

Steve McDaniel, Director

- ✚ I met with Sara the new president of the Three Rivers Festival to discuss logistics for the next few years based on the construction adjacent to Headwater's Park. They are looking at various changes and wanted my input on the park along with Lawton and Fourth Street.
- ✚ We had a press conference to kick off the disc golf course at Weisser Park. It was a great collaborative event with Fort Wayne Community Schools and several students from Weisser Park Elementary School. This new 9-hole course is ready for play.
- ✚ I attended the annual Veterans Day breakfast at the Community Center. This is a great event that we can give back to our veterans.
- ✚ We continue to work with a small group from Resultant on a prototype of a new park app to help identify amenities in our parks. This will continue for the next few months.
- ✚ Several of the staff met with the Jennings Center Advisory Council to discuss programming for this year's Wassail. We will also be celebrating the center's 75th anniversary.
- ✚ Several staff members also met with a small group to plan out the lighting celebration for McKinnie Commons that is scheduled for December 7th. This new display will become a tradition for our city.
- ✚ Nate Cardelli and I taped our newest episode of the Parks Podcast discussing everything for the holiday season at the Botanical Conservatory. This episode and others are available for download to listen.
- ✚ Fort Wayne hosted the annual convention for the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association this last month. Over 320 park professionals across the state attended as well as a couple of hundred vendors. Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation won the award for Outstanding Agency of the Year. It was a great honor to win this along with hosting the event.
- ✚ Fantasy of Lights kicked off at Franke Park. This seasonal display of lights goes through the Franke Park and provides over 150 displays. This event has become a tradition for many families and the park sees tons of visitors.
- ✚ We also were part of the downtown lighting event called Night of Lights. Several of our facilities were part of this event.
- ✚ Our Headwater's Park skating rink opened this month. The team has learned to set up and operate the outdoor rink. We hope to continue this tradition as well as provide some new programming and events. Check out the Winter Fun Times for these upcoming events.

Our friend, colleague, and neighbor from New Haven Parks and Recreation, Mike Clendenen retired from the Director position. It has been an honor working with him over the years. We have collaborated on many things including our master plans for the last 15 years. We wish Mike well on retirement.

Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director of Recreation

Salomon Farm Park, Neighborhood Outreach Community Centers (Youth/Downtown/McMillen Park), Riverfront, Athletics, Aquatics, Golf, Outdoor Recreation, Special Events, Headwaters Park, and Travel Service

✚ General

- Several members of the Recreation division assisted with the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA) State Conference November 14-16th. This included hosting off-site tours at McMillen Park Community Center and Promenade Park. Chuck Reddinger participated in a panel discussion "Impacts of Homeless Populations on Parks".

- McKinney Commons Park hosted the first annual holiday “Unity” lighting on December 7th from 5:30 -7:00 pm in partnership with Premier Bank, the City of Fort Wayne Community Development, and the Fort Wayne National Panhellenic organization. In addition to the lighting, there were musical performances, free hot chocolate, cookies, hats, and gloves.

Riverfront

- November was a busy time for Programming at Riverfront Fort Wayne. Dance Promenade: West Coast Swing continued to bring an average of 30 people to the Pavilion every Wednesday throughout the month until its conclusion on November 15th. The following day we had another “Open Mic Night” in the pavilion that saw a small increase in participation. One of our new events to promote the “Art and Culture” events at Promenade was the “Spirit of History” event on Friday, November 3rd. A great crowd showed up at the Well Street Bridge to kick off a walking tour throughout the Park and Downtown Fort Wayne to learn about the unique history of Fort Wayne. Our 2nd Sundays at Promenade continued to show great attendance at both Yoga on the Riverfront and the Sunday Heritage concert Series. The concert series had one of its largest attendances yet with close to 100 attendees.
- The “Holly Shopping” event held on Small Business Saturday in partnership with the Downtown Improvement District went well for another year. Families and Children enjoyed meeting the character princesses from the movie Frozen while enjoying hot coco and arts and crafts.
- November Programs at Promenade Park concluded with “Cheers and Cookies” on November 30th. This new event showed great attendance and had a great partnership with Teds Snack Bar as they provided the drinks. Rentals at Promenade began to slow down with fewer events but the events tend to be more attended. The Waymakers gathering held their annual employee gathering again at the pavilion with close to 200 people in attendance.
- The following weekend on November 11th the annual CTN Brew Tour utilized the space for their annual Fort Wayne brew tour. Almost 250 people enjoyed meeting and enjoying local beer including Ted’s Snack Bar as they prepared to walk around downtown.
- On November 18th the Headwaters Ice Rink officially opened its doors under Riverfront Fort Wayne for the 2023/2024 season. About 20 new seasonal staff were hired and trained to help this season. The rink has some new changes from the Headwaters Park Alliance including a brand-new concessions menu, a new admission trailer as you walk in, and the addition of taking credit card transactions.
 - The first weekend saw around 600 skaters show up with unfavorable conditions to kick off the season. The first-weekday attendance started slow but continued to have regular skaters at the rink buying punch passes.
 - We had special hours on Black Friday from 12:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. to accommodate downtown shoppers. We had close to 500 people skating on that Friday and similar attendance for that Saturday.

Salomon Farm Park

- Eighteen Meet and greet sessions were held in November with Frankie and Mickey, the highland mini cows, at Salomon Farm Park. Each thirty-minute session was \$65 for up to 4 people. Throughout the spring and fall, Salomon has conducted 61 meet-and-greet sessions. Due to the popularity of these sessions, Salomon staff plans to continue the meet and greets in December as well. With the current revenue collected one highland cow has already been paid for.
- Salomon Farm Park is a satellite location for the 2023 Municipal Election. Voting hours are Wednesday, November 1, - Friday, November 3 from 8:00 am – 8:00 pm, and Saturday, November 4, 2023, from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.
- Auditions and ticket sales have begun for Summit City Music Theatre's A Christmas Carol held at Salomon Farm Park, Old Barn. Shows will be held on Thursday, November 30, 2023, through Sunday, December 10, 2023. Tickets are \$25 per person.

Johnny Appleseed Campground

- Johnny Appleseed Campground closed for the season on Monday, November 6, 2023.
- Construction has begun on the new small RV sites at Johnny Appleseed Campground. The paving was finished in November. The project will continue over the next couple of months and into early spring, with completion planned before the campground opens in May 2024.

Community Center

- During the Halloween Haunt on October 21st, Karen Shrock hosted the sensory clubhouse for over 200 people. There were 2 overwhelmed, stressed moms who stayed for over 30 minutes to de-escalate from the zombie walk while their children happily played and checked out the fun sensory-engaging activities in the clubhouse.
- November's Thanksgiving Lunch November 20th was turkey and stuffing casserole, mashed potatoes, and gravy, autumn roasted vegetables, bread/butter, pumpkin pie with whipped topping, and cranberry sauce. 8 volunteers were in attendance. 59 signed up and 54 showed up
- Veterans' breakfast and bingo was held on November 3rd from 9:30-11:30 am to a large crowd of 13 volunteers and 85 veterans and guests. In addition there were musical performances by the Shepard's Brass Quintet band play.
- Santa's workshop was held on November 22nd from 4:30-7:30 pm and is one of if not the largest events we run at the center. The big push is it is during the annual night of lights downtown. We offer activities, crafts, milk and cookies, photos with Buddy the Elf, and the big draw is kids shopping for family members. We always hope for fair weather to gather more attendance, it is a well-attended event with new patrons visiting the center for the first time.
- The Community Center staff and volunteers went to the Weisser community to help prepare for the harvest fest. Mary and Linda also helped during the event.

- Community center staff volunteered and attended sessions/activities for the IPRA conference
- The Community Center received a \$1000 grant for the Sensory Clubhouse from the Council on Senior Services.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- 114 youth registered for our After-school Program (this includes 14 youths that originally attended Jennings and after Jennings reopened attended Weisser daily). Currently, we have 68 youth enrolled in our After-school Program and 2 on the waiting list. Our daily average attendance was 43.5 youth per day. Our highest number to attend was 55 youth.
- We had our Annual Weisser Harvest Fest Party on Thursday, October 26. 55 registered Weisser youth and 24 Jennings youth participated. We also had 15 unregistered youth who came with their parents to enjoy the activities.
- On Thursday, November 2, Ten Point Coalition and Ubuntu Collaborative held their prayer event in our auditorium. Approximately 50 people attended the event.
- On Thursday, November 16th, we held our Annual Holiday Dinner. 50 registered Weisser youth enjoyed a meal of turkey, rib tips, cornbread dressing, green beans, baked macaroni and cheese, cranberry sauce, gravy, and juice.
- On Saturday, November 18th, Ten Point Coalition had their Community Feed from 12-2 pm at Weisser Park Youth Center. They fed over 50 people
- Lighting has been upgraded at Weisser Center. A main pole light was out in the circle drive making it very dark when kids were going in and out of the cars. Also, the new bulbs in the can lights finally make it possible to see from the inside if people are standing outside the door. THANK YOU!

Jennings Recreation Center

- Jennings Recreation Center reopened for the youth on Monday, October 23rd. Since the reopening, Jennings has 58 registrations and 30 youth enrolled. The daily average since October 23rd is 21 youth per day. The highest day of attendance was 29. Jennings had 3 registrations in November.
- On October 26th the Jennings Recreation Center took 25 youth on a field trip to attend the Harvest Fest, at Weisser Park and McMillen Community Center. The youth enjoyed and had a great time at each event.
- On November 23rd, the Jennings Center held its annual holiday dinner for all of the Jennings Recreation Center youth. There were 25 youths in attendance and one youth was sent home with a plate because he could not attend due to his weekly counseling session. The youth enjoyed the meal and dessert. It was a great Celebration.
- Jennings Hosted a Self Defense class on Saturday, November 18th. The class was taught by Mr. V, a 4th-degree black belt in Taekwondo. This was a free class offered for women ages 18 and older. The max number of participants for the class was 20, there were 14 registered and 11 in attendance with 1 walk-in.
- Jennings JC Fit Adult Class is held every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 pm and is open to all adult participants. In November, the class did an arm workout challenge. There were 8 of 14 participants who completed the whole month. There were over 19,000 repetitions completed for this challenge, which is exceptional!

- The 70th annual Wassail was held on Sunday, December 4th from 4:00-6:30 pm. This was also part of the Jennings 75th annual celebration. There was a new and updated photo display wall to highlight the history of the Jennings Center. In addition, there was a new UMBUNTO art sign installation in the main room. New furniture was also added to provide an updated and welcoming feel to the spaces. The event was held with assistance from the Jennings Advisory staff, Anita Dortch in addition to Jennings Center Staff. There were several musical performances, poetry, and sharing of Jennings Center memories. The event concluded with cookies, treats, and the traditional Wassail Punch. Attendees were provided a commemorative magnet.
- Jennings received 7 new/updated computers.

McMillen Community Center

- On Thursday, October 26th, 2023 McMillen hosted its annual Harvest Fest. There were over 1,000 community members in attendance. We collaborated with the Indiana Autism Society and were able to provide Halloween bags to the kids, a bounce house, candy, lots of vendors, a sensory room, and a haunted room. There were prizes given away to the youth who won the costume contests for their age group.
- On Thursday, November 20th, 2023 from 5:30 pm-6:30 pm McMillen hosted the McMillen Center Thanksgiving Dinner and Game Night for parents. The event was a success. There were 50 parents and youth in attendance. Special thanks to Ziano's Italian Restaurant for donating the dishes for the dinner.
- The Burmese community started adult volleyball on November 1st. The sport seems to be a hit in the community. Attendance has been consistent at 25-30 participants.
- On Wednesday, November 21st we had our annual McMillen Turkey Give-A-Way. We were able to give away 500 turkeys to members of the community. This was made possible through collaborations with the Steve Harvey Morning Show and the Social Status of African American Males. 120 Turkeys went to Davita Dialysis Center and another 100 went to two independent senior living facilities.
- On Wednesday, November 15th, McMillen Park Community Center participated in the IPRA conference by providing a tour of McMillen Center. We were able to highlight the Pickleball community, the Bad Mitten Club, the Burmese volleyball, and a parent's group that utilizes the indoor playground. We were also allowed to present the history of McMillen and show the growth of the center over the years.

Golf

- Bryan Keister reported that the "Big Dig" sewer project in Foster Park has started and they seem to be moving along quickly and smoothly. He keeps Jason Smith updated daily as to what's going on and sends pictures so that they can be filed for future reference.
- Gary Whitacre stated that all three of the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Golf Courses have closed for the season. Gary reported that it was another great year with total rounds for 2024 topping 64,000. That is roughly an increase of 13,000 over 2023.

- Dave Weadock has been consulting with Hills, Forrest, and Smith (Foster Park GC master plan consultants) to provide the department with a restoration and driving range plan to possibly be constructed after the “Big Dig” project is completed. This would give the Parks and Recreation Department an added amenity as well as an additional revenue stream while funding was being raised for the complete golf master plan to be implemented.
- Tom Mizzell has been working diligently to keep the golf carts at Shoaff Park Golf Course running. These are the older carts that are still in use until the new carts arrive.

🏊 Pools

- Daryn Schwartz reported that he is in the process of ordering a couple of different styles of lifeguard chairs for next season. When a certain model is identified that meets what we are looking for, we will phase them all in.

Sandra Odisho – Finance Manager

-  The Parks and Recreation Department paid 234 employees (136 full-time and 98 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending December 2nd and paid on December 9th, 2023.
-  We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing, or in the process of being hired, as of November 30th, 2023:
 - Heavy Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Grounds Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Relief Person – Grounds (Fund 121)
 - Maintenance Technician II - Electrician (Fund 121)
 - Program Facility Coordinator – Community Youth Centers (Weisser) (Fund 121)
 - Supervisor IV – Community Outreach (Fund 121)
-  Headwaters Ice Rink is officially open and we have seasonal positions for the Headwaters Ice Rink up and posted on the City’s website. We have four positions that we are hiring for: Ice Rink Attendant, Lead Attendant, Ice Guard, and Ice Rink Maintenance. The majority of the ice rink staff have been hired.
-  Golf courses are now closed for the season and all of the seasonal golf staff have been separated.
-  The Winter Fun Times registration begins November 1st. December through February programs are covered in this brochure. The most popular programs in this brochure in the past have been:
 - Breakfast with Santa at the Conservatory
 - The Holiday Dinner and Light Tour at the Community Center
 - The Cooking Classes at the Salomon Learning Center
 - The Christmas Carol production at the Salomon Barn, which was new last year, sold out all show times.
 - Salomon has added a Breakfast with Santa this year, and we expect this to become an annual favorite, as well.
 - Salomon also added some more Highland Cow interactions and those sold very quickly too.
-  Rhonda Berg, Office Manager, attended the IPRA Conference in Fort Wayne at the Grand Wayne Center. The education sessions were excellent. She also helped out a lot with the conference itself, since it was hosted by Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
-  Kim Weldon, our RecTrac Lead, attended the 2024 Vermont Symposium in Burlington, Vermont. This is an educational conference put on by our RecTrac software vendor every year. It was Kim’s first time attending and

she brought back a lot of useful information and also information on new opportunities for our department. Stay tuned for more information on that in 2024. This is the first time in five years that we were able to attend this Vermont Symposium.

- + We are very appreciative of being able to attend these conferences when schedules and budget allow.
- + Maxine King, one of our Registration Specialists, has taken over processing Johnny Appleseed Campground reservations for 2024 since the Campground is now closed for the season. She enjoys talking to the renters from various parts of the country.
- + Elizabeth Daniel, one of our Registration Specialists, is retiring. Her last day is December 1st. She will be missed very much! We will be interviewing to fill this position in December.
- + We are now processing daily financial reports for the Headwater's Park Ice Skating Rink. These reports are similar to what we process in the summer for the pools and Foellinger Theatre.
- + A budget transfer request for the 2023 Budget should be approved on December 11th by the City Council for \$103,600. We requested the budget transfer from the 5300's (Services) of \$103,600 to be transferred to the 5200's (Materials and Supplies). This budget transfer was necessary due to the increased cost of materials and supplies that we have experienced this year.

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director of Park

Maintenance, Facilities, Grounds, Projects Administration, Safety Compliance, Storeroom, Fleet & Mechanical Operations

+ Facilities Maintenance

- Pavilion rentals totaled: **141** for November. This is down from **274** in October.
- Graffiti was removed at the Downtown Community Center, Rockhill bathroom doors, and Lakeside Pavilion.
- The paths at Lindenwood Nature Preserve were cleared of leaves and other debris that were blocking and hindering a clear walking path.
- The staff is working on the annual cleaning of the rental pavilions. We will also be doing annual cleans at Weisser, Jennings, and Cooper Center, the Downtown Community Center, and the Franke Day camp.

+ Maintenance Technicians

- Maintenance techs assisted in final preparation for the Headwaters Park ice rink which included work on the Zamboni.
- The annual downtown holiday lighting ceremony was on the 22nd. Maintenance techs had installed the displays in the downtown Community Center in preparation for this event.
- The Johnny Appleseed Campground closed for the season on November 6th. Winterization of the campground was completed which included shutting down power and turning off water service to the campsites.
- Weisser Park Community Center received LED lighting upgrades to the front entrance and parking lot.
- Work was completed at the Botanical Conservatory for the 2023 Christmas showcase. This included removing structures from the summer showcase and repainting the existing structures.
- Winterization of facilities and amenities should be completed by the first week of December. This is the process of shutting the water off to seasonal buildings and drinking fountains as well as blowing out irrigation lines.
- The shade structures at the Downtown Community Center and McKinney Commons were removed for the season.

- Repairs were made to the River Greenway trails at both Shoaff Park and Johnny Appleseed Park.
- The vacant Maintenance Tech position was filled by John McIntosh III who started on the 13th. Derek Palmer, who was one of the Maintenance Tech Electricians, transferred to the Street Lighting department which has left that position vacant.
- The Maintenance Technicians completed the following:
 - 2: Alarm Maintenance, 1: Building Maintenance, 19: Carpentry, 23: Electrical Repair,
 - 3: HVAC Maintenance, 7: Key Core Maintenance, 10: Light Maintenance,
 - 7: Lock Maintenance, 8: Paint, 11: Playground Maintenance,
 - 9: Plumbing Maintenance, 2: Sign Maintenance, 9: Vandalism

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment

- Mowing crews began the month still cutting grass and only mulching leaves where necessary. Mid-November, the crews switched to just removing leaves from the parks as the grass had stopped growing.
- Crews spent time servicing summer turf equipment, winterizing sprayers, and moving equipment into winter storage. Snow blowers, plow blades, and salt spreaders were moved to Lawton Park, and serviced, and we are working on installing them.
- We completed the late fall fertilization program early in the month. This includes all athletic fields, ball diamond outfields, and many general park areas.
- Relief crews spent 4 days using a pull-behind brush-cutting mower at Salomon to cut down the natural grass farm fields and one day doing the same at Franke Park Derby Hill.
- Heavy Equipment hauled over 100 tons of gravel to the overflow parking lot at the Foellinger Theatre. This was for the Fantasy of Lights display.
- Crews also spent time marking their plow routes with snow stakes for the winter and began the process of converting the 3-ton dump trucks into plow trucks with salt boxes.
- The garbage truck is only running twice a week.
- All extra trash cans were removed from the parks and stored at Kreager Park.

Manager of Facilities, Trades and Grounds

- There were 26 after-hours calls: 15 code issues, 3 alarm issues, 2 items left in the pavilions, 1 plumbing issue, 1 lock issue, 1 electrical issue, 1 setup issue, 1 light issue, and 1 miscellaneous issue.
- Mopar Insulation was hired to spray foam an exterior wall at the Rea Magnet building to help keep the sprinkler system pipes from freezing.
- Jack Laurie was hired to do the annual cleaning of the multipurpose room floor at the Downtown Community Center.
- Lan Con was hired to install outlets for the new kiln at the Downtown Community Center.
- VFP was hired to connect the range hoods to the fire alarm system at both McMillen Community Center and Weisser Community Center.
- New Outlook calendars were created by the IT department on an iPad for the codes for the rental pavilions.

Main Trac Coordinator

- Main Trac Entries: 6,068 for the month.
- We have had 32, 311 calls this month.
- Busy entering timesheets, gas tickets, and contracted invoices.
- Running monthly reports for Chucks Recreation Staff.

- We had 185.75 volunteer hours in the greenhouse and 2 volunteer hours at Franke playground for litter picking.
- Nicole is still working with many different people to see if it's possible to get out of the dark ages on how hours are put into the Main Trac system. Nicole has looked into GIS, Survey 123, and our Main trac system, trying to find the best one.

Lawton Garage/Operations - Garage Operations Highlights:

- 127 work orders were scheduled this month, 20 of which were services.
- The last truck from the 2022 lease, a Ford F150 4x4 was delivered and is being set up for the forestry supervisor.
- The last truck from the 2023 lease, a regular cab Ford F250 was located and a P.O. has been written for that purchase.
- The chip body for a new chipper truck from the 2022 lease was canceled per a request from the controller's office. The 2022 lease is about to be closed out and all remaining purchases need to be delivered or canceled.
- A new Ford 250 Transit cargo van has had the shelving installed and now is in service for the maintenance techs.
- A Toro 6000 zero turn mower and a Sullair air compressor that were replacements for canceled equipment from the 2022 order were delivered.
- Mechanics started the process of converting the Toro 7210 mowers to polar tracs.
- The Zamboni for the Headwaters ice rink had final repairs performed and was delivered to the ice rink and put into service.
- A Toro Dingo was delivered for the forestry crew. This unit wasn't expected for another 8-9 months, but a model became available sooner.
- Garage staff performed major clean-ups in the garage and welding shop to prepare for the IPRA convention tours. Some larger tools that are only used periodically were moved to the Rea building.
- The transmission in truck 184 started having major issues. This unit was just rebuilt by Bob Thomas Ford so it was sent back to be repaired under warranty.
- Kenney Machine has mowers for the 2022 order at their facility in Indianapolis. The polar trac unit for Promenade is being converted by them so it is ready for snow removal when it is delivered.
- A new walk-behind ice edger was prepared for the Headwater's ice rink and put into use at that facility.
- Spray tanks for the landscape crew were winterized so they can be safely stored for the winter.
- Diesel fuel at various park locations has been switched over to winter-grade fuel as those tanks have been refueled.
- Quotes are still coming in for 2024 equipment purchases to allow for budgeting for what each division needs.
- Option sheets for 2024 vehicle purchases have been filled out with various dealers to allow the parks to get vehicles equipped as we require them.
- Now that the last vehicle from 2023 has been located, quotes for new park radios can be prepared. This purchase will be divided up over the 2023 and 2024 lease purchases to allow us to purchase the amount of radios used by the department.

Storeroom and Property:

- Storeroom staff began doing physical counts of inventory to prepare for the yearly audit.
- 15 passenger vans were prepared and used by the department to transport IPRA convention attendees to various park facilities.
- Purchase orders were written for a large Toro parts order from RPM and a tractor repair from Plevna. Funding is still being located to pay for the forestry crane repair from earlier this year.
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 **Property Transactions:**

23 Sullair 185 Air Compressor	P250	Added into Inventory
24 Liberty Equipment Trailers (2)	P240	Added into Inventory
02 Honda Push Mower	P240	Transferred from the Zoo
09 Honda Push Mower	P240	Transferred from the Zoo
23 CID Grapple Rake Attachment	P240	Added into Inventory
23 Toro TX1000 Dingo	P270	Added into Inventory
23 Toro TX Grapple Rake	P270	Added into Inventory
23 Ford F150 4x4	P270	Added into Inventory

2022 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:

Toro Polartrac	Due November
Toro 7210 Zero Turn Mower (3)	Due November
Toro Groundsmaster 4000 Mower	Due November
Ford F750 Chassis	Canceled
Chip Body for Above	Canceled
Ford F150 Pickup	Delivered
Ford Transit 250 Van	Delivered

2023 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:

Club Car enclosed cabs (2)	Delivered
Replacement Plow for truck 159	Early Dec.
John Deere 835M Gator	Delivered
Ventrac 4520z Tractor	Delivered
Phillips FRx AEDS (8)	Delivered
Dump Trailer	Delivered
Tilt Trailer	Delivered
Equipment Trailers (2)	Delivered
John Deere greens mowers	23121200
John Deere Aercore 800	23121213
Ford F250 Pick-Ups (4)	Delivered
Motorola Replacement radios	Waiting on updated quotes
Toro Dingo loader	Delivered

 **Superintendent**

- Approve and record invoices for various materials used and applied in grounds, maintenance, and facilities departments.
- Overseeing a variety of issues on all sides of Maintenance.
- Going back over inspections of the Parks and doing new ones.
- Working on a kiln room for the Community Center on Main Street.
- Working on the 2023 Playground inspections follow-up, for the third time.
- Working on River Greenway inspections.
- Working with supervisor staff to remind them of work that needs to be completed.
- Wrapping up 2023 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.

Project Administration

- Boone Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Awaiting purchase order. Installation in 2024.
- Botanical Conservatory Linkway Roof Design – Project completed.
- Botanical Conservatory Linkway Roof – Project completed.
- Botanical Conservatory Linkway Interior Design – Project currently out to bid. Construction is planned for early 2024.
- Botanical Conservatory Tropical Paths – Planning in progress.
- Buckner Park Trail As-Built Services – Survey in progress and final drawings are yet to be prepared for Allen County Planning.
- Community Center HVAC Control System – Quote received. Approval is in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Lighting Improvements – Planning in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Sidewalk Improvements – Planning in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Master Plan – Master plan completed.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Planning in progress.
- Foster Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Gren Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Project planning in progress.
- Headwaters Park Pavilion Report – Report completed. Staff review in progress.
- Headwaters Park Pedestrian Bridge Renovation – Bidding in progress.
- Headwaters Park Lighting Improvements – Planning in progress.
- Irish Town Plaza – Planning in progress.
- Kettler Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Lawton Park Maintenance Building Roof – Improvement planning in progress.
- Lawton Park Trestle Bridge – Awaiting bid info from Landscape Dept.
- Lawton Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- McMillen Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Construction – The Project is currently bidding with a due date of December 1, 2023.
- Northside Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Parks System Comprehensive Plan – Project in progress.
- Parks Playground Improvements – Purchase orders received. Planning and coordination are in progress.
- Salomon Farm North Garden Fence – Project completed.
- Salomon Farm South Field Watering System – Final work to be completed by the end of 2023.
- Salomon Farm Homestead Exterior Improvements – Project completed.
- Sheldon Park Signage – Park identification sign fabrication and installation are in progress.
- Swinney Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Planning in progress. Bidding is scheduled for early 2024.
- Tillman Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Turpie Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in 2024.
- Various Parks Site Furnishings – Acquisition and installations in progress.
- Various Parks 2024 Paving Projects – Planning in progress, bidding in early 2024.
- Various Parks 2024 Pavement Restoration – Planning in progress, bidding in early 2024.
- Various Parks Playground Borders and Drainage – Planning in progress.
- Various Parks Playground Safety Surfacing – Planning in progress.
- Weisser Center – Security System additions in progress.

Other work:

- Various Parks: assessed potential and necessary future projects
- Various Parks: planning projects for next season's budget

- Various Parks: updating park site plan bases and building plans.
- Various Parks: underground utility locates were scheduled and performed.
- Various Parks: cost estimates for various projects are being prepared upon request.
- Various Parks: park assessments are being completed.

Safety

- The Parks & Rec. The Safety Committee met on 11-28-23. 3 employees were present.
- 1 vehicle crash was reported for this period.
- 5 employee injuries were reported during this period.
- 2 CPR/FA classes were held. 13 employees were certified.
- 17 new seasonal employees were given General Safety Training.
- Risk Management hosted a 10-hour OSHA training class. 7 Parks employees received their cards.
- Tri-annual Forklift Training is still being organized.
- Stormwater pollution prevention inspection corrections are ongoing.
- The review of Parks Safety SOPs continues.

Alec Johnson, Deputy Director of Planning &

Development, Forestry, Landscape & Horticulture, Riparian and

Planning Report – November 2023

- We continue to see progress with the construction of the Franke Renaissance project. Pavilion construction carries on, while landscape improvements continue to be made as possible. Cranes were moved on-site for bridge construction, as well. Due to rough grading and the presence of some debris, the west side of the sledding hill has been fenced off from use for this winter; it will be cleaned up, fine-graded, and reseeded in the spring.
- Permitting and design continue for Riverfront Phase II. Deficiencies with permitting agencies are being addressed while planting plans and site details receive further refinement.
- Comments were delivered to our consultant for the Comprehensive Plan. We expect to see a rough final draft in the coming weeks.
- Planning continues for the Brewer Park Redevelopment project. Playground and splash pad design and details are currently being worked through, as the team moves into the construction documentation phase of the project.
- A schematic design has been completed for the Packard Park Redevelopment project. The team intends to introduce the project to various city departments in early December for coordination purposes. A Phase II Environmental Assessment was carried out in late November; we anticipate hearing results in early December.
- Master plans for both Hanna Homestead and Reservoir Park were completed in November. Following a public comment period, we aim to request approval for adoption of these plans in the coming months.
- The consolidation sewer projects at Foster Park have begun. Trees were removed as necessary along Hartman Rd., with additional impacts to be seen in the upcoming Indian Village portion of the project. Staff continues to coordinate with City Utilities throughout the construction process. A restoration plan for the golf course is currently underway.

- A revised design was completed in-house for Irishtown Plaza; this design was shared with EarthSource, Inc., the project consultant, for advancement into design development and construction drawings.
- Staff attended and presented education sessions at the IPRA conference.
- Construction drawings are being wrapped up for Conservatory Tropical Path Improvements and Tillman Tennis Center Landscape Improvements; we anticipate bidding on these projects either in December or early January.
- Staff met regularly with Conservatory management to discuss various agreements, staff training, marketing, showcase, and facility operations. Progress continues to be made on the various capital projects within the facility that were discovered through the facility assessment and internal discussions. We are currently looking forward to bids for both the elevator replacement and linkway interior improvement projects in early December.

Horticulture and Landscape Report- November 2023

Volunteers worked 292.5 hours in the greenhouse.

The SCFVA was represented at the Farm to School Summit at PFW on November 14th.

Landscape staff continues to plant bulbs at Freimann, Courthouse Green, and Foster Park this month.

The remaining bulbs are shipping now and our goal is to finish the first week of December.

Landscape staff cut down and cleaned up all daylilies in the Main Street Medians before the Night of Lights with the help of Community Corrections.

Memorial Park was cleaned up before Veterans Day.

Landscape staff assisted in the pickup and delivery of 23 conifers from St. Joe Tree Farm purchased for the holiday show change at the Botanical Conservatory.

Landscape staff assisted in installing the "Timeless Tradition" exhibit from November 12th through the 17th at the Botanical Conservatory.

Landscape staff began winter landscape bed cleanups; cutting down perennials and ornamental grasses, as well as, leaf/debris cleanup. Areas of focus were Lakeside, Foster, Little Turtle, Downtown Community Center, Meyers, Cindy's Diner, Courthouse Green, Freimann, Northside, Lawton Park, and Taylor's Dream.

Lakeside, Foster, Northside, and Lawton Parks began regular daily/weekly leaf cleanups on the turf.

Mulching projects completed this month included Camp Allen, Vesey Greenway, Foster Golf Course Greenway, PSI OTE Park, Bass Park, Miner Park, S.Cornell/S. Seminole Blvd., Lions Park, McCormick Park, Hamilton Park, and Guildin Park.

Lakeside worked on re-aligning, edging, and mulching of the main rose gardens to restore symmetry to all the beds.

The downtown staff re-set some of the paver stones in the Plock Garden at the Downtown Community Center.

Multiple hours were spent by the downtown staff at Headwaters cleaning up landscape beds and removing invasive and overgrown species from them.

Annuals were removed from the Bluffton Road Letter Bed.

Irrigation system winterizations were scheduled and completed.

Herbicide treatments ended. All spray equipment was winterized and stored until the next season.

Landscape staff installed greens in the Downtown Community Center's pots, as well as Lakeside's urns, park signs, and fountain walls.

Park tree plantings were located, mapped, and installed this month. Shade Trees Nursery planted 202 trees totaling over 24 different parks. Nineteen of these trees were Memorial Trees. Landscape staff installed all memorial plaques following the planting of the trees.

Pride Landcare, Mow Baby Mow, and Harlow continued with their maintenance contracts consisting of mowing and leaf cleanup.

Lawnganics continued with their final turf fertilization and weed control applications.

Riparian Management Report- November 2023

Headwaters, Guldlin, and Shoaff dock systems were successfully removed and stored at REA.

Scouted along the recently exposed riverbanks for debris and exposed navigational hazards. Removed approximately 1560 pounds of debris in the form of tires, shopping carts, scooters, sections of pipes, and a sunken gangway that would have otherwise been unseen with normal river levels.

Located all previously wrapped trees (beaver protection) to inspect and repair as needed. Scouted along riverbanks looking for new beaver activity and damage.

Cut through embedded/silted log jam at the trestle bridge on Spy Run Creek.

Presented at the 2023 IPRA's Annual Conference and Expo.

Forestry Report- November 2023

The 2023 Fall Tree Planting Project is nearing completion. 739 street trees and 178 park trees were planted during November. The remaining trees will be planted in the spring to improve the likelihood of survival for a few specific tree species.

Collaborated with City Utilities to identify the tree impacts in Foster Park and Indian Village Neighborhood. All trees being removed are expected to be replaced at a 5:1 ratio.

A tree removal package was distributed and bids have been accepted. This package was broken into several smaller packages to attract smaller, local contractors. This strategy proved effective. We received favorable pricing and all of the packages will be awarded to local contractors.

During October, Forestry crews completed 12 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to accommodate the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs. We anticipate these numbers remaining relatively low over the next few months.

111 high-priority trees were removed by in-house crews this month. Service requests have slowed down offering crews an opportunity to address some of the tree removals.

This month crews responded to 12 storm-related fallen/hanging limbs and 2 trees were impacted to the extent that required removal.

Completed 10 inspections/appraisals of trees that had been damaged by vehicles. In total, these incidents resulted in \$9,900.00 of damage.

Forestry staff responded to and resolved 36, 311 Call Center requests for service this month.

Botanical Conservatory Report – November 2023

Timeless Tradition (opened November 18) exudes a simple elegance as the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory celebrates its 40th anniversary. The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received programs/events in November 2023 including Timeless Tradition Exhibit Opening (November 18), \$1 Night Light Display (Started November 22), and Holly Shopping (November 25) in addition to several pre-registered classes and workshops. Staff are gearing up for Santa & Reindeer Saturdays (December 2, 9, 16 & 23), String Jams Holiday Concert (December 7), Suzuki Strings (December 10), Member & Volunteer Holi-Day (December 13), PFW Carolers (December 15), as well as the highly anticipated Breakfast with Santa, Evergreen Centerpiece, and Succulent Christmas Tree pre-registered

programs. December is the second highest-impact month of the year at the Botanical Conservatory, with over 11,000 visitors anticipated (the month of May welcomes 12,000+).

Botanical Conservatory KPIs

Overall, November 2023 continued the significant strides observed thus far in 2023. Membership, Admissions, Facility Rental, and Conservatory Shop revenues are all up when comparing November 2023 to November 2022. A moderate attendance increase observed year-over-year is attributable to the additional \$1 Night Light Display programming that is driving traffic in addition to increased support for Holly Shopping by Downtown Fort Wayne.

Attendance

November 2022:	6,549 visitors
November 2023:	6,981 visitors

An increase of 432 or +6.60% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Attendance:	74,489 visitors
2023 Attendance:	92,298 visitors

An increase of 17,809 or +23.91% to 2022

Admissions Revenue

November 2022:	\$24,470.00
November 2023:	\$25,575.11

An increase of \$1,105.11 or +4.52% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Admissions Revenue:	\$286,475.70
2023 Admissions Revenue:	\$333,690.59

An increase of \$47,214.89 or +16.48% to 2022

Membership Revenue

November 2022:	\$5,570.00
November 2023:	\$6,937.00

An increase of \$1,367.00 or +24.54% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Membership Revenue:	\$60,083.00
2023 Membership Revenue:	\$75,887.26

An increase of \$15,804.26 or +26.30% to 2022

Conservatory Shop Revenue

November 2022:	\$17,982.08
November 2023:	\$20,100.66

An increase of \$2,118.58 or 11.78% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$211,963.21
2023 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$245,506.60

An increase of \$33,543.39 or +15.83% to 2022

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

November 2022: \$3,847.50

November 2023: \$8,505.00

An increase of \$4,654.50 or +121.05% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Rental Revenue: \$93,838.38

2023 Rental Revenue: \$93,273.50

A decrease of \$564.88 or -0.60% to 2022

Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, Plant Sale, etc.)

November 2022: \$11,421.27

November 2023: \$3,572.28

YTD Comparisons

2022 Other Revenue: \$405,548.01

2023 Other Revenue: \$398,360.04

Conservatory Total Revenue

November 2022: \$55,441.86

November 2023: \$72,539.04

An increase of \$17,097.18 or +30.84% to 2022

YTD Comparisons

2022 Total Revenue: \$1,057,908.30

2023 Total Revenue: \$1,146,717.99

An increase of \$88,809.69 or +8.39% to 2022

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

The Botanical Conservatory was awarded support of \$5,000 from the M. E. Raker Foundation for the 2023 Timeless Tradition Holiday Exhibit.

Staff secured media sponsorships for the following 2024 exhibits: Botanical Speedway: WANE 15 and 103.9 Wayne FM; Color in Motion Live Butterfly Exhibit: 21Alive and 97.3 WMEE; Raise a Glass! Exhibit: WANE 15 and Majic 95.1; Gnome for the Holidays: PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1; and events: Botanical Brew: WANE 15 and 89.1 WBOI; Bunny Tales in the Garden: FOX55 and Majic 95.1; Garden Trick or Treat: FOX 55 and Majic 95.1; Jazzworks!: WANE 15 and 89.1 WBOI; Mother’s Day in the Garden: 21Alive and Majic 95.1; Mother’s Day Plant Sale: FOX 55 and Majic 95.1; Pumpkin Path: Majic 95.1; Rocky Horror Picture Show: ALT 99.5 & 102.3; and ROOTS Music Fest: 96.3 XKE.

Staff submitted a final promotional report to Fort Wayne Metals for support of the 2023 Botanical Brew. This report will enable us to approach the company again for continuing support of the 2024 Botanical Brew.

Staff submitted promotional reports to the following media for support of these 2023 exhibits and events: WANE 15 for the 2023 An Herban Garden Exhibit; WANE 15 and 89.1 WBOI for Botanical Brew; FOX 55 and Majic 95.1 for Garden Trick or Treat; Majic 95.1 for Pumpkin Path; 99.5 & ALT 102.3 for Rocky Horror Picture Show. These reports provide our media sponsors with promotional acknowledgments and encourage future partnerships.

Promotional and complimentary tickets were distributed to PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1 for support of the 2023 Timeless Tradition Holiday Exhibit.

Conservatory donations in October 2023 totaled \$181,750: \$167,500 capital grant payment from the Foellinger Foundation; \$4,000 from the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Matthew M. Wyatt Advised Fund for the 2024 Butterfly Exhibit-In Memory of Jo Ann and William Wyatt; \$50.00 from Samuel Bolin/Crossroads Kombucha for Botanical Brew; \$10,000 from the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne/Clark Endowment Fund/Inspiring Places grant for the 2023 Desert House Improvements Project; and \$200 general trust donation from Virginia Zimmerman.

Staff coordinated details for a congratulations letter to Sarah Strimmenos, the new president and CEO of the Foellinger Foundation.

Conservatory Public Programs

Events

\$1 Night of Lights at the Conservatory (November 22)

During Downtown Fort Wayne's Night of Lights, a total of 849 guests stopped in to enjoy festive lighting at the Botanical Conservatory with \$1 admissions. This year's colder weather attracted a smaller crowd than 1,115 guests in 2022. Many children especially enjoyed the Festive Search & Find Activity, which was distributed by a volunteer.

Holiday Performance: \$1 Night Light Display (November 24)

During the evening of Black Friday, Those Two Guys in Suits & Ties performed on the brownstone stoop inside the Botanical Conservatory's holiday exhibit "Timeless Tradition." Begonia plants were also given away in celebration of 40 years since the Botanical Conservatory opened its doors on November 20th of 1983; it is believed that a Beefsteak Begonia was the very first plant installed. Furthermore, this event marked the first Friday of special holiday hours being open late with \$1 admission from 5-8 pm Thursdays and Fridays up until December 22nd.

Education

Simple Salads with Local Flavor (November 2)

This pre-registered program was taught by local, small business owner Lori Berndt and assistant Sharon Hunt. Six registered participants created four different salads while learning about healthy, homemade salads packed with flavor. Participants also enjoyed fresh herbal teas in good company. Participant reviews were positive while particularly highlighting the instructors' preparations.

Cornucopia Centerpiece (November 9)

A total of 12 paid participants created festive fall centerpieces complimented by faux greenery, harvest accents, and real-colored corn. Just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday, this workshop was facilitated by guest instructor Dennis Bowman on a Thursday evening.

Youth Field Trips

There were 5 on-site youth group visits totaling 192 children in November. There were 5 visits totaling 119 students in November of 2022, no visits in 2021 or 2020, 2 visits totaling 19 students in 2019, and 5 visits totaling 94 students in 2018.

Exhibits & Displays

Timeless Tradition (November 18-January 7)

The Botanical Conservatory's current holiday exhibit celebrates 40 years as a downtown tradition. Main features include an original sleigh belonging to Helene Foellinger, a homey brownstone setting, and even a seat reserved for Santa himself. Guests wander in awe at the smell of pine while eager to pose and find the mistletoe. They are also invited to read facts such as how the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation's Forestry Department helps source large-cut evergreens. Of course, there is the beloved poinsettia tree on display, which continues to serve as the backdrop of numerous family portraits. It has done so every holiday since 1983!

Fort Wayne Traditions by Julia Meek (November 28-January 5)

Julia Meek's renderings of familiar Fort Wayne winter celebrations are earning a strong reaction from guests of the Botanical Conservatory! Initial feedback from guests and volunteers has been very positive, as they recognize many scenes from the current day and years past.

Volunteers/Staff

Garden Educator Gathering (November 9)

Interpretation Coordinator, Kelsey Gerig; Program Supervisor, Amanda Amstutz; and General Manager, Nate Cardelli attended the first Garden Educator Gathering held at the Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, Ohio. The Conservatory staff took advantage of this special opportunity to network with fellow educators while also sitting in on related presentations and receiving a tour of the Conservatory grounds.

At the Front Desk, 8 volunteers covered 35 shifts while 11 volunteers fulfilled 37 shifts in the Gift Shop. A total of 12 volunteers assisted with the holiday showchange, and an additional 9 volunteers prepared magical reindeer food for upcoming events. During November, 10 CAS students and 2 instructors volunteered a total of 77.75 hours; this included preparing outdoor evergreen pots for the holidays.

Upcoming

December 2, 9, 16 & 23: Santa & Reindeer Saturdays, 12-4 pm

December 2: Breakfast with Santa, pre-registered program

December 3: Succulent Christmas Tree, pre-registered program

December 7: String Jams Holiday Concert, 6:30-7:30 pm

December 10: Suzuki Strings Performance, 2-2:45 pm

December 10: "Fort Wayne Tradition" Public Artist Reception 1:00-3:00 pm

December 13: Member & Volunteer Holi-Day, 10 am-8 pm

December 14 & 16: Evergreen Centerpiece, pre-registered program

December 15: PFW Holiday Carolers, 5:30-7:30 pm

Thru December 22: \$1 Night Light Display, Th & Fri 5-8 pm

December 24 & 25: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, CLOSED

December 31: New Year's Eve, OPEN 10 am-5 pm

January 1: New Year's Day, CLOSED

Thru January 7: "Timeless Tradition" Holiday Exhibit

Art Exhibit Julia Meek- *Fort Wayne Traditions*

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

Dahm Brother completed the roofing project in the area over the Tropical Linkway. Staff worked with project management to facilitate contractor access and safe routing during the process.

Mutton Rental removed the large tent on the Terrace Garden. Terrace Restrooms were closed for the end of the season and M&D Power Washing completed a cleaning of the Terrace Garden.

Next Level Surfaces completed concrete repairs and O'Neils Glass completed windowsill repairs after a vehicle struck the east side of the Botanical Conservatory.

Three Rivers Painting completed the repainting of the guard rails in the Tropical House.

Staff repainted light bollards in all indoor garden spaces.

Nowak Supply completed the annual fire extinguisher inspection and maintenance.

Mr. Electric installed several LED lighting projects to increase efficiency and appearance in the building.

Allied Mechanical made repairs to a leaking water line for the boiler system and is completing warranty work on the blower for boiler #2.

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

November saw the end of the summer show, An Herban Garden. During the last few weeks of the show, mums were on display to provide fall seasonal interest for visitors and complemented the late-season perennials in bloom such as the Maximilian sunflowers.

Center for Academic Success (CAS) students have continued to volunteer with Botanical Conservatory staff. CAS students assisted the gardeners with planting the final mums in the Showcase House for An Herban Garden and assisted with setting large decorative pots in outdoor spaces. CAS also installed cut trees in the pots as part of the outdoor holiday décor.

Staff have planted nearly all the bulbs for the outdoor gardens with only one bed remaining, which will be planted during the first week of December. Many of the bulbs in the front beds will be a long-season red mix to raise awareness for Parkinson's Disease. This will be a partnership with a coalition of Indiana Parkinson's organizations.

Parks Department and Botanical Conservatory staff worked together to install the Timeless Tradition Holiday Showcase the week before Thanksgiving. Urban Forestry harvested four donated Colorado

Spruce from residents in Fort Wayne and the Park Department Landscape staff worked with Botanical Conservatory staff to install the cut evergreens and plant the poinsettias.

Timeless Tradition utilized four of the seven donated poinsettia tree frames the Botanical Conservatory received earlier this year from Sandpoint Living Interiors. A new irrigation system was created for the trees to optimize watering and keep the poinsettia foliage dry. Due to the size of the pot-holding rings, Conservatory and Lawton staff repotted the poinsettias from 6” pots to 8” pots and included an additional small plant in each pot to fill the space. This was the first time this method was utilized at the Conservatory and has been met with high praise from the visiting public.

The Conservatory received a donation of a 40-year-old *Agave sisilana*—Sisal Agave. Once the plant completes its blooming cycle, the young offsets will be planted in the permanent collection of the Desert House.

The first Vanda orchid bloomed during November with additional blooms to follow. This particular genus of orchid is new to the collection at the Conservatory. These were purchased from Toledo Zoo during their spring orchid sale with each plant being a named cultivar. These orchids have acclimated well to the Tropical House and make great additions to the permanent collection as they continue to grow and bloom.



Forestry crew delivering a cut evergreen for Timeless Tradition



CAS Students preparing evergreens for outdoor pots

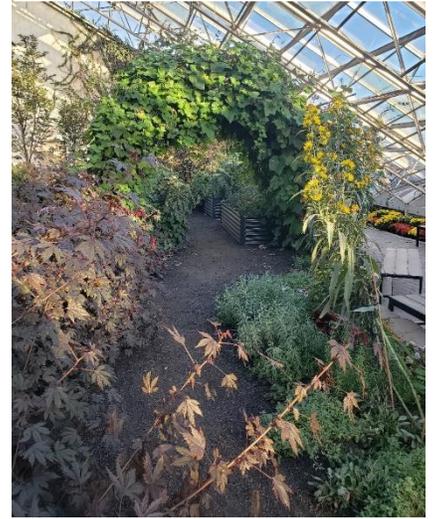
Final shift of florist mums in Showcase House



An Herban Garden



An Herban Garden



Parks Department Gardener, Ashley Mitchell, removing lower branches of cut evergreen for Timeless Tradition



Parks Department Working Leader, Austin Barton, assembling Poinsettia Trees



New Vanda orchid blooming in Tropical House



Holiday Performance by Those 2 Guys in Suits &



Helene Foellinger's Sleigh on display in the "Timeless Tradition" holiday



\$1 Admission during Night of Lights as part of the \$1 Night Light Display



Volunteer, Dixie Bradley assisting with holiday decorating during showchange



Staff Visit to Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, OH

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

- ✚ www.RiverfrontFW.org had 2,927 hits to the site this month and the Promenade Park link had 2,385 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 2,102 hits in November.
- ✚ The Marketing team worked on promos, marketing pieces, sponsorship opportunities, and media interviews for various November events.
- ✚ The Marketing Team supported the IPRA Conference in Fort Wayne (November 14-16) by attending sessions, working the registration desk, and selecting other tasks.
- ✚ Completed 49 Design projects.
- ✚ Designed Headwaters Park Ice Rink signage, printed skate passes, and postcards.
- ✚ The Marketing Team worked on the November Donation Drive piece, consisting of e-mail and physical mail communications. This has been completed. The mailer was sent to 3,200 homes.
- ✚ Botanical Conservatory Showcase graphics for 2024 complete, individual ads and pole banners designed.
- ✚ Two grants were received from AWS: \$15,000 for an accessibility study at the Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory and a three-year \$215,000 grant for playground accessibility upgrades in various parks.
- ✚ Reaching out to area businesses about sponsorships for Winterval 2024.
- ✚ Received a \$20,000 grant from the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation for funds to put toward the Conservatory Showcases and the Headwaters Splash Pad renovations.
- ✚ Gathered photos and/or shot/edited video clips for web & social: Vesey Park in the fall, dock removal for future needs, Weisser Park Disc Golf Press Conference, Headwaters Park Ice Rink, Unity Lighting, and the Wassail video.
- ✚ Social media promotion mainly consisted of: Winter Fun Times, Headwaters Park Ice Rink, Christmas on the Farm, Youth Center jobs, and McKinney Commons Unity lighting.
- ✚ November Media Mentions: 52
 - ✚ Social Media Totals for November:

FB Followers	85,783
FB Reach	166,713

Twitter Followers 13,802
 Instagram Flowers 24,832

Social Media Total Mentions, including television, radio, newspaper, and websites:
September 70 (as of 9/26/23) October 75 November 52

Web Statistics:

<u>Users:</u>	<u>Hits:</u>	<u>Month:</u>
46,149	122,728	September
33,594	95,599	October
29,176	86,337	November

Social Media Totals for the months of:

	September	October	November
FB Followers	81,595	85,237	85,783
FB Reach	260,698	218,392	166,713
 Twitter Followers	13,746	13,787	13,802
 Instagram Followers	23,215	24,757	24,832

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

2023 was another substantial gain in both revenue and play, both here and nationally. Here are the year-over-year figures for golf revenue/# of rounds played at the Fort Wayne Parks courses:

				revenue <u>% GAIN (Year/Year)</u>		
FOSTER PARK		MCMILLEN PARK		SHOAF PARK		
2021	\$316,222.75/16,418	2021	\$186,175.00/11,614	2021	\$398,119.00/20,294	N/A
2022	\$355,303.50/17,196	2022	\$217,088.50/12,560	2022	\$448,137.50/21,723	+13.3%
2023	\$472,051.75/21,469	2023	\$289,831.50/16,677	2023	\$556,089.75/26,019	+29.1%
RANGE REVENUE						
	2021	\$11,406		\$78,581		
	2022	\$13,078		\$86,777		
	2023	\$17,094		\$109,919		
ALCOHOL REVENUE						
	2022	\$16,053	\$ 7,710	\$12,526		
	2023	\$25,616	\$13,495	\$16,228		
TOTAL ALCOHOL REVENUE:	2022	\$36,290				
	2023	\$55,339				
ALCOHOL COGS			2022	\$11,279.50		
	2023	\$18,366				

The total revenue shown at the top includes the range and alcohol revenue, and alcohol revenue is broken down by course below the total figures.

Foster and Shoaff golf courses opened for the year on Tuesday, March 21, with McMillen following the next day. Although overall the weather was good this year, the early season is unpredictable and we were not able to start running carts until April 9. The rest of the year was very good weather-wise, with a minimal amount of days lost to rain/wet conditions.

The golf courses closed for the season upon the conclusion of play on Saturday, November 11. Weather during the fall was average, following an outstanding fall season in 2022. Even though this fall was not as good as last year's fall weather-wise, the courses overall had a great season. Revenue at the three courses combined was up over 29% year-over-year from a very good 2022.

Seventeen new golf carts arrived at Foster Park on September 27. This allowed us to move older carts from Foster to Shoaff, replacing carts that were as much as 20 years old and were becoming increasingly difficult to keep in safe running condition. Another 16 carts are expected to arrive in the spring of 2024. At that time, we will be able to finish cycling out the remainder of the oldest carts at Shoaff and begin building the fleet to optimal numbers.

The current cart fleet is:

40 carts at Foster Park (17 2024 models, 23 2022 models)

24 carts at McMillen Park (all 2015 models)

24 carts at Shoaff Park (1 2022 model, 16 2015 models, and 7 2002-2007 models)

There are also 17 additional 2002-2007 models that have been taken out of day-to-day service, but are available in emergency/high volume situations, although these carts are the ones that are of questionable safety/utility.

The current optimal plan would be to increase the cart fleet to 50 carts at Foster, and 30 each at McMillen and Shoaff Parks. This cart fleet would appear to be optimal to cover most of the high-volume days. At the current fleet size, waits for carts on high-volume days have stretched to one hour and beyond.

Expanding the cart fleet will bring up storage space considerations. Foster's cart storage area is adequate for 40, 50 would be a stretch. McMillen can hold 30 without problems. The entire storage situation at Shoaff is a concern, as even the 24 current carts and their chargers sit outside and are exposed to the elements during the season.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

Moving into 2024, the final stage of the "Big Dig" project will affect Foster Park. Work has already begun that will affect the golf course for at least the entirety of next year. The current seventh hole will not be playable at all, and the eighth, ninth, and possibly tenth holes will have to be adjusted. A provisional green has been seeded, and the current 4th hole has been split into a shortish par 3 (app. 130 yards to the provisional green) and a shortish par 4 (app. 280 yards from a temporary tee in the 4th fairway to the existing green complex). After playing the existing fifth and sixth holes (as the 6th and 7th in the new configuration), players will proceed to a shortened 8th hole to the existing green and then the ninth.

With that being the case, the current thought is to not change the green fee structure at Foster Park next year. The suggested green fees at the other two courses reflect nominal (\$1-\$4 increases), while the suggested cart fees increase by \$1/9 holes across the board as the carts become upgraded. Green fees last increased following the 2021 season, and cart fees have not increased since at least 2020. Costs of everything from fertilizer to wages have increased quite a bit during this time.

Other suggested changes relate to season passes. Currently, there is a corporate season pass category listed. It is only utilized by six groups. The parameters of the season pass are vaguely written, and it is difficult for the staff to enforce. Because of this, many people are taking advantage of this and it costs the courses money in both lost revenue and lost tee times that could be filled easily by open-play (paying) customers.

Cart accountability is another concern we will be addressing moving forward. It is stated that a person must be at least 16 years of age and have a valid driver's license to rent a golf cart. What we have seen in the last couple of years is a slight uptick in the number of carts that have been damaged by "roughhousing" or other things outside of the normal course of play. We are developing methods of assigning carts and developing a sense of responsibility in the patron to let them know that they are responsible for any damage done to the carts during the time they have the vehicle. Hopefully, increased signage at the registers increased the range of the courses, and assigning carts will take care of this problem.

To summarize, there is every reason to be optimistic about the golf program moving forward. National trends are up, and local results are outpacing that and should continue. We are continuing to try and optimize our operation. Our demographics are very good, with many new golf golfers coming in. This year, we contracted two instructors and were able to provide very good, professional learning opportunities. Combined with the buzz surrounding the Foster Park project, the future of the Parks golf offerings is in a very good position.

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



FW PUBLIC WORKS
**Greenways
& Trails**
In Your Neighborhood

- ✚ We've been meeting recently with City Utilities and their contractors to discuss construction projects in Foster Park that will affect the Rivergreenway and trail along Hartman Road. We are doing our best to minimize or even eliminate the closure of this very popular trail.
- ✚ We met on December 6th with USI Consultants to hear the results of an engineering study regarding the below-grade crossing of West Jefferson Boulevard for the Rivergreenway at Swinney Park. This section of the trail is always the first to flood. It floods with even a minimal rain event. We hope to find a solution that will keep the trail from flooding except during major events.
- ✚ Public Works (and the Greenways & Trails Dept) will be meeting with two new council members later this month: Councilman Myers and Councilman Hartman.
- ✚ We have the Winter Solstice Walk and Bike Ride at Salomon Farm and the Pufferbelly Trail on December 21st at 5:30 p.m. with a bonfire and food afterward.
- ✚ We will be bidding out the Covington Road Trail: Hadley to Getz and the Pufferbelly Trail: Washington Center to Ice Way projects early next year.

- ✚ 2024 will be a big construction year for trails in the City limits with nearly 9 miles of trails (12 projects) to be built.
- ✚ We are up to 140 miles of trails in the Fort Wayne Area Trails Network.
- ✚ We're making some major updates/changes to the trails page on the website.
- ✚ City Utilities and Public Works just made traffic pattern changes on Thieme Drive. The Rivergreenway shared Thieme Drive. We will have an area for the trail with curbing and delineators. This is an improvement for trail users. There will be much less vehicular traffic and slower speeds and now trail users will have a separate trail.

Division News and Media Coverage:



Ice rink

Fellow ice skaters glided by Josh Binz and his 7-year-old daughter Sunday as he assured her it was OK to rely on the wall encircling the Headwaters Park rink.

"If you've got to hold it, you've got to hold it," Binz said.

That wasn't always possible, however. Skaters crowded the outdoor rink – sometimes blocking portions of its perimeter – just a day after the downtown Fort Wayne attraction closed because of warm weather.

The rink has chilling equipment, but conditions including humidity and sunlight can cause melting, said Riley Hollenbaugh, Riverfront manager. Humidity was the problem Saturday, he said, explaining the rink had a layer of water.

Another warm-weather cancellation wasn't a threat Sunday, which had a predicted high of 37 degrees.

More than 5,000 skaters have visited the rink since the season began Nov. 18, Hollenbaugh said.

"We're happy with the numbers," he added.

The venue is open daily except Mondays and Dec. 24. Special events are planned for January and February, including a Taylor Swift-themed night Jan. 12 and on-ice yoga before skating begins Jan. 21.

Admission is \$6 for skaters ages 3 and older and free for spectators and skaters 2 and younger. Skate rentals are \$3.

Christmas songs, including "Frosty the Snowman," played Sunday at Headwaters Park as visitors skated and sipped hot chocolate.

The activity has become an annual tradition for Ossian resident Berenice Anderson's daughter and her friends. Now sophomores at Norwell High School, the group usually skates for up to two hours before dining at Coney Island downtown. About a dozen teens participated in this year's outing.

"I think more kids get added every year," Anderson said, noting many of them have been friends since preschool.

Along with helping his 5-year-old daughter put on her skates, Nick Fabini of Fort Wayne helped the girl remain upright on the ice. She and the other children in their group could handle a fall if needed, however.

“These are pretty adventurous girls,” Fabini said before they got on the ice. “They’re not afraid of some tumbles.”

Binz similarly helped his daughters – Addalyn, 7, and Aliana, 10 – navigate the busy ice, limiting their falls while his balance remained steady.

“He’s a pro, it seems like,” said Grace Binz, his wife.

Binz said he picked up ice skating easily, crediting his ease to his experience in-line skating.

“Now it’s time for these girls to learn,” he added.

Technology

Fort Wayne City Council will vote Tuesday on a more than \$17.6 million computer security contract, which city officials said is a necessary cost to maintain public safety.

Councilwoman Sharon Tucker, D-6th, asked to hold the item at the Nov. 28 meeting because she wanted to fully understand the three-year contract.

Tucker said she had questions she wanted to ask about private cybersecurity matters that would not be appropriate at a public meeting. At the time, Tucker was unsure if she would be an affirmative vote for a large cost for the city without seeking answers first.

The computer security contract is for the city of Fort Wayne, City Utilities and Allen County.

The city and county would each pay 40% – \$11,748,583 – and City Utilities would cover \$5,874,292, or 20%. The council would be approving both the city and utilities’ portion – \$17,622,875.

Ed Steenman, the county’s director of technology, said the computer service cost has been included in the county budget for next year.

John Perlich, the city’s director of public information, said the contract is an investment in the wellbeing of the community.

“Having the cybersecurity protection as much as possible in turn helps the community, because residents and neighborhoods can depend on the city of Fort Wayne to meet the needs that they have each and every day,” he said. “We have a well-functioning computer system that’s safe. We’re going to be able to continue to meet those needs and all of the divisions throughout the entire city.”

Jim Haley, chief information officer for Fort Wayne, said the contract cost increased by roughly 30% from the previous agreement, based on an inadvertent omission of what needed to be covered and rising risks.

The cost for the contract is partially based on the amount of IT infrastructure the city, utilities and county have. In the last contract, a large portion was accidentally excluded, Haley said. The second factor is the added security measures as cyber threats are increasing through multiple methods.

Joe Welch, the chief information officer for City Utilities, said Fort Wayne, City Utilities and Allen County IT infrastructure have thousands of cyber threats.

On average, the network is attacked 21,000 times each month, and domains see 3,000 separate attacks. The term “domain” can refer to how the internet is structured and to how an organization’s network resources are organized.

In addition, 200,000 malicious emails are sent to government employees, and the Security Operations Center provided by the computer service contract has 140 alerts and investigations of potential cyber attacks, he said.

The service provided under the contract includes a 24/7 security center with employees monitoring the city, utilities and county’s system, Welch said.

Haley said the city’s priority is to prevent all malicious attacks, which is difficult.

“(Attackers) have to get lucky once, and they are successful,” he said. “We have to be lucky every single time to be successful – that makes it expensive.”

The city and county officials want to be good stewards of taxpayer money, but this is a necessary expense, Welch said.

“If we were to be running old servers, old PCs and things like that on the network, they’re known vulnerabilities,” he said. “It’s like having a locked front door but on the back side of your house ... anybody can come in, so we need the whole thing. Security is only as strong as the weakest link.”

Cyber attacks on government entities have steadily increased in recent years. Welch said cyber attacks first began targeting banks and then hospitals, but now that both have tightened cybersecurity, attackers moved onto governmental entities.

A global threat intelligence report by Blackberry showed a 40% increase in attacks targeting governmental agencies between March and May this year. CloudSEK also reported attacks increased 95% worldwide in the second half of 2022 compared with the same period in 2021. CloudSEK is an artificial intelligence company that detects cyber threats.

Welch and Haley said they do not believe the attack rate will slow down, but instead expect it to accelerate over the next few years – and the city and county need to be prepared.

The grant for the Summit Equestrian Center is specifically for its cavalry program, which is equine therapy for veterans.

Book Sale

December 12-14, 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Community Center, 233 West Main Street

Book sales are open to the public and feature hardback books for \$1, paperback books for 50¢ and DVDs for \$1. Other items such as magazines, cards, CDs and puzzles are also available. Donations of these items are accepted year round.

Highland Meet and Greet

December 17, 10:00 a.m.–1:45 p.m.

Salomon Farm Park, 817 W. Dupont Road

Meet Franke and Mickey the resident highland mini steers at Salomon Farm Park. Appointments are being accepted for special meet and greet sessions on Sunday, December 17. Each private session will include 30 minutes of exclusive interaction with Franke or Mickey for up to four people. Brush, feed, pet and take pictures of your visit with your cell phone. Participants must be 10 years of age and older. Please wear close toed shoes. A few sessions are still available for this date, but are filling up quickly. Session fee is \$65 and can be reserved online at www.FortWayneParks.org or by phone at 260-427-6000.

Santa & Reindeer Saturdays

Saturday, December 9,16 & 23, 12:00–4:00 p.m.

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

This December, Santa himself returns to the Botanical Conservatory on the Saturdays leading up to Christmas! Strike a pose with the man in red while enjoying indoor scenery accompanied by the “Timeless Tradition” holiday exhibit. Please note: Santa takes a break from 2:00-2:30 p.m. While visiting, you also won’t want to miss out on an outdoor appearance with a friendly and majestic reindeer. Regular admission fees apply. Sponsored by: Air-Xray, PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1. WANE, Project Zodiac takes another step via Redevelopment Commission

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/project-zodiac-takes-another-step-via-redevelopment-commission/>

Kelly Lundberg from City’s OHNS featured on United Way of Allen County podcast

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/boldly-engage/id1703599590>

WFFT, Mayor Henry, Councilman Didier react to passing of Michael Franke

https://www.wfft.com/video/mayor-tom-henry-tom-didier-react-to-michael-frankes-death/video_6233ff54-b4eb-5bf7-8d4b-0a6c01e20157.html

\$1 Night Light Display

Thursdays & Fridays, through December 22, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

The gardens in light are best seen at night! Find yourself surrounded by festive greenery, stunning poinsettias and enchanted scenery as part of illuminated photo ops at the Botanical Conservatory. Stroll through gardens glistening and glowing every Thursday and Friday evening leading up to Christmas. A special musical group will be featured on Dec. 15.

- December 15: Let timeless holiday carols remind you of memories past as you create new moments to cherish. A quartet of carolers from the Purdue University Fort Wayne School of Music will sing festive melodies from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This concert is included with \$1 admission as a part of the \$1 Night Light Display. Standing room only.

Civic Center Garage parking is validated for free.

**Holiday Showcase Exhibit: Timeless Tradition, 40 Years
Until January 7, 2024, public hours**

Foellinger-Friemann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

Holidays at the Botanical Conservatory have delighted the community as a family favorite over the last 40 years. Its gardens in light and scenes of merriment contribute to a warm holiday spirit in the heart of downtown Fort Wayne. Fresh cut evergreens, a lush poinsettia tree and deep ruby undertones are the backdrop to this year's memories. Join us in celebrating an oasis of growth and tradition. Sponsored by the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, Waterfield Foundation, Wilson Foundation, M.E. Raker Foundation, Air Xray, PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1.

WANE, Podcast evolution – How Fort Wayne leaders share information – Mayor Henry/FWPD/Parks featured <https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/podcast-evolution-how-fort-wayne-leaders-share-information/>

Headwaters Park Ice Rink

Tuesday-Thursday, 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Fridays in December, 12:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Headwaters Park, 333 South Clinton Street

Enjoy skating outside in downtown Fort Wayne. Admission is \$6 for age 3 and above and free for age 2 and under. Skate rental is \$3. Ice conditions are subject to weather. On Fridays in December, the rink will open at noon. Stay up to date on special holiday hours and parking on the @HeadwatersParkFW Facebook page and FortWayneParks.org.

**Art Display features Julia Meek: Fort Wayne Traditions
November 28–January 5**

Artist Reception: December 10, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Foellinger-Friemann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

Fort Wayne native Julia is a radio host, graphic artist and legendary community volunteer who has contributed to Northeast Indiana Public Radio both on- and off-air for forty years. Besides being WBOI's arts & culture reporter, she currently co-produces and hosts "Folktales" and "Meet the Music." She also hosts live concerts and festival stages in northeast Indiana and coordinates special programs with Gregg Coyle, Director of Clyde Theatre. Known for her accessible arts and cultural offerings, Julia's list of achievements includes Easter Seals ARC's 26-year Portraits of Pride series and two decades of Cityscapes and Schooldays renderings, countless private commissions, multiple Mastodons on Parade, Canal Society of Indiana co-founder, Three Rivers Festival Millennial Artist and Fort Wayne's 1st Female Muralist designation as well as various works of public art including a recent mural in the Landing neighborhood.