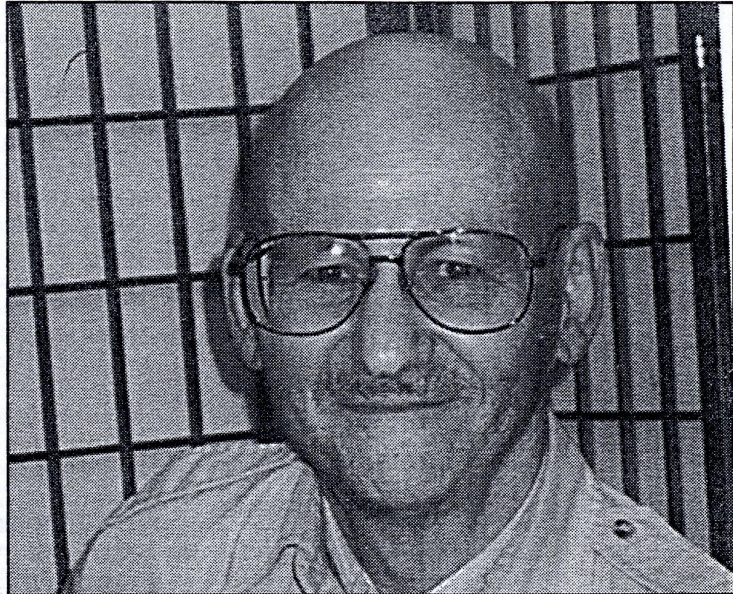
by Doris Litscher Gasser

You can now visit the enchanting land of Dr. Evermor's Sculpture Park, located on U.S. Hwy. 12 between Baraboo and Prairie du Sac, in your easy chair. This delightful "vacation from the world" is made possible by producer Bob Leff who has just finished creating a documentary video of Dr. Evermor's fantastic creations made from scrap metal he accumulated from the "time frame of the Industrial Revolution."

Dr. Evermor, born Tom Every in Brooklyn, Wis., has been interested in the scrap business ever since he collected a train load of it in 1952 when he was 14 years old. Since Tom was a unique individual, he saw these old metal pieces of machinery as art and disliked the thought of them being destroyed and melted down.

As time rolled along, he eventually met a kindred soul, Jim Delaney, who shared his appreciation for scrap, known as junk to some of his customers. Nevertheless, Jim Delaney's Store, located across from the old Badger Ordnance on U.S. Hwy. 12 flourished and he has made a comeback since a recent fire destroyed his old building. Tom set up camp on some acres adjacent to Jim's business and was on his way to creating Dr. Evermor's Sculpture Park.

Midst the beauty of nature and freedom of the country, Tom was in a spirit to dream and create. With intuition as his guide, he was engrossed in welding and putting interesting treasured pieces of old machinery together to become out of this world sculptures with the Forevertron, Ship to Heaven, as the center of the park. A 70 piece intriguing Bird Band is on hand to play for the take off of the Forevertron, among numerous other exciting sculptures.



Producer Bob Leff

Producer Leff has a fascinating background that led to his enthusiasm for creating the video of Dr. Evermor's Sculpture Park. Bob was born and grew up with his parents Sally and Sam and a younger sister Benay in Brooklyn, NY. He was surrounded by relatives involved in the newspaper and public relations businesses. His dad was a natural at imaginative drawing and expressing emotions, humor and the human condition, in general. These qualities, coupled with his interest in prize fighting, gave birth to the nationally syndicated adventure comic strip, *Curly Kayoe*, about a boxer. Bob's uncle Moe Leff shared these talents and drew and helped write the popular *Joe Palooka* comic strip. When boxing's popularity declined, Sam switched in the '60s to doing a skin-diving strip called *Davy Jones*.

While Sam's cartooning expressed

understanding of psychological aspects of life, his son Bob decided to focus on psychology as a career. He graduated from the Univ. of Pennsylvania with a doctorate in clinical psychology and then came in 1967 to Wisconsin where he joined the staff of a small state-funded institution in Madison, the Children's Treatment Center which later drew national attention for its innovative Home and Community Treatment Program. That project, having staff train parents and public school teachers in homes and schools, helped families and public schools deal more effectively with young, emotionally disturbed children before their problems became major, and without institutionalizing them.

But with changes in state government, the Treatment Center was merged into Mendota Mental Health

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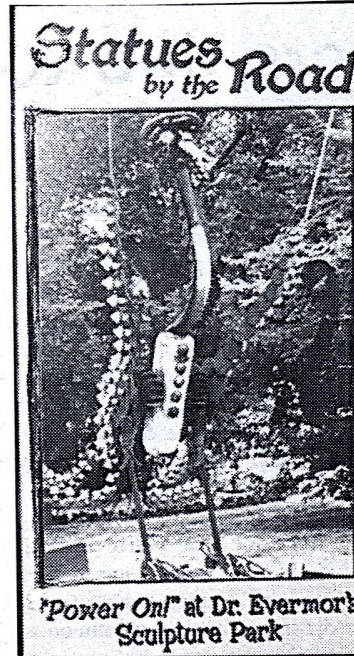
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Institute in 1973 and over time Leff's job responsibilities changed substantially, not always to his liking. Eventually, no longer finding satisfaction in his position, he decided to explore other options. Bob had never lost the spirit of the early days of his life when he was inspired by his dad's creative activities and teaching and so, with his natural artistic eye and his interest in people, he decided to take early retirement in 1996 in order to create films in his new company, Video Art Productions (V.A.P.).

An avid musky angler, Bob was lured to Northern Wisconsin for his first professional video production. There he captured candid stories of the old timers in "The Old Masters of Musky Hunting," a 1998 film that led to a sequel entitled "Musky Stores of the Old Masters," both videos later being aired statewide on Wisconsin Public Television.

"Gangster Holidays—The Video" was Bob's next project in 2001 depicting the days of John Dillinger, Al Capone, Baby Face Nelson and other mobsters in their Northwoods hide-aways. Their escapades of bootlegging, prostitution, racketeering and run-ins with the law in Wisconsin are weirdly mesmerizing.

"Statues by the Road," the latest fantastic V.A.P. production, is one you won't want to miss, according to reviews. Producer Leff has captured all aspects of the sculpture park, scientific, historical and artistic, and the philosophy of its creator through great photography, tantalizing music and comfortable chats with Dr. Evermor and Lady Eleanor who holds a painting party every year when the public is invited to help decorate Dr. Evermor's unique pieces. Lady Eleanor conducts the video viewer on a tour of all the park's major sculp-



tures, explaining what makes things tick and the fun of it all. Children of all ages from all over the world come to the park to enjoy the fantasy. How great that Dr. Evermor and Lady Eleanor have brought to life the light of creative joy into the heaviness of the Industrial Revolution when workers were too tired and absorbed in dust for that kind of appreciation, Leff said.

Leff, phone number 608/873-5784, will be happy to answer questions about the film. "Statues by the Road," which is 50 minutes long, can be ordered by check or money order sent to V.A.P., PO Box 44, McFarland, WI 53558. Cost is \$25 which includes shipping and tax. For those interested in the other videos, they are all priced the same but any two cost \$46.95 and any three cost \$67.

"Statues by the Road" can also be found in Hall's Drug Store, Sauk City, The Window Sill gift shop, Prairie du Sac, the Village Booksmith and Just Imagine in Baraboo and at Dr. Evermor's Sculpture Park.