



# FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE

## NEWSLETTER

December 2014

Volume 24 No. 4

### 2014 LECLAIRE PARKFEST - FUN, FOOD, FRIENDS

LeClaire Parkfest 2014 brought some challenges, but with the help of many members, friends, volunteers and sponsors it was a great year for the festival.

After several days of rain, the weather cleared giving patrons the opportunity to enjoy the music, shopping, festival food and the beer and wine from our new vendor, Bin 51! Guests enjoyed the narrated trolley tours, historic exhibits, craft vendors and numerous activities for children, then strolled over to the east side of the park to admire an impressive collection of vintage vehicles, stopping along the way to buy books from the DAR, talk to officers at the D.A.R.E. table or even adopt a pet!

This year we learned the true meaning of "Necessity is the mother of invention." A new Edwardsville festival made early reservations for the Chamber of Commerce electrical

cords and HPC easels that FOL has relied on each year. There were more than a few moments of panic, but, with the inspiration, talent and time of our great volunteers, all turned out well.

Thanks to Site Supervisor Al Pauli's electrical knowledge and determination to find a good price, FOL now has its own heavy duty electrical cords. Although it was a financial set-back this year, it will prove to be a great advantage in the years to come.

Instead of using easels to display photographs, a collaborative effort by FOL members Bob and Mary Blain, Mark Hartman and Cindy Reinhardt created a photo gallery without easels that will be used again in the future.

By "game day" all the problems had been solved. Thank you to all of our many FOL volunteers, sponsors, vendors, city employees, and patrons for another successful year. We're already looking forward to next year!

Save the Date: The 24<sup>th</sup> annual LeClaire Parkfest will be on Sunday, October 18, 2015.



Thank you to Home Depot for supporting Friends of LeClaire by making our new electrical cords affordable! You rock!!

Members of Friends of LeClaire are invited to our annual social on Tuesday, December 9, at 7 p.m. hosted by Albert and Kim Pauli at 1101 Lake Avenue.

The Pauli home is the brick bungalow at the southwest corner of the park featured in the last newsletter because it was used in the filming of the movie, "Marshall, the Miracle

### HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE



Dog." The annual party is a great way to meet your neighbors and others who love our wonderful historic neighborhood. Please note that this is a members only event.

Guests are asked to bring a plate of "finger foods" to share and if you are so inclined, BYOB. The hosts will provide non-alcoholic beverages, plates and silverware. Please RSVP to Kim Pauli at 444-5558.

Friends of LeClaire ♦ P. O. Box 644 ♦ Edwardsville, IL 62025

www.historic-leclaire.org ♦ friends@historic-leclaire.org ♦ 618-656-1294

## HOUSE HISTORY CONTEST

Curious about the history of your Leclaire house? With over 400 homes in Leclaire, the House History Contest gives homeowners a better chance of having their home chosen for the quarterly newsletter's house history.

The winner of the contest is given a written history of their home, supporting documentation and, when available, early photographs of their house and its original owners. Contestants must be members of Friends of Leclaire.

To enter, send a letter or e-mail to Friends of Leclaire (addresses on front cover). E-mails should have the subject line "House History Contest." Good luck!

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## FOL NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Cindy Reinhardt

If you have story ideas or comments on the newsletter, please call 618-656-1294 or send an e-mail to friends@historic-leclaire.org. Your suggestions are welcome!

*Corrections: In the September newsletter, page 9, the Anesi home address should have been 1109 Lake Avenue instead of 1111. On page 12, the actress pictured with the Rutherford girls is Haley Busch, not Shannon Elizabeth.*

# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

## Tourists in Leclaire

A busload of tourists from St. Charles, Missouri, took a tour of Edwardsville on November 6, including the Leclaire National Historic District.

## Marshall the Miracle Dog

After the sold out premier of "Marshall the Miracle Dog" at the Tivoli Theater during the St. Louis International Film Festival, the movie is scheduled for a special local showing before its nationwide opening in late spring. It will be shown at the Wildey Theatre in Edwardsville on Sunday, December 14.



## Kit Homes in Leclaire

Edwardsville's Historic Preservation Commission funded a housing survey of Edwardsville last month to identify kit homes made by Sears, Montgomery Ward, Aladdin and other companies during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A complete list will be provided soon, but preliminary results indicate that about two-thirds of Edwardsville's kit homes are in Leclaire or within a few blocks of Leclaire. Back-

ground on Leclaire's kit homes will be featured in the next newsletter.

## FOL Aldermanic Forum

Leclaire's Ward 5 Alderman position is on the ballot this spring. Watch local newspapers and the Historic Leclaire Facebook page for information regarding a forum traditionally held in the weeks before the election. City elections are scheduled for Tuesday, April 7.

## Memberships

Thank you to everyone who has recently joined Friends of Leclaire or renewed their membership. Membership dollars help pay for this newsletter, for park beautification and in the case of this year's festival, for electrical cords! Many have given donations beyond the \$15 membership fee and we are very grateful. Friends of Leclaire is open to anyone with an interest in the preservation of the Leclaire neighborhood and its history.

To join FOL, send a check made out to Friends of Leclaire to P. O. Box 644, Edwardsville, IL 62025 along with your name, address, email and phone number. E-mails are only sent as calendar reminders and our list is never shared.

*Photos: Page 1 from top, FOL volunteers Bob Nickrent and Mark Hartman; Old St. Louis Levee Band Trio's trombonist; Park-fest pumpkin by Liz Krause; Face-painter Candace Sauerman of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. This page, a Sears home at 1014 Troy Road.*

## About Friends of Leclaire

Friends of Leclaire (FOL) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and enhancing the history and heritage of the Leclaire National Historic District. The organization promotes Leclaire's heritage through advocacy, education, and community involvement.

FOL conducts business meetings at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month except in December when the regular meeting is replaced with a holiday social and January when it's just too cold!

All members are welcome to attend meetings which are held in room 201 of Building N4 at the Historic N. O. Nelson Campus of Lewis & Clark Community College in Edwardsville.

## Coming Soon

Dec 9	7 p.m. FOL Holiday Social
Feb 10	7 p.m. FOL Meeting
Mar 10	7 p.m. FOL Meeting
Apr 14	7 p.m. FOL Meeting

*Watch for notices regarding the FOL Ward 5 Aldermanic Forum in March.  
Date and place yet to be determined.*

# THE KROTZ HOME - 315 FRANKLIN AVENUE

The one-and-a-half story bungalow at 315 Franklin Avenue was built in 1927 for Michael and Pauline Krotz by their son-in-law, George Shashek. Shashek, a contractor, lived at 206 Hale, just two blocks away, in a home he built for his wife when they married in 1924. The Krotzes were not new to LeClaire though. Before moving to Franklin Avenue, they owned the house on the corner of Troy Road and Jefferson (303 Jefferson).

Mike and Pauline Krotz grew up in a community of local immigrant Czech families in Edwardsville Township. In 1892 they served as wedding attendants at the marriage of Pauline's brother William and two years later, on November 27, 1894, Michael Krotz, 25, and Pauline Rosipal, 22, were married at St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville.

The Krotzes had four children, three daughters, Lillian, Leona, and Irene, and a son who died in infancy. Mike supported the family with a number of jobs including farming, working for the Madison Coal Mine, and employment for a car dealer in the early days of automobiles. The Krotz family moved to town around 1919 when they purchased the house on Jefferson Road. Two of their three daughters married while they lived on Jefferson, Lillian to George Shashek in 1924 and Leona to Clarence Beck in 1926.

Mike and Pauline purchased the lot on Franklin the same



*Michael and Pauline Rosipal Krotz, circa 1935*

*Courtesy of Janet Perini.*



year Leona married Clarence, in October, 1926. Mike, Pauline, and their daughter Irene likely moved into the new house in the fall of 1927. By this time Mike was almost 60 years old and his wife 57. Irene, who worked as a stenographer, was 27 years old and would remain with her parents, as long as they occupied the house.

Mike died at home in 1932 of a sudden heart attack. He was 74 years old which at that time was considered a long life. Pauline and Irene remained in the home until the house was sold in 1946. At that time Pauline went to live with her daughter Leona and Irene moved to St. Louis. Pauline passed away at the home of her daughter in 1948.

The new owners brought a different dynamic to the home. Where it had been built

for and occupied by an elderly couple who were both first generation Americans, the new owners were a young couple who were from families that had been in America for many generations. George Jr. and Evelyn Little purchased the home in 1946.

When George Little, Jr. was a boy, his father was Madison County Sheriff, so he lived for a number of years in the Sheriff's residence attached to the jail. After serving as sheriff, George, Sr. held other county offices and was considered very influential in Madison County politics.

Evelyn Stolze Little was the daughter of Albert and Hilda Weber Stolze. Her grandfather, John, founded Stolze Lumber Company which was well known throughout the region. She grew up on Park Street near the lumber yard where her father was president.

George and Evelyn were married in 1938. They lived and worked in Missouri for a few years early in their marriage, then returned to Edwardsville where George established a real estate and insurance firm, the Little Agency. He was later hired by the Corp of Engineers as an appraiser, a position he held for 40 years.

Before purchasing the Franklin Avenue house, the Littles rented an apartment from Mrs. Ammann on St. Louis Street, but their family was growing. They had a little girl, Ann, who was 2, and the family was expecting a second child in 1947. They moved into the house with one child in 1946, but by the time they sold the house in 1955, there were five. They simply outgrew the house. George and Evelyn eventually had seven children, not unusual for that time. Evelyn passed away in 1997, and George in 2012 at the age of 97.

## THE KROTZ HOME (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)



*George Little Jr. and his wife Evelyn on the back steps of their home at 315 Franklin Avenue with their daughter Ann and sons, from left, Bob, Jim and Tom circa 1951.*

*Courtesy of Ann Luttrell.*

Franklin Avenue lots on the east side of Troy Road were among the last in Leclaire to be platted. The N. O. Nelson Company sold this building lot to William Sido in 1911 who sold it two years later to his daughter and son-in-law, Ferdinand and Emma Hotuiz. For unknown reason, they chose not to build on the lot, residing instead in a little house on Second Avenue. The Krotz family was the first to put a house on the lot.

When it was built, the house on Franklin Avenue was on a quiet residential street. Just two blocks to the east it turned into a country road and one block south was the Herman Bollman farm. For the Little family in the 1940s and 1950s Franklin Avenue remained lightly travelled, but change was coming and the Little family was the last to enjoy the rural aspects of Franklin Avenue. Dunlap Lake was constructed in 1939-1940, but because of building material shortages in World War II, most lots weren't developed and sold until after the war. The "new" Leclaire School on Franklin opened in 1954 and Montclair Shopping Center held its August 1958 "Grand Opening" only a block away.

The latest occupants of the one-and-a-half story bungalow at 315 Franklin are the seventh family to enjoy the house in its 87 year history.

## UPDATED NATIONAL REGISTER FOR LECLAIRE

The updated National Register Application for Leclaire will be posted to the National Parks Service website soon, but some may wonder why it might be of interest to them. The 200-plus pages of the report include a building survey describing the architectural style of every house and outbuilding along with an estimated date of construction and a note of its significance to the historic district. There are over 700 buildings in Leclaire, including over 400 houses.

There is also information on the planning and development of Leclaire, biographical information about Leclaire's founder, N. O. Nelson, as well as notes on the significance of the original landscape architect, Julius Pitzman. Background is given to place Leclaire in context with other company towns of the era.

The report provides insight and information of value for historians as well as students. At right is an excerpt from the report by Michael Allen.

### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Leclaire Historic District, a historic suburban village now located in Edwardsville, Illinois, possesses statewide significance and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT. A thoughtfully planned and designed village founded on the progressive ideals of industrialist N.O. Nelson, Leclaire survived as an independent village until it was annexed by Edwardsville in 1934. In the late nineteenth century N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company was one of the first companies in the United States to successfully implement a profit sharing program, and later initiate a program of cooperative ownership. The village of Leclaire was a physical extension of those social ideals of the cooperative movement. The Leclaire landscape remains a cohesive suburban landscape of mostly single-family residences and a large park with a lake. Renowned engineer and surveyor Julius Pitzman of St. Louis designed Leclaire's original plat that set the suburban character with uniform set-backs, curvilinear streets and deed restrictions. Leclaire has very little demolition or alteration since it became a part of Edwardsville, although some infill construction has been built since then. The period of significance starts with the earliest construction in 1890 and ends with the village's annexation into Edwardsville in 1934.