

Steve McDaniel, Director

- ✦ The month started and ended with discussions with the DNR regarding grant opportunities through their division. The team is evaluating each of their criteria to determine if we can meet them. The team is also evaluating several projects to see which ones align best with grant objectives.
- ✦ Part of the Parks team met with the Inclusion Institute to continue our quarterly talks. This partnership is helping us better understand accessibility needs beyond the ADA law.
- ✦ The golf team met with designers to talk about the possibility of including a driving range in the footprint of Foster Golf. This is building on the master plan that was completed a few years ago.
- ✦ The Recreation team and I met with the advisory board of Jennings Center to discuss their plan for Identity Counts Saturday Sessions. This program was designed to be an intergenerational learning initiative to help bridge the educational gaps with our youth. The program is being modified a little bit and will be included in our Tuesday through Thursday curriculum at the center.
- ✦ The Salomon staff and I have been talking more about Frankie and Mickey, our Highland Cows at the farm. Animals of this size have some additional needs, and they are bringing me up to speed on what those are. I believe more discussions will take place in the months to come.
- ✦ Rob, Chad, and I met with a representative of the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne to discuss collaboration on future fundraising opportunities. It was a great discussion in which we were able to discuss various strategies that might benefit us.
- ✦ Rhonda and I met with Pat and Nick from the Controller's Office to discuss what 2027 might look like with budgets and capital needs. They have asked for a couple of documents, including unfunded needs, deferred maintenance items, and historical capital spending, to determine maintenance vs. new construction.
- ✦ I attended an IPRA Leadership Summit in Culver, Indiana, with several northern Indiana park representatives. This program gave us multiple opportunities to collaborate on challenges that we are all facing with SEA-1, immigration, the unhoused, and many more issues.
- ✦ I had a lengthy telephone conversation with a consultant that is working with the Park Foundation on their strategic planning that they are working on. I felt it was a good discussion.
- ✦ The team hosted Councilwoman Booker's State of the 6th District meeting at McMillen Park Community Center. I, along with several other city departments, was able to present our department's accomplishments this past year as well as what is to come in 2026.
- ✦ The department held a press conference at the Botanical Conservatory to cut the ribbon in the Desert House on the new improvements that have been installed in the past few months. I am very proud of the team and the new look this space offers.

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


✦ Salomon Farm Park

- Registration opened on Monday, March 23, 2026. Each week, there are 24 spaces available for ages 4–5, 130 spaces for ages 6–11, 12 spaces for FIT (Farmers in Training, ages 12–14), and 15 spaces for CIT (Counselor in Training). Spots are anticipated to fill quickly, with a total of 181 campers per week if all sessions reach full enrollment – consistent with last year's total enrollment. Camp will run from Monday, June 8, 2026, through Friday, July 24, 2026.

- A new upcoming program at Salomon Farm Park will celebrate Earth Day while also honoring our country's 250th anniversary. This event will be an Earth Day cleanup at the park, taking place on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The program is free and open to anyone who would like to volunteer their time to help care for and improve the park grounds. Following the cleanup, there will be one hour of social time, featuring a campfire and light refreshments.
- Brock Sakowski was hired at Salomon Farm Park into a regular part-time maintenance position. He has experience as a facilities supervisor, along with experience in nursery management. The operations staff is looking forward to his contributions to the team, not only with light maintenance around the farm but also in the sunflower field and the north garden area.

Sweet Breeze

- Sweet Breeze staffing is nearly complete, with nine of the 14 crew members returning from the 2025 season. Sweet Breeze management plans to hire five new crew members.
- Opening weekend will remain the same as in previous years, taking place over Memorial Day weekend on Saturday, May 23, 2026, and Sunday, May 24, 2026. The tour schedule is currently being finalized by management, with a planned release date of Friday, May 1, 2026.

-  **Franke Park Day Camp** - Registration for Franke Park Day Camp opened on Monday, March 23, 2026. Each week, there are 32 spaces available for ages 4–5, 160 spaces for ages 6–11, 24 spaces for Junior Leaders, and 50 spaces for CITs (Counselors in Training). This allows for a total of 266 campers per week, assuming full enrollment, which is an increase of 25 spaces compared to the previous year.

McMillen Park Community Center

- During March 2026, youth programming at McMillen Park remained consistent, with daily activities including organized sports, group exercise, and team competitions. Youth continued to participate in a variety of recreational opportunities that supported engagement and social interaction.
- Youth attendance decreased from three hundred forty-two (17 average) in February to two hundred forty-two (12 average) in March, reflecting typical monthly variation.
- Kids Café meals remained consistent at two hundred eighty-five meals served in both February and March.
- Snack distribution remained consistent at two hundred twenty snacks served in both February and March.
- Breakfast participation remained unchanged, as attendance did not align with breakfast service times.
- Kids Korner participation increased from three hundred one in February to three hundred forty-four in March, indicating continued growth in usage.
- Facility rentals remained consistent with five rentals in both February and March.
- Cardio Fit participation remained steady at thirty participants due to enrollment capacity limits.
- Adult basketball participation remained consistent due to fixed team rosters, including the forty and over men's league.
- Pickleball participation increased from three hundred ten participants in February to three hundred seventy-five in March, reflecting continued growth in adult engagement.
- During March 2026, the Pickleball Social Club expanded participation, with introductory sessions attracting new participants, and a total of seventy-five participants were recorded across February and March.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- During the reporting period, nine new youth registered for the Weisser Park Youth Center after-school program, indicating continued program growth.

- During the reporting period, youth participated in a variety of core program activities, including social and emotional learning focused on stress reduction techniques and team building exercises such as a balloon tower competition. Youth also continued STEM bridge-building projects and historical research through the Finding Your Roots program.
- Recreational and creative activities included group games such as Blob Tag, Tug of War, and Wiffle Ball, along with yard games, art projects, and cultural learning activities focused on African textiles and mask design.
- On Tuesday, March 3, 2026, Weisser Park Youth Center began a martial arts program led by an instructor from Goree Hung Ga Academy. The program introduced youth to structure physical activity and skill development.
- During the reporting period, outreach programming included two sessions of Erin’s House focused on grief support, one Allen County Public Library craft session, and two Turner Chapel AME Ubuntu Learning Lab sessions that provided cultural and educational enrichment.
- On Thursday, February 26, 2026, youth participating in the Turner Chapel AME Ubuntu Learning Lab traveled to Jennings Recreation Center to attend an African drumming presentation led by Ketu Oladuwa. Youth engaged in hands-on learning of traditional rhythms and cultural practices.

Community Outreach

- During the reporting period, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation staff participated in multiple community engagement events, including the Fort Wayne Human Services Career Fair at Ivy Tech, WorkOne Job Fair at Franke Park Pavilion, PFW Wellbeing Summit, Memorial Park Middle School Culture Night, and St. Joe Central Title I Event. Approximately two hundred community interactions were recorded, reflecting strong efforts across multiple audiences.
- During the reporting period, the Supervisor of Community Outreach participated in the Community Center Sensory Showcase and facilitated an accessible activity inspired by The Lorax, promoting inclusive engagement for attendees.
- On Saturday, March 21, 2026, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation supported the State of the Sixth District Address hosted by Councilwoman Rohli Booker. Staff provided event setup and technical support, including sound, visual, and equipment resources, demonstrating effective collaboration and use of departmental assets.

Community Center

- During the reporting period, eleven rental dates were available, and six were booked, resulting in a fifty-five percent utilization rate. One Saturday rental was held on Saturday, March 21, 2026, with fifty attendees, and five Sunday rentals were held for Calvary Christian Church with a combined attendance of one hundred fifty-four participants. Total monthly rental attendance was two hundred four, with revenue of one thousand one hundred seventy-seven dollars and fifty cents.
- Forty-one rental inquiries were received during the reporting period, resulting in a twelve percent booking conversion rate.
- Program participation included one hundred twenty-eight participants in Gymnastics and Dance, fifty-five in Open Gym, and smaller attendance in specialty programs such as St. Patrick’s Day Fun, Bluey Party, and Sensory Clubhouse. Adult athletics participation included recreation basketball and volleyball, along with additional weekly drop-in participation.

- Social media engagement increased significantly in March compared to February, with Facebook reach increasing to over ten thousand and engagements remaining above twelve thousand, indicating strong growth in community visibility.
- During the reporting period, the Monday Luncheon was held with thirty-two attendees.
- Sponsorship support was received from multiple organizations, including contributions toward senior programming, Veterans Breakfast, and community events, as well as a one thousand two-hundred-dollar donation from the Senior Info Fair.
- On Saturday, March 7, 2026, the Community Center hosted the Sensory Showcase with one hundred thirty-nine attendees. The event featured sensory activities, crafts, music therapy, and community resource tables, with participation from multiple partner agencies. The event was supported by a five-hundred-dollar grant and demonstrated strong community interest in inclusive programming.
- During the reporting period, staff completed professional development and community outreach activities, including job fairs, training sessions, and recruitment efforts for seasonal programming.
- Facility and program operations remained stable, with expenses and revenue showing overall consistency compared to the previous year.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- During the reporting period, nine new youth registered for the after-school program, indicating continued program growth.
- During the reporting period, youth participated in social and emotional learning activities focused on relaxation techniques, as well as team-building exercises such as a balloon tower competition. STEM and Finding Your Roots sessions continued, with youth working on bridge-building projects and African American research assignments.
- Recreational and creative activities included group games such as Blob Tag, Tug of War, and Wiffle Ball, along with yard games and art projects such as flip books, finger painting, and African textile and mask designs.
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Jennings Recreation Center

- During the reporting period, Jennings Recreation Center maintained consistent participation with an average of twenty-one registered youth attending daily, reflecting stable attendance compared to the previous month.
- During the reporting period, the Allen County Public Library facilitated a creative activity focused on spring-themed crafts, including coloring and decorating flowers.
- During the reporting period, Erin's House conducted sessions using play-based activities to help youth explore emotions and feelings, supporting social and emotional development.
- During the reporting period, Drum Fun sessions focused on self-expression and identity through drumming activities led by the instructor.

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Riverfront

- Riverfront hosted several free fitness classes in partnership with the following organizations: YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, Discover Yoga, and Pure Movement Studio. Classes included Barre, Yoga, Zumba, and Pilates, which brought in a combined 182 individuals getting active along the Riverfront.
- The Riverfront Social Runners Club continues to be a popular offering, with an average of 20 participants each week. Community engagement has grown online, with the Riverfront Strava Club now exceeding 250 members. We look forward to continuing this momentum into the spring season.
- This month, Riverfront also held Dig Day for 39 kids aged 3-12 years old. In partnership with Science Central, this program brought educational hands-on activities for young earth explorers, including fossil dig bins, scavenger hunts, fossil identification, and more.

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

Payroll and Accounts Payable

- The 2026 Budget includes the following permanent, full-time positions:
 - 130 general fund positions
 - 13 non-reverting operating positions
 - 7 local income tax (LIT) positions
- We currently have the following permanent full-time positions open, posted, interviewing, or in the process of being hired, as of March 31st, 2026:
 - Manager – Neighborhood Programs (Fund 121)
 - Program Facility Coordinator – McMillen (2) (Fund 121)
 - Relief Person – Grounds (2) (Fund 121)
 - Fleet Mechanic – Golf (Fund 439)
 - Program Coordinator – Riverfront (Fund 439)
- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 269 employees (142 full-time and 127 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending March 21st and paid on March 27th, 2026.
- 41 total P-Card statements were processed for March for charges made at the end of January to almost the end of February.
- There was a total of 518 invoices processed during March from 3/1 to 3/31.
- All ice rink seasonal staff have come off payroll. Seasonal hiring continues with the vast majority of golf staff hired on and set up in our time clock software. We have also submitted most of the PDRs for the Salomon Farm camp staff, seasonal maintenance staff, Sweet Breeze staff, and Foellinger Theatre staff.

✚ Customer Service and Finance

- Open house for McMillen Family Pavilion was held on March 11th. Great turnout with over 40 individuals attending. Some even brought their decorations, etc., for their event that they have the pavilion rented for, to see how it would all look and sound.
- The warmer weather has increased the number of Pooch Passes that are being sold. The new option of mailing the passes when the information is completed online is going very well.
- Registrations for all Day camps started on March 23rd. The front office staff did a great job of helping customers. This is a very busy day since all our camps are very popular. It was “all hands-on deck” with customers coming into the office, calling into the office, and sending questions through email.
- An online queue for WebTrac has been created and put in place for busy times. This helped greatly with the registrations for camps.
- Ticket sales for the concerts at the Foellinger Theatre have greatly increased this month. Tickets for three concerts went on sale in March. Customers like coming into the Main Office to purchase tickets to avoid the extra fees that are charged through other purchasing options.
- The process of how Youth Scholarship is applied to accounts has changed. This change allows customers to use the scholarships when they are registering for programs online as well as in the office.
- Rhonda met with Steve and Chuck to begin working on a formal agreement with Blue Jacket for their use of Franke Park during the holidays.
- Rhonda was trained by Ticketmaster on how to change ticket status so that held tickets could be sold or comped. After training performed this on all six concerts with tickets currently on sale.

✚ Foellinger Theatre Report (Overview) -March focused on continued momentum toward the 2026 Foellinger Theatre season with key show confirmations, expanded ticketing preparation, and significant progress in seasonal staffing. Efforts centered on solidifying the season lineup, advancing operational readiness, and building out the team required to execute a successful summer season.

✚ Staffing / HR Development

- Conducted final rounds of interviews for seasonal positions across production, front of house, and food & beverage operations.
- Successfully filled several key seasonal roles, including:
 - Theatre Production Lead
 - Theatre Technician - Production
 - Theatre Technician - Stage
 - A1 (Audio Lead)
 - L1 (Lighting Lead)
 - Theatre Facilities and Grounds Lead
 - Theatre Food and Beverage Assistant Manager
 - Theatre Utility Lead - Bars and Concessions
 - Theatre Front of House Lead
 - Theatre Box Office Lead

- Theatre Utility Lead - Artist Hospitality
- Continued rehiring returning seasonal staff to maintain institutional knowledge and operational consistency.
- Advanced onboarding planning for seasonal staff, including training schedules, operational expectations, and safety protocols.
- Continued evaluating staffing structure to ensure proper coverage across all departments for the 2026 season.

2026 Season Planning & Show Development

- Confirmed additional shows for the 2026 season, continuing to build a balanced and market-responsive lineup.
- Advanced planning for previously confirmed shows, including:
 - Ghostbusters (1984) in Concert
 - Three Dog Night
- Continued collaboration with promoters and partners to finalize routing, holds, and contract details.
- Refined overall season pacing to align with venue capacity, staffing readiness, and audience demand.
- Prepared confirmed shows for announcement strategy and coordinated timing for upcoming on sales.

Ticketing / Box Office / Ticketmaster

- Continued building newly confirmed events in Ticketmaster, including pricing, scaling, and hold configurations.
- Advanced internal readiness for upcoming on-sales, including coordination of marketing timelines and pre-sale structures.
- Continued refining ticketing strategy to align with revenue goals and accessibility objectives.
- Coordinated with partners on ticketing logistics for venue presents, co-promoted, and rental events.

Operations & Event Management Systems

- Expanded implementation of Monday.com as the central platform for event and operational tracking. Still not done.
- Continued building and refining workflows for:
 - Event timelines
 - Staffing coordination
 - Production needs
 - Vendor management
- Began internal alignment on usage expectations to ensure consistency across departments.
- Continued improving internal communication and task tracking in preparation for peak season operations.

Production & Vendor Coordination

- Continued coordination with Force Tech and other production vendors to support confirmed events.
- Advanced technical planning for newly confirmed shows, including staging, audio, and lighting needs.
- Continued assessing venue readiness and technical requirements to support a diverse range of programming.

+ Additional Work / Ongoing Items

- Continued coordination with Parks and Recreation and internal stakeholders on seasonal readiness.
- Advanced planning related to ongoing facility improvements and infrastructure updates.
- Continued refining operational workflows to improve efficiency during the active season.
- Supported broader strategic planning related to marketing, sponsorship, and audience engagement initiatives.

+ Next Steps / April Priorities

- Finalize additional 2026 season bookings and complete core lineup.
- Announce additional shows and launch coordinated on-sale campaigns.
- Complete hiring of remaining seasonal staff and begin formal training.
- Finalize production schedules and vendor commitments for confirmed events.
- Prepare for full operational ramp-up as the season approaches.

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

+ Facilities Supervisor: Greg Reith

- Pavilion rentals totaled 99 for this month.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge, Lawton Park Skatepark, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, Brewer Park, Moody Park shelter, and Packard Park shelter.
- The facilities team pressure-washed the following locations: The entrance and awning at Psi-Ote Lower pavilion at Northside Park, Moody Park shelter, Packard Park shelter, and Brewer Park.
- Annual cleanings were completed at Foster Park Golf Course Clubhouse and Shoaff Park Golf Course Clubhouse
- Facilities team continue to prep the summer rental pavilions. The team is continuing to stock the restrooms in preparation for the annual water on schedule.
- Relief staff are starting their annual pressure washing in the parks. With the warmer temperatures recently, they were able to knock out a few locations, as pictured below.



Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- All the time clock controllers for lights were adjusted due to the change to daylight saving time.
- The process of restoring water service to the summer facilities began with the Shoaff Park golf clubhouse on the 16th. This process continued with summer pavilions, restrooms, and drinking fountains the week of the 30th. This process usually takes up to a month, depending on the weather.
- Playground inspections have started for the season, resulting in several work requests to maintain the safety and integrity of our playgrounds.
- There was a total of **11** calls to the on-call person this month. **3** of which were lock issues, **4** were calls from dispatch regarding alarms, and **4** were miscellaneous issues.

Maintenance Technician completed the following:

3: Alarm Maintenance, **26:** Building Maintenance, **6:** Carpentry, **20:** Electrical Repair, **3:** HVAC Maintenance, **1:** Key Core Maintenance, **47:** Light Maintenance, **15:** Lock Maintenance, **17:** Paint, **21:** Playground Maintenance, **28:** Plumbing Maintenance, **2:** Sign Maintenance, **10:** Vandalism

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment

- Tree limb and debris cleanup continues as needed at various park locations.
- Rivergreenway Trail continues to be serviced weekly to remove sticks, debris, and snow.
- Botanical Conservatory, Foster Park, and Lakeside Park compost bins continue to be emptied as needed.
- The Grounds crews run trash routes three days a week, ensuring all receptacles in the parks are emptied.
- Crews have plowed snow, shoveled walkways, and applied salt to icy walks, parking lots, and roads throughout the park's system.
- Parking blocks have been straightened and replaced as needed in various parks.
- Trees were pruned at Memorial Park, Brewer Park, McCulloch Park, Lions Park, and Jehl Park to improve appearance and allow mowers better access to maintain turf beneath the trees.
- Crews assisted with the cleanup of fallen trees, limbs, and debris in multiple parks following the windstorm on March 13th.
- Heavy Equipment crews added and graded stones on roads and paths at Salomon Farm to improve the quality and enhance their overall appearance.

- Crews spent some time at Franke Park cutting back some of the tree line around Shoaff Lake and other areas in the park.



Main Trac Coordinator: Nicole Roth

- Main Trac Entries: 5,880 for the month.
- We received 116 calls from the 311 Call Center this month.
- 0 volunteer hours reported.
- Busy entering time sheets and contracted/sales invoices.
- Running monthly reports for Recreation Staff.
- Nicole attended the Mental Health First Aid training seminar that was held at the Bowen Center. She completed the training and earned her three-year certification.

Superintendent: Mike Gore

- Approve and record invoices for various materials that are being used in our grounds, maintenance, and facilities departments.
- Overseeing a variety of issues on all sides of Maintenance.
- The 2026 River Greenway inspections are continuing.
- Spending time on the new HR hiring system, trying to find our new employees in grounds.
- Working with contractors to ensure 2026 purchase orders are completed.
- Starting the MMR reports for IDEM at the spray parks for the 2026 season.

Operations: Travis Roth (Storeroom and Property):

- The Franke Park Day Camp Kenwood radios were checked over by the radio shop and given a clean bill of health for the summer season.
- 1 additional Kenwood radio was purchased for the Day Camp staff.
- Storeroom staff have worked on making various signs and banners for the upcoming season.
- Quarterly storm water inspections were performed at 9 locations and submitted to City Utilities.

Property Transactions:

Hilti Piston Drive Tool	Scrapped	P210
22 RedMax Reciprocator	Scrapped	P230
26 Ag Tank Sprayer	Added to Inventory	P230
26 Hawk 20" Floor Machines (2)	Added to Inventory	P250F
26 Makita 18V Tools	Added to Inventory	P295
24 Stihl MS261 Chainsaw	Added to Inventory	R211



26 Toro Reelmaster 3555D	Added to Inventory	R211
26 Kenwood NX1200 Radio	Added to Inventory	R490
Kenwood TK-2200 Radio	Scrapped	R490

2026 Vehicle and Equipment Purchase Update:

Forestry Bucket Truck	Ordered
Ford F250 Pickup	Ordered
Toro 5910 Mower	Ordered

Garage Operations Highlights:

- 143 work orders were scheduled this month, 20 of which were services.
- The older engine from the Park’s pontoon boat was installed on the riverfront work boat to make it more reliable and easier to use. The pontoon boat had a new engine installed last year, resulting in a spare engine that could be utilized on the smaller boat.
- The day camp passenger van was taken to Bob Thomas Ford to have body work performed, resulting from a slight accident in 2025. The van has been repaired, serviced, and is ready for day camp.
- A new Toro Reelmaster 3555D was delivered to the Foster Golf Course. This mower was part of the golf mower orders placed early this year to replace aging units.
- A forestry bucket truck involved in an accident in January was transported to H&H Sales to have the front bumper and vertical rack support repaired. The alignment was checked at McMahan tire and once the bumper is repaired, the truck will go back into service.
- A forestry truck required a turbocharger replacement. This work was performed by Selking International.
- Garage mechanics continued working on grounds and golf mowers to make sure they are ready for the first day of the mowing season.
- A garage lift vendor inspected the in-ground truck lifts in the Lawton garage to determine if the leaking seals could be repaired. The lifts are quite outdated, and parts may be difficult to source. If repairs cannot be made, we will look at updating the lifts in the shop with more modern 4-post lifts to meet our needs.
- 4 trucks and several small tractor attachments were listed online for auction. Purple Wave auction is the city’s new vehicle and auction vendor and has been approved by the purchasing department. This new company takes dozens of pictures of the equipment, provides detailed information online, and handles all parts of the sale for the city.
- Several pickup trucks and vans had recalls from Ford this month. The Bob Thomas mobile technician was able to perform these repairs on-site without us needing to transport vehicles to the dealership.
- Crews have met to discuss the upcoming Sweet Breeze spring maintenance and launch to make sure all of the needed repairs and maintenance details have been performed before the boat is in the water for the summer.
- W.A. Jones has been contracted to install a new lift gate on one of the Headwaters utility trucks. The lift gate was purchased in 2025 and will be installed at their facility.
- A Toro 5910 came in to have the engine flywheel replaced. This involves disassembling a major portion of the rear of the mower to access the damaged part.
- The last Fuel Lock fuel controller was ordered to be installed on the Lawton non-ethanol gas tank. This will be the last unit installed and will place all of the Park Department fuel tanks on the same computerized tracking system.
- A replacement crane section for the large forestry crane is on its way to RPM Machinery, which will install the part and reinspect the crane. They will also repair a leaking hydraulic tank, which will allow the vehicle to be put back in service to support Forestry operations.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Bloomingdale Park Playground Equipment – Installation of equipment is in progress. New concrete border and safety surfacing were installed in early April.
- Boone Street Park Fence Replacement – Bidding is completed. Project to begin in late April or early May.
- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Design – Planning is in progress. Construction planned for after Labor Day, 2026.
- Botanical Conservatory Roof Glass Replacement – Planning is in progress. Installation planned for September/October 2026.
- Buckner Park Stream Crossing – Planning ongoing through the Landscape Division, and the Sidewalk Leveling Projects are completed.
- Foellinger Theatre House Lighting Installation – Installation is 95% completed. Warranty work is ongoing through the end of April.
- Foellinger Theatre Rear Parking Lot Lighting – Concrete foundations and electrical lines are installed. Fixtures and poles will be installed by late April.
- Foellinger Theatre Step Lighting – Lighting is completed. Step tread treatment planning is in progress.
- Foellinger Theatre Ticket Office Windows Replacement – Mechanical equipment is installed and operational. New glass panel installation planned for April.
- Foster Park Golf Course Restoration Plan – Restoration is in progress with completion planned in Spring. Work is being performed through City Utilities.
- Foster Park Golf Renovation Design – Proposal preparation is in progress. Planning will be ongoing through the Summer of 2026.
- Foster Park Pavement Striping – Installation is ongoing.
- Foster Park Playground Drinking Fountain – A new drinking fountain for the playground area has been delivered. Installation by Parks staff.
- Franke Park Concrete Improvements – Project is completed.
- Franke Park Longhouse Lighting – Installation is in progress. Completion planned for end of March.
- Gren Park Picnic Shelter – Shelter has been ordered. Bidding for installation planned for May.
- Hamilton Park Picnic Tables and Benches – Installation of new furniture and concrete pads is planned for Spring.
- Hamilton Park Playground Border Replacement – Construction planned for the summer of 2026.
- Hanna Homestead Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned for mid to late April thru end of May.
- Hanna Homestead Park Redevelopment – RFP for design firms planned in Spring.
- Hanna Homestead Playground Border – Bidding is complete. Completion of work planned for the end of April.
- Hanna Homestead Playground Removal – Work is planned for early April, with new playground equipment scheduling.
- Headwaters Park Bridge Railing Renovation – Renovation work set to begin April 13th. The project will take approximately 3-4 weeks to complete.

- Headwaters Park Fountain – Construction is in progress. Opening planned for May.
- Headwaters Park West Sidewalk Leveling – Work is scheduled to begin April 4th and will take 2-3 weeks to complete.
- Headwaters Park West Sidewalk Stairs and Pavers Renovation – Work is planned to commence once the sidewalk leveling project is completed.
- Johnny Appleseed Campground Fire Pit – Project is completed.
- Johnny Appleseed Campground Paving Projects – Installation of new paving and renovations to existing paving planned for May/June.
- Kreager Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned to begin late March. Completion by the end of April.
- Kreager Park Tennis Center Fence Renovation – Project is completed.
- Kreager Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Project planned to begin after the spring high school season. Completion by the end of June.
- Lafayette Park New Sidewalks – Installation to follow playground removal and shall begin approximately the first week of May.
- Lafayette Park Playground Equipment – Installation planned to begin the first week of June.
- Lafayette Park Playground Equipment Removal – Work is planned for mid-April in conjunction with the installation of new playground equipment.
- Lafayette Park Tennis Courts Fence Renovation – Project is completed.
- Lakeside Park Electrical Service Upgrades – Project is completed.
- Lakeside Park Pond Fountain – Awaiting installation of new fountain in Spring.
- Lawton Park Maintenance Building Roof Design – Work is planned to begin in April, with 3-4 weeks to complete.
- Lindenwood Nature Preserve Wood Railing Replacement – Work is planned for early Spring.
- Lions Park Pickleball Court Paving Repair – Work is planned for late April or early May.
- Lions Park Tennis/Pickleball Courts Recoating – Work is planned for late June through early August.
- McMillen Park Basketball Goals Pads Replacement – Installation is in progress.
- McMillen Park Pavilion Roof Replacement – Installation planned to begin March 24th. Completion by the end of the first week of April.
- McMillen Park Pool Deck Engineering Design – Design is in progress.
- McMillen Park Pool Drains Improvements – Construction is in progress.
- McMillen Park Pool Liners Replacement – Construction is in progress, and completion is planned for mid-April.
- Memorial Park Picnic Table Concrete Pads – Installation in Spring.
- Memorial Park Picnic Tables – Installation is planned for Spring.
- Multiple Park Locations Playground Communication Panels – Project approval process is ongoing.
- Northside Park Pool Sand Filters Replacement – Installation planned for April 2026.

- Northside Park Psi-Ote Upper Pavilion Awning Replacement – Order has been placed and new awning to be installed in May/June.
- Promenade Park Safety Surfacing Replacement – Installation completed March 23rd.
- Repka Park Playground Equipment – Existing playground has been removed. New equipment installation is planned for the last week of March through early April.
- Salomon Farm Animal Barn Renovation – Planning is in progress.
- Salomon Farm Old Barn Flooring – Application to improve flooring planned for May.
- Salomon Farm Old Barn Gutters Replacement – Planning is in progress.
- Salomon Farm Rear Parking Lot Lighting – Planning is in progress.
- Salomon Farm Restroom Building Door Replacement – Project is completed.
- Shoaff Park Playground Equipment – Work planned to begin March 23rd. Installation of all materials through the end of April.
- Swinney Park East Trail Relocation – Planning for trail maintenance is in progress.
- Various Parks Playgrounds Dry Wells Installation – Planning is in progress for Lafayette, Hanna Homestead, and Bloomingdale Parks.
- Various Park Pavilions Exterior Painting – Project planned for Spring of 2026.
- Various Parks Paving Projects 2026 - Bidding is completed. Awaiting approvals. Work planned for May through August.
- Various Parks Sidewalks Replacement – Planning is in progress.
- Various Parks Concrete Pads for Site Furniture – Bidding is in progress for Memorial, Hamilton, and Kettler Parks.
- Various Parks Park Identification Signage Additions – New signs to be installed at McKinnie Commons, Hurshtown Reservoir, and Hanna Homestead Park.
- Weisser Park Tennis Courts Fencing Replacement – Project planned for Spring 2026.

Other work:

- Content preparation for Engage Fort Wayne
- PAS Division GIS training sessions in progress with staff
- Preparing GIS content for the Parks mobile application
- Various Parks: cost estimates for various projects are being prepared upon request.
- Various Parks: park assessments are being completed.
- Various Parks: underground utility locates were scheduled and performed.
- Various Parks: assisting the marketing department by preparing requested project information.
- Various Parks: reviewed potential and necessary future projects
- Various Parks: updating park site plan bases and building plans.

Safety: Tony DeVido

- Parks & Rec. The Safety Committee meeting was held on 3/31.
- 0 vehicle crashes were reported for this time period.

- 2 employee injuries were reported during this time period.
- 2 CPR/FA classes were held. 12 employees were certified.
- 5 employees received SOAR/CPR training.
- The biennial AED inspections continue.
- SDS book collection and digitization continue.
- Bobcat (skid steer) training was discussed w/ risk and is being planned.
- Golf course seasonal employees received General Safety training.



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

✚ Botanical Conservatory Report – March 2026

Fern's Fairylight Express continued to welcome guests throughout March, offering a storybook journey of trains, botanical wonder, and interactive discovery that will remain on display through April 12. March also marked a major milestone for the Botanical Conservatory's permanent collection with the official reopening of the Desert House on March 26, celebrated through a public press conference and remarks highlighting the renewed space.

The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events in March 2026, including the Great Train Connection (March 13–15) and the Volunteer Celebration Dinner (March 23), along with strong participation in education programming such as T'ai Chi and specialty workshops. Behind the scenes, staff and volunteers also made significant progress preparing materials and logistics for the Grow it! School Plant Program, supporting the larger spring ramp-up already underway. Staff are now gearing up for a busy spring stretch, including Bunny Tales in the Garden (April 3–4), Showchange Week (April 12–20), the opening of Color in Motion: Live Butterfly Exhibit (April 21), and the Spring Artisan Market (April 26), along with additional pre-registered programs and early preparations for Mother's Day season.

Current vacancies include Seasonal Gardener (two candidates have been selected and submitted for clearance by Human Resources), Seasonal Maintenance (accepting applications), and Clerical II – Retail Assistant (scheduling interviews). Carla Stanley (Clerical II – Retail Assistant) and JP Schey (Seasonal Maintenance) both submitted their resignations in March.

✚ Botanical Conservatory KPIs

March 2026 reflected a softer attendance month for the Botanical Conservatory, with 8,699 visitors (down 25.20% from March 2025) and a year-to-date total of 22,200 (down 23.19%). A key contributing factor is that Fern's Fairylight Express remains a longer-running showcase for us; extended exhibit runs typically reduce the "newness" effect that drives repeat visitation and urgency, which can depress month-to-month attendance even when guest satisfaction remains strong. As a result, admissions revenue followed the same pattern, finishing at \$32,522 for the month (down 24.30%) and \$85,964 year-to-date (down 20.48%).

Despite lower attendance, several revenue streams performed favorably and helped the Botanical Conservatory finish ahead overall. Membership revenue increased sharply to \$12,510 (up 46.85%), bringing year-to-date membership slightly ahead of last year (+0.34%). Retail remained resilient: Conservatory Shop revenue rose 11.70% in March to \$29,477.51, and Café Flora generated \$10,248.61 in March (\$29,095.77 YTD), continuing to strengthen the combined retail and hospitality operation.

While rental and catering revenue was lower for the month (-45.00%) and year-to-date (-52.98%), Other Revenue increased for March and rose significantly year-to-date, helping offset softer admissions and rentals. Altogether, total revenue finished up 5.04% for the month to \$128,292.39, and up 7.16% year-to-date to \$318,132.59, reinforcing that the Botanical Conservatory's overall revenue picture remains strong even as attendance trends reflect the realities of a longer exhibit cycle.

Attendance

March 2025:	11,630 visitors
March 2026:	8,699 visitors

A decrease of 2,931 or -25.20% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Attendance:	28,901 visitors
2026 Attendance:	22,200 visitors

A decrease of 6,701 or -23.19% to 2025

Admissions Revenue

March 2025:	\$42,959.00
March 2026:	\$32,522.00

A decrease of \$10,437.00 or -24.30% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Admissions Revenue:	\$108,100.00
2026 Admissions Revenue:	\$85,964.00

A decrease of \$22,136.00 or -20.48% to 2025

Membership Revenue

March 2025:	\$8,519.00
March 2026:	\$12,510.00

An increase of \$3,991.00 or +46.85% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Membership Revenue:	\$30,582.00
2026 Membership Revenue:	\$30,686.00

An increase of \$104.00 or +0.34% to 2025

Conservatory Shop Revenue

March 2025:	\$26,390.22
March 2026:	\$29,477.51

An increase of \$3,087.29 or +11.70% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$80,824.65
2026 Gift Shop Revenue:	\$78,540.15

A decrease of \$2,284.50 or -2.83% to 2025

Café Flora Revenue

March 2026:	\$10,248.61
YTD 2026:	\$29,095.77

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue

March 2025:	\$6,985.00
March 2026:	\$3,842.50

A decrease of \$3,142.50 or -44.99% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Rental Revenue:	\$28,535.00
2026 Rental Revenue:	\$13,417.50

A decrease of \$15,118.00 or -52.98% to 2025

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

March 2025:	\$37,280.05
March 2026:	\$39,691.77

YTD Comparisons

2025 Other Revenue:	\$48,837.64
2026 Other Revenue:	\$80,429.17

Conservatory Total Revenue

March 2025:	\$122,133.27
March 2026:	\$128,292.39

An increase of \$6,159.12 or +5.04% to 2025

YTD Comparisons

2025 Total Revenue:	\$296,879.29
2026 Total Revenue:	\$318,132.59

An increase of \$21,253.30 or +7.16% to 2025

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

Staff received a \$5,000 grant from the O'Rourke-Schof Family Foundation for support of the 2026 Showcase Garden Exhibits.

The Conservatory received \$1,000 from Matthew W. Wyatt (via the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee) for the 2026 Color in Motion Butterfly Exhibit.

Staff discussed potential funding of the Terrace Garden Exploration Garden Redesign project with Miah Michaelsen, Director of the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC), which is coordinating funding applications with the IEDC (Indiana Economic Development Corporation). Estela Perez, the grants coordinator for the City of Fort Wayne, thought we should review the project with the IAC even though the initial review of the requirements indicated our application would not present a strong case for funding. Miah confirmed the Botanical Conservatory project would not be a strong application, primarily due to the lack of strategic alignment with the arts and culture plan of the Northeast Indiana Region, which is heavily emphasizing the creative and visual arts. Miah recommended that a Botanical Conservatory application, if submitted, should focus on the project's arts/music programming and education.

Staff is continuing to work on a new comprehensive fundraising plan for the Botanical Conservatory that covers all earned and contributed revenue streams, consulting with pertinent Botanical Conservatory staff for their input and review. The fundraising plan will also incorporate key factors of the Botanical Conservatory's strategic plan (currently in process). The fundraising plan will serve as the master playbook for revenue growth. Expected review, completion, and approval by the end of Q2 2026, with the plan in use by Q3 2026 and beyond.

Staff submitted a media sponsorship proposal to 21Alive for support of the 2026 Back to our Roots music program.

Staff provided promotional tickets and information to FOX55 and Majic 95.1 for the promotional spots for the 2026 Bunny Tales in the Garden.

Staff provided promotional tickets and information to FOX55 and Majic 95.1 for the promotional spots for the 2026 Mother's Day Plant Sale.

Staff provided promotional tickets and information to 21Alive and 97.3 WMEE for the promotional spots for the 2026 Color in Motion Live Butterfly Exhibit.

Botanical Conservatory Public Programs (Events)

The Great Train Connection (March 13-15)

This year's 3-day event welcomed a total of 1,793 visitors, which is a 19% decrease from 2025. A total of 352 people attended on Friday (influenced by high winds and power outages), 886 on Saturday, and 555 on Sunday. There also happened to be a traveling train show at the Memorial Coliseum; regardless, all 7 of our vendors still participated in our event! It was neat to have this year's event scheduled during the "Fern's Fairylight Express" showcase exhibit, which added to the train theme. Talitha Shipman even joined us for a pop-up book signing. In addition, there were promotions and winners of free book giveaways.

- **Education**

T'ai Chi for Relaxation (March 3-April 7)

Liz Monnier instructs this evening session of t'ai chi to offer students the opportunity to release and unwind after a full day. After beginning with a focus on form in the classroom, students enjoy the opportunity to practice their form in the garden. This peaceful setting allows for complete relaxation. Thanks to a social media promotion, this class filled with 20 participants and held a waitlist of 5 for registration.

Psanky: Ukranian Eggs (March 26)

In this popular workshop taught by mother/daughter duo Carol Ann and Karen, participants learned Ukrainian methods of decorating eggs with wax and dye. It reached capacity and generated a great deal of enthusiasm, with attendees fully engaged throughout the session. By the end of the workshop, each participant completed their own beautifully decorated egg and left with both a finished piece and the knowledge and supplies to continue the craft at home!

Bonsai Club Private Workshop (March 28)

Approximately 17 members of the Fort Wayne Bonsai Club enjoyed a semi-private bonsai session while inviting silent viewing of onlookers who were curious and perhaps interested in joining the club. This session allowed club members to enjoy their artform with the fellowship of other enthusiasts while sharing

tips and ideas on repotting. Furthermore, the session allowed the opportunity for newer members to receive coaching and guidance from those with more experience.

Grow it! School Plant Program

This month marked a major coordination and preparation period for the *Grow It! School Plant Program*, with strong participation from school chairpersons and dedicated volunteer support behind the scenes. Chairpersons successfully submitted their student orders for seeds, t-shirts, and pencils. This kicked off a significant amount of work completed by volunteers, who played a crucial role in preparing materials for distribution. Over the last 3 months, a total of 17,000 bags were assembled in preparation for plant deliveries, and over 1,500 seed packets were carefully sorted and packaged. In addition, partners at Easterseals provided valuable assistance by bundling nearly 2,000 pencils, helping streamline the distribution process taking place over the next month.

Youth Field Trips

The Botanical Conservatory hosted 393 visitors from seven school groups in March 2026, with 40% choosing to participate in additional educational programming. Last year, 12 groups brought 145 students to the 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. Guests are also invited to a Scavenger Hunt to learn about ferns and discover what smaller elements are in the garden.

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 and will be displayed until April 12th.

Garden Party Window Decorating Contest (March 20-May 10)

The Botanical Conservatory is partnering again with the Anthis Career Academy on a design for Downtown Fort Wayne's window decorating contest. Spring of 2026 is our 3rd design collaboration, with winter 2025 being our 2nd and spring 2025 being our 1st. Last spring, the students even won the People's Choice for best use of them. What's cool is that these neighboring graphic design students find it to be a worthwhile collaboration, offering them real-world experience in their junior and senior years. It's also a great way to participate in community events via our Connector hallway. Visit downtownfortwayne.com to vote for your favorite 2026 "Garden Party" window display.

Volunteers/Staff

- In March, 4 new volunteers were welcomed, while 2 additional volunteers who had already started serving at the Greenhouse also received orientation. These new volunteers, along with ongoing active volunteers, significantly supported the Botanical Conservatory this month! Six different volunteers filled 27 shifts at the Front Desk, with 8 volunteers filling 36 shifts in the Gift Shop. Two volunteers continued their weekly

garden grooming, and 2 additional volunteers assisted with showcase train maintenance and answering guest questions. With the next showcase exhibit approaching, 40 volunteers have already committed to 289 shifts; this equates to 88% coverage with more shift offers pending for Color in Motion.

- Regarding special tasks and events, March began with 4 volunteers wrapping up duties for the Home and Garden Show. A total of 18 volunteers supported the Great Train Connection with train maintenance, goody bag distribution, craft assistance, and survey collection. In advance of Bunny Tales in the Garden come April, 3 volunteers offered their time for spring cleanup on a brisk Saturday morning. On the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, Easterseals continued to tidy garden paths and bundled nearly 2,000 pencils for the Grow it! School Plant Program. Across 3 different dates in March, 23 different volunteers prepared over 4,300 bags and 1,500 seed packets for school distribution.
- Volunteer Celebration Dinner (March 23)
The Botanical Conservatory and Lawton Park Greenhouse jointly celebrated 2025 Volunteer Service at the beautiful Promenade Park Pavilion. With staff, volunteers, and their guests in attendance, a total of 129 people came together to celebrate 224 active volunteers who collectively served 10,303 hours in 2025. All together, these volunteers offered the equivalent of 5 full-time staff members! Key speakers, including Director Steve McDaniel, presented words of appreciation while also recognizing volunteers with milestone anniversaries and those with extensive volunteer hours. Of the most significant accomplishments, Louise Rennecker celebrated 40 years of service, and Denise Lock was thanked for contributing over 1,000 service hours in 2025. Delicious cupcakes, raffle prizes, and a centerpiece giveaway rounded out the evening festivities.

Upcoming

Thru April 12: Fern's Fairylight Express showcase exhibit
Thru April 12: Gathered After the Fall, art display by Ben High
Thru April 26: Slightly Used Bulb Sale
April 21-June 21: Grounded in Light, art display by Julie Wall
April 21-June 21: Color in Motion live butterfly exhibit

April 3 & 4: Bunny Tales in the Garden
April 12-20: Showchange Week
April 21: Opening of Color in Motion live butterfly exhibit
April 25: Bonsai for Beginners, pre-registered program
April 26: Spring Artisan Market
April 28-May 26: Continuing T'ai Chi, pre-registered program

May 4-7: Setup of Mother's Day Plant Sale, McMillen Community Center
May 7-10: Mother's Day Plant Sale, McMillen Community Center
May 8-17: National Public Garden Week
May 9 & 10: Mother's Day in the Garden
May 16: Spring Bonsai Show
May 24: Iris Flower Show
May 28: String Jammers Spring Jam

June 3: Desert Sound Relaxation, pre-registered program
June 4-25: Back to Our Roots, \$1 Night Thursdays

June 6: Spring Plant Swap, pre-registered program
June 7 & 14: Breakfast with Butterflies, pre-registered program
June 8-26: Camp ACTIVenture, pre-registered program
June 20 & 21: Father's Day in the Garden
June 22-26: Showchange Week
June 23-28: National Pollinator Week
June 27-November 15: Pueblo Garden: Style of the Southwest showcase exhibit
June 27-November 15: Touching Grass, art display by Jeremy Stroup
June 28: Summer Artisan Market
June 30-July 28: T'ai Chi for Relaxation, pre-registered program

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

- Rock mulch was delivered and installed in the Desert House. Pride Landcare installed the rock mulch throughout the Desert House, with Horticulture staff providing the final detailed work on the rock placement.
- New labels were installed in the Desert House to inform guests of the species they are observing. Plant labeling will continue throughout the Botanical Conservatory over time to eventually label every species on display.
- On March 26th, the Desert House was officially opened to the public. The Mayor, Director McDaniel, and Gilbert Young all spoke during the press conference to share with the public the renewed Desert House.
- Extensive spring cleanup has been underway in preparation for the season and the upcoming Bunny Tales in the Garden event. Perennials have been cut back, and leaves raked to prepare for spring.
- Pride Landcare completed nearly all the edging and mulching throughout the Conservatory grounds in between storms and wet weather. Their work should be completed by the end of the first week in April. Sycamore Tree Care completed additional pruning throughout the Showcase House and Tropical House. Their crew will be finishing their yearly pruning work in April, before the start of the Color in Motion Live Butterfly Showcase.
- The bulbs for use at the Botanical Conservatory next year have all been ordered early to take advantage of a bulk pricing discount and an early ordering discount. Due to the discounts offered, the Botanical Conservatory was able to save approximately \$2,700 when compared to last year's bulb purchase.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

- Allied Mechanical completed a temporary repair to the boiler exhaust vent on the roof following windstorm damage. A permanent replacement component has been ordered and will be installed upon arrival.
- The Rental Coordinator's office was cleared of outdated furnishings to allow for a full revive. Ruiz Painting was contracted to repaint the space and install a new cover base, and new office furnishings were installed to complete the renovation by Workspace Solutions. Ruiz Painting also repainted the office hallway areas and door frames, improving overall appearance and consistency across the administrative spaces.
- Mutton Rental installed the vinyl skin on the permanent upper-terrace tent structure in preparation for the season. Required permits were obtained for the 2025 season as well as for 2026.
- Reichhart Construction completed repairs and finishing work in the Atrium related to the wall spigot leak restoration, including rebuilding and repainting damaged wall areas and completing ceiling repairs in the vestibule. Chair rail installation was also completed in the Kessler and Jaenicke Rooms, supporting

continued facility improvements in key rental spaces.

- Jeremy Schey has submitted notice of resignation to accept a full-time position outside of the city. Recruitment will begin to fill the resulting seasonal vacancy.



Visitors enjoying train displays during the Great Train Connection



Students practicing T'ai Chi after hours in the Tropical House



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



Spring bulbs are blooming the last few weeks of Fern's Fairylight Express



2026 Spring Window Design by Anthis Graphic Design Students



Remarks held at the Annual Volunteer Celebration Dinner



Volunteers prepping bags and seeds for Grow it! School Plant Program



Pictured here are a few Volunteers who answered a callout for spring cleaning the outdoor gardens

Planning Report – March 2026

- Riverfront Phase IIB construction continues with more paver installation in the esplanade and trail paving. The contractors have been working on an updated cost and schedule due to recent scope of work changes.
- Our staff continues to coordinate construction activities with adjacent developments at the old Schaab Metals building, More Brewing, relocated Depot, and the Eddy.
- The Design team met to discuss the Foster Park Entrance design project and to review value engineering and phasing options. The design team is revising drawings.
- The Staff continues to coordinate with members of Wildwood Park Community Association and Heritage Landscapes on the Wildwood Park and Rockhill Park Historic Landscape Study and Guideline project.
- Staff have drafted an RFP for the design of the Hanna Homestead Park Masterplan. A fundraising plan and committee have been formed and are being coordinated through a partnership between Parks and the Community Foundation.
- Public input was received for the proposed improvements at Wells Street Park. Staff is working on schematic design.
- Staff met with the City Utilities Engineers to discuss the proposed alignment of a new storm sewer alignment in Swinney Park along W. Jefferson Blvd.
- Staff participated in a visioning workshop with the design team for the Conservatory’s Exploration and Terrace Garden Design project. The design team presented a summary of the inventory, analysis, and needs assessment and led the staff through a series of exercises to gain feedback on site amenities, design elements, and building aesthetics.
- The Final coordination took place for the utility work in the Duck Street parking lot (south of Headwaters Park); this work has been made necessary by the construction of the Headwaters Lofts. Various Parks staff members met with the Inclusion Institute. This quarterly meeting focused on the potential for a video series aimed at improving accessibility and conveyance of related information for a variety of parks.
- We began coordination with a consultant team organized by Public Works regarding a Southeast Corridor study; staff are serving as members of the technical committee for this group.

Horticulture and Landscape Report- March 2026

57 people volunteered in the greenhouse for approximately 469 hours.

There were 32,000 seeds sown for the Parks, Mother’s Day Plant Sale, and Conservatory Showcase.

A total of 1,617 cuttings were taken for Parks, Plant Sale, and Showcase.

Approximately 9,000 plants were transplanted for the Parks and Plant Sale.

1,748 Spring Bulbs planted for Showcase.

2,351 plants were raised for Summer 1 Showcase.

Approximately 10,000 plants were transplanted for SCFVA.

800 geraniums were transplanted for the Mother's Day Plant Sale in the Garden Event.

101 plants were provided to be sold at the Botanical Conservatories Gift Shop.

The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup, leaf removal, and limb removal after a large storm event. Snow removal and salting continued. Spring pruning began on the roses. Some poor weather led to greenhouse assistance. The fountain was roughly cleaned. Memorial tree rings were mulched, and bed mulching began. Turf cleanups were finished, and spot mowing was done as needed.

The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup, leaf removal, bed edging, pre-emergent applications, perennial garden cleanup and mulching, and bridal glen cleanup and mulching. They also cleaned up the golf course rental and cleaned up and mulched the golf clubhouse before the course opened on March 26th. They planted pots with pansies in the Bridal Glen and the Golf Clubhouse. The Foster team once again labeled all bulb beds this year with the species of bulbs that are growing in them as a way to educate park patrons who may be interested in learning more. All bulb beds were cleaned up, and edges mulched. Deer repellent is consistently added to the bulb beds to deter deer from eating the bulbs. Roses were pruned and leaves on the tennis courts were cleaned up. Limbs were removed after storm events, and snow removal and salting continued as well.

The Downtown Team and the City Team combined as one team for most of the month of March. The Downtown team continued to pick litter daily at Freimann. They removed all greens from the Downtown Community Center pots and replanted them with spring bulbs. Liriope beds at Freimann were mown. The Downtown team spent a lot of the month completing landscape bed cleanups ahead of our mulching landscape contractors. Cleanups were done at Courthouse Green, the Downtown Community Center, Freimann, Headwaters, Main St. Medians, Meyers, Promenade, Riverfront beds, and Riverfront IIA. Limbs were picked up in the parks after storm events. Snow removal and salting continued as well.

The City Team and Downtown Team combined as one team for most of the month of March. The City team spent the majority of the month doing landscape bed cleanups ahead of our mulching landscape contractors. Bed cleanups were done at Foellinger Theatre, Franke Pond Pavilion, Franke Pavilion 1, Indian Village Sears Pavilion, Kreager-Taylor's Dream, McKinnie Commons, McMillen Community Center, McMillen Family Pavilion at Franke, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, Nuckols Park, PSI OTE Upper/Lower, Salomon, Shoaff River Lodge, and Weisser Center. Limbs were picked up in the parks after storm events. Snow removal and salting continued as well.

Some poor weather has resulted in greenhouse work (transplanting, seeding, etc.) being completed by landscape staff. Landscape staff also helped the greenhouse stay on schedule with seeding as needed. Per contract, MJK Total Lawn Care did a spring leaf cleanup of all turf and landscape beds in Headwaters Park. Leaves have been removed in anticipation of an April mulch installation on the East side and the beginning of mowing season.

Visionscapes completed most of their contracted spring landscape maintenance that included partial bed cleanups, bed edging, mulching, and pre-emergent applications. Parks completed in March were the Downtown Community Center, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, Nuckols Park, Freimann Square, Courthouse Green, Main Street Medians, Kreager-Taylor's Dream, and the Foellinger Theatre.

Lawnganics began their organic turf fertilization and weed control contract. Applications to the turf were made at Promenade, Headwaters, Foster, Lakeside, Courthouse Green, Freimann, Community Center, Foellinger Theatre, Main Street Medians, McMillen Pool, Northside Pool, and Meyers Park.

Triscape replaced 45 declining Crab Apple trees with 45 newly planted trees throughout the park. Tree species planted were Serviceberry, Redbud, Yellowwood, Tulip Poplar, and two different varieties of Crab Apple. Turf restoration followed.

Myers Plant Health Care will be treating several select trees at Lakeside and Promenade, as well as the Boxwood in the Swinney Letter Bed this season for insects, fungi, and improved tree health.

Pfister Sprinkler Systems was awarded a PO to do emergency repairs to all irrigation systems. This work will be done as needed this season in Headwaters, Promenade, Freimann, Community Center, Main Street Medians, Courthouse Green, Meyers, Northside Park, Foellinger Theatre, McKinnie Commons, Riverfront IIA, Swinney Letter Bed, Lakeside, and Foster.

Luke Price began working as the new Riverfront Gardener. Luke's focus will be on Riverfront Phase IIA, Riverfront IIB, as well as other parks along the river. He will be a part of the Downtown Team and assist with all downtown park maintenance.

One seasonal gardener position was filled and began working at Foster Park.

Riparian Management Report- March 2026

Removed 95 bags of litter (approximately 3800 lbs.) as well as numerous larger debris items (2 bikes, 3 traffic barrels, a tire, a cart, and a stroller) from the riverbanks.

Coordinated with the Heavy Equipment Dept to improve the gangway trench at Guldlin.

Coordinated with Forestry Dept to remove large fallen tree across Spy Run Creek.

Continued research and planning for new dock system for Promenade.

Continued monitoring geese activity for geese egg addling season.

Completed all repairs to the barge. Ready for launch.

Met with TeenWorks Site Supervisor for upcoming volunteer season to discuss goals and work site locations.

Completed Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training and certification.

Forestry Report- March 2026

Contract crews have completed their 2025 assigned removals of street trees throughout Fort Wayne. The removal of street trees is part of a comprehensive urban forestry management plan, addressing factors such as tree health and safety concerns.

During March, forestry crews completed 7 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to accommodate the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs. We anticipate these numbers to increase depending on storm issues.

March was the first month of 2026 to have a significant high wind event. 100 high-priority trees were removed by in-house crews this month. 74 of these were due to storm damage and 4 were a result of vehicle damage. 26 of these were in parks.

This month crews responded to 89 storm-related fallen/hanging limbs. 24 were private trees blocking streets.

Completed 6 inspections/appraisals of trees that had been damaged by vehicles. In total, these incidents resulted in \$5,200.00 in damages for March.

Forestry staff responded to and resolved (140) 311 Call Center requests for service this month.

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager, Lead of Marketing

 www.RiverfrontFW.org had 6,288 hits to the site this month. We continue to use RiverfrontFW.org to

promote upcoming events and share current Riverfront news.

✚ **Web Statistics:** Active Users: 22,690 Event Counts: 162,649

- ✚ Marketing team assisted with various tasks associated with the Botanical Conservatory Desert House Press Conference on March 26.
- ✚ Marketing team worked with Registration team on arranging for and assisting with the McMillen Family Pavilion at Franke Park Open House (March 11). Another great showing of potential renters.
- ✚ Marketing team produced the Annual Report.
- ✚ Senior Games and Learn to Swim brochures are almost done.
- ✚ Travel posts/flyers completed through fall.
- ✚ Met with DNR to discuss the LWCF grant, likely targeting Hanna Homestead for this grant in July.
- ✚ Applied for a grant for Park and Play.
- ✚ Sent sponsorship e-mail for Senior Games, as well as finalizing sponsorship flyers for several fall programs.
- ✚ Social media promotions for: McMillen Family Pavilion Open House, Bus Trips, Job Openings, Tri-Star Basketball Skills Contest, and Reimagined Desert Room at the Botanical Conservatory. In addition, crafted messages for four Theatre shows.
- ✚ Arranged for 10 media interviews with select staff promoting March events.

✚ March Media Mentions: 66.	Social Media Totals for March:	
	FB Followers	111,743
	FB Viewers	382,336
	X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,887
	Instagram Followers	31,692

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- ✚ All three golf courses are open for the year as of Thursday, March 26. That was 5 days later than the anticipated open date, and about a week and a half later than ideal. As is usual with this time of the year, the weather is the entire story and dictates how we can proceed. Opening day was great! The weather was warm, the courses were dry enough to run carts and have the ranges open, and activity was so strong that two of the courses had waiting times for carts. By the weekend, it had rained to the point we were walking only, with no driving ranges open. Tuesday was great, everything was reopened, and play was strong. That evening, the weather hit that will impact us for at least a week. Courses are closed, ranges (especially Shoaff)

are underwater, and there is more rain forecast. The three “good” days we had after opening showed great demand, but Indiana weather will be Indiana weather.

- ✦ From an operational standpoint, we have learned where we are and are adjusting accordingly. Staff is solidifying, with a good mix of returning people and new hires. The staff is going through a more extensive training process as we try to achieve a more consistent level of customer service at all 3 courses.
- ✦ We have also got enough information to see some potential issues that are already being addressed. We received 17 new golf carts on March 26, 10 of which went to Foster Park, with 7 going to McMillen. 12 2015-model carts were traded in. We still operate (28) 2015 model-year carts and have identified some battery and electrical issues with these. We are finding that batteries that were rated for a 5-year life are lasting 2-3 years and are having to be replaced. As these are being discovered, the batteries are being changed.
- ✦ As the growing season is getting ready to start, work will begin on repairing damage incurred due to weather and infrastructure issues from last year, as well as completing restore work on the holes at Foster that were disrupted by the Deep Rock Tunnel project. This has been delayed somewhat by the excessive rainfall in early April. The project will resume when the weather permits. Results from the work done last fall are already showing promise, and the golf courses should continue to improve as the season progresses. Hopefully, Foster Park can return to its traditional route later this summer.
- ✦ As we swing into mid-April, high school and middle school golf are starting back up. The courses are at or over capacity. Shoaff is down to 2 middle school teams; it had been 3, but one school is not fielding a team this year. Two teams are the number that works best. Currently, 3 high school teams utilize McMillen, and one at Foster. In the fall, during girls' golf season, all 4 use McMillen. With the growing public usage of McMillen, this creates a lot of traffic. We are not looking to host any more teams. League play is growing, as at least two leagues have added this year, with perhaps a third coming on board. Leagues will restart towards the end of April.
- ✦ Canterbury golf course has closed. They had a sizable golf organization, changed their name to the Summit City Golf Association, and moved to McMillen Park. This move will lead to an increase in usage and has already created many new participants with season passes.
- ✦ As the weather improves and activity level increases, we will be working towards a great season!

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager



- ✦ We received a \$400,000 Indiana Trails Program Grant from the Department of Natural Resources for the Carroll Road Trail from the Fairgrounds to Lima Road. Completing this trail will fill a critical gap in our trail network, connecting many neighborhoods with the four schools on Bethel Road and connecting homes to the Pufferbelly Trail. Huntertown, Allen County, and Fort Wayne Trails, Inc. are partners.

- ✦ The Illinois Road Trail and Road Improvement project is now under construction from Rockhill Park to Magnavox Way. The contractor hopes to finish in October of 2026.
- ✦ The 4.5-mile Hanna Street Trail and Trailhead should be completed by early May. We'll have ribbon cutting in mid-May.
- ✦ The Stellhorn Road Trail and Sidewalk Project is under construction between Northwood Plaza and Reed Road on the north side of Stellhorn. A sidewalk will be constructed between Reed and Eicher Drive. A trail will be constructed from Eicher to Northwood Plaza to tie in with the Maplecrest Road Trail. This trail segment is part of the Northeast Trail that will continue north to the YMCA, St. Joe Community Park, Evard Road, and eventually Rothman Road.
- ✦ We will hold a public information meeting at the Waynedale United Methodist Church on April 8th at 6 p.m. for anyone who wants to learn more and provide input on the Poka-Bache Connector Trail along the east side of Bluffton Road from Lower Huntington Road to Ferguson Road. This trail is scheduled to be constructed in 2028.
- ✦ Dawn will be attending the Greenways Foundation of Indiana Trail Celebration Luncheon in Indianapolis on April 10th.
- ✦ We will host the annual Greenway Ranger volunteer meeting on April 15th in Citizens Square at 6:30 p.m. We have close to 120 volunteers who help with our trails.
- ✦ Dawn will be attending the Walk & Bike Summit in Indianapolis in early May.
- ✦ Our seasonal employee, Brad Baumgartner, will be coming back to work on April 21st until mid-November for the third straight year. Brad helps with maintenance on the trails three days a week.
- ✦ We have hired a part-time intern who will begin on May 11th. She will assist with our events.
- ✦ *Trek the Trails* and *Tread the Trails* will begin on April 28th. The programs run biweekly through the end of September.
- ✦ As of 4/1/26, much of the Rivergreenway is closed due to flooding.

National / State / Division News and Media Coverage:



NATIONAL RECREATION
AND PARK ASSOCIATION





[Park and Recreation Month Cover Contest](#) | [Park and Recreation Month](#) | [National Recreation and Park Association](#)

[Fort Wayne magazine March 2026](#) | [FortWayne.com](#)

Registration Opens for Free Tree Seedlings

Bare-root trees, ready to plant for Arbor Day

Fort Wayne, Ind – In celebration of Arbor Day 2026, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, in partnership with Trees Indiana, will offer 200 seedlings to the public (one per household) via a simple phone registration.

White Pine and Chestnut Oak tree seedlings will be offered to those who register on a first come first served basis. Those who want a free tree seedling should call 260-427-6000 during normal business hours now through April 22 to reserve a seedling. The bare root seedlings must be picked up on Friday, April 24, from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Franklin School Park at 1903 St. Mary's Avenue.

Trees are an asset to communities when planted properly and maintained. They help improve visual appeal in a neighborhood, increase property values, reduce home cooling costs, remove air pollutants, and provide habitat for wildlife, among many benefits.

###

***Inclement Weather Procedure:** Any program changes, facility closures or other weather-related adjustments will be posted to the FWPRD social media pages and website.*

If the Mayor declares an emergency, all Parks and Recreation facilities and programs will be closed or canceled

Slightly Used Bulb Sale Until April 26, public hours

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

This annual sale features slightly used tulips, daffodils and hyacinths from the Botanical Conservatory's winter exhibit. Take advantage of bulbs that are ready to plant now in preparation for next year's blooms! Purchases are made through the Conservatory Shop while supplies last. Conservatory admission is not required to shop.

Wild Walkers

Friday, April 10, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Crooked Lake Nature Preserve, 5998 S. 250 W-57, Albion, IN

This adult hiking group meets the second and fourth Fridays of each month for a walk on the wild side. Each hike features a different natural area in the region (parks, wetlands, nature preserve, etc.) and carpooling is available when necessary. This location has a \$5 per car admission fee. Find the full 2026 schedule at this link: <https://bit.ly/WildWalkers2026>

Barre on the Riverfront Sunday, April 12, 9:15 – 10:00 a.m.

Park Foundation Pavilion, 202 West Superior Street

In partnership with Discover Yoga, Riverfront is bringing Barre to Promenade! If you are interested in getting your Sunday morning started with a unique combination of ballet, Pilates, and yoga, drop in and join the fun! It's free!

Yoga on the Riverfront

Sunday, April 12, 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 the owner of Discover Yoga, Chelsea Vona. Bring your own yoga mat to Promenade

Pilates on the Riverfront Sunday, April 12, 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. *Park Foundation Pavilion, 202 West Superior Street*
Add more movement to your fitness plan. In partnership with Pure Movement Studio, Riverfront Fort Wayne offers a free one-hour Pilates class on the second Sunday of the month. Suitable for all skill levels, this introductory class is a perfect way to focus on core strength, posture, and controlled movement.

Showcase Exhibit: Fern’s Fairylight Express Until April 12, 2026, public hours

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, Magee O’Connor Foundation, Wilson Foundation, O’Rourke-Schof Family Foundation, Majic 95.1 and PBS Fort Wayne.

Ben High: Gathered After the Fall Until April 12, 2026, 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.

Riverfront Social Runners Promenade Park, 202 West Superior Street

The Riverfront Social Runners are calling all runners and walkers—no matter your experience level! Join the club on the Strava App (<https://bit.ly/RFWStravaClub>) and discover your community at your own pace. Stay connected and up to date on upcoming meetups, fun challenges, and Riverfront adventures by following Riverfront Fort Wayne on Strava and social media. Don’t miss the chance to get active and make new friends along the way!

Mother’s Day Plant Sale Friday, May 8, 1:00-7:00 p.m. Saturday, May 9, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 10, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. *McMillen Park Community Center, 3901 Abbott St.*

Just in time for spring planting, the Botanical Conservatory offers over 700 varieties of plants at the Mother’s Day Plant Sale. Browse locally grown herbs, vegetable starts, flowering perennials and native plants, along with annuals, mixed containers, hanging baskets, bonsai and houseplants. A team of knowledgeable plant advisors are also ready to answer questions and offer suggestions! This annual fundraiser supports the Botanical Conservatory. Sponsored by: Majic 95.1 WAJI, Fox55 and Koester’s Body & Frame Shop.

WANE, Electric Works drops three vendors and searches for new market management

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/electric-works-drops-three-vendors-searches-for-new-market-management/>

WFFT, FWFD adds digital alert program

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-fire-adds-digital-alerts-to-protect-crews-on-scenes/article_0b3aa989-46aa-4552-ad6b-f70d5acca115.html

WFFT, IURC listening session



https://www.wfft.com/news/iurc-listening-session-draws-ratepayer-concerns-union-workers-locked-out/article_22f38ebc-eeb6-4a64-baa9-aa01288e67de.html

WPTA, \$37M planned for Fort Wayne neighborhood infrastructure improvements this year

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/04/06/37m-planned-fort-wayne-neighborhood-infrastructure-improvements-2026/>

FW Bus Weekly, Upcoming concert at Foellinger Theatre

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_5d72cafe-b870-4ac9-ab6c-06cb5929385a.html

WANE, Salvation Army reflects on first year as overnight shelter as part of winter contingency plan

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/the-salvation-army-reflects-on-first-year-as-overnight-shelter-in-emergency-winter-contingency-plan/>

WANE, Fort Wayne in Bloom brightens downtown

<https://www.wane.com/news/positively-fort-wayne/fort-wayne-in-bloom-brightens-downtown/>

Input FW, How improvements to wayfinding build confidence in trail users

<https://inputfortwayne.com/how-improvements-to-wayfinding-build-confidence-in-trail-users/>

FW Bus Weekly, Casino study – Steuben County

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/government/article_e2f3faaa-b3a1-58f2-884b-03e6304ae86b.html

WBOI, Allen County population climbs over 400,000

<https://www.wboi.org/government/2026-03-27/allen-county-population-climbs-over-400-000>

WANE, Feature on how TIF works

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/what-is-a-tif-meet-one-of-fort-waynes-best-economic-development-tools/>

FW Bus Weekly, City receives federal funding for FWPD and CU projects

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_896e60d3-66d2-56e8-b880-34c9806aedde.html

WPTA, FWACC launches new app making it easier to adopt

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/03/18/fort-wayne-animal-care-control-launches-new-app-making-it-easier-adopt/>

WFFT, FWACC announces new partnership

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-shelter-offers-new-app-to-ease-pet-adoption-process/article_bd3dfecc-881c-46d5-a50c-086c1c241637.html

WOWO, Councilman Jehl on Fort Wayne’s Morning News discussing ordinance that would prohibit the relocation of transient homeless individuals to the city

<https://wowo.com/2500-fine-for-helping-the-homeless-lets-clear-this-up/>

FW Bus Weekly, New Haven Mayor Steve McMichael attends national conference

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/government/article_95ed01a1-6b47-4908-8797-911c650f52a2.html

FW Bus Weekly, Inflation in the Midwest up slightly in February

https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_e0c1c72b-57f3-49d8-9e50-54dec62082d6.html



These concerts and more coming this season to
Foellinger Theatre

DAVID LEE ROTH
LIVE IN CONCERT
WITH SPECIAL GUEST **SEAL**
THURSDAY, JUNE 11
FOELLINGER THEATRE

LITTLE RIVER BAND
FRIDAY, JUNE 12
FOELLINGER THEATRE

SEALS & CROFTS
FRIDAY, JULY 10
FOELLINGER THEATRE

THREE DOG NIGHT
JULY 17
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG

THE UNSTOPPABLE TOUR
OCTOBER 4
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG

GHOSTBUSTERS
IN CONCERT
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10
FOELLINGER THEATRE

FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION
foellingertheatre.org
Foellinger Theatre

WANE, Project Sidewalk audits mobility

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/project-sidewalk-fort-wayne-audits-mobility-in-three-neighborhoods/>

WANE, Fort Wayne eyes zoning change to help revitalize a south side corridor

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-eyes-zoning-change-to-help-revitalize-a-south-side-corridor/>

WANE, 122nd Fighter Wing announces leadership transition

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/122nd-fighter-wing-announces-leadership-transition/>

WANE, Google's third phase under environmental review

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/google-data-centers-third-phase-under-environmental-review/>

WANE, 2045 transportation plan amendments now open to public comment

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/2045-transportation-plan-amendments-now-open-to-public-comment/>

WFFT, Neighborhood workshop helps prepare applicants for community engagement grants

https://www.wfft.com/news/neighborhood-workshop-helps-prepare-applicants-for-community-engagement-grants/article_91a3f86c-c3d8-426e-9a5a-061a2e438b3b.html

Indiana Capital Chronicle, Indiana isn't ready for the next pandemic

<https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2026/03/17/six-years-after-covid-19-indiana-is-not-ready-for-the-next-pandemic/>

WANE, Mayor Tucker on First News Weekend discussing Fort Wayne's responses to winter and work on potholes

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/mayor-sharon-tucker-reflects-on-fort-waynes-busy-snow-season-and-potholes/>



WANE, Councilwoman Booker brings back the State of the 6th District speech

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-state-of-the-6th-returns-with-booker/>

WFFT, Fort Wayne Neighborhoods team earns three awards

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-waynes-neighborhoods-team-earns-three-awards-for-planning-excellence/article_79841863-d05d-4e38-ad2d-aa593f166eee.html

FW Bus Weekly, The uproar over data centers

https://www.fwbusiness.com/opinion/article_30469986-2325-4ea7-85be-39219a2101aa.html

WPTA, City to host Power Lab Workshops

https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/03/12/city-fort-wayne-host-neighborhood-power-lab-workshop-series/?utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=organicclicks&tbref=hp

City TV, On the Move program with Councilwoman Chambers interviewing an I&M official

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=QRfan6xyNb5701b8>

Little River Band with Seals & Crofts 2 to play at Foellinger Theatre, June 12

General and in-person sales begin on Friday, March 20 at 10:00 a.m.

Foellinger Theatre presents **Little River Band** on **Friday, June 12, at 7:30 p.m.** **Little River Band** was once dubbed as **“the best singing band in the world”** by Glenn Frey of the Eagles. Through the ‘70’s and ‘80’s, LRB enjoyed huge chart success with multiplatinum albums and chart-topping hits. With worldwide album and CD sales of more than **30 million** copies, they were also the first band to set a record for having Top 10 hits for six consecutive years.

The Little River Band is best known for their mega hits like, **“Cool Change,” “Take It Easy On Me,” “Reminiscing,” “Help is on its Way,” “Lonesome Loser,” “Man on your Mind,” “The Other Guy,” “The Night Owls,” “Lady,”** and **“Happy Anniversary,”** plus many more will be rocking **Foellinger Theatre** and bringing back memories and great times for folks in **Fort Wayne**. This high-energy, fantastically tight band keeps the audience on their feet. Folks have a hard time sitting still when the Little River Band is playing. They perform the hits the way you remember them, but with more feeling, vibe, and energy than ever before. You can’t help but move to the music and sing along with the Little River Band.

The band won “Musical Artist of the Year,” at the **Global Gaming Expo’s** (G2E) Casino Entertainment Awards recently. Seeing them live will show you why. For more on Little River Band, check out their main [website](#) along with their [fan club](#) website, and make sure to like them on [Facebook](#).

Plus, experience the music of 70’s rock duo **Seals & Crofts** in a whole new way. Hear the hits “Summer Breeze,” “Diamond Girl,” and “We May Never Pass This Way (Again),” artfully re-imagined with a reverent nod to the past. Seals & Crofts 2 comprised of Brady Seals (cousin to James “Jim” Seals) and Lua Crofts (daughter of Darrell “Dash” Crofts) will dazzle you on their debut album. The project will feature many popular Seals & Crofts classics, as well as new songs from Seals & Crofts 2. Foellinger Theatre is located at 3411 Sherman Blvd. in Franke Park.

Local pre-sale tickets will be available from 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 19, with code **MAMMOTH** at <https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/0500647141E5645E>.

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, March 20, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit www.foellingertheatre.org.

WFFT, City to receive federal funding for projects for FWPD and City Utilities

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-gets-2m-to-replace-aging-lead-pipes-enhance-safety/article_de042393-a443-4e1e-a61c-df0c9f959ac9.html

WANE, Airport Expressway project

<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-gets-23m-grant-for-airport-expressway-overpass/>

WPTA, City opens applications for CDBG and ESG programs

<https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/03/11/applications-open-two-city-fort-wayne-nonprofit-grant->

[programs/?utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=organicclicks&tbref=hp](#)

WANE, Sweetwater store expands to include home audio displays

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/sweetwater-store-expands-to-include-home-audio-displays/>

**Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Announces New Performance
Presented by Honeywell Arts & Entertainment**

Tickets go on sale Friday, March 27, at 10:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne, Ind. – Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation adds a new show to its lineup at the Foellinger Theatre. Honeywell Arts & Entertainment presents Three Dog Night with special guest Jay Psaros on Friday, July 17, 2026, at the Foellinger Theatre. Tickets go on sale Friday, March 27, at 10 a.m. and will be available online at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or in person at the Parks and Recreation Department, 705 East State Blvd.

Three Dog Night with Special Guest Jay Psaros – Fri., July 17, at 7:30 p.m.

Three Dog Night claims some of the most astonishing statistics in popular music, whether on the radio, in TV commercials or major motion pictures. The band holds a Billboard Magazine record for releasing 21 consecutive Top 40 hits, including three #1 singles, seven platinum-selling singles and 12 straight RIAA Certified Gold LPs. Three Dog Night is known for hits like “Mama Told Me (Not to Come),” “Joy to the World,” “Black and White,” “Shambala” and “One.”

Jay Psaros has spent nearly 15 years performing across New England and the U.S., sharing the stage with Gordon Lightfoot, Three Dog Night, Collective Soul and dozens of other artists. His music has been featured in Netflix’s *Dog Gone*, Lifetime’s *Christmas on Ice* and independent films. On his new album *Long Time Coming*, Psaros delivers folk, rock and Americana with songs like “Rise When You Fall,” “I Dream of Christmas with You,” and “Zombies.”

Mayor Tucker on the NEI Pioneer Podcast

<https://pioneerstartshere.com/podcast/?playlist=99013b0&video=183439e>

WBOI, Funding for formal planning for Fort Wayne’s North River District is in place

<https://www.wboi.org/government/2026-03-11/funding-for-formal-planning-for-fort-waynes-north-river-district-is-in-place>

WBCL, Surack Enterprises – Funding approved for Scottish Rite building

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/funding-approved-for-scottish-rite-building-in-fort-wayne>

WBOI, Fort Wayne’s opioid settlement grants focus on harm reduction, grief <https://www.wboi.org/health-science/2026-03-11/fort-waynes-opioid-settlement-grants-focus-on-harm-reduction-grief>



Classic rock pairing Kansas and 38 Special to play at Foellinger Theatre, July 10

General and in-person sales begin on Friday, March 13 at 10:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne, Ind. –Two of America’s preeminent classic rock bands, **KANSAS** and **38 Special**, are coming for an incredible night of classic rock live at Fort Wayne’s **Foellinger Theatre** on **Friday, July 10**. The concert is hosted by Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation in partnership with Exceptional Artists and Mammoth.

Fans will hear iconic KANSAS classics including “*Carry on Wayward Son*,” “*Dust in the Wind*,” “*Point of Know Return*,” “*Play the Game Tonight*,” and “*The Wall*,” along with 38 Special favorites such as “*Hold on Loosely*,” “*Rockin’ into the Night*,” “*Caught Up in You*,” and “*Fantasy Girl*.”

With a legendary career spanning five decades, KANSAS has firmly established itself as one of America’s iconic classic rock bands. This "garage band" from Topeka released their debut album in 1974 after being discovered by Wally Gold, who worked for Don Kirshner, and have gone on to sell more than 30 million albums worldwide.

Composing a catalogue that includes 16 studio albums and five live albums, KANSAS has produced eight gold albums, three sextuple-Platinum albums (*Leftoverture*, *Point of Know Return*, *Best of KANSAS*), one platinum live album (*Two for the Show*), one quadruple-Platinum single “*Carry on Wayward Son*,” and another triple-Platinum single “*Dust in the Wind*.” KANSAS appeared on the Billboard charts for over 200 weeks throughout the ‘70’s and ‘80’s and played to sold-out arenas and stadiums throughout North America, Europe, and Japan. “*Carry on Wayward Son*” continues to be one of the top five most played songs on classic rock radio, and “*Dust in the Wind*” has been played on the radio more than three million times!

50 years together. 20 million albums sold. More than 15 albums of guitar-driven southern rock stacked high with hits like “*Hold on Loosely*,” “*Caught Up in You*,” “*If I’d Been the One*,” “*Back Where You Belong*,” and “*Second Chance*.” 38 Special is proof that there’s strength in numbers.

Formed in 1974, the band toured tirelessly from the start, sharpening the explosive live show that’s been 38 Special’s calling card for a half-century. Along the way, the Florida natives fine-tuned their sound too: a blend of muscle and melody, filled with the arena-rock pop hooks that would soon become staples of FM radio. Years passed...trends changed...some band members retired from the rigors...but 38 Special remained, hitting the road year after year, flying the flag for an enduring form of classic rock & roll that never dies.

Local pre-sale tickets will be available from 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, with code *MAMMOTH* at <https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/05006468346A9581>

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, March 13, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit www.foellingertheatre.org.

WANE, FWFD can now send digital alerts to your car during emergency runs

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/the-fort-wayne-fire-department-can-now-send-digital-alerts-to-your-car-during-emergency-runs/>

Riverfront Social Runners *Promenade Park, 202 West Superior Street*

The Riverfront Social Runners are calling all runners and walkers—no matter your experience level! Join the club on the Strava App and discover your community at your own pace. Stay connected and up to date on upcoming meetups, fun challenges, and Riverfront adventures by following Riverfront Fort Wayne on Strava and social media. Don’t miss the chance to get active and make new friends along the way!



**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.



WANE, City Council recap – Trying to limit threats and commercial speech at public comment period
<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-city-council-trying-to-limit-threats-commercial-speech-from-public-comment/>

WANE, FWPD – E-bike or E-motorcycle – Know the difference to keep from breaking the law
<https://www.wane.com/news/e-bike-or-e-motorcycle-know-the-difference-to-keep-from-breaking-the-law/>

WPTA, FWFD debuts alert system aimed at keeping drivers and crews safe
<https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/04/07/fwfd-debuts-alert-system-aimed-keeping-drivers-crews-safe/>

WPTA, Volunteer Center highlights community contributions
<https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/04/07/volunteer-center-highlights-community-contributions/>

WOWO, Commissioner’s Corner – Voting

<https://wowo.com/commissioners-corner-you-can-now-vote-anywhere/>

WOWO, I&M leader recaps recent IURC listening session

<https://wowo.com/president-coo-of-indiana-michigan-power-recaps-new-haven-listening-session/>

WOWO, Sen. Liz Brown – Town Hall preview

<https://wowo.com/wowo-town-hall-preview-senator-liz-brown/>

WOWO, Darren Vogt – Town Hall preview

<https://wowo.com/wowo-town-hall-preview-darren-vogt/>

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**THE
UNSTOPPABLE
TOUR**

**OCTOBER 4
FOELLINGER THEATRE
FOELLINGERTHEATRE.ORG**



**Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Announces New Performance
Presented by Honeywell Arts & Entertainment
Tickets go on sale Friday, January 30, at 10 a.m.**

Fort Wayne, Ind. – Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation adds a new show to its lineup at the Foellinger Theatre. Honeywell Arts & Entertainment presents UB40 on Sunday, October 4, 2026, at the Foellinger Theatre. Tickets go on sale Friday, January 30, at 10 a.m. and will be available online at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or in person at the Parks and Recreation Department, 705 East State Blvd.

UB40: The Unstoppable Tour 2026 – Sun., October 4, at 6:00 p.m.

UB40 is one of the most successful British groups of all time, having sold more than 100 million albums worldwide. Their global No. 1 hits include “Red Wine” and “(I Can’t Help) Falling in Love with You,” along with U.S. Top 10 favorites “Here I Am (Come and Take Me)” and “The Way You Do The Things You Do.” The reggae/pop legends continue to perform their iconic catalog alongside songs from their 45th-anniversary album, *UB45*.

About the Foellinger Theatre - The Foellinger Theatre in Franke Park was constructed in 1949 as a gift to the community from Helene Foellinger in memory of her father, Oscar G. Foellinger, former publisher of the Fort Wayne News Sentinel. The Theatre was designed to provide a unique type of entertainment space—an informal, open-air community gathering and performing area, molded into a grassy hillside in the park. For more information about the Foellinger Theatre, please visit [fortwayneparks.org](https://www.fortwayneparks.org).

Media Contact: April McCampbell | april.mccampbell@cityoffortwayne.org | (260) 427-6024

About Honeywell Arts & Entertainment

Honeywell Arts & Entertainment encompasses the full range of arts opportunities and venues of The Honeywell Foundation, a nonprofit public charity based in Wabash, Indiana. The organization is dedicated to providing arts, education, and entertainment for all through live entertainment, movies, arts education, cultural events, culinary experiences, Honeywell Arts Academy, and more. Offerings take place at eight venues, including the Honeywell Center, Honeywell House, Eagles Theatre, Charley Creek Inn, Charley Creek Gardens, Dr. James Ford Historic Home, Clarkson House, and 13-24 Drive In. Honeywell Arts & Entertainment partners with a network of venues throughout the region to further the reach of live entertainment programming. Honeywell Arts & Entertainment programs and activities are made possible by generous donors and in part by Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne; the Indiana Arts Commission, a state agency; and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. For more information about Honeywell Arts & Entertainment, please visit [honeywellarts.org](https://www.honeywellarts.org). **Media Contact:** Jessica Bott | pr@honeywellarts.org | (260) 274-1429

Incident Weather Procedure: Any program changes, facility closures or other weather-related adjustments will be posted to the FWPRD social media pages and website. If the Mayor declares an emergency, all Parks and Recreation facilities and programs will be closed or canceled.