

FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE Newsletter



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December 2007

JAY HOFFMAN CENTER DEDICATED DEC. 5

[The following is based on a press release from the Illinois Governor's Office.]

After four years of construction, the N.O. Nelson campus of Lewis and Clark Community College in Leclaire is nearing completion with the dedication of the Jay Hoffman Center on Wednesday, December 5th. The center was named for State Representative Jay Hoffman (third from the left in the masthead picture). His support in the Illinois State Legislature was essential in obtaining the more than \$14.2 million of Governor Rod R. Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* funds for restoring the former factory complex into a state of the art education center. Local funding totaled nearly \$5.8 million.

Also essential was the vision of LCCC President, Dr. Dale Chapman, and his staff who recognized the historic significance and the potential of what in the beginning of the process were buildings that had been allowed to deteriorate.

The total space occupied by all the buildings is now 102,100 square feet, with a total of 30 classrooms. The Jay Hoffman Center

provides 35,500 square feet of newly-renovated space for the Southwest Illinois Advanced Manufacturing (SIAM) Center, a joint initiative between Lewis and Clark and SIUE, plus computer and electronic laboratories and a 66-seat lecture hall. The Leclaire Room, pictured below, seats about 250 people for seminars, training and meetings.

"N.O. Nelson, believed that labor and management should work as a team for a just and equitable society. This belief and an intense desire to provide educational opportunities for everyone, are the hallmarks of Jay Hoffman's career, and it is certainly appropriate to name this building for Jay," said State Sen. William Haine (D-Alton).

"Representative Hoffman is very focused on education. He understood

the potential benefits of the project while it was still on the drawing board, and has worked tirelessly to turn the concept into reality," said Lewis and Clark Community College President Dale T. Chapman.

"We are thankful to Rep. Hoffman for his continued support of this project," Lewis and Clark Board Chairman Robert Watson said. "This project is extremely important to the College, because it allows us to expand our current offerings and create new offerings through our partnerships with Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and the Edwardsville School District. Our lawmakers have seen our vision for this campus and understand how important this project is to the region."

About 1,500 Lewis and Clark and Edwardsville High School students attend classes on the campus. College and school officials expect that number to grow with the new additional space.

"We are pleased to be able to provide more offerings and state of the art equipment for our students through this partnership with the College," said Edwardsville School Superintendent Ed Hightower.



Standing room crowd in the new Leclaire Room.



Kathy Krisnan & Amy Hillmer

**FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE
HOLIDAY PARTY**

Members of Friends of Leclaire enjoyed their annual holiday social at the home of Bob and Mary Blain at 919 Hale Avenue on Tuesday, December 11. The Blain home is across the street from the park. The event was a potluck social with guests bringing appetizers and desserts to share.

NEW MEETING TIME!

Beginning February 12, 2008, Friends of Leclaire will meet at 7 PM instead of 7:30 PM. Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the second floor conference room (Room 224) of Building N3 at the Historic Nelson Campus of LCCC in Leclaire. There are no meetings in August or January, and the December meeting is a social gathering at the home of a FOL member.

**MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS
OF LECLAIRE**

Join Friends of Leclaire or renew your membership for just \$10 per year by mailing a check to: Friends of Leclaire, P.O. Box 644, Edwardsville, IL 62025. Include your name, phone number, e-mail and street addresses.

Dues are used to promote the history and preservation of the historic Leclaire neighborhood. Founded in 1890 as an experiment in cooperative living, Leclaire was designated a National Historic District in 1979. Walking tour brochures, books, DVDs and other materials on the history of the neighborhood are available.

Call 656-1294 or E-mail friends@historic-leclaire.org for more

information. Members receive quarterly issues of the Leclaire newsletter and are eligible for that warm fuzzy feeling we all get when we know we are supporting a good cause!

IN MEMORY

Long time Friends of Leclaire member Ruth Dezort passed away in late October at the age of 85. Ruth and her husband Edward "Slim" Dezort raised their two children in a charming Leclaire bungalow on Hale Avenue. Ruth was a devoted homemaker who enjoyed taking care of her family, baking and quilting. The Dezorts lived in the house at 724 Hale Avenue until last year when they moved to Meridian Village in Glen Carbon. A friend of the family has made a memorial donation to the Leclaire Park Improvement Fund.

Friends of Leclaire member Henrietta "Henri" Johnson passed away in late November. Henri grew up on Emerson Avenue in Leclaire with her two sisters. She wrote about her family who moved to Leclaire in 1945 in a Friends of Leclaire newsletter several years ago. Henri remembered attending third grade at the old Leclaire school house, swimming and skating at Leclaire Lake, and a time when the city of Edwardsville ended at Hadley Avenue. Henri concluded her essay by saying, "Yes, life was good at 1206 Emerson...I hope the new owners have as wonderful a life as my family, the Johnsons, did at 1206 Emerson." We are grateful to Henri for leaving us with her memories of Leclaire.

**SIUE CLASS LEARNS ABOUT
LECLAIRE**

The Edwardsville Historic Districts of Leclaire and St. Louis Street were the subject of a recent SIUE graduate class on "Enhancing Urban Livability." Cindy Reinhardt and Meg Solon of Edwardsville's Historic Preservation Commission spoke to the students about their respective neighborhoods and then provided walking tours.

The focus of the discussion was improving livability through neighborhoods. Most of the students were unaware of Leclaire's unique history and the early innovations of setbacks and deed restrictions that were part of Leclaire. Prof. Robert Koepke remarked on how you could feel "a sense of place" in Leclaire that enhances livability.



Austin & Carter Blaine Kuykendall

**WINTER CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM CELEBRATIONS**

From November 30th through December 29th the Children's Museum will be filled with displays and workshops that introduce children to international winter celebrations such as Hanukah, Christmas and Kwanzaa as well as Winter Solstice and lesser known celebrations.

Winter Celebrations, featuring unique crafts, activities and displays, will be open on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am - 3:30 pm during the month of December. Admission will be \$4 per person over the age of one. The museum will be closed December 22-25, but is open on December 27-29. What a great place to take the kids during their school holiday!

The museum is located in the former Leclaire School House at 727 Holyoake Road. For more information call 618-692-2094 or visit their web site at www.childrens-museum.net.

THANK YOU!

This year's Leclaire Parkfest was declared by many to be the best one ever! Absolutely perfect weather was certainly a contributing factor, but it was the many volunteers that made everything work so well.



Jim Fralinger visits with Madison County Historical Society members

Site supervisors Al and Kim Pauli and Mike Reinhardt saw to it that all the vendors had electricity when they needed it and helped with set-up and take-down. This included hauling needed electrical wiring to the park from the Chamber of Commerce and returning it after the festival.

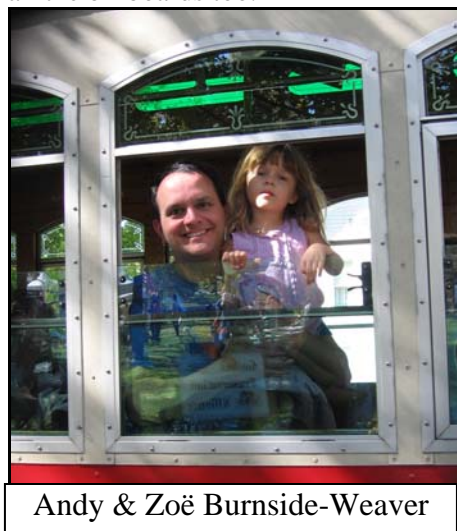
Ginger McCall organized the team that worked the Friends of Leclaire booth. The volunteers included Bob and Mary Blain, Edna Grench, Amy Hillmer, Reba Klenke, Kathy Krishnan, Mary Ellen Milgrim, Lou Ann Trebing, Danielle Smith, Elizabeth Bottje, Jim Fralinger, Pat Jones and others who stopped by to tell visitors about our history or welcome them to Leclaire.

Janet Foehrkolb and Jill Dorsey took care of contracts, insurance, permits and the placement and take down of billboards at City Park and at the Leclaire water tower. New Friends of Leclaire member Elizabeth Bottje handled publicity with the local newspapers. Kim Wolfford and her family counted and distributed thousands of flyers to children in



area schools. Dozens of people assisted in distributing flyers to local businesses and we are grateful to the businesses that allowed us to post flyers. Steve Brockmeyer posted vendor applications and other Leclaire Parkfest information to the Friends of Leclaire website.

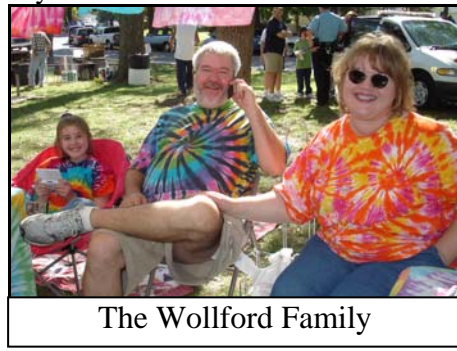
Member Sherrie Hickman of Creative Options Graphic Design worked overtime creating a new festival logo that places emphasis on music and a new shirt design so FOL had fresh merchandise to sell at the festival. The new festival logo was on all the flyers advertising the festival this year. Next year you'll see it on all the billboards too.



Andy & Zoë Burnside-Weaver

Jim Milgrim volunteered to help the Parks Department with their washers tournament and seemed to be at hand whenever needed throughout the festival. Dozens of Leclaire Parkfest vendors, exhibitors and musicians made the festival a success and we are grateful that so many come back each year to participate.

The Edwardsville Parks Department provided assistance the day of the festival as well as in the



The Wolfford Family

weeks leading up to the event. The City of Edwardsville provided a much needed grant to fund the festival as well as officers to make sure everyone was safe during the event. Eden Village was kind enough to donate their bus and a driver to transport visitors from the parking areas to Leclaire Park and back. Their driver, Geri, was wonderful.



Taylor, Austin, & Carter

I also need to thank all the residents of Leclaire who live near the Park for their tolerance of traffic, noise and crowds in their quiet corner of Leclaire on a Sunday afternoon that brought joy to thousands of people. We are especially grateful to Sharon Hile for allowing the pony rides to be set-up on her property.

I have to say thanks to all those I might have missed! It's a long list, so I'm sure I've missed someone.... My apologies.

In addition to people who volunteered in advance, we had many who just showed up and did what they could to help. It was a great experience and I hope to see you all again next year: Sunday, October 19, 2008!

Cindy Reinhardt
Leclaire Parkfest Coordinator





TURKEY BOY SHIRTS

The shirts featuring the N. O. Nelson Memorial Fountain (turkey boy) have proved so popular that a reorder had to be made before Leclaire Parkfest! The shirts come in a hooded sweatshirt (grey only), a crew neck sweatshirt, a ladies t-shirt and a standard t-shirt. All but the hooded sweatshirts come in either grey or green. Most sizes and styles are still available although some are in very limited quantities. Call 656-1294 to order shirts for Christmas.

In our last newsletter, we asked if anyone knew the meaning of the boy on a turkey on Nelson's Memorial Fountain. This card is Mary Blain's entry.



It says, "May you see many glad Thanksgiving Days. May you always ride on the wings of prosperity and plenty."

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS

Christmas programs were very popular in Leclaire at the turn of the last century. Each year a few days before Christmas, there was a lengthy evening's entertainment at the school house with songs, recitations and reading to celebrate the season.

LECLAIRE HISTORY

Children letters to Santa
Edwardsville Intelligencer
 December 9, 1926

Dear Santa Claus:

Just a line to let you know what I want for Christmas. I want a box of tools, black board, water tower, pencils, tablet, aeroplane, telephone, crayons, Xmas tree, candy, nuts and oranges.

Your little friend,

George Junior Blume

P.S. DON'T FORGET MY TEACHERS
 MISS WILSON AND MISS SHAW.

Dear Santa Claus,

We are two little girls, sister is 3 yr and I am 6 yr old. I will tell you what we want for Christmas. Bring us both a bye-lo-baby and some paints and I want a tinkertoys set and cabinet. Dolores wants a piano and bring us a Christmas tree. Don't forget our sick cousins Leola and Laverne and Grandpa and aunt Velyn, Daddy and Mama.

Your little girls,

Belva and Dolores Howerton

926 Ruskin Ave., Edwardsville, Ill.

Dear Santa Claus:

I am 1 years old. I will tell you what I want for Xmas a sled, a big pool table, a big tool box, candy, nuts and oranges. Don't forget my sister Mary Lee.

Your friend Jack Welch

(Note: There was evidently a typo in the newspaper as Jack Welch would certainly have been older than 1 in 1929 or had very mature taste for a 1 year old! The Welch family lived at 826 Holyoake in 1929)

Dear Santa,

I am a little boy 4 yrs old and go to Leclaire Kindergarten. Please bring me for Christmas a tool chest, gas station, building blocks, race horse, story books, candy, nuts, and oranges and a Xmas tree. Don't forget my uncles, aunts and cousins.

Your Little Friend,

Lester M. Troeckler

The Edwardsville Intelligencer,
 December 21, 1929

Dear Santa Claus:

I am a little boy 6 years old and go to Leclaire Kindergarten. I want a scooter, tractor, dirigible and some candy oranges and nuts and bring my little brother Duane who is two years old a Kitty Kar and some kind of toy and also a Xmas tree. Don't forget my teacher Miss Shaw.

Gerald Grosenhelder

Dear Santa Claus:

I am a little girl five years old. I go to Kindergarten every day. My teacher is Miss Shaw. I will tell you what I would like for Xmas, a nice big doll, set of dishes, a Xmas tree and a pair of bedroom slippers, candy nuts and oranges.

Your little friend,

Edilha V. Schmidt

LECLAIRE CHRISTMAS

The Edwardsville Intelligencer,
 December 28, 1894

The Leclaire kindergarten had its Christmas treat Monday morning. After the regular exercises by the children the tree was brought in by George Roe, who acted in the capacity of Santa and distributed candies, nuts and oranges among the little ones, whose joy knew no bounds.

J. H. Neustadt, superintendent of the N. O. Nelson Mfg. Co. plant was pleasantly remembered on Christmas Eve. The employees at Leclaire presented him with a diamond pin and the Leclaire Co-operative Association with a gold headed cane. J. R. Van Arsdale made the presentation. Mr. Neustadt thanked the donors and invited them to his house where refreshments were served and an hour was spent in a very cheerful manner.

The Leclaire band to express their appreciation of W. B. Thomas, their leader, presented him with a handsome parlor lamp. Harry Friday made the presentation, and the popular leader gracefully acknowledged the favor.

Thanks to Cindy & Mike Reinhardt
 for copy. Bob Blain, Editor