



FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE NEWSLETTER

Dec. 2016

Volume 26 No. 4

HOLIDAY SOCIAL PLANNED AT HISTORIC SEHNERT HOUSE

The Sehnert House at 716 Hale Avenue, one of the most beautiful homes in Leclaire, will be the location for the annual FOL Holiday Social on Tuesday, Dec. 13, beginning at 7 p.m. Those planning to attend should RSVP to 656-1294 so our hosts will know how many to expect.

All current members of Friends of Leclaire are invited to attend the Holiday Social which is a potluck where attendees are asked to bring “finger foods,” an appetizer or dessert. The party is held in lieu of a December FOL meeting. If you are a dues-paying member of Friends of Leclaire, please join us for an evening of good food, wonderful conversation, and an opportunity to renew acquaintances with friends and neighbors.

Most area residents are familiar with the Victorian half-turret home located behind Leclaire Field. A few years ago, it was discovered that the house was identical to one in West Virginia, and both were made from plans that came from the Daverman & Son Catalog. The two houses were built in 1908 (West Virginia) and 1909 (Leclaire). The house in Leclaire, now Edwardsville, was built by Erwin

“Dick” Sehnert and his wife, Emma Rizzoli Sehnert, who purchased the Leclaire lot in 1908 for \$500.

According to the Daverman catalogue, the house was a “one story and attic dwelling, size 32 x 48 feet over all”. The attic was unfinished, but it was noted that there was room to finish two to three additional rooms with 8 foot ceilings. The estimated cost to build the house “with full plumbing, mantels and grates, exclusive of heating” was \$1,450. The price for the working plans and specifications was \$15, blue print plans \$10, and a bill of materials \$5.



The Sehnert house was built for Erwin and Emma (Rizzoli) Sehnert who both came from early Leclaire families. Erwin, known as “Dick” Sehnert, grew up in the Sehnert Hotel just a two blocks away. And Emma’s parents lived just down the block on the corner of Jefferson and Hale. Photo is circa 1914.

(Courtesy of Madison County Historical Society)

A 2008 history of the house written as part of the Edwardsville Historic Preservation Commission’s “This Old House” series and published in the *Edwardsville Intelligencer*, is available on the FOL web site.

The current owners of the home, Shawn McCue and Tim Snell, have worked miracles on this house that was in dire need of repair when they purchased it a number of years ago. FOL looks forward to celebrating the season and the restoration of this beautiful home.

December Luminaria Walk Returns

Last year Friends of Leclaire hosted a Luminaria Walk at Leclaire Park in December. It was the first time for the event and we learned a lot, the most important thing being that people loved it! So, the lights will be back on Sunday, Dec. 4, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. There will be hot chocolate and we hope some folks singing Christmas carols. There will also be luminarias placed around the beach area and on the bandstand for the first time. This is a family friendly event for attendees and volunteers (bring the kids!). Volunteers will meet at the park at 5 p.m. If you are willing to help with the Luminaria Walk, please call organizer Bob Nickrent at 618-407-5268. A rain date for the event is set for December 11.



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

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

Recent News & Announcements

Christmas Gift Ideas

LeClaire sweatshirts (\$30), t-shirts (\$15), books (\$15-\$23), tote bags (\$4) and gift certificates for memberships in Friends of LeClaire (\$15) are all just a phone call away at 618-656-1294. Membership is a great gift for anyone who enjoys history, whether or not they are current residents of the neighborhood.



The above design is available in hoodies, unisex t-shirts and women's tees. Hoodies are in black only, but t-shirts are also available in grey. Other shirt designs are also available. Friends of LeClaire graphics are all designed by Sherrie Hickman of Creative Options Design. (Cindy Reinhardt)

Homeowner Welcome Bags

Theresa Morrison is Friends of LeClaire's new "Welcome Wagon." If you have recently purchased a home in LeClaire, call 656-1294 to let us know. Theresa will stop by to say "hello" and give you a canvas welcome bag with materials that will help you settle into your new home in the LeClaire National Historic District.

New Date for February Meeting

Assuming that members of the FOL Board have a romantic inclination, the February 2017 meeting of Friends of LeClaire will be held one week early, on Feb. 7, so that Valentine's Day is available for romance. We advise you to mark your calendars now!

Researching LeClaire Homes

Did you miss the House History Workshop offered through HPC in June? Not to worry. Guidelines distributed at the workshop are available on the FOL website as well as at local libraries. But a good place to start is a call to LeClaire historian Cindy Reinhardt who assisted with the LeClaire Housing Survey conducted several years ago. She will know if research has already been done on your home. Call 618-656-1294 to inquire.

FOL Member Provides Mulch for LeClaire Park

Friends of LeClaire thanks FOL member Barbara Krause for again providing mulch for LeClaire Park flower beds. We are also grateful for the hard work of Mike Reinhardt, Jim

Milgrim and Will Krause who spent a September morning spreading two-and-a-half truckloads of mulch. Barbara Krause, of Carrollton, is the mother of Will Krause. For the last few years she has brought her truck to LeClaire where she not only paid for the mulch to help beautify the park, but also hauled it from Market Basket. Many thanks to Barb and to the guys for their work in keeping LeClaire Park beautiful!

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 4	6 - 8 p.m. Luminaria Walk
Dec 11	Rain Date for Luminaria Walk
Dec 13	7 p.m. FOL Holiday Social
Jan	No FOL meeting
Feb 7	7 p.m. FOL meeting
Mar 8	7 p.m. FOL meeting
Apr 12	7 p.m. FOL Annual Meeting
May 10	7 p.m. FOL meeting
May 21	FOL at Goshen Market

Landscape Design in Leclaire

By Jeff Pauk

As people stroll through the Leclaire neighborhood, they may enjoy the feel for the layout of the neighborhood, but seldom do they consider the person who had the responsibility for the design. The surveyor who designed and laid out Leclaire was Julius Pitzman.

Born in Prussia in 1837, he came to the United States in 1854 to become an engineer and was hired as an apprentice to his brother-in-law who was the St. Louis City Engineer. He learned quickly, becoming an accomplished engineer and surveyor. In 1857, he was the Chief Surveyor for the City of St. Louis and became the acting St. Louis City Engineer in 1861.

When the Civil War began, he offered his services and was appointed Lieutenant of Topographical Engineers in the fall of 1861. In 1863, he was promoted to captain. He served on the staff of General Sherman at Vicksburg until he was wounded. He was discharged in 1864.

His firm, Pitzman's Company, was founded in 1859 and provided surveying and engineering services. It celebrated its 150th



Capt. Julius Pitzman

anniversary in 2009. Among the many projects he worked on was the construction of Forest Park from 1874 until its completion. He was well renowned for his layout of private subdivisions. Among those he designed were Vandeventer Place, Compton Heights, Benton Place, Washington Terrace, Clifton Heights, and Parkview Place. It is no wonder that N.O. Nelson hired Mr. Pitzman to design his new community of Leclaire.

Pitzman continued to be an active surveyor and engineer in the St. Louis metropolitan area until his death in 1923. His gated communities still inspire designers to this day.

~

Jeff Pauk is a second generation surveyor and owner of Madison County Surveyors, Inc. in Edwardsville who has often surveyed in Leclaire. When working in Leclaire a few months ago, he commented, "I have often followed Pitzman's work and found it to be exceptional."

Despite not having modern instruments available, Pauk noted that Pitzman surveys are within inches in accuracy.

ARTICLES FROM THE PAST

Edwardsville Intelligencer

December 21, 1923

To Get Extra Pay

All to Be Remembered According to Years of Service

Formal announcement was made last night at a Christmas entertainment at the Leclaire school and notices were posted in the shops today of an extra compensation plan through which all employees of the company will be remembered tomorrow. The workmen will get from \$5 each to a maximum of \$170 while a few of the superintendents and foremen will receive larger sums.

Employees who have been with the company for six months or less will receive \$5 each. Those who have been with the company more than six months and less than three years will receive 5 per cent of their yearly wage. Men with the company for over three years will receive 10 per cent.

The announcement was one of the most interesting features of a delightful entertainment at the kindergarten last night in which the kiddies took part. Quite a large number were present, the audience being composed of principally families with children attending the school.

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 graciously acknowledged the favor.

Note: J. H. Neustadt lived in the house at 739 Hale Avenue. Will Thomas was a foreman at the Nelson company until he left the company to become a full-time musician and bandleader.

LECLAIRE PARKFEST FROM THE AIR!

Leclaire resident Andrew Schalk manufactured a drone at the FabLab on the Nelson Campus of Lewis and Clark Community College here in Leclaire. When FOL heard he was making wonderful videos from the drone, they asked if he could take aerial photographs during Leclaire Parkfest. He has created a youtube

video and FOL has links to it on both its website and its facebook pages, Historic Leclaire and Leclaire Parkfest. Go take a look!

It turns out there are some pretty spectacular things happening in those old N. O. Nelson factory buildings. We'll have more on Leclaire's FabLab in the next newsletter.

NEW SIGN PROVIDES HISTORY OF PARK



Representatives of Friends of LeClaire, the Edwardsville Parks Department, Mayor Hal Patton and Alderman William Krause gathered on Tuesday, Nov. 15 for a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate a new sign for LeClaire Park. The sign was designed by Sherrie Hickman of Creative Options Design, manufactured and installed by Dave Thomas and the posts were manufactured by local artist Micah Wall. Text for the back of the sign was written by a Friends of LeClaire committee. The sign was a project of Friends of LeClaire with funding assistance from the new Edwardsville ENERGI grant program. (Cindy Reinhardt)

LECLAIRE PARKFEST CELEBRATED 25 YEARS

In last year's December newsletter the post-Parkfest report said "This year the festival was nearly perfect. The weather was beautiful, the crowds were strong and there was a record number of vendors." Well, we did it again!

Thank you to the dozens of Friends of LeClaire members and friends who volunteered to help with set-up, signage, the FOL booth, park preparation (love the fall flowers!), tours, and so much more. It is impossible to name everyone but in particular the following were all-day volunteers: William Krause, Jim Milgrim, Theresa Morrison, Rob Nickrent, Al and Kim Pauli, and Mike and Cindy Reinhardt. Theresa Morrison took over the position of Vendor Chairman and did a terrific job with Casey Weeks and Andi Smith assisting on the festival weekend.

We are especially grateful to our sponsors: TheBank of Edwardsville, Krause Properties, attorney Keith Short, realtor Jennifer Short, Sherrie Hickman of Creative Options Design and Theresa Morrison.

We also thank the City of Edwardsville for its cooperation and support. The Edwardsville Parks and Recreation Department did some major renovations before the festival this year including upgrading and painting the restrooms and adding new gutters to the bandstand. The jewel of our neighborhood, LeClaire Park, was shining for Parkfest and we are grateful. Their representative at the festival, Darren, was as usual, friendly and efficient, helping everything go smoothly for visitors. Edwardsville Police were also there to help with parking

and traffic, and to distribute DARE materials to children. We always appreciate their participation.

The annual book sale at LeClaire Parkfest was hosted for the first time by the Relay for Life team at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. They raised over \$500 for the American Cancer Society. The Lion's Club earned money for eye glasses, and other non-profits raised funds for their activities in our community throughout the year. Funds raised by Friends of LeClaire help pay for this newsletter, and for the FOL share of the cost for the new LeClaire Park sign/historical marker obtained through an ENERGI grant. (See above)

For more pictures of the festival go to the LeClaire Parkfest facebook page. We'd love to see your pictures there too!



Mike Leitner organizes a wonderful display of vintage vehicles each year at Parkfest. Photo courtesy of the Edwardsville Intelligencer. (Photographer Bill Tucker)