



**Martha Lafite
Thompson Nature
Sanctuary**

Connect with Nature

THE SANCTUARY



Autumn at the Sanctuary

Celebrating 50 years in 2026!

The mission of Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary is to protect native habitats and wildlife while providing opportunity for people to discover and connect with nature.

Renew your membership today!

Your membership helps maintain and improve wildlife habitats, educational programs, and facilities. Members receive reduced rates on programs and events. Visit our website to become a member or renew your membership!

In this issue:

Bluegrass in the Tallgrass

Fairy Tale Forest

50th Anniversary Celebration

A Look Back:
Martha Lafite's Later Years

\$50 for 50 Years Campaign

Support MLTNS



www.NatureSanctuary.com



**Martha Lafite
Thompson Nature
Sanctuary**

SHARING NATURE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

BLUEGRASS IN THE TALLGRASS

Join us for an unforgettable evening of live bluegrass music surrounded by the beauty of the prairie at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary! Bring your lawn chairs or a blanket, relax under the open sky, and enjoy incredible music in one of the area's most scenic outdoor settings. It's the perfect way to spend a fall evening with family and friends. Sonia's Sweet & Sour Bakeshop will have treats for sale. MLTNS will have bottled water for sale. Get your tickets today and come experience Bluegrass in the Tallgrass!

<https://tinyurl.com/MLTNSBluegrass2026>

MARTHA LAFITE THOMPSON NATURE SANCTUARY
PRESENTED WITH  LIBERTY ARTS COMMISSION

Bluegrass — IN THE — TALLGRASS

 **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026**
 **6 PM** |  **PICNIC SHELTER**

— FEATURING —

**MARCH TO
AUGUST**



SINCE 2015
HONEST SONGS FROM THE LONG ROAD

BETH & BRANDON

GARDENIA
WASHTUCNA WALTZ
WINTER RAIN



— OPENER —

THREE STRINGS
✦ YOUTH BLUEGRASS BAND ✦



Bluegrass in the
Tallgrass Concert
2026



Please
DONATE

 **TICKETS: \$20 | SENIORS & STUDENTS: \$10 | UNDER 10: FREE**



**Martha Lafite
Thompson Nature
Sanctuary**

Habitats to explore: Prairie, Glade, Forest and more

FAIRY TALE FOREST



It's almost time for our favorite event of the year...Fairy Tale Forest! This family friendly Halloween event has been a community favorite for 41 wonderful years. On October 15-18 between 6-8 pm, you can explore the Walk of 100 Jack-O-Lanterns and meet the characters of Fairy Tale Forest. You can wear a costume but it is not required. Bring a treat bag to collect Halloween candy from the characters as you learn a tale about nature. You won't want to miss an up-close encounter with Swoop the Eurasian Eagle Owl! Individual tickets are \$10 and children under 2 years are free. Fairy Tale Forest is our biggest community fundraiser and we need your support! Purchase tickets online at www.naturesanctuary.com.

Volunteers are needed to make this event a success. Teens and adults can help before the event by carving pumpkins (Oct 13 & 14) and decorating the Nature Center. At the event we need Fairy Tale Forest Characters, Guides, and Parking Attendants. Look on our Facebook page for a volunteer sign-up, or contact us via phone or email (mltnsnaturalist@gmail.com, 816-781-8598).





**Martha Lafite
Thompson Nature
Sanctuary**

MLTNS, "The Nature Sanctuary"

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



We have been celebrating 50 years at MLTNS all year long, and the special events continue through the end of 2026.

- The United Tweets of America Story Walk is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm through December. This clever and amusing children's book introduces the 50 State Birds through colorful illustrations and witty dialogue between the birds. The Story Walk begins at the picnic shelter and follows the paved trail to the Rush Creek Overlook.
- The Hummingbird Deck has been a huge hit for the hummingbirds and visitors alike! Hummingbird activity will peak in September so be sure to come enjoy the hummers, butterflies, and colorful flowers before the first frost. Please note: the Nature Center (and hummingbird deck access) will be open 9-12:30 Tuesday-Friday and Saturday 9-5 in September.
- The pinnacle of our 50th Anniversary Celebration will be an Open House on Nov. 14. Join us for special guests, including Big Bird and Swoop the Owl, plus family-friendly activities such as a guided prairie bird hike, bird crafts, and story time in the book nook. Watch our social media channels and website for more details.

MARTHA LAFITE THOMPSON NATURE SANCTUARY

Where nature takes flight!

50 YEARS





A LOOK BACK: MARTHA'S LATER YEARS



Martha Lafite Thompson at her home, now MLTNS

We can't celebrate 50 years of MLTNS without remembering the life of Martha Lafite Thompson. This year our newsletters will highlight segments of Martha's life, finishing here with her later years and the founding of Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary.

At the end of 1935, Martha Lafite realized that she loved Omar Thompson, a landscape architect residing in Leavenworth, Kansas. Omar was a Russian immigrant and was 10 years older than Martha. His 1942 draft card shows he worked and resided at William Jewell College, where he supervised greenhouse construction. Presumably, Martha and Omar wed around 1946 because Liberty telephone directories begin listing his name at the address of Martha and her mother in that year, but no official record of their nuptials can be found. Martha and Omar lived with her mother Annie until her death in 1955. Just prior to Annie's death, Martha purchased 53 acres of land on LaFrenz Road. Martha and Omar built a house on the property and lived there together for about 20 years. Omar ran Thompson Greenhouse in the heart of Liberty from 1946-1966. Martha became an avid bird watcher with a keen interest in woodland and prairie plant life. Keeping her horse and stable along with frequent riding helped her remain connected to the land and environment until the end of her life. In 1965 Martha entered a five-year lease of her acreage to the Burrough's Audubon Club and wrote a will to create a permanent nature sanctuary on her property upon her death. Martha passed away suddenly of a stroke at the age of 65 in June of 1975. She was cremated and some of her ashes were placed under a pink granite stone on the property. A plaque on the stone is engraved in French with the sentiment *Que Votre Repos Dans Ce Lieu Tant Aime Soit Doux*, which translates to "May your rest in a place so loved be gentle". In November of 1976, Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary was incorporated as a private non-profit organization. Omar lived on the property until his death in 1980. Around that time, 46 adjoining acres were purchased by the Missouri Department of Conservation and leased to MLTNS to create an almost 100 acre sanctuary. That lease was transferred to Liberty Parks and Recreation in 2025.



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\$50 FOR 50 YEARS CAMPAIGN



This year marks a remarkable milestone for the Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary—our 50th anniversary of connecting people with nature, inspiring stewardship, and preserving the beauty of our natural environment for generations to come. For five decades, the Sanctuary has served as a treasured community resource, offering environmental education, wildlife experiences, and a peaceful place to explore the wonders of the natural world. None of this would have been possible without the generosity and support of individuals like you. To celebrate this special year, we invite you to participate in our “\$50 for 50 Years” campaign. A donation of \$50 honors our past, sustains our present, and helps ensure a vibrant future for the Sanctuary. Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/mltns50for50> to inspire a love of nature for the next 50 years.

Support MLTNS by attending these Upcoming Events!

Bluegrass in the Tallgrass: September 12

Fairy Tale Forest: October 15–18

50th Anniversary Open House: November 14

Martha Lafite is solely supported by donations, grants, and memberships from the local community. Whether you can make a \$5 donation when you visit, get a family membership for \$200, or give a \$1000 donation to procure needed equipment and repairs, your gift is greatly appreciated.

Please consider how you can support MLTNS today, then visit www.NatureSanctuary.com and click the Donate button.

SUPPORT MLTNS

DONATE

Thank you !

We would like to thank the following businesses for supporting MLTNS during our 50th year!



Pony Express Bank partnered with Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines to provide a 3 to 1 matching grant. Pony Express contributed \$2500 and FHLB matched with \$7500, for a total of \$10,000!!!



\$500 donation



**LIBERTY ARTS
COMMISSION**

\$1000 grant for
Bluegrass in the
Tallgrass



Summer Camp
Shirts