

2015 Annual Report

West Lafayette Parks & Recreation Department



Ribbon-cutting on the extension of the Cattail Trail on U.S. 52.

2015: Partnerships Build Successes

by Janet Fawley, Parks Superintendent

By definition, an annual report is a story of all the things that have been accomplished during the past year. Most corporate reports will deal with earnings and profits. It's all about the numbers! For us, however, an annual report has more to do with people, parks, and the successes we've enjoyed together during the past year. While we will share numbers with you throughout this annual report, the numbers are intended to help tell our story for the year of 2015.

Partnerships

Our successes during 2015 have been about our partnerships. The **Farmers Market** at Cumberland Park was a great success all season long. Many vendors and residents enjoyed the constant variety of goods, foods, and music available. The **West Lafayette Community School Corporation** made facilities and equipment available to us for programs, and those programs provided our children with learning opportunities that will help get them on the right path in life. The **West Lafayette Tree Friends** planted and cared for so many trees this year throughout the entire city – not just in the parks. We also have been working with the **Wabash River Enhancement**

Corporation (WREC) to create a vision for development along the Wabash River now and into the future. Finally, **Purdue University** classes and individual students have worked towards erosion control at Happy Hollow Park, education posters that are posted throughout our parks, and bringing international foods & cultures to Global Fest. We are grateful that these groups (and more!) enhanced the work that we do!

Public Feedback

In an effort to accommodate the public's needs and interests, we have also begun work on our 5-year Master Plan Update. Our first public query involved an online survey of those who have participated in programs at the Morton Center. Results were 95% positive. The 5% negative results, provided a list of improvements we can make to our programs. We also began a partnership with the **Purdue University Extension Educators** to engage members of the public using their program, [Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces](#). The next steps in our process of developing the 5-year Master Plan is to assess community data, and complete a public feedback questionnaire that will determine our road for the future. Once these

items are completed, it will be the job of our consultant to help us use this information to determine our course of action for the next 5 years.

FAST FACTS

13

PROPERTIES

450

ACRES OF LAND MANAGED

14

PICNIC SHELTERS

12

PLAYGROUNDS

FAST FACTS

1445

"SWIM SAFE" MEMORIES THROUGH
INSTRUCTION AT THE WEST LAFAYETTE
SWIMMING POOL

79

2ND & 3RD GRADERS PLAYED
WINTER BASKETBALL

31/12

CO-ED AND MEN'S SOFTBALL TEAMS

45

SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYERS

352

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN SUMMER SPORTS
CAMPS, INCLUDING BASKETBALL,
FOOTBALL, VOLLEYBALL & SOCCER

289

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN TENNIS LESSONS

196

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN
PLAYGROUND PROGRAM

25

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN FALL VOLLEYBALL

Swimming, Slides & Sports

Parents look to the West Lafayette Parks & Recreation Department for special opportunities for their children in sports, in the arts, AND for passive and engaged play experiences. Led by Recreation Director, Chris Foley, our "directive" is to organize sports camps, swimming & diving lessons, tennis lessons, and the various classes offered to our youth through the Morton Center classes. The "FAST FACTS" demonstrate the necessity of this program for the families of West Lafayette.

West Lafayette Municipal Swimming Pool

Our swimming pool next to the Happy Hollow School has provided swimming lessons, and other activities for 50 years. Once again, Sue Mattern has served as its leader for 13 years until her retirement this past September. Sue's professionalism helped create the programs and activities that families rely on today—swim lessons for all ages and abilities, party rentals at the pool, daily lap swimming, and of course, our regular open swim. Kevin Noe will continue those traditions at the West Lafayette Municipal Swimming Pool in 2016 and into the future.

Attributed to the weather, swim lesson numbers are down by approximately 60 people. Weather also played a significant role in reduced days that we were able to be open.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are necessary to our children's development as they contribute to their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Playgrounds give a child a safe place to take risks that won't harm them. Through play, children explore and learn the rules of fairness and cooperation with others.

Most of the West Lafayette Parks offer a playground for children to utilize. We take great pride in providing quality playground equipment that is regularly inspected and maintained. Assistant Superintendent Pennie Ainsworth has established a full program of playground inspections and maintenance that we have followed for many years.

Sports Activities

We are very fortunate to be able work with the West Lafayette Community School Corporation to offer sports camps in the summer and other sports throughout the off-season. We work directly with varsity high school coaches. Sports camps give children the chance to work with their coaches on fundamentals in a fun environment. We are very proud of our sports activities which take place year round.



The Morton Community Center

Those who haven't been a part of the daily activity that goes on at the Morton Community Center, have missed a great variety of classes, programs & events. In our amazing world, Bess Witcosky, Director of the Morton Community Center, strives to bring as much of that world to West Lafayette. Art, Dancing, Yoga, and Fitness programs make up the majority of classes offered, but people will also find some unusual classes such as:

- ⇒ Leaping through Literature-parent/child dance exploration
- ⇒ Stage Combat for adults
- ⇒ Beginning Crochet
- ⇒ Get Fit Bootcamp and Turbo Kick fitness classes
- ⇒ Mother Daughter Yoga
- ⇒ Guitar Essentials
- ⇒ Halloween Mask Decorating for children or adults
- ⇒ Ornament Decorating
- ⇒ Party in the Pottery Studio for Youth or Adult and Large group Pottery Workshop

In addition, we have secured two different grants for 2016. The first grant is from the Community Foun-

ation to purchase a table and slab roller for the pottery studio.

The second grant from the Indiana Arts Commission will provide funds for "Arts in the Parks" in which Morton Instructors will teach several mini workshops at the Prophetstown State Park for the Indiana Bicentennial.

Morton Community Center partnered with the West Lafayette Public Library to host Family Fun Day this past September. This was Morton's 2nd year to be involved with this successful event that welcomed over 600 people. Some of the highlights included Morton instructors demonstrating a variety of activities including: Chess, Crochet, Scottish dancing, and Tai Chi; Minnetrista Theatre Preserve performed Habitat-tat; free snacks, drinks, and books were enjoyed by all.



Even Dad's get in on the act at the Mor'Danc'n recital.

FAST FACTS

4,025

HAPPIER & HEALTHIER PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN MORTON COMMUNITY CENTER CLASSES & PROGRAMS

1,026

RECREATION CLASSES OFFERED

14,504

SMILES AT THE RIVERSIDE SKATING CENTER

Riverside Skating Center



The Riverside Skating Center has been led by Sue Mattern, who retired in September. While Sue was the leader of the Riverside Skating Center, she created programs, classes, and workshops that encouraged our families and visitors to have a wonderful experience when ice skating. Her best-loved programs have been "Skate With Santa" and "Dare to Bear." In addition, many have learned to skate through the lessons offered at Riverside Skating Center. Our new Skate Rink/Pool Manager is Kevin Noe, who intends to continue these programs and find new ones that will enhance our community.

Celery Bog Nature Area & the Lilly Nature Center

Observing the beauty of nature and teaching the public about the conservation of our natural resources is the main objective of the Celery Bog Nature Area, and its teaching companion, the Lilly Nature Center. Many programs took place there to provide those teachable moments to children and adults, visitors and residents. Led by Stewardship Director Dan Dunten, the Celery Bog Nature Area was able to provide the following activities and special events:

- ⇒ Paint the Rain Barrel.
- ⇒ The Mind-Boggling Event, in which over 300 people participated.
- ⇒ The Junior Nature Club was held twice a week and was led by Zonda Bryant.
- ⇒ The Sycamore Audubon Society met monthly at the Lilly Nature Center.
- ⇒ The Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society meets monthly.
- ⇒ Sam Postlethwait led weekly walks through the Celery Bog Nature Area.

In addition, two sections of warm season grasses received prescribed burns using the expertise of the West Lafayette Fire Department. These burns kill the invasives and help the warm season grasses and the wildflowers grow better in the summer.

Several groups also volunteered their time at the Celery Bog Nature Area:

- ⇒ Purdue's Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity spread mulch throughout the CBNA Trails.
- ⇒ Linemen from Duke Energy also spread mulch on the trails.

Finally, the West Lafayette Parks received a grant from the SIA Foundation to purchase a new Public Address system, and 3 "audio" boxes. These audio boxes will be placed on the trails for trail users to hear about different elements of nature and how to conserve our natural resources. These boxes operate using solar power or a hand crank power station.



FAST FACTS

27

ADOPT-A-SPOTS THROUGHOUT WEST LAFAYETTE

122

YOUTH INVOLVED IN JUNIOR NATURE CLUB

861

PARTICIPANTS IN 44 WEDNESDAYS IN THE WILD PROGRAMS

2,500

POUNDS OF BIRDSEED CONSUMED BY BIRDS & OTHER WILDLIFE AT THE LILLY NATURE CENTER

2,446

HOURS DONATED AT THE LILLY NATURE CENTER BY DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS





Springtime Pool Scrubbing

Parks Staff spent several days preparing the pool to be filled with water. It takes 3-4 weeks for the water to be clean and sanitized for swimming.

Safe, Clean & Green

The work of maintaining and improving the Parks in the City of West Lafayette falls upon the Parks Maintenance Crew, led by Parks Director, Jon Munn. Our maintenance crew takes a great deal of pride in every park's appearance. They work extremely hard to make the city's parks & trails the best possible.

The list below is a small sampling of the work that is regularly performed by the Parks Maintenance Crew:

- ⇒ Inspect, maintain, and repair playgrounds regularly.
- ⇒ Winter time snow removal.
- ⇒ Remove trash throughout the year.
- ⇒ Mow, clean, remove and maintain all vegetation.
- ⇒ Inspect, maintain and repair trails throughout the City.
- ⇒ Install and maintain basketball and volleyball courts and nets.
- ⇒ Clean and maintain restrooms and all plumbing.
- ⇒ Clean and maintain all pavilions.

PROJECTS COMPLETED BY PARKS STAFF:

- ⇒ Rejuvenated marquis signs for each park.
- ⇒ Moved donated mulch from SIA.
- ⇒ Cut down and remove damaged trees from flood & storms.
- ⇒ Installed two Little Free Libraries at Lommel and Lincoln Parks.
- ⇒ Completed rink repairs for 2015-16 season.
- ⇒ Completed concrete foundations for public art at Tapawingo Park and the Celery Bog Nature Area.

- ⇒ Installed accessible grills, drinking fountains, and trash cans at Happy Hollow Shelters #3 & #4.
- ⇒ Aerated turf & added ag-lime to warning track at softball fields in Cumberland Park & at the Blessed Sacrament Church.
- ⇒ Added playground safety surfacing to all playgrounds.

PROJECTS COMPLETED BY CONTRACTORS:

- ⇒ Construction of ravine footpath bridge
- ⇒ Garden Street Project
- ⇒ ADA work in restrooms at Happy Hollow Park, Cumberland Park, and the Lilly Nature Center.
- ⇒ Fence Repairs at Cumberland Park Softball Fields
- ⇒ Sidewalk Trip Hazards ground down at Cumberland, Lommel, Peck-Tractman, University Farms Parks
- ⇒ Siding completed at the Parks Service Center
- ⇒ Cumberland House Demolition
- ⇒ Ice Rink coolers repaired
- ⇒ Sealed cracks, and pavement and striped lines at the Cumberland Park Basketball Court.
- ⇒ Sealed cracks and pavement and striped lines at the Morton Center parking lot.

FAST FACTS

7,067

GALLONS OF GASOLINE USED IN 2015

79,924

MILES DRIVEN TO PROVIDE QUALITY FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

28

MILES OF PAVED TRAILS UTILIZED BY BIKERS, WALKERS, & RUNNERS



Farmer's Market Shade Sail

The installation of the shade sail for the Farmer's Market was technically easy, but physically difficult due to the size of the sails.

2015 Parks & Recreation Board

Pat Flannelly, President
Karen Springer, Vice President
Aimee Jacobsen, Secretary (till 9/15)
Linda Eales, Secretary (began 9/15)
John MacDonald
Jeff Love
Andy Gutwein, Parks Board Attorney

2015 Parks & Recreation Staff

Janet Fawley, Superintendent
Pennie Ainsworth, Assistant Superintendent
Chris Foley, Recreation Director
Dan Dunten, Stewardship Director
Jon Munn, Parks Director
Maintenance Staff: Bob Cheever, Phillip Gutierrez, John Heitmiller,
Thomas James, Caleb Pavey, Nick Rawles, Eric Reifel, Ken VanderHoff,
Sue Mattern, Pool & Ice Rink Manager (till 9/15)
Kevin Noe, Pool & Ice Rink Manager (began 12/15)
Bess Witcosky, Morton Center Director
Marianne Gaio, Morton Center Administrative Assistant

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Contact Us

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