

Carrigans to be honored during Forest ceremonies Saturday
(KAIR)--When Atchison's International Forest of Friendship holds its 46th annual celebration this weekend, the event is dedicated to Pat and Kathy Carrigan.

According to a release, the couple's recognition comes due to the many contributions they've made to the Forest over the years.

The Forest was founded in 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial celebration, with work having begun on the idea in 1973 by Fay Gillis Wells, then Chair of the Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots. Having a close relationship to Atchison, she worked closely with Pat Carrigan's father, Joe, who served as Atchison's Bicentennial Committee Chairman.

Following Joe's years of work on behalf of the Forest, including serving with Wells as the first Co-Chairs after having worked to build the Forest, he died in 1996. Following his death, son Pat took on increasing roles, becoming International Forest of Friendship co-Chair in 2003.

The release notes that Pat's relationship with George Putnam, Amelia Earhart's stepson, not only led to the creation of the Putnam Forest, adjacent to the Forest of Friendship, but also established firm ties between the Forest and the Putnam family.

The release calls Kathy Carrigan's contributions to the Forest "essential," saying that she has worked on organizing the Forest's annual ceremony, participated actively in office operations, and "was vigilant with the finances as the Forest's treasurer."

Pat Carrigan died in January, 2022, with Kathy then stepping back from active involvement.

Among other local nominees will be longtime Atchison attorney Leonard Buddenbohm. A 43-year volunteer with the Forest, Buddenbohm now serves as Vice-President and Co-Chairman for the board.

The annual celebration at the Forest will take place Saturday morning, with the local children-led Parade of Flags at 9:45, followed by the honoring of the Carrigans and the induction of new honorees at 10:00.

This year, the parade will be led by the flag of Jamaica, the newest flag in the Forest, with Jamaica joining the 35 other countries represented in the Forest.

The International Forest of Friendship was presented in 1976 as a gift to America on the nation's 200th birthday. The gift came through the City of Atchison, the birthplace home of famed aviator Amelia Earhart, the Ninety-Nines, and Kansas State University's Kansas Forest Service.

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