



# ParkNotes

*A semiannual newsletter published by the Lafayette Park Conservancy*

Issue 27

Winter 2020

## Beauty, Courtesy of Your Park



*Lafayette Park trees showing autumn colors*

Is there anyone left who underestimated the value of Lafayette Park to the neighborhood in 2020? It's been serving the usual function of a thirty acre strolling, running, dog-walking, playing, painting, picnicking getaway. This year, it's grown into some emergency duties as well, as a pressure relief for the confined or quarantined over a long year.

Speaking with some neighbors in the park recently, we shared a renewed appreciation of simply having this open space to air our thoughts, anxieties and humor.

If this year was fraught with stress and restriction, it was also a spectacular summer and autumn in Lafayette Park. We were able to establish fifty or so new trees without losing a number of them to the heat. A new sunny approach was taken in plantscaping the grotto, following the loss of the hackberry that long formed a backdrop to the Cook Pavilion.

A number of visitors remarked on the return of grass to several areas, and the ball fields never looked so good. This August the mowers had much better work to do than just stirring up the dust.

Some of the iconic park fence was repaired, good as new this year, and a major donation from long-time residents have made a rebirth of the 1876 bandstand an exciting prospect.

On several Saturdays, members of a school orchestra came to the park and played classical music, *al fresco*. It hit the spot, soothingly appropriate for such an ornamental place.

When autumn came, it revealed an unusually colorful canopy, and we had a week of 70 degree temperatures and sun to maximize the enjoyment of it. Photographers brought out young couples, wedding parties and families, to document life's progression in a park full of attractive settings.

*This article continues on page 2.*



*A foggy morning in Lafayette Park*

## Beauty, Courtesy of Your Park, from page 1

A lot of work was done during the year, in planting, mulching, watering, and trimming. It always appears magical to the many visitors who enjoy it, but you might be surprised just how satisfying it is to be part of making that magic happen.

Join the Lafayette Park Conservancy; donate or perhaps volunteer a bit of your time, to keep and grow our neighborhood treasure. Check us out at [www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org)



*An artist at work in Lafayette Park*

## 1876 Music Stand

We have exciting news. The project to rebuild the Music Stand is moving forward again. The Park Conservancy's Music Stand Committee overcame a number of preliminary obstacles and we are ready to move to the design phase.

Two of our longtime and generous neighbors, Joan and Mike Gerard, have made a very generous contribution to pay for the architectural and engineering design of a recreation of the Music Stand which was built in 1876, destroyed by the Great Cyclone of 1896, rebuilt shortly afterwards and finally removed in 1951, leaving only the deteriorating masonry base standing in the park.

The new music stand will be built on the site of the original. It will be the same size. The Conservancy has been collecting photographs and print descriptions of the Music Stand and they will be used to authenticate the design so it will faithfully replicate the original. It will become the new symbol of the park. The site is highly visible and the stately and beautiful new Music Stand will be the site of many weddings, concerts and other events for decades to come.

The Conservancy has selected John Vinci, FAIA of Chicago, to be the lead designer. Joanne Baltis, AIA of St. Louis will coordinate work with Mr. Vinci, local engineers and architectural consultants. Mr. Vinci has a long and distinguished career in historic preservation. He has won awards for the restoration of Graham Chapel at Washington University, Sullivan's Carson, Pirie, Scott & Co. Building, Chicago, the Mo Chicago Stock Exchange Trading Room at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio, and a new entrance pavilion for the Carnegie Museums in Pittsburgh among many, many others.



*The rebuilt 1876 Music Stand after tornado of 1896  
State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, MO*

### More for History Buffs

To celebrate Washington's long history in Lafayette Park, the Lafayette Park Conservancy published "George Washington in Lafayette Park." Companion publications "Thomas Hart Benton in Lafayette Park" and "The Guns of Lafayette Park" are also available at [www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org)

## Update on Park Benches



*Stan and his dog enjoy the view from Jim King's bench.*

The dedication plaque was installed on Kaye Mayer's memorial bench. A Memorial Bench for longtime Lafayette Square neighbor Jim King has been installed in front of the Kern Pavilion overlooking the lake. The pad for a Tribute Bench honoring Carolyn Willmore has been poured on the other side of the Kern patio. About 20 benches have been installed in scenic locations by the LPC since the Memorial Bench program began in 2004. A Memorial Bench is a great way honor a loved one, celebrate a wedding, anniversary, graduation or other achievement.

Memorial benches have a steel frame and slats of long lasting Ipe wood. The bench is installed on a concrete pad located along a paved pathway or other location with a great view. Donors may request a specific site, subject to approval by the Parks Division and the LPC. The bronze memorial plaque can be installed on the pad or the bench.

To order a bench, contact [secretary@lafayettepark.org](mailto:secretary@lafayettepark.org).

## Boy Scout Service Project

Lafayette Park Conservancy Loves Volunteers. Andrew Mudd, a Boy Scout from Troop 110 at St. Margaret of Scotland School, was a recent volunteer. To earn the eight hours of service required for his Citizenship in the Community merit badge, he weeded and mulched the gardens in front of the Kern Lakeside Pavilion. Andrew's father also volunteered. Father and son have been known to go to the main lake and fish after completing the day's work.

As part of earning his merit badge, Andrew created a video. Enjoy Andrew's tour of Lafayette Park at:

<https://youtu.be/NzQbnLWBYBw>

Inspired to volunteer? Contact [secretary@lafayettepark.org](mailto:secretary@lafayettepark.org)



*Andrew mulching in front of the Kern Pavilion*

### Some COVID-19 Information Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

World Health Organization [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

National Alliance on Mental Illness [www.nami.org/covid-19-guide](http://www.nami.org/covid-19-guide)

Please stay safe and check on neighbors, friends and family.

## Mending Fences

A 1972 Chevelle SS had its Park Avenue joyride come to an abrupt end back in June. It skidded over the curb and into the fence, knocking down two sections. It's said the Lord watches out for drunkards and fools, so this driver was doubly aided. One Tuesday in October, a crew was at work putting the 151-year old fence back into proper trim. Thank goodness for car insurance. Several years ago, a section of fence along Lafayette Avenue was damaged by a fallen tree limb. The damaged section of fence was repaired and reinstalled in June. The section was painted after the finial on the right side post was replaced.

The generosity of park lovers and neighbors alike enables the Lafayette Park Conservancy to make improvements like this.



*Section of fence along Park Avenue after being hit by a car.*



*Section of fence along Lafayette Avenue after being hit by a fallen tree limb.*



*Section of fence along Lafayette Avenue after being repaired this June.*

Do you need a program for your organization?

The LPC offers the following presentations:

- “Dr. William Swecosky: The Dentist Who Became the Pallbearer of Old St. Louis”
- “Harriet Hosmer's Statue of Thomas Hart Benton: St. Louis' First Piece of Public Art”
- “The Guns of Lafayette Park: St. Louis' Monument to the Revolutionary War”
- “The Fascinating History of Lafayette Park”
- “The Man Who Made St. Louis Beautiful”

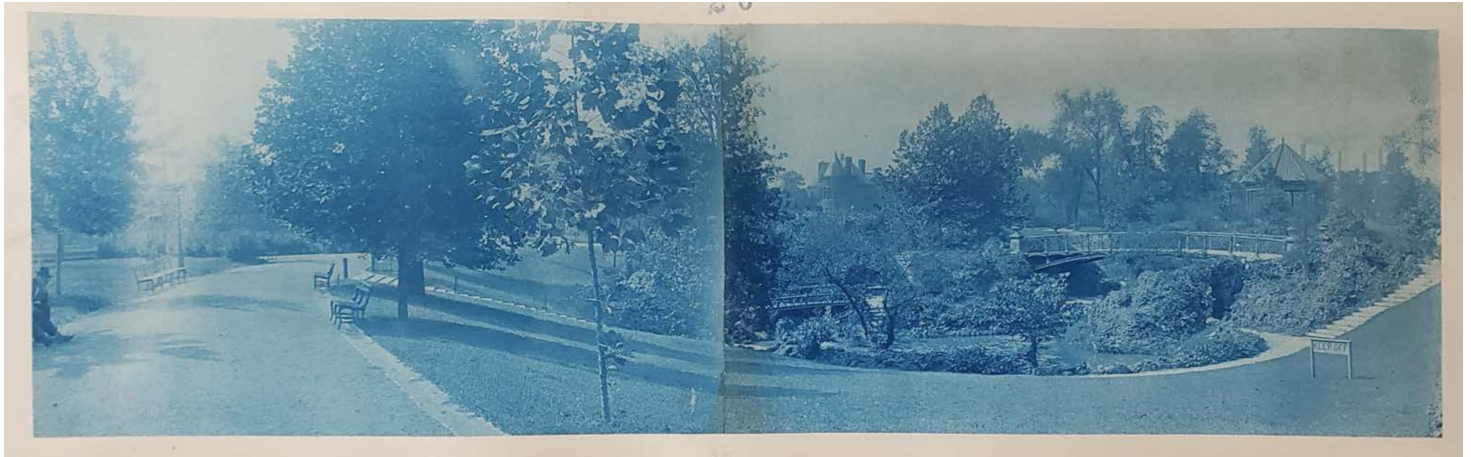
For information, contact the Lafayette Park Conservancy at: [secretary@lafayettepark.org](mailto:secretary@lafayettepark.org)

## The Park in Panorama

Matt Brazelton and Jeff Jensen, owners of Four Muddy Paws, discovered a treasure trove of Lafayette Park photographs at the Missouri Historical Society Library. Those photos were taken a century earlier when Leonard Hunt was Superintendent of Lafayette Park. The panoramic images show the condition of the park in the decade following the Cyclone of 1896. Mr. Hunt was Superintendent of Lafayette Park from 1872 to 1905. His widow donated the album to the Missouri Historical Society in 1924.

The album pages look a bit like old blueprints, having been printed using a process called cyanotype. This was a simple and inexpensive way to produce copies using light sensitive paper, no darkroom is required. Sir John Herschel invented the cyanotype in 1842.

The Missouri Historical Society recently digitized the album. It is available at <https://mohistory.org/collections/item/P0031-02>. Take a virtual tour of Lafayette Park around 1905. Discover the new attractions built or rebuilt after the Great Cyclone like the Grotto bridges and gazebo, the 1976 Music Stand and the recently acquired Revolutionary War Guns.



*Cyanotype photograph of Lafayette Park taken by 19th century Park Superintendent Leonard Hunt.*



*A black and white version of the same scene as in the photo above.*

Lafayette Park Conservancy Membership –November 2020**LAFAYETTE SOCIETY (\$1,000)**

Alevtyina Beckett & Daniel Naert  
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Samuel Murphey  
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**IN HONOR OF**

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Lon D. Zimmerman

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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS.

The Park looks great and is getting better!

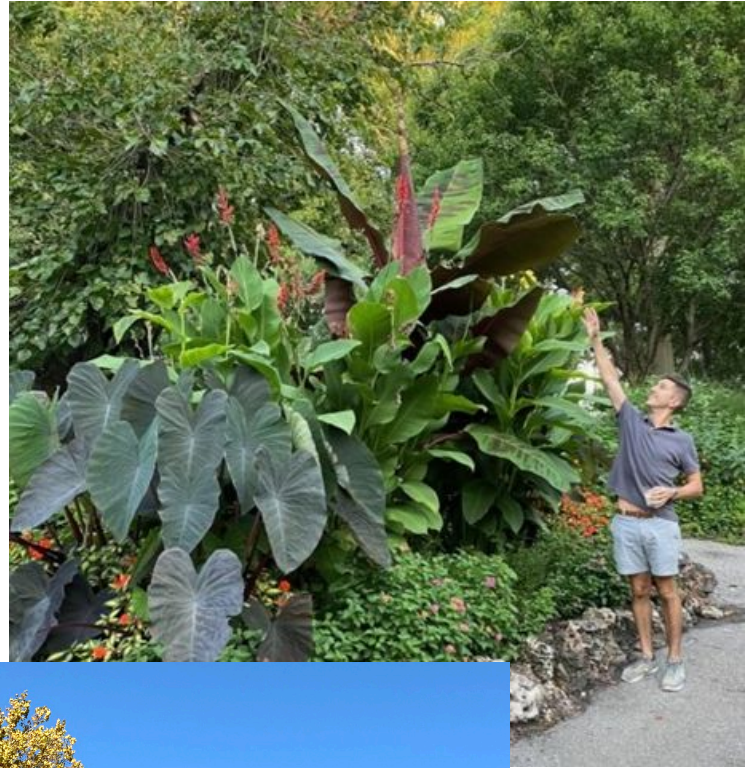
WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU.



## A Medley of Park Photos



*Two images of the island area in the Park Grotto showing it early in spring and then again after a summer of growth where the plantings are over the head of volunteer Michael Bushur.*



*Washington statue  
Autumn 2020*



*Southeast entrance to the Park, Autumn 2020*



*Lafayette Park Mallard ducks, Fred & Wilma, visiting the garden pond of Penny Kalk-Lammert*

*The mission of the Lafayette Park Conservancy is to restore and preserve the historic legacy of Lafayette Park, the first developed urban park in the Louisiana Purchase Territory, and to raise funds for those purposes.*

I want to begin or renew my membership to the Lafayette Park Conservancy

Membership Level:

- \$35 - Friend (one named member)
- \$50 - Family (two named members)
- \$75 - Botanist (two named members)
- \$150 - Historian (two named members)
- \$300 - Preservationist (two named members)
- \$500 - Benton Society (two named members)
- \$1,000 - Lafayette Society (two named members)
- My company will match my gift (include a matching form from your employer)
- In addition to my membership, or instead of, I'd like to make a special donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ toward restoration of the Park fence.
- In addition to my membership, or instead of, I'd like to make a special donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ toward restoration of the 1876 Bandstand.

*Memberships are valid for one year from date of joining and are tax-deductible to the extent allowable under IRS regulations. The LPC is a 501(c)3 organization.*

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State &

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return with check or money order payable to:*

Lafayette Park Conservancy, 2023 Lafayette Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63104

*Or make a donation online using PayPal at: [www.lafayettepark.org](http://www.lafayettepark.org)*



Follow the LPC on Facebook.



## Lafayette Park Conservancy

2023 Lafayette Avenue  
Saint Louis, Missouri 63104

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