



Fountain Frog To Be Replaced After Being Stolen

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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ALTON - A new “fountain frog” is coming to the fountain island display at State and Belle Streets in Alton after a thief stole the last one. After the story went [viral on Facebook](#), an outpouring of community support has led to fundraising efforts to replace the frog.

Those interested in donating to the “Frog Fund” can do so on [Venmo @frogfund2023](#), or donations can be mailed by check to the North Alton-Godfrey Business Council, P.O. Box 306, Godfrey, IL 62035.

Laura Dixon Wallendorf, who adopted the island and has managed its upkeep, said the incident appeared to be very deliberate - and that it wasn't the first time - on [a recent episode of Our Daily Show! on Riverbender.com](#).

“I saw the frog was gone again, and it was so purposeful ... it's unexplainable to me,” Wallendorf said. She added that somebody cut the plastic tubing connecting the fountain's water and stuck it inside the fountain so it wouldn't flood the road.

At one time, the site of the island had been covered in weeds and trash and was steadily deteriorating. One day, Wallendorf teamed up with local community beautification organization Pride, Inc. and decided to do something about it. She, Cheryl Senior, and other helpful volunteers have since spent their time, money, and resources enhancing the site to its current condition.

“Cheryl had just moved into our neighborhood and we became best friends, and I asked her one day if she would help me, and it's turned into what it is,” Wallendorf said. “The first two years, usually when we'd show up, we'd have to 15 minutes to half an hour just picking up all the trash.”

After cleaning up the area, installing plants and connecting the water, she said the North Alton-Godfrey Business Council paid for all of the mulch and flowers. The island had come a long way before being set back by vandals who have smashed and stolen the fountain's frog.

Wallendorf said it started during the pandemic, when "somebody had taken a rock to the frog and demolished it."

"We didn't know who did it, so I replaced the frog. Next time, it was stolen, had to replace the frog. Next time, it was vandalized again," she said. "This last taking of the frog, it just - first, I sat down and cried - that's very purposeful.

"I decided that this time, I'm going to do something, so I called my sister Sarah ... she's like, 'Okay, we've got to take a picture and get this on Facebook.'"

That [Facebook post](#) generated tons of local support and beyond, reaching nearly 600 shares and people in multiple states, including one man from Utah and Wallendorf's two sons in Colorado.

She added that the new frog will be on display soon, but that replacements are getting harder to come by. She said she had to get the latest replacement frog special-ordered, so she also got an extra backup frog, just in case.

"The frog will return, hopefully by this weekend," Wallendorf said. Senior thanked the Alton Lowe's, who donated two of the new replacement frogs, and Wallendorf also thanked Community Seed & Feed in East Alton for donating additional backup frogs.

Donations can be sent on [Venmo @frogfund2023](#), or by check to the North Alton-Godfrey Business Council, P.O. Box 306, Godfrey, IL 62035. The full interview with Wallendorf and Senior can be watched at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com /video](#).