

HOPE ON THE RIVER

THE BOOK TOUR

www.hopeontheriver.com



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AUTHOR BIO

Erich Mische is one of nine children from a family of six boys and three girls. Of all of Eugene and Betty Mische's children, he possesses the least amount of courage, intelligence, and athleticism. Despite these obvious shortcomings, he managed to survive a trip down the Mississippi River on a homemade raft during a global pandemic on a mission to save the non-profit he leads as Executive Director, Spare Key.

Mische spent 35 years in local, state, and national government and politics. He is a former United States Senate Chief of Staff, White Bear Lake City Council Member, altar boy, and bowling pinsetter at Fairmount Lanes. Undaunted by convention, Mische has lived a lifetime of adventure.

He and his wife, Mary-Helen, live in the Twin Cities metro area of Minnesota and are the proud parents of Owen and Maisie and an unruly, smelly dog, Sailor.



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"Erich Mische's Hope on the River is a master storyteller's journey, but it's not a travelogue. It's a compelling story of human perseverance--for him, the great non-profit organization he leads and loves, and the communities and people of a diverse and changing nation."

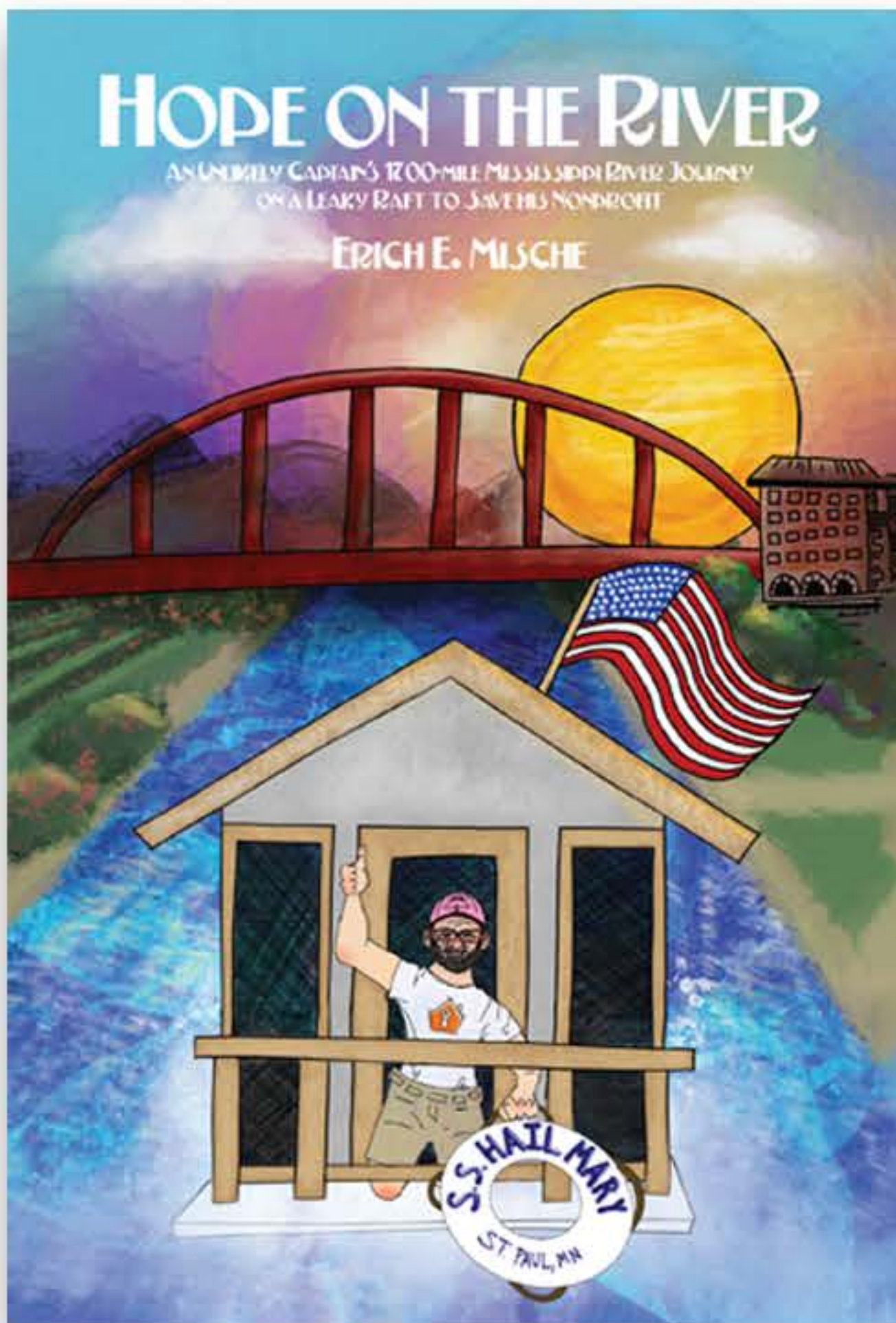
-Jamie Merisotis, President & CEO, Lumina Foundation, and author, Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines

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BOOK INFORMATION



Title: Hope on the River: An Unlikely Captain's 1700-Mile Mississippi River Journey on a Leaky Raft to Save his Nonprofit

Author: Erich E. Mische

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Page Count: 294

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GENRE/SUBGENRE



Adventures & Explorers | Memoirs | Motivational & Inspirational

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:



eBook: \$9.99 | Paperback: \$24.99

MEDIA REACTIONS

"Charles Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers, once wrote, "Those who navigate little streams and shallow creeks, know little of the God of Tempests; but those who "Do business in great waters," these see his wonders in the deep." For a great cause in tough times, Mische stepped into the deep, navigating the Mighty Mississippi like a water bug among barges, in a perilous trip that also proved to be profound. If you have ever wondered about travel on the great rivers, as I have, it's a great read. Love the details."

- Karl Puckett, Reporter, The Island Packet, Beaufort, South Carolina



"Here's what I like so much about the adventure Erich Mische tells us about here, hints of which we published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press as he traveled: Scared of the dark, hopelessly naive about the big river, possessed of insufficient trepidation, lacking any sense of the rhythms of the river, Mische, with a tankful of hope for and about humanity, launches from St. Paul -- into the kinds of troubles and trials that rational people, safe on our couches or not, might have predicted. Somehow, he lives to tell the tale. We get to learn how he feels his way and finds his rhythm. And how, after a thousand underpowered miles and weeks of tribulation, his tank of hope is even fuller than when he left."

- Mike Burbach, Publisher, Saint Paul Pioneer Press



"The Mississippi River's beauty deceives us. The river seems peaceful and calm. It's a kind soul who will harm no one. But last year, Erich Mische met the true Mississippi River, the real woman behind the reputation. The river is majestic – and dangerous. The man who admits he's afraid of the dark and scared of wild animals tackled the mighty, historic river to save a charitable organization, and with the help of friends, family, and folks along the way, he didn't die – and that was always a real possibility. Mische met the people who live, love, and respect the river and her mysteries. He learned who she really is. And he tells her secrets, harrowing and inspiring, with honesty and sincerity."

- Winona Whitaker, Senior Staff Writer of the Clinton Herald



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PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NON-PROFIT LEADER WHO SURVIVED MISSISSIPPI RIVER JOURNEY ON A LEAKY RAFT LAUNCHES BOOK TOUR

Sales of the book "Hope on the River: An Unlikely Captain's 1700-Mile Mississippi River Journey On A Leaky Raft To Save His Non-Profit" to benefit Spare Key

(SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA, AUGUST 2, 2020) Erich Mische, Executive Director of Minnesota-based non-profit, Spare Key, will launch a 10-state book tour along the Mississippi River Friday, August 27 – Friday, September 10 to promote his recently published book, "Hope on the River: An Unlikely Captain's 1700-Mile Mississippi River Journey On A Leaky Raft To Save His Non-Profit".

The book, currently available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble, shares the adventures of Mische as he traveled during the height of the global pandemic in a desperate attempt to raise money and awareness for his non-profit. All profits from the sale of the book will go directly to Spare Key to help support its www.HelpMeBounce.org platform that serves families facing a medical crisis by partnering with them to raise the funds they need to pay their bills.

Mische will stop in every state along the Mississippi River with specific times and locations found at www.HopeOnTheRiver.com during his 14-day book tour.



SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



- What inspired you to embark on such a journey down the Mississippi River?

"We needed something to spur more donations to Spare Key when COVID-19 began shutting down the economy. Sometimes the best ideas come from desperation and that's where this idea came from. Nearly every single fundraising event we had scheduled was cancelled due to the global pandemic and this event became our way of staying in people's thoughts and to raise awareness of who we are and what we do."

- What's your favorite under-appreciated novel?

"The Road" by Cormac McCarthy. You can consider the end of the world to be a hopeless dystopia where you are looking out for nobody but yourself, or you can look at the end of the world being the place where humanity truly rises to its place in the Universe. I chose, and choose, the latter. Where hope is lost, all is lost. Hope is ultimately never lost in "The Road"

- What can readers hope to learn from this book?

"Not learn, but be reminded: America is great, filled with great American people, and we live in the most profoundly important country in the world."



- What is your favorite passage from the book?

"Easy. It's the speech that my son, Owen, wrote and read at the launch ceremony for my trip on August 27th, 2020. It made me cry then, it still makes me cry."

- What was your favorite spot along the river that you stopped at?

"My favorite spot along the river was Kimmswick, Missouri. It's where I met Captain Michael Coyle who helped me down the river after I left Hoppie's Marina. It was also where my brother, Karl, joined me on the raft to successfully complete the "Hope on the River" journey."



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BOOK TOUR CITY ITINERARY:

- Friday, August 27 – Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Saturday, August 28 – Red Wing, Minnesota
- Sunday, August 29 – Wabasha, Minnesota and Clayton, Iowa
- Monday, August 30 – Bettendorf and Keokuk, Iowa
- Tuesday, August 31 – St. Louis, Missouri
- Wednesday, September 1 – Cape Girardeau, Missouri
- Thursday, September 2: Osceola, Arkansas and Memphis, Tennessee
- Friday, September 3: Greenville and Vicksburg, Mississippi, Lake Providence, Louisiana
- Saturday, September 4 -: Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Monday, September 6: Lettsworth and Vidalia, Louisiana and Helena, Arkansas
- Tuesday, September 7: Hickman, Kentucky and Kimmswick, Missouri
- Wednesday, September 8: St. Charles, Missouri, and Oquawka, Illinois
- Thursday, September 9 - Clinton, Iowa
- Friday, September 10: Captain Michael Coyle Celebration of Life, St. Louis, Missouri
- Saturday, September 11 – Rockport, Illinois
- Sunday, September 12 – North Buena Vista and Lansing, Iowa, and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin
- Monday, September 13: La Crosse, Wisconsin and Winona, Minnesota

FOR SPECIFIC CITY LOCATION INFORMATION, PLEASE VIEW THE ONLINE PRESS KIT



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BOOK EXCERPT:

A few miles past Lock and Dam Number 21, I came upon a large towboat pushing barges up the river. Nothing unusual, and not large enough entourage to cause me much concern.

I looked at my navigation app on my iPad and quickly determined that I had plenty of room on the port side of my raft, the SS Hail Mary, to exit the navigation channel and just let the towboat go by. For some reason, though, I got on the radio and asked the tow's captain for his opinion. I was quite sure his first set of instructions aligned with my thought: that I should go to my left and stay out of his way until he got by me.

However, his response was not clear, and I repeated my request for guidance from him.

He then said, "One whistle"—meaning that we should pass port to port—and instructed me to go by him on the green buoy side, my right.

I was skeptical, but he assured me that the water on my side was deep and we would get past one another uneventfully.

I should have stuck with my original plan.

The space from the shoreline to his rolling wake—with me in the middle—was not very wide at all. As I approached his port side, I regretted the decision immediately. I could tell that I had extraordinarily little room to wiggle between him and the shoreline, so I picked up speed in the hope that I could ride past his wake quickly.

Unfortunately, that tactic didn't work this time.

The wake he created was not a simple chop; it was a rolling tsunami. I quickly assessed my options. I couldn't go right, because I would go directly into the shoreline. I couldn't go left, because he had not yet gotten far enough past me to allow me to get back into the navigation channel.

So instead I rode head-on into the first of several massive, rolling waves.

The raft pitched straight down into the river and stopped. I gasped as I felt myself being flung forward and down. The water poured in and the motors labored under the brick wall of water I had hit.

It happened a second time, and this time the raft went down deeper and I nearly flew over the steering console.

I knew I wouldn't survive a third time.

I stopped the motors and let the third wave wash over the deck as I pushed myself to the front of the raft and desperately threw three sandbags off the front, into the river.

I then throttled up the motors, turned the nose sharply to port, and made my way back into the navigation channel. I decided that I would fight the roiling backwash and turbulence of the towboat in the channel rather than battle any more of the wake outside it. It took me a good fifteen minutes to ride out this roller-coaster. As the waves got smaller, they came faster, until finally I made it to calm water.

I was exhausted. Sweating. The raft was soaked. And I found myself shaking. Not from the cold but from the realization that the SS Hail Mary had nearly ended up seventeen feet down on the bottom of the river, with me in it.

Months earlier, when I had decided to take a raft down the Mississippi, I had envisioned myself going it alone. After all, how hard could it be, right?

My vision of a slow and leisurely drift, complete with time to read books, wax poetic in a journal, fish for the monster catfish I'd heard and read about, and chat with my fellow "river rats" was as vivid in my mind as a motion picture.

My mistake in how I had rearranged the weight on the raft that morning was multiplied by the error of not trusting my judgment about going to the left side of the channel. Had I done so, the encounter would never have happened. The near sinking would have been avoided. And I would have been in a better position a couple of hours later when the next catastrophe struck.