FORT WAYNE PARKS AND RECREATION

Staff Reports - Submitted 11.12.2026

Steve McDaniel, Director

- We took a group of staff from across the department to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) annual conference. There were three days of classes, vendor and product discovery, and team building that took place.
- The Theatre held its last show of the season with the Movie Ghostbusters, with a live orchestra playing all the music of the movie. The team did a great job this season with major improvements in customer experience. They are also working hard on making offers for next year!
- This past month was budget month with City Council. One week we presented our budget and answered several questions about it and our operations. We were given proposed budget cuts and then an opportunity to defend those cuts. By the end of the second night, the department received no cuts.
- I attended the Make It Downtown Advisory Committee meeting held by the Planning Department. This was in conjunction with the consultant they have been working with on the plan. Several areas were discussed, and input was given.
- The team and I were able to celebrate with staff who have 25 years of service with the department. This year we have inducted two new members, giving us a total of 20 current members with more than 25 years of full-time service. When totaling the years of service for these 20 individuals, there is 579 years.
- We held our annual Great Tree Canopy Comeback this month. Volunteers helped us plant 50 new trees in Gren Park and remove invasive plant species in Swinney Park. We accomplished so much because of the many volunteers who were present, along with our wonderful Parks staff and the Friends of the Parks group. Thanks, everyone.
- Chad met with the Memorial Park Neighborhood Association to discuss possible reuses of the Memorial Pool area. Several items were shared, and he is working with the city to post this on the Engage page for additional feedback.
- The team and I met with the Tennis Advisory Committee to discuss all things related to tennis. We have been meeting annually with this group for the last 15+ years. It is always great to hear their passion for sport and cover things like court conditions and future construction projects.
- Harlean, Rhonda, and I assisted during the Fall Harvest Festival at McMillen Park's Community Center. We judged costumes for all youth age groups. It was a fun event, filled with kids celebrating the special day. (Or maybe they just wanted the candy?)
- Chad, Stacy, and I met with Neighborhood Planning to discuss how we can better work together on future grants and projects. Communication and timing seem to be the highlights of the meeting. We appreciate all they do for neighborhoods.
- Parks participated in the Georgetown Neighborhood Plan to hear about the needs from residents and their planning committee. This helps to inform action items that will be part of the final plan early next year.

- We met with a group from Indiana Wesleyan University to talk about possible internships for next year as well as what some of our seasonal jobs are within the department. There were a lot of questions from them regarding the theatre operations and our potential needs regarding staffing.
- We continued our discussions with Visit Fort Wayne and other attraction-based facilities. This dialog helps us keep in line with what others are offering as well as learning about future events that might impact on our parks and programs.

Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director of Recreational Services

Salomon Farm Park, Neighborhood Outreach, Jennings Recreation Center, Weisser Park Youth Center, McMillen Park Community Center, Community Center *(Downtown),* **Athletic Fields, Aquatics** *(Bob Arnold/ Northside Park & McMillen Park Pools),* Golf Courses *(Foster Park, McMillen Park, Shoaff Park),* **Outdoor Recreation, Campgrounds, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, Hurshtown Reservoir, Special Events, Ice Skating, and Travel Services**.

Community Outreach

- The Supervisor of Community Outreach and other Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation staff participated in several community outreach events during the reporting period. Staff engaged with more than 100 people at the Lincoln Elementary School Carnival, approximately 150 people at Levan Scott Academy's Hispanic Heritage Event, and approximately 75 people at the Franklin Electric Health Fair.
- On October 15, 2026, six youths from Weisser Park Youth Center participated in Northeast Indiana Water Trails' Learn to Paddle event at Fort Wayne Outfitters. Participants received instruction on river safety and paddling before completing a 45-minute group paddle.
- The Supervisor of Community Outreach organized and facilitated the Spider Races as part of the Community Center's Halloween Haunt event.

Jennings Recreation Center

- During the reporting period, Jennings Recreation Center averaged 20 youth participants per day.
- Allen County Public Library facilitated a craft activity in which youth created 3D food projects.
- Erin's House continued its grief support programming. Youth completed *Charlotte's Web* and discussed the positive qualities and memories of loved ones they have lost.
- Ubuntu programming continued at the center, offering opportunities for youth to explore identity, cultural awareness, literacy, leadership, and personal development through several facilitated activities.
- OurStory, facilitated by Kétu Oladuwa, focused on introducing youth to Malcolm X and exploring his historical significance. Planned sessions did not take place due to a lack of participation.
- Xpress YoSelf provided four sessions focused on self-identity, expository writing, and historical connections to the Civil Rights Movement. Youth worked toward developing personal identity statements and expressing their thoughts through writing.
- Breanna C. Johnson facilitated three creative writing sessions focused on identity, self-expression, shared experiences, and personal connections. Activities included discussions, writing exercises, and poetry, with attendance reaching 14 youth during the September 29 session.

- Individual mentoring sessions supported a fifth-grade participant through activities focused on self-care, organization, school routines, personal expectations, and self-worth. Reading and memorization activities and tools reinforced positive identity and personal development.
- Literacy and Ancestral History sessions explored ancient African kings and queens, including Mansa Musa and precolonial African empires. Youth participated in documentaries, discussions, and library visits that promoted cultural awareness and historical knowledge.
- Civics sessions, facilitated by Sheik Béy, introduced youth to topics involving ancestry, nationality, identity, and critical thinking. Discussions and hands-on activities encouraged youth to ask questions, share perspectives, and develop a better understanding of these concepts.
- On October 16, 2026, youth attended Fright Fest at the Main Library, providing an opportunity for seasonal activities and community engagement.

Community Center

- The Community Center recorded nine bookings out of 13 available rental dates during October, resulting in a 69% utilization rate. Rental attendance totaled 232 participants, generating $1,575 in rental revenue. Staff received 28 rental inquiries during the reporting period.
- Gymnastics and Dance served 72 participants, while Open Gym recorded 25 participants during the month. Adult athletics included Pickleball (23), Basketball (19), Volleyball (14), and Tennis (6). Youth tennis programs served 18 participants across three age groups.
- Adult and senior programming continued to demonstrate strong participation. Classes reaching or exceeding maximum enrollment included Knitting, Senior Line Dance, Senior Aqua Fit, Pottery, and Tap. Senior Yoga, Watercolor, Ballroom, and several educational seminars also experienced strong enrollment.
- Active Aging Week was held October 5-9, 2026, with 425 total participants and support from 20 volunteers. The event featured an opening breakfast and health fair with nine vendors, live music, recreational activities, and educational opportunities. Sponsorship support totaled $3,300.
- On October 17, 2026, the Community Center hosted Halloween Haunt as part of downtown Fort Wayne's annual Fright Night festivities. The event attracted 1,271 attendees and was supported by 23 volunteers and sponsors Marr & Thompson Dental and 103.9 FM. Popular activities included the Scavenger Hunt (108 participants), Spider Guess (203 participants), and the Sensory Clubhouse.
- The Monday Luncheon was held September 19, 2026, with 20 participants in attendance. Nurturing Home Care Agency sponsored the luncheon.
- The September volunteer program recorded 46 volunteers contributing 308.25 hours.
- Social media engagement remained strong, with Facebook recording 22,409 views and 15,568 engagements in October. Facebook followers increased to 5,414, while Instagram followers increased to 542.
- The Community Center expanded its instructional partnerships through the addition of youth pottery instructor Ali McDaniel and continued development of new adult and senior programming opportunities.
- A donation of new program materials and additional instructor partnerships supported the continued development of recreational, creative, and educational classes.

Weisser Park Youth Center

- A total of 128 youth were registered in the After-School Program. Of those registered, 40 attended Weisser Park Elementary School, and 17 were transported to the center through FWCS transportation.
- Team Leads introduced a new game, "Button, Button, Who Has the Button," designed to develop focus, self-control, trust, and awareness of body language.
- Youth participated in a variety of recreational activities, including tag games, pickleball, soccer, football, kickball, parachute activities, and trivia.

Outreach Programs:

- **Allen County Public Library:** Facilitated a craft session in which youth created pumpkin designs using construction paper and glue.
- **Erin's House for Grieving Children:** Facilitated a session featuring *Charlotte's Web* and a worksheet exploring the cycle of life.
- **Goree Hung Ga Academy:** Conducted four martial arts sessions focused on self-defense techniques, agility, and strength-building exercises.
  - **Field Trips**
    - **October 15:** Seven youth participated in a kayaking trip.
    - **October 18:** Three youth attended an Indianapolis Colts NFL game along with youth from Jennings and McMillen Centers.

McMillen Park Community Center

- Pickleball participation at McMillen Park Community Center continues to increase as colder weather drives demand for indoor recreation opportunities. The facility welcomed approximately 75 pickleball players during the reporting period. The courts continue to attract both regular and new participants seeking a safe, active, and social environment.
- The Podcasting Program provides students ages 11 and older an opportunity to explore podcasting while learning interviewing techniques, audience engagement strategies, and content development. Students analyze podcasts and streamers to better understand what makes content engaging. The program helps youth gain confidence, strengthen communication skills, and create content centered around topics that interest them, including music, fashion, sports, food, community life, and personal experiences. The mock podcast program continues to keep participants engaged and enthusiastic.
- The Cooking Program provides students with opportunities to learn food preparation, cooking techniques, and proper use of kitchen tools, including measuring cups and spoons. Participants gain an understanding of ingredients and recipe development while building practical life skills and confidence in the kitchen. Youth are encouraged to take recipes home and continue practicing with their families.
- The 12th Annual Harvest Fest was a great success, bringing together approximately 400 community members and staff for an evening of seasonal activities and fellowship. Prize giveaways included bicycles, Little Tikes items, toys, gift certificates, gift cards, gift baskets, speakers, AirPods, televisions, and other electronics. Ten vendors participated, providing giveaways and gift cards. The costume contest was a highlight of the event, and City of Fort Wayne staff volunteered as judges. Staff worked throughout the event to ensure smooth operations, resulting in a memorable community celebration.

- Since the start of the new transportation collaboration with FWCS, the center has received nine new registrations. Staff remain appreciative of the partnership and are optimistic that participation will continue to increase.

Riverfront

- The total Promenade Program and Rental Attendance: **1,057**
- Notable events included Fitness on the Riverfront, Spirit of History Tour, Lutheran Social Services Fundraiser, and Animal Care and Control's Howl-O-Walkoween.
- October programming focused primarily on recurring fitness series and seasonal offerings. Fitness on the Riverfront, including Pilates, Barre, and Yoga, welcomed a combined 66 participants. Zumba transitioned to a monthly schedule and attracted 20 participants. The Riverfront Social Run Club continued to grow, reaching 441 members on Strava, up from 401 in September.
- The Spirit of History Tour was held despite rainy conditions. While 55 participants registered, 24 attended. Continued demand suggests the program should return in 2027, potentially with multiple sessions to accommodate additional participants.
- Riverfront hosted seven rental events, including two weddings, a Lutheran Social Services fundraiser, an Allen County Superior Family Recovery Courts graduation, a City of Fort Wayne Community Development meeting, and two Halloween parade events.
- The largest event of the month was the Lutheran Social Services fundraiser, which welcomed approximately 250 guests utilizing both the Park Foundation Pavilion and Wells Street Bridge.
- The annual Howl-O-Walkoween event attracted approximately 150 guests and their dogs. The inaugural Japanese Halloween Parade, organized by the Fort Wayne Sister Cities International-Takaoka Committee, brought approximately 65 guests to Promenade Park.
- Preparations for the Headwaters Park Ice Rink season are underway, including rink construction, seasonal staffing, and training updates. The ice rink opens on November 21, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.
- Overall, October was a smooth and successful month for Promenade Park rentals, programs, and special events.

Golf

- Chris Rudolph reported that Foster Golf maintenance staff have been working diligently to restore flood-damaged areas, particularly around holes 5, 6, 9, 13, and 14. Many areas remained underwater for a week or more, resulting in significant turf loss and bare ground.
- Gary Whitacre reported that although the season is winding down, mild weather has increased play. He remains optimistic that this trend will continue through the end of the season.
- Chris Rudolph reported that he and Seth Pequignot are aerifying, sanding, and seeding greens and tee boxes at all four golf courses. This process improves water absorption and promotes healthy turf growth for the spring season.
- Jason Smith reported that Mike Gore and Mike Cremeans, along with Water Control staff, completed maintenance on the Shoaff Golf Course driving range drainage pipe. The line was jetted to remove years of calcium and sediment buildup, and debris was subsequently vacuumed out. Additional camera inspections will take place after the courses close for the season.
- Jason Smith met with Mike Gore and Mike Cremeans to develop a plan to replace carpeting beneath beverage coolers with non-absorbent flooring in all three golf pro shops, in accordance with Board of Health requirements.

Placer.ai – *Location intelligence and foot traffic analytics platform that measures how people move through and interact with physical spaces.*

- During September 2026, there were approximately 617,000 visits to Fort Wayne parks.
- The three most visited parks were:
  - Franke Park: 106,000 visits
  - Kreager Park: 62,000 visits
  - Johnny Appleseed Park: 53,500 visits
- The following parks are not included in monthly Placer.ai reports due to proximity to sensitive locations:
  - Indian Village Park
  - Klug Park
  - Miner Playground
  - Ronald G. Repka Memorial Park
  - Study Park

Aquatics

- Daryn Schwartz reported that the Aquatics Program was awarded the **2026 Gold International Aquatic Safety Award** by Jeff Ellis & Associates. The award recognizes the program for consistently exceeding established aquatic safety standards during unannounced safety audits.

Athletics

- Daryn Schwartz reported that athletic fields, including ball diamonds, soccer fields, and other multi-use athletic facilities, concluded seasonal operations.

Salomon Farm Park

- The annual Fall Harvest Festival was held October 9-10, 2026. Activities included antique farm equipment demonstrations, children's activities and rides, animal interactions, food and craft vendors, an antique tractor parade, Hooley pony rides, and more.
  - Community partners included the Flax and Fleecers Guild, Tri-State Tractor Club, and DeKalb County Horsemen's Association.
  - Parking revenue totaled $7,887 compared to $8,295 in 2025.
  - Placer.ai estimated attendance at 3,400 in 2026, compared to 3,900 in 2025.
  - Vendor booth revenue increased from $1,290 in 2025 to $1,750 in 2026.
  - Overall, the festival operated smoothly and successfully celebrated agriculture, farm life, and outdoor recreation.
- Salomon Farm Park partnered with the Northrop High School Theatre Department to host a Haunted Hike on October 23 and 24, 2026.
  - Hikes were offered at 6:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m.
  - The first two hikes were PG-rated, while the final hike provided a more intense experience.
  - Admission was $5 per person.
  - The event expanded programming opportunities at Salomon Farm Park while supporting local students and providing a seasonal community activity.

Sweet Breeze

- Sweet Breeze completed its final tour of the 2026 season on October 11 and was removed from the river on October 14.
- During the 20-week season, Sweet Breeze conducted:
  - 111 public tours
  - 10 private tours
  - 5 specialty tours
  - 21 field trips
  - 142 total tours
- A total of 3,704 tickets were sold for public tours, averaging 33 passengers per tour.
- Twenty-five public tours were canceled due primarily to high river levels, compared to 11 cancellations in 2025.
- Staff successfully rescheduled and completed all 21 field trips, an increase from 18 in 2025.

Hurshtown Reservoir

- Hurshtown Reservoir closed for the season on October 15, 2026.

Lindenwood Nature Preserve

- Lindenwood Nature Preserve has experienced increased vandalism, including fire damage to a section of the pond boardwalk and damage to benches along the trail system. Staff are evaluating additional surveillance and preventative measures to protect park facilities and natural resources.
- Spotted lanternflies have also been observed at the preserve. Staff have reported the sightings to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and will continue monitoring both lanternfly activity and vandalism to determine appropriate next steps.

Rhonda Berg – Director of Finance, Foellinger Outdoor Theatre, Budgets, Finance, Payroll & Commercial Vouchers, Trust Fund Donations, Registrations, Rentals, Tickets, Customer Service, Accounts Payable, and Accounts Receivable.

Payroll and Accounts Payable

- The 2026 Budget includes the following permanent, full-time positions:
  - 130 general fund positions
  - 12 non-reverting operating positions
  - 7 local income tax (LIT) positions
- The Parks and Recreation Department paid 307 employees (144 full-time and 163 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending October 31st and paid on November 6th.
- 41 total P-Card statements were processed for October for charges made at the end of August to almost the end of September.
- There was a total of 691 invoices processed during September from 10/1 to 10/29.
- Additional seasonal position separations have been completed. Most of the Theatre staff are off the payroll, and golf seasonal employees will be separating soon. Headwaters ice rink positions have been posted, transfers from other park seasonal positions to the ice rink have been processed, and new/rehires have been submitted and have either cleared or are awaiting clearance.

Customer Service and Finance

- Joana Garcia has attended two events at Levan Scott with Community Outreach staff so she can assist the Hispanic community using her bilingual skills. Her willingness to attend these events after her normal work hours is greatly appreciated and very beneficial to the Parks and Recreation Department and the community.
- The McMillen Pavilion Open House was held on Saturday, October 3rd. Maddie, Joyce, and Rhonda attended along with Kathy Pargmann. Several potential renters were in attendance and were able to ask questions and see all that the beautiful pavilion has to offer.
- On October 1st, the Main Office started to receive Garden Plot Applications for 2027. Once again, this year Joana is taking the lead on this and is reaching out to the renters to assist in assigning them a plot and taking their payment.
- Joyce and Kim have worked with the Marketing staff to be sure that all of the changes regarding the Youth Scholarships are ready when the Winter Fun Times are sent. All staff have been made aware of the changes and are ready to assist customers with their questions and to accept their applications and paperwork.
- Joniece and Kim both volunteered and assisted at the Harvest Festival at Salomon Farm. These two ladies are always willing to assist other Parks and Recreation locations when extra hands are needed.
- Rhonda attended the City Council Meeting with the Director to present the 2027 Parks and Recreation Budget.
- Rhonda assisted Jarin with the Ghostbusters event at Foellinger on October 10th.
- Rhonda and Jarin met with project management to discuss potential projects that can be completed to improve customers' experiences in the 2027 season.
- Rhonda attended the Quarter Century Club Breakfast. This year, Joniece Wright from the Accounts Receivable/Rental/Reservations office reached the 25th work anniversary and was welcomed into the group.
- Rhonda and Joyce attended a session on Creating a Culture of Psychological Safety at Indiana Tech that was offered by City Human Resources.
- Rhonda helped Harlean and Steve judge Halloween costumes at McMillen's Harvest Fest. What a great event!
- Rhonda attended two virtual sessions that were made available to us by the Indiana Arts Commission. The first was on fundraising, sponsorships, and sustainability, and the second was on Making the Deal, Talent Buying, Contracting, and Production. Both were very informative.

Foellinger Theatre:

October brought the 2026 performance season to a close with Ghostbusters in Concert on October 10. Following the final performance, the theatre's focus shifted to event reconciliation, seasonal strike, winterization, and a comprehensive inventory of equipment and supplies throughout the facility. Booking and programming efforts continue for 2027, with attention to audience demand, financial feasibility, and a balanced season of ticketed and community events.

- **Performance Highlights**

Ghostbusters in Concert concluded the season with a film concert presentation. This event had 578 paid tickets and 348 complimentary tickets, for 926 total distributed. Recorded attendance was 653, representing a 70.5% scan rate of distributed tickets.

- **Operations and Guest Experience**

The final event required coordination across production, front of house, ticketing, security and medical coverage, artist hospitality, and concessions. Post-season review will capture lessons from the season's concert, family, community, and film concert formats, including staffing requirements, audience response, lawn use, and weather-related operating considerations.

We activated the lawn as an extension of the guest experience again for Ghostbusters in Concert. Ghostbusters of Fort Wayne helped promote the show through their social media channels and word-of-mouth, then brought a large on-site presence featuring Ghostbusters-themed vehicles, photo-op backdrops, and large-scale character models, including Slimer. Guests could even try on proton packs. Fort Wayne Arcade Rental brought its full trailer of free arcade games, adding another interactive element that encouraged families to arrive early, engage with community partners, and enjoy the venue before the performance. Together, these activities created a lively, family-friendly atmosphere, made the season finale special, and demonstrated the lawn's potential for future pre-show programming and community partnership.

- **Season Closeout and Strike**

Season closeout is focused on returning the theatre to an organized, secure condition and resolving remaining administrative and financial work. Priorities include reconciling event settlements and outstanding invoices, reviewing seasonal expenditures, organizing show documentation, and identifying operational changes for next season.

Strike work includes dismantling and storing seasonal lawn installations, temporary lighting, signs, event furnishings, and related equipment; consolidating supplies; and cleaning and organizing public, backstage, production, and storage areas. Department leads will identify damaged or missing items and document repairs and replacement needs before equipment is put away.

A special Thank You to the Riverfront staff that allowed us to utilize their concession trailer and outdoor furniture, and to Community Events for allowing us to use their lawn games this season. These items were a great addition to the events themselves.

- **Winterization and Facility Readiness**

Winterization planning covers the box office, restrooms, dressing rooms, greenroom, concessions and bar areas, production booths, storage rooms, lawn, and exterior areas. Work priorities include coordinating seasonal plumbing shutdown and freezing protection with facilities staff, preparing refrigeration and concessions equipment for storage, addressing moisture concerns, and securing doors, windows, and storage locations. Technology closeout includes identifying appropriate winter storage for Ticketmaster scanners, Clover handhelds, computers, monitors, docking stations, printers, radios, and charging equipment. Climate-controlled storage and manufacturer storage requirements will guide placement of temperature-sensitive equipment. Final closeout checks will document equipment locations, unresolved maintenance needs, and responsibility for off-season access and facility checks.

- **Department Inventory**

A theatre-wide inventory is an ongoing closeout priority. Each department's record should identify item, quantity, location, condition, storage destination, and repair, replacement, or replenishment needs. Equipment

records should also include serial or asset numbers where applicable. The inventory will support accountability, winter storage, and 2027 purchasing and budget preparation.

- **Staffing and Leadership**

Closeout assignments are being organized by area, with emphasis on clear ownership, safe handling of equipment, orderly storage, and communication of unfinished work. Seasonal review priorities include staff performance, workload distribution, training needs, and coordination between departments. Findings will inform staffing expectations and opening preparations for 2027.

- **Booking and Programming for 2027**

Booking efforts continue with promoter partners and artist representatives to evaluate availability, offers, routing, and suitable dates for the 2027 season.
Financial review centers on artist guarantee, ticket prices, attainable paid attendance, production and labor requirements, marketing costs, and projected ancillary revenue. Offer-specific pro formas are being used to compare potential outcomes and guide discussions with promoter partners before commitments are made.

Programming priorities include a mix of national touring concerts, family entertainment, and accessible community events. Planning also considers opportunities to build on the lawn's use for pre-show activities and local partnerships, while accounting for staffing, weather exposure, and the cost of each event format. The goal is a season that serves the community and supports the theatre's financial sustainability.

- **Facility Planning and Off-Season Improvements**

Inventory findings and department reviews will inform a prioritized list of maintenance, equipment, storage, and guest-experience improvements. Planning also includes continued development of the laundry and wardrobe storage concept, including a work sink, subject to room measurements, utility requirements, cost estimates, and project approval.

- **Looking Ahead**

The next phase of work will focus on completing winterization and departmental inventories, reconciling remaining 2026 expenses, and consolidating maintenance and purchasing needs. In parallel, management will continue refining 2027 offers, programming options, and operating assumptions so that booking decisions are supported by realistic attendance and expense projections.
Thank you to the seasonal staff, department leaders, volunteers, City of Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation colleagues, artists, and community partners whose work supported the 2026 season. Their contributions made it possible to welcome audiences across a varied schedule and respond to the demands of an outdoor performance venue.

Steve Schuhmacher – Director of Park Maintenance, Facilities, Project Administration Technicians, Buildings & Grounds, Heavy Equipment, Main Trac, Operations Support, Storeroom, Fleet Management, and Safety Compliance

Facilities Supervisor Jesse Sayre

- Pavilion rentals totaled 231 for this month.
- Facilities workers pressure washed various facilities, splash pads, and shelters, including: Kreager Park Splashpad, Waynedale Park Splashpad, Brewer Park shelter. Bowser Park shelter and sidewalks, Franke Pond pavilion entryway and sidewalk, Rockhill Park pavilion kitchenette and shelter, Gren Park Shelter, Johnny Appleseed playground restrooms, Shoaff Park restrooms, Riverlodge entryway and sidewalk, Lions Park Shelter, McCormick Park shelter, Foster Park West Bleachers, Foster pavilion #1 and Pavilion #3, Swinney Park West Japanese shelter, Tillman Park ballfield restrooms, Weisser Park Shelter, Community Center (Downtown) exterior retaining wall
- Paper product and soap dispensers at Brewer Park, Swinney Tennis Center restrooms, Weisser Park restrooms, Psi Ote Park restrooms, and Hamilton Park restroom had to be replaced due to vandalism.
- Graffiti was removed from the following locations: Brackenridge Park basketball court, Bowser Park shelter, Hamilton Park shelter and playground, John Street Park playground, Klug Park playground, Lawton skate park, Packard Park shelter and playground, Gren Park playground, Cooper Center women's restroom exterior, Franklin Park Restroom, Waynedale Park Playground, Weisser Park shelter and restrooms, Brewer Park playground and restroom, Hamilton Park shelter, and Buckner Park.
- Facilities Staff logged 499 hours of litter removal in October.
- Jonathan Bradley filled an open Facilities Park Person C position. Jonathan previously held a Park Person C position in the Riverfront Division, now assigned to the facilities Foster Park route.
- Facilities staff have completed Bloodborne Pathogens and Infectious Disease Control training.
- Facilities Supervisor Jesse Sayre participated in Leadership Development Workshop – Creating a Culture of Psychological Safety and Trust, as well as the Quarter 4 Cohort of the Lead Boldly Curriculum.

Maintenance Technician Supervisor: Mike Cremeans

- Lowe's Hometown Heroes volunteer program spent a day at Franke Park rehabilitating picnic tables with new boards and hardware. 60 tables from the park were staged by the number two pavilion to streamline the operation. Maintenance Technicians were tasked with discarding the old material and repositioning the tables in the park.
- Hurshtown Reservoir closed for the season on the 15th. Maintenance Techs disconnected power and water service, shuttered the building, removed the wooden docks, and brought the rental and staff boats back for storage.
- The 2026 holiday season kicked off with the installation of the exterior lighting display at several park facilities. The downtown Community Center, which is part of the annual downtown lighting display event, had all the outdoor decorations installed. New rope lighting was also installed on the half wall on the west side of the building. Rooftop displays were installed on the McMillen Park Community Center, Weisser Park Youth Center,

Reservoir Park Cooper Center, and the Albert Jennings Youth Center. The unity light display was also installed at McKinney Commons.

- Freimann Square fountains shut down on October 1st. The maintenance techs drained the pond and installed the winter covers.
- Repairs were completed at the Weisser Park ballfield press box.
- The main drainage line for the Shoaff Park golf course driving range was repaired. Maintenance techs worked with the heavy equipment crew to excavate the area to expose the clogged area, then completed the repair to re-establish proper drainage.
- Seasonal water service shutdown has begun. Remote drinking fountains and special use facilities were first on the list. Summer pavilions and outdoor restrooms will close for the season on November 1st. The winterization operation will kick into high gear after that date to ensure facilities are properly shut down until spring.
- The shade structures at Kreager Park's Taylor's Dream playground were removed for the season. The second largest, 3-point sail was taken in for repairs
- There were a total of **26** calls to on-call personnel this month. 9 of which were lock issues, 5 were calls from dispatch regarding alarms, and 12 were miscellaneous issues regarding patron concerns.

Maintenance Technician completed the following:

12: Alarm Maintenance, 8: Building Maintenance, 6: Carpentry, 15: Electrical Repair,
3: HVAC Maintenance, 8: Key Core Maintenance, 5: Light Maintenance,
6: Lock Maintenance, 8: Paint, 5: Playground Maintenance,
10: Plumbing Maintenance, 13: Sign Maintenance, 4: Vandalism

Grounds Maintenance/Heavy Equipment: Rob Schenkel

- Crews service the Rivergreenway Trail weekly to keep it clean, safe, and usable for the public. Maintenance includes mowing, cutting trees and brushing from the path, removing debris, and addressing damage caused by flooding.
- Botanical Conservatory, Foster Park, and Lakeside Park compost bins continue to be emptied as needed.
- The Grounds Crew runs trash collection routes seven days a week, ensuring all park receptacles are emptied regularly. This helps keep the parks clean, sanitary, and visually appealing for visitors.
- Mowing crews maintain the parks on a 7–10-day rotation, including mowing grass, string trimming around trees and fence lines, blowing off walkways, removing sticks and debris, and spraying weeds. These efforts help keep the parks clean, well-maintained, and welcoming visitors.
- Safety mulch (FIBAR) was added to Bowser Park, Lawton Park, Casselwood Park, Jehl Park, Weisser Park, and McCormick Park playgrounds to improve safety and enhance their overall appearance.
- Heavy Equipment crews excavated a damaged drainage pipe at the Shoaff Park Golf Course driving range to provide access for Maintenance Techs to complete the necessary repairs.
- Grounds crews cut back brush lines at Franke Park and the Foellinger Theatre overflow parking lot to make room for the Fantasy of Lights installation.
- Heavy Equipment crews removed the Sweet Breeze Canal Boat from the St. Mary's River and transported it to the Rea property for winter storage.

- The rugby fields at McMillen Park were aerated, top-dressed, and overseeded to improve turf quality, appearance, and playability.

Main Trac Coordinator: Nicole Roth

- Main Trac Entries: 11,801 for the month.
- We have had 55, 311 calls this month, and no volunteer hours reported.
- Busy entering time sheets and contracted/sales invoices.
- Running monthly reports for Recreation Staff.

Superintendent: Mike Gore

- Approve and record invoices for various materials that are being used in our grounds, maintenance, and facilities departments, and a variety of issues on all sides of Maintenance.
- 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 Support: Travis Roth – Storeroom / Property / Garage Highlights:

- Two Ford vans and the bus were loaned to City Utilities to allow them to conduct tours of their facilities.
- The Jennings Center staff borrowed a van to use for a field trip to Indianapolis to attend a Colts game.
- Staff unloaded and stored materials for the IPRA Conference being held in Fort Wayne this year. These materials will be delivered to the Grand Wayne Center before the start of the conference.
- Order levels have started to reduce in volume as pavilions, bathrooms, and programs end for the season.
- Property Transactions:

18 Stihl BG86 Blower	Scrapped	P240
26 Makita Reciprocating Saw	Added Into Inventory	P250
12 Makita Cordless Drill	Scrapped	P250
26 Makita Impact Driver	Added Into Inventory	P252
26 Honda Water Pump	Added Into Inventory	P270
26 Milwaukee Grease Gun	Added Into Inventory	R211
Various Golf Equipment	Scrapped	R211, R212, R213
Motorola APX Radios	Transferred	R710

2026 Vehicle and Equipment Purchase Update:

Forestry Bucket Truck	Chassis complete
Ford F250 Pickup	Delivered
Toro 5910 Mower	Delivered

Garage Operations Highlights:

- 205 work orders were scheduled this month, 28 of which were services.
- Mulching attachments were purchased for the newest Toro 5910 wide area mower. These will allow the machine to mulch leaves at the end of the mowing season.
- Sweet Breeze was removed from the river without any major difficulties. Garage mechanics fabricated and installed a new large-capacity winch on the boat trailer that helped with the process. Magnetic trailer lights also helped make the move to winter storage safer.

- The mechanics have dealt with a large number of flat tires and damaged tires on mowers during October. Some of them could be patched and repaired; others had to be replaced with new tires and tire-and-rim combinations.
- Parts were ordered and installed on a ground rotary broom used on the Polar Trac conversions. This broom is an older model and needed to be updated with new parts from the manufacturer to ensure that future parts would be available and that both brooms in the grounds inventory are identical.
- Major repairs were performed on a grounds Toro aerator to prepare the machine for fall turf maintenance. There were several broken and damaged parts on the rotating assembly that required replacement.
- The process of winterizing summer equipment for long-term storage was started, with paint liners being some of the first pieces of equipment to be taken out of service for the fall.
- A pallet of RV antifreeze was purchased from a vendor to allow the maintenance techs to start winterizing bathrooms, irrigation, and other outdoor water sources.
- The forestry crane truck currently off-site for repairs is almost finished. The rusted outriggers were replaced, but during testing, the technicians had problems getting the truck to start and run properly. A mobile tech from Selking International was able to troubleshoot the truck and get it back into operation again.
- The two loaner Ford Transit vans at Lawton Park, along with the Park & Play van and the theater passenger van, were prepped to be used as shuttle vans for off-site tours during the IPRA conference in early November.
- The spare Zamboni for the Headwaters ice rink is now up and running with only a few minor leaks and a tune-up to perform before it can be used if the main ice machine breaks down and cannot be serviced quickly.
- Garage mechanics serviced the shop parts washer and were able to replace the heating element without relying on an outside vendor to make the repairs. The shop oil filter press has been disassembled after the motor failed. A new electric motor has been purchased, and the hydraulic pump is being rebuilt to bring that machine back online.
- A new broom attachment was purchased from Bobcat Fort Wayne for the Toro Dingo used by the Forestry division.
- The Ford IDS diagnostic software had some issues while updating. Bob Thomas Ford is working to correct the problems created by how Ford currently licenses dealers and aftermarket software.

Project Administration: Dave Weadock

- Botanical Conservatory Gallery Corridor Design – Project is currently out to bid. Bids are due November 24, 2026, and work is planned to begin early 2027.
- Botanical Conservatory Roof Glass Replacement – Installation is in progress with two custom panels on order and awaiting installation.
- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Construction – Construction work has begun with demolition of existing facilities in progress.
- Botanical Conservatory South Linkway Design – Design work is complete.
- Buckner Park Stream Crossing – Planning is ongoing through the Landscape Division.
- Community Center Classroom Renovation – Planning is in progress.
- Community Center Front Desk Renovation – Planning is in progress.
- Community Center Exterior Façade Tuckpointing – Work was completed late October 2026.
- Daryl B. Cobin Park Sidewalk Replacement – Installation of sidewalk sections is completed.

- Foellinger Theatre Storage Building Floor Improvements – Planning is in progress with the theatre manager and deputy director.
- Foster Park Golf Course Clubhouse Restrooms Design – Planning is in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Practice Facility Architectural Services – Site grading plan preparation is in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Practice Facility Permitting Services – Floodplain review is in progress.
- Foster Park Golf Course Practice Facility Topographic Survey – Survey has been completed and provided to the consultants.
- Foster and Franke Parks Floodplain Projects – Planning is in progress.
- Gren Park Picnic Shelter – Construction is in progress, with completion planned for early November 2026.
- Hamilton Park Trail Lighting – Bidding is complete. Awaiting purchase order issuance and contractor schedule.
- Johnny Appleseed Campground Paving Projects – Project is complete.
- Kettler Park New Sidewalk to Tennis Courts – Sidewalk construction is complete. Awaiting final site remediation.
- Lakeside Park Lawton Monument Restoration – Planning is in progress; project oversight is being provided by the Landscape Division.
- Lawton Park Barn Exterior Renovation – Construction is in progress on siding, doors, and windows.
- Lawton Park Barn Roof Replacement – Project is complete.
- McCulloch Park Monument Cleaning – Project is complete.
- McCulloch Park Sidewalks Replacement – Sidewalk construction is complete. Awaiting final site remediation.
- McMillen Park Basketball Courts Paving – Paving is complete. Awaiting installation of player benches.
- McMillen Park Golf Course Irrigation – Contractor bidding is complete. Work is scheduled to begin mid-November.
- McMillen Park Pool Deck Construction – Construction is ongoing; completion is scheduled for late October.
- McMillen Park Pool Deck Engineering Design – Design is complete; the engineer will remain engaged in the project through construction.
- McMillen Park Pool Slides Reconditioning & Northside Park Pool Slides Reconditioning – Both parks' projects are complete, along with the Northside Park Trail Construction – Bidding is complete. Construction is planned for Spring 2027.
- Psi-Ote Park Playground Equipment Replacement – Play equipment is on order with the vendor. Installation is planned for late 2026.
- Roosevelt Park Trail Lighting – Awaiting construction schedule from contractor.
- Salomon Farm Animal Barn Renovation – Project is complete.
- Salomon Farm Barns Exterior Painting – Project is complete.
- Salomon Farm Summer Kitchen Decorative Fence – Construction of a decorative fence at the perimeter of the kitchen building is planned for late 2026.
- Shoaff Park Driving Range Drainage – Work is scheduled for mid-November after the golf course is closed.
- Various Parks Sidewalks Replacement – Project is complete.
- Various Parks Bench Pads – Concrete bench pads are scheduled for installation in October; bench installation is scheduled for mid-November.
- Waynedale Park Fitness Equipment Replacement – Equipment is on order with the vendor. Installation is planned for late 2026.

- Weisser Park Youth Center Entrance Improvements – Project is complete.

Other work:

- Engage Fort Wayne – Preparing project and program content for Engage Fort Wayne.
- Parks Mobile Application – Updating GIS content for the Parks mobile application and data records.
- Project Cost Estimates – Preparing cost estimates for various Parks projects as requested.
- Playground Inspections and Work Orders – Conducting playground inspections and preparing work order requests as needed.
- Park Assessments – Completing assessments at various park locations.
- 2027 Capital Planning – Developing and evaluating projects for the 2027 budget.
- Underground Utility Locates – Coordinating and completing underground utility locates at various park locations.
- Marketing Support – Assisting the Marketing Department by preparing requested project information.
- Future Project Planning – Reviewing potential and necessary future projects.
- Park Site Plans and Building Plans – Updating Park site plan bases and building plans.

Safety: Tony DeVido

- Parks & Rec. Safety Committee meeting was held on 10/27. 6 employees and 1 guest were present.
- 0 vehicle crashes were reported during this time.
- 0 employee injuries were reported during this period.
- 2 *CPR/FA* classes were held. 12 employees were certified.
- 5 new employees were SOAR trained
- I participated in the city-wide Safety Review Council meeting.
- SDS book collection and digitization continue.
- Conducted 19 individual worksite inspections.
- Annual Forklift training was completed, with 10 employees being certified.
- Sign-up sheets for annual Compliance training were sent to all divisions.

Chad Shaw – Deputy Director, Botanical Conservatory Planning & Development, Forestry, Greenhouse, Landscape & Horticulture, and Riparian.

Planning Report

Riverfront Phase IIB construction continues. The majority of the planting has been completed within the Esplanade and North Lawn areas. Contractors are finishing pavements along Calhoun and Fourth Streets. Staff continues to coordinate construction activities with adjacent developments at the old Schaab Metals building, More Brewing, relocated Depot, and The Eddy.

Staff met with the design team and Public Works to review the progress of the construction documents for the Foster Park Entrance design.

Staff met with the design team to review the progress of the schematic design for the Hanna Homestead Park Redevelopment project.

Staff finalized construction documents for Wells Street Park improvements and is working on specifications and bid documents.

Staff met with the design team to review the progress of the schematic design for the Conservatory's Exploration and Terrace Garden Design.

Staff worked with Marketing to prepare and submit an application for the Community Parks Initiative grant.

Staff has met with various divisions to discuss 2027 budget expectations and challenges.

Memorial Park Pool concepts were prepared and shared with members of the Memorial Park Neighborhood Association. These concepts will be posted to Engage for public comment.

Horticulture and Landscape Report

30 volunteers worked 192.95 hours in the greenhouse.

The greenhouse provided 159 plants to be sold at the Botanical Conservatory's Gift Shop.

306 garden mums and 117 flowering cabbages and kales were provided for the Parks fall landscapes.

120 pots of floral mums went to the conservatory's showcase, and 12,600 flower bulbs were planted for Bunny Tales, Showcase, Home and Garden Show, Volunteer Dinner, and the Conservatory's Gift Shop.

The Lakeside Park team focused on daily litter pickup; weekly mowing and spin trimming; sidewalk edging; fountain maintenance including vacuuming and draining the fountain; landscape bed weeding, herbicide treatments, bed edging, mulching; limb pickup; and rose bed maintenance that included pesticide treatments for black spot and powdery mildew. Staff also removed all annual flowers, planted mums in the sunken garden urns, installed all spring bulbs, and began leaf pickup. Soil was added to annual beds to improve annual flower health.

The Foster Park team focused on daily litter pickup; weekly mowing of the Bridal Glen, regularly removing tree debris from the tennis courts; leaf litter pickup; and watering all annual beds. Staff also spent time applying pre-emergent herbicides for weed control and doing some bed mulching. All annual flowers were removed and beds were edged, tilled, and prepped for bulb installation. Bulb planting began this month, and the fountain was cleaned and drained for the season.

The Downtown Team continued their daily litter and trash removal in downtown parks. Post-emergent herbicide applications and general weeding/bed cleanups were made at the Courthouse Green, Freimann, Headwaters, Meyers Park, MLK Bridge, Riverfront IIA, Rivergreenway beds, and Zeiss Park. The Freimann fountain was cleaned, drained, and winterized for the season. Staff removed all annuals from Freimann, Courthouse, and Community Center; planted Mums in all Community Center pots; completed all spring bulb installations at Freimann, Courthouse, and Community Center; and power washed on the square at Freimann. Staff finished what has been a 2-year plan of reducing landscape beds in Headwaters Park. The team also mulched Guldlin, Thieme Drive, Rockhill Drive, and Sherman Drive Rivergreenway beds.

The City Team continued to mow in Bob Arnold/Northside Park and Lawton Park weekly, adding leaf cleanup as part of their duties. Post-emergent herbicide applications and general weeding/bed cleanups were made in Irishtown, McMillen, Packard, Reservoir, Salomon, and Weisser. Staff finished a landscape project at Lawton Park that improved aesthetics, visibility, and safety. They also applied fertilizer and weed control to the turf at both Northside and the Lawton Offices and did the turf seeding restoration at Packard Park after a drainage project was completed by a contractor. Staff spent time on stump grinding, turf repairs, and landscape bed reductions in McCulloch Park. Mulching projects this month included Memorial Grove in Memorial Park, Franke Pavilion 1 parking lot islands, and all entry beds to Franke Park. Staff completed fall cleanups at McMillen Park and Shoaff Park, as well as beginning cleanups at the McMillen Family Pavilion in Franke Park.

Irrigation winterization began in all parks.

Landscape staff moved all the Zoo tropical plants back to the greenhouse for the winter season.

Landscape staff spent a day hauling horse manure to a storage pile that will be spread in the spring as a soil amendment to all annual flower beds in the parks.

The 25th annual Great Tree Canopy Comeback was held on October 17th this year. Staff assisted volunteers in planting 50 trees at Gren Park and helped remove invasive shrubs at Swinney Park on the banks of the St. Mary's River.

200 Prairie Dropseed grasses were installed in Rudisill Park by neighborhood volunteers.

One seasonal staff team member worked on their last day of the season this month.

Pride Landcare and MJK Lawncare continued with their annual mowing maintenance contract. They began leaf pickups in selective parks per contract.

Lawnganics completed their annual turf fertilization and weed control contract.

Aquatic Management continued to maintain the Thomas Property pond, spraying for algae and submerged weeds as per contract.

Riparian Management Report- October 2026

Removed 19 bags of litter as well as several tires, carts, a chair that belongs in Promenade Park, and tents from the rivers and riverbanks this month.

Removed 169.34 tons of logs from Taylor, Hale, Jefferson, Van Buren, Ewing, and Old Fort.

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

Improved part of the viewshed at Promenade South by removing small unwanted trees.

Safety buoys removed for the season.

Attended Psychological Safety Training.

Completed forklift training and test for internal certification.

Forestry Report

Fort Wayne Trees has not yet begun work on this year's tree planting project. 855 new trees will be planted this fall. 208 of these will find new homes within our parks. We anticipate project completion by January 1st, 2027.

Bids have been requested to assist with street trees identified as high-priority removals. In total, 617 high-priority tree removals have been identified. With the help of contractors, we hope to complete these removals by May of 2027. Bids will be accepted on November 20th.

Partnered with Kendall Tree Service to offer safety training focused on tree felling and utilizing mechanical advantages. We appreciate Parks making a pavilion available for this training.

In October, Forestry crews completed 47 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to facilitate buses, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs.

In-house crews removed 67 trees in October. 13 of these were located within our parks, and seven were the result of vehicle damage.

Crews responded to and cleared 25 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs. 2 of these were private trees that had fallen into the roadway.

Completed 7 tree damage appraisals for trees that had been struck by vehicles. These appraisals resulted in $5,000.00 in damages to City-owned trees.

Responded to and closed 66 referred 311 Call Center requests for service this month.

Botanical Conservatory Report – October 2026

October brought a full month of fall activity to the Botanical Conservatory, with *Pueblo Garden: Styles of the Southwest* continuing to welcome guests in the Showcase House and Jeremy Stroup's *Touching Grass* remaining on display in the Gallery Hall. Pumpkin Path provided a festive outdoor experience through October 25, featuring seasonal plantings, photo opportunities, gourd towers, an oversized mum tree, and a Seek and Find activity. At the Allen County Public Library, *From Storybook to Showcase* concluded its run on October 31, sharing the creative process behind *Fern's Fairylight Express* with the broader community.

The Botanical Conservatory hosted several well-received events throughout October, including Botanical Brew, which welcomed 1,645 guests, the Fall Bonsai Show, Rocky Horror Picture Show & Fright Night Market, and Garden Trick or Treat. Educational offerings included continuing T'ai Chi programs, the new Dried Flower Mini Pumpkins workshop, and field trips serving 372 visitors. Following the conclusion of the Grow it! School Plant Program's 100th year, staff also began preparing for the next season, with 55 schools already registered for 2027.

Across departments, staff and volunteers supported fall events while advancing seasonal winterization, bulb planting, collection enhancements, and facility improvements. Looking ahead, preparations are underway for Veterans Day in the Garden, the transition to *Silver Bells*, opening November 21, and the return of holiday lighting, Holly Shopping, seasonal performances, and December family programming.

Jaime Majewski resigned in October to pursue other career opportunities. The Clerical II – Retail Assistant position was posted, interviews have been completed, and the selected candidate is undergoing Human Resources clearance. There are currently no positions open for applications.

Botanical Conservatory KPIs

October 2026 continued the Botanical Conservatory's positive fall momentum, with attendance reaching 9,228 visitors, an increase of 226 guests or 2.51% compared to October 2025. Admissions revenue grew more substantially, increasing 10.27% to $40,056.18. These monthly gains helped narrow the year-to-date shortfall, with attendance totaling 95,977 visitors, down 5.74%, and admissions revenue reaching $336,359.55, down 6.47% compared to the same period in 2025. Membership revenue declined 19.93% for the month to $5,151.90, although year-to-date membership revenue remains nearly level with the prior year at $80,011.70, down just 0.52%.

Conservatory Shop revenue also finished below last October, declining 8.58% to $18,049.86; however, year-to-date shop sales remain 3.03% ahead of 2025 at $259,317.03. Café Flora contributed $10,143.54 in October, bringing its year-to-date revenue to $109,652.35 and continuing to expand the Botanical Conservatory's earned revenue base. Comparisons with Café Flora's 2025 revenue should be viewed in the context of its limited opening period that October, rather than as growth across equivalent operating periods.

Rental and catering revenue was a particularly strong contributor in October, increasing 53.96% to $14,287.50. This performance brought year-to-date rental revenue to $77,755.50, narrowing the remaining gap with 2025 to 4.09%. Other Revenue, which includes activity enrollments, donations, Mother's Day Plant Sale proceeds, and related sources, totaled $13,702.50 for the month compared to $880.60 last October. Year-to-date Other Revenue reached $502,869.11, supporting overall revenue growth.

Altogether, October total revenue reached $101,391.48, an increase of $26,281.71 or 34.99% compared to October 2025. Year-to-date total revenue now stands at $1,365,965.24, an increase of $165,514.49 or 13.79% over the prior year. While cumulative attendance and admissions revenue remain below 2025, October's gains in visitation, admissions, and rentals—alongside Café Flora's contribution and growth in Other Revenue—strengthened the Botanical Conservatory's overall revenue position heading into the holiday season.

Attendance
October 2025: 9,002 visitors
October 2026: 9,228 visitors
An increase of 226 visitors or +2.51% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Attendance: 101,826 visitors
2026 Attendance: 95,977 visitors
A decrease of 5,849 visitors or -5.74% compared to 2025

Admissions Revenue
October 2025: $36,325.27
October 2026: $40,056.18
An increase of $3,730.91 or +10.27% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Admissions Revenue: $359,617.90
2026 Admissions Revenue: $336,359.55
A decrease of $23,258.35 or -6.47% compared to 2025

Membership Revenue
October 2025: $6,434.00
October 2026: $5,151.90
A decrease of $1,282.10 or -19.93% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Membership Revenue: $80,427.00
2026 Membership Revenue: $80,011.70
A decrease of $415.30 or -0.52% compared to 2025

Conservatory Shop Revenue
October 2025: $19,743.96
October 2026: $18,049.86
A decrease of $1,694.10 or -8.58% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Gift Shop Revenue: $251,697.41
2026 Gift Shop Revenue: $259,317.03
An increase of $7,619.62 or +3.03% compared to 2025

Café Flora Revenue
October 2025: $2,445.94
October 2026: $10,143.54
An increase of $7,697.60 or +314.71% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Café Flora Revenue: $2,445.94
2026 Café Flora Revenue: $109,652.35

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue
October 2025: $9,280.00
October 2026: $14,287.50
An increase of $5,007.50 or +53.96% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Rental Revenue: $81,067.50
2026 Rental Revenue: $77,755.50
A decrease of $3,312.00 or -4.09% compared to 2025

Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, Plant Sale, etc.)
October 2025: $880.60
October 2026: $13,702.50

YTD Comparisons
2025 Other Revenue: $425,195.00
2026 Other Revenue: $502,869.11

Conservatory Total Revenue
October 2025: $75,109.77
October 2026: $101,391.48
An increase of $26,281.71 or +34.99% compared to October 2025

YTD Comparisons
2025 Total Revenue: $1,200,450.75

2026 Total Revenue: $1,365,965.24
An increase of $165,514.49 or +13.79% compared to 2025

Botanical Conservatory Business Development

Staff submitted a grant proposal to the Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation for $5,000 support of the 2027 Botanical Builders Showcase Garden Exhibit.

The Botanical Conservatory received an additional $862.63 from William's estate for our share of the 2021 federal tax refund. Our final gift from Nancy and Chuck William totaled $502,581.70.

Staff submitted corporate sponsorship proposals to 12 local/area construction firms (Brooks Construction, CME, Crosby, Fox, Hamilton Hunter, JG Bowers, JT Contracting, Schenkel, Shambaugh, Star Excavating, Strebig, and the Hagerman Group) and the Northeast Indiana Building Trades for $5,000 support of the 2027 Botanical Builders Exhibit.

Staff submitted the 2027 corporate sponsorships pdf/brochure to the marketing contacts at 84 local and area corporations. Additional submissions and follow-ups will continue in November.

Adams Radio Group confirmed media sponsorship support for several Botanical Conservatory 2027 events and exhibits. Specific stations for each event will be confirmed soon. The events/exhibits include Botanical Builders Exhibit, The Great Train Connection, Bunny Tales in the Garden, Mother's Day Plant Sale, Mother's Day in the Garden, Father's Day in the Garden, Glamp & Grow Exhibit, Pumpkin Path Display, Rocky Horror Picture Show, Garden Trick-or-Treat, and Sweater Weather Exhibit.

Conservatory Public Programs: Events

Botanical Brew (October 2)

Enjoying its fifth year, Botanical Brew received 1,645 guests and 69 vendors/performers for a total attendance of 1,714, which is a 13% increase from 1,460 in 2025. Participation from regional beverage producers increased by 1, representing 17 different products including tea, coffee, mushroom coffee, chai, cane juice, cider, beer, wine, mead, and spirits. In addition, there were 5 food and 2 dessert vendors serving guests outdoors. Highlighting indoor spaces, a dozen artisans and a dozen performers/buskers were spread throughout the Botanical Conservatory. This annual fall event on the first Friday of October continues to be a local favorite and is complimented by the beautiful Pumpkin Path Display as the perfect backdrop!

Fall Bonsai Show (October 3)

A total of 460 guests attended in 2026, which is a 15% decrease from 540 guests in 2025. There were 25 members from the Bonsai Club who participated and helped make the show an overall success! This repeat event continues to hold interest and is scheduled to recur in both spring and fall of 2027.

Rocky Horror Picture Show & Fright Night Market (October 17)

The weather was beautiful for this year's outdoor screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show during Downtown Fort Wayne's Fright Night. A total of 713 people attended, which is a dramatic 70% increase from 419 when it rained in 2025. As part of the event, there was also the Fright Night Market and Costume Contest with 27 entries for Best Halloween Costume, 5 for Best Zombie, and 24 for Best Rocky Horror. This participatory event maintains to be a crowd favorite as well as a cult classic.

Garden Trick or Treat (October 24)

This popular annual event saw 827 guests over the course of just 3 hours. Participants enjoyed hunting for ghosts throughout the Botanical Conservatory, then trick-or-treating down the Pumpkin Path with 12 botanically themed stations like "Spooky Plant Parts," "Creepy Compost Dig," and "Seeds of Mystery." In addition to such wonderful volunteers, staff were happy to bring back community partners from Allen County Environmental Management and Allen County Public Library. Overall, it continues to be a successful event with lots of smiling faces!

Education

T'ai Chi for Relaxation (September 22-October 27)
Liz Monnier concluded this 6-week series, incorporating the Qigong style. A total of 15 students participated and gave high ratings overall.

Continuing T'ai Chi (September 29-October 27)
Sandy Gebhard concluded this 5-week series, which offered advanced instruction to 16 students studying the Sun Style forms. High ratings continue to be received.

Dried Flower Mini Pumpkins (October 8)
In this brand-new workshop, 25 pre-registered participants used a combination of dried flowers and moss to accent mini pumpkins, crafting unique pieces of seasonal living décor. Attendees enjoyed the cozy, relaxing atmosphere, complete with a free beverage from Café Flora!

Grow it! School Plant Program
The School Plant Program recently concluded its landmark 100th year, celebrating a major milestone supported by an incredible 598 volunteer hours! Following a successful season, staff have begun preparing for the 101st year. Momentum remains strong for the upcoming season, with 55 schools already registered to participate in 2027.

Youth Field Trips

This October, 8 schools and organizations brought 372 visitors to the Botanical Conservatory. These groups enjoyed Staff-Led Labs (36%), Garden Exploration Activities (30%), and Basic Visits (34%). There were 533 field trip visitors in October of 2025.

Exhibits & Displays

Pueblo Garden: Style of the Southwest (June 27-November 15)
This one-of-a-kind showcase exhibit became a top favorite among Conservatory guests. Inspired by the landscapes and gardening traditions of the American Southwest, Pueblo Garden: Styles of the Southwest celebrates the resourcefulness, beauty, and enduring influence of Pueblo-inspired design in a breathtaking seasonal display. The exhibit also features adobe-inspired structures and information on Pueblo gardening techniques. This beautiful blend of heritage, artistry, and horticulture is at the Botanical Conservatory from summer through fall, leading up to the Silver Bells holiday exhibit.

Jeremy Stroup: Touching Grass (June 27-November 15)
Jeremy Stroup's exhibition *Touching Grass* celebrates nature, memory, and the sensory experiences that connect us to the world around us. Developed through Stroup's daily art practice, the exhibition encourages viewers to step away from screens and reconnect with the textures, colors, and beauty of the outdoors.

From Storybook to Showcase (July 1-October 31)
Visitors to the main branch of the Allen County Public Library were invited to peek into the creative process of showcase development for the Botanical Conservatory. Four display cases featured original sketches, concept materials, and exhibit props from the recent immersive garden experience, *Fern's Fairylight Express,* in partnership with author and illustrator Talitha Shipman.

Pumpkin Path Display (September 29-October 25)
This annual display continues to grow as a popular seasonal attraction, bringing staff and volunteers together to create a festive fall experience that guests absolutely love! Adding a welcoming seasonal experience to the Botanical Conservatory grounds, all guests were invited to explore outdoor pathways complete with a Seek and Find activity. The 2026 display also included a variety of different photo opportunities and some new fun features, such as gourd towers and an XXL mum tree on the Terrace.

- **Volunteers/Staff**

Each year at the Botanical Conservatory, October is an incredibly busy month when volunteers offer critical support. There were 23 volunteers who helped during Botanical Brew, 1 at the Fall Bonsai Show, 2 distributing treats as part of Fright Night Trick-or-Treating, 12 assisting during The Rocky Horror Picture Show, and 11 for Garden Trick or Treat. There was also a newly oriented volunteer who jumped right in on both Botanical Brew and Rocky Horror. To conclude the fall season, 35 different volunteers moved haybales, corn shucks, pumpkins, gourds, and mums to deconstruct the Pumpkin Path Display. This included 4 students and 2 staff from CAS, 10 students and 1 instructor from South Side, 12 employees from Voltava, and 12 Conservatory Volunteers.

As for routine service, there were 7 volunteers who offered 26 shifts at the Front Desk, and 8 volunteers who offered 32 shifts in the Gift Shop. There were 5 volunteers who contributed 16 2-hour shifts as part of the new Hort Support Team. The Gift Shop Plant Groomer continued to care for plants twice a week, and Easterseals of NE IN continued their biweekly service of maintaining indoor and outdoor pathways.

- **Upcoming**

Thru November 15: Pueblo Garden: Style of the Southwest, public hours
Thru November 15: Touching Grass: Art Display by Jeremy Stroup, public hours

November 11: Veterans Day in the Garden, public hours
November 15-20: Showchange Week
November 21-January 3: Silver Bells Holiday Exhibit, public hours
November 25: $1-Night of Lights at the Conservatory, 5-8 pm
November 26: CLOSED Thanksgiving Day
November 27-December 18: $1 Night Light Display, Thursdays & Fridays, 5-8 pm
November 27: Those 2 Guys in Suits & Ties Holiday Performance, 5:30-7:30 pm
November 28: Holly Shopping at the Conservatory, public hours

Dec. 5, 12 & 19: Santa Saturdays, 12-4 pm
December 3: Holiday Succulent Wreath, pre-registered
December 3: Holiday Performance by String Jams Musicians, 5:30-7:30 pm

December 4: Holiday Performance by Woodside Middle School Advanced Choir, 5:30-7 pm
December 5: Breakfast with Santa, pre-registered
December 9: Volunteer & Member Holi-Day Open House
December 10: Evergreen Centerpiece, pre-registered
December 10: Holiday Performance by The Snow Fort Singers, 5:30-7:30 pm
December 11: Holiday Performance by PFW Holiday Carolers, 5:30-7:30 pm
December 12: Evergreen Centerpiece, pre-registered
December 13: Suzuki Strings Holiday Performance, 2-2:45 pm
December 24 & 25: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, **CLOSED**
December 31: New Year's Eve, OPEN 10 am-8 pm
January 1: New Year's Day, **CLOSED**

Botanical Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture

Horticulture staff performed an extensive cleaning of the Tropical House pond and waterfall this month to reduce the nutrient load, enhance the aesthetics for guest enjoyment, and improve water conditions for fish health.

Botanical Conservatory staff have completed the installation of a new retaining wall where the Southern magnolia had originally been growing. Pride Landcare then filled in the new bed with fresh soil, and the gardeners planted a sausage tree (*Kigelia africana*) in its place, which the Lawton Greenhouse grew from a small seedling procured nearly three years ago.

Horticulture staff continue to work on excavating, installing crushed stone, and building retaining walls around each of the vents on the south side of the Showcase House. The new retaining walls will enable the south slope inside the Showcase House to be stabilized and subsequently planted with permanent plantings. The retaining walls will also help to keep the vents cleaner and, in turn, enable the HVAC system to work more efficiently by reducing the dust entering the system.

Lawnganics applied their final seasonal application of herbicides and fertilizer on all the turfgrass. Their technicians also aerated and overseeded the turfgrass to ensure it is as full and lush as possible.

A Plus Irrigation performed winterization of the outdoor irrigation system.
Horticulture staff and volunteers have completed nearly all the fall bulb planting, with just a small fraction of the bulbs remaining to plant in the ground. The remaining plants should be completed in November.

Horticulture staff planted first and second shifts of florist mums in the Pueblo Garden Showcase Exhibit. Lawton Greenhouse staff also grew approximately 30 specialty mums for the Showcase, which are also on display. The wide variety of forms in which they grow and bloom adds seasonal interest to the Showcase Garden for guests visiting the Botanical Conservatory.

The Botanical Conservatory received a generous donation of an eight-foot-tall Madagascar Palm (*Pachypodium lamerei*) from an individual living in Ohio. The value of the plant if purchased would be somewhere between $800 and $1,000, based on its large size. It will be planted in the Desert House next month.

Supplies and finished product plants have been procured for the upcoming Silver Bells Holiday Showcase. It will feature white orchids, Tillandsias, poinsettias, and a wide variety of plants throughout to give texture and visual interest.

Botanical Conservatory Facility and Maintenance

Seasonal winterization progressed throughout October. Mutton Rentals removed the 30x45 Terrace tent and the vinyl covering from the 20x30 upper-level tent structure as the Terrace closed for the season. The exterior restrooms were closed and winterized, preparations began to close Café Flora's outdoor seating area, and the INcrEDIBLE Discovery Garden was winterized.

Following the conclusion of Pumpkin Path and the associated fall events, staff removed the display and returned seasonal décor to storage. The bee display in the Tropical Linkway was also removed for the winter.

Staff removed damaged speakers from the north-wall bulkhead in the Showcase House in preparation for the repainting project scheduled for November. Replacement speakers were installed to restore sound coverage and improve audio quality.

Teusch Electric replaced recessed can lighting with LED wafer fixtures in the Kessler and Jaenicke Rooms and the front hall and Atrium areas. Compatible dimmer switches were also installed to support operation of the new fixtures.

Homeland Security completed the facility inspection required for renewal of the Botanical Conservatory's entertainment permit. No issues were identified, and the permit was renewed for 2026–2027.

Allied Mechanical coordinated the installation of insulation on the new ductwork in the west mechanical room off the Tropical Linkway. Scheduled fall service also continued, including boiler maintenance and filter replacements.

Throughout the month, maintenance staff provided operational support for Botanical Brew, Rocky Horror Picture Show, Garden Trick-or-Treat, the Fall Bonsai Show, Orchid Society activities, multiple weddings, and educational programs.



Guests enjoying the festivities as part of the 5th annual Botanical



The crowd cheering for a Costume Contest before screening the Rocky Horror Picture Show



Community partners & visitors interacting during Garden Trick or Treat



A memorable entrance to Pueblo Garden: Styles of the SW



Gorgeous scenery within the 2026 Pumpkin Path Display



CAS Students assisting with teardown of the Pumpkin Path Display



South Side Students helping teardown the Pumpkin Path Display



Voltava Employees helping prepare for end-of-season on the outdoor Terrace



Greenhouse Volunteers maintaining holiday Poinsettias for upcoming display



Conservatory Staff pause to celebrate the end of one season before things pick up for the next; L-R: Amanda Amstutz, Kim Hartman, Anna Harpe, Nate Cardelli

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager, Lead of Marketing

- www.RiverfrontFW.org had 6,467 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: 21,214 Event Counts: 106,608
- Two members of the Marketing Team started virtual InDesign Accessibility Compliance training at the end of October and into November.
- 85 graphic projects produced for the Department.
- Winter Fun Times are completed, printed, and delivered. Social Fun Times website updates and Social Media promotion strategy started in late October and will continue throughout the season.
- Winterval social posts completed.
- Riverfront and Headwaters graphics are all complete for winter programs.
- Submitted grants to Community Parks Initiative, Foellinger Foundation, and Raker Foundation.
- Presented to Old National Bank as part of the city presentation for potential 2027 funding.
- Social media promotions for: Shared FW article about Riverfront Social, announced FW Newspapers' Readers' Choice Award-winning Park entries, 2027 Extended Travel Trips, Shared Walk in the Park segments, and more.
- Arranged for 13 media interviews with selected staff promoting October events.
- October Media Mentions: 54.
- Social Media Totals for October:

FB Followers	118,423
FB Viewers	370,506
X (formerly Twitter) Followers	13,863
Instagram Followers	34,630

Gary Whitacre – Manager of Golf Operations – Foster Park/McMillen Park/Shoaff Park Golf Courses

2026 has been a transitional year for the golf courses. Multiple factors, including extended extreme weather in 2025, greatly affected turf conditions, and this year the courses are improving. Final maintenance for 2026 is being completed, and the courses will be "put to bed" in preparation for next season.

Below are the year-over-year comparisons for October, as well as year-to-date totals:

OCTOBER	**FOSTER**	**MCMILLEN**	**SHOAFF**
2025 REVENUE	$22,096	$29,802.75	$49,832.75
YTD 2026	**$26,454**	**$33,879**	**$49,867**
YTD 2025	$385,556.50	$342,525.50	$621,129.50
YTD 2026	**$321,706.25**	**$360,930.50**	**$583,380.00**

All three golf courses will close at the conclusion of play on Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11. As is our custom, Veterans will pay no green fees on this day. Initial plans are in place to continue operations at one course (McMillen) should the weather be conducive beyond this date. Grounds maintenance will use the remaining time after closing to aerify the greens and set the course up for next season.

The golf cart situation is fairly good, with mainly routine maintenance required throughout the season. An aggressive program of maintaining carts on a day-to-day basis implemented this year has contributed to the lower number of issues with carts this year. A quote has been acquired to rotate out most of the remaining 2015 model year carts as we continue to modernize and update the fleet. We currently have 47 carts of the body style that was discontinued in 2022, 23 of which are 2015 models. As we update these, we are still building towards our optimum number of 110 carts (we currently have 96). The lack of indoor cart storage at Shoaff continues to be a concern.

Through coordination with contractors and the City Utilities, much of the drainage issue on Shoaff Park's range has been taken care of. What was broken up and taken out of the system was about 25 years' worth of calcified sediment. This contributed heavily (along with spring rains) to the range at Shoaff being closed for about a month and a half throughout the year. Each day of the range closure in mid-season averages out to about $500 of lost revenue.

Work on hole #7 at Foster has been completed, and 150' of safety fencing has been installed along the walking trail. This hole will open with the golf course at the start of the 2027 season, which will return Foster to its normal routing for the first time in over 2 seasons. There has already been some vandalism by kids on bikes and motorized vehicles on this and other greens that need to be monitored. This type of activity sets back a lot of the work that has been done to restore the course.

Plans for the Foster driving range and bathroom remodeling in the clubhouse continue, with possible start dates as early as next fall.

Dawn Ritchie – Greenways and Trails Manager

FW PUBLIC WORKS Greenways & Trails *In Your Neighborhood*

- We will be asking for City Council approval of our construction contract with Beaty Construction for the Vann Family Crossing, the Pufferbelly Pedestrian Bridge over Coliseum Boulevard, on November 24th. The bid was $2.5 million over the estimate. We have secured additional funding from the Capital Improvement Board ($1 m); Allen County Commissioners ($500K); and Steel Dynamics ($50K). We are seeking $1.4 million in TIF

Funds from the Redevelopment Commission on November 23rd to help fill our gap in funding. Plus, we are negotiating with the contractor on savings through value engineering. We believe we can save at least $400K on the $9.9 million bridge.

- Dawn Ritchie will be presenting at the upcoming IPRA Conference in Fort Wayne on 11/6. She'll discuss electric devices in our parks and on our trails. FWPD Officer Brock Hassenzahl and Kent Castleman from Fort Wayne Trails will present with Dawn.
- Our seasonal person is busy blowing leaves off some of our trails. His last day is 11/10/26. He will re-join our staff in mid-April.

- The contractor will be wrapping up the Illinois Road Trail and Road Improvement Project next month through next spring. They will get the trail rough graded from Getz Road to West Jefferson by the end of the year. The only section of trail that was completed this year was between Getz Road and the Meijer entrance. They have until 10/20/27 to complete the project.

- At Council President Bender's request, Dawn will be giving City Council a presentation on 11/24 highlighting trail accomplishments in 2026 and what to look forward to in 2027.

- National Take a Hike Day is November 17th. We'll be hosting a hike on the Pufferbelly at 11 a.m. starting at Shambaugh & Son.

- We recently hired APEX Consulting & Surveying to provide an engineering study for a trail on Dicke Road, filling the trail gap on Aboite Center Road, and a sidewalk on Hadley Road. We'll be driving/walking the corridors with them on November 13th.

- We have analyzed numerous mid-block crossings of our trails. Our goal is to make these crossings safer and have more consistent signage.

- We've begun land acquisition of 25 parcels for the NE Trail between St. Joe Center Rd and Rothman Road. We are appraising 4 parcels for the Lake Ave Trail between Coliseum Blvd and Reed Rd. Construction on both projects will begin in 2027. We'll start appraising soon for the 36 parcels for the Stellhorn Rd Trail, with construction in 2028.

- We have been replacing more than 120 old, worn-out signs on the Rivergreenway, Towpath Trail, and other trails throughout the year as we find time. We've also installed around 80 signs systemwide educating trail users on the vehicles/devices allowed and not allowed on trails.

National / State / Division News and Media Coverage:

https://parksandrecmag.mydigitalpublication.com/november-2026/cover1

Parks Recreation Magazine • October 2026

https://www.fortwayne.com/good-reads/fort-wayne-magazine-november-2026/
https://www.fortwayne.com/good-reads/fort-wayne-magazine-october-2026/
(Sweet Breeze in Promenade Park pages 32-33)

Pueblo Garden: Styles of the Southwest June 27 to November 15, public hours
Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

Journey into the heart of the Southwest's botanical heritage this summer and fall. Delight your senses with earthy aromas, vibrant hues, and soothing sounds that transport you to a land where tradition meets contemporary design. Encounter adobe-inspired structures and Pueblo gardening techniques, showcasing the resourcefulness and wisdom of indigenous communities. Immerse yourself in a breathtaking botanical display where Southwest culture comes to life through the timeless beauty of Pueblo style. Sponsored by the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, Fort Wayne Park Foundation, and O'Rourke-Schof Family Foundation.



Jeremy Stroup: Touching Grass Until November 15, public hours

Jeremy Stroup's exhibition, Touching Grass, invites viewers to a celebration of nature, memory, and the sensory experiences that shape our lives. Stroup creates daily and shares his works online, a routine that both challenges and motivates him. Touching Grass is both a personal reflection and a gentle call to the audience: to step away from screens, passive entertainment, and overstimulation, and to reconnect with the textures, colors, and sensations of the world outside. In every brushstroke and line, the exhibition honors the joy of unplugging and immersing oneself in the green spaces that inspire and refresh us all. Included with regular admission.

Mr. Chris Freehill was honored for his 48 years of service, including 33 years as Day Camp Supervisor, and 15 years as part of the Franke Park Day Camp Staff, with a bench in the Nature Lodge located in Franke Park.




FRED
"THE RED GODS MAKE
THEIR MEDICINE AGAIN —
FOR THE RED GODS
CALL ME OUT —
AND I MUST GO"
SMOKE FREE
FACILITY
FIRE

Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation receives award from the Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA)



Fort Wayne, Ind – The Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department was honored at the IPRA Awards of Excellence ceremony as a part of the Indiana Park and Recreation Association conference on November 6 in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Director Steve McDaniel accepted the Legacy Park Award for 2025 for Franke Park. This award recognizes a park that has stood the test of time and continues to enrich the community. Criteria included demonstrating long-term impact on the community, enduring quality and resilience of the design, continued high level of use, stewardship and relevance, measurable benefits, a compelling narrative of the park's evolution, and influence or inspiration for other park projects.

Franke Park, founded in 1921 through John Bohn Franke's land donation, has evolved into one of Fort Wayne's most cherished destinations. Its history spans early community gatherings such as the first grand Labor Day picnic in 1923, winter festivals, and the creation of the Fort Wayne Zoo. Cultural additions like the Foellinger Theatre and cherry trees deepened its legacy. Today, ongoing improvements through the Franke Park Renaissance ensure this century-old park remains a vibrant, community-centered landmark.

"Every year we celebrate the numerous accomplishments of our staff," said Director Steve McDaniel. "This particular award highlights the leadership of our Board of Parks Commissioners in shaping policy, our specialized planning staff whose recent work in guiding the Renaissance Phase I helped translate community input and long-term vision into plans for the park's future, as well as our dedicated forestry, landscaping, maintenance, and recreation teams for ongoing care and programming for Franke Park. Each plays a dynamic role in protecting the park's legacy while ensuring it continues to serve and enrich our community for generations to come. I thank the IPRA for this honor and recognition."

The Indiana Park & Recreation Association Awards of Excellence recognize those throughout Indiana who embody vision, dedication, and excellence in parks and recreation. These awards highlight the efforts that transcend everyday standards to make a difference and improve the quality of life in our Indiana communities. IPRA award winners include park and recreation professionals, organizations, agencies, and volunteers. Projects must have been completed between January 1 and December 31, 2025, to be eligible.

WPTA, Headwaters Park Ice Rink to open soon
https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/11/09/headwaters-park-ice-rink-open-2026-2027-season/

WOWO, Bob Morris on Fort Wayne's Morning News
https://wowo.com/state-rep-bob-morris-says-republicans-must-rebuild-after-election-losses/

PBS, Pet Life program – FWACC featured
https://www.pbs.org/video/seasonal-pet-safety-protecting-your-pets-through-every-season-jrce0s/

WPTA, Headwaters Park Ice Rink to open soon
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WANE, Vincent Village ribbon cutting
https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/vincent-village-family-transitional-shelter-celebrates-opening/

WANE, Fort Wayne/Allen County eye mixed residential district zoning
https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-allen-co-eye-mixed-residential-district-zoning/

WOWO, City to dedicate Wounded Veterans Memorial on Veterans Day
https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-to-dedicate-wounded-veterans-memorial-on-veterans-day-2/

National recognition for Fort Wayne – The retirees choosing Fort Wayne over Florida are doing the math on taxes and housing
https://247wallst.com/personal-finance/2026/11/08/the-retirees-choosing-fort-wayne-indiana-over-florida-are-doing-the-math-on-taxes-and-housing/

WPTA, Kody Tinnel announces run for City Council
https://www.21alivenews.com/video/2026/11/10/community-leader-announces-run-fort-wayne-city-council/

WPTA, Fort Wayne Plan Commission discusses affordable housing as city considers zoning changes
https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/11/10/fort-wayne-plan-commission-discusses-affordable-housing-city-considers-zoning-changes/

WOWO, City awards 12 neighborhood grants through Sparked at Inspire program
https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-awards-12-neighborhood-grants-through-sparked-at-inspire-program/

FW Bus Weekly, Ribbon cutting at Mitchell's
https://www.fwbusiness.com/news/article_85d94678-ecf9-4ce2-b373-930fd8cfec1e.html

Around FW, City awards 12 neighborhood grants through Sparked at Inspire program
https://aroundfortwayne.com/news/2026/11/09/sparked-at-inspire-neighborhood-grants-awarded-2/

WOWO, Northeast Indiana voters reject casino proposal; coalition says fight was a community effort
https://wowo.com/northeast-indiana-voters-reject-casino-proposal-coalition-says-fight-was-a-community-effort/

WPTA, Mayor and FWFD at Coats for Kids event
https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/11/05/fort-wayne-leaders-celebrate-official-kickoff-27th-annual-coats-kids-campaign/?utm_source=taboola&utm_medium=organicclicks&tbref=hp

Ind. Cap. Chronicle, Braun: Election results a 'wake-up call' for GOP
https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2026/11/05/braun-election-results-a-wake-up-call-for-gop/

PBS, Mayor Tucker on The 260 program
The 260 | Fort Wayne Mayor Sharon Tucker | League of Women Voters Election Day Preview | PBS

WOWO, City invites the public to take part in National Take a Hike Day on the Pufferbelly Trail
https://wowo.com/fort-wayne-invites-residents-to-celebrate-national-take-a-hike-day-on-pufferbelly-trail/

WANE, New Haven mayor announces run for third term
https://www.wane.com/top-stories/new-haven-mayor-steve-mcmichael-announces-run-for-third-term/

WPTA, State Rep. GiaQuinta honors Linda Jackson
https://www.21alivenews.com/2026/10/30/state-rep-giaquinta-marks-linda-jacksons-retirement-with-declaration/

WANE, Fort Wayne Police Department outposts, grant fund plans approved by Council
https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fort-wayne-police-department-outposts-grant-fund-plans-approved-by-council/

WANE, Council postpones vote on data center amendments
https://www.wane.com/top-stories/council-postpones-vote-on-data-center-amendments/