

Grandpas called for duty again for Christmas Wonderland

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ALTON - The holiday transformation of Rock Spring Park in Alton will begin on Monday, Sept. 12, but new **Christmas Wonderland** volunteers to help put together the displays are needed to make sure the holidays sparkle in 2016.

The Grandpa Gang, which coordinates the annual Christmas event is looking for volunteers to work three to five days a week from 8 a.m. to noon to help with tasks like setting up wooden displays and hanging lights throughout the park. Volunteers are able to work from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday through the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Local restaurants band together to provide lunch later in the volunteer season.

“The Grandpas we have are getting older and we really need more help to make this display possible. If people do not show up, we will not be able to do this any longer for our community,” said **Al Cowgill**, Head Grandpa for the Grandpa Gang.

The Grandpa Gang, a group of retirees and volunteers, organizes and designs a Christmas spectacular of cascading lights, tunnels and displays for visitors and locals to enjoy each year. Each evening, the park sparkles against the night sky with three million

glistening lights, all hung by volunteers and the “gang.” Visitors and families can turn off their headlights and let the holiday displays carry them through the magical scene. Even a few of Alton’s historical figures visit, including displays of Robert Wadlow, the World’s Tallest Man, placing the star on the Christmas tree and the legendary Piasa Bird carrying a bag of gifts for the kids.

Each year, Christmas Wonderland warms the hearts and helps families and friends capture the holiday spirit. All of the proceeds from the attraction’s seasonal revenue is returned to the community in the form of donations to local charities.

For more information, or to volunteer, please contact the Alton Visitor Center at 618-465-6676 and get added to the list to help make this event possible. An informational kick-off meeting is being scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 8 a.m. at Rock Spring Park at 2100 College Ave, in Alton, Il.

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