

LIVE TONIGHT: Alton Halloween Parade marks its 100th anniversary

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON – Tonight marks the 100th anniversary of the Alton Halloween Parade.

The parade begins at 7:30 p.m. at Broadway and Washington in Alton and continues west down Broadway to Piasa Street.

The East End Improvement Association has served as the parade's main sponsor for many years. Parade Committee spokesperson Don Huber said this year's parade will be a huge display, honoring the event's 100th anniversary. The parade originated in 1916, Huber said.

Huber said that each year, East End Improvement works to make the next edition of the parade better. East End Improvement invites people and takes applicants for participants in the parade.

Fire trucks, marching bands, an array of floats and a large list of parade grand marshals will participate in this year's festivities. Huber said of 20 marshals who are still living, 17 have signed up to attend, including Norma Glazebrook, who received that honor in 1961.

Huber, also a historian, said he hesitates to make the claim this Halloween parade is the oldest, but he said it is definitely one of the oldest.

“It used to be a larger parade when we had a lot of industry in town,” he said. “The Glass Works, for example, used to put four to eight skilled laborers on construction of a float. They built some tremendous stuff over the years. Those in industry had a lot of money to spend at the time.”

Huber said few things rival the tradition of the Alton Halloween Parade.

“If you drive on or by Broadway at 7 in the morning on the day of the parade, there won’t be a parking place left on the entire route,” he said. “People bring their trucks the night before and reserve themselves a spot along the route.”

Many people have spots along the route where they sit year after year with their families, Huber said.

Selecting the grand marshal for the 100th anniversary was not an easy decision, so Huber and the others decided to invite all the living former parade marshals.

“We decided to honor all the men and women who have been parade marshals,” he said. “It is a really neat group of people. It should be a very fun night. We have a lot of participation this year.”

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