



## Parks and Recreation Department 2018 Highlights

### Change and New Beginnings....

The West Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department has been gearing up for unprecedented change. From a leadership change in June (the hiring of a new superintendent) to the selection of the City Hall Community Center and the West Lafayette Health and Wellness Center design and construction teams – the department has shown that it has just the right balance of historical, solid institutional knowledge and entrepreneurial, creativity and spark to bring an exciting new world of recreation to the city in the coming years. Following, you will find just a few highlights of the department for the 2018 season.

### Community and Health and Wellness Center:

In partnership with the West Lafayette Redevelopment Commission and the City of West Lafayette, the long dreamed and planned for addition of a community, health, wellness and year round aquatics programming became a reality. A major goal for the Park and Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan conducted in 2016 was the construction of a new recreation center to serve the community. The center would include space for community gatherings, sports, children's activities, water activities in a year round capacity, fitness, arts, etc. In late 2016 a Feasibility Study was conducted to determine if this long dreamed of addition to the city was needed, could be funded and most important, could be sustainable. The conclusion was YES and so the process for building that dream began.

The competition for designing, managing the construction and constructing the new building was intense. A steering committee consisting of Mayor John Dennis, Clerk Sana Booker, Redevelopment Board President Larry Oates, Park Board President Linda Eales, Redevelopment Director Erik Carlson, Facilities Director Tim Clark, Assistant Redevelopment Director Erin Easter and Parks and Recreation Superintendent Kathy Lozano spent a whirlwind six weeks choosing an Architect & Engineering firm for each project along with Construction Managing firm to oversee the project and a one firm to be the Owners Representative overseeing both projects. The groups chosen are as follows:

Health and Wellness Center Architects and Engineers	Perkins and Will
Health and Wellness Center Construction Manager	Skillman
City Hall/Community Center Architects and Engineers	Axis
City Hall Construction Manager	Garmoung
Owner's Representative (both projects)	Veridus

All of the teams were in place and working by Mid October. Construction is targeted to begin spring of 2019 with Grand opening of the Health and Wellness Center targeted for January of 2021 (soft opening late November 2020). This is a very exciting time for the West Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department and the city as a whole.

### New Beginnings and Fond Farewells:

2018 saw the retirement of longtime Assistant Superintendent of Parks, Pennie Ainsworth and the hiring of a New Parks and Recreation Superintendent Kathy Lozano. Pennie dedicated over 40 years to the City of West Lafayette and Kathy has been hired to herald a new tradition of excellence to the department.

### On the Trails:

West Lafayette's trail system remains unsurpassed for a city the size of West Lafayette. Planned additions to the trails include the completion of the Happy Hollow Trail, a new trail through Cumberland Park in conjunction with the Health and Wellness Center construction.

The Happy Hollow Stream Relocation project was completed just in time to start a playground replacement and the trail extension.

### Fun and Fitness:

The West Lafayette Parks and recreation Department hosted a variety of activities throughout the year including:

Playground program: 143 children, ages 5-8 & 8-12, enjoyed summer day camp programs at Happy Hollow School.

Tennis lessons: Four sessions of Tennis, each 3 weeks long were offered from May 29-July 26 at the West Lafayette Varsity Tennis courts. 261 individuals aged five – adult were enrolled.

### Summer Sports Camps included:

Girls Basketball Camp for grades K-8	58 enrolled.
Boys Basketball Camp for grades 2-8	55 enrolled.
Volleyball Camp for grades 4-7	32 enrolled.
Football Skills for grades K-7	47 enrolled.
Soccer for grades K-8	73 enrolled.

Softball Camp for grades 4-6 22 enrolled.  
Total: 287

Fall Sports included:  
Volleyball for 4, 5& 6 grades 30 enrolled.  
2nd grade Basketball 53 enrolled.  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade Basketball 58 enrolled.  
Total: 141

Adult Softball Leagues enjoyed a good long season from May 7 through tournaments in late August/early September. There were 26 Coed and 10 men's teams

Adult drop-in Softball – the softball field was used by adults that still enjoy playing non-competitive softball at Cumberland Park the drop-in program in the Spring until early Fall.

#### Municipal Pool:

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At the Riverside Skating Center 10,296 individuals and Santa enjoyed the wonders of winter twirling and skating from Thanksgiving thru the end of the year.

#### At the Community Center:

A total of 3,846 people registered for Morton Community Center programs and classes in 2018. Registrations increased slightly over 2017 due in part to the excitement over the impending move to the New City /Community Center Site in the former Happy Hollow Elementary School in December. The ratio of students per class increased to 5.8 from 5.1 in 2017. Thank you to all of our stellar instructors and teachers that work tirelessly throughout the year to insure quality programs!

In addition, many senior bridge players, euchre players, and Wabash Area Lifetime Learning Association participants continue to call Morton "home." The WALLA classes had a record 268 people participating in the fall session.

Congratulations to all the young dancers and their instructors, families, and friends on another very successful Morton Spring Dance Recital.

Global Fest- the Naturalization Ceremony for Global Fest was held on Fri, 14<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. 93 individuals from over 20 countries received citizenship. The festival, itself was held on Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 12noon-10pm. Over 6,000 people were in attendance.

Art on the Wabash was held at Tapawingo Park Sunday, Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10a-4p.

Family Fun Day was held on Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup> from 1p-4p in partnership with the West Lafayette Public Library. Over 900 people of all ages attended and participated. Every child under the age of 12 received a free book, popcorn, snacks, and a drink. Entertainment and education opportunities were provided by Morton instructors, Civic Youth Theatre. Special thanks to the West Lafayette Police and Fire Department for attending!!

### In the Nature Area:

Once again, several thousand visitors from many states and a few foreign countries were able to enjoy visiting Lilly Nature Center and the Celery Bog in 2018. A special thanks goes to the popular "Wednesdays in the Wild" program, the Sycamore Audubon Society, and Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society for providing many informative nature presentations over the course of the year.

### Nature by the numbers:

Over 9,000 individual visitors to the Lilly Nature Center

Outreach - LNC Director gave over 20 presentations to over 900 people

Eleven new Lilly Nature Center displays and exhibits including:

- "Sounds of Nature"
- 22' display covering the 4 ecosystems found at the Celery Bog Nature Area
- Vinyl floor graphic to simulate a mulched trail and wooden bridge
- Touch table with pelts, bones, shells, seeds, etc.
- Scope-On-A-Rope hand-held 50X microscope to examine items up close
- Refurbished diorama of a wetland scene, including taxidermy animals
- Lego table with nature Duplo pieces Area
- Table with wood pieces for stacking and building
- 100 large pictures of nature scenes from the Nature
- Wood table with the top made from 13 different native trees
- Expanded children's play area

Worked with two Boy Scouts on projects at the Celery Bog Nature Area to complete their Eagle Scout requirements

Celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of long-time volunteer, Sam Postlethwait. Representatives from local and state government, Purdue University, University Place, West Lafayette Parks & Recreation and his local church all attended.

Junior Nature Club had over 200 youth involved in environmental education.

Over 200 individuals participated in the day-long Mind BOGgling Family Nature Celebration

Over 2500 pounds of birdseed was made available to birds at the Lilly Nature Center

53 volunteers in the Lilly Nature Center contributed over 2500 hours. Based on the state estimate of the hourly value of volunteer time, this comes to

approximately \$63,000.

200 youth and adults from churches, Purdue groups, corporations, scouts, and AmeriCorps contributed 500 hours mulching trails, at a value to the city of over \$12,000.

41 educational Wednesdays in the Wild programs were held with 950 people in attendance.

The London-based BBC came to the Celery Bog Nature Area to film a documentary.

### Special Recognition and Thanks:

Sincere thanks and congratulations to the many people who were so instrumental in making our community a special place throughout the year:

The many volunteers (trained as Master Naturalists) who provide at least 95% of the staffing for Lilly Nature Center;

The Tree Friends for providing over 1000 hours improving West Lafayette's urban forest this year - many street trees were planted (and watered), 1,292 trees were pruned, and the City was again recognized as a Tree City USA;

West Lafayette Community School Corporation – We thank their Board, faculty and staff for their cooperation and support of our programming at their facilities. More than 2,100 youngsters participated in recreation programs: basketball, soccer, volleyball, and tennis camps; swimming and diving lessons at the Municipal Pool; the Playground Program; and grade school basketball.

The citizens who contributed more than \$15,000 to support the efforts of the Tree Fund committee;

The Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society RIP (remove invasive plants) Squad for their on-going valuable work in our parks;  
The Park and Recreation Foundation Board for their continued support.

The Parks and Recreation Board.

The many, hard-working Adopt-a-Spot sponsors who help make community thoroughfares more attractive and enjoyable;

The Sagamore West Farmers' Market vendors and workers for making the market a success and a community gathering place;

The Master Gardener Association and Purdue Extension for managing the Community Gardens in Cumberland Park to provide plots for local vegetable gardeners;

The approximately 100 volunteers who helped with the Detrash the Wabash event

I am certain that there are many more individuals and groups that contributed in 2018 to the success of the Parks and Recreation Department – My thanks to you – we could not do this work alone.