

Look what the Lafayette Society was up to in 2020!



In early January, the Lafayette Society held its first-ever board retreat. With Chamber of Commerce CEO Christine Michaels as facilitator, board members sifted through member surveys, discussed priorities and leadership responsibilities, and set the goals for the coming 2 years. Even though we didn't know it at the time, this half-day planning session would prove invaluable for keeping the organization active and relevant even during a pandemic.

In 2020, the Society hired a professional videographer to make a series of short videos about Fayetteville's Lafayette Trail. Mike Samperton (seated) served as technical advisor and director with Linda McAlister as producer and still photographer. Each video features a brief description of each site's significance and Lafayette's personal remembrances and impressions of the town from his 1825 visit.



Society member and retired BG Ferd Irizarry asks Lafayette about his visit to Liberty Point.



FTCC hosted a lecture by Lafayette College archivist Diane Shaw entitled *A Sanctuary for the Rights of Mankind: Lafayette and Human Rights*. All 25 seats allowed by CDC social distancing guidelines were filled early, but the FTCC media department and Humanities/History Instructor Daniel Stewart (left) live-streamed her lecture on YouTube and Jimmy Harvey of radio station WIDU (right) streamed the audio on radio.



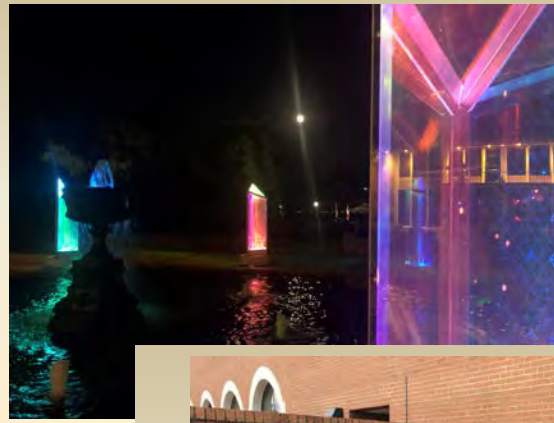
The Annual Meeting and Luncheon Social was held at Skyview on Hay on March 1, before terms like "flatten the curve," "PPE," and "social distancing" had entered our lexicon. We had our best attendance ever and the crowd enjoyed lively conversation and fellowship along with delicious "small plates" and Highsmith mimosas.



Lafayette (our historic interpreter Stan Seay) led the attendees in a rousing toast to health, happiness, and success with cognac given to our Chamber of Commerce by a French distillery. In February, our Lafayette performed before 200 guests at the Chamber's annual awards banquet.



Prismatica, an interactive art exhibit touring big cities nationally, was brought to Downtown Fayetteville by the Cool Spring Downtown District in October.



Cool Spring Downtown District CEO Bianca Shoneman (below, far right, with member Amy Samperton) invited Lafayette to be a special guest at the Prismatic opening.



Students in attendance at Diane Shaw's lecture (see opposite side) were engaged and enthusiastic and some, like Roderick Gooden (next to sign), stayed long after to discuss her topic further.



The Lafayette Society once again provided scholarships for a local Boy Scouts troop – but this year with a few twists! First, due to Covid-19 the funds went towards not week-long summer camp, but shorter camping events to be held later in the year. And second, Lafayette Society board member Betty Goolsby presented the award to members of Troop 740G – a newly established all-girls troop. Girls can now earn the coveted Eagle Scout rank along with all of the other merit badges, from archery to digital technology!

City Councilwoman Courtney Banks-McLaughlin and Lafayette admire one of the Prismatic towers.



Visit www.lafayettesociety.org to see videos and complete details!



For this year's Lafayette Birthday Celebration, we chose the older Lafayette for the event poster. 2020 was a tumultuous year with intense social/political upheavals, not unlike 1824 when Lafayette returned to America as "The Nation's Guest." Revered as the last surviving Major General of the Revolutionary War, his speeches of praise and affection for our country helped heal the national divide. As a leader who advocated for human rights and always treated others with respect and fairness, his ideals seem especially appropriate now.