

**Winter White Out's  
Competition for St. Clair's  
2017 Bootlegger Balladeer  
And Poet Laureate**

**Contest Rules & Regulations**

[www.StClairOnTheRiver.com](http://www.StClairOnTheRiver.com)

The competition is open to all amateur and professional song writers or poets. The competition is to determine who can write the best song or poem for the “2017 Legend”.

The 2017 Legend  
**The Mystery of the Cadillac Bear**

In Chuck Homberg's book, ST. CLAIR, MICHIGAN, he states that the Cadillac Hotel had a bear living there in the 1940's and early 50's. Very little is known about this permanent resident at the hotel, not even his or her name. It is really a shame since it had its own room and an adjoining exercise area.

Ron Brenner, a St. Clair Historical Commissioner, recalls as a youth walking by the hotel as he went to school and sometimes seeing the bear in its exercise yard. He is pretty sure that it was not a polar bear, because he remembers it as a big, very BIG, dark bear. He can't remember if it was a Michigan black bear, a grizzly from the Rocky Mountains or another behemoth.

There are rumors still circulating around town about the bear, but the museum can't verify any of them, because it only has a picture of the bear's room at the Cadillac Hotel and its exercise area.

There are two facts that appear beyond dispute, the first is that almost every sighting of the bear outside of the Cadillac Hotel took place just before sunrise, the second involves an eye patch, which witnesses report seeing the bear wearing on multiple occasions.

Some say that a circus came to town and left in the middle of the night leaving behind many unpaid bills and the bear. While the arrival of the bear remains uncertain, there is little debate on the day of the bear's departure. Police reports from January 20, 1953 indicate on three separate occasion bystanders reported seeing two men and one women walking with a bear. While details remain sketchy all three witness accounts have the bear and entourage moving in a westerly direction along the Pine River

Loren Gannon, co-owner of Gannon's Dairy at the time remembered the day clearly twenty years later:

*“The snow was hip-high and the air was cold, my chewing tobacco crunched when I put it in my mouth. As I was getting ready for work, two guys, a tall woman with dark red hair, and a bear walked right down the frozen river in front of my home. To this day it is the darnest thing I ever saw. “*

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Another rumor says that the bear was owned by Detroit's notorious Purple Gang. Apparently the gang ran a gambling room at the Cadillac and when there was a game being played, the bear guarded the room's door, discouraging uninvited visitors from entering.

Contestants for this year's event are encouraged to do their own independent research on the Cadillac Bear. In the past some contestants have uncovered unknown facts by doing research in the Port Huron Library's Michigan Room. One contestant consulted a gypsy fortune teller who used her powers to communicate with the dead revealing interesting and uncontested facts.

How a contestant obtains the facts for his or her poem or song is not relevant for this contest. Contestants will be judged on the best story of the Cadillac Bear's stay in St. Clair and its delivery.

1. Songs will be judged based on melody, composition, originality and lyrics (*must be based on the "2017 Legend"*). Poems will stand on their own. The decision of the judges is final.
2. Poets are competing for the title, **St. Clair's 2017 Poet Laureate**. Song writers are competing for the title, **St. Clair's 2017 Bootlegger Balladeer**. Winner will receive a proclamation from the mayor at the St. Clair City Council's February 20, 2017 meeting.
3. *In addition to winning the title of Poet Laureate or Bootlegger Balladeer, the St. Clair Rotary Club will award cash prizes in each category: \$250 for 1st place, \$150 for 2nd place and \$100 for 3rd place.*
4. Each entry shall be wholly original and shall not infringe on any copyrights or any other rights of any third parties. Each entrant shall, by entering, indemnify and hold the City of St. Clair, St. Clair DDA, the St. Clair Rotary Club and the St. Clair Events Company harmless from and against any claims inconsistent with the foregoing.
5. The entrant grants the City of St. Clair, St. Clair DDA, the St. Clair Rotary Club and the St. Clair Events Company an unlimited license to use the song or poem submitted.
6. We are requesting that an "Entry Form" be completed by noon, Friday, January 20, 2017 with a copy of entrant's song or poem. Entry forms may be dropped off at LaCroix's Riverside Pub (314 Clinton Ave.), St. Clair City Building (547 N. Carney Dr.) or e-mailed to [info@StClairOnTheRiver.com](mailto:info@StClairOnTheRiver.com) (*preferred method of receiving entry.*)
7. Entry forms, poems and songs will be accepted on the day of the event.

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**Entering contest Entrant agrees to perform at these times and locations at no-charge to the City of St. Clair, St. Clair DDA and St. Clair Events Company.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Wednesday, Jan 25</b>	7:00 pm	LaCroix's Riverside Pub	Competition
<b>Monday, Feb 20 (1)</b>	7:00 pm	St. Clair City Building, Council Chambers	City Council meeting

**Note 1** – The winner of the songwriting and poetry contests will receive their proclamation from the Mayor at the Council meeting after performing their winning poem or song.