



FORT WAYNE  
PARKS AND  
RECREATION

Staff Reports Submitted: Thursday, December 11, 2025 – Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory (Kessler Room)

## Steve McDaniel, Director

- This month was filled with several meetings covering various topics within the department. Those included Foster Park golf and entrance, Theatre, Park Foundation, Jennings Center, Riverfront development, parks amenities app, and marketing.
- We honored our veterans with a breakfast celebration at the downtown Community Center on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The staff and volunteers provided a great morning filled with food, music, a presentation, a color guard, and entertainment.
- Jason Smith and I had a discussion with Josh Rifkin regarding next year's summer tennis tournament. This event has evolved over the last few years. Our discussion allowed us to understand how the evolution would continue, and we offered to collaborate as needed.
- Chad and I attended the Warrior Breed Motorcycle Club's press conference at Memorial Park for the dedication of the new flagpole in the grove on the east side of the park. It was a great ceremony.
- I attended the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association's annual conference. This event included educational sessions, vendor discussions, and networking with other park professionals across the state.
- I participated in two lighting ceremonies this month. The first was with Blue Jacket for the Fantasy of Lights in Franke Park. The second was the Unity Lighting at McKinnie Commons with the local chapter of the Pan-Hellenic Council.
- The team and I participated in HR training for new software that is being unveiled this month for applicants for our open positions. From what I can tell of the new software and feedback from the team, we think this will be a great change in how we deal with hiring several hundred individuals each year.
- I had my last "Drop in with the Director" session for this year at the Community Center. I was able to have some good one-on-one discussions with staff members who visited me. I will look forward to next year to build on this experience and hopefully make it better.
- A group of us met with Visit Fort Wayne and other attraction groups from our area. This was our first of many quarterly meetings that allowed us to collaborate with other facilities that do attraction-based programming.

## Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director of Recreational Services, Salomon Farm Park, Neighborhood Outreach, Jennings Recreation Center, Weisser Park Youth Center, McMillen Park Community, Community Center (Downtown), Riverfront (Promenade Park), Athletic Fields and Courts, Aquatics (Northside Pools/McMillen Park Pools), Golf (Foster Park/McMillen Park/Shoaff Park), Outdoor Recreation, Special Events, Headwaters Park, & Travel Service

### Community Center

- Attendance for senior (50+) programs increased to one thousand four hundred fifteen participants, which exceeded the same period in 2024 by one hundred thirty-six participants. Revenue remained stable compared to last year.



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- Attendance for adult programs totaled six hundred sixty participants, which was slightly lower than in October of 2024. Classes with strong participation included the Aging and In-Home Overview with 14 participants, Four-Week Adult Tap with 13 participants, Dementia Behaviors with 8 participants, and Legal Counseling with 5 participants.
- The Community Center hosted the annual Veterans' Breakfast on November 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am, which had one hundred two attendees and a total event count of one hundred fifty-two participants, including sponsors and volunteers. Twelve volunteers assisted with the event. Activities included a hot breakfast, live music from the Shepherd's Brass Quintet, Bingo, and recognition of veterans. Each veteran received a commemorative shirt, and all attendees received a small gift.

### Community Outreach

- The Supervisor of Community Outreach represented Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation at multiple Fort Wayne Community Schools events, including Portage Middle School's Fall Festival and Haley Elementary School's Title 1 Family Night. Over 500 people attended the event at Portage Middle School, and 9 families attended at Haley Elementary.

### Weisser Park Youth Center

- Attendance was five hundred forty-seven registered youth.
- During this period, staff served three hundred thirty-one snacks and three hundred fifteen Kids Café meals.
- Team-building and social and emotional learning activities were added to the weekly curriculum during the reporting period. Youth participated in activities using Team Walker boards that required groups of three to work together to complete a relay challenge. Youth also completed a Circle of Control exercise in which they identified factors within and outside their control related to situations that made them upset or sad.
- Youth participated in arts, crafts, and STEM projects. Activities included making scented candles, creating posters related to the Civil Rights Movement, and building film canister rockets. After designing their rockets, the youth learned about carbon dioxide and gas expansion by launching the rockets using water and anti-acid tablets.
- On October 23, the center held its Annual Harvest Fest Party with sixty-four youth in attendance. Participants enjoyed a chili dinner, caramel apple sundae bar, hot chocolate bar, games, and other activities.
- On November 20, the center hosted its Annual Fall Holiday Dinner. The Summit City Distillers hockey team assisted with serving the meal and engaged youth in recreation games. Sixty-seven youth and twenty-one adults were served.
- On November 13, nine youth participated in a shopping trip to Academy Sports + Outdoors. Youth submitted written or illustrated entries describing how they would use one hundred dollars in a sporting goods store, and each participant received a two-hundred-dollar spending limit during the trip.

### Jennings Recreation Center

- Jennings Recreation Center served an average of twenty-four registered youth per day, an increase from the previous month.
- Erin's House provided activities focused on understanding grief and expressing emotions related to sudden loss. Participants also created cards for the Holloway-Davis family in memory of former employee, Chantell Holloway Davis.
- The center hosted Harvest Fest and served a meal to forty-five youth. The event included games, prizes, and a basement scavenger hunt.
- Twenty-one youth visited the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo.



## McMillen Park Community Center

- Creative Bloom continued to run successfully with sessions centered on identity-based and personality-focused art activities. These projects supported self-expression and reflection among participants. Co-facilitators remained consistent and maintained a strong creative environment.
- Sister Circles progressed well and hosted its first guest speaker this month. Participants responded positively and continued engaging in sessions focused on empowerment, emotional development, and community building.
- Attendance of 243

## Johnny Appleseed Campground

- The 2025 season at Johnny Appleseed Campground concluded successfully, with continued engagement from campground hosts and visitors. While overall revenue was slightly down from last year, the campground remains a valued recreational destination, and all hosts have confirmed their return for the 2026 season. Factors influencing revenue trends include changes in RV ownership patterns, economic conditions, and travel behaviors.
- The campground officially closed for the season on Monday, November 3, 2025, following the successful completion of the annual Dog Show.

## Salomon Farm Park

- In the ongoing effort to grow rental operations at Salomon Farm Park, another 2025 goal was successfully achieved. Developed collaboratively by the marketing team and the Salomon Farm Park team, the final goal for 2025 rentals focused on advertising in a wedding magazine. Wedding Day Magazine was selected, and ads are scheduled to run in the fall/winter and spring/summer issues. While final revenue figures are not yet available, preliminary observations indicate that rentals at Salomon Farm Park have increased by approximately 30% since 2023. The combined efforts of the marketing team, rental staff, and the additional attention devoted to the rentals program are clearly paying off. Looking ahead, the goal is to continue this growth in the coming years, allowing rental operations to become a significant contributor to Salomon Farm Park's revenue and helping to support farm operations and activities.

## Golf

- Chris Rudolph reported that Mark Slater has begun the process of rebuilding the #7 green at the Foster Park Golf Course. He stated that he was having a little trouble with the green holding its shape due to lack of moisture in the dirt or ground.
- Chris Rudolph stated that he and his staff continue to repair or replace irrigation heads at all three golf courses. He also stated that this will be an ongoing process due to the large number of heads that are broken or missing.
- Gary Whitacre reported that Foster, McMillen, and Shoaff Golf Courses are still enjoying play even though the temperature is starting to drop and days are getting shorter.

## Riverfront

- Total Promenade Program and Rental Attendance: 1,650
- The Headwaters Ice Rink opened on November 22, 2025, to a crowd of 342 people skating. Opening day of 2024 was 232 skaters. The opening weekend continued strongly and averaged more than the 2024 opening weekend. The Ice Rink was able to stay open the second weekend with winter storm warnings on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, but we did see a drop in attendance due to the weather and road conditions.
  - The Winter Market was canceled on the 29<sup>th</sup> and will be rescheduled in December.



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- The total number of skaters for November was 1,516, with 1,289 rental skates. This was about 300 more skaters than in 2024.
- Our number 1 selling item of the concessions continues to be the hot chocolate, followed by the hot dogs. The concessions sold a total of \$2,555 for the month of November.
- The new skates, along with the new skate helpers for beginning skaters, have been a hit for people attending the rink.
- The parking lot being cleared and the new parking garage have also helped with attendance as the construction begins to come to an end on Barr St. We hope this increase in attendance continues into December and the Holiday season.
- In November 2025, Promenade Park offered three free, community-centered programs. These programs were Yoga on the Riverfront, a Veterans Tribute Concert, and Zumba on the Riverfront - each designed to activate the space and bring the community together. Yoga on the Riverfront, our monthly partnership with Discover Yoga, continued to provide a free wellness opportunity for visitors. On November 9, 38 participants gathered to stretch, breathe, and start their morning with intention. 38 is slightly fewer than our typical turnout, but still a meaningful and engaged group on a cold winter morning. That same day, the Veterans Tribute Concert welcomed guests for an afternoon of music presented in partnership with the American Legion Band. 40 attendees joined us to honor veterans. On November 10, our ongoing Zumba series, offered in collaboration with the YMCA, brought 11 energetic participants together for a lively, dance-filled workout. As always, this free series continues to encourage neighbors to stay active and connect through fun, inclusive movement. We'll be partnering with all three organizations again in December.

## **Deputy Rhonda Berg - Director of Finance & Theatre, Budgets, Finance, Payroll & Commercial Vouchers, Trust Fund Donations, Registrations, Rentals, Tickets, Customer Service, Accounts Payable, and Receivable.**

### **Payroll and Accounts Payable**

- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 255 employees (145 full-time and 110 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending November 29<sup>th</sup>, and paid on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing or in the process of being hired, as of November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025:
  - Assistant Golf Superintendent (Fund 121)
  - Manager – Neighborhood Programs (Fund 121)
  - Program Facility Coordinator – Jennings (Fund 121)
  - Heavy Equipment Operator (Fund 121)
  - Program Facility Coordinator – McMillen (Fund 121)
  - Fleet Mechanic – Golf (Fund 439)
- There were 46 total P-Card statements that were processed for the month of November for charges made at the end of September to almost the end of October.
- There was a total of 603 invoices processed during the month of November from 11/1 to 11/30.
- Down to the last few year-round Seasonal employees. Golf course separations are nearly complete.
- Seasonal Ice Rink positions are all filled.



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- 2026 Seasonal Requisition is almost all ready to be submitted.
- I have been working with TMS regarding our Payroll software, per Mona Snider in Payroll. The OBBBA has changed the way we need to report overtime, so we are changing the way that the software calculates overtime to match what the Civil City side is doing. We are transitioning away from the 201 Overtime 1.5 pay designation code and moving to split pay designation codes of 205 Straight Overtime and 225 Overtime 0.5. The calculation method is not changing, and it will not affect anything other than appearing differently on the time cards. What used to appear as 4.0 hours 201 OT 1.5 will now appear as 4.0 hours of 205 ST and 4.0 hours of 225 OT 0.5. This will allow Payroll to specifically pull overtime hours worked for tax reporting purposes. This will go into effect in the pay period that runs 12/14-12/27.

## **Customer Service and Finance**

- Joyce and Maddie, along with Marketing Staff, held an open house at the McMillen Family Pavilion on November 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Joana has begun to receive and enter Garden Plot contracts and payments.
- The garden plots at Foster West have been added to RecTrac as we work towards a better tracking system and reservation method.
- Joana has begun to receive and enter Garden Plot contracts and payments into RecTrac.
- Winter Fun Tim registration has begun, and the front office staff have been assisting customers with registering for classes/programs.
- Joana has assisted other areas of the department with her bilingual skills, helping customers and recording videos in Spanish.
- Rhonda attended eCivis Grants Management Training. This is the software the City will use to track grants received and grant options.
- Rhonda attended the November Southeast Area Partnership meeting and promoted our holiday programs and events, and took copies of the Winter Fun Times.
- Rhonda, Joyce, and Tiffany attended training for the City's new employment software.

## **Foellinger Theatre Report**

November was focused on long-term planning, formalizing agreements and rates, and building internal structure to support future growth of the theatre's operations.

### **Board Items: Co-Pro & Rental Agreements / Rate Schedules**

This month, Rhonda and I presented to the Theatre Committee and then to the Board a comprehensive package of:

- A co-promotion (co-pro) agreement template outlining financial splits, marketing expectations, production responsibilities, and settlement procedures.
- Standard updated rental agreements for outside users of the venue, designed to create consistency in how we structure events, protect the venue, and clearly define responsibilities.
- A rate structure for both commercial and nonprofit rentals, including base rental fees, staffing minimums, equipment charges, and add-on services. The nonprofit pricing emphasizes accessibility while still covering core operational costs. Feedback from the committee was incorporated into the final document revisions, and the Board approved all proposed documents.

## **Promoter Relations & 2026 Season Development**

Throughout November, I've met and communicated with multiple **promoters and agents** regarding potential bookings for the **2026 season**. This included:



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- Reviewing availabilities and discussing routing opportunities that align with the Theatre's calendar and market.
- Sharing updated rental and co-pro parameters so promoters have a clear understanding of venue expectations.
- Beginning soft holds and preliminary discussions for several potential 2026 dates, pending final offers and routing confirmation.

These conversations are laying the groundwork for a strong, well-balanced 2026 lineup.

### **Job Descriptions & SOP Manual**

A major focus in November was **organizational clarity and documentation**:

- I continued developing **updated and/or new job descriptions** for key Theatre positions to better reflect current operational needs, clarify responsibilities, and support future hiring and evaluations.
- I'm also working on a **comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual** for the Theatre. This manual is intended to standardize processes across front-of-house, production, rentals, and administrative functions. It will serve as a central reference for staff and will support onboarding, training, and continuity of operations.
- In addition to an SOP manual, we've been actively working on finalizing a new venue tech pack, which is a comprehensive document that outlines all the technical, logistical, and operational details of the Foellinger Theatre.

Draft sections completed this month include general venue operations, event day procedures, communication protocols, and basic rental workflow.

### **Offers & Programming Work**

In support of future programming, I spent time **building and refining show offers**, including:

- Reviewing financial models and historical data to create responsible offers that balance artist expectations with venue risk tolerance.
- Studying scaling maps from past events in Ticketmaster to gain insight into buying trends and strategies to maximize revenue.
- Aligning potential partnerships with the Board-approved rental and co-pro frameworks to ensure consistency and sustainability.

### **Marketing & Other Future-Focused Work**

- Meeting with marketing firms to discuss ideas and strategies for enhancing the Theatre's social media presence and exploring a potential venue rebrand.
- Exploring opportunities for corporate sponsorship and community partnership.
- Working with Dave and Vanessa on projects to enhance the Theatre.

Overall, November's work centered on long-term infrastructure—formalizing agreements and rates, strengthening promoter relationships for the 2026 season, and building internal documentation and job clarity to support smoother operations moving forward.

## **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 November were at 112



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- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Bridge, Lions Park, Waynedale Park, Lawton Park Skate Park, Foster Park, Freimann Square, Packard Park, and Lindenwood Nature Preserve.
- Pressure-washed the following locations: Freimann Square, Packard Park, Waynedale Park, Brewer Park, Rockhill Park, Foster Park Pavilion 3, and Memorial Park.
- All summer restrooms and pavilions have been winterized.
- Facilities employee Scott Jewell has decided to retire. He has been with us for 11 years and will be missed by all.

## **Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans**

- The holiday/winter showcase installation at the Botanical Conservatory was completed on the 21<sup>st</sup>.
- All light timers and photocells were updated for daylight savings time change.
- Winterization of non-heated facilities and amenities was nearing completion except for irrigation at Freimann Square, which will be done after contracted repairs are complete.
- Repairs were made at the Thomas Nature Sanctuary, including siding damage and garage door opener replacement.
- Seasonal maintenance was completed at the Franke Park Day Camps furnaces and heaters.
- A new heat shield and heater were installed at the Salomon Farm Park livestock barn.
- New heritage plaques were installed at Freimann Square.
- The downtown holiday festival culminated on the 26<sup>th</sup> with the lighting ceremony of downtown Community Center displays that were installed by the maintenance techs.





- The on-call staff received a total of **27** calls this month. **7** of which were lock issues, **9** were calls from dispatch regarding alarms/emergencies, and **11** were miscellaneous issues.

**Maintenance Technician completed the following tasks last month:**

**10:** Alarm Maintenance, **35:** Building Maintenance, **5:** Carpentry, **14:** Electrical Repair,  
**8:** HVAC Maintenance, **4:** Key Core Maintenance, **43:** Light Maintenance,  
**17:** Lock Maintenance, **1:** Paint, **1:** Playground Maintenance,  
**11:** Plumbing Maintenance, **6:** Sign Maintenance, **5:** Vandalism

 **Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment Rob Schenkel**

- Crews converted mowers to Polar Tracks and serviced, installed, and prepared snow plows and salt spreaders in anticipation of winter snow removal operations.
- Tree limb and debris cleanup continued at various park locations.
- River greenway trails were serviced weekly to mow, remove sticks, and debris.
- Botanical Conservatory and Lakeside Park compost bins were emptied several times this month.
- Crews were busy wrapping up the mowing season. This included mulching leaves, string trimming around trees and fence lines, and blowing off walkways.
- Grounds crews and Heavy equipment worked over the Thanksgiving holiday removing the first big snow fall of the year. They did an amazing job at getting the parks cleaned up.
- Crews are running trash routes three days a week, ensuring all receptacles in the parks are emptied.
- Safety mulch was added to the playgrounds at Waynedale Park, Franke Park, and Lions Park.
- Equipment that is not currently in use has been transported to the Kreager Park Maintenance facility for winter servicing.



## **Main Trac Coordinator: Nicole Roth**

- Main Trac Entries: 10,660 for the month.
- We had 36 calls from the 311 Call Center this month.
- We had 0 volunteer hours reported to Nicole.
- Busy entering time sheets and contracted/sales invoices.
- Running monthly reports for Recreation Staff.
- Nicole has completed all her CCUs for her spray license.
- Nicole worked with KayeC to organize a pasta party for Lawton Maintenance.

## **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.
- Continuing the 2025 River Greenway inspections.
- Working on 2025 monthly MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks.
- Writing and overseeing 2025 change orders.

## **Operations and Support: Travis Roth**

### **Storeroom and Property:**

- Storeroom staff began stocking up on snow shovels, winter wiper blades, and heavy gloves for the upcoming winter season.
- Initial checks of inventory numbers have started to prepare for the audit of the entire storeroom stock by the City's Internal Audit Department.
- Staff worked with Salomon farm to determine which older pieces of equipment stored at the farm need vinyl numbers made up to help staff identify individual tractors for service issues.
- 2026 blanket purchase orders were prepared so they can be submitted as soon as possible to allow 2026 parts purchases to continue seamlessly after the first of the year.
- Russo informed us that RedMax will be bringing back their stand-alone reciprocator. These units are used by Landscape throughout the season. RedMax discontinued this product line early in 2025.

### **Property Transactions:**

23 Redmax Reciprocator	Scrapped	P230
25 Milwaukee 18V Grease Gun	Added Into Inventory	P295R
25 Milwaukee 18V Grease Gun	Added Into Inventory	R211
25 Milwaukee 18V Grease Gun	Added Into Inventory	R530

### **2025 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

All Vehicles and Equipment from the 2025 equipment lease have been delivered, entered into inventory, and invoices processed.

### **2026 Vehicle Lease Purchase Update:**

Forestry Bucket Truck	Quotes obtained from Utility Truck Equipment
Toro 5910 Mower	Quotes obtained from Kenney Machinery
Toro 7210 Mower	Quotes obtained from Kenney Machinery
Ford F250	Budgeting numbers from the 2025 fleet bid used



#### Garage Operations Highlights:

- 155 work orders were scheduled this month, 21 of which were services.
- Garage crews coordinated with a certified welder on the repair of the Sweet Breeze boat trailer. The hitch needed to be replaced, and to strengthen the connection, the hitch was both bolted and welded to the trailer frame.
- Off-season maintenance was performed on the Headwaters Zamboni, and it was transported to the ice rink. We are working with a vendor who specializes in repairing obsolete electronics to assist with the repair of the backup Zamboni. The engine's ignition module was discontinued by Ford several years ago, and replacements are unavailable.
- Mechanics have worked on servicing trucks that will be used as plow trucks during the winter to make sure all plow and salt spreader wiring is functioning correctly.
- Forestry crane V150 went to RPM Machinery to have the lift cable replaced. As part of this repair, the crane was inspected for safety issues. A crack in a boom section was discovered, and welding can no longer be done as an acceptable repair. The section must be replaced, and an emergency purchase order was created to cover payment.
- The newest Forestry chipper truck developed a check engine code that required the truck to be sent to the Ford Dealer. The vehicle only has 3,600 miles on the odometer, so any repairs will be covered as a warranty issue.
- As the grounds crew started brush cutting farm fields this fall, one of the older John Deere 401B tractors developed a fuel system issue. Further inspection discovered a bad fuel injection pump. A replacement part is \$1,500, which is beyond the value of the tractor itself. The equipment was taken out of service, and adapters were made up to attach the brush mower decks to more modern tractors in our inventory.
- The water reel used for irrigation at Salomon Farm was winterized, and the John Deere Gator from the farm was transported to Truland Equipment for a warranty repair to the heater system.
- Mechanics began purchasing mower tires and wheel rims to replace deck tires during the winter months. These rims and tires will be assembled in the garage and then installed on equipment as the ground's maintenance crews at Kreager Park service the decks on each mower.
- A new radiator was installed in the step van used by the Botanical Conservatory for show changes. Even though this is a very old truck, it is the only vehicle that will fit inside the overhead door at the Conservatory, which is a requirement to keep the poinsettias alive for the Christmas showcase. They cannot be exposed to cold weather.
- The Ford IDS and FRS diagnostic software used by the garage had to be reinstalled on the garage laptop. Changes in Ford's licensing of the software meant that a simple update would not work. The software was removed and then reinstalled with the assistance of Resultant.
- The Sullair air compressor used to blow out water and irrigation lines had to go to the dealer for repairs. An older model was serviced and reconditioned to get it into usable shape so the maintenance techs could continue winterizing water lines. This allowed the work to continue until the newer model can be returned to us.
- New chainsaws for the forestry crew were prepped by the small engine mechanic and then delivered to the crews. These included a Stihl-powered pole saw.
- The Solid Waste Department assisted Parks by removing all of the empty plastic 55-gallon drums stored in the Lawton bullpen. These are from the splash pad dechlorination chemicals and Solid Waste located a vendor who could recycle the barrels for us.

#### **Project Administration: Dave Weadock**

- Bloomingdale Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned for Spring of 2026.
- Foellinger Theatre House Lighting Installation – Installation is in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Ticket Office Windows Replacement – Bidding is in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Rear Parking Lot Lighting – Planning is in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Restoration is in progress.
- Foster Park Pavement Striping – Installation planned when weather allows.
- Franke Park Pond Pavilion Interior Renovation – Construction completed.
- Hanna Homestead Park Playground Equipment – Design of new playground is in progress.
- Hamilton Park Playground Border Replacement – Construction planned for early 2026.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Construction in progress.
- Johnny Appleseed Campground Fire Pit – Bidding is in progress.
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Kreager Park Tennis Center Fence Renovation – Planning in progress. Construction planned for Spring of 2026.



- Kreager Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Planning in progress. Recoating planned for late Spring of 2026.
- Lafayette Park Playground Equipment – Design revisions are in progress.
- Lafayette Park New Sidewalks – Planning is in progress.
- Lakeside Park Pond Fountain – Fountain replacement planning in progress. Installation in Spring 2026.
- Lakeside Park Electrical Service Upgrades – Planning in progress.
- Lawton Park Maintenance Building Roof Design – Planning documents sent to PAS for review.
- Lawton Park Skate Park Fence Walls – Construction completed.
- Lions Park Tennis/Pickleball Courts Recoating – Planning is in progress.
- McMillen Park Basketball Goals Pads Replacement – Equipment is on order and installation planned for January.
- McMillen Park Pool Liners Replacement – Construction planned for early December.
- McMillen Park Pool Drains Improvements – Construction planned for early December.
- McMillen Park Pavilion Roof Replacement – Planning is in progress.
- Memorial Park Picnic Tables – Tables are on order and installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Northside Park Psi-Ote Pavilion Lower Updates – Bidding complete. Construction in early 2026.
- Northside Park Administration 1<sup>st</sup> Floor HVAC Replacement – Installation planned for late 2025.
- Northside Park Pool Sand Filters Replacement – Project is currently out to bid.
- Promenade Park Safety Surfacing Replacement – Installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Repka Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Salomon Farm Animal Barn – Planning in progress.
- Salomon Farm Pasture Barn Utilities – Construction is in progress.
- Shoaff Park Riverlodge Roof Replacement – Construction completed.
- Shoaff Park Playground Equipment – Approvals in progress. Installation planned for Spring 2026.
- Various Parks Paving Projects 2026 - Planning in progress, and Signage Improvements – Projects ongoing.
- Wells St. Bridge Partial Deck Replacement – Construction completed.

#### **Other work:**

- Various Parks: planning projects for 2025 budget
- Various Parks: updating park site plan bases and building plans.
- Various Parks: underground utility locates were scheduled and performed.
- Various Parks: assisting the Marketing Department by preparing requested project information.
- Various Parks: cost estimates for various projects are being prepared upon request.
- Various Parks: park assessments are being completed.
- PAS Division GIS training sessions in progress with staff
- Preparing GIS content for the Parks mobile application

#### **Safety: Tony DeVido**

The Parks & Rec. The Safety Committee meeting was on 10-28-25. 4 Parks employees and 1 guest attended.

- 1 vehicle crash was reported for this time period, and 0 employee injuries were reported this time period.
- 1 CPR/FA classes were held. 3 employees were certified
- 1 CDL holder successfully renewed their license.
- Safety Review Council meeting was held. 1 Parks employee was present.
- Annual *Compliance training* continues. 5 divisions completed.
- *General Safety Training* was completed for the Headwaters ice rink seasonal employees.
- Safety inspection of the Headwaters ice rink was completed.
- I completed the required AHA “Instructor Update” training.
- Online training lists were received from HR, and a reminder to complete the emails was sent out.



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

- Riverfront Phase II B construction continues. The cascading stairs and pre-fab benches are ready to receive the wooden tops. Staff continue to coordinate construction activities with adjacent developments at the old Schaab Metals building, More Brewing site, and the Eddy. Staff continue to meet with AEP for coordination of this project with their transmission line rebuild.

Design work continues on the Foster Park Entrance project. Staff have reviewed the design development drawings and provided comments to the design team. Staff continue to coordinate with City Utilities on the restoration of their utility construction project throughout Foster Park.

Staff continue to work with members of Wildwood Park Community Association and Heritage Landscapes to find historical photos of the park for the Wildwood Park and Rockhill Park Historic Landscape Study and Guideline project.

Staff prepared a service agreement with V3 for Mitigation Monitoring services for mitigation plantings required by Construction in a Floodway permits for the Franke Park Renaissance and Lawton Park Trestle Bridge projects. Coordination for the first year of monitoring is underway.

Stacy attended De-escalation Training: Verbal Judo presented by City of Fort Wayne Captain Juan Barrientes. After reviewing 15 proposals and interviewing 4 teams, the Staff selected the design team of Merritt Chase for the Conservatory's Exploration and Terrace Garden Design project. Staff have prepared contract documents for the Board of Park Commissioners' approval, as well as the City Council approval in December.

Chad traveled to Louisville, KY, with a group of community accessibility advocates to tour and review the GoodMaps accessibility app in a variety of public settings. The trip was sponsored and arranged by AWS and FW International Airport; it offered an in-depth look at potential future applications in Fort Wayne.

Staff coordinated the installation of various interpretive signs at Jennings Center, Wells St. Park, and the Historic Wells St. Bridge. These signs were designed in coordination with the Bloomingdale Neighborhood and Historic Preservation.

### Horticulture and Landscape Report- November 2025

26 volunteers worked 260.38 hours in the greenhouse.

The greenhouse provided 55 plants to be sold at the Botanical Conservatory's Gift Shop and 1,650 succulent cuttings were provided for their succulent pumpkin workshop.

Approximately 650 Poinsettias and 689 other decorative plants were sent to the Conservatory for the Holiday Showcase.

We have begun preparation for the Home and Garden Show by taking 300 plant cuttings.

The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup; landscape bed weeding, landscape bed cleanup and removal of spent perennials. Staff continued to pick up leaves in the turf areas. They also kept leaves and pooling water out of the drained fountains to protect the integrity of the liner system that was recently installed. Spring bulbs were planted, and the rose hillling was completed as well. The urns were decorated with greens for the Holidays, and the team helped with the Show Change at the Botanical Conservatory all week.

The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup; mowing the bridal glen, regularly removing tree debris from the tennis courts, limb and leaf pickup; and landscape bed cleanup and removal of spent grasses and perennials. Mums/Kale were removed, and bulb planting was completed this month, with all beds edged.

The Downtown Team continued to focus on daily litter and trash removal in downtown parks and fall landscape bed clean-ups before the “Night of Lights”. The team finished planting bulbs this month and installed greens for the Holidays in the pots at the Community Center. Staff also installed the plow and salt spreader on the Gator, getting it ready for the winter season. All spray equipment was winterized and stored for the season. Community Corrections assisted staff in cutting and removing all spent daylilies for the season from the Main Street Medians. Staff did some weed control in Headwaters, as well as continued to work on bed consolidation projects. Freimann Square was power-washed before the water was turned off for the season. An early-season snow led to some salt spreading at Promenade, Headwaters, Riverfront IIA, and Freimann.

The City Team continued to mow the Northside and Lawton office as needed, as well as leaf cleanups. The team focused on fall landscape bed clean-ups at Jennings, Lawton, and Memorial Park (before Veterans Day). Staff also did some tree pruning in Kreager, weed control in Franke, and stump grinding in assorted parks to get ready for tree replacements. Staff continued bed consolidations at Franke Day Camp. All spray equipment was winterized and stored for the season.

Staff completed bulb designs for Foster, Freimann, Courthouse, Community Center, and Lakeside Parks. Landscape staff assisted in the pickup and delivery of conifers from St. Joe tree farm purchased for the holiday show change at the Botanical Conservatory.

Landscape staff assisted in installing the “Ferns Fairylight Express” exhibit from November 17<sup>th</sup> through the 21st at the Botanical Conservatory.

Park trees were staked out and mapped this month. Shade Trees Nursery began planting 153 trees across 29 different parks.

Irrigation system winterizations were scheduled and completed.

Pride Landcare, Mow Baby Mow, and MJK Lawncare continued with their annual mow maintenance contracts that included leaf pickups.

Lawnganics continued with their annual turf fertilization and weed control contract.

#### **Riparian Management Report- November 2025**

Maintained the Guldlin boat ramp, which includes cleaning and removing any debris.

Successfully removed and stored Promenade dock, Shoaff dock, Headwaters dock, and Guldlin dock for the season.

Removed record amount of debris from the riverbanks in a month’s period of time: approximately 5,840 pounds of floatables and man-made debris.

Attended the 2025 IRPA’s annual conference to receive the IRPA Excellence in Resource Improvement award in Muncie, IN.

Attended ATS software training from HR.

Continued HR’s Lead Boldly training session.

The entire Riparian team attended the City of Fort Wayne’s Verbal Judo De-escalation training.

#### **Forestry Report- November 2025**

This year's fall tree planting project is underway. As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, all of the street trees have been planted despite the early snowfall. Shade Trees Unlimited plans to continue work to complete the remaining park trees. Any trees that go unplanted this fall as a result of the unexpected weather conditions will be scheduled for planting in the spring.

Contractors have begun work on this year's tree removal project. So far, two of the ten lists have been completed, with the remaining list expected to be completed before May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Forestry staff participated in a ‘Verbal Judo’ training session hosted by Human Resources. This course teaches verbal skills, techniques, and mindsets that have proven effective in preventing escalation when emotions become charged.

Staff worked to prepare quarterly performance evaluations. These evaluations allow for early intervention with 'opportunities for improvement' and foster continuous growth through regular recognition.

In November, Forestry crews completed 15 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 88 trees in November. 5 of these were the result of damage caused by storms. 7 were located within the parks, and 1 was the result of vehicle damage.

Completed 7 inspections/appraisals of trees that had been damaged by vehicles. In total, these incidents resulted in \$4,125.00 in damages.

Crews responded to and cleared 32 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs.

Responded to and closed a total of 41 Call Center 311 requests for service this month.

#### **Botanical Conservatory Report – November 2025**

Following the close of the Botanical Conservatory's "...Something Blue" Showcase Exhibit on November 16, the team pivoted into an intensive showchange week—deinstalling, resetting, and preparing the Showcase House for the start of the holiday season. That work culminated with the opening of Fern's Fairylight Express on November 22, transforming the Showcase House into a luminous winter journey filled with warmth, wonder, and richly planted seasonal moments. Guests are invited to step aboard and follow Fern and friends through glowing scenes, sparkling details, and storybook vignette-style experiences that celebrate imagination, connection, and the joy of coming together. Designed to be both visually stunning and family-forward, this holiday showcase sets the tone for the Botanical Conservatory's busiest season and builds strong momentum as we head into peak attendance weeks. Fern's Fairylight Express is sponsored by the Fort Wayne Park Foundation, Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Foundation, English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, Wilson Foundation, Majic 95.1, and PBS Fort Wayne.

The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in November 2025: Veteran's Day in the Garden (November 11), Fern's Fairylight Express (Opened November 22), \$1 Night Light Display (Started November 26), and Holly Shopping (November 29). Staff are gearing up for \$1 Night Light Display (Through December 19), Santa Saturdays (December 6, 13, and 20), Volunteer/Member Holi-Day Open House (December 10), Talitha Shipman Book Signing (December 20), Holly Shopping Part II (December 20), and several pre-registered programs and workshops throughout the month.

Norah Bray resigned her role as Rental Coordinator effective November 21, 2025. Rachel Cole, formerly a Food Service Assistant – Café Flora, has been promoted to the Rental Coordinator Role vacated by Norah Bray. There are two open staff positions, Food Service Assistant – Café Flora (2), candidates are being interviewed.

#### **Botanical Conservatory KPIs**

November 2025 marked a challenging but instructive period for the Botanical Conservatory, as heavy snowfall on November 29 significantly depressed turnout and revenue during one of the traditionally highest-performing weekends of the year. Despite this disruption, year-to-date metrics remained strong, with overall attendance surpassing 109,000 visitors—up 10.74% compared to 2024—and total revenue exceeding \$1.26 million, reflecting a 5.66% increase over the same period last year.

Admissions revenue in November declined 12.49% from the prior year, a weather-related dip that offset otherwise steady visitation throughout the month. Membership revenue also saw a drop of 20.09%, though year-to-date gains in this category remained positive at +3.44%.



Retail operations continued to evolve in tandem with Café Flora's growth, which has assumed responsibility for many pre-packaged food items previously offered through the Conservatory Shop. This operational shift creates natural ebb and flow between café and shop revenues, both of which contribute to the same non-reverting fund. The Café generated \$12,842.00 in November, while the Conservatory Shop recorded \$18,108.65, down 16.50% from the same month last year. Viewed together, these retail streams signal strong combined performance under a new model of shared responsibility.

Rental and catering revenue were down slightly for the month, falling 12.67%, yet year-to-date totals still reflect 8.81% growth. "Other" revenue categories—including donations, activity enrollments, and plant sale income—experienced a notable month-over-month decrease, though the year-to-date figure remains strong at \$427,988.52.

While the snowfall setback briefly impacted short-term results, broader trends remain encouraging, and the team's adaptive success in cross-departmental initiatives—particularly the café/shop coordination—will be a continued area of focus as we close out the calendar year.

#### **Attendance**

November 2024:	7,758 visitors
November 2025:	7,585 visitors
A decrease of 173 visitors or -2.23% to 2024	

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Attendance:	98,796 visitors
2025 Attendance:	109,411 visitors
An increase of 10,615 visitors or +10.74% to 2024	

#### **Admissions Revenue**

November 2024:	\$25,874.00
November 2025:	\$22,641.15
A decrease of \$3,232.85 or -12.49% to 2024	

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Admissions Revenue:	\$373,237.46
2025 Admissions Revenue:	\$382,259.05
An increase of \$9,021.59 or +2.42% to 2024	

#### **Membership Revenue**

November 2024:	\$7,985.00
November 2025:	\$6,381.00
A decrease of \$1,604.00 or -20.09% to 2024	

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Membership Revenue:	\$84,078.00
2025 Membership Revenue:	\$86,968.00
An increase of \$2,890.00 or +3.44% to 2024	

#### **Conservatory Shop Revenue**



Staff Reports Submitted December 11, 2025

November 2024: \$21,686.08  
November 2025: \$18,108.65  
A decrease of \$3,577.43 or -16.50% to 2024

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Gift Shop Revenue: \$280,672.78  
2025 Gift Shop Revenue: \$269,806.06  
A decrease of \$11,491.72 or -4.09% to 2024

#### **Café Flora Revenue**

November 2025: \$12,842.00  
YTD 2025: \$15,292.94

#### **Rental & Catering Fee Revenue**

November 2024: \$7,085.00  
November 2025: \$6,187.50  
A decrease of \$897.50 or -12.67% to 2024

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Rental Revenue: \$80,190.00  
2025 Rental Revenue: \$87,255.00  
An increase of \$7,065.00 or +8.81% to 2024

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

November 2024: \$14,360.85  
November 2025: \$2,409.18

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Other Revenue: \$383,392.82  
2025 Other Revenue: \$427,988.52

#### **Conservatory Total Revenue**

November 2024: \$76,990.93  
November 2025: \$68,569.48  
A decrease of \$8,421.45 or -10.94% to 2024

#### **YTD Comparisons**

2024 Total Revenue: \$1,201,571.06  
2025 Total Revenue: \$1,269,569.57  
An increase of \$67,998.54 or +5.66% to 2024

#### **Botanical Conservatory Business Development**

Staff submitted a grant proposal to The Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation for support of the Desert House Improvements Project.

The Conservatory was awarded support of \$5,000 from the M. E. Raker Foundation for the Desert House Improvements Project.



Staff Reports Submitted December 11, 2025

The Conservatory was awarded support of \$10,000 from the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation for the 2026 Showcase Garden Exhibits.

Staff submitted the 2026 corporate sponsorships pdf/brochure to the marketing contacts at 30 local and area corporations. Additional submissions and follow-ups will continue in December.

Staff completed the 2025 Fall Annual Appeal to our members – it was sent November 21st.

Staff secured sponsorships for the following 2026 special events and exhibits\*:

Fern's Fairylight Express Showcase Exhibit:	PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1
Color in Motion Live Butterflies Exhibit:	21Alive and 97.3 WMEE
Silver Bells Showcase Exhibit:	PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1
Great Train Connection:	US 93.3
Bunny Tales in the Garden:	FOX55 and Majic 95.1
Mother's Day Plant Sale:	FOX55 and Majic 95.1
Mother's Day in the Garden:	21Alive and Majic 95.1
Father's Day in the Garden:	103.9 FM
Botanical ROOTS:	96.3 XKE
Pumpkin Path Display:	Majic 95.1
Rocky Horror Picture Show:	ALT 99.5 & 102.3
Garden Trick-or-Treat:	FOX55 & Majic 95.1
Santa Saturdays:	PBS Fort Wayne and Majic 95.1

Approximate cash value of the confirmed media sponsorships is \$122,500.

Proposals are in process for:

Jazzworks:	WANE 15 and 89.1 WBOI
Botanical Brew:	WANE 15 & 89.1 WBOI
Pueblo Gardens Showcase Exhibit:	Majic 95.1
Botanical ROOTS:	PBS Fort Wayne

Staff submitted final event reports to Fort Wayne Metals, FOX55 and Majic 95.1 for the 2025 Garden Trick-or-Treat. These reports will enable us to approach these sponsors for continuing support of upcoming special events.

Staff submitted final event report to Majic 95.1 for the 2025 Pumpkin Path. This report will enable us to approach this sponsor for continuing support of upcoming special events.

## Conservatory Public Programs - Events

Night of Lights (November 26)

In conjunction with Downtown Fort Wayne's Night of Lights, the Botanical Conservatory kicked off the holiday season with a \$1 admission from 5-8 pm. This year, there were 789 guests with 45 members and 230 children as compared to a total attendance of 770 in 2024. The indoor gardens were beautifully decorated in addition to the newly installed showcase exhibit. There was also a scavenger hunt tailored for the décor that was well received by guests – especially adults! Lighting extended to the outdoors offering a moment of wintery air on a windy evening. Despite the brisk cold, attendance was slightly up from last year.



## Holiday Performance by Those 2 Guys in Suits & Ties (November 28)

As part of the \$1-Night Light Display, Tom Didier and Todd Frymier performed holiday music in the showcase exhibit. Many guests enjoyed the opportunity for musical entertainment when out with friends and family the day after Thanksgiving.

### Education

#### Continuing T'ai Chi (October 7-November 4)

Sandy Gebhard led a full t'ai chi series, and she scored a perfect 10 on surveys from participants. A repeat winter program is already half full!

#### GROW IT! School Plant Program

Out of 65 schools contacted, a total of 62 schools will be participating in the 2026 School Plant Program having submitted an online "Free Plant Order Form" this past fall. This includes 12 schools that did not participate in 2025, one of them being new to the program. There were 4 schools that either declined participation or did not respond at all. Next, staff are updating and editing program booklets for 2026 distribution.

### Youth Field Trips

This November, four schools brought 196 visitors to the Botanical Conservatory. These students enjoyed Staff-Led Labs (27%), Self-Taught Activities (60%), and Basic Visits (13%). In November of 2024, five groups brought 133 people to the Botanical Conservatory.

### Exhibits & Displays

#### Fern's Fairylight Express (November 22-April 12)

The newest showcase exhibit is one for the books! See the magic of *Fern's Fairylight Express* come to life, as you follow an enchanting story by local author and illustrator, Talitha Shipman. Books are available at Allen County Public Libraries as well as for purchase in the Conservatory Shop. With so many favorite features to choose from, guests ooh and aww at the book printed in an XXL version plus they cannot get enough of the Bromeliad Towers. There is also a G-scale model train and a bigger play train for guests to enjoy in addition to other elements from the book that were created in collaboration with the Botanical Conservatory. This combined holiday/winter exhibit is currently decorated for the holidays with a "soft showchange" scheduled the first week of January.

#### Ben High: Gathered After the Fall (November 22-April 12)

Ben High is a multidisciplinary artist and graduate of Wabash College whose work incorporates a variety of natural elements foraged from the Botanical Conservatory. His pieces are available for purchase at [shop.botanicalconservatory.org](http://shop.botanicalconservatory.org). A public artist reception will be held on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026, from 1-3 pm.

#### Window Display: Candy Cane Lane (Vote November 24-January 3)

In partnership with the Anthis Career Academy, the Botanical Conservatory is participating in the 2025 Merry & Bright Window Decorating Contest put on by Downtown Fort Wayne. Students Diomar Soto, Pau Nge, and Brayla Miller created and collaborated on the design to combine a train, a fairy, and a candy cane theme. Such talent! Learn more about these graphic design students when visiting in person, and vote for your favorite window design by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://www.visitfortwayne.com/blog/stories/post/merry-bright-downtown-fort-wayne-holiday-windows/>.





### \$1-Night Light Display (November 28-December 19)

This seasonal display is emphasized as part of special holiday hours when the Botanical Conservatory is open late from 5-8 pm on Thursdays and Fridays from Thanksgiving up until Christmas. Only \$1 admission, there are 8 different dates to choose from when the gardens in light are best seen at night!

### Volunteers/Staff

The month of November certainly benefitted from volunteer service. As part of showchange, 15 different volunteers assisted with holiday decorating. Volunteer, Blane Ryan helped to install the model train set as a focal point in the new showcase exhibit. During Downtown Fort Wayne's Night of Lights, 3 volunteers supplemented staff as one worked the Front Desk, one helped in the Gift Shop, and another distributed scavenger hunts to the delight of guests. Another 3 volunteers assisted with Holly Shopping on Small Business Saturday by managing entry points for load in and setup of the Artisan Market.

At the Front Desk, 8 volunteers filled 33 shifts while 9 volunteers covered 36 shifts in the Gift Shop. One year-round SWAT volunteer maintained a weekly shift to groom and assist garden staff while another volunteer groomed plants for the Gift Shop. EasterSeals again offered a shift to sweep and tidy garden paths. CAS students continued their ongoing support even amongst testing and the holiday break. Four students and an instructor offered 14 hours to accomplish an impressive amount of work, as they cleared Egyptian grass and prepared Terrace pots for evergreens. They also pulled a significant amount of ivy from the Showcase House.

### Upcoming

November 22-April 12, 2026: Fern's Fairylight Express showcase exhibit

November 22-April 12, 2026: Gathered After the Fall, art display by Ben High

November 28-December 19: \$1-Night Light Display

December 5: Holiday Performance by The Snow Fort Singers

Dec. 6, 13 & 20: Santa Saturdays

December 6: Breakfast with Santa, pre-registered

December 7: Succulent Christmas Tree, pre-registered

December 10: Volunteer & Member Holi-Day Open House

December 12: Holiday Performance by PFW Holiday Carolers

December 13: Evergreen Centerpiece, pre-registered

December 14: Suzuki Strings Holiday Performance

December 20: Book Signing— Talitha Shipman

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

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

January 1: New Year's Day, CLOSED

January 4-9: Soft Showchange

January 11: Winter Artisan Market, 12-4 pm

January 13-February 3: Continuing T'ai Chi, pre-registered

January 17: Fairy Fun with Talitha Shipman, pre-registered

January 17: Book Signing— Talitha Shipman, 10 am-1 pm

January 20-February 24: T'ai Chi for Relaxation, pre-registered

January 24: Winterval, 10 am-3 pm

January 25: Ben High Public Artist Reception, 1-3 pm



## Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

Horticulture staff completed all the outdoor bulb planting in early November. Next spring will showcase the familiar tulips and daffodils, but will also have new seasonal additions like anemone and some permanent additions such as Allium and Fritillaria.

Students from the Center for Academic Success (CAS) continued with the ivy removal project in the Showcase House. The Algerian ivy is a host for many pests staff are working to eradicate in the Houses and its removal will reduce pest pressure while also creating available space to feature new and interesting plantings.

Conservatory staff and contractors made significant strides in the fall cleanup effort in November. The unexpected snowfall in late November hindered the completion of the fall cleanup which will resume in early spring in anticipation for the next growing season and for Bunny Tales.

Horticulture staff ordered finished product from a new vendor in Florida to create fresh hanging baskets in the Tropical House for the holidays. Tropical plants were chosen with silver, white, or green foliage and anthuriums with white and red flowers, too. The hanging baskets add a touch of holiday color in the Tropical House while staying with tropical plants.

The final shift of florist mums were planted in the Showcase House for the ...*Something Blue* Exhibit. The mums added seasonal interest to the garden while also showcasing specialty mums with varied flower forms such as spider, spoon, quill, and incurve.

The planting in the Desert House concluded this month. Work has now begun to apply a top dressing of worm castings to add more organic matter to the soil before applying the final application of decorative rock mulch.

The Conservatory also received generous donations of many plants, some of which were planted in the Desert House and some that staff have kept to grow on to utilize for the next the *Pueblo Garden* exhibit. One notable plant donation was a large, mature specimen of *Mammillaria spinosissima*, which was planted in the Desert House for the permanent collection.

The Conservatory is working with Vanroot Growers to hold and grow on plants that will eventually be planted on the south side of Showcase, plants for the next summer showcase, and possible replacement plants for any plant losses in the Desert House. Vanroot has been a great partner in the past and has provided the Conservatory with donated plant material over the last few years that has been used in our annual displays.

Conservatory and Lawton staff worked together to create the newest exhibit—*Fern's Fairylight Express*. This exhibit features a collaboration between local author and artist Talitha Shipman and Conservatory staff. Contractors and MTs built props for the showcase, including Crystal Caverns, the elevated track and platform for the g-scale train, an oversized book stand, and others. This hybrid show includes the timeless poinsettia, but in unique colors for this particular showcase. It also features tropical plants to create a lush, verdant, and inviting experience.

## Botanical Conservatory Facility Maintenance

Significant prep work was completed in support of the seasonal show change from *Something Blue* to *Fern's Fairylight Express*. Staff collaborated across departments to fabricate new props, install seasonal décor, and complete the full show changeover, including exterior lighting and winter display installations. Props from the prior show were carefully cleaned, stored, and documented for future use.



Three Rivers Painting completed the repainting of the east wall in the Showcase Garden, enhancing the overall presentation of the new exhibit.

Allied Mechanical installed airflow spacers on the compressor guards to improve ventilation and performed air filter replacements on the Showcase air handlers due to excess particulate accumulation from show installation. A maintenance kit for Boiler #2 has also been ordered.

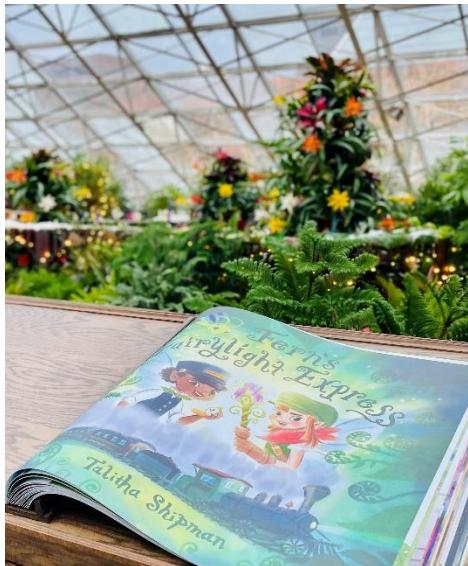
Simplex Security conducted a service cleaning of the duct detectors in the Showcase air handler units after a false fire alarm was triggered by dust from exhibit installation.

As winter arrived earlier than expected, staff began snow removal operations in late November, ensuring safe access for visitors and event guests.

Maintenance personnel have been adjusting to new operational demands associated with Café Flora, implementing updated daily protocols and return procedures to accommodate food service needs.

Throughout the month, the team has remained responsive to daily operational needs, including support for rentals and ongoing holiday show maintenance. Staff have also actively participated in the Botanical Conservatory's strategic planning process through both departmental and leadership-level meetings.

## Botanical Conservatory Photos



*An XXL version of Fern's Fairylight Express in the Showcase House*



*Anthis Career Academy Students posing with their collaborative design for a local contest*



*Volunteers helping to decorate and prepare for the holidays*



*Volunteer, Blane Ryan assisting with the model train display*

## Kathryn Pargmann – Manager, Lead of Marketing

- [www.RiverfrontFW.org](http://www.RiverfrontFW.org) had 7,201 hits to the site this month, and the Promenade Park link had 415 hits. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information. A total of 106 hits in November.
- Conducted Customer Service Training for Headwaters Ice Rink staff.
- Evaluation Reports completed include: Franke Day Camp Parent, Franke Day Camp Counselor, fall Adult Special Interest Classes, Foellinger Theatre Volunteer Evaluation, Johnny Appleseed Campground, Riverfront summer/fall classes, fall classes at Salomon Farm Park, and fall Classes at the Botanical Conservatory.
- Marketing staff attended the Field Trip to Academy Sports + Outdoors and took photos for social media and the web. In addition, Marketing staff participated in the McKinnie Commons Unity Lighting and took both photos and video for social media and the web.
- **Web Statistics:** Active Users: 14,436 Event Counts: 125,084
- 63 Graphic Design projects completed.
- Conservatory, Community Center, and Salomon promos and props are all ready for Christmas events.
- Riverfront promos and props completed for rink opening, Winter Cozy, and winter programs.



- Solomon Farm Park programs are ready for social.

- Completed grant application for Hanna Homestead project (Healthy Communities Grant/US Mayors).
- Sent Donation Drive e-mail to over 30,000 customers.
- Recorded “Walk in the Park” interview at 21Alive to promote donations.
- Completed media meetings for 2026 sponsorships.
- Social media promotions for: Unity Lighting at McKinnie Commons, Bus Trips, and Winterval Sponsorships.
- Arranged for 15 media interviews with select staff promoting November events.
- November Media Mentions: 50.
- Social Media Totals for November:

FB Followers	108,362
FB Viewers	417,483
X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,901
Instagram Followers	30,817

## Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- 2025 was a difficult year for the golf courses. The industry as a whole showed a 2% growth nationally over a record 2024, while locally, Indiana courses were down around 4%. The heat was the largest of several factors that combined to form a “perfect storm” for the Park courses, leading to a decline in revenue following several years of rapid growth. Spring started unusually cool and wet. There was a record amount of rainfall in April and early May. This changed quickly to unusually hot and historically dry. While it is not uncommon for us to have a stretch or two of 90-degree days in a season, having six weeks of consecutive 90-degree days (and “lows” in the 70s) puts a lot of strain on the golf courses.
- All of the courses suffered irrigation issues at different times during the year. Shoaff Park was completely without watering capabilities for 2 months. Fortunately, this was while we were still getting adequate precipitation, and it was just starting to get hot. After getting the system back operating, one of the control boxes was vandalized, shutting off part of the system. As our system is nearly obsolete, sourcing parts is not easy.
- The jockey pump at Foster was down for over 6 weeks during the heat. This left us with only being able to operate a few sprinkler heads at a time, and at a very diminished pressure. Also, over 40 heads were either repaired or replaced, as many years of issues all surfaced at the same time.



- All of these issues resulted in poor turf conditions, especially at Foster Park and McMillen Park. Added to that, the Deep Rock Tunnel project at Foster finished well after it was anticipated to wrap up, and restoration work on the 7<sup>th</sup> hole was not begun until late fall.
- Our new Superintendent, Chris Rudolph, also lost his full-time assistant in April and was doing the work of two people the entire summer while still learning about the operation. To Chris's credit, he managed to get most of the issues fixed, and we are in MUCH better shape heading into 2026. A more aggressive maintenance program is also in place and has already been initiated.
- Here are the revenue numbers for this year and the year-over-year comparison to the record year of 2024:

	<b><u>FOSTER PARK</u></b>	<b><u>MCMILLEN PARK</u></b>	<b><u>SHOAFF PARK</u></b>
2024	\$442,639.50/19,135	\$349,977.25/17,983	\$659,780.30/28,272
<b>2025</b>	<b>\$388,952/16,531</b>	<b>\$348,766/17,908</b>	<b>\$627,331/25,896</b>
	RANGE REVENUE	2024      \$23,302	\$114,878
		<b>2025      \$21,913</b>	<b>\$113,781</b>
	<b><u>TOTAL ALCOHOL REVENUE:</u></b>	2024      \$55,352.50	
		<b>2025      \$54,623</b>	

- The total revenue shown at the top includes the range and alcohol revenue at each course, and range revenue is broken down by course below the total figures. Alcohol totals are the three courses together.*
- All three of the Park golf courses opened on March 22 and were slated to close Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11. An early snowfall ended up closing the courses as of November 8.
- Looking ahead to the 2026 season, we will be in a far better position than we were in going into this year. Most of the major issues have been addressed and resolved, and a much better plan is in place to improve conditions. The problem is that turf issues from this year will take a bit of time to completely resolve.
- Upon opening in the spring of '26, Foster Park will still be playing with the nines reversed from the traditional setup, and we will still be playing to one temporary green. By mid-season, we should have all 18 holes playing as usual, and conditions will improve dramatically.
- Quotes have been acquired to continue expanding and modernizing the cart fleet. As the average age of the fleet gets younger and the size increases, maintenance (while still vital) is less of an issue. It is important to continue this trend as we build the fleet to its projected ideal size of 110 carts (currently at 93).
- As the season moves on and the new maintenance schedule begins to show results, we should have no problem easily surpassing our 2025 totals and getting back into the growth spurt that golf has experienced since the COVID years. Even with all that transpired this year, McMillen Park basically matched 2024's record numbers, Shoaff Park was right on the Indiana average for year-over-year (-4% from record 2024 totals), and Foster will be back up as conditions improve and the course returns to normal.
- 2025 was a "perfect storm" that we weathered, and much improvement will come out of the adversity. With the overall growth of golf continuing and the improvement of our playing conditions and level of customer service, we are very excited about the opportunities the new season will bring.

## Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



- Steve Heim from the Fort Wayne Running Club, who works with the City and Fort Wayne Trails on our Tread the Trails program, was named and received the 2025 Trail Volunteer of the Year award. We will have a red maple and granite marker installed at our Covington Road Trailhead to recognize him in the spring.
- The City, DNR, and Fort Wayne Trails, Inc. had a ribbon-cutting on 12/3 for the Pufferbelly Trail “Golden Spike” section between Washington Center Road and the intersection of Lima Rd and Ice Way. This trail connects to Glenbrook Square Mall on the south side of the Memorial Coliseum. The trail is segmented at Coliseum for now until the Vann Family Crossing pedestrian bridge is constructed in spring 2026- spring 2027.
- We have the Winter Solstice Walk and Bike Ride on 12/21 at 5:30 p.m. at Salomon Farm and the Pufferbelly Trail.
- We are working on an updated motor vehicle ordinance for trails, sidewalks, and parks to address electric devices like e-bikes. We hope to bring the revisions to the Park Board in January or February.
- We are in the RFQ process of selecting a consultant to manage the construction of the Vann Family Crossing (Pufferbelly Trail Bridge over Coliseum Blvd) in 2026.
- The Hanna Street Trailhead at Pettit and Hanna was paved, but we'll have to wait for warmer weather for the striping and restoration work. Park benches will arrive in January for installation.
- The Hanna Street Trail between Wallace and Berry is 80% complete. Most of the trail is finished. ADA ramps, signal upgrades, and lighting are still needed.



## Division News and Media Coverage:

[November 2025 – Parks & Recreation \[14 - 15\]](#)

[November 2025 – Parks & Recreation \[16 - 17\]](#)

December 2025 NRPA Ezine - <https://www.nxtbook.com/nrpa/ParksRecreationMagazine/december-2025/index.php#/p/Intro>

### Create the Bright: Winter Solstice Walk/Ride and Campfire

Fort Wayne, Ind. – Gather friends and family and join us for the Winter Solstice Walk/Ride and Campfire at the Wolf Family Learning Center, [Salomon Farm Park](#), 817 W. Dupont Road, 5:30 p.m., Sunday, December 21. DLZ, the Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation Department, and the City of Fort Wayne Public Works Division are partnering to present this FREE event.



On the shortest day of the year, let's create the bright! Bring a flashlight, battery-operated lantern, or Christmas lights and join us by wheel or by heel as we enjoy the Winter Solstice on the Pufferbelly Trail and Salomon Farm Trail Loop. We encourage all cyclists to light up their bicycles for fun, but require a front white light and red rear reflector for safety. Helmets are strongly recommended. Walkers can deck out with Christmas decorations, lights, and bells.

Bicyclists will depart from the Wolf Learning Center at 5:30 p.m. for a 6.5-mile ride on the Pufferbelly Trail. The 1.65-mile walk around the Salomon Farm Trail Loop will begin immediately after riders depart. We will gather back at Salomon Farm following the ride and walk for food and a campfire. Participants are encouraged to bring a chair.

The Winter Solstice event is sponsored by DLZ, Fort Wayne SEED, Indiana Donor Network, IU Health, and Linke Urology + Robotics.

Follow Salomon Farm on Facebook for updates and weather-related cancellations.

**From:** Mary Tyndall <Mary.Tyndall@cityoffortwayne.org>

**Sent:** Monday, December 8, 2025 12:15 PM

**To:** Release Listserv <Release@cityoffortwayne.org>

**Subject:** City of Fort Wayne and Greater Fort Wayne Inc. to host community information forum about local Google Data Center



**GREATER  
FORT WAYNE INC.**

METRO CHAMBER ALLIANCE

For Release: Monday, December 8, 2025

Contact: Mary Tyndall, Community Development, 260-427-2162

## **City of Fort Wayne and Greater Fort Wayne Inc. to host community information forum about local Google Data Center**

*Fort Wayne, Ind.* – The City of Fort Wayne and Greater Fort Wayne Inc. are hosting a community forum to provide information to the public about the local Google Data Center. The forum is informational only and is not a public hearing where any decisions will be made.

The forum is set for **Thursday, December 11, 5:30-7 p.m.** at the Grand Wayne Center, Anthony Wayne Ballroom A, 120 W. Jefferson Blvd. After an informational presentation from Google, Indiana Michigan Power, and City Utilities representatives, attendees will be able to submit questions via their smartphones. Index cards and pencils will also be available for those who want to submit written questions. Greater Fort Wayne Inc. staff will review the questions, combine similar ones, and then ask the appropriate person to respond.

The City and Greater Fort Wayne Inc. have a duty to maintain the safety of all attendees and presenters and will follow policies similar to those used at City Council meetings.

- 1) Signs on poles, sticks, or other objects with the potential to pose a danger or harm to others are prohibited at this forum.  
Signs larger than 24" x 24" are prohibited without exception.
- 2) Signs, signage, banners, or any similar item shall not be displayed in a manner that obstructs the view of other attendees at this meeting.
- 3) The affixing of signs, signage, banners, or any similar item to any structure or part of the Grand Wayne Center is prohibited.



- 4) Flames and flammable materials are prohibited inside the Grand Wayne Center.
- 5) Loud, excessive, disruptive noise and/or the use of noisemaking devices are restricted at this forum.
- 6) The use of personal or privately-owned sound or voice amplification devices, including microphones, megaphones, and speakers, is prohibited.
- 7) Should a situation arise that is determined unsafe or disruptive, Grand Wayne Security and/or City of Fort Wayne Police officers may ask attendees involved to leave the event.

An ASL interpreter will be at the event to provide interpretation services

WANE, Feature on the Conservatory

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/all-aboard-ferns-fairylight-express-for-a-new-experience-at-the-foellinger-freimann-botanical-conservatory/>

WANE, Feature on the FWPD's Citizens Police Academy

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/why-did-we-want-to-be-here-thoughts-from-the-2025-fwpd-citizens-police-academy-class/>

WPTA, Winter safety tips from the FWFD

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/12/05/fwpd-fire-crews-talk-winter-fire-safety-after-battling-fire-extreme-cold/>

WBOI, Fort Wayne and Allen Co. leaders come out in favor of a casino

<https://www.wboi.org/government/2025-12-05/fort-wayne-allen-county-come-out-in-favor-of-area-casino-location>

Adams Radio Group, Changes to construction for Riverfront IIB

<https://www.1039waynefm.com/2025/12/05/93774/>

FW Bus Weekly, New leader for CCP chosen

[https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article\\_8f0e66cd-607f-4824-917a-7091f3e2656b.html](https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_8f0e66cd-607f-4824-917a-7091f3e2656b.html)

WFFT, Fire officials warn of winter fire hazards

[https://www.wfft.com/news/fire-officials-warn-of-winter-fire-hazards/article\\_ef5d7783-1209-4d5c-9239-08ee3bcfe762.html](https://www.wfft.com/news/fire-officials-warn-of-winter-fire-hazards/article_ef5d7783-1209-4d5c-9239-08ee3bcfe762.html)

WANE, Pocket neighborhood zoning encourages dense, connected communities

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/pocket-neighborhood-zoning-planned-for-allen-co-encourages-dense-connected-communities/>

WANE, Fries confirms run for sheriff

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fries-confirms-run-for-allen-county-sheriff/>

WANE, Allen County Council approves \$200k grant to go toward substance abuse treatment facility

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/allen-county-council-approves-200k-grant-towards-substance-abuse-treatment-facility/>

WANE, Mayor Tucker and Senator Banks present Purple Heart

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/tucker-banks-award-veteran-with-purple-heart-to-kick-off-northeast-indiana-defense-summit-celebrate-veterans-day/>

City TV, City Utilities' Long Term Control Plan celebration

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=G8RrsSIEibQeHo5g>

FW Bus Weekly, Fort Wayne Newspapers CEO tells Rotary about commitment to local news

[https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article\\_c7776286-79c7-4c0f-8433-973741781258.html](https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_c7776286-79c7-4c0f-8433-973741781258.html)

FW Bus Weekly, Mayor announces 1<sup>st</sup> recipients of opioid settlement funds

[https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article\\_c83daaf9-85c8-427c-97b8-539111bf0788.html](https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_c83daaf9-85c8-427c-97b8-539111bf0788.html)



WANE, Visit Fort Wayne launches study on city's music industry and potential growth

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/visit-fort-wayne-launches-study-on-citys-music-industry-potential-growth/>

WBCL, Recognition for Fort Wayne water

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/fort-wayne-water>

WANE, Legacy Fund update

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/legacy-fund-pausing-investments-looking-to-the-future/>

WPTA, Walk in the Park feature

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2025/02/06/walk-park-stargazing-night-hikes/>

WOWO, Recognition for Grand Wayne Center

<https://www.wowo.com/grand-wayne-convention-center-celebrates-40-years-of-operation/>

WANE, Feature on TRAA

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/traa-supports-preventative-care-with-grant-money/>

WANE, Pontiac Street Market celebrates two years in southeast FW

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/pontiac-street-market-celebrates-two-years-in-southeast-fort-wayne/>

WANE, \$1M investment will support opioid addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/1-million-investment-will-support-opioid-addiction-prevention-treatment-and-recovery-programs-in-fort-wayne/>

FW Bus Weekly, A Lot to Love program update

[https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article\\_594ce70a-2585-4658-bfa0-3590b4e666b3.html](https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_594ce70a-2585-4658-bfa0-3590b4e666b3.html)

WANE, Food Not Bombs, FWPD situation

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/food-not-bombs-calls-out-fwpd-for-meal-share-arrests/>

WANE, City Utilities completes LTCP

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-utilities-celebrates-completion-of-long-term-control-plan/>

WANE, Southeast corridors planning study

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/city-council-approves-southeast-corridors-planning-study-for-southeast-fort-wayne/>

WANE, Conservatory feature

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/step-aside-roses-botanical-conservatory-celebrates-orchids-this-february/>



**The Headwaters Park Ice Rink is accepting dasher board sponsors for the 2025-26 season. You can see your business featured on the boards surrounding the rink all season long!**



**Contact us at 260-427-6000 to learn more about joining the wintry fun!**

#### **Headwaters Ice Rink**

**\*Weekdays, 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Saturdays & Sundays, 12:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Headwaters Park, 333 South Clinton Street**

The Headwaters Ice Rink, a community favorite since 2003, is set to open for the 2025–2026 season on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, weather permitting. Following opening day, the rink will operate Monday through Sunday through January 6. Regular hours are 4:00–9:00 p.m. Monday–Friday and 12:00–9:00 p.m. Saturday–Sunday. Admission is \$7 for skaters ages three and older, free for children two and under, with \$4 skate rental. The season will feature special programming, including an afternoon Winter Market in partnership with the YLNI Farmer's Market on November 29, December 20 and February 14 and beginner skating sessions in January with the Fort Wayne Ice Skating Club. Thanks to a generous donation from Marcia and Grant Crawford, reduced admission and skate rental opportunities will be available in January and February to honor the memory and community service of Dr. John Crawford, a physician, radiation oncologist and 20-year member of the Fort Wayne City Council.

Find complete details in the Winter edition of the Fun Times Activity Guide. For the latest parking map, please go to [www.fortwayneparks.org](http://www.fortwayneparks.org) and search Headwaters Park. Ten-punch skating passes will be available to purchase at the rink, located at 333 South Clinton Street in downtown Fort Wayne, during normal hours of operation.

\*After January 6, the rink will be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. The rink will also be closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Additional or extended hours will be announced throughout the season. Stay up to date on Facebook pages for @HeadwatersParkFW and @FortWayneParks. Sponsored by: WANE 15, Loud 103.3 and Hot 107.9.

### **\$1 Night of Lights**

**Thursday, December 11, 18, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

**Friday, December 12, 19, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

#### **Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street**

Experience the magic of the gardens aglow during the \$1 Night Light Display! Make time to stroll through the Botanical Conservatory, where indoor gardens glisten and glow with festive greenery, vibrant poinsettias and illuminated photo ops. During this special display on Thursday and Fridays in December, enjoy multiple visits with family and friends, treat yourself at Café Flora and find unique gifts in the Conservatory Shop. Garden admission is just \$1.

### **Summit City Music Theatre Presents: A Christmas Carol**

**Friday, December 12, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, December 13, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, December 14, 2:00 p.m.**

#### **Old Barn, Salomon Farm Park, 817 West Dupont Road**

Bundle up the family and join us in the Old Barn at Salomon Farm for Summit City Music Theatre's 4th annual adaptation of "A Christmas Carol" by Artistic Directors, Gavin Thomas Drew and Chapman Shields. The barn is heated only with auxiliary heat, so bring your blankets and coats and witness this story of redemption in the historic Salomon Farm Park Old Barn with the entire family. Seating is general admission, so you may arrive half an hour early to help ensure the best seats. Light concessions will be available during the show. Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased by calling (260) 427-6000 or online at <https://bit.ly/AChristmasCarolatSalomon>

### **PFW Carolers**

**Friday, December 12, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

#### **Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street**

A holiday favorite returns, as carolers from Purdue University Fort Wayne's School of Music bring festive cheer to the Botanical Conservatory. Hear their harmonies naturally enhance the magic of the "Fern's Fairylight Express" showcase exhibit. Enjoy their joyful carols with \$1 admission as part of the \$1-Night Light Display! Standing room only; no reservations required.

### **Ben High: Gathered After the Fall Opens during public hours**

#### **Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street**

Benjamin High, a multidisciplinary artist working in both gallery and stage, draws on a diverse range of experiences to shape his creative process. Raised in Fort Wayne, IN, he graduated from South Side High School before attending Wabash College, where he studied art and education and graduated in 2024. His work as a scenic artist and designer centers on creating works and spaces that invite imagination and connection, extending beyond simple functionality. Across mediums, his practice reflects a commitment to art's ability to transform environments and deepen human experience, combining technical skills with a drive to engage audiences in new and meaningful ways. This art display will be available to see at the Conservatory until April 12, 2026.

### **Holiday Cheer**

**Sunday, December 14, 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

#### **Park Foundation Pavilion, Promenade Park, 202 W. Superior Street**

Celebrate the season with an afternoon full of festive fun at Promenade Park! Families can snap a photo with Santa from 2:00-4:00 p.m., enjoy a live performance of timeless holiday classics by the American Legion Band and New Horizon Band from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., write letters to Santa, create special holiday cards and more! This event is free and open to all ages to attend.



**Yoga on the Riverfront**

**Sunday, December 14, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.**

**Park Foundation Pavilion, 202 West Superior Street**

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

**Suzuki Strings Performance**

**Sunday, December 14, 2:00 – 2:45 p.m.**

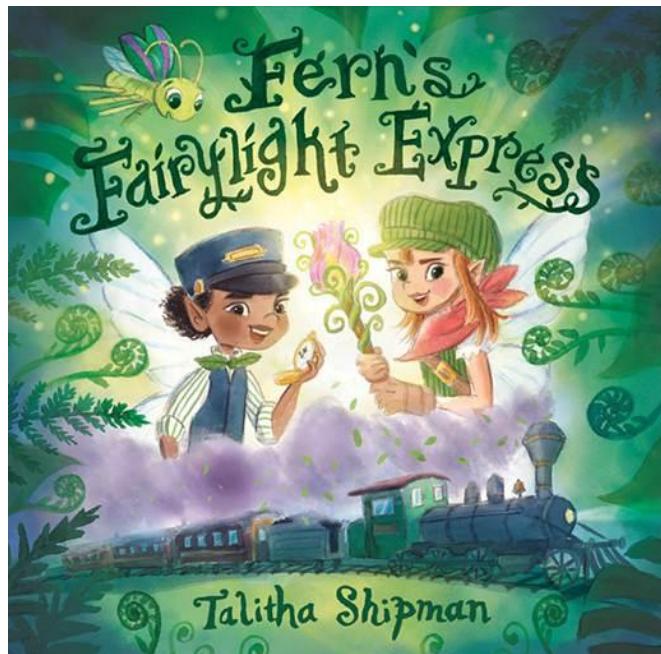
**Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street**

As you explore the latest showcase exhibit, pause to enjoy holiday favorites performed by the talented young musicians of Fort Wayne Suzuki. Playing violin and cello with skill and spirit, these students showcase the renowned Suzuki Method, often called the “mother tongue method,” where music is learned much like a language. Share in the festive cheer and include their heartwarming performance as part of your visit to the Botanical Conservatory. Included with regular admission.

**Holiday Showcase Exhibit: Fern's Fairylight Express**

**Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street**

All aboard the Botanical Conservatory's journey of discovery, imagination, and botanical wonder. This winter, step into a one-of-a-kind exhibit where the magic of trains transports you to a whimsical world as part of an enchanting story by local Author/Illustrator, Talitha Shipman. Read along and join your new favorite characters, Fern, Bug and Sprout on an unforgettable adventure through Fairy Glen. Experience the magical transformation of the Fairylight Express as you work together to get it back on track. For visitors of all ages, don't miss this opportunity to Let Your Imagination GROW! Sponsored by: Fort Wayne Park Foundation, Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Foundation, English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, Wilson Foundation, Majic 95.1 and PBS Fort Wayne.



**SHOWCASE GARDEN  
EXHIBIT**

**November 22, 2025**

**thru**

**April 12, 2026**