



Committed Volunteers Look Forward to First Night River Bend

December 16 2013 4:03 PM

Some very familiar faces will be volunteering at the 19th annual First Night River Bend on New Year's Eve at the Godfrey campus of Lewis and Clark Community College.



John and Margaret Novotny, of Alton, have been volunteering at First Night River Bend since it began in 1994, and they have enjoyed every minute of it.

“We get to volunteer and participate at the same time,” M. Novotny said. “I really like watching everyone having fun as a family.”

“The children are always bright eyed, and as happy as can be,” J. Novotny said. “I have never seen anybody go away from First Night unhappy.”

The couple began volunteering at First Night River Bend after attending First Night in St. Louis.

“We liked going to First Night in St. Louis so much, and then we found out they were starting a First Night at Lewis and Clark,” M. Novotny said. “It truly is a great way to spend New Year’s Eve.”

“When we called to see if Lewis and Clark needed any volunteers, we were welcomed to come help,” J. Novotny said. “We are happy to help with whatever we can. We always run into people we know while volunteering, and some of them become volunteers, too.”

Over the years, the couple has helped by getting supplies, answering questions, facilitating children’s activities and pitching in wherever needed.

“Everybody works together really well,” J. Novotny said. “Whether you’re a volunteer or a participant, you will have a good time at First Night, and, once you try it, you’ll be hooked.”

Volunteers are still needed for this year’s family-friendly event, which for the first time will run from 3-7 p.m. exclusively in the newly renovated Hatheway Cultural Center.

Those interested in volunteering can contact Melissa Batchelor at (618) 468-7500 or fill out an online volunteer form at www.lc.edu/firstnight.

First Night buttons are on sale at Party Magic and all Liberty Bank locations. Buttons are \$10. Children 5 and under are admitted free.

First Night River Bend is an alcohol-free, family-oriented New Year’s Eve celebration of the arts, featuring live music, juggling, magic and activities for people of all ages. First Night River Bend 2014 is a community project of Lewis and Clark Community College in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Community College Foundation, the village of Godfrey, WBGZ and The Telegraph.

For a complete schedule of entertainers and events, visit www.lc.edu/firstnight.