

2016 Alton Halloween Parade will mark 100th anniversary, tradition remains strong

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Some may not realize this, but this was the 99th edition of the **Alton Halloween Parade** which means 2016 will be the 100th anniversary.

To think that something as simple as a Halloween Parade has made it through 100 years is amazing.

Don Huber, a spokesperson of the **East End Improvement Association**, said the parade is extremely rich in tradition and heritage, much like Alton.

Huber said some people still occupy the same positions on the street they held over the years.

“Some watch the parade where they went with their grandparents and have picked a spot they like and stay there,” Huber said. “The participation in the parade is wonderful. We have a large number of floats in the parade. There is a lot of work and money involved in putting a float together.”

Each year, East End Improvement Association provides \$50 for each youth float, which includes Cub Scouts and any of the younger groups.

“We realize a lot of money goes into the floats and we try to help the younger groups,” Huber said.

There are about 20 members of East End Improvement who are active in the parade, Huber said. Many play the same roles year after year, **Bill Keller** was recognized for a lifetime of devotion to the parade and other civic groups.

Huber said the exact crowd numbers for the parade are difficult to estimate, but he said they run anywhere from 20,000 to 40,000 over the years. Younger people don’t associate with clubs as much anymore, Huber said, and the East End group is aging.

“I am afraid we are going to lose some of these traditions if some younger people don’t step forward,” Huber said.

There is a pretty simple motivator for the East End Improvement Association volunteers on why they enjoy coordinating the parade: “We all love seeing the smiles on the kids’ faces,” Huber said.

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