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Linda Wine
Taylor Flowers Employee

Decorations

Local businesses gather tinsel, garlands and lights to embellish the windows

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Bright red umbrellas hang from nearly invisible wire, sheltering the stuffed kittens and puppies lining the bottom of the window from an apparent shower of blown glass cat and dog Christmas ornaments, also suspended by wire. Carol Rector, an Edna Campbell Bookstore employee, said she and the other employees took a full day to decorate the window.

“The theme is ‘Raining Cats and Dogs,’” Rector said. “We all kind of work on things together and we decorate every year, but this display took all day.”

The window display of Taylor Flowers, located on the north side of The Square at 120 W. Harrison St., leans more toward elegant than fun. The completed window is filled with a large, green Christmas tree embellished with delicate copper and gold ornaments. Employee Linda Wine said Taylor Flowers tries to create displays that will attract a variety of people.

“In that window, we were trying to go a little contemporary,” Wine said. “The other window will be done after Thanksgiving and will be more traditional. We also have a country theme inside the store, so we’re trying to appeal to everyone’s tastes. We’re just trying to include all genres with decorating and making it look nice for passers-by. It’s one of the fun things to do here. Everything is fun, but that’s the most fun.”

In past years, shop owners on The Square not only had the incentive of attracting Christmas shoppers into their stores with their decorations, but also the possibility of winning money through an annual Christmas window decorating contest. The first place winner receives a reward of \$100, second place receives \$50 and third place receives \$25. The contest usually is sponsored by Hidden Treasures, a consignment store on the north side of The Square at 104 W. Harrison St., but owner Sherry Stacey decided to do something different this year.

“It seemed like not very many people ever participated, so this year I decided to take my \$175 and put it towards organizing caroling in The Square instead,” Stacey said.

The Green Door, Edna Campbell Bookstore and Taylor Flowers all used their own seasonal decorations, including many products available for purchase inside their stores, and had their own employees arrange the displays.



Brian O’Shaughnessy/Index

The Masonic Temple is located at 217 E. Harrison St. and displays Egyptian Revival architecture. Inside the building, members concentrate on supporting the Kirksville community through charity services.

Temple shows Egyptian style

BY SHANNON WALTER
Staff Reporter



Egyptian Revival architecture sits in the middle of Kirksville, attempting to blend in.

The Masonic Temple at 217 E. Harrison St. was built in 1930 as a place for the Masons in Kirksville to hold meetings.

David Powell, Masonic Temple Board president and Lodge Number 105 secretary, said he has been a part of the Masons for about 40 years. He was originally initiated into the lodge in Pason, Ill. He said that when he moved to Kirksville in 1999, he immediately became involved with its lodge.

“It’s an opportunity to get together with men of the community that are what I like to call shakers and movers,” Powell said. “They’re business people, government officials, people from all walks of life. It’s a way to come together with a common goal and meet with people that you wouldn’t normally have contact with.”

The characteristic building is Egyptian Revival, the only one of its kind in Kirksville, according to the 1987 Adair County Historic Inventory prepared by John Thomas. The first Masonic organization, Number 128 of Kirksville, was chartered in 1850. The first two members held meetings in a small log house on the corner of Dodson and Osteopathy streets. In 1865, Number 128 combined with the current Masonic body, Number 105, and met downtown in the north side of The Square until the building burned down in 1890.

“The first Masonic building was actually uptown,” Powell said. “Historically, most lodge halls were in a big building, and they would rent out the bottom or the street level part of the building to a business, and they would hold their meetings on the second floor.”

The four-story building is one of the tallest

buildings in Kirksville. Currently, the Masonic Bodies, the Ladies of the Eastern Star and the York Rite Bodies use the building for their weekly meetings and monthly banquets, according to the 1987 Historic Inventory. There are two large meeting halls on the top two floors for the organizations. The building is completely original down to every detail.

“A Masonic temple association was formed in 1919, in hope that a building could be built exclusively for the use of the Masons,” according to the Historic Inventory. They raised \$105,000 and laid the cornerstone for the building in 1930 and finished that same year.

The Masonic body’s main goal is to give back to the community and support several charities. Powell said their largest charity is the Masonic Home of Missouri, which supports a residential care facility providing care to all master Masons and their wives, widows or family members. Another large charity for the Masons is CHIP, the Child Identification Program, Powell said.

“Children are photographed, given a dental impression, which provides DNA, and fingerprints are taken,” Powell said. “All of this is put on a CD and given to the parents. So if the child is ever abducted, the parents can give that to the police.”

Since the program was implemented a few years ago, approximately 75,000 children have gone through the program, and four children have actually been recovered from being kidnapped, Powell said.

The custodian for the building, Reta Thomas, said she has been cleaning the building for about

10 years, and it requires quite a bit of upkeep. Her cleaning company, Thomas Custodial, cleans the building about once a week, along with several other businesses and residences in Kirksville.

The building recently experienced flood damage because of gaps between the bricks in the building. Thomas said this caused the plaster walls on the interior to get wet and flake off.

“Too much moisture in the walls causes the plaster to get soft and fall down,” she said. “So that makes more work for me. I can clean that up one day and come in the next day and the mess will be back.”

Thomas said she has eight employees who clean with her, and they have experienced odd things in the old, massive building a few times.

“There’s a few of us that think there’s a ghost in there,” she said. “We call him Eli. One time, four or five of us were cleaning after a banquet dinner. We were taking a break outside. All of a sudden, we looked up because we heard a noise and there was a window on third floor that opened all by itself. Every one of us was outside. After that, I had a few girls that wouldn’t go on the third floor by themselves.”

According to the 1987 Historic Inventory, “despite its relatively late date of construction, the building is unique in being very well maintained and unaltered since its completion.”

Cole Woodcox, department chair of English and linguistics, said he thinks the building certainly adds to the architecture in Kirksville. Woodcox has taught a JINS course focusing on architecture in the past, therefore studying the different homes in Kirksville.

“I think we’ve got a very interesting range [of architecture] in the Kirksville community,” he said. “The range of different class level structures are fairly close to each other ... so that we get a very rich variety of American architecture.”

Students demonstrate odd talents

BY ANNA MEIER
Staff Reporter

Walking among the mass of Truman students each and every day, unbeknownst to the typical young men and women surrounding them, are people capable of the strange and entertaining.

Several Truman students perform odd tricks such as a witch’s cackle, a ventriloquist’s version of a children’s song, a kick to the back of one’s own head or riding a unicycle.

Sophomore Claire Schueler’s claim to fame is her laugh, which she said sounds like it’s coming straight from the mouth of the Wicked Witch of the West herself. She said she doesn’t exactly remember where she learned to do her cackle, but she thinks it came about while babysitting a couple years ago.

“I know I have used it on occasion when I’m around kids,” Schueler said. “Depending upon their age and if it’s a boy or a girl, it can really freak them out.”

Schueler said she has never entered into any kind of a talent show but was recruited by the Career Center for their haunted house.

“I played a dead person who came alive and

cackled and crawled after people,” Schueler said. “I think I scared a few people.”

Schueler and sophomore Rebecca Ringling both worked during freshman summer orientation, and they performed their tricks for a group of incoming freshmen. Ringling said she kicked herself in the back of the head for the students in hopes that it would loosen them up enough to perform their own talents. Performing her talent for the incoming freshmen was the closest she’s come to hurting herself doing it, she said.

“I was wearing tennis shoes and wasn’t thinking about it,” Ringling said. “It’s easier to do that stretch in the summer because your muscles are warm, and it was loud, you could hear the sound of my shoe hitting the back of my head.”

Ringling said she was involved in gymnastics when she was little and decided to experiment one day while watching a movie.

“My mom didn’t think it was going to work, and I was laying on my stomach watching a Disney movie, and I just kicked myself in the back of the head,” Ringling said. “We couldn’t stop laughing because we didn’t expect it to work or anything.”

After she discovered she was able to kick

the back of her head, Ringling said she soon began trying to crush things on the back of her head with her foot. So far, she said all that she’s mastered is a Styrofoam cup.

“I tried an aluminum can once, but my mom tried to stop me from doing that,” Ringling said. “Whenever I try an aluminum can, it’s just really hard to balance on your head and kick it, so I usually just end up knocking it off, so the crushing thing hasn’t worked out too well.”

Sophomore Brittany Thomas said she, too, has been able to perform her talent since she was very young. She said she first tried when she saw a girl on a television show, “Maury,” who was able to sing “Old McDonald” with her mouth closed. Now, Thomas has mastered singing the song without opening her mouth at all.

“I can only do the one song,” Thomas said. “It’s just hard to enunciate words because B’s are hard,” Thomas said.

Although Thomas is a bit of a ventriloquist, she doesn’t boast. In fact, she said hardly anyone knows about it, but most people who find out are interested and want her to perform.

“It’s kind of like a hidden talent,” Thomas said. “Whenever somebody finds out about it, they make me do it on the spot. My sister

makes me do it all the time,” Thomas said.

Junior Mark Feiner said he can ride a unicycle, an ability he learned from his friend who also went to Truman.

“He mentioned he could ride a unicycle, so I said, ‘I’m not going to pass up that opportunity,’” Feiner said. “So I asked him if he could bring it, and it took awhile to bring it, but he did, and he kind of taught me how.”

He said he doesn’t ride often because he doesn’t actually own a unicycle himself, but he rode it on campus one day and brought the unicycle into his classes with him. He said he didn’t feel like it was more dangerous than riding a bicycle.

“I’m not the best, so I was kind of swerving,” Feiner said. “You’d think it would be more dangerous, but it’s not that tall, so when you fall, you just kind of step off and let it fall to the ground, so it’s not that bad.”

Feiner said riding a unicycle is not as hard as most people think, and it actually isn’t like riding a bike at all. He said it only took him about five hours to learn and that he plans on teaching his brothers to ride one day.

“It’s just fun,” Feiner said. “I think it’s a little easier than you think. I think if you want to try it, you should.”

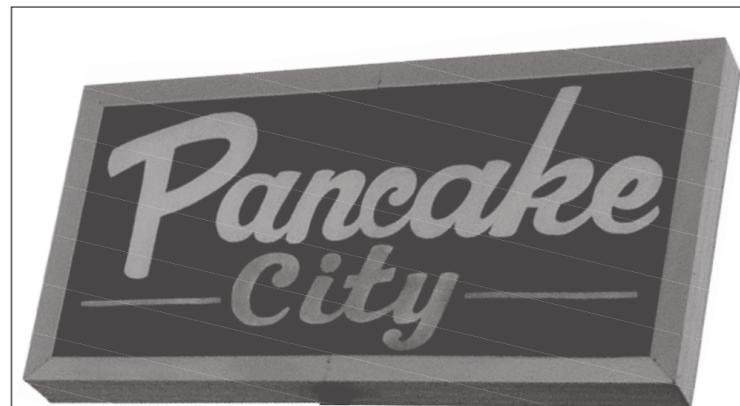
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