

URBANDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

4010 70TH STREET

URBANDALE, IA 50322

(515) 270-2917

www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org

urbandalehistory@gmail.com



Spring 2023

Ice Cream Social

Our Annual Ice Cream Social will be held **Sunday, June 25**. This is not only an important fundraiser for the Historical Society, but for over 40 years a favorite community event.



What you can do:

1. Tell others a date has been set so they can get it on their calendar.
2. Invite your friends and family to attend.
3. Agree to donate pie(s) or other baked goods, (Callers will be contacting you).
4. Volunteer to help on one of the serving shifts. (Jo Henry is the over-all chairman of the event).
5. Come to the lawn of the Olmsted-Urban House, 4010 70th St. between 2-4 p.m. for an afternoon of fun and fellowship.

After you give your donation, file along to select your choice of pie or other baked item, get your serving of ice cream and choice of beverage. Then sit down at a picnic table and stay as long as you like to visit with your friends or meet someone new.

Hope you can attend this unique fundraising event this year.

For additional information and updates check the Urbandale Historical Society Facebook page and/or our web page (www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org).

Programs

With our re-emergence of Programs in 2022-23 we have had some mixed success. In January we were anticipating a talk on the history of the Urbandale Parks and Recreation with Jan Herke, then she got sick with the respiratory crud going around at that time. Then in February we were looking forward to Chief Jerry Holt talking about the Fire Department when he came down with COVID. Both have recovered well and will be

rescheduled for our next series starting in September.

March brought us Myrna Johnson for a discussion of Iowa Public Radio. It was interesting to learn of the lead role Iowa played in the developing medium. In April, Gina Wright with the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce shared the history and happenings of the Urbandale Chamber.

These programs are on the second Sunday of each month, except for May (then the 3rd Sunday) from 2-4 pm at the Olmsted-Urban House. We are going to try something different for this May. Pat Finnerty will be presenting a program on Glenn McDole at the **Urbandale Library, (May 21) same time (2-4 pm)**. We are trying a different location to see if that will bring more people.

Our June (**June 11**) program will feature Mindy Williamson talking on the Great Iowa State Fair. This will be back at the **Olmsted-Urban House**, 2-4 pm.

Since we have resumed our monthly programs, we have had only a handful of participants. We had changed the time and date of our programs just before COVID struck because our participation was dwindling and we were told that the evening was getting difficult for our older audience. Sunday afternoon was thought to be a good time. We do have several programs in the hopper but we need some fresher ideas and thoughts on how to make our monthly programs more appealing. If you would be willing to help with programs, please contact us at Historical Society (urbandalehistory@gmail.com). Pat Finnerty would greatly appreciate any and all assistance on the Program committee.

Olmsted-Urban House Grounds

We have spruced up the grounds. The yard was raked and cleaned up thanks to the help of the Metro West learning Academy. These students have been true friends of the Historical Society.

Faith Huitt has been working to keep the garden on the eastside of the house in order. Marilyn Finnerty had enjoyed keeping this garden in shape for several years

before her passing. Faith has cleaned up from the winter and the plantings are blooming. It looks quite nice. She, along with several others have cleaned up the ferns and hostas on the north side as well.

Faith and the other ladies could use help with keeping the gardens weeded and watered throughout the year (well not so much in the winter). If you would be willing to help with the gardening and yard work around the house, please give us a call at 515-270-2917 or send us a note - urbandalehistory@gmail.com.

Summer in Urbandale

The sun is out, temperature is warm and Spring has really arrived. While Spring is a time of new life and awakening, it also is a time of preparing for Summer. So, what is there to do in Urbandale this summer? Lots!

The Urbandale Public Library has a number of activities



planned for young and old throughout the summer. Beginning on June 1 at 4:30 at the library they are having the **'Summer Reading Kickoff** celebration.

If you not sure what to read, try *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, the All Urbandale Reads selection. As I looked at the calendar for the library, there are really only a few days this summer when you will not find something to do. For more details and information go to the Urbandale Public Library website (www.urbandalelibrary.org). While at their website, be sure to sign up for their monthly newsletters (under the About Us tab).

If you want to get outside for some pickleball or other activities for yourself, kids or grandkids, see the Urbandale Parks and Recreation website for their summer activities. One of the programs they have is a partner arrangement with the Clive Aquatic Center. As an Urbandale resident we can purchase a Clive Center pass at the same rate as a Clive Resident. These costs are very reasonable and they have several options available for families and grandparents.



They offer way too many programs to mention here; suffice it to say there is something for every interest and age. Go the Urbandale Parks and Recreation website for more details and listing of the programs (www.urbandale.org/170/Parks-Recreation).

Under the umbrella of the Urbandale Park and Rec program is the Senior Center. The Center is operating year-round, but the summer time allows for more outdoor activities, see their website (www.urbandale.org/250/Senior-Recreation-Center) for more details. They have a number of trips planned including Cubs baseball games, berry picking, Field of Dreams trip and even a Mississippi river cruise.

If you are looking for a way to contribute your time to the community, the Urbandale Action Network (UCAN, www.urbandalenetwork.org) and the Urbandale Food Pantry (www.urbandalefoodpantry.org) are two examples of services that are always in need to volunteers for a variety of needs.

This brings us to what Urbandale is famous for in the summer: **4th of July**. To kick off the annual festivities will the Urbandale Historical Society's Annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, June 25 from 2-4 pm. Watch our website (www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org) and Facebook page for more details. We will need your support for baked goodies, help and of course, your coming to the event and eating ice cream and pie.

The 4th of July Committee has been busy over the past many months preparing for the carnival, parade, fireworks and other activities for the celebration. To keep up on their planning see the website for this year, *Discover the Difference*, (www.urbandale4thofJuly.org). Don't forget to get your 4th of July button. We hear the Urbandale Lions will be selling them at Fareway June 17, 24 and July 1.



Along with all the other festivities of the 4th the Urbandale alumni have typically held class reunions at this time, and I'm sure this year will not be any different. June 26 is the date for the Urbandale Alumni Association (Urbandale Schools and Alumni Foundation) Golf Tournament. Then the next week they will be hosting the annual U-Fest. Details of these and other activities of the Alumni Foundation can be found at www.urbsaf.org.

Urbandale Garden Club and Pollinator Garden

The Urbandale Garden Club is the oldest existing organization in Urbandale, having first been established in 1931. Over the 90 years, membership and goals have changed, but the mission of the club has been to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, aid in protection of native trees, plants and birds and to encourage civic plantings.



A number of service projects have been undertaken through the years. In 2015, the latest project, was initiated in cooperation with the

Urbandale Historical Society to establish a Pollinator Garden in the existing garden space at the Olmsted-Urban House.

The Garden was originally planned to attract the popular Monarch butterflies. The Club has even been designated as a Monarch Way Station. The Club recognized the value of plants for a variety of insects that are vital pollinators for our environment. Some additional annuals and perennials that are recommended have been purchased and added each year to appeal to these insects. In recognition of the development and upkeep of our community garden, the Urbandale Garden Club received a grant of \$700 from Endow Urbandale to be used over the years for this work.

Help is needed for the upkeep of the garden throughout the season. Anyone is welcome to join the Garden Club, which meets the second Tuesday each month at the Olmsted-Urban House. The members share information and exchange idea, schedule work sessions and plan visits to local gardens and garden centers and to events sponsored by the Polk County Master Gardeners. You do not have to have your own garden, just an appreciation for growing plant and shrubs. Current members are from Urbandale, Des Moines, West Des Moines and Johnston. For further information please contact Virginia Gee, Garden Club President (515-276-0222).

Public Art in Urbandale

This past November, Carol Holmquist presented a program on the Public Art in Urbandale. While many of us are familiar with the various pieces of Art around town, most do not appreciate what is behind those, where they come from and the history behind the efforts to brighten our community.

In the late 1990s the *Imagine Urbandale program* was initiated. The goal of this process was to provide the Urbandale Community with the opportunity to identify our community priorities. The outcome was the development of a **Community Action Council** overseeing several initiatives: *Caring Corps. Character*

Counts, Community Center, Leadership Urbandale and Beautification. The *Caring Corps* was the origin of what is today, UCAN. The *Beautification Committee* was the one responsible for our current Urbandale City flag.

In 2004 the *Imagine Urbandale* process went through a second iteration and from that three additional committees were established: *Strengthening Neighborhoods, Diversity and Organizing Special Events.* Over the ensuing years, *Strengthening Neighborhoods* and *Organizing Special Events* have merged. All are still active.



The original *Beautification Committee* morphed into the *Urbandale Friends of the Park (FOP)* in 2007.

Accomplishments of the original committee and the FOP have been the Tree Board (2002), Urbandale Memorial Tree Park and a designation of Urbandale as a Tree City (now 22 years). In 2008 with the FOP began developing a plan for promoting public art in Urbandale. Since then, they have been very successful in securing funding and establishing procedures for promoting art and procuring pieces of art for use throughout the city.

The Urbandale Public Art Committee was established as part of the Urbandale Public Art Long Range Plan in June 2008. The Public Art Committee, is under the direction of the Urbandale Friends of the Parks (FOP) Committee. Their mission is to encourage and facilitate public art of high aesthetic quality that celebrates the uniqueness of Urbandale, enhances quality of life, economic development and community image, promote tourism and make art more accessible to the general public. The Public Art committee consists of 10 members who must be residents of Urbandale. Current members of the committee are: Rob Hilbert, Carol Holmquist, Alexson Calahan, Michelle Czarnecki, Doug Adamson, Kris Schechinger Camper, Blake Rozendaal, Terri Steinke, Terri Bane, Deb Lawrence and Kurtis Wolgast.

The funding for the Art Programs comes from a variety of sources. Each year the City of Urbandale allocates approximately \$20,000 - \$45,000 to support capital improvement purchases of public art. The amount is based on a city formula and is approved annually by the city council. Grants and donations are another important source of funds.

While there are many pieces around town, in our parks, along bike/walking trails, around the library and city hall and at the entrances of Urbandale there is also an art gallery in the library and in the halls of City Hall. Some of the pieces are commissioned and owned by

Urbandale while others are selected and on loan to us for a period. Many of the pieces are rotated so we can enjoy some new and different pieces over the years. One of the most noted was the 'oil can' in the Art Park at the library. Beyond the various pieces, we also enjoy a number of educational and participatory activities throughout the year sponsored by the Public Art Committee. The library newsletter



is a good way to learn of some of these activities. The Urbandale City website has a nice gallery of photos of the works, their location and information regarding them (www.urbandale.org/394/Public-art-committee). The Urbandale City newsletter and their website, particularly the Parks and Recreation tab will have information for these activities as well.

Memorial

Audrey DeCarlo passed away this past January 30. She and her husband Ed were longtime members and supporters of the Urbandale Historical Society, United Church of Christ and other organizations in the Urbandale community. Audrey was a 1964 graduate of Urbandale High School and continued her support of UHS activities as an alum and a parent. She served several years on the Board of the Alumni Association and memorial gifts have been used to establish a scholarship in her name.

Membership

In March we sent out notices to all members on our rolls who had not renewed as of March 1 as we wanted to update our roster in preparation of a new Directory. This campaign has been rather successful as we currently have 82 members. Of these, 7 are new since last December. As mentioned in our last newsletter, we have upgraded our website (www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org) to accommodate credit card payments for membership.

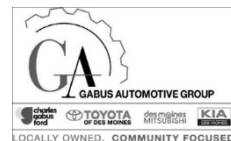
If you have not renewed, please take the time to do so as our membership dues provide so much of our operating budget to keep the house in order and maintain our operation. Additionally, we do need some fresh blood to keep the Urbandale history alive. As mentioned earlier, we need people to help with gardening and light yard work. Another area for contributing is with our programs. We had a full slate of programs this past 2022-23 year and will have another for the 2023-24 year, but we need help with ideas for topics, contacts, arrangement and promotion of the programs. If you are interested in these or other ways

to contribute to your Urbandale Historical Society, please contact us (515-270-2917, urbandalehistory@gmail.com) or any of the Board members.

New Members	
Ron & Karen Aldrich 9333 Parkside Ln. Urbandale, IA 50322 515-650-7514 rkaldrich24@q.com	Bethany Dralle 3501 66 th St. Urbandale, IA 50322 319-931-8123 toddralle4@gmail.com
Ryan Conway 3001 Sherry Ln. Urbandale, IA 50322 515-480-9397 rjconway2@gmail.com	
Address Changes	
Phyllis Barry 1594 NW 96th St. Clive, IA 50325 515-276-7788	Dave & Mary Russell 3615 81 st Street Urbandale, IA 50322 515-278-5175 memrussell@gmail.com
Carroll and Maxine Edwards 7901 Airline Avenue Urbandale, IA 50322 515-577-0083	Arlene Sweeney 5921 Winwood Dr., Apt. #112 Johnston, IA 50131 515-707-9224 grandmaone@mchsi.com
Dennis & Regina Linn 17932 Creekside Dr. Clive, IA 50325 641-780-1475 randdlinn@gmail.com	Carole Winter 1015 S. Shepherd, Apt. 310 Houston, TX 77019 816-753-4030 cwinter.design@att.net
Tom Olmsted & Jannette Bashard 6 Arrowhead Lane Groveland, MA 1834 40-725-0076 thomas.olmsted@sbcglobal.net	

Acknowledgement of Supporters

Special Thank you to the Urbandale American Legion for caring for our American Flag.



Urbandale Historical Society
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