



FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE NEWSLETTER

October 2020

Volume 30 No. 3

City Announces 2020 Halloween Guidelines

The City of Edwardsville has announced Halloween guidelines for the strange and eerie year of 2020. Trick or Treating will be allowed only from 5-9 p.m. on Saturday, October 31. Safety guidelines are at right.

Although there is no Halloween parade, there are a number of other events where social distancing is possible and area children are encouraged to participate. Visit the city's website and search for "Halloween" The site also lists creative ways to distribute treats while keeping your distance.

Some LeClaire residents plan to sit on their stoop with a table of candy out near the sidewalk. They can see the little ghouls and goblins, but keep them safe at the same time. Have fun, but stay safe everyone!

To add to the fun, this year LeClaire residents are encouraged to go all-out in decorating for Halloween. It's fun for those walking or driving through the neighborhood.



Healthy Halloween!

- Limit your group to those in your household
- Remain 6' away from anyone you don't live with
- Wipe down candy or leave in your bucket for 48 hours after Halloween
- If you are handing out candy or if you are a trick or treator, wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth
- Carry hand sanitizer and use regularly
- If you are ill or have been exposed to COVID-19, stay home and enjoy Halloween remotely this year.



Mixed messages are being sent from the home at 922 Holyoake Road, but it's all in fun. It's the home of Elizabeth Donald, an award winning author of horror and science fiction books that, as she says, "go chomp in the night."

Although Elizabeth writes about horror, her husband, Jim Gillentine, and son, Ian Smith, also get into the spirit of Halloween. Drive by to see the rest of the graveyard. It's a nice change from the gardens of political signs this year!

City Offers Tree Planting Program

Fall is the perfect time to plant trees and the city has a program to help you pay for it. The Edwardsville Beautification and Tree Commission encourages area residents to participate in the "Edwardsville Tree Planting Program." This city program reimburses one-half the cost (up to \$75) of the cost to purchase and plant a tree on personal (not rental) property in Edwardsville.

To be reimbursed, residents must submit applications to the Department of Public Works for approval BEFORE final tree selection and planting. Details can be found on the city's website at <https://www.cityofedwardsville.com/432/Tree-Planting-Program>

Edwardsville Children's Museum

In order to do their part to help slow the spread of COVID-19, the Edwardsville Children's Museum will be closed until further notice. They look forward to seeing the children again when they are able to reopen safely. In the meanwhile, if you can spare it, local museums like the Children's Museum are without income but still have to pay overhead. Please consider donating to local museums. The Edwardsville Children's Museum is located in the 1895 LeClaire School House.

Holiday Social Canceled

December is normally when FOL gathers to greet neighbors and friends, but to keep everyone safe, the annual party has been canceled. See you next year!

2020 LECLAIRE PARKFEST CANCELED

Friends of LeClaire ♦ P. O. Box 644 ♦ Edwardsville, IL 62025
www.historic-leclaire.org ♦ friends@historic-leclaire.org ♦ 618-656-1294

MORE CURRENT NEWS

OCTOBER 18TH 2020 RAIN OR SHINE

Drive-thru
CHICKEN & DUMPLINGS

University
Care Center

10 AM - 3 PM
1095 UNIVERSITY DR. EDWARDSVILLE, IL
NOW TAKING PRE ORDERS. PLEASE
CALL 618-656-1081 & ASK FOR
VANESSA, BRE OR WANDA.
DUE TO COVID CONCERNS PLEASE DO
NOT BRING CONTAINERS FROM HOME!

12oz \$6	16oz \$8	24oz \$11	32oz \$15
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Inscribed Bricks Available

If you would like to honor a child, grandchild, friend or parents with an engraved brick at Leclaire Park, there is an application on the FOL website or you can call 618-656-1294.

Bricks are \$50 each and proceeds are used to make improvements at Leclaire Park. The bricks are placed in the sidewalk surrounding the Leclaire bandstand. Orders placed now will be installed before Christmas.

A Taste of Parkfest

More than 20 years ago, a nurse's aide at Anna Henry Nursing Home decided to have a booth at Leclaire Parkfest. She sold chicken and dumplings to benefit residents of the nursing home by using the proceeds to buy prizes for game nights or holiday gifts for those that had no families. Wanda Howell did it on her own with the help of a friend. When Anna Henry closed, she found a job at University Care Center where her boss learned about it and offered her the use of their kitchen. He also volunteered to help at the festival.

Wanda has retired and a new Wanda is organizing the chicken and dumplings these days. Despite bringing roaster after roaster full of product, chicken and dumplings always sell out at Parkfest. Since the festival was canceled this year, on what would have been Leclaire Parkfest Sunday, they will be selling take-out orders of their delicious chicken and dumplings at the nursing home from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. See the poster, at left, for additional information.



Leclaire Park Fall Clean-Up

On Saturday, October 17, FOL will hold their last Park Clean-Up Day of the year. Volunteers are encouraged to wear gardening gloves and bring rakes and other tools.

In addition to sprucing up the park, volunteers will be decorating for bandstand for Halloween. Work begins at 9 a.m. Finally! An event we can do while socially distancing!



Remembering Parkfest Sponsors

Since the 2020 Leclaire Parkfest is canceled, we have no sponsors this year. However, we want to say "thanks" to the following because when we do have a festival, these folks are there for us year after year. If you are in need of their services, please think of them first and start by saying "Thank you for supporting our community."

Busey Bank (formerly TheBank of Edwardsville), Cassens – Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, Creative Options Graphic Design, Krause Properties, Attorney Keith Short, and Taqueria Z

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. Membership is just \$20 annually. To join, send dues to Friends of Leclaire, P. O. Box 644, Edwardsville, IL 62025. For information, call 618-656-1294.

FOL normally conducts business meetings at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month except in December and January, but the schedule is currently "as announced" due to COVID.

All members are welcome to attend meetings which are normally held in Room 201 of Building N4 at the Historic N. O. Nelson Campus of Lewis & Clark Community College in Edwardsville. Alternative locations will be announced during COVID.

The quarterly Friends of Leclaire Newsletter is written and edited by Cindy Reinhardt. Contact her at cynreinhardt@yahoo.com with questions or feedback.

THE MCDADE FAMILY HOME

853 Hale Avenue

The modest cottage at 853 Hale Avenue was probably built by the N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company circa 1900. However, it wasn't sold to an individual until purchased by Henry and Mattie McDade in 1908. It's likely that the McDades rented the house for a few years before buying it. The McDade family would occupy this house for almost 90 years, until 1994.

Henry McDade (often incorrectly spelled McDaid) was born in Vermont in 1843. He lived there until he entered the Civil War where he served for four years, afterwards settling in Missouri. In 1881, Henry married Martha Boan (sometimes spelled Bowen). Martha was born in 1853 in Litchfield, Illinois, but her family moved to Missouri when she was a child.

In 1890, their fourth child, Nettie Lou McDade, was born in Edwardsville. She was the only one of their children to survive to adulthood. They moved around a bit in the early 1890s, but always in the area, Stallings (west of Glen Carbon), Glen Carbon, Marine, and back to Edwardsville. In 1894, Henry went to work for N. O. Nelson as a teamster. Teamsters, a century ago, were men (almost always men) who took care of teams of horses. The horses in Leclaire were kept in the barn behind the Leclaire farmhouse. The "farmhouse" today is the house located on the SE corner of Troy Road and Franklin Avenue.

The McDade's daughter, Nettie, married a local electrical contractor named Louis Bertram and during the early years of their marriage they somehow managed to share this tiny house with her parents. In 1908, their daughter Florence, was born in the house. Nettie and Louis later established their own home but after a divorce in 1910, Nettie and Florence returned to her parents' house.

Tragically, the following year Nettie died at the age of 21. There was a story about her death in the newspaper that said she had a premonition of her death. She contacted an aunt who came and took some personal items, then called her mother and gave her instructions for her funeral. She died that evening. Her baby, Florence, remained with her parents for a while, but then went to live with one of her father's sisters in Greenville. Her aunt had a large blended family that included her own children as well as Florence and several cousins who had been orphaned. According to the local newspaper's society columns, the McDades saw their granddaughter regularly.

The McDades were a popular couple in Leclaire where the neighborhood children all knew Henry as "Mack." When the children were on vacation from school, he often brought out the team with a large wagon to take the children on picnic excursions or for rides around Leclaire.

Mattie and Henry were both very active in affairs of the First Christian Church and Henry was a member of Post 471 of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization for Union veterans of the Civil War.

In February 1916, Henry was in the barn when he was knocked down by one of the horses. The fall would prove fatal for the 73-year-old who died at his home a few days later as a result of his injuries. Henry was the oldest Nelson employee at the time and had been with the company for more than a dozen years. Company president Louis Lawnin, personally took charge of the affairs of Mattie McDade. She was paid a pension of \$6 per week plus interest on Henry's stock

in the company. When Mattie died in 1925, her granddaughter and heir, Florence Bertram was still a minor and Lawnin became her legal guardian regarding her inheritance, collecting rents from the house, etc. until she was able to take control of her finances.

Florence married Michael Willmann, a painter and decorator, in 1929. They initially lived in Greenville, but after a few years moved to Edwardsville and set up housekeeping in the house she inherited from her grandmother, the place where she was born.

Florence was a bookkeeper for the Greenville Telephone Company when she married, and after moving to Edwardsville worked at the Madison Store until her retirement. She and Michael had no children, perhaps the reason they stayed in the little house. According to Dennis Brown, a neighbor who knew her well, the couple moved all the walls inside the house in the 1930s to accommodate an indoor bathroom without putting an addition on the house. Michael died in 1959 and Florence lived in the house until shortly before her death in 1994.

Since then, the house has primarily been a rental property. It's nice to remember the good years when the McDade family occupied the house, when children walked by calling a greeting to "Mack" and church ladies gathered to work on their projects. It was also inspiring to find documentation of how the Nelson Company took care of its employees and their families, just like Mr. Nelson planned.

Sometimes, the humblest homes have the best stories.



Dennis Brown's grandmother was best friends with Florence Willmann, so he was often hired to help maintain Florence's house. Many years ago, when he was hired to paint the house, she provided very specific instructions on how to do it right...techniques she learned from her husband who was a professional painter. New owners plan to paint the house in the spring. Careful, Florence may be watching!

PLEASE SAVE US A BUCK!

Can you help? Since most of us renew our membership at LeClaire Parkfest and there is no festival this year, please consider renewing your membership by mail as soon as possible. Next month, our membership chair, Sue Betts, will send out reminders, but each membership renewal that arrives before then saves us a buck!!!



FOL has well over 100 members. If everyone renews without a separate notice it will save the organization over \$100!

To renew your annual membership or become a new member, please send your name, street address, email and phone # along with a check for \$20 made payable to Friends of LeClaire to P. O. Box 644, Edwardsville, IL, 62025. For further information, call 618-656-1294. Please note that Friends of LeClaire does not share membership information.

NEW SPRING RIDER

Friends of LeClaire noticed two of the popular spring riders at LeClaire Park were broken and decided to pay the replacement cost for one of them. We were pleased to learn that the Edwardsville Parks Department has another donor willing to replace the second one. We hope to see them at the park this fall, but if not, they'll be installed in early spring.



NICKEL PLATE NEWS

Although the Nickel Plate Depot was moved to its permanent location last March, it is still in need of major renovation. A recent announcement from the City of Edwardsville marks the beginning of a renovation/restoration project that they hope will be completed by the end of December.

The work is being done with a combination of public and private funds. Friends of LeClaire is proud to be a contributor towards the work to save this historic 1883 depot. The depot was a primary reason that N. O. Nelson chose this area for the site of his village in 1890. Available transportation for the products made in the LeClaire factories was essential.



This photograph of the Nickel Plate Depot at its original location is believed to have been taken circa 1920. A copy of the photo was donated to Friends of LeClaire in 1990. The last station agent, Gale Raffaele, retired after the last train in 1967.

RECOGNIZING HOME IMPROVEMENT IN LECLAIRE

Area residents are watching the progress on this house at 1001 Troy Road. (Photos show "before" at left and a current photo at right.) The home was built for Braxton McCord Tabor and his wife Marie between 1905, when they were married, and 1907 when they first appeared in the city directory.

When work began on this house, it had eight-inch wide aluminum siding the Victorian porch had been closed in, and the gingerbread had been covered for many decades.

The siding profile has now been returned to a four-inch lap, the gingerbread uncovered and the Victorian porch is being restored. This is the kind of work that happens when you live in a National Historic District protected by HPC guidelines. The result is that historical integrity is returned and all property values increase. Kudos to the owner, Trevor Kleinschnittger, for restoring this historic LeClaire home. We can't wait to see it when it's completed!

