



Changes coming to Saint Patrick's Day in Dogtown

Generations of Saint Louisans have celebrated Saint Patrick's Day in Dogtown, but this March 17 visitors to the old South Saint Louis neighborhood might notice a few changes.

For one the Annual Ancient Order of Hibernians Saint Patrick's Day Parade, where the Hibernians proudly march down Tamm Ave, followed by scores of Irish family clans, will be starting earlier than usual. This year the parade kicks off at 10:00 am, instead of 12:30 pm.

This year both the Dogtown and the Downtown Saint Patrick's Parades are on the same day, so public safety officials requested that the Hibernians move up the start of their parade. The Downtown Parade is also moving back an hour to 1:00 pm.

In addition, the Hibernians feel that an earlier starting time could provide a more "family friendly" environment, where parade watchers could focus on enjoying the parade itself, and not be caught up in the "party atmosphere" that surrounded the event at its usual midday start time.

The Hibernians created the parade in 1984 to both honor Saint Patrick as the Apostle of Ireland and to highlight to the Saint Louis community the themes of Irish heritage, history, faith, and culture.

However, the Hibernians have not forgotten that March 17 is also a day of celebration, for both the Irish and the “would be” Irish.

The Hibernians are currently working with representatives of Dogtown United, a non-profit organization that seeks to bring together the broader Dogtown community to create a strong, safe and vibrant neighborhood. Dogtown United seeks to represent local residents and business owners to better coordinate efforts with the Hibernians and improve the operations and efficiency of all events taking place in that historic neighborhood on March 17.

Dogtown United and the Hibernians have formed a joint committee to launch a new venture called “The Dogtown Irish Festival,” which both groups hope elevate the celebration from simply a parade “after party” to its own special event, showcasing the unique spirit and celebrated history of the Dogtown neighborhood.

Millions of Americans celebrate the feast of Saint Patrick every year. However, if you ask any citizen in the greater Saint Louis metropolitan area, they will tell you that perfect place to be to see the true Irish spirit on display on March 17 is in the Dogtown neighborhood, the “greenest” piece of real estate this side of Dublin.

For more information on the Dogtown United, visit their website at <https://dogtownunited.org/>, or contact Joe Jovanovich at 314-210-2553 (cell) or via email joe.jovanovich@gmail.com

For information on the Ancient Order of Hibernians, or the 2018 AOH Saint Patrick’s Day Parade, visit the Hibernian website at <http://www.stlhibernians.com/> or contact Committee Chairman, Dennis Pogue via email cptdpogue@gmail.com