

First Friday Art Walk presents

Meet the Artist

David J. Eslick is the featured artist at Fitzwilly's Gifts & Antiques in May. A lifelong photographer, David's career was in the grocery business. Retired after 50 years of service in 2005, he's now devoted to photography, local history and the community.

Q: Where are you from originally?

A: I am a Northside Springfield native; I grew up a few blocks from the Ozark Empire Grounds on North Broadway. I am a product of the Springfield Public School System, graduating from the newly named Central High School in 1958.

Q: When and how did you first become interested in photography?

A: I have taken photos all my life.

Q: Are there other photographers or artists who have had a major impact on you? If so, who?

A: Virginia Anderson, wife of Eugene Anderson, owner of the Ozark Camera Center, was my Mom's cousin. I bought my first 35mm camera in 1972 and Eugene was my mentor, teaching me not only how to be a better photographer but how to develop and print my own photos and slides.

Q: How has photography influenced your life and career?

A: I began photographing area Republican candidates and officeholders in 1976 and was "The Official Greene County Republican Photographer," a title given me by the late Congressman Gene Taylor. I changed jobs in 1991 (started working nights) and had to give up

that role. I count several prominent Republicans, John Ashcroft, Roy Blunt, Kit Bond, Darrell Moore among my friends. I have many great memories of those days.

My good friend, Bob Glazier, owner and publisher of Springfield! Magazine provided me with a press pass and this allowed me access to some interesting events. He also published three of my stories in his magazine, as well as several class reunion group photos of Springfield area schools.

I am a Springfield historian and historic preservationist, and I enjoy photographing historic sites and presenting Springfield history programs, most recently to elementary school students.

Q: What do you do when you're not taking photographs?

A: When I am not taking photos, I am a deacon at First Baptist Church, where I am chairman of the communications committee. I am on the Board of Trustees of the Springfield-Greene County History Museum, the cabinet of the Dr. Michael J. Clarke History Museum of Ozarks Scouting, The Executive Board of the Ozarks Trails Council, Boy Scouts of America (a 39-year veteran Scouter), the Route 66 Association of Missouri,



The Greene County Historic Sites Board, chairman of the University of Missouri Extension Council of Greene County, vice president of the Association of Contemporary Executives Networking Group, board member of the Southwest Missouri Camera Club.

I do enjoy fishing when I have time!

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: Married to Nancy for 47 years in June, we have one son, Mark, and his wife Teresa, a grandson who is finishing his junior year as a computer engineer at Mizzou and a grandson who is a lance corporal in the Marines.