



## Press Release

Event: Bradley Firemen's Fish Fry

Date: June 11-12, 2004

Time: 11:00am – 11:00pm

Location: Bradley Village Hall  
147 South Michigan  
Bradley, IL 60915

Contact: Danielle Dugan

Organization: Village of Bradley Fire Department

Phone: 815-933-2401

Admissions:

Website: <http://www.bradleyil.org>

### FISH FRY TRADITION

On the short list of things that are distinctively Kankakee County, the Bradley Firemen's Fish Fry ranks up there. The Bradley Firemen's Fish Fry will be June 11 and June 12, 2004 at the Village Hall in Bradley, IL.

If you've lived here longer than a week, you probably know the basics - the best-tasting fish is battered and deep fried, and it usually comes with coleslaw and French fries.

But the people at the Village of Bradley Fire Department want you to know more about this curious phenomenon.

The standard explanation for the unique Kankakee County tradition is that it evolved because the state's big Catholic population was banned from eating meat on Fridays during Lent. But there is much more to it than that, including the fishing culture of the Potawatomi Indians who lived around the Kankakee River.

The only way for the Potawatomi to survive here was to eat fish, which they dried so they could make it through winter. There were populations who spent their lives making nets and cooking fish. Then all these immigrants descended on the area - Scandinavians, Belgians, French, Germans, Poles whose cultures, also relied heavily on fish. There's a love-hate relation with fish. There's something disgusting about fish, the way they smell, the huge quantities of them, the dead

fish on shore.

Cooking massive amounts of fish for big groups of people has been going on as long as there have been fishing cultures, usually in private gatherings and as fund-raisers. But it wasn't until around the time of Prohibition that eating fried fish in taverns and restaurants became part of Kankakee County's social fabric. The first evidence of commercial fish fries was an advertisement in the 1920s.

Taverns had to find ways to bring people into their businesses because they could no longer sell alcohol, so they started offering fried fish on Friday nights. It was cheap enough for the whole family.

And when Prohibition was lifted, people were so accustomed to their Friday night fish fry outings that they kept on going. But from then on, there was beer and brandy old-fashioned to wash down the fish.

Even though Friday night fish fries are relaxed and casual, they have their own special etiquette.

So remember at the Bradley Firemen's Fish Fry: you might have to wait in line at the beer tent, or for some of the best fish in Kankakee County, but that is the best part of the fun. (And you single folks...you never know who you could meet in line.) You will have a chance to meet people and find out the latest community gossip!

If you go

\* What: Bradley Firemen's Fish Fry

\* When: June 11 and 12, 2004, 11:00am – 11:00pm

\* Where: Village of Bradley Hall  
147 South Michigan  
Bradley, IL

**BRADLEY FIREMEN'S FISH FRY  
& CASHDRAW  
ON  
BROADWAY**

**JUNE 11<sup>TH</sup> & 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2004  
11:00 AM TO 11:00 PM**

FRIDAY'S EVENTS:

FISH, BEER AND MUCH MORE  
BOUNCY TENT FOR KIDS FROM 4:00 PM TO 9:00 PM  
7:00 PM TO 10:30 PM - FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE

SATURDAY'S EVENTS:

FOOD, BEER AND MUCH MORE  
BROADWAY BUSINESS'S SIDEWALK SALE 11:00  
AM TO 3:00 PM

MOTORCYCLE SHOW 11:00 AM TO 5:00 PM  
REGISTRATION 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM, JUDGING AT 4:00

**THE JESSE WHITE TUMBLERS**

**SPONSORED BY**

**STATE REP. LISA M. DUGAN**

**AT NOON**

BOUNCY TENT FOR KIDS FROM 2:00 PM TO 9:00 PM  
BRADLEY'S BEAUTIFUL BABY CONTEST 5 CATEGORIES  
REGISTRATION 1:30 PM TO 2:30 PM, JUDGING AT 3:00 PM

6:30 PM TO 10:30 PM - SCOTT FREE, CASHDRAW AND  
RAFFLE DRAWING

CENTER STAGE AT 7:00 PM