

Steve McDaniel, Director

- # The Parks and Recreation team and I would like to congratulate Mayor Sharon Tucker on the election and welcome her to her new role with the City. We look forward to learning more about her vision for the city and how Parks and Recreation can continue to grow for our community.
- # We are still hiring for our summer season. Several positions are still open. If anyone is interested please visit: www.fortwayneparks.org and click on the [Parks Jobs](#) button on the right.
- # Construction on the Franke Park Renaissance project is moving right along. Some of the staff and I were able to visit the site to see the progress first hand.
- # We are working on a great partnership with the Laborer's International Union of North America (LiUNA) at a few parks. They are helping with volunteering to install several key concrete sidewalks. This will be our second time partnering with them and we hope it will not be the last.
- # Alec and I were able to tour the Shaab building currently under construction next to the Riverfront development. This helped us identify key elements that will tie our two projects together.
- # Brewer Park plans and specifications are being finalized so that we may go out to bid very soon. We are hoping to receive bids, get approvals, and sign contracts this summer so that construction can start by early fall.
- # We continue to work with City Utilities on the various construction projects impacting Foster Park. The design of the new entrance will be beginning soon with public input. The sewer line heading south along Hartman Road is progressing towards the 7th tee box. The line moving west down the main drive is getting closer to the golf parking lot entrance. This will eventually tie into the work happening about half way down the 10th fairway, which is a bore pit to go under the river.
- # April's wet conditions have impacted several areas in parks. Several sections of the Rivergreenway have been closed due to flooding conditions. We were forced to close the golf courses due to standing water. This continued with either walking or cart paths only days. Our mowing team is keeping up with how fast the grass is growing this spring.
- # I was able to record the latest Parks Podcast with the help of Eden Lamb, Daryn Schwartz, and Andre Patterson along with April McCampbell to cover the topic of seasonal positions and our hiring needs. This episode is available to be downloaded to listen to.
- # We began talks with a new-to-us (sort of) festival about the use of various parks for their event. We concluded that Headwaters Park seems to be the most logical choice. We will continue to work with them to finalize their plans. Keep an eye out in the future for an announcement.
- # Parks along with other city departments met with our City Property Manager to talk about potential uses for property on Lower Huntington Road. Several items were discussed with the next steps for us to put together some quick sketches.
- # The team is working on finishing up our Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation mobile app. This is currently being evaluated at Apple and Google before being placed in their respective stores. Our app will allow our park users to quickly and easily sign up for programs, book pavilions, by tickets for Sweet Breeze Canal Boat tours, or select tee times for any of our golf courses. We hope to launch this app very soon.
- # We are only a few weeks away from the start of this year's Foellinger Theatre concert season. We have several great acts lined up including:
 - o Rick Springfield
 - o Rockin' the 80's with Great White, Slaughter & Vixen
 - o Lee Brice
 - o Blues Travelers with Big Head Todd and the Monsters
 - o The High Kings with Gaelic Storm
 - o Rocky Horror Picture Show by the Civic Theatre
 - o Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark with music by the FW Philharmonic

- Tesla
- Fort Wayne Area Community Band
- New Millennium Jazz Orchestra
- Fort Wayne Children’s Choir

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

- Recreation staff met with 3 Rivers Festival to help provide alternatives to the festival to minimize the impacts of the adjacent construction project at Headwaters Park.
- Several team members met with City Department staff and the DNR to discuss the upcoming boating season. As more City Departments and the Parks and Recreation staff have boats, it has been important to ensure efficient emergency communications and safety procedures.
- Catering bids were publicized for Promenade Park and Salomon Farm Park. The previous agreements were expiring and needed to be rebid. The final vendors will be selected in May. This bid process did not impact any existing rentals.
- Attended the IPRA Leadership retreat in Avon, Indiana.

✚ Jennings Recreation Center

- The Eclipse Viewing Program was as huge success for our Center this year. Our youth had solar viewing glasses provided to them by FWCS and had the experience of a lifetime. Then we were outside all day waiting for the opportunity to see the TOTALITY of the eclipse. We used our glasses throughout the day to monitor how the sun was looking and could see the changes progress. Adults were invited to the event and we gained six new adults to our programming after they came and enjoyed what we had to offer. It was an awesome opportunity to see our adults and youth bond and work together to view and learn about the eclipse. This was a day to remember at the Jennings Recreation Center! 9 youth and 16 adults were in attendance.
- “Fun Friday” began when we had a few weeks where it was raining on Friday. Since we had adult lunch and games on Fridays before the youth came in, staff would leave the popcorn machine up, and the games out, so the youth could come in and play games and eat popcorn. 6 youth participated in April.
- Parkview has been coming once a month to hang out with our Youth and discuss healthy living. In April, they came and played basketball and kickball with the youth outside to demonstrate fitness and the importance of staying active. 21 youth participated in April
- **Yoga** is every Thursday from 12-1 pm this spring with Ms. Meagan. She has had some great turnouts from our adults and has allowed them to relax, stretch, and slow down a bit in the middle of everyone’s busy days. Some adults use our cushioned chairs and some use our yoga mats. She will also continue this summer in the evenings for us as well as this fall. 5 adults participated in April.

- Lunch and Games has been our biggest success with attendees for our adult programming. This program is every other Friday from 11:30-2 pm. The adults come in and bring their lunch and we play games and have meaningful discussions. During a half hour of this time, we sometimes have a speaker from the Alzheimer's Association and teach our adults about health. Our adults are always wanting to learn and grow so I like to allow them to do so. 15 adults participated in April.
- The Field Trip to Parkview Mirro Center Heart Health Expo 2024 was a HUGE HIT with our adults. We had a great turnout of 10 people and all the adults were talking about how much they enjoyed this event.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- We had 5 new registrations making a total of 147 youth registered for our After-school Program. Currently, we have 103 youth enrolled in our After-school Program. Our daily average attendance was 35 youth per day. Our highest number to attend this period was 52 youth. During the 7 days that FWCS was closed our highest attendance was 26 youth per day.
- On Thursday, March 21, 2024, in our Microgreens session, the youth planted sunflowers and harvested kale. Learned that over-watering is harmful to the plants. On Thursday, March 28, 2024, the youth learned the various types of microgreens and that some like light and others grow better in darkness. They also learned that some can be grown in water instead of soil. The youth began growing sprouts using a jar and water. On Friday, March 29, 2024, the youth began growing salad mix microgreens.
- On Thursday, April 11, 2024, the youth enjoyed an exercise of copying the leader's drum beats and positions. The exercise assisted the youth in staying focused and following instructions.
- On Monday, March 27, 2024, the youth learned the basics of meditation and some of the meditation positions. On Monday, April 8, 2024, the youth enjoyed a guided relaxation meditation session.
- On Tuesday, April 16, 2024, the youth enjoyed learning about the science of planting and growing flowers. They planted a variety of flower seeds in small spring-colored pots to give to their mother or mother figure on Mother's Day. The youth are doing well caring for the planted seeds and are excited with anticipation of their growth into beautiful flowers. On Wednesday, April 17, 2024, youth learned how to make popcorn balls. The youth had to follow instructions and measure ingredients to ensure that their treat turned out correctly.
- On Monday, April 15, 2024, we began highlighting a youth each week by having them perform for the youth and staff. Our first Performing Artist of the Week was Zya and she played violin performing several songs. She also performed spoken word and dance.
- Springcation Highlights:
 - Hosted a scavenger hunt for the youth and they also built marshmallow shooters.
 - Youth attended the Community Center Book Swap and Sale. The youth were excited to trade and buy new books to read.
 - On Friday, youth enjoyed a skating party at Bell's Skating Rink.
 - We wrapped up our 2024 Springcation on Saturday, April 6 by competing in the Optimist Club Tri-Star Basketball Skills Competition at the Fort Wayne Boys and Girls Club. One of our youth came in first in his age category and one of our youth came in second in her age category.

McMillen Park Community Center

- Registrations were up this month by about 10% compared to last month. We had 56 new registrations for April. The numbers of some of our registrations bumped due to spring break. We are consistently getting new children joining our after-school program and the parents are loving it.
- McMillen's after-school program finished the month of March on a high note, with some exciting things happening in our Pickleball Tuesday club. Nate Thomas got in contact with Selkirk Sport, a sports equipment company that specializes in pickleball products. Mr. Nate informed the company about how MPCC had started a youth pickleball program and Selkirk quickly got on board. The company sent 8 premium paddles and a box of balls for the children to use during the club. The goal of this program is to give our children in the after-school program a competitive head start, once our kids get to high school they will have already been trained on the basics of the sport giving them an advantage over their peers. Seeing the development in the children from week one back in January compared to now is a sight to see, children who couldn't hit the ball over the net in the first week are now having full-blown matches with no trouble at all, the children can now keep score by themselves without asking for help.
- Trivia Wednesdays were a huge hit for Mr. Nate's 11 and up group in March, the trivia the youth play here is team-based jeopardy. Compared to pickleball this is a great way to get the children's competitiveness flowing in an *academic* way instead of in an *athletic* way. Geography and history were the themes for this month, to be more detailed the questions ranged from states and capitals to American history dating back to the Revolutionary War.
- Parent's Night Out went well. There were 15 children and 4 adults in attendance. The theme was Dr. Seuss. We took everybody to the gymnasium and they loved it. They ate pizza, watched a movie, and did several activities.
- Pickleball has been a little slow this month due to the children being out of school for spring break the first week of April. There were no morning public hours. We had 207 pickleball players come in and play at our facility this month. Pickleball has decreased by about 25% compared to last month. What's exciting about pickleball is that we are still continuously getting newcomers.
- During April our open gym number has slowed down due to the weather getting warmer. The gym is still open to the public from 6 pm to 8 pm. Thursday night men's basketball is now entering the final weeks and the playoff will be starting April 25th. Six teams will play for the men's league championship on May 2nd. On Sundays, our 40 and over men's league has become a success. Each Sunday for 7 weeks teams are competing against each other. The 40 and over men are very excited to have their league to have to compete against their old peers.
- Cardio Fit taught by Ms. Dorothy has returned from their two-week break. Ladies are excited to be starting a new 8-week program of exercising and reaching their goals.
- Essential Steps taught by Ms. Lisa. Essential Step is a slow-paced dance step class made for ladies who still like to move and groove to some smooth-tune music.

Community Center

- Al Jennings has started our Intro to Pickleball classes. They were both full and they are going very well!

- PODS staff is close to being fully staffed for the summer.
- Caleb attended a large job fair on April 19 at New Haven High School. There were multiple high schools and the students were very interested in our jobs. It was a success!
- Caleb is also going to attend the AMP Lab Reverse Career Fair on April 30. It is an opportunity for employers to sell themselves to candidates. They are looking for internships, part-time and full-time positions.
- Caleb and Karen attended a virtual mental health training dealing with youth.
- The Community Center had approx.45 volunteers this month for approx. 250 hours.
- Josh spoke to a senior group at Faith Baptist Church about the Community Center.
- Josh appeared on WANE 15 for 5 live news segments to promote the Children’s Book Sale.
- Josh attended the Volunteer Expo on April 24th with Cheri Umphrey.
- Linda said that all but one of the Senior Classes is full! Senior Tap is not full but has 7 enrolled.
- The Journal Gazette did an article on senior health and wellness and took pictures of our Senior Aqua Fit Class at Turnstone.
- We added another date for “The March to Kekionga” class since we had 30 people sign up for the one in April.
- The Promenade Apartment Tour was full with 20 people signing up.
- The new sound system was installed on March 27 & 28. It has been working great and we all love it!
- The Shuffleboard courts have been leveled, ground down, sanded, painted and waxed.
- The staff had our second Senior Games meeting with coordinators and volunteers.
- Caleb, Josh, and Mary met with Andrea Burton from the Fire Dept. to partner for multiple events. They are going to have a table at Senior Games, do a presentation for a Monday Luncheon and they are going to be a location for the Fun in the Fort PODS activity.
- Mary did a “Walk in the Park” TV interview with Channel 21 for Senior Games on April 30th.

Community Outreach and Park & Play

- Patti met with FWCS Food Service for the Summer Feeding Program. They are using Weisser and Jennings Center as a Pilot program for hot lunches to see how well the kids eat those versus the cold pack lunches. They will also be providing the afternoon snack.
- Patti and Neil met with the ACPL youth programming staff to see how we can work together. The Library’s Team Read will visit Jennings, Weisser, and McMillen Youth Centers this summer.
- On June 16th, from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm, the Fort Wayne Tincaps and Parkview SportOne will host a baseball skills workshop for children at Weisser Park. Children enrolled in Weisser Park Youth Center Jennings Youth Center, and McMillen Community Centers will be invited to participate, alongside community members who register. The skills will be taught by University of St. Francis and Indiana Tech baseball and softball players. The program’s goal is to impact 200 students.
- On April 6, 2024, 23 students from Weisser Park Youth Center, Jennings Youth Center, and McMillen Community Center competed in a basketball skills contest, hosted by the Boys and Girls Club in conjunction with the Optimist Club. Overall, close to 50 children were competing, and the event was attended by an estimated 150 supporters.

- Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation is preparing to offer its Park and Play Program in June and July 2024. The program will visit 8 parks weekly, and include community collaborators during “Fantastic Fridays”. Confirmed collaborators for the 2024 season include the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne City Utilities, Historic Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Fire Department, Fort Wayne Police Department, and Riverfront Fort Wayne.
- Beginning in June, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation will begin a new program called “McKinnie Commons Connections”. Twice monthly in June and July, Parks staff will invite community organizations, vendors, and live entertainment to McKinnie Commons to highlight community resources, health, education, and culture. McKinnie Commons Connections will take place on Thursday, June 13th from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, Sunday, June 30th, from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, July 11th from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, and July 28th from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Salomon Farm Park

- Farmin Fun Day Camp registration began on Monday, March 25, 2024.
- Available group sizes are based on the current number of applicants. More groups could be added if more staff is obtained. Salomon Farm Park Farmin’ Fun Day Camp has the following group sizes listed per week:
 - (30) 4 – 5 age group – Weeks 1, 2 and 5 are sold out
 - (120) 6-11 age group – Weeks 1 – 5 are sold out
 - (12) FIT (Farmers-In-Training) 12+ years – all weeks sold out
 - (15) CIT (Counselor-In-Training) 13+ years – space is still available in all weeks
 - 177 campers per week
- Farmin’ Fun Day Camp will be held Monday, June 10, 2024, through Friday, July 26, 2024, with the 4th of July being an off week.
- Preparations for planting the flower fields have commenced amidst a rainy April. The staff is aiming to kickstart the planting process in early to mid-May, contingent upon the weather conditions. This year, a water reel has been purchased for the flower fields to mitigate dry spells during the season.

Sweet Breeze Canal Boat

- The hiring process for Sweet Breeze has concluded, with the operation happily welcoming back 9 returning crew members and onboarded 7 new additions to the team.
- Tickets for both general public tours and specialty tours will be available for purchase starting May 1st.
- General public tours for June and July will be listed first with two available tours per day on Saturdays and Sundays. As these tours fill more tours will be added to the Saturday and Sunday schedule.

Johnny Appleseed Campground

- The campground hosts have arrived and are diligently working on the opening procedures in preparation for opening day, which is Wednesday, May 1st, 2024.
- The newly available small RV sites are already in high demand and booking up rapidly. We are expecting a full campground in May.

Franke Park Day Camp

- Camp registration began on Monday, March 25, 2024.
- Due to an increase in camp counselor applications, groups have been added to clear children from the waitlists.
 - (20) The 4 – 5 age group – has remained the same
 - (180) 6-11 age group – increased by 24
 - (15) Junior Leaders 12+ years – increased by 3
 - (45) CIT (Counselor-In-Training) 13+ years – increased by 9
 - 260 campers per week (a total increase of 36 children)
- Franke Park Day Camp will be held Monday, June 10, 2024, through Friday, July 26, 2024, with the 4th of July being an off week.

Hurshtown Reservoir

- Opening day for Hurshtown Reservoir was Wednesday, May 1st. All staff members have been hired and are prepared to commence their duties.
- All docks were installed during the week of April 22nd, 2024. While the crew was busy with the dock installations, they were also able to give the office a much-needed staining. Everything is looking fantastic in preparation for opening day.

Golf

- Gary Whitacre reported that the overabundance of rain in April has hampered play at all three golf courses. The overly wet conditions have not allowed for much use of the driving ranges at McMillen and Shoaff.
- Gary Whitacre informed Jason Smith that the additional 15 new golf carts should arrive by the end of May. He also stated, that after this delivery the extremely old golf carts will officially be out of circulation unless extra carts are needed for an outing.
- Tom Mizzell reported that he is continuing to go through all of the golf carts to make sure that they are being maintained and doing preventive maintenance on them to avert potential problems that would take them out of service.
- Bryan Keister reported that he has been going to the semi-weekly “big dig” construction meetings. He reported that the owner of the company contracted for the project stated that they were ahead of schedule and they could be out of the area in the middle of August. This would be ideal for the restoration process.
- McMillen Golf Course will host a First Tee Skills Challenge on May 20, 2024, for elementary kids as part of a state-wide competition. The participants will be using the putting/chipping green as well as the driving range. It should be a great event and a chance to promote the Lifetime Sports Academy.

Pools

- Daryn Schwartz reported that he has received numerous pool applications. Especially lifeguards. He stated that this is great news compared to the previous three seasons. He has been in contact with the returners and interviewed the new applicants.

Riverfront

- The biggest rental of April was the MMJ Comedy Festival for their 3-day event of standup comedy throughout all of downtown Fort Wayne. This event kicked off on the 18th with local

standup comedians presenting inside of the Park Foundation Pavilion. Each night local comedians provided entertainment for guests to the Park. Teds Snack Bar opened their doors from normal hours to accommodate this event.

- April Riverfront programs started with our quarterly Dance Promenade: West Coast Swing on April 10, 17, and 24. For this session of Dance Promenade, we welcomed Dance CoLAB, a local dance studio, to the pavilion to lead a 4-part progressive West Coast Swing series. West Coast Swing was our dancing style for the last quarter's session as well, and we decided to bring it back due to popular demand and it has continued to be one of our most successful programs again. Over the 3 classes held in April, we had 75 attendees. The class has been having such a good time dancing the night away with their newfound skills that the classes are running over the scheduled end time so that the fun can continue.
- Our Second Annual cookie decorating event was held on April 12th. Country Kitchen SweetArt joined us for the second time to instruct a seasonal cookie decorating class. 20 participants enjoyed creating gnome, butterfly, and mushroom cookies in festive spring colors while enjoying light snacks and refreshments from Country Kitchen. While this is one of our more expensive programs to attend, it has had an excellent turnout while also helping promote this local business.
- On the second Sunday of each month in Promenade Park, the Free fitness is still in full swing. Our monthly kickboxing class with 9Round has continued to maintain its steady attendance, with 20 people attending this month. This was the first class where they were able to take their kickboxing outside and enjoy the spring weather during the class.
- Similar to kickboxing, yoga continues to be a huge hit. This month we had 86 people come out to the park and enjoy the first outdoor session of the year with Discover Yoga.
- The Sunday Heritage Concert was held on April 14 with Joy Bell, who plays acoustic folk, pop, and rock, and 38 people came out to attend this free show in the Park Foundation Pavilion.
- We are continuing to try and bring in new, younger acts to showcase the local talent to the community at these free monthly concerts. Emily Simpson of Sol Eye Glass led a unique class for this quarter's Be Your Artist class, where the 20 attendees created fused glass flowers. Participants designed their 4"x5" flower panels and then Emily took them back to her studio and fired them in a kiln. Projects will be available for pickup beginning on May 7. We were excited to see this class reach capacity before we even had a chance to market it on social media, and we hope to have the same outcome for July's class when Emily returns to create votive candle holders with us.
- The 2024 Headwaters event season kicked off on Saturday, April 27th with the Michiana Wine Festival. Wine vendors from Michigan and Indiana all gathered at Headwaters Park to provide an assortment of sampling for ticket holders. The rain held off just enough so patrons could enjoy great food, music, and wine on the East lawn of Headwaters Park. Around 2,000 people attended the event and it continues to grow each year.

Sandra Odisho – Finance Manager

✚ For Payroll:

- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 259 employees (137 full-time and 122 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending April 20th and paid on April 26th, 2024.

- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing, or in the process of being hired, as of April 30th, 2024:
 - Heavy Equipment Working Leader (Fund 121)
 - Heavy Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Maintenance Technician II – (Fund 121)
 - Supervisor IV – Neighborhood Programs (Fund 121)
 - Gardener Helper (Fund 121)
- Seasonal hiring is in full swing. Staff for the Day Camps, Foellinger Theatre, and Aquatics are doing most of their onboarding currently.
- We have had hiring events on 4/29, 5/1, and 5/6 with three more upcoming hiring events on 5/15, 5/16, and 5/21.

✚ Pavilion Rental/Registration/Ticket Sales/Receptions/Front Office:

- In the front office, the month of April was spent posting the Summer Fun Times into our software system. We entered 401 programs for summer registration!
- We were able to contact 216 kids who were on the waiting list for Franke Park Day Camp and offer them spots since they were able to hire additional staff members.
- Pavilion rentals, dog park memberships, golf memberships, and Johnny Appleseed Campground reservations were also very busy in April.
- Rhonda purchased and activated six new portable credit card machines for the Foellinger Theatre. This will help us expand the concession and bar locations during the concert season.
- Accounts payable is picking up. We processed 648 invoices for payment in April and we also entered in 26 purchase requisitions this month.
- We are on the verge of being able to announce our new Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation app. Stay tuned for details on this.
- We are working with IT and planning to roll out Attendance on Demand for time clock management and payroll processing soon. We plan to implement this in phases over the next several months.

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director of Park

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

✚ Facilities Supervisor: Greg Reith

- Pavilion rentals totaled: **144** for April. This is up from **137** in March.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations; Martin Luther King Bridge, Lawton Park Skate Park, Hamilton Park Shelter, McCulloch Park, Swinney Park West, PSI-OTE Park, Rockhill Park, Weisser Park, Bloomingdale Park, Northside Park, Foster Park.
- The facilities staff have completed all the annual preparations of all 22 pavilions for summer rentals which will be in full swing starting April 26.
- Spring pressure washing has begun at various shelters and both Northside and McMillen Park pools.

✚ Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- Preparations for the 2024 season at Freimann Square were completed. This included removing the protective winter covers, repairing lights, and filling the pond.

- A concrete slab was poured at the Lawton Park complex that will hold the above-ground fuel tanks that were relocated from the Franke Park maintenance yard.
- The annual butterfly showcase at the Botanical Conservatory began on the 12th. Maintenance Techs were tasked with installing the education lab and access vestibules.
- Pre-season preparations were completed at both McMillen and Northside Park pools. The pools were filled on the 29th and are ready for Board of Health inspections before opening.
- New climbing rose guide wire and hardware were installed at the Lakeside Park Rose Garden arbor.
- Work continues to restore water services for the summer months. All pavilions, restrooms, and drinking fountains have been turned back on. The process will be completed once the rest of the irrigation is turned on.
- A new permanent fire ring was installed at Lindenwood Nature Preserve. This replaced the primitive rock formation used in the past.
- **Maintenance Technician completed the following:**
 - ✓ 3: Alarm Maintenance, 8: Building Maintenance, 5: Carpentry, 20: Electrical Repair,
 - ✓ 2: HVAC Maintenance, 9: Key Core Maintenance, 19: Light Maintenance,
 - ✓ 8: Lock Maintenance, 4: Paint, 16: Playground Maintenance,
 - ✓ 21: Plumbing Maintenance, 8: Sign Maintenance, 25: Vandalism

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment: Scott Winling

- Mowing routes began on April 10th due to the warm weather.
- Ball diamonds have been open for practice rentals only.
- Ball diamond crews are completing spring cleanup work on all of the rental diamonds, Kreager, Foster West, and Hamilton.
- Athletic crews marked 2 large soccer fields at Foster West and made the third field into two smaller ones for youth soccer.
- Two flag football fields at Tillman and a rugby field at McMillen have been striped.
- All of the park's athletic fields along with ball diamond outfields were aerated and fertilized.
- Crews started performing weed control on ball diamond infields, warning tracks, fence lines, and other areas.
- Heavy Equipment used 26 tons of stone in the Lincolndale Lot at Franke Park to smooth out the lane.
- Crews worked with the maintenance techs by operating the large forestry crane truck to place the docks into the water at Hurshtown Reservoir.
- Parking bumpers in various parks were also repaired and replaced as they became damaged from winter snowplowing.
- Heavy Equipment is continuing the 10 playgrounds for removal.
- Heavy Equipment is also assisting the garage by hauling tractors and mowers to and from the golf courses.
- The garbage truck is operating three days a week and Sundays to keep up with the increased usage in the parks.
- Summer trashcans were placed in the parks a few weeks earlier than usual.
- The total number of trashcans serviced by our in-house garbage truck is 193 cans.
- The Rivergreenway gates were closed for approximately 10-12 days through April. Crews continued to clean up the path and remove debris.

Manager of Facilities, Trades, and Grounds: Dennis Hamilton

- There were 35 after-hours calls: 7 code calls, 2 alarm calls, 1 cleaning call, 2 vandalism calls, 3 electrical calls, 1 call to help the Zoo with their train, 3 set up calls, 6 lock calls, 2 plumbing calls, 1 tree down call, and 7 miscellaneous calls
- Musco repaired two wiring harnesses at the Kreager Ball Diamond, they also replaced 13 lamps and 12 fuses.
- Arab pest control treated the Downtown Community Center.
- Working on the fence at the McMillen Golf Course that was damaged due to a car accident.

- Working on repairs to the gates at Kreager Park Ball Diamonds and other fence repairs that are needed in our general park areas.
- VFP completed the installation of the new fire alarm system at the Foster Golf Course maintenance building.
- Lan Con Electric repaired a broken light fixture at Freimann Square.
- Lan Con Electric installed power to the new concrete pad that was poured for the gas tanks that will be moved from Franke Park to Lawton Park.
- Aquatic Management installed the fountains at both Lakeside Park and Reservoir Park.
- Continuing playground inspections.

Main Trac Coordinator: Nicole Roth

- Main Trac Entries: 7,771 for the month, and we had 56, 311 calls this month.
- Working with supervisors to get their employees to turn in correct time sheets.
- The only volunteer hours have been through Landscape and they have 100 hours total. They mulched both Moody and Franke Park.
- Working on playground inspection reports, and entering timesheets, gas tickets, and contracted invoices.
- Running monthly reports for Chucks Recreation Staff, and assisted with the school plants program.
- Nicole and Forestry resuming the Citizen Match tree program for 2024.

Lawton Garage/Operations Manager: Travis Roth

- **Garage Operations Highlights:** 158 work orders were scheduled this month, 30 of which were services.
- 2 of the last 3 remaining pieces of equipment from the 2023 equipment lease (2 John Deere greens mowers) were delivered to Foster Golf Course.
- P.O.s have been submitted for many of the 2024 equipment purchases and several of those items have been delivered to Lawton Park already.
- A Gravely Ovis remote control mower arrived for the Riparian crew. The Fort Wayne Parks Dept. is one of the first customers in the country to take delivery of one of these units.
- Garage mechanics repaired a metal handrail at Headwaters Park making the area safe.
- A McMillen Golf Course picker cart had an engine failure and the motor was replaced with a new factory unit and the cart was placed back into service.
- Truck 82 (1993 Chevy 3500) was returned to the Parks from the Zoo as it is no longer serviceable. This truck will be sent to auction.
- The Riparian work barge came in for its annual service and required the prop and water pump to be repaired.
- SUV #128 was involved in a minor accident and will be taken to Bob Thomas Ford to have the rear bumper cover repaired.
- Truck #1513 was returned from H&H with a utility body from another, older Park's truck installed and ready for facility usage.
- Forestry truck #151 required both air tanks for the air brake system to be replaced due to rust.
- New quotes are being received for dump and utility bodies for the 2024 truck purchases. H&H is our normal supplier but their prices have jumped drastically in the last few years. Alternate quotes from W.A. Jones and Kalida Trucking will be considered.
- A purchase order and service agreement for moving the above-ground diesel gas pumps from Franke to Lawton Park was completed. Staff is working to use up all of the fuel in those tanks so they are empty by the time Gasoline Equipment relocates them.
- The Headwaters chiller trailer was added to the inventory. This 1965 Army surplus trailer is scheduled to have brakes, tires, and wiring repaired before it is needed next fall.
- The in-ground hydraulic lifts in the garage started leaking and were inspected by a repair technician. Once quotes for the rebuild have been received, repairs can be completed.

- **Storeroom and Property:** Storeroom staff assisted Risk Management with the creation of warning signs to be placed at city-owned gas pumps at city facilities designed to prevent pump damage by vehicles.
- The Courier began daily bank deposit drops now that the bank does not provide pickup services.
- Staff assisted with prepping multiple pieces of new equipment by numbering them and purchasing filters and other service items for those units.
- 4 vehicles from the Parks Department took part in Mayor Tom Henry’s funeral procession along with vehicles from multiple other departments.
- **Property Transactions:**

24 Toro Zero Turn Bagger Kit	Added Into Inventory	P230
24 Master 15 Ga. ATV Sprayers (2)	Added Into Inventory	P230
24 Ventrac Tractor	Added Into Inventory	P240
24 Ventrac Ball Diamond Groomer	Added Into Inventory	P240
24 Honda WX10 Water Pumps (2)	Added Into Inventory	P240
00 Nobles Floor Scrubber	Scrapped	P250F
24 Westward Hole Saw Kit	Added Into Inventory	P252
24 Milwaukee 18V Shop Vacuum	Added Into Inventory	P252
25 Ford F750 Chassis	Added Into Inventory	P260
24 Gravely Ovis RC Mower	Added Into Inventory	P295
24 John Deere 2700E Mowers (2)	Added Into Inventory	R211
05 Kifco Water Reel Sprinkler	Added Into Inventory	R530
65 Troyler Flat Bed Semi Trailer	Added Into Inventory	R710
- **2023 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

John Deere greens mowers	Delivered
John Deere Aercore 800	23121213
Motorola Replacement radios	24121117
- **2024 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

Ford F250 Route Trucks (4)	3 are in at City Ford
Ford F350 Chassis	Delivered to City Ford
Ford Maverick Pick-up	Option sheet completed
Chevy 1500 Pick-up (2)	P.O. Submitted
IPC Floor Machines (4)	P.O. Submitted
Chevy Equinox	P.O. Submitted
John Deere Gators (2)	P.O. Submitted
Ventrac Tractor with Ball Diamond Attachment	Delivered
Bobcat Stump Grinding Attachment	24121149
JLG Electric Scissor Lift	Delivered
Motorola Replacement Radios	Quotes received
Gravely Remote-Control Mower	Delivered
Toro Pull Behind Blower	Delivered

 **Superintendent: Mike Gore**

- 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 2024 playground inspections, and Rivergreenway inspections.
- Working with supervisor staff to remind them of work that needs to be completed.
- Starting 2024 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Boone Park Playground Equipment Replacement and Safety Surface – Installation in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory Linkway Interior Construction – Final construction installation review in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory Roof Glass Replacement – Project currently out to bid.
- Botanical Conservatory Tropical Paths – Project completed.
- Community Center HVAC Control System – Upgrade is in progress.
- Community Center Art Room Renovation – Project currently out to bid.
- Community Center Shuffleboard Renovation – Project completed.
- In the Foellinger Theatre Lighting Improvements plans are progressing, Sidewalk improvements, and the Stage Floor Improvements are in the construction phase, and the Electrical services to the Concrete Terrace, and the Ticketing Office Exterior Improvements have been completed.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Planning in progress.
- Foster Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- Foster Park Pavilion #1 Ceiling Painting – Bidding is complete. Awaiting necessary weather conditions to begin work.
- Freimann Square Pump House – Project completed.
- Gren Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- Headwaters Park Fountain and Lighting Improvements are in the planning process.
- Headwaters Park Pavilion Sidewalk Improvements – Construction in progress.
- Kettler Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation is in progress.
- Lawton Park Trestle Bridge – Purchase order acquisition in progress.
- Lawton Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- McMillen Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Construction – Project going through review/approval process.
- In Bob Arnold/Northside Park, the Playground Equipment Replacement Project, the installation is in progress, and the Administration Building Flooring – Project is currently out to bid.
- Staff continues to assist with the progress of the Department’s Comprehensive Plan
- At Salomon Farm Park, the Entrance Signage Initial project is in the planning process, the Barn Entry Doors Replacement is in the Construction phase, and the Bran Painting Project is complete.
- Swinney Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Work planned for June 2024.
- Tillman Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation in Spring of 2024.
- Tillman Park Playground Sidewalk – Installation in progress.
- Turpie Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation is in progress.
- Various Parks 2024 Paving Projects – Scheduling in progress.
- Various Parks 2024 Pavement Restoration – Work set to begin in mid-May.
- Various Parks Playground Borders and Drainage – Construction is in progress at various locations.
- Various Parks Playground Safety Surfacing – Installation in progress at various locations.
- Various Parks Entry Identification Signage – Fabrication in progress for Vesey, Sheldon, Cobin, Little Turtle Memorial, and Rudisill Parks.
- **Other work:**
 - Various Parks: accessed potential, necessary future projects, planning projects for next season’s budget was conducted, along with the updating of park site plan bases and building plans.
 - Various Parks: underground utility locates were scheduled and performed.
 - Various Parks: cost estimates projects are being prepared upon request, and park assessments are being completed.

Safety: Tony DeVido

- The Parks & Rec. Safety Committee met on 4-30-24. 4 employees and 1 guest were present.
- 2 vehicle crashes were reported for this period, and 0 employee injuries were reported this period.
- 2 CPR/FA classes were held. 8 employees were certified, along with Worker Protection (Pesticide) training was completed. 12 employees certified.
- Office Ergonomics assessments were done at the Community Center w/ Risk.
- The training schedule for seasonal employees was finalized and published.
- CPR/FA training supplies were inventoried and needed items were ordered.
- The review of Parks Safety SOPs continues.

Alec Johnson, Deputy Director of Planning & Development,



Forestry, Landscape & Horticulture, Riparian and the

Planning - Construction continues at the Franke Renaissance Project site. We expect to see work begin on the reconfigured park drive sometime in May, while floors are poured and interior/exterior work continues on the pavilion. Select administrative staff was given a site tour at the end of April.

- Design continues on Riverfront Phase II, mainly in coordination with ongoing construction and planning at the adjacent Schaab site. We continue to define a path forward as we must navigate the new conditions of the IDNR Construction in a Floodway Permit. We are hopeful that the ACOE/IDEM 401/408 permits will be released in May.
- Construction documents for both Brewer and Packard Park Redevelopment projects are reaching completion following staff reviews. Bidding and construction schedules will be coming into focus in the coming weeks.
- Consolidation sewer projects continue at Foster Park. These projects are having a significant impact on the park both physically and in relation to access, but staff continues to coordinate with City Utilities in trying to minimize effects. The tentative completion of these projects is October 2024, so impacts will continue to be seen throughout the year. We are taking part in bi-weekly construction update meetings; site safety continues to be a concern as the weather has improved and we are having more visitors to the park.
- As we await a purchase order for the Foster Park Entrance Design project, we remain in contact with the project consultant in hopes of scheduling a project kick-off in the coming weeks.
- Chad completed year two of the two-year Executive Development Program at Indiana University.
- Bidding of the Irishtown Plaza Construction project took place in April; construction is anticipated over the summer months.
- Staff took part in discussions regarding the implementation of the City's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. Topics covered were the urban canopy and conservation/management of natural spaces.
- 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, including the completion of path improvements in the tropical house, near completion of interior linkway improvements, and upcoming replacement of doors and awnings.

Horticulture and Landscape - Volunteers worked 440 hours in the greenhouse in April

16,000 seeds were sown for the Mother's Day Plant Sale, parks and Conservatory Showcase

The 3rd and last shift of bulbs were sent to the Conservatory the first week of April and 400 pots of bulbs were sent to decorate for the Bunny Tales event.

- 16,600 plants were sent to 59 schools for the School Children's Flower and Vegetable Association.

- Show change was completed the week of the 7th at the Botanical Conservatory; the “Botanical Speedway” exhibit was removed and the “Color In Motion” live butterfly exhibit was installed.
- Landscape staff helped out in the greenhouse and delivered plants for the SCFVA the week of April 22nd. In 6 days, landscape staff delivered over 16,000 plants and 2,600 trees to 59 schools.
- Lakeside staff began weekly mowing, worked on bed and sidewalk edging, un-hilled the roses, power washed the fountains, filled the fountains, planted pansies in the urns, and assisted in SCFVA deliveries.
- Foster staff began mowing the bridal glen weekly, removed early season tulips, tilled beds as they prepared for annual flowers, edged beds, mulched perennial and tree beds, pruned shrubs, and applied pre and post-emergent herbicides for weed control.
- The Freimann Square fountain was power-washed and filled. It was swept for the first time by Clarity Pool & Patio Services, who will be sweeping the fountain approximately two times per month per contract.
- Triscapa, Inc. finished mulching Promenade, Headwaters, and Riverfront IIA as per contract.
- Landscape staff hauled approximately 80 yards of mulch to Moody Park and Franke Park for volunteer events. A volunteer group from First Presbyterian Church spread approximately 20 yards of mulch in Moody Park landscape beds. A volunteer group from the Oxford House Community spread approximately 60 yards of mulch in landscape beds at Franke Park.
- Landscape staff began post-emergent herbicide treatments at Swinney Park, Franke Park, McMillen Park, Rockhill Park, Headwaters, Promenade, Salomon, Johnny Appleseed, Main Street Medians, Downtown Community Center, and Freimann.
- Poor weather resulted in Landscape staff helping out in the greenhouse.
- Landscape staff installed a dry riverbed feature inside the Foellinger Theatre in an area that was continually washed out due to stormwater.
- Turf repairs were completed at Headwaters, Community Center, Franke, and Shoaff.
- Landscape staff completed mulching projects on the Foellinger Theatre property and Little Turtle.
- The spring pots were planted at the Community Center.
- Pride Landcare, Mow Baby Mow, and MJK Total Lawn Care began mowing all contracted maintenance areas.
- Lawnganics continued turf fertilization and weed control on all park locations under contract.
- Myers Plant Health Care treated several select trees at Promenade and Freimann, for insects, fungi, and improved tree health.
- Beth Krill passed her herbicide applicators test with the State Chemist and became licensed in Category 3A-Ornamental Pest Management.
- One seasonal employee began work in April.

Riparian Management Report- April 2024

- Assisted with silt removal on South and North Dock after a recent flood. Began formulating protocols for future management of work that will include watching river levels and warning buoy lines.
- Cleared most debris from Van Buren bridge and began work on the large log jam at Ewing. Approx. 11,450 pounds (5.725 tons). Pulled logs from the shore off Old Fort pedestrian bridge. Approx. 2430 pounds (1.215 tons).
- The Guldlin Park ramp was cleared and maintained after all recent floods.
- Continued geese nest scouting and egg addling. The running total is currently 3 nests addled. (Recent floods have been washing most nests out.)
- Had one volunteer group from NIPSCO on April 23rd. Due to weather, had to pivot from honeysuckle removal to litter removal along Spy Run Creek. Approximately 400 pounds of debris and litter were removed with 5 volunteers doing 4 hours of work (20 hours of volunteer work logged).
- Attended a demonstration and training event with a new Gravely robotic mower. Plans are now being

developed on how to incorporate them into the yearly schedule.

- Assisted Risk Mgmt with the planning and development of a boat operators meeting that included DNR, Police, Fire, 911 Dispatch/Communications, City Utilities, Public Works, and Water Pollution.
- Sweet Breeze's Spring Commission is nearly completed in prep for the May launch.
- Organized this year's Boater's Safety Certification class for DNR and City employees for May 13.
- Completed this year's DNR structure permits for the Idle Speed Zone for Guldlin, 3rd Street Pump Station, and Trader's Point. Completed DNR passenger-for-hire permits for Sweet Breeze and Park's pontoon.

Forestry Report- April 2024

- This year's Arbor Day celebration was held at Northside Park on Friday, April 26th, and was a success. The tree seedling giveaway was met with enthusiasm.
- Nearly 2,700 sycamore tree seedlings were distributed to area third-graders. The Homestead High School Environmental Club students and the School Children Flower and Vegetable Association deserve a big THANK YOU for all of their work that made this possible. This year Kelly Box donated all of the boxes used to store and transport the trees.
- We presented on the impact of reduced tree canopy for an Indiana Tech course titled Urban Biomass and Waste (BIO 4210). Much of this presentation was a discussion on the lost community health benefits associated with a declining urban canopy.
- Collaborated with the Boys and Girls Club of Fort Wayne, Trees Indiana, and the Tree Canopy Growth Fund for a tree-planting event on the Fairfield Ave campus. This event is scheduled for Thursday, May 9th.
- Collaborated with multiple City and County departments on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. This plan intends to ensure that Fort Wayne is prepared for future potential environmental challenges.
- Subcontractors continue to complete street tree removals throughout the City. These contracts were issued early in the year and are expected to be completed by midsummer.
- In April, Forestry crews completed 65 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to facilitate buses, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs.
- In-house crews removed 42 trees in April. 16 street trees, 13 park trees, 9 resulting from storm damage, and 4 were the result of vehicle damage removals.
- Crews responded to and cleared 27 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs. 5 of these were privately owned trees impacting the right of way.
- Responded to and closed 70, 311 Call Center requests for service this month. We anticipate this number growing in the coming months as the weather becomes more conducive to outdoor recreation.
- Forestry staff reviewed 27 pruning requests from Indiana Michigan Power for powerline clearance. This has become necessary to ensure that the utility contractor practices comply with Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission protocol.
- Forestry Staff completed 12 tree-related property damage appraisals totaling \$11,1500.00 in damages. The vast majority of these are the result of vehicles losing control and striking City-owned trees.

 **Botanical Conservatory** - On April 16, the 21st annual 'Color in Motion: Live Butterfly Exhibit' welcomed its first visitors, this nine-week exhibit will last until June 23 with an anticipated attendance of over 25,000 visitors. The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in April 2024 including the Color in Motion Exhibit Opening (April 16), and several pre-registered programs and workshops throughout the month. Staff are gearing up for Mother's Day Plant Sale (May 9-12), Mother's Day in the Garden (May 11-12), National Public Gardens Week (14-18), Spring Bonsai Show (May 18), Iris Flower Show (May 26), and Sales Garden Opening (May 28). Current vacancies include Camp ACTiVenture Counselors (2) (selected applicants in the screening process) and Seasonal Gardener (1) (opening applications in May). A Conservatory Maintenance Seasonal, Destinee Burlette, was hired and has begun work.

Botanical Conservatory KPIs - April 2024 observed a free attendance decrease to 2023, attributable to lower member attendance in the same period in 2023; however, attendance on the year is still up 0.67% with Color in Motion being very well received in its first couple of weeks, an overall attendance increase is still on-track for the year. Membership revenue shows a slight decrease compared to April of 2023 due to a MAP Membership receivable from Science Central expected in May, on-the-year, membership is still up 11.39% to the same period last year. Conservatory Shop revenue continues to climb, with an impressive 9.56% increase on the year. Rental sales have slowed year-over-year, as availability for 2024 is very limited and Saturdays in 2025 are mostly sold through. Overall, compelling exhibit themes and inspired execution have continued to drive traffic.

Attendance

April 2023:	14,331 visitors
April 2024:	10,860 visitors
A decrease of 3,471 or -24.22% to 2023	

YTD Comparisons

2023 Attendance:	34,673 visitors
2024 Attendance:	34,906 visitors
An increase of 233 or +0.67% to 2023	

Admissions Revenue

April 2023:	\$45,095.00
April 2024:	\$44,596.00
A decrease of \$499.00 or -1.11% to 2023	

YTD Comparisons

2023 Admissions Revenue:	\$128,908.00
2024 Admissions Revenue:	\$141,102.00
An increase of \$12,194.00 or +9.46% to 2023	

Membership Revenue

April 2023:	\$13,643.00
April 2024:	\$10,999.00
A decrease of \$2,644.00 or -19.38% to 2023	

YTD Comparisons

2023 Membership Revenue:	\$38,995.06
2024 Membership Revenue:	\$43,437.00
An increase of \$4,441.94 or +11.39% to 2023	

Conservatory Shop Revenue

April 2023:	\$26,926.54
April 2024:	\$33,341.37
An increase of \$6,414.83 or +23.82% to 2023	

YTD Comparisons

2023 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$95,407.39
2024 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$104,530.82
An increase of \$9,123.41 or +9.56% to 2023	

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

April 2023: \$6,180.00

April 2024: \$4,342.50

A decrease of \$1,837.50 or -29.73% to 2023

YTD Comparisons

2023 Rental Revenue: \$39,197.50

2024 Rental Revenue: \$29,295.00

A decrease of \$9,884.50 or -25.23% to 2023

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

April 2023: \$10,353.37

April 2024: \$1,508.73

YTD Comparisons

2023 Other Revenue: \$223,305.27

2024 Other Revenue: \$224,411.72

Conservatory Total Revenue

April 2023: \$102,197.91

April 2024: \$94,787.60

A decrease of \$7,410.31 or -7.25% to 2023

YTD Comparisons

2023 Total Revenue: \$525,813.22

2024 Total Revenue: \$542,776.54

An increase of \$16,963.32 or +3.23% to 2023

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

- Staff submitted the full application for \$20,000 support of the Desert House Improvements Project to the Olive B. Cole Foundation. The request included attendance visitation to the Conservatory from Dekalb, LaGrange, Noble, and Steuben counties as required by the Cole Foundation for funding consideration. In 2022, the Conservatory welcomed 5,000 guests from the four counties, and 6,000 guests in 2023. (This is the first application ever submitted to the Cole Foundation from the Botanical Conservatory).
- Staff applied for \$5,000 in support of the Desert House Improvements Project to the Zollner Foundation.
- Staff applied for \$5,000 in support of the Desert House Improvements Project to the Waterfield Foundation.
- Botanical Conservatory received the support of \$3,000 for the 2024 ROOTS Music Fest from the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne, Engage grant.
- Staff submitted final grant reports to the Howard P. Arnold Foundation and the Magee-O’Connor Foundation for their support of the 2024 Botanical Speedway Exhibit. These reports enable us to apply for funding for the 2025 Floor is Lava! Exhibit.

- Staff submitted final promotional reports to FOX55 and Majic 95.1 for the 2024 Bunny Tales in the Garden. These reports will enable us to approach these media for continuing support of upcoming special events and exhibits.
- Promotional and complimentary tickets and fliers were distributed to 21Alive and 97.3 WMEE for the 2024 Color in Motion Live Butterfly Exhibit. Provided information for and approved the stations' promotional spots.
- Promotional and complimentary tickets and fliers were distributed to FOX55 and Majic 95.1 for the 2024 Mother's Day Plant Sale. Provided information for and approved the stations' promotional spots.
- Promotional and complimentary tickets and fliers were distributed to 21Alive and Majic 95.1 for the 2024 Mother's Day in the Gardens. Provided information for and approved the stations' promotional spots.

Botanical Conservatory Public Programs - Events

Bloomfest (April 7)

The Botanical Conservatory planted “Dr. James Parkinson Tulips” in addition to providing space for the first Parkinson's Awareness Tulips Bloomfest in Fort Wayne, organized and hosted by Richard May. The event offered information on Rock Steady Boxing, SPEAK-OUT! speech therapy, and dance for Parkinson's as well as a presentation on genetic and environmental interactions and a screening of *The Long Road to Hope: Ending Parkinson's Disease*. It targeted all of Northeastern Indiana with area partners at outreach tables. In attendance were 435 guests.

• **Education**

- Bones for Life® (April 16-May 7)
Canceled having not met minimum registration.
- Cottagecore Moss Mirror (April 20)
Canceled having not met minimum registration.
- T'ai Chi Tuesdays (April 23-May 28)
Sandy Gebhard returned to instruct a six-week course of T'ai Chi. The class maxed out with 20 participants. One interested individual remained on the waitlist, suggesting a demand for T'ai Chi at the Conservatory.

 **Youth Field Trips** - A total of 929 students from 26 field trip groups visited this month. In 2023, 14 groups brought 281 students; 4 groups brought 99 students in 2022; 2 groups brought 26 students in 2021; no groups visited in 2020; 12 groups brought 326 students in 2019; 22 groups brought 749 students in 2018.

 **Plant Societies** - Fort Wayne Bonsai Club (April 13)

Twelve members of the Fort Wayne Bonsai Club enjoyed the use of the Kessler Room to welcome a guest lecturer visiting from Chicago. The lecturer provided individualized instruction on the pruning of specimens while the group benefited from observing the techniques used for each specimen. The lecturer also guided potting and overall care.

Exhibits & Displays

- Botanical Speedway (January 13-April 7)
The winter showcase exhibit had people racing to the Botanical Conservatory where they could engage in an unexpected kind of fun! At first sight, guests delighted in a backdrop of colorful tropical plants adorned by black and white checkered flags. Adults and especially young children found themselves in awe of all

the different activities including sitting in a bright green Indy car (generously loaned from the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum), flagging racers from the control tower, cheering in a grandstand, and posing in the winner's circle. The chance to drive pedal cars and act as part of a pit crew is something you couldn't find anywhere else! In addition, each child was invited to take home a helmet provided by INDOT.

- The Octane Collection by Kelly Bremer (January 13-April 7)
The Octane Collection brought the “Botanical Speedway” theme into the gallery hall with 14 pieces that celebrated the speed, science, history, and pageantry of car racing. This Fort Wayne artist has been featured in previous Indianapolis 500 publications and is collected internationally by drivers, fans, and car enthusiasts.
- Wild and Free by Dani Kiefer (April 16-June 22)
Wild and Free is a collection of 25 pieces of acrylic, watercolor, and ink portraying Midwest urban and botanical scenes. The artist says “I’m drawn to wildflowers. They thrive in the most unlikely of circumstances. They are strong, resilient, patient, trusting, wild and free.” Dani Kiefer currently teaches part-time at Concordia Lutheran High School, leads art workshops in her home studio, and designs communication materials and illustrations for a variety of clients.
- Color in Motion (April 16-June 23)
The current showcase exhibit is among the most popular and is much anticipated by guests at the return of spring! With the live butterfly exhibit in its 21st year, high attendance numbers are anticipated especially regarding increased field trips. New this year is a beautiful butterfly bench in addition to a hydroponic system and backdrop of aquatic plants. Approximately 364 Butterfly Attendant shifts will be fulfilled by volunteers and staff over these next 10 weeks.

Volunteers/Staff

- April was a busy month of volunteer service... In addition to 9 ongoing volunteers who covered 35 shifts in the Gift Shop; 8 volunteers who covered 36 shifts at the Front Desk; and 1 garden volunteer who logged over 7 hours of grooming, other groups of volunteers joined forces!
- As for routinely scheduled groups, 8 new volunteers with Easterseals Arc settled into a schedule and took to clearing paths for well-groomed walkways. Five CAS students and 2 instructors completed 30 hours when removing invasive wintercreeper from the Exploration Garden and packaging seeds for National Public Gardens Week. As for a one-day schedule, 4 youth and their YMCA Coordinator volunteered on a Saturday morning to assist with plant installation. A volunteer from Vermeer also offered their time to remove the bulk of wintercreeper remaining in the Exploration Garden.
- Throughout the month, 3 new volunteers formally joined the Botanical Conservatory's Volunteer Program, and a total of 10 volunteers were trained as new Butterfly Attendants. In all, 32 volunteers covered 72 butterfly shifts. Around 150 volunteers are in the process of being scheduled to assist with setup and during the Mother's Day Plant Sale come May. While most are individual volunteers, 3 volunteer teams will be participating. Also, in preparation for the Mother's Day Plant Sale, 11 volunteers packaged seeds in addition to a multitude of volunteers who have been keeping busy with staff at the Lawton Park Greenhouse.

Upcoming

April 16-June 23: Color in Motion Live Butterfly Exhibit
April 16-June 22: Dani Kiefer Art Exhibit: *Wild and Free*
June 29-November 17: Raise a Glass! Garden Exhibit

May 4: Bonsai for Beginners, pre-registered program
May 5: Three Rivers Orchid Society Meeting
May 6-9: Setup of the Mother's Day Plant Sale

May 9-12: Mother's Day Plant Sale at McMillen Community Center
May 11 & 12: Mother's Day in the Garden
May 14-18: National Public Gardens Week
May 18: Spring Bonsai Show
May 26: Iris Flower Show
May 28: Sales Garden Opening

June 1: Spring Plant Swap, pre-registered program
June 8 & 9: Breakfast with Butterflies, pre-registered program
June 10-July 26: Camp ACTIVenture, 6-week pre-registered program
June 15-16: Father's Day in the Garden
June 23-28: Showchange
June 29: Opening of Raise a Glass! Garden Exhibit

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

The final shift of forced bulbs was installed in Showcase House as part of the Botanical Speedway show. Once the bulbs were pulled out, they were sent to the Sales Garden and were available for the public during the Slightly Used Bulb Sale.

Through the incredible teamwork of the Botanical Conservatory staff, Lawton garden staff, and the MT's the Botanical Conservatory installed the Color in Motion Live Butterfly show. With the concerted efforts of everyone involved, the show installation went smoothly.

Center for Academic Success (CAS) students worked diligently with Horticulture staff to continue with the removal of invasive wintercreeper currently growing throughout the Exploration Garden.

A volunteer from the local Vermeer branch spent a day removing a substantial portion of the wintercreeper with a mini loader saving countless hours of labor through the use of their equipment.

Contractors completed insecticide treatments in the Tropical House and Showcase House before the installation of the Color in Motion Butterfly Exhibit. Areas adjacent to the koi pond were treated with high-pressure soil injections to minimize the risk to the koi.

Conservatory and Lawton's staff made four insecticide applications throughout the Botanical Conservatory to combat current insect infestations.

Beneficial insects were ordered and released to further the work of reducing the insects found within the Botanical Conservatory houses.

Contractors completed the removal of the dead and declining oak trees along Calhoun Street, the declining and unsafe red oak in the Exploration Garden, additional stumps remaining in the ground from removals in past years, and shrub removal along Harrison/Douglas to enhance the aesthetics of the property's southwest corner.

Additional plants were purchased for the permanent collection. These include cork oak, silk oak, Ashe Magnolia, grevillea, bear's breeches, coast rosemary, New Zealand flax, and many others. Cork oak, silk oak, and bay laurel will eventually replace the declining Aleppo pines currently growing in Showcase. Additional hardy aquatic plants were purchased for the Terrace Pond. These include three new cultivars of hardy lotus, marsh marigold, sensitive plant, and water hyacinth.

A youth volunteer group from the YMCA spent a few hours volunteering at the Conservatory. They planted approximately 18 shrubs on the Terrace which will provide spring color in the future and potted up many aquatic plants for the Color in Motion butterfly show.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

Staff facilitated a single-office renovation including the removal of fixed furnishings and repainting of the office. New furnishings were installed by Workspace Solutions.

Staff worked on preparing the outside spaces, restrooms, janitorial space, and concessions for the coming rental season. Park maintenance technicians started up the water service outdoors. Schenkel Construction continued working on the North Linkway, bringing it closer to completion. S&E contractors installed a more durable and aesthetically pleasing shiplap surface to the south staircase exterior in the Magnolia Room.

Allied Mechanical completed the installation of a new Duct Sock in the Magnolia Room.

Staff performed several repairs including the faux stones at the top of the Tropical House waterfall, garden carts, and the floor sweeper.



Vibrant tulips in bloom at the Botanical Conservatory's Main Entrance



The Fort Wayne Bonsai Club enjoying time with a guest lecturer



Children racing around the "Botanical Speedway!"



See the butterflies & refer to the guide as part of "Color in Motion"



*Volunteers seed packaging
for the Plant Sale and
SCFVA*



*A Butterfly Attendant
admitting guests into the
entrance vestibule*



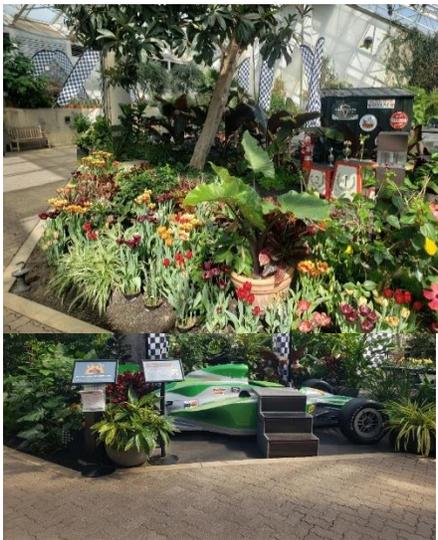
*A YMCA youth volunteer
prepares vegetation for the
butterfly tent*



*New volunteers with
Easterseals Arc completing
their orientation*



CAS Students enjoy a moment inside the butterfly tent



Colorful bulb display in Botanical Speedway exhibit

IndyCar on display in Showcase House



Conservatory and Museum Staff rolling out IndyCar



MT's building Butterfly Hatching Lab

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

- + www.RiverfrontFW.org had 3,913 hits to the site this month and the Promenade Park link had 3,002 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 1,280 hits in April.
- + Complaint Reports were completed for January, February, and March.
- + Completed Web Quarterly Report.
- + **Web Statistics: Users: 54,168 Hits: 154,628**
- + Completed 34 Design projects, and completed the Summer Fun Times brochure (distributed May 8), Senior Games brochure, LSA brochure, and other marketing documents.
- + Working on a grant for Lifetime Sports Academy.
- + NIPSCO informed the Department that we will be receiving a small donation as part of their volunteer program; recently a group of NIPSCO employees worked at Vesey Park.
- + Developing single-page sponsorship flyers for individual areas within the Department.
- + Shot and/or edited video for Social Media: FW Senior Games b-roll, SCFVA loading reel, Golf b-roll, Volunteer Ops b-roll, and the Golf reel.
- + Media promotions for: Swinney Park Landscape (*Welcome*) Letterbed, almost daily golf condition updates, Fun Summer jobs, Arbor Day/tree seedlings, Foster Park spring blooms, and more.
- + April Media Mentions: 58
- + Social Media Totals for April:

FB Followers	91,967
FB Reach	345,236
X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,964
Instagram Flowers	25,593

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- + April 2024 is now on record as being the wettest April since records have been kept in northeast Indiana. With that being said, revenue at this point in the year is up almost 28% over the total last year. When the weather has been conducive, play has been **very** strong.

- + Here are the numbers through April:

<u>APRIL</u>	<u>FOSTER</u>	<u>MCMILLEN</u>	<u>SHOAF</u>
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2023 REVENUE	35,997	23,975	45,614.75
2024 REVENUE	22,976	21,851.75	50,646.75
YTD 2023	38,591.50	25,553.75	50,732
YTD 2024	36,142	34,303.75	76,345.25

- ✚ Many of the leagues have already started, and all of them will be by the end of May. Outings will suffer a bit this year because of the situation at Foster Park. The Concordia Invitational was moved this year but will be coming back.
- ✚ The continued construction of the Deep Rock Tunnel project has seriously affected ingress and egress from Foster Park itself, and this is affecting play to a large degree. This is being closely monitored, and alternatives to attract play despite the project are being discussed. With that being said, this situation will continue at least throughout the summer. Hopefully, it will ease somewhat when construction on the entrance road moves beyond the entrance to the golf course parking lot. Discussions with City Utilities are ongoing regarding the restoration of the disruption to the golf course upon completion of the project.
- ✚ By the end of May, we should take delivery of 16 more new Club Car golf carts. This will allow us to cycle out of day-to-day use of the last seven 2002-era carts at Shoaff and increase the number of carts available at all 3 courses. Upon delivery of these carts, our usable cart fleet should be up to 97 carts, with the goal being to build the total fleet to 110.
- ✚ We have once again added two contract instructors to help provide golf lessons at the courses. Back again is Mark Beneke, a PGA Associate and the head coach for men’s and women’s golf at Indiana Tech. Added this year is PGA Member Edgar Leano. Edgar was a long-time assistant professional at Sycamore Hills and was the 2022 Assistant Professional of the Year in the Indiana Section PGA. The availability of quality golf instruction through the Parks Department is strong, and we will continue to add learning opportunities.
- ✚ All things considered, the golf program is off to a very strong start for 2024. As always, the weather will play a large part, but hopefully, we will be dryer than we were in April.

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



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

- ✚ Fort Wayne Trails’ new Executive Director, Kent Castleman, starts on May 6th. Kent used to lead the organization. The City is happy to have Kent back!
- ✚ Trek the Trails and Tread the Trails kicked off on April 30th at Promenade Park. We had 134 bicyclists and 68 walkers and runners.
- ✚ The Three Rivers Horse Trails group will have their annual meeting at PBS on May 8th at 6 p.m. They will elect a new board and officers.
- ✚ The County, the DNR, and Three Rivers Horse Trails will have the ribbon-cutting for the equestrian trails on May 16th at 11 a.m. at the trailhead off Paulding Rd, west of Adams Center Rd.
- ✚ Bike to Work Day will be held on May 17th. We’ll have four locations: The Porch off Calhoun, the Rivergreenway in Johnny Appleseed, the Hanna St Trail at Weisser Park, and the Rivergreenway in Swinney Park.

- The Pufferbelly Trail from Washington Center Road to the intersection of Lima and Ice Way is out for bid. Construction will begin in July with completion in July of 2025.

Division News and Media Coverage:



WFFT, the City's neighborhood improvement grants for 2024 Announced

https://www.wfft.com/news/forty-six-neighborhoods-receiving-grants-for-beautification-efforts/article_d11fdcc6-0be2-11ef-a9a9-df9608ff0312.html

WANE, DORA called a massive success on the first day

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/massive-success-downtown-fort-wayne-shares-feedback-after-dora-day-1/>

WANE, Conservatory feature

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/botanical-conservatory-has-everything-you-need-to-make-mothers-day-special/>

WANE, Curb Appeal program closes early due to popularity

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/curb-appeal-program-shut-down-due-to-popularity/>

Hurshtown Reservoir opens for the season

Wednesday, May 1, 7:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

16000 Roth Road, Grabill, IN

Hurshtown Reservoir may be the best fishing spot in Allen County. It also features a 2.75-mile walking path and, an area for picnics, kayak and rowboat rentals. It's open Tuesday to Sunday seasonally from May to mid-October. Admission is \$5 per car or \$1 to walk or bike in. Season passes are available to purchase at the reservoir. For more information, call 260-427-6000 or 260-627-3390 during hours of operation

WISH-TV, Feature on Mayor Tucker

<https://www.wishtv.com/news/unfiltered/one-on-one-with-fort-waynes-new-mayor/>

WFFT, Historic Preservation Month feature

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/engage-fort-wayne-features-people-saving-places-for-national-preservation-month/article_5ed72b36-08ce-11ef-b702-5773a1a98e81.html

Boone Street Playlot Dedication

One of ten park playground makeovers

WHO: Fort Wayne Mayor Sharon Tucker, Fort Wayne Parks, and Recreation Director Steve McDaniel, AWS Foundation CEO Patti Hays, park representatives, additional public officials, and neighborhood association representatives.

WHAT: Reopening of Boone Street Playlot with a brand new playground and accessible safety surfacing, one of ten neighborhood playgrounds receiving makeovers in 2024.

WHEN: Friday, May 10, 10:00 a.m.

WHERE: Boone Street Playlot, Boone and Mechanic Streets, street parking available. Signs will be posted.

Petal Picasso: Crafting Masterpieces for Mom

Friday, May 10, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Park Foundation Pavilion

Craft a heartfelt floral mason jar with or for your mom this Mother's Day! These crafts can be used as flower vases, candle holders, and more. One jar is included in your family registration, so multiple kids

can work together to create the perfect gift. You are welcome to register for multiple jars. Register online at bit.ly/RiverfrontFW or call 260-427-6000.

Mother's Day Plant Sale

Friday-Sunday, May 10-12 Friday 1:00-7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. *McMillen Park Community Center, 3901 Abbott Street*

Just in time for spring planting, the Botanical Conservatory offers over 700 varieties of plants at the annual Mother's Day Plant Sale. Shop masses of locally grown herbs, vegetable starts, flowering perennials, and native plants joining a host of annuals, mixed containers, hanging baskets, houseplants, bonsai, and a variety of seeds. Essentials like potting soil and compost worms are also available. A team of knowledgeable plant advisors is even ready to answer questions and offer suggestions! This annual fundraiser supports Fort Wayne's very own Botanical Conservatory. Sponsored by Majic 95.1 WAJL, Fox55, and Koester's Body & Frame Shop.

Mother's Day in the Garden

Saturday & Sunday, May 11 & 12, Public hours

Plan a special outing to the Botanical Conservatory where Moms get in free during Mother's Day weekend. Together, browse the Conservatory Shop, visit live butterflies, and admire all the lovely garden displays. The first 800 mothers to visit receive a free plant! Sponsored by Majic 95.1 WAJL and 21Alive.

National Public Gardens Week

Tuesday-Saturday, May 14-18, Public hours

All are invited to explore diverse plant collections while touring indoor and outdoor destinations at the Botanical Conservatory. As part of Fort Wayne's downtown revitalization efforts since 1983, our mission is to "provide a unique botanical venue for quality public education and enjoyment." Visit during National Public Gardens Week to learn, celebrate, and discover all there is to see and do at your local public garden! Also, take advantage of a special giveaway while supplies last. Regular admission fees apply.

Spring Bonsai Show

Saturday, May 18, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Embrace peace and harmony while immersed in a bonsai display presented by the Fort Wayne Bonsai Club. Members are present and pleased to discuss this art form. For those who would like to cultivate tranquility at home, a selection of beginning bonsai specimens and pots are available for cash-only purchase. Show entry is included with general admission.

Iris Flower Show

Sunday, May 26, 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Revel in the beauty of showy spring blooms. Members of the Northeast Indiana Iris Society display a sublime array of prized blooms in various varieties. Be sure to vote for your favorite! Members are also happy to offer helpful growing advice. Show entry is included with general admission.

Fort Wayne Ballet's Firefly Tour

Wednesday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.

Plaza at Promenade Park

Start your summer with Fort Wayne Ballet's professional company of dancers, great music, and the twinkling lights of evening stars and fireflies. This free outdoor tour brings a variety of amazing dance performances into the very heart of your community at Promenade Park. Seating is first come, first served. Guests are welcome to bring their seating for the performance.

Historical Tie Dye

Saturday, May 18, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion*

For most of human history, dyes were derived from nature. People cooked plants until they produced the desired pigment. Explore this fabric-dyeing technique with your tie-dye t-shirt. With natural dyes, the color may not be as vibrant as you may be used to (like with modern clothing). All dyes have been pre-tested and there will be fabric samples to help you choose your color or colors. A plain white T-shirt is included. All ages are welcome. Register online at bit.ly/RiverfrontFW or call 260-427-6000.

Dragon Boat 101

Thursday, May 23, 6:00-7:00 p.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion*

Interested in taking part in this year's Fort Wayne Dragon Boat Races, but not sure where to start? Attend this informational session to learn all things Dragon Boats—what it is, how to create a team, the event schedule, and more!

Kickboxing with 9Round

Sunday, May 12, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion*

Kick and punch your way through a great workout at this free monthly exercise class. Instructors will lead participants in a calorie-burning journey like no other.

Yoga on the Riverfront

Sunday, May 12, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion*

This free, relaxing one-hour flow yoga class is designed for all skill levels and led by the owner of Discover Yoga, Chelsea Vona. Bring your yoga mat to Promenade Park or borrow one for the class.

WPTA, Feature on Mayor Tucker

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/05/01/getting-know-fort-wayne-mayor-sharon-tucker/?tbref=hp>

WPTA, Feature on Senior Games led by Parks and Recreation

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/05/02/walk-park-fort-wayne-senior-games/?tbref=hp>

WOWO, Mayor Tucker featured on Fort Wayne's Morning News program

<https://wowo.com/getting-to-know-mayor-sharon-tucker/>

City TV, Google groundbreaking event from April 26

<https://acpl.viebit.com/player.php?hash=vr2CEhFEbmHSaOVy>

WFFT, Feature on renovations to Calhoun St. underpass

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/downtown-underpass-renovation-improves-pedestrian-safety/article_c9e4c440-080d-11ef-b1e1-b7dcb6d9ca30.html

Fort Wayne Politics, What it's like to be mayor – Former mayors Richard and Helmke share the biggest surprises about the city's top job

<https://www.fortwaynepolitics.com/p/what-its-really-like-to-be-mayor>

Adams Radio Group, Historic Preservation Month

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2024/05/02/city-of-fort-wayne-celebrates-historic-preservation-month-3/>

Sunday Heritage Concert Series

Sunday, May 12, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion*

Kyla J will bring her high vibrational (i.e. positive) and uplifting music and spoken word to Riverfront Fort Wayne. The presentation is free and open to all ages. Seating will be on a first-come first served basis.

WPTA, Feature on summer jobs available with Parks and Recreation

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/29/walk-park-summer-jobs-fort-wayne-parks/>

WPTA, FWACC event

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/29/fwacc-bissell-pet-foundation-partner-reduce-adoption-fees/>

WFFT and DORA start on Sunday

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/city-officials-announce-the-start-date-for-dora/article_48e34114-069b-11ef-afb0-dbccefd485c1.html

WFFT, Caucus date announced for selection of councilperson for 6th District

https://www.wfft.com/news/politics/allen-county-democratic-party-announces-caucus-to-be-held-next-month/article_dc42cdd6-0645-11ef-a53a-27dbff6653dc.html

WFFT, FWACC event

https://www.wfft.com/animals/fwacc-and-bissell-pet-foundation-announce-empty-the-shelters-event-coming-in-may/article_e9f9e27e-0669-11ef-9a76-a307ae88070f.html

PBS, Primetime program with passenger rail as the topic

<https://www.pbs.org/video/northern-indiana-passenger-rail-association-s1ekux/>

Adams Radio Group, Veterans Memorial Bridge, and Pontiac Street Market awarded

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2024/04/30/veterans-memorial-bridge-pontiac-street-market-awarded/>

Adams Radio Group, Fort Wayne named a Tree City USA

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2024/04/29/fort-wayne-named-a-tree-city/>

Adams Radio Group, Trek and Tread the Trails to begin

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2024/04/30/trek-the-trails-tread-the-trails-kick-off-tuesday/>

WANE, Hurshtown Reservoir to open for 2024 season – Partnership between Parks and Rec/City Utilities

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/hurshtown-reservoir-set-to-open-for-2024-season/>

Recaps of Google's event to announce \$2 billion investment in Fort Wayne from April 26:

WANE

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/live-google-announces-details-on-data-center-in-fort-wayne/>

WFFT, Sit down interview with Mayor Tucker

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-mayor-sharon-tucker-sits-down-with-fox-55s-brian-miller-during-her-first/article_5960ee40-0436-11ef-8bfd-d77fda3fbeb7.html

Dani Kiefer: Wild and Free

Until - June 22, public hours

Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

Dani Kiefer is a teacher, graphic designer, illustrator, and fine artist. She received a Bachelor of Arts in graphic design and photography from the University of Saint Francis in 1999. Upon graduation, she moved to Chicago and began designing exhibits and marketing materials for the Field Museum of Natural History. She continued her career in Chicago at the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Lincoln Park Zoo where her brand design for the Pritzker Family Children's Zoo was awarded first place by the American Association of Museums. She currently teaches part-time at Concordia Lutheran High

School, leads art workshops in her home studio, and designs communication materials and illustrations for a variety of clients. "I'm drawn to wildflowers. They thrive in the most unlikely of circumstances. They are strong, resilient, patient, trusting, wild and free."

WFFT, Fort Wayne is a Tree City USA

https://www.wfft.com/news/environment/arbor-day-foundation-names-fort-wayne-tree-city-usa-for-34th-year/article_39ef3124-040f-11ef-82a5-13205a53f4be.html

WPTA, City celebrates Arbor Day

<https://www.21alivenews.com/video/2024/04/27/city-fort-wayne-recognizes-continued-environmental-management-improvement-efforts-arbor-day/>

WANE, What's next for our area in economic development

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/how-nei-landed-google-and-whats-next/>

Irish Folk Bands: The High Kings & Gaelic Storm to play at Foellinger Theatre

General and in-person sales begin Friday, April 26, at 10:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne, Ind. –Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation announces that Fort Wayne's Foellinger Theatre will host The High Kings & Gaelic Storm on **Wednesday, August 21, 2024.**

The High Kings are Finbarr Clancy, Darren Holden, Paul O'Brien, and Brian Dunphy who have held the position as the distinctive voice of Irish folk music across the world for the last 15 years.

And as they continue to sell out venues to an ever-growing army of loyal fans, The High Kings show no signs of stopping. Having already surpassed 1.5 million monthly listeners on Spotify as well as two platinum albums in their time, 2023 saw The High Kings celebrate 15 years together by releasing 15 brand new tracks to their fans, as well as the release of their eighth Studio Album *The Road Not Taken*.

Renowned for their captivating harmonies and timeless melodies, The High Kings' latest studio album is a collection of original songs that breathe new life into traditional folk music, blending the old with the new.

It's hard to imagine a band just coming into its own after 20 years of success, but that's exactly what makes it a true anomaly. **Gaelic Storm** is a multi-national, Celtic juggernaut that grows stronger with each live performance, and as you can imagine, after two decades and over 2000 shows, it is a true force to be reckoned with. With their latest release, *Go Climb a Tree*, their music has never sounded more representative of themselves as musicians and as live performers.

The band attributes their continued success to their fanatic audience—and it's a well-diversified crowd for sure. The country-music folks adore the storytelling, the bluegrass-heads love the instrumentals, Celtic fans love their devotion to tradition, and the rockers simply relish the passion with which they play their instruments. Each band member, in their way, expresses a deep gratitude for their fans, but it's best summed up in the words of Patrick Murphy, "The fans are the ones that have given us this life. We're here for them."

Local pre-sale tickets will be available from 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, with code MIGHTY at <https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/05006092C19657D4>.

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, April 26, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit FoellingerTheatre.org.

Swearing in of Mayor Tucker:

WANE

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-mayor-elect-to-be-sworn-in-tuesday/>

WPTA, City receives solar grant

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/22/fort-wayne-chosen-federal-grant-implement-solar-energy-programs-community/>

Trek the Trails and Tread the Trails Kick-Off the Season on April 30

Fort Wayne, IN: The 2024 season for Trek the Trails and Tread the Trails will begin on Tuesday, April 30 at 6:00 p.m. at Promenade Park. This special event also includes a free Trails Celebration Party, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., hosted by Fort Wayne Trails Inc. TEDS Snack+ Bar will be open with food and drink for purchase. (After Tuesday, April 30, the season-opening, Tread the Trails will take place every other Thursday as they did in 2023.)

Date and locations for the next 5 Trek the Trails bicycle rides:

- 5/7: Fellowship Missionary Church, 2536 E. Tillman Rd.
- 5/14: Buckner Park, 6114 Bass Rd.
- 5/21: Kreager Park, 7225 N. River Rd. (Meet near tennis courts.)
- 5/28: Shoaff Park, 6401 St. Joe Rd., Conklin Pavilion. (Turn left at the entrance.)
- 6/4: Covington Elementary School, 2430 W. Hamilton Rd. South

Locations for the next 5 Tread the Trails for walkers, runners, and wheelchairs:

- 5/16: Buckner Park, 6114 Bass Rd.
- 5/30: Shoaff Park, 6401 St. Joe Rd., Conklin Pavilion. (Turn left at the entrance.)
- 6/13: Cookie Cottage, 620 W. Washington Center Rd. (Park behind the building.)
- 6/27: Indian Trails Park, 10313 Aboite Center Rd. (Meet south of the playground.)
- 7/11: Engle Road Towpath Trailhead, 7171 Engle Rd. (Additional parking is available east of the trailhead and along the gravel service road.)

A full schedule of Trek the Trail bike rides: <http://www.fortwayneparks.org/trails/news-events.html>

Trek the Trails is sponsored by UAW Local #2209, Three Rivers Velo Sport and Bike Fort Wayne, and is presented by the City of Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Trails. Tread the Trails is presented by the City of Fort Wayne, the Fort Wayne Running Club, Fort Wayne Trails, and the City of New Haven. *The Fort Wayne Area Trails Network consists of 142 miles of trails, with 101 miles inside City limits. Most of the trails in City limits are planned, designed, constructed, and maintained by the City of Fort Wayne, under the leadership of Mayor Sharon Tucker.*

Recaps of Sharon Tucker’s caucus victory to become new mayor:

WANE

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/democratic-precinct-chairs-choose-sharon-tucker-as-next-mayor-of-fort-wayne/>

WPTA

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/20/historic-vote-city-councilwoman-sharon-tucker-elected-fort-waynes-next-mayor/>

WOWO

<https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-has-a-new-mayor-how-it-all-unfolded/>

WBOI

<https://www.wboi.org/news/2024-04-20/allen-county-democrats-elect-sharon-tucker-to-succeed-late-mayor-tom-henry>

WANE, Buddy Bench in honor of Mayor Henry dedicated

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/a-friend-to-all-mayor-henrys-legacy-lives-on-through-buddy-bench-at-citizens-square/>

WANE, City holds open house for upcoming Bluffton Rd. Bridge project

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/city-making-headway-on-bluffton-road-projects-starting-with-open-house/>

WANE, Gov. Holcomb comments on the life of the late Mayor Tom Henry

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/gov-holcomb-discusses-agriculture-industry-mayor-henry-in-interview-with-wane-15/>

WANE, Living Local program with a feature on Victim Assistance, FWPD to honor crime victims and surviving families at 2024 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Candlelight Vigil

<https://www.wane.com/lifestyle/living-local-15/full-episode-april-18-2024/>

WPTA, Buddy Bench dedication for the late Mayor Henry

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/18/new-buddy-bench-honoring-late-mayor-tom-henry-be-placed-inside-citizens-square/?tbref=hp>

WOWO, Public Works to invest nearly \$50 million in neighborhood projects this year

<https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-makes-big-neighborhood-investments/>

WBCL, Buddy Bench dedication for the late Mayor Henry

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/buddy-bench-honoring-tom-henry-to-dedicated>

Recaps of the town hall for mayoral candidates:

WFFT

https://www.wfft.com/news/politics/fort-wayne-mayoral-candidates-list-campaign-promises-at-pfw-town-hall/article_e6d3b3ec-fe2e-11ee-88f1-07ccb9daeb0f.html

WPTA

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/19/mayoral-town-hall-what-would-be-each-candidates-first-order-business-mayor/>

WPTA

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/18/watch-live-town-hall-held-thursday-evening-candidates-running-mayoral-vacancy-caucus/>

WANE

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/city-residents-democratic-precinct-chairs-hear-from-candidates-at-mayoral-town-hall/>

Country Music Award Recipient Lee Brice to play at Foellinger Theatre

General and in-person sales begin Friday, April 12, at 10:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne, Ind – Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation announces that Fort Wayne's Foellinger Theatre will host **Lee Brice on Thursday, August 8, 2024.**

When Curb Records recording artist, Lee Brice, isn't selling out arenas, writing and recording songs, or building new brands like American Born whiskey, you'll find the family man with his wife Sara, two young boys, and a daughter. Meanwhile, with over 3.7 billion on-demand streams, and over 4 billion spins on Pandora, Brice continues to enjoy massive success at country radio, digital streaming services, and on the road.

He has reached the #1 spot on Country Radio with Platinum-selling “Memory I Don’t Mess With,” which consecutively follows three prior #1 songs: ASCAP’s 2021 Country Song of the Year and three-time Platinum track “One of Them Girls,” “I Hope You’re Happy Now” with Carly Pearce, and the four-time Platinum hit “Rumor,” which was nominated in the category Single of The Year at the 55th Annual ACM Awards. One of the most-played country artists of all time on Pandora, he was the second country artist behind Keith Urban to receive the Pandora Billionaire plaque.

Lee is also a GRAMMY nominee, a CMA and ACM award winner, and he's taken nine radio singles to Number One: "A Woman Like You," "Hard to Love," "I Drive Your Truck," "I Don't Dance," "Drinking Class," "Rumor," "I Hope You're Happy Now," "One of Them Girls," and "Memory I Don't Mess With." Garth Brooks, Jason Aldean, Kenny Chesney, and others have recorded his songs, and he's performed on numerous TV shows, including NBC's Today, ABC's The Bachelor, NBC's The Voice and FOX's Miss USA 2018. Lee performed as part of the Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song honoring Garth Brooks, which aired on PBS in March of 2020. At the 54th Annual CMA Awards, Lee took home the prize for Musical Event of the Year for his song with Carly Pearce, "I Hope You're Happy Now." At the 56th ACM Awards, "I Hope You're Happy Now" won Single of the Year and Music Event of the Year, and Lee and Carly Pearce performed the song live. Lee's latest album, Hey World, has been certified Platinum and features several multi-platinum-selling hits. In 2024, Lee is kicking off the year with a special acoustic tour, *Me & My Guitar Tour*, and is releasing a collaboration track with Australian group King & Country, "Checking In," which will be featured in their upcoming biographical film, *Unsung Hero*.

Local pre-sale tickets will be available from 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, with code COUNTRY at <https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/05006088A74017A6>

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, April 12, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit [FoellingerTheatre.org](https://www.foellingertheatre.org).

WANE, City Council recap – Fort Wayne could recognize historic Hake Block, Bottle Works with new district
<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-could-recognize-historic-hake-block-bottle-works-with-new-district/>

WANE, Foster Park redesign at City Council for approval
<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/foster-park-redesign-hits-city-council-seeks-nearly-300k/>

WPTA, Conservatory feature
<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/16/color-motion-live-butterflies-return-botanical-conservatory/>

WBOI, City Utilities projects for 2024
<https://www.wboi.org/news/2024-04-16/fort-wayne-to-invest-130-million-more-in-neighborhood-infrastructure>

WFFT, City program aims to get residents involved in planting more trees
https://www.wfft.com/news/top-stories/city-program-aims-to-get-residents-involved-in-planting-more-trees/article_7901cfec-fb73-11ee-972b-afe431ce2d4e.html

WFFT, Acting mayor and fire chief announce promotions for several FWFD employees
https://www.wfft.com/news/local/acting-mayor-and-fire-chief-announce-promotions-for-fwfd-employees/article_1534ae8a-fb46-11ee-b09d-939ab4a5618f.html

WANE, Allen Co. Fire Districts address tax increase
<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/allen-county-fire-districts-address-tax-increase/>

WANE, Redevelopment Commission approves new lighting at Parkview Field
<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/redevelopment-commission-approves-new-lighting-at-parkview-field/>

Dani Kiefer: Wild and Free April 16 - June 22 Public Reception: May 19, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Dani Kiefer is a teacher, graphic designer, illustrator, and fine artist. She received a Bachelor of Arts in graphic design and photography from the University of Saint Francis in 1999. Upon graduation, she moved to Chicago and began designing exhibits and marketing materials for the Field Museum of Natural History. She continued her career in Chicago at the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Lincoln Park Zoo where her brand design for the Pritzker Family Children’s Zoo was awarded first place by the American Association of Museums. She currently teaches part-time at Concordia Lutheran High School, leads art workshops in her home studio, and designs communication materials and illustrations for a variety of clients. "I’m drawn to wildflowers. They thrive in the most unlikely of circumstances. They are strong, resilient, patient, trusting, wild and free."

WPTA, Riparian management feature with Parks and Recreation

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/11/walk-park-riparian-management/>

Adams Radio Group, City receiving Community Crossings grant

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2024/04/12/fort-wayne-to-receive-1-5-million-community-crossings-grant/>

WBOI, Mayor Henry laid to rest

<https://www.wboi.org/news/2024-04-12/fort-wayne-mayor-tom-henry-laid-to-rest>

WFFT, Great American Cleanup coming next month

https://www.wfft.com/news/top-stories/city-of-fort-wayne-to-participate-in-the-great-american-cleanup/article_e1e93570-fad0-11ee-9079-fff408b41271.html

WFFT, New playgrounds coming through Parks and Recreation

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/fort-wayne-parks-undergo-playground-refresh-program/article_46cbb8a2-faa7-11ee-918f-b7bc133502c4.html

WFFT, Conservatory’s Mother’s Day Plant Sale coming soon

https://www.wfft.com/news/top-stories/botanical-conservatory-to-host-annual-mothers-day-sale/article_147b1c08-fa9d-11ee-8dd7-070a04460e52.html

Fort Wayne, Ind –Foster, Shoaff, and McMillen Park Golf Courses are open for the 2024 season. Cart conditions for each course and opening for the driving ranges at Shoaff and McMillen will be determined day-to-day. Please call to inquire.

Also due to the ongoing construction of the Big Dig Sewer Project in Foster Park, the front nine will have a couple of temporary tees and greens starting in the 2024 golfing season and will last for an undetermined amount of time:

- Hole number four will have a temporary green.
- Two holes will play from shorter tees.
- The par on the front nine will be 34, which will make par for the course 34-35/69.

Please note: Foster Park Golf Course will be presented and played as-is.

City golf courses begin operations at sunrise and close 30 minutes before sunset, weather permitting. When inclement weather occurs, courses may close for a short period, or the day, depending on the severity of the weather. To check on course availability or to schedule tee times, call the golf course clubhouse where you plan to play.

Foster Park Golf Course	427-6735	www.fostergolfcourse.com
McMillen Park Golf Course and Driving Range	427-6710	www.mcmillengolfcourse.com
Shoaff Park Golf Course and Driving Range	427-6745	www.shoaffgolfcourse.com

Season Passes are on sale at the Main Parks Office (705 East State Blvd.). To schedule league reservations, an outing for a business, or tournaments, contact Gary Whitacre, Manager of Golf Operations by phone at 260-427-6016 or email at gary.whitacre@cityoffortwayne.org.

Follow FortWayneParksGolf on Facebook for course conditions and range announcements, information on discounts, and more.

Inclement Weather Procedure: Any program changes, facility closures, or other weather-related adjustments will be posted to the FWPRD social media pages and website. Text alerts will be sent (to those who have opted into this service). If the Mayor declares an emergency, all Parks and Recreation facilities and programs will be closed or canceled.

WANE, John Felts remembers Mayor Henry

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/mayor-henrys-photographer-reflects-on-documenting-his-legacy/>

WFFT, City to receive Community Crossings grant

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/fort-wayne-to-receive-community-crossings-grant/article_4c01a86e-f83f-11ee-a2b9-2b99c8ffe34d.html

WANE, Soccer stadium plan goes before County Plan Commission

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/soccer-stadium-planned-for-southwest-allen-county/>

THE WEEKENDER **Tying It All Together**

Once eclipse mania died down, I realized that there were a lot of different environmental events happening this week and throughout this month. Perhaps the most notable one is **Earth Day on April 22**. But there's also **National Gardening Day on the 14th**, **Arbor Day on the 26th**, and **National Go Birding Day on the last Saturday of April**. Too, this is Earth Month, National Garden Month, and Poetic Earth Month. And soon, we'll also mark National Park Week.



It's a lot to keep track of. And even for those among us who make the space to commemorate each one, there's only so much time in a given day, week, or month to properly recognize them. Not to mention, if you work in [observance with no connection to nature](#), you've got a full-time job on your hands. I understand the intent. Each of these holidays serves the purpose of bringing a particular cause to the forefront, even if it's just for 24 hours. With that awareness comes action. If a few more people get involved with gardening or birding, then we gain a few more stewards of the environment.

Still, attempting to recognize each of these holidays can feel intimidating. Even the most well-intentioned people can miss a day or two, or pay more attention to one occasion over the other. One group who isn't missing a beat? Parks departments.

Spend a few moments in the park's corner of the web, and you'll not only be reminded of which holiday it is but also why we celebrate it and how we can participate. An individual might not have a particular date circled on their calendar, but their local park staff has their back. When you saw the "together" image at the top of this newsletter, I'm sure it suggested a sentimental message about unity. And sure, parks staff members across the country encourage that, too. But in this particular (less serious) context, I'm thinking of park leaders as the societal throughline, connecting the general public to all environmental causes, one holiday at a time.

For those of you who work on the parks side of things, know that your incredibly inventive social media posts are not only entertaining but also informative. You're keeping us all up to speed and ensuring each and every environmental cause gets the attention it deserves—which is precisely the point of these special holidays.

Have a celebratory weekend, **Jefferey Spivey** - *Editor, Northstar Publishing*

From: PRB+ <editor@parksandrecbusiness.com>

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 2:02 PM

Subject: 🖱 Parks Tie It All Together (The Weekender)

WPTA, John Perlich remembers Mayor Henry

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2024/04/10/fort-waynes-director-public-information-reflects-friendship-work-with-late-mayor-tom-henry/>

WANE, PIO director reflects on Mayor Henry and their friendship

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-waynes-director-of-public-information-reflects-on-mayor-tom-henry-and-their-friendship/>

WANE, Deep rock tunnel project update

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/city-utilities-provides-deep-rock-tunnel-project-update/>

WFFT, Bandemer signs sexual assault awareness month proclamation

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/acting-mayor-karl-bandemer-signs-his-first-proclamation-for-sexual-assault-awareness-month/article_dcea4da6-f770-11ee-b66d-a302c1ab6f60.html

WANE, Application denied for party boat project

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-riverboat-application-denied-over-deficiencies/>