

[www.library.wustl.edu/map-lgbtq-stl](http://www.library.wustl.edu/map-lgbtq-stl)

**Mapping LGBTQ St. Louis**  
**Additional Information Sheet**

Location:

Miss Fannie's Ball (Halloween)

Masonic Prince Hall Grand Lodge. 4525 Olive St (circa 1958 – 1970s)



Exterior of Prince Hall. Image #336-354, State Historical Society of Missouri

Additional Information:

After the 1970s the tradition of a Halloween Ball with female impersonators / drag performers continued under the sponsorship of different organizations. At times in the 1980s different event of a similar name were held both in St. Louis County and in Metro East Illinois. After 1986 when the city of St. Louis's cross-dressing statue was found unconstitutional, the event no longer needed to be held on Halloween night, and was moved to an adjacent weekend. As of 2017 "The Legendary Ms. Fannie's Ball" was held in early November at the Ambassador 9800 Halls Ferry.

For additional history see:

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 12, 1956, page 22

An advertisement says the Jolly Jesters are putting on a Pre-Halloween Frolic, on October 30, 1956. The address is listed at the West End Waiters Club at 911 N. Vandeventer. (It seems that the Jolly Jesters Halloween Party from 1956 and 1957 did not feature female impersonators; they were added in 1958.)

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 18, 1957, page 7-B; same advertisement October 25, 1957 p. 7-B

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Halloween Bal Masque Dance to be held on October 31, 1957. It lists the location as West End Waiters Club at 911 N. Vandeventer. Music is by Dave Thomas and his Combo. Prizes awarded to the "3 prettiest costumes." Illustration is of a witch.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 24, 1958 p. 6

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Social Club Mock Fashion Show and Artist Ball to be held on October 31, 1958. It lists the location as the Masonic Hall at 4525 Olive. Prize awarded to the best hula hooper. Music by the Buggs Roberts' Orchestra. Contestants between the ages of 18-80. This is a benefit for "Ferrier Harris Home for [unreadable]." Illustration shows several people in Halloween costumes.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 23, 1959 p. 7-B

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Halloween Bal Masque Artist Ball to be held on October 31, 1959, "featuring female impersonators." It lists the location as the Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive. Prize awarded to the best impersonation. This is a benefit for "Dubois School for Retarded Children." Illustration shows several people in Halloween costumes.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 14, 1960 p. 6-B; same advertisement in October 21, 1960 p. 6-B and October 28, 1960 p. 8-A

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Miss Fannie's Ball to be held on October 31, 1960, "featuring a full line of female impersonators." It lists the location as the Masonic Hall at 4525 Olive. \$100 in prizes to be given away. It requires an application, to be sent to The Jolly Jesters Inc. at 3523 Hepert Street, St. Louis 20, Mo.

*The Saint Louis Argus* October 20, 1961, p. 6-B; same advertisement in October 27, 1961 p. 6-B

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Miss Fannie's Ball to be held on October 31, 1961, "featuring a full line of female impersonators." It lists the location as the Masonic Hall at 4525 Olive. Music is by the Caravans. Cash prize awarded for the best female impersonator. Last year's winners were Lady Harvey (Miss Fannie of 1960) and Elliot Muzell (Best Dressed). Says that "everyone is welcome." Illustration shows a man and a woman dancing.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 19, 1962, page 4-B; same advertisement in October 26, 1962, page 4-B

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Miss Fannie's Artist Ball to be held on October 31, 1962. It lists the location as the Masonic Hall at 4525 Olive. Music is by Albert King's Combo. \$50 will be awarded to the best dressed, with other cash prizes available. Illustration shows a man and a woman dancing.

*The Saint Louis American*, November 5, 1964 p. 10

Photograph from the Jolly Jesters Social Club's Miss Fannie's Ball on October 31, 1964. Lists address as Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive Street. Title reads "The 'Girls' Were Really Pretty on Halloween Night." "The 'babe' in center" is Miss Fannie of 1964, who was selected at last year's ball.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 22, 1965 p. 4-B; same advertisement October 29, 1965 p. 4-B

An advertisement for The Jolly Jesters Miss Fannie's Artist Ball to be held on October 30, 1965. It lists the location as the Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive. Music is by Albert King's Combo. \$50 will be awarded to the best dressed, with other cash prizes available. Illustration shows a man and a woman dancing, with two men on drums and another playing the trombone.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 21, 1966 p. 7-A

Advertisement for the Jolly Jesters' 8th Annual Miss Fannie's Artist Ball to be held on October 31, 1966. Music by Benny Sharp's Combo. To be held at the Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive Street. \$150 to Miss Fannie of 1966, \$100 for best dressed.

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 27, 1967 p. 24

An advertisement for the Jolly Jesters 9th Annual Miss Fannie's Artists' Ball on October 31, 1967. Lists address as Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive Street. \$150 to Miss Fannie of 1967, \$100 for best dressed. Music by Albert (Blues Boy) King's Combo. Includes a photo in the ad

*The Saint Louis American*, November 9, 1967 p. 12

Full page of photographs and captions about Miss Fannie's Ball held on October 31, 1967. Headline reads: "All the 'Dolls' Showed Up for Miss Fannie's Ball at Masonic Temple." Address is listed as Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive Street. Winner was "Judy" King, second place was "Miss Toby," and annual Miss Fannie was "Misty June." Photos by Willie McKinney.

*The Saint Louis American*, November 7, 1968 p. 9

A full page of photographs and captions about Miss Fannie's Ball held on October 31, 1968. In the brief description, the author writes that "If you should see a 'babe' you like send a letter of inquiry to Farley Wilson, % The St. Louis American." The title of Miss Fannie is awarded "on the basis of the participants who looks and acts the most like a woman." According to the author many contestants fit this criteria. It is also mentioned that people come from far away just to attend the ball. Photos are mostly of black female impersonators, with one white one. One caption of a photograph reads "Black is beautiful, baby." Photos by Joiner.

*St. Louis Sentinel*, November 7, 1970 p. 1

A photograph of the unnamed winner of Miss Fannie's Ball. Caption says: "The young 'lady' demurely posing here, proudly display the trophy she won as the top contestant." Also mentions the event was "jam-packed."

*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 29, 1971 p. 4-B

An advertisement for the Jolly Jesters 13th Annual Miss Fannie's Artists Ball on October 30, 1971. Lists address as Masonic Auditorium at 4525 Olive Street. Cash prize to Miss Fannie of 1971, and for best dressed. Music by Alexander and the Profiles. Illustration is of a witch and a broomstick.

*The Saint Louis American*, November 11, 1971 p. 7

Photograph and brief description/caption about the Miss Fannie's Ball on October 30, 1971. Title: "Don't Need No Sex Change." Photograph is of the 1970 winner giving her crown to the 1971 winner, "Miss Sherrel." The author writes: "And if one of the many 'girls' who participated...would have told the fellas 'What you see is what you get' he (she) would have been lying" ... "Boy, there wuz a lot of switchin' goin' on at that shindig and several 'real' women had to whack their dates across the head with their purses to jerk the cats' glued eyes off the 'babes.'" Photos by Jim Joiner.



*The Saint Louis Argus*, October 19, 1972 p. 4-B

A listing of events of the week, including the Miss Fannie Ball on October 31, 1972. Lists address as Masonic Hall. No advertisement this year.

St. Louis LGBT History Project – Balls. <http://www.stlouislgbthistory.com/topics/drag.html>