

Steve McDaniel, Director

- ✚ Deputy Chad Shaw, Superintendent of Planning & Botanical Conservatory, Stacy Haviland, and Manager, Nate Cardelli, and I lead a tour of the Botanical Conservatory for the Foellinger Foundation's Board of Directors. Our opportunity was to showcase one of the facilities with the Foellinger name. The Foellinger Foundation's Board members asked some great questions, and our team was able to highlight the history and look to the future on many different topics related to the Conservatory. We hope to do a similar tour of the Theatre once weather warms up.
- ✚ Several of the staff continue with the Mayor's Leadership training through the Human Resources Department and outside coaching. All staff who manage people for the city will go through this training over the next year.
- ✚ I attended an IPRA retreat geared towards the Public Awareness Campaign that IPRA has been working on these past few years.
- ✚ The team and I have been working on this year's departmental goals. We will be sharing those goals with the staff as well as the board.
- ✚ The Treeline District continues to move through preliminary design. We also presented updates to several of the city council members on the project and the proposed procurement methodology.
- ✚ I started having drop-in sessions at various locations within the department. This is focused on staff by allowing them to stop in and talk with me about any topics they would like to cover. I will schedule approximately one a month and move them around the city to various locations.
- ✚ We had two long-term staff members retire this past month. Lynda Heavrin in our Greenhouse and Bryan Keister our Golf Course Superintendent. I also helped Jason with interviews for a new golf superintendent. He will be making an offer soon.
- ✚ I talked with one of Trine University's professors about the future possibilities of building an internship program that would benefit both our organizations. This will continue to develop as our team looks at areas that make sense.
- ✚ I gave a presentation to the Downtown Rotary Club highlighting the Parks and Recreation Department.
- ✚ We held our annual All Employee Meeting at the end of February. This gives us an opportunity to go over some training, touch on goals, review capital projects, and issue some staff awards. It was my honor to award Employee of the Year to Rene Franco Ayala who works out of the McMillen Community Center.

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

- ✚ **Salomon Farm Park – December**
 - Management is currently seeking a Supervisor for Salomon Farm Park. The position has been posted, and applications are being collected. Interviews will begin in March.
 - The park is looking to hire one or two additional cooking instructors to replace those who have departed over the past year. Information about the opportunity has been posted in the *Fun Times* and on social media.
- ✚ **Lindenwood Nature Preserve:** Applications are now open for the **Lindenwood Naturalist** position, which runs from April to December. Interested candidates can find the application on the City of Fort Wayne website.

✚ **Franke Park Day Camp** - Vivienne Clark has been hired as the new Franke Park Day Camp Supervisor. Though new to this role, she brings experience as both a counselor and an assistant supervisor from previous seasons. Chris Freehill will serve as one of the assistant supervisors to help support her transition

✚ **Sweet Breeze Canal Boat**

- Applications for Sweet Breeze canal boat positions are not posted on the City of Fort Wayne website. While 14 out of 15 staff members from 2024 plan to return, we are seeking 2-3 additional team members, primarily for deckhand and first mate roles.
- Per the agreement with Friends of the Rivers, management is finalizing the 2024 annual report.

✚ **Golf**

- Steve McDaniel, Dave Weadock, Krista Diehl and Jason Smith conducted interviews for the Golf Superintendent position. They are in the process of identifying the candidate that they would like to offer the position to.
- Jason Smith and Gary Whitacre reported that they are the majority of golf seasonal staff is returning. They stated that this is positive to help with continuity from year to year.
- Jason Smith reported that the Big Dig project that is going on at Foster Park, in particular the golf course portion, is running behind schedule. This will put the restoration of the golf course behind as well.

✚ **Pools**

- Daryn Schwartz reported that he had identified a potential candidate to shadow and possibly replace Jeff Barney (pool maintenance) who has stated that this will be his last season.
- Daryn Schwartz stated that he has been in contact with the pool staff from the 2024 season that stated their intention to return this summer. As well as working with Jessica Witt to identify a potential manager for McMillen Pool.

✚ **Weisser Park Youth Center - December and January**

- Youth completed the Pumping Heart experiment using a balloon, red food coloring, jar, water, straws, tape and scissors. This experiment helped the youth understand how the heart works. They also completed the Cloud in a Bottle experiment using a plastic bottle, clay, ball pump, awl and rubbing alcohol. The experiment helped youth learn how clouds are formed.
- The youth had much fun participating in our Lego Pictionary Challenge. Youth had 3 minutes to build something using Legos and the other players had to guess what they had built. Each youth had a chance to be the builder in their groups. Youth learned a new game called Fire and Ice Freeze Tag. The game consists of three levels of play using three blue noodles (icicle) and three red yarn balls (fireball). There is three ways to get frozen (tagged by icicle, falling down and going out of bounds). The only way to get unfrozen is by catching a fireball.
- Youth enjoyed making Valentine's Day cards and writing personal messages to their family, friends and/ or someone they feel is special in their life.
- Thursday, January 23, 2025, Turner Chapel Ubuntu Learning Lab lesson covered nutrition. The youth learned what food groups they should include in their breakfast and why breakfast is an important meal. They also learned what the food groups and various food items do for their body. After classroom lesson, the youth enjoyed making their own pizza with protein, vegetables and grain.
- Wednesday, January 29, 2025, Erin's House had the youth draw a picture of someone special to them that they had loss and write a paragraph about what they loved about that person. On Wednesday, February

5, 2025, Erin's House staff read the youth a book entitled *Grandma's Last Cookies*. The youth also shared things that remind them of their loved one that they loss. Wednesday, February 19, 2025, youth enjoyed a game of Tapple with the Erin's House staff.

- Tuesday, February 18, 2025, we had our 3rd Annual Weisser Center Family and Friends Trivia Game and Karaoke Night. We had 42 registered Weisser youth, 10 Jennings youth and 40 parents, family and/or friends for a total of 92 attendees at the event. The event was hosted by Aaron Montgomery (AM2Funny). He also donated a Sky Pad Tablet for one of the prizes. First-place trivia game family received the Sky Pad Tablet, second-place family received a movie for four, third-place family received dinner for four and the fourth-place family received family board games. All enjoyed a spaghetti and salad dinner, and were entertained by the karaoke participants

Community Center - December and January

McMillen Park Community Center - December 2024 and January 2025

Albert G. Jennings Recreation Center

- Jennings Youth center averaged 21 youth daily over the past month, with the highest daily attendance being 30.
- Youth attended Weisser Park Youth Center's Family Trivia Night and had a blast! We were able to interact with their youth and families while having a friendly competition! We plan on participating in more field trips in March.
- DrumFun has begun and is in full swing with Mr. Ketu and this session includes Identity and Heritage, where he can meet the youth where they are and elevated them by showing them their greatness.

McMillen Park Community Center

- In the month of February, we collaborated with the Jennings Center for some friendly exhibitions in both dodgeball and flag football. The games were created for the youth who may not otherwise be able to participate in organized sports through school or other outlets. The youth learned the value of sportsmanship, game rules, teamwork, and established a sense of pride when they competed. Most importantly, every youth had fun and was engaged in the friendly competition. We intend to continue hosting the Jennings Center for Center vs Center games.
- Parents Night Out resumed 2/22. There continues to be a good turnout and partnership with Easter Seals Arch. Parents and youth enjoyed the evening and continue to provide positive feedback about the importance of the service to them and their children

Community Center at 233 West Main Street

- February rental activity was above normal for this time of the year with 9 rental events. There were 13 possible rental dates of which nine were booked for the month. Friday the 21st we had a rare violin concert booked by a Michigan based promoter. City Utilities booked a weekday rental to host an open community planning forum at no charge to them. The utilization rate for February was 69%.
- Open Gym (Every Friday) 71 (Kids & Adults) There were 45 in January
- Josh Ogle gave a presentation to the retired UAW workers over recreational activities happening at the Community Center.
- Karen Shrock was interviewed for the Walk in the Park segment on Channel 21 about Open Gym on Feb 11 and it aired the following day. Open Gym continues to grow with new faces each week. The kids never cease to learn new things and do the unexpected with the equipment and toys available each week.

- Confirmation on at least 4 summer staff returning for the 2025 summer. 3 of those staff being PODS staff. It will be great to build on the consistency of the program.
- 2025 PODS brochure has been updated and finalized, Jill will get those sent over to schools on 2/20. Registration begins on March 24th.
- Mary, Karen, and Rob Hines met with Joni Schmalzried, CPO of Anthony Wayne Services, on Feb 13 to discuss some ways to improve the Sensory Clubhouse and increase its use. Some ideas were to highlight unique activities, think towards a universal design, virtual programming, and possibly rebranding. We need to increase awareness of the room and find partners. Some questions we are wrestling with are what is the Sensory Clubhouse focus, and who are the target audiences? The way forward was decided to develop a Focus Group where agencies, foundations, and organizations are invited for a meeting where there would be food, a presentation, and a tour of the Community Center and Sensory Clubhouse. Then we hope to get feedback to move forward. We are creating an invitation list and possible questions for those in attendance.
- Karen Shrock conducted staff training on the Sensory Clubhouse on Feb 28. This will cover learning more about the equipment and activities in the room, sensory processing, how to help those with sensory overload, and streamline the process for checking people in and out. The goal is to get staff more comfortable with this, especially if room usage increases.
- Brice has been working on importing our current volunteers into the Galaxy Digital platform. We are scheduling a blast off call soon, and hopefully will go live starting March 1st.
- The Winter Carnival was held on January 25th, and was a resounding success, bringing together 750 attendees for a day of festive fun and community spirit. Guests enjoyed a wide variety of activities, including a craft, a scavenger hunt, the ever-popular candy luge with 200 participants, and a snowball guess contest. Mini golf and scenic carriage rides added charm to the event, while the modest weather benefited everyone. The Warm Heart Market had a total of 26 vendors registered and 24 that attended. We had 11 volunteers from Homestead Key Club and 13 regular volunteers. Miss Fort Wayne also volunteered for the event. LC Nature Preserve and Century Link participated as non-profit booths, further enriching the event with their community-focused initiatives. Winter Carnival wrapped up with a live ice carving. Participants were excited and asked numerous questions to the carvers. To keep everyone cozy, 250 cups of hot cocoa were given away.

Riverfront

- February was a month full of programs bring in over 240 participants to Promenade Park. From fitness programs to dancing the night away at Dance Promenade, this month offered the community a wide variety of activities.
 - Our monthly Riverfront Fitness programs, Kickboxing and Yoga, brought in 80 participants to enjoy getting active in the park the 2nd Sunday in February.
 - Riverfront also had the pleasure of celebrating Lunar New Year in partnership with Korea Festival on February 1 which consisted of K-Pop dance, crafts, making wishes for the new year and more.

This was the second time Riverfront has held this program and welcomed over 70 participants to join in on the fun.

- Finally, Riverfront hosted a pop-up Open Mic Jam Session which was an amazing way to showcase the community and local talent. Over 60 people came out to enjoy music, stories, and poems. We are excited to offer a more extensive open mic night later this summer and continue to highlight what our community has to offer!
- Headwaters Park Ice Rink concluded its operation on February 23rd with a total close to 3,000 people attending the rink in February. We had 5 school groups/church groups attend in February for rentals of the Ice Rink.

Rhonda Berg – Deputy Director of Finance & Theatre

Budgets, Payroll and Commercial Vouchers, Trust Fund Donations, Foellinger Theatre, Registrations, Rentals, Tickets, Customer Service, Accounts Payable and Receivable.

Payroll and Accounts Payable:

- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 202 employees (138 full-time and 64 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending February 22nd, and paid on February 28th, 2025.
- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing or in the process of being hired, as of February 28th, 2025:
 - Heavy Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Manager VI – Grounds (Fund 121)
 - Program Coordinator – Neighborhood Programs – Jennings (Fund 121)
 - Program Coordinator – Neighborhood Programs – McMillen (Fund 121)
 - Grounds Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
 - Relief Person – Grounds (Fund 121)
 - Superintendent – Golf Greens (Fund 439)
 - Supervisor – Salomon Farm (Fund 439)
 - Fleet Mechanic – Golf (Fund 439)
 - Gardener – Riverfront (Fund 451)
 - Riparian Maintenance Technician (Fund 451)
 - Security Person (Fund 451)
- Seasonal hiring has begun! First hiring event was for golf course staff with their pre-employment meeting taking place on March 5th, 2025.
- Seasonal positions have largely all been posted.
- We are working with HR to set up one of the last hiring event meetings for the incoming Theatre staff to tentatively take place the week of April 14th.
- Payroll on the new Attendance on Demand/Time Management System has been going smoothly.
- We are getting ready to ensure the remaining seasonal rented time clocks will be ordered and installed.
- In February we processed 37 purchase requisitions, numerous change orders, 41 p-card statements, two payroll periods and 399 invoices.

Customer Service:

- Interviewed and filled the Office Manager position that was left open when I moved up to the Deputy Director position. We hired Joyce Enterline who most recently worked for City payroll, but previously worked as our payroll specialist. She comes to us with vast knowledge of the City's financial software system and payroll system. She will be a great addition to our team.
- Attended Mayor's State of the City Address.
- Submitted a list of software by facility to the City's contracted technology service that is vital to each of our facilities on a daily basis, along with the hours of the facilities in order to ensure when updates to these programs are needed that they can be scheduled around work hours.
- Attended and participated in the Park's Annual All Employee Meeting.
- Front office staff continue to be busy verifying veterinary records and selling dog park memberships.
- Registration for the Spring Fun Times began February 5th.
- The bus trips have returned to Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation! Registration staff have assisted with getting these trips set up and available for registration.
- Pavilion usage is strong even in the colder months. Families and organizations are also reaching out looking for pavilion availability for future events.

Foellinger Theatre:

- ***Programming***
 - **Concerts Announced and On Sale:**
 - ✓ FW Philharmonic - Dolly Parton's Threads - May 17, 2025
 - ✓ Justin Moore – June 5, 2025
 - ✓ Tommy James and The Shondells – June 28, 2025
 - ✓ Trace Adkins – August 22, 2025
 - ✓ Warrant, Lita Ford and Firehouse - September 26. 2025
- ***Marketing, PR and Patron Services***
 - 1) Working with internal marketing staff and external marketing partners to implement Foellinger Theatre venue focused marketing campaign. This is to increase the visibility of the venue to our region and will begin in early 2025
 - 2) Engaging fans in offseason through active social media presence
 - 3) Worked with Mayor's team and Parks Marketing on updates to Foellinger Theatre website – to be launched in early 2025
- ***General Management***
 - 1) Working with promoters and renters to communicate financial information regarding individual show revenue, ticket sales, security details, patron issues, areas of needed improvement and ways to grow revenue in 2025
 - 2) Reviewing 2024 revenue and expense statements
 - 3) Preparing pro forma revenue breakdowns for in-house promoted shows and co-pros
 - 4) Creating Purchase Orders for theatre payments and purchasing
 - 5) Reviewing License Agreement language and authoring co pro agreement language
- ***Facility Management/Capital Improvement Projects***
 - 1) Received approximately 60% of the equipment
 - 2) Prepared staging and test area for chain motor inspection and testing in March
- ***HR and Human Resources***
 - 1) Received approximately 60% of the equipment
 - 2) Reviewed and updated all Foellinger Theatre Staff position job descriptions, wage sheets, and any new HR protocol

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director of Park Maintenance, **Facilities, Technicians, Grounds/Heavy Equipment, MainTrac, Projects, Storeroom, Administration, Safety Compliance**

Facilities Supervisor: Greg Reith

- Pavilion rental totals for the month: 85 for February. This is down from 109 in January.
- Assistance was provided to the staff at McMillen Community Center to help sanitize the center.
- Checks continued to ensure that the heating systems are operating correctly during the winter season.
- Facilities staff painted the wood trim at Northside Psi Ote Upper pavilion.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Martin Luther King, Jr Bridge, McCulloch Park, and Lawton Park Skate Park.

Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- The maintenance techs continued remodeling work at the Northside Park administrative office building.
- Repairs were completed at the Salomon Park summer kitchen.
- Plumbing and drain work was completed at the Freimann Square building.
- The new Riparian area was completed in the Lawton Park training center.
- Batteries were replaced in several fire alarm control panels and new Simplex monitoring devices were replaced at the REA building.
- New automatic gate controls were installed at the REA property.
- A total of **11** calls to the on-call person this month. **1** of which were lock issues, **6** were calls from dispatch regarding alarms or other issues, and **4** were miscellaneous issues.
 - **Maintenance Technician completed the following last month:**
 - ✓ 10: Alarm Maintenance, 52: Building Maintenance, 4: Carpentry, 19: Electrical Repair,
 - ✓ 2: HVAC Maintenance, 6: Key Core Maintenance, 5: Light Maintenance,
 - ✓ 16: Lock Maintenance, 10: Paint, 0: Playground Maintenance,
 - ✓ 18: Plumbing Maintenance, 0: Sign Maintenance, 3: Vandalism

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment: Rob Schenkel

- The heavy equipment staff transported several pieces of equipment to McMillen Park golf maintenance.
- Tree limb and debris cleanup continued at various park locations.
- River greenway trails were serviced twice a week to remove snow, sticks, debris, and flood damage.
- The Botanical Conservatory and Lakeside Park compost bins were emptied numerous times this month.
- Winter service on equipment continues at both Lawton Park and Kreager Park maintenance shops.
- Grounds maintenance crews have plowed, shoveled, and salted snow-covered walks, parking lots, and roads in parks and community centers many times this month.
- Ice safety equipment at the park ponds was checked weekly. This included verifying that the red light was on, red flag was up as well as ensuring the safety ladder and rescue pole were in place.
- Heavy Equipment and Grounds Relief crews removed and excavated the Waynedale Park playground to prepare for the installation of a new playground.
- Grounds Relief crews pruned trees at the following parks: Lakeside Park, Salomon Farm Park, Swinney Park, Moody Park, John Nuchols Memorial Park, Indian Village Park, McCulloch Park, and Griswold Park.

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 2025 playground inspections still.
- Working on River Greenway inspections still.
- Working with supervisor staff to remind them of work that needs to be completed.
- Wrapping up 2025 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.
- Writing and overseeing 2025 purchase orders.
- Spent a few days in “Lead Boldly” training
- Spent a few hours in interviews for open positions in multiple departments.
- Assisting with computer and phone hook ups, as needed for all the office moving.

Operations / Fleet Maintenance / Storeroom: Travis Roth

- Storeroom staff ordered Hi-Viz clothing and rain coats for the upcoming summer season. This clothing features the Parks and Recreation logo screen printed on the items.
- Signs have been fabricated for the Mother’s Day plant sale.
- The Kenny purchase order for Toro mower parts was approved by city council and sent to purchasing for final approval.
- New epoxy floors were poured in the storeroom vestibule, entry hallway, and garage bathroom.
- Quotes were received to install a new, energy efficient window in the storeroom.

- **Property Transactions:**

25 Mantis 7940 Tiller	Added Into Inventory	P230
25 Mantis 7566A Tiller	Added Into Inventory	P230
25 Bobcat 68" Bucket	Added Into Inventory	P230
24 Stihl FCS-KM Edger (2)	Added Into Inventory	P240
19 Stihl MS201TC Chainsaw (2)	Transferred	P240
22 Stihl HS82T Hedge Trimmer	Added Into Inventory	P240
25 Milwaukee 18V Inflator	Added Into Inventory	P295
10 Stihl MS170 Chainsaw	Scrapped	Z200

- **2024 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

- ✓ Motorola Replacement Radios

P.O. Complete

- **2025 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

- ✓ Equipment and vehicle list submitted to the purchasing department.

The Park’s portion of the lease budget is approximately \$769,000 to be used on vehicles, equipment, and trailers.

- **Garage Operations Highlights:**

- 194 work orders were scheduled this month, 56 of which were services.
- The 2025 equipment lease list was submitted to the city’s purchasing department and will be presented to Park Board in March once the CIP money is released by the controller’s office.
- The last quotes for trucks and vans were received for the 2025 lease purchases and option sheets submitted.
- An order of Kenwood radios was placed with the radio shop to begin replacing the handheld radios used by Salomon Farm. 8 were ordered for 2025 with the other 11 being future purchases. The 31 Kenwood radios at

the Day camp will also need replaced over the upcoming years. These radios have started to break down and replacement parts are not available.

- Work orders for equipment maintenance services performed by grounds were created in Main Trac to allow the system to track work performed in areas other than the garage. This will allow garage employees to identify repairs and preventative maintenance that has been performed in the ground's maintenance shop and Kreager park.
- Work continued this month on the winter service of golf course mowers, landscape equipment, and the rebuilding of Toro 7210 and 580 mower decks. Mower deck tires have been rebuilt by a ground's employee working in the garage for the winter.
- A Toro 5910 mower was sent to RPM Machinery to have a computer issue diagnosed and repaired.
- Van 166 (Ford Transit) was taken to Ford to have an electrical issue in the door switches resolved and to have replacement keys cut and programed.
- Quotes have been received to vinyl wrap the new Ford step van for the Conservatory. Marketing staff at Northside will work with the Conservatory to design graphics that showcase the Botanical Conservatory and our flower programs. A local vendor will print and install the full wrap to create a mobile billboard for the Parks Department.
- Aluminum frame work from the Conservatory butterfly exhibit was transported to the Lawton garage to have welding repairs performed before the next show change.
- Mechanics are in the process of rebuilding train axles for the Zoo train. The train has to be placed back on the tracks and inspected by the middle of March. New gear sets for one of the axle assemblies have been ordered as well.
- 2 fire place log holders arrived and will be modified to make one large log grate to be installed in the outdoor fireplace at the new Franke pavilion.
- Cold temperatures resulted in battery replacements in vehicles being a high priority this month and constant snow fall resulted in plow and Toro Polar-trac repairs as grounds and landscape worked to keep up with snow removal.
- A broken drain cover in the forklift storage garage was repaired by the maintenance techs which will make that area safe from tripping hazards.
- Garage staff has continued to work with the Kreager winter maintenance team and golf course employees to make sure all parts needed for grounds and golf course mowers and equipment have been ordered and are installed correctly.
- A Ford F250 from facilities was taken to H&H Sales in Huntertown to have spray-in bed lining installed in the pickup bed to keep the metal from getting damaged when floor machines and pressure washers are hauled in the truck bed.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Botanical Conservatory Boilers Replacement – NIPSCO energy efficiency incentive program in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory Roof Glass Replacement – Planning in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Design – Planning in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Roof Replacement – Planning in progress.
- Brewer Park Construction – Pavilion foundation completed, site utility construction and trail development in progress.
- Community Center Parking Lot Control Gate – Purchase order acquisition in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Lighting Improvements – Revised bidding options in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Lighting Components Package – Vendor and theatre manager coordinating delivery of products.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Awaiting completion of utility work on golf course.
- Foster Park Golf Course Irrigation – Bids received. Awaiting approval from leadership.
- Franke Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Work planned for April 2025.
- Franke Park Pond Pavilion Renovation – Planning in progress.

- Hanna Homestead Lighting Installation – Contractor is scheduled to begin work late March 2025.
- Hanna Homestead Lighting Product Purchase – Materials delivered, and project is ready for installation.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Construction in progress.
- Headwaters Park Service Buildings Roofing – Planning in progress.
- Hurshtown Reservoir – Dock system installation in progress.
- Indian Village Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Work planned for May 2025.
- Jehl Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Project start date, mid-March.
- Johnny Appleseed Park Fishing Piers Stabilization – Engineering design in progress. Construction planned for early April 2025.
- Kreager Park Soccer Fields Irrigation – Construction in progress.
- Kreager Park Softball Fence Replacement – Project completed.
- Kreager Park Tennis Courts – Net posts reconstruction and surface recoating to begin early March 2025.
- Lakeside Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Construction planned for early April 2025.
- Lakeside Park Dome Arbor Renovation – Bidding in progress.
- Lawton Park Trestle Bridge – Construction in progress.
- Lawton Park Greenhouse Wall Construction – Purchase order issued. Construction planned for May 2025.
- Lawton Park Maintenance Building Roof Design – Planning in progress.
- McCormick Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Construction planned for late May 2025.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Construction – Work on hold until weather conditions allow contractor to proceed. Completion planned for May 2025.
- Northside Park Psi-Ote Pavilion Lower Updates – Planning in progress.
- Northside Park Admin Building – Front Office and customer experience planning in progress.
- Old Fort Bridge Renovation – Planning in progress.
- Packard Park Redevelopment – Construction in progress.
- Parks 2025 Paving Projects – Project approval in progress.
- Parks 2025 Pavement Renovations Project – Scheduling of work in progress.
- Repka Park Boardwalk Renovation – Planning in progress.
- Salomon Farm Animal Barn – Planning in progress.
- Shoaff Park and the Riverlodge Pavilion Roof Replacement – Planning in progress.
- Various Parks Façade and Monument Tuckpointing – Bidding preparation in progress.
- Waynedale Park Playground Equipment – Purchase order issued. Construction has begun.

Safety: Tony DeVido

- The Parks & Rec. Safety Committee met on Feb 25. 6 employees and 2 guests were present.
- 1 vehicle crash was reported for this period.
- We received and processed 4 employee injury incidents.
- 1 CPR/FA classes were held. 8 employees were certified
- The classroom portion of the annual *Forklift Safety* class was held. 14 employees attended. The practical exercise portion will be in March.
- Those employees who attended the all employee meeting were trained in *Situational Awareness* and *Accident/ Incident Reporting*.
- OSHA 10 Hr. classes are being planned for select employees.
- The new SOP addressing Avian flu is still being developed.

Chad Shaw, Deputy Director of the BOTANICAL CONSERVATORY Planning & Development, Forestry, Greenhouse, Landscape & Horticulture, and Riparian

Botanical Conservatory Report – February 2025

‘Floor is Lava’ continued inviting enthusiastic patrons into a playful, nostalgia-filled setting that reimagines the childhood thrill of leaping from couch to armchair—elevated within a breathtaking tropical display. Guests can continue enjoying Floor is Lava through April 6. The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in February 2025 including the Sweetheart Orchid Display (Opening February 1), Orchid Show (February 1-2), Lisa Heintzman Artist Reception (February 9), Home and Garden Show (February 27 – March 2). Staff are gearing up for Great Train Connection (March 14-16), Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (March 17), Bunny Tales in the Garden (March 18 & 19), and several pre-registered programs and workshops throughout the month. Current vacancies include Conservatory Gardener (accepting applications), two Camp ACTiVenture Counselors (candidates have been selected and are awaiting clearance by Human Resources). A new rental receptionist, Cindy Salgado, has accepted and began on-boarding in March.

Botanical Conservatory KPIs

- The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory continued its strong start to 2025, with attendance increasing by 9.59% over February 2024, bringing in 7,803 visitors. Year-to-date (YTD) attendance reached 17,271 visitors, marking an impressive 36.77% growth compared to the same period last year. This surge in attendance reflects the ongoing success of engaging exhibits and programs, including The Floor is Lava and the Sweetheart Orchid Display.
- Admissions revenue also saw significant growth, rising 12.40% in February to \$31,544.00, with YTD admissions up 34.97%. Membership revenue, while showing a 29.85% decline in February compared to 2024, remained stable on a YTD basis with a 3.07% increase. This variance is attributed to the timing of MAP membership receivables, which were processed in February of 2024 but are anticipated in March of 2025.
- The Conservatory Shop maintained steady sales, with revenue nearly matching last year’s numbers for February, while YTD sales rose 17.11% to \$54,434.43. Revenue from the Home & Garden Show saw a slight 7.82% decline, though this was offset by a 33.20% increase in rental and catering fees, which reached \$11,225.00 for the month. YTD rental revenue is now 21.02% higher than in 2024, reflecting a growing demand for Conservatory event space.
- Despite a slight 0.99% decrease in total February revenue, overall YTD revenue has increased significantly by 27.82%, reaching \$174,746.02. This strong financial performance positions the Conservatory for continued growth, ensuring that exhibits, programs, and visitor experiences remain engaging and impactful throughout the year.

Attendance

February 2024:	7,120 visitors
February 2025:	7,803 visitors
An increase of 683 or +9.59% to 2024	

YTD Comparisons

2024 Attendance:	12,628 visitors
2025 Attendance:	17,271 visitors
An increase of 4,643 or +36.77% to 2024	

Admissions Revenue

February 2024: \$28,063.00
February 2025: \$31,544.00
An increase of \$3,481.00 or +12.40% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Admissions Revenue: \$48,262.00
2025 Admissions Revenue: \$65,141.00
An increase of \$16,879 or +34.97% to 2024

Membership Revenue

February 2024: \$13,442.00
February 2025: \$9,430.00
A decrease of \$4,012.00 or -29.85% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Membership Revenue: \$21,406.00
2025 Membership Revenue: \$22,063.00
An increase of \$657.00 or +3.07% to 2024

Conservatory Shop Revenue

February 2024: \$19,860.89
February 2025: \$19,865.58
An increase of \$4.69 or +0.02% to 2024

Home & Garden Show Revenue

Home Show 2024: \$15,129.49
Home Show 2025: \$13,946.29
A decrease of \$1,182.71 or -7.82% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Gift Shop Revenue: \$46,482.20
2025 Gift Shop Revenue: \$54,434.43
An increase of \$7,952.23 or +17.11% to 2024

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

February 2024: \$8,427.00
February 2025: \$11,225.00
An increase of \$2,798.00 or +33.20% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Rental Revenue: \$17,807.50
2025 Rental Revenue: \$21,550.00
An increase of \$3,742.50 or +21.02% to 2024

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

February 2024:	\$16,257.20
February 2025:	\$13,137.20

YTD Comparisons

2024 Other Revenue:	\$17,884.88
2025 Other Revenue:	\$11,557.59

Conservatory Total Revenue

February 2024:	\$86,050.09
February 2025:	\$85,201.78

A decrease of \$848.31 or -0.99% to 2024

YTD Comparisons

2024 Total Revenue:	\$136,713.09
2025 Total Revenue:	\$174,746.02

An increase of \$38,032.93 or +27.82% to 2024

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

- Staff researched potential foundation funders for the upcoming Conservatory capital projects and created a spreadsheet for Park Department staff to use in drafting the RFP. Staff discovered that several key funders have delays in their project guidelines (to Fall 2025) that will actually be to the Conservatory's benefit in planning the RFP and capital plan timeline.
- Staff is continuing research for possible capital plan funders from foundations and corporations.
- Staff completed a grant to the M. E. Raker Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project. We will officially submit the grant in the foundation's 2025 fiscal year at the July 2025 cycle per the foundation's request.
- Staff inquired for possible funding for the Desert House Improvements Project with an environment education focus from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust (based in Indianapolis). They declined support as the Conservatory project does not fit securely in their grant funding priorities and they no longer support environment education projects.
- Staff submitted a final grant report to Wilson Foundation for its support of the 2024 Gnome for the Holidays Exhibit. This report enables us to apply for future funding of Conservatory projects and exhibits.
- Staff contacted WANE 15 and 89.1 WBOI to confirm their media support of the 2025 Jazzworks! program since we have changed the date from July 19th to July 4th to match up our program with the City of Fort Wayne's annual fireworks display. WANE 15 has confirmed again as our sponsor; 89.1 WBOI is considering our request.
- Staff provided promotional tickets and information to US 93.3 for the promotional spots for the 2025 Great Train Connection.
- Staff sent corporate sponsorship appeals to JSM Exteriors, Glenbrook Dodge, and Korte (recent leads from Rob) for support of our 2025 events.

Botanical Conservatory Public Programs - Events

Orchid Show (February 1 & 2)

The Three Rivers Orchid Society hosted three different vendors and seven exhibitors for the Botanical Conservatory's 2025 Orchid Show. This two-day award show presented from 12-5 pm on Saturday and 12-4 pm on Sunday. Two potting demonstrations were also offered on Saturday, which continues to be a significant aspect of this public event. With 1,322 in attendance, there was an increase of 26% guests. The show was even more popular this year than the last! Of the total attendance, 264 were both Conservatory and reciprocal members accounting for 20% of attendance.

Education

Continuing Tai Chi (January 14-February 4)

Sandy Gebhard offered a 4-week morning class while instructing a winter session for her first time in seven years. Running with 13 registrants, this year's morning T'ai class had a slight increase in attendance over the 11 who registered in 2024. As a popular returning instructor, Sandy continues to offer sessions throughout the year. Participant class summaries also continue to be positive.

T'ai Chi for Relaxation (January 14-February 18)

Liz Monnier returned to instruct a 6-week evening class, which maintained momentum and surpassed minimum registration with 11 registrants. A twelfth attendee even enjoyed the drop-in option at a slightly higher-class fee for the freedom of participating in single sessions. Participant class summaries were all positive. Overall, the series had good attendance when winter weather is not as ideal for evening activities.

SCFVA, School Children's Flower & Vegetable Association

Education staff continue to stay in contact with area schools while tracking information for 2025 program participation. Out of the 67 schools in contact, a total of 53 schools have committed to receiving free plants and hosting their own local plant show for students to participate in come late summer/early fall. This is made possible with the 14,998 free plants that are being coordinated for April delivery by Landscape and Horticulture Staff. In addition, 2,305 free trees have been requested in partnership with Parks Forestry Operations and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. All other ordered items such as seed packets, pencils, and t-shirts are being coordinated for pickup at the Botanical Conservatory as of April 1st. Before then, a total of 2,303 seed packets will be prepared as additional participation categories outside of the free plants. New this year, 15,000 handled bags are being prepared as a response to ongoing concerns for the plants making it home safely; included is a plant care sheet, information on SCFVA history, and admission passes to the Botanical Conservatory. Staff have also begun to recruit volunteer judges in preparation for school plant shows as the next big thing!

Youth Field Trips

The Botanical Conservatory hosted 145 students from 6 groups in February 2025. There were 3 groups totaling 74 students in 2024; 6 groups totaling 103 students in 2023; 0 groups in both 2022 and 2021; 1 group of 102 students in 2020; and 6 groups totaling 83 students in 2019.

Exhibits & Displays

The Floor is Lava (January 11-April 6)

The new year's first showcase exhibit is one for the books, as it is the HOTTEST garden around. Conservatory guests of all ages find themselves in awe of unique elements such as a creatively assembled volcano that is surrounded by vibrant coleus and a variety of other meaningful plants. Plant interpretation is included along with an imaginative scavenger hunt and fun, colorful obstacles nearby. This winter play exhibit even features volcanic

smog and a mud pit, which wouldn't be complete without realistic sound effects and adventurous background music. Watch your step, and don't fall in... The Floor is Lava!

Lisa Heintzman: Innovative Abstractor (January 11-April 5)

Abstract artwork by artist, Lisa Heintzman is on display in the Gallery Hallway where it is being enjoyed by guests coming and going at the Botanical Conservatory. The medium is primarily epoxy and alcohol ink with some sea-themed objects included. The displayed work is available for sale at shop.botanicalconservatory.org. Her public artist reception was held on Sunday, February 9th.

Sweetheart Orchid Display (February 1-March 2)

Accompanying an intimate backdrop near the waterfall lookout, Horticulture Staff wowed everyone with the addition of colorful hanging planters leading from the entrance of the Tropical House. These areas were adorned with breathtaking orchids in bloom, bringing together an absolutely stunning display! Other levels of the garden were also embellished as an unexpected surprise. All orchids that were new to this year's display are now a part of the Conservatory's permanent collection.



Volunteers/Staff

- February was a rather busy month for volunteerism, especially with 7 new volunteers completing orientation. These new volunteers got right to it having assisted with temporarily moving the Gift Shop, SCFVA bag prep, and goody bag assembly. Five of them even scheduled butterfly shifts. To get ahead, staff have been actively recruiting Butterfly Attendants and are pleased to have 2/3 of the shifts covered at this point in time! In all, a total of 7 volunteers assisted with the Gift Shop move, 10 assembled a total of 800 goody bags for the upcoming Great Train Connection event, and 19 prepared 5,680+ bags for SCFVA. The Clover Rovers 4-H Club also assisted with SCFVA bag preparation.
- At the Front Desk, 25 shifts were covered by 7 volunteers, and in the Gift Shop, 29 shifts were covered by 9 volunteers. Two volunteers continued special support with plant grooming and product labeling in the Gift Shop. CAS, Career Academy Students returned for a new semester with 2 students and 1 instructor offering 6 hours in February. Easterseals Northeast Indiana continued their weekly service and were eager to sort SCFVA ribbons and pencils. Eight different volunteers supported this year's Home and Garden Show with setup, sales, and plant advising off-site at the Memorial Coliseum. At the Botanical Conservatory as well as the Home Show (not counting greenhouse), volunteers logged over 360 hours this month. Staff have also been collaborating more closely with the Lawton Park Greenhouse regarding volunteer recruitment, scheduling, etc.



Upcoming

January 11-April 5: Innovative Abstractor, art display by Lisa Heintzman

- January 11-April 6: The Floor is Lava, winter play exhibit
- March 9: Three Rivers Orchid Society Meeting
- March 14-16: The Great Train Connection, public event
- March 17: Volunteer Celebration Dinner, 2024 active service
- March 26: Volunteer SCFVA Seed Packaging
- March 27: 4-H Club Meeting
- March 29: Bonsai Club Private Workshop
- April 6-14: Showchange
- April 15-June 22: Color in Motion, live butterfly exhibit
- April 15-June 22: Gentle Turning, art display by Grace Yencer

- April 15 & 16: Volunteer Goody Bag Assembly
- April 18 & 19: Bunny Tales in the Garden, public event

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

This year's Sweetheart Orchid Display was a hit for Conservatory guests. The display delighted the sense of sight and smell with color and fragrance filling the Tropical House. The orchids were displayed in a number of ways this year. Some were hanging in the air in hanging baskets, others were in kokedama, with the remainder in decorative pots throughout the Tropical House. Conservatory staff included orchids grown and cared for by Lawton Greenhouse staff, in addition to orchids that were purchased.

Sycamore Tree Care continued to prune the large plants in the Tropical House this month, with pruning the Giant Bird of Paradise, Fishtail palm, tropical yucca, and others. Their skill and expertise are invaluable in maintaining the health of the Conservatory's large plant specimens.

Brandenberger Tree Care completed the pruning of twelve trees at the Conservatory and the removal of several diseased trees (four arborvitae and two crabapples). They also removed four failing Alaskan cedars that were failing and becoming hazardous due to improper planting years prior. New tree species will be planted in their place in late spring as the weather improves.

Work has continued with the renovation of the Family water feature located in the Atrium. Staff are currently sourcing stainless-steel grating and next month the artist will assemble the water feature.

Staff have been in contact with several conservatories in the region to gain insights to soil compositions of their respective Desert Houses. Strong connections have been made with Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago Botanic Garden, and Phipps Conservatory. Material sources and soil recipes have been shared and discussed collaboratively. Garfield Park Conservatory has also extended a willingness to donate plant specimens for the Botanical Conservatory's Desert House as renovation continues.

Staff have requested quotes from vendors to perform soil remediation in the Desert House, renovate the Exploration Garden pond, and perform systemic soil injections of insecticides in all three houses—each would be performed by vendors specialized in the respective jobs.

Staff have begun to remove plant material that won't be retained in the Desert House renovations, have begun to take cuttings of plants we'll reintroduce once soil work is complete, and have begun potting up plants that will be retained. Certain large specimens will be retained in place with minor soil work within the plant's drip line.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

- Allied Mechanical installed the new loop filter for the boiler system this month. They also installed the new flue for the water heater as the old flue was failing. A radiator was removed in the small janitorial room as we prepare for a remodel of the area.
- Bethany Patty was hired and began work as Seasonal Maintenance.
- American Elevator continued the replacement of the elevator. Great progress has been made this month and the project is on schedule as we move towards the completion phases in the next month.
- As the Café and Conservatory Shop renovation project has moved forward, we have been working on a large variety of projects. These projects included the following:

- ✓ Lawton Park MTs and staff worked on demolition to open areas for contractors to be able to view and assess for bidding.
- ✓ Contracting Luxe Guard as a contractor to apply an epoxy flake coating to designated areas in the assigned time frame
- ✓ Contracting Coleman Blinds to install powered roller shades in the assigned windows as contracted
- ✓ Contracting O'Neil's Glass to replace a mirrored window and repair framing, replace a door handle and to make needed adjustments to the door as contracted
- ✓ Coordinated FlowTech as they made plumbing upgrades on the rough-in
- ✓ Coordinated LanCon for the start of the electrical demolition and rough-in as contracted
- ✓ Ordering of a new 3 bay sink and faucet for install by FlowTech on the finish portion
- ✓ Coordinated with David Brandenburger Contracting as they removed the old ceiling grid in many areas, started the install of the FRP panels, and started the install of the new grid work for the new ceiling panels
- ✓ Coordinated Simplx Security to have alarm system and fire system units moved to allow for construction and will schedule for proper placement as project moves forward
- ✓ Coordinated with B-Squared Contracting to go over the scope of work for the new counters and grid wall work



*Orchids on display as part
of the 2025 Orchid Show*



*Students of T'ai Chi for Relaxation
enjoy practice in the Tropical Garden*



*Colorful features as part of the
"Floor is Lava" winter play exhibit*



*An absolutely stunning
display of Orchids in the
Tropical House*



*Artist, Lisa Heintzman posing with
her art display in the Gallery*



*Volunteers with Easter Seals
Northeast Indiana counting SCFVA*



*Volunteers preparing bags
for students receiving SCFVA*



Planning Report – February 2025

- Construction of the Franke Park Renaissance, Phase I project is nearly complete. There are a few punch list items remaining to finish at the pavilion and landscaping replacements to be completed in the spring.
- Construction at Packard Park continues with installation of utilities and preparation for site concrete. Our team meets regularly with the project contractors, Hamilton Hunter Builders.
- Construction at Brewer Park continues with installation of utilities and the construction of the pavilion underway. Our team meets regularly with the project contractors, Schenkel Construction.
- The new Lawton Park/Fourth Street Pedestrian Bridge is in place. Site restoration should be completed this spring.
- Staff has been reviewing submittals for Riverfront Phase II B as Hagerman ramps up to start construction. Staff will attend regular progress meetings scheduled to start in late March.

- Design work continues on the Foster Park Entrance project. Based on the public input received during the public open house, various emails and phone calls, and comments through the Engage website, the southern entrance option (near Branning St.) is preferred over the existing northern entrance location. The design team is working to incorporate changes to the southern option based on comments received.
- The Treeline District design team incorporated comments received through public input into three conceptual designs for this new park space. Parks staff met with the design team and Redevelopment staff to select a concept to move through design development. Staff will continue to work through final design to ensure it aligns with the department's goals and that it is integrated with the adjacent Riverfront designs.
- Staff is drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with City Utilities for the installation of off-site Floodway Riparian Mitigation for impacts at Franke Park during construction of the Franke Park Renaissance, Phase I project. City Utilities is installing multiple other areas of riparian mitigation at the former Lakeside Golf Course and has agreed to include this mitigation in a construction package with the others. The MOU will be presented for Park Board approval in the upcoming months.
- A topographic survey for Wells Street Park has been completed. Staff will begin working through design development for proposed improvements at this park.
- Staff reviewed design for interpretive signage at Wells Street Park and Well's Street Bridge. The Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association is using neighborhood grant funds to purchase the signs and is working with Parks staff to determine locations for installation.
- Staff is developing a planting plan for the Salomon Farm Park north/dining garden to be installed this spring.
- Staff has been coordinating with the City's communication team on city-wide website improvements which will update Parks' webpages. In addition to these updates, the department is also working on updates to make Parks' webpages universally accessible with input from the Inclusion Institute.
- Staff finalized a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Wildwood Park and Rockhill Park Historic Landscape Study and Guidelines in coordination with Wildwood Park Community Association. The association was recently awarded a grant from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, for this work.
- Staff is drafting a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Botanical Conservatory Exploration Garden and Terrace Garden design. The redesign of these spaces will not only bring opportunity for new uses but also improve the visitor's experience, universal accessibility, maintenance operations, and sustainability.
- Staff continues to meet regularly with Conservatory management to discuss various agreements, staff training, marketing, showcase, and facility operations. We continue to explore and implement ways to improve the physical facility and visitor experience.

Horticulture and Landscape Report- February 2025

- There were 25,984 seeds sown for Parks, Mother's Day Plant Sale and Conservatory Showcase.
- 706 plants were provided for the Home and Garden Show.
- A total of 1,800 Iresine cuttings, 3,434 Spider Plants and 2,660 Asparagus Ferns were propagated for the SCFVA.
- Greenhouse volunteers worked approximately 397.9 hours in the greenhouse helping to transplant, clean plants, price and label, clean the greenhouse benches and get plants together for the home and garden show and the gift shop.
- One seasonal gardener was hired this month.
- All landscape staff assisted in snow removal and salting at Lawton Park, Promenade Park, Lakeside Park, Headwaters Park, and Foster Park during winter weather events.
- The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup, leaf removal, perennial bed cleanups, tree pruning, and equipment maintenance. The team also began cleaning up brush around delta pond #3 to improve both aesthetics and views of the pond. Staff continued to cut down and clean up the native grass vegetation around the main pond. They do 1/3 of the pond every season to help control weed trees/shrubs. The remaining

vegetation is left up to provide wildlife habitat for overwintering.

- The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup, leaf removal, perennial garden and golf clubhouse cleanup & pruning, stick/limb cleanup, trellis construction, tree/shrub pruning, and honeysuckle removal and treatment along the greenway trails.
- The Downtown team continued to pick litter daily, prune, and cleanup leaves as weather allowed. They also worked on pruning trees along the Headwaters East riverbank to improve views of the Little Turtle statue from the river. Staff walked the riverbanks cutting and treating any young honeysuckle re-sprouts along with removing and treating all the mature honeysuckle on the riverbank east of the ice rink.
- The City team removed a few dead crab trees around the Bluffton Road Letter Bed and reduced some of the large mulch beds adjacent to them. They continued to prune trees at Swinney Park, Hamilton Park, Repka Park, Reservoir Park, Memorial Park, and the Rea Building. The team cleared a few areas of overgrown brush to improve aesthetics in Franke Park, as well as cleaning up brush along the fence line in Bass Park. They also chipped honeysuckle brush piles up at Lindenwood that had been created by volunteers.
- Some poor weather has resulted in greenhouse work (transplanting, seeding, labeling, weeding, etc.) being completed by landscape staff.
- Lawnganics contract was renewed for Turf Fertilization and Weed Control for the Various parks contract, Headwaters Park, Riverfront IIA, and Promenade Park.
- Triscape's contract was renewed for mulching Promenade Park and Headwaters Park.
- Visionscapes contract was renewed for mulching Foellinger Theatre, Kreager-Taylors Dream, Meyers Park, Downtown Community Center, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, Nuckols Park, Freimann Square, Courthouse Green, and Main Street Medians.
- Mulching contracts for Franke Pavilion 1, Franke Pond Pavilion, Salomon, PSI OTE Upper and Lower, Shoaff Riverlodge, Indian Village Sears Pavilion, Jennings Center, Powell Park, McKinnie Commons, McMillen Community Center, and the Weisser Center were renewed with Pride Landcare.
- Mowing contracts were renewed with Pride Landcare for Foellinger Theatre, Myers Park, Franklin Park, Powell Park, Freimann Square, Courthouse Green, Main St. Medians, the Downtown Community Center, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, Memorial Pool, Foster Gardens, and McKinnie Commons.
- The mowing contract for Headwaters was renewed with MJK Lawncare.
- Heartland Restoration Services contract was renewed for maintaining native plantings, rain gardens, bioswales, etc. at Salomon Farms, Kreager Park, Buckner Park, Lakeside Park, Reservoir, and the Thomas Nature Sanctuary.
- Landscape staff attended the Green Expo at the Indianapolis Convention Center on February 12th. Staff spent the day in a variety of educational horticulture courses while earning continuing education credits toward their pesticide licenses.
- Paul Rodriguez passed his Category 3A test allowing him to be a licensed Ornamental Pesticide Applicator.
- Human Resources gave all landscape staff DISC personality assessments, as well as follow up coaching to help us improve our productivity, teamwork, and communication.








Riparian Management Report- February 2025

- Onboarding process for the basics of the new volunteer management software is completed.
- Continued volunteer recruitment, networking, and planning for the year. Attended Volunteer Center's Volunteer Networking Brunch.
- Designing a presentation for the River Management Society's Symposium as well as designing a poster, continues.
- Existing training modules for the Department in the process of getting revamped as per Risk Management to be more comprehensive and more easily tracked for the future.
- Interviews completed and an applicant chosen to fill full-time Riparian position.
- Replacement of decking on the service boat began as well as general prep of boats for the upcoming season.

Forestry Report- February 2025

- The 2024/2025 Street Tree Removal Project is underway. Mudrack Tree Service will be removing the remaining stumps. Between contract crews and in-house crews, we anticipate all of the 462 high-priority street trees removals, and the resulting stumps, to be removed by June 1st.
- The City of Fort Wayne has approximately 40,000 vacant street tree planting sites and funding to plant about 1000 trees annually. For this reason, we are not able to plant trees based on request alone. Residents wishing to fill one or more vacant sites adjacent to their homes can apply through the Citizen Match Tree Planting Program. Applications can be found on the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation website. The deadline to apply is July 1st.
- Coordination to make free River birch seedling trees available to the area 3rd graders has begun. This opportunity is made possible through partnerships with the School Children Flower and Vegetable Association, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and the Homestead High School Environmental Science Club. In total, we expect to deliver more than 2,300 seedlings.
- Over the years, tree grate maintenance has proven challenging to keep up with. Forestry staff took advantage of the unseasonably warm weather in February to begin inventorying and evaluating all 621 tree grates.
- In February, Forestry crews completed 113 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 100 trees in February. 3 of these were located within the parks and 5 were the result of vehicle damage.
- Crews responded to and cleared 10 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs.
- Completed 11 tree damage appraisals for trees that had been struck by vehicles. These appraisals resulted in \$11,378.00 in damages to City-owned trees.
- Responded to and closed 23 311 Call Center requests for service this month.

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

-  www.RiverfrontFW.org had 2,509 hits to the site this month and the Promenade Park link had 4,538 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 1,018 hits in February.
-  The Marketing Team is working on the DRAFT Annual Report and related documents. Like last year, we will have both the complete Annual Report and a Summary available very soon.
-  The Marketing Team continues to push out job messaging and attend Job Fairs and related events. Over 3,000 hits to the Parks Job link in February!
-  **Web Statistics:** **Users:** 32,483 **Hits:** 104,911
-  Day Camp and PODS brochure/postcard/flyer completed, delivered to schools.
-  Signs promoting the Registration App are now in the youth centers, the Administrative Office, and the Botanical Conservatory.
-  Riverfront and Conservatory promo pieces completed for spring.

- ✚ Submitted nominations for grants for Cooper and Jennings Centers.
- ✚ Met with DNR to begin planning for ORLP and LWCF grants in 2025.
- ✚ Continued planning fundraising strategy for Salomon Farm Park Animal Barn project.
- ✚ Met with Community Center and AWS to discuss fundraising plans for Sensory Clubhouse.
- ✚ Social media promotions for: Spring edition of the Fun Times, programs impacted by winter weather, Headwaters Ice Rink, Botanical Conservatory/"Floor is Lava", and Foellinger Theatre posts among others.
- ✚ Arranged for six media interviews with select Staff.
- ✚ February Media Mentions: 81
- ✚ Social Media Totals for February:

FB Followers	100,144
FB Reach	776,677
X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,956
Instagram Followers	27,634

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- ✚ The Parks golf courses are slated to open on or about March 22. This is a bit later than the previous two years, as this winter has been a bit colder and is hanging on a little longer than the past few. There does not appear to be any substantial problems that have popped up over the winter, so we should be able to hit the ground running.
- ✚ Long-time golf course superintendent Bryan Keister retired as of February 14, and a new superintendent should be in place by early April. This should not disrupt the operation, and hopefully this will be a seamless transition.
- ✚ Onboarding day for seasonal staff was March 5 and was well-attended. The inside golf staffing is good, with a nice mix of returning and new employees. The outside staff is certainly adequate, but we are always looking to bring in new people.
- ✚ Golf course merchandise will begin arriving shortly. Inventory will consist of basics (balls/tees/gloves) with some expansion into apparel (hats, shirts). By design, inventory is limited to basics, but has been expanding based on how it is received by our patrons. We will not be stocking hard goods (clubs/bags).
- ✚ High School boys golf and middle school golf will start as soon as the courses open. A total of seven schools

utilizes our facilities.

- ✚ Leagues are being contacted for the start of their seasons (usually mid-late April).
- ✚ Construction relating to the Deep Rock Tunnel project will continue to affect Foster Park this season. It is not expected to be as disruptive as last year, and may be completed by mid- to late summer. Immediately upon completion, we will identify and prioritize repairs that need to be made to the golf course. For this season, we have reversed the nines, and we will still have one provisional green and four holes total affected by the construction.
- ✚ Golf showed no signs of slowing down last season, and even with the challenges we face there is no reason to be anything but optimistic about the 2025 season.

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



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

- ✚ The notice to proceed was given to Fleming Excavating to construct the Wheelock Road Trail from Jefferson Middle School to Stellhorn Road.
- ✚ We had an excellent public information meeting for the Stellhorn Road Trail: Maplecrest to Wheelock with 76 attending.
- ✚ The Hanna Street Trail from Wallace to Berry will be bid in April.
- ✚ The extension of the Towpath Trailhead on Glendale Road will be bid in March.
- ✚ Construction on the Anthony Boulevard Streetscape Project between Pontiac and Creighton will begin in mid-May and continue into fall. This is a Community Development project with the trail on the west side and a sidewalk on the east side.
- ✚ We will give the notice to proceed to DLZ to design the Poka-Bache Connector trail along the east side of Bluffton Rd from Lower Huntington Road to Ferguson Road in March after Redevelopment Commission and City Council approval.
- ✚ We will be taking a thorough look at existing trail amenities like benches, portable restrooms, trees, landscaping, etc., and determining gaps where amenities are needed.



[Home | National Recreation and Park Association](#)

Division News and Media Coverage:



WANE, Fort Wayne Children's Choir honors Tom and Cindy Henry

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-childrens-choir-renames-concert-in-honor-of-tom-and-cindy-henry/>

WANE, FWPD to receive high-tech training simulator

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-police-to-receive-high-tech-training-simulator/>

WANE, Pothole filling season in Fort Wayne

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-police-to-receive-high-tech-training-simulator/>

WPTA, Portland Loo project moving forward

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/03/12/fort-wayne-city-council-approves-purchase-portland-loo/>

WPTA, Applications for citizen match tree planting program open

https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/03/10/applications-citizen-match-tree-planting-program-open-fort-wayne/?utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=organicclicks&tbref=hp

Adams Radio Group, Spring leaf bag collection by Street Dept. to start soon

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/03/11/spring-cleaning-citys-brown-biodegradable-bag-collection-to-begin/>

WPTA, Gen. Mad Antony Wayne organization to coordinate parade following TRF cancellation

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/24/general-mad-anthony-wayne-org-coordinate-parade-following-three-rivers-festival-cancelation/>

WFFT, Annual parade marches on despite TRF cancellation

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/annual-parade-marches-on-despite-trf-cancellation/article_8fb65510-f2f7-11ef-85dd-c36b8bf57d0e.html

Adams Radio Group, City to host Neighborhood Presidents Meeting

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/02/25/85815/>

Adams Radio Group, Upcoming public meeting on Stellhorn Road Trail

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/02/24/85774/>

PBS, Primetime 39 program with Sen. Johnson and Rep. Abbott as guests

<https://www.pbs.org/video/rep-david-abbott-sen-dr-tyler-johnson-kmbpg5/>

WANE, Jehl opposes golf entertainment center development

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/bait-and-switch-councilman-russ-jehl-opposes-golf-entertainment-center-cites-zoning-issues/>

WPTA, Developer shares excitement about new golf entertainment center development

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/27/back-9-leaders-share-excitement-over-announcement-new-fort-wayne-location/>

WOWO, Gov. Braun on Fort Wayne's Morning News

<https://wowo.com/governor-mike-braun-first-30-days-freedom-and-opportunity-agenda/>

WANE, City Council recap – Portland Loo

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/city-council-looks-at-approving-purchase-of-the-portland-loo/>

WANE, City Council recap – Apartment project

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/southeast-apartment-complex-due-for-renovation-may-get-opportunity/>

WANE, Update on passenger rail efforts in Fort Wayne

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/planning-chugs-along-for-fort-wayne-passenger-rail-amidst-federal-funding-freeze/>

Input FW, Feature on complete streets

<https://www.inputfortwayne.com/features/the-push-for-complete-streets-could-make-fort-wayne-safer-and-more-accessible.aspx>

Input FW, IFF's community development in Fort Wayne

<https://www.inputfortwayne.com/features/iffs-community-development-in-fort-wayne.aspx>

WANE, Mayor Tucker featured on Black History Month program

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/mayor-tucker-reflects-on-time-served-in-office/>

WANE, Two lawsuits cost Fort Wayne nearly \$1 million

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/a-snow-plow-crash-and-excessive-force-two-lawsuits-cost-fort-wayne-nearly-1m/>

WANE, Salt shortage for plow trucks

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/everybodys-going-through-this-right-now-salt-shortage-hits-allen-county/>

WOWO, Update on Fort Wayne International Airport construction

<https://wowo.com/fwa-construction-delayed-completion-pushed-to-fall-2025/>

WANE, Mayor Tucker delivers her first State of the City address

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/forging-new-footprints-together-fort-wayne-mayor-sharon-tucker-to-deliver-state-of-the-city-address/>

WANE, Neighbors of North River Fieldhouse weigh in

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/new-neighbors-of-north-river-fieldhouse-weigh-in/>

WANE, East Central Neighborhood Plan meetings

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/last-chance-to-voice-your-opinion-on-the-east-central-neighborhoods-future/>

WANE, County Council meeting recap

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/most-credit-projects-pass-county-council-after-months-of-miscommunication/>

WANE, How the Arts United Center is becoming more accessible

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/how-the-arts-united-center-is-becoming-more-accessible-in-2025/>

WPTA, Mayor announces downtown patrol district to improve safety

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/19/state-city-mayor-tucker-announces-downtown-patrol-district-improve-safety-downtown-fort-wayne/>

WPTA, Mayor announces Mental Health Commission initiative

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/19/fort-wayne-mayor-sharon-tucker-announces-mental-health-commission-initiative/>

Adams Radio Group, Public input opportunities for East Central Forward Neighborhood Plan

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/02/18/final-public-input-opportunities-for-east-central-forward-neighborhood-plan/>

City TV, On the Move program with Councilwoman Chambers

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=ztPg7V0vcdbfhMP>

WPTA, FWFD seeking applicants

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/16/fwfd-applications-open-new-firefighter-recruit-class-monday/>

WANE, Mayor announces major redevelopment project – North River

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/watch-mayor-announces-major-redevelopment-project/>

WOWO, City Clerk – State GOP position

<https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-city-clerk-gets-nod-to-lead-indiana-gop/>

WFFT, Open house to showcase Stellhorn Road Trail designs

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/open-house-to-showcase-stellhorn-road-trail-designs/article_3e9d10b4-eaec-11ef-b86d-975f0310532d.html

WANE, Investing in southeast FW

<https://www.wane.com/news/fort-wayne-wants-to-check-in-with-southeast-residents-on-strategy-plan/>

City TV, ‘News Around Town’ program with features on public safety; Avenue of Autos project; Citilink’s Transit Equity Day

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=JT15UuZXA82bJwDr>

WPTA, Walk in the Park segment with Parks and Recreation

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/13/walk-park-open-gym-preschoolers/>

WPTA, Fort Wayne UNITED relaunches

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/13/fort-wayne-united-relaunches-with-new-leadership/>

FW Bus Weekly, City Council recap on TRAA and Portland Loos

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_a10c0326-ea39-11ef-b4fd-63e9263931a7.html

WFFT, Conservatory feature

https://www.wfft.com/news/botanical-conservatory-features-display-for-your-sweetheart/article_a5393d2c-ea63-11ef-842f-435526ea5b84.html

WFFT, Clean Drains program

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/city-initiative-aims-to-keep-storm-drains-clean-using-art/article_5fcbea80-ea47-11ef-9a65-5fb1bb536e92.html



Riverfront
FORT WAYNE
EDUCATION

SPRING CELEBRATION

Exploring Cultural Traditions Around the World



Germany Thailand Bulgaria Middle East
Music Soarin' Hawk Indiana Wild Food Trucks
Information Booths Crafts Plant Walk Prizes


Saturday, March 22 **FREE EVENT**
11:00am – 3:00pm
Promenade Park, 202 W. Superior


LEARN MORE RIVERFRONTFW.ORG/EVENTS


 **Riverfront**
FORT WAYNE

 **FORT WAYNE**
PARKS AND
RECREATION



 **BOTANICAL** Showcase
CONSERVATORY Exhibit
January 11 - April 6
Public hours

Sponsored by:
English-Bonter-Mitchell Foundation
103.9 Wayne FM
PNC Charitable Trusts
Magee-O'Connor Foundation
Fort Wayne Park Foundation

 **FORT WAYNE**
PARKS AND
RECREATION

Lisa Heinzman: Innovative Abstractor January 11 – April 5

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 S. Calhoun Street

See paintings inspired by the energy and emotions that Lisa HeintzmanPorta experiences. Heintzman is very observant of how one motion affects the next and how simple daily life has so many moments all compiled into one day. The artist paints abstract art with these emotions and the perfect imperfections of each moment. Time is suspended in the paintings. Heintzman believes beauty is necessary and the intent and purpose is to help view the imperfect world by bringing calmness, joy, and serenity of the movements in the paintings.



[click for Day Camp brochure](#)

[click for PODS brochure](#)



SCHOLARSHIPS

available for qualified youth
up to 17 years of age!

**One scholarship (max \$75)
per calendar year**

 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION

fortwayneparks.org



THE GREAT TRAIN CONNECTION

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY
MARCH 14-16, 2025**

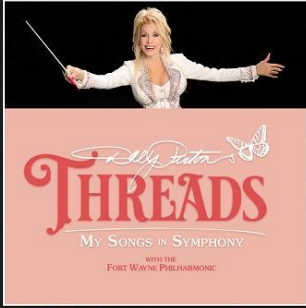
Botanical Conservatory
1100 S. Calhoun St., Fort Wayne

 **BOTANICAL
CONSERVATORY**




These shows and more . . . coming soon to

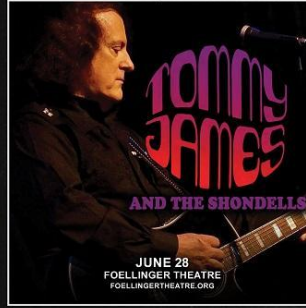
Foellinger Theatre



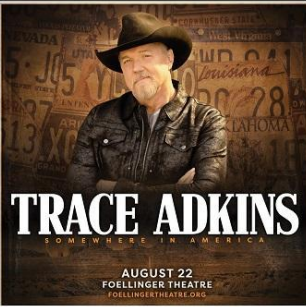
THREADS
My Songs in Symphony
WITH THE FORT WAYNE PHILHARMONIC
AUGUST 22
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG




**JUSTIN MOORE
JOE NICHOLS**
LIVE IN CONCERT
JUNE 5, 2025
FOELLINGER THEATRE



**TOMMY JAMES
AND THE SHONDELLS**
JUNE 28
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG



TRACE ADKINS
SOMEWHERE IN AMERICA
AUGUST 22
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG




WARRANT
LET THE GOOD TIMES ROCK TOUR
LITA FORD FIREHOUSE
CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF CHERRY PIE
SEPTEMBER 26 - FOELLINGER THEATRE - FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG

Tickets on sale now!

Through Ticketmaster at
Foellingertheatre.org
or **Ticketmaster.com**

In person at Fort Wayne
Parks & Recreation Dept.
705 E. State Blvd.
(no additional fees)

 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION
Foellinger Theatre

Foellingertheatre.org

PLAY the PARKS

Opening mid-March
Follow us on social media or call the golf course.

Foster Park Golf Course

Historic 18-Hole Championship Course
New Golf Carts New Golf Paths

Rudisill Blvd. & Old Mill Rd. | (260) 427-6735

Shoaff Park Golf Course & Driving Range

Challenging 18-Hole Course, All Par 3
City's Premier Driving Range

Great for beginners, families and
skilled golfers who want to play a quick round!

6401 St. Joe Rd. | (260) 427-6745

McMillen Park Golf Complex

18-Hole Executive Course • Mad Anthony's Short Course
Driving Range • Jerry Fox Learning Center
Putting Green • Short Game Practice Area • Foot Golf
Lifetime Sports Academy

MORE GOLF for LESS GREEN
Play 9 Holes on weekdays for just \$7!

Oxford at Hessen Cassel | (260) 427-6710

 FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION

fortwayneparks.org
@FortWayneParks Golf

Senior Men's Golf League Organizational Meeting
April 16, 9 am, Franke Park Pavilion #1
or call Jim at 260-479-7770.