



# Indiana Park & Recreation Association

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Winter 2019



*the*  
**Profile**







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### We Need Your Contributions

What makes *The Profile* a success is your input, ideas, experiences, and creativity. Please consider sharing your input with our network of IPRA members. Artwork and photographs are encouraged.

### How to Submit

Articles and Photographs to:  
IPRA, *The Profile*  
107 Logan Street  
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- 18 Norwalk Concrete Industries
- 18 PROS Consulting, Inc.
- 20 Frost Brown Todd LLC
- 20 RATIO Architects, Inc.
- 23 Buddenbaum & Moore, LLC
- 25 Lehman & Lehman, Inc.
- 26 Browning Day Mullins Dierdorf
- 27 Parkreation, Inc.
- 28 Midstates Recreation

## Inside this issue

- 5 Leadership Team
- 7 From the Executive Director
- 12 From the Foundation
- 13 Parks and Aggravation! IPRF Hosts A Successful Trivia Night
- 15 Highland Parks and Recreation Superintendent Named 2019 Ivan H. Brinegar Municipal Management Award Winner
- 17 Edison Park's Winning Renovations
- 19 Indiana University Executive Development Program: Educating and Creating Networking Opportunities for Parks and Recreation Professionals from Across the United States
- 21 Tractors and Mowers and Pavers, Oh My!
- 22 A Beautiful Night to Party in the Park
- 24 Promenade Park Revives Fort Wayne's Riverfront



## Mission Statement

The Indiana Park & Recreation Association advances healthy lifestyles and environmental stewardship by providing education, professional development, resources and advocacy.

## Vision Statement

The Indiana Park & Recreation Association is the premier source of support and advancement for parks and recreation providers.



# 2019 IPRA Board of Directors

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# From the Executive Director

By Lisa D. Nye  
Indiana Park & Recreation Association

As we near the end of 2019, I reflect on an exciting year at the Indiana Park and Recreation Association. I'm thankful for each member, supporter, and Board member. I'd especially like to thank our 2019 IPRA Board President, Dominic Cornett. Dominic showed exceptional leadership of IPRA and faced challenges with a focus on creative solutions that benefit members and the parks field. We sincerely appreciate his guidance over the past year.

Without Dominic and the committed group of board members we are fortunate to have leading the way, the growth and success of IPRA would not be possible! I look forward to continued momentum in 2020.

The Board and staff continuously look for new opportunities to better meet the diverse needs of our membership. This summer I visited many park departments throughout the state and one challenge that continued to be identified was the need for communication and support of smaller departments with limited budgets to attend events. With these challenges in mind we worked on some possible solutions to ease the strain on members. We're happy to announce a couple we're able to implement immediately.

First—we wanted to alleviate some of the financial burden prohibiting attendance at educational events. In response, the Indiana Park & Recreation Foundation funded a number of scholarships to the Fall Leadership Retreat. Several of our smaller departments were able to take advantage of this new opportunity to attend the event and gather new knowledge while networking with their peers. The IPRF will also be funding scholarships for the upcoming IPRA Conference in Muncie. Watch for that announcement in the near future. The Foundation exists to support educational opportunities for current and future parks professionals.

Second—by the time you receive this edition of the Profile, we will have launched the New **IPRAConnect.org online community**. The goal of this exciting new member service is to make communication, networking and support easier. We all have challenges in our job from time to time and could use advice from our peers on how they manage similar situations. This new tool offers you that opportunity regardless of where you are in Indiana. IPRAConnect is for our members only. Content is restricted to parks-related discussions, resources, and items of interest. It is home to many different communities that focus on the diverse interests of our membership. You will find a group for aquatics professionals, programmers, park directors only, small department networks, campground operators and more. If you have an idea for a new group to meet your needs, please let me know and we can assist in creating something new. The value and success of the online community is dependent on engagement by all of you. We will post articles, blogs, educational opportunities, etc. But, only you—the professionals—can post questions/ comments and assist your peers with their inquiries.

The online community also has a built-in, online, searchable suppliers guide. If you are looking for a new piece of equipment or a service, you can enter that search criteria and find suppliers quickly and easily. We know that there will be a bit of a learning curve and Lindsey and I are always available to help. Just reach out to us in the Member Connection community by using @LisaNye or @LindseyHouston in your message or email us with your questions. [lnye@inpra.org](mailto:lnye@inpra.org) or [lindsey@inpra.org](mailto:lindsey@inpra.org).

It's vitally important to us that we meet the needs of ALL of our members regardless of the size of the department or geographic location. If there is anything we can do to be of assistance to you, please call or email me. We're here to serve.

I hope to see all of you at the IPRA Conference in Muncie.

All the best to you, your staff and communities. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Lisa



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## From the President

By Dominic Cornett, Indy Parks & Recreation, 2019 IPRA President

It's hard to believe that 2019 is almost over, and my term as president will come to a conclusion. I'd like to take a moment to say thank you, thank you for your support of the Indiana Park and Recreation Association. This year has been tremendous. We added two Inaugural events, the Maintenance Expo and IPRF Trivia Night. We built on the momentum of our first "Party in the Park", and had an even bigger crowd in 2019. We launched "Project Relevance" which will benefit all parks throughout our great state, more details to come on that soon.

First, our Maintenance Expo was a huge success. The event was October 2, 2019 at the newly opened Main Street Park in Whitestown, Indiana. I would like to

thank all of our vendors, sponsors, and our friends at Whitestown Parks and Recreation for all they did to make this event happen. Secondly, we sold out our first ever IPRF Trivia Night. It was great to see the overwhelming support on November 14 at Saxony Hall in Fishers.

I would like to give a few "high fives". First, I would like to thank all of the staff at IPRA. Your hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed; I appreciate everything you have done for me throughout my year as President. I also would like to personally thank Al Patterson, Brandon Bennett, Lisa Nye, and Rich Sinclair. I have taken a piece of each one of your leadership styles and added it to my own. Next, my Steering committee which consisted of Lindsay Labas, Neelay Bhatt, and Ronnetta Spalding for sticking with me through this year.

Lastly, I would like to thank the IPRA Board of Directors, IPRF Board of Directors, and all of our IPRA membership for allowing me to serve this year.

As we usher in 2020, watch your inboxes for IPRA's weekly Insights e-newsletter, and follow IPRA on all social media platforms. These emails will contain important information about the IPRA Conference & Expo in Muncie on February 11-13, 2020 at the magnificent Horizon Convention Center. We hope to see you there! Lastly, we are thrilled to welcome our incoming 2020 President, Lora Helmick of Washington Township Parks. I wish you all the best and hope to see you at the 2020 Annual IPRA Conference & Expo in February!

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## ACCOMPLISHING THE MISSION

The Indiana Parks and Recreation Foundation exists to support the Indiana Park and Recreation Association and its members by funding educational opportunities.

## SUPPORTING THE FUTURE OF PARKS & RECREATION

Parks are vital to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community. Parks contribute to the economic and environmental well-being of a community as well as to the health of children, youth, adults, and seniors.

The Indiana Parks and Recreation Foundation (IPRF) understands the important role parks play and dedicates its resources to providing scholarships and professional development grants to future and current park and recreation professionals.

IPRF's goals are to provide an opportunity to earn and possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and aptitude to be a successful park and recreation professional and encourage career paths for future park leaders to manage and maintain these important public places.

# From the Foundation

**SUPPORTING PARK PROFESSIONALS FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS**



## Events & Sponsorship Opportunities



### **DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS GOLF OUTING** - Spring 2020; location TBD

Approximately 100 participants golf to raise money for the IPRF scholarship fund benefiting students and/or park professionals supporting the field of parks and recreation.

### **TRIVIA NIGHT** - Fall 2020; location TBD

IPRF's Trivia Night gives friends, families, and colleagues the opportunity to get together to laugh, test their knowledge, and have fun all while benefiting the IPRF scholarship fund.

### **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SPONSORSHIP OF THESE EVENTS?**

Contact Felisha Canillas [felisha@inpra.org](mailto:felisha@inpra.org) or via phone at 317.219.5272

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## OUR OBJECTIVES

The Foundation administers the scholarship fund of the Indiana Park and Recreation Association to promote parks, recreation, and leisure services in the state of Indiana, through the following objectives:

- To foster and support research in the field of park and recreation
- To provide scholarships to students, and/or professionals supporting the field of park and recreation
- To seek ways to build, facilitate and collaborate with allied organizations



## 2019 IPRF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

**Parks are the places where people of all ages and abilities come to connect. These spaces provide gathering places for families, individuals and social groups. It's where we experience life and it's where we go to create memories to last a lifetime.**

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## Parks and Aggravation! IPRF Hosts A Successful Trivia Night

The Indiana Parks and Recreation Foundation held its inaugural IPRF Trivia Night on November 14, 2019 and it was a huge success! Eighteen teams comprised of park professionals, colleagues and friends gathered to test their knowledge and compete for prizes, sponsored by Snider Recreation, and earn bragging rights as well the coveted Champions Trophy!

Did you know that lightning can reach to temperatures of up to 50k Fahrenheit? Or did you know that the most popular three letter last name in the US is Lee? Matt Hammond with Hambones Trivia hosted the game and challenged competitors with many questions like these.

In addition to the game, attendees enjoyed dinner provided by McAlister's Deli, beer from Sun King brewery and wine courtesy of Aspen Creek Grill.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the IPRF Scholarship Fund that supports current and future park professionals.

**Congratulations to Team Cardno on a first-place finish!**

**Great job to the other award winners!**

**SECOND PLACE WINNERS:**  
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**BEST TEAM NAME:**  
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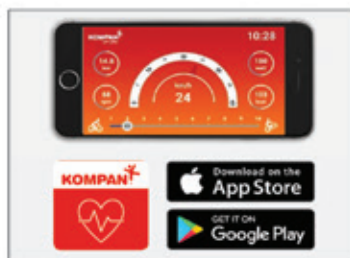
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## Highland Parks and Recreation Superintendent Named 2019 Ivan H. Brinegar Municipal Management Award Winner

FRENCH LICK – Alex Brown, the parks and recreation superintendent of Highland, received the 2019 Ivan H. Brinegar Municipal Management Award from Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (Aim). Brown received the award on August 28 during the Presidents' Reception at the 2019 Aim Ideas Summit.

The Ivan H. Brinegar Municipal Management Award is presented to an appointed municipal official with a minimum of 10 years of city or town service who displays strong leadership, contributions to the community, and serves as a role model to citizens and other municipal officials.

Brown's municipal experience spans 31 years of service, with the bulk of his career spent at the Highland Parks and Recreation Department. Brown became the town's parks superintendent in 1998, where he's responsible for overseeing 23 parks totaling 267 acres. Throughout the years, Brown has developed a strong reputation for financial management and has worked regionally to extend bike trails. He also was integral in the creation of the Cooperative Special Recreation Initiative, which offers programming to community members with physical or emotional challenges.

"The dedication Alex has shown to cultivating Highland's parks and recreation opportunities is an inspiration to all in public service," Aim CEO Matt Greller said. "Our parks play an important role in the quality of life of cities and towns across the state. Alex's body of work spans decades, and the mark he leaves on Highland and the broader Northwest Indiana community is a testament to his strong leadership." In its 43rd year, the Aim Annual Awards program, presented by Baker Tilly, recognizes communities and individuals in municipal government for excellence and outstanding achievement. A nine-member panel of qualified judges selected this year's winners from a competitive field of nominees from around the state.

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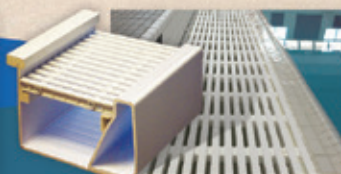


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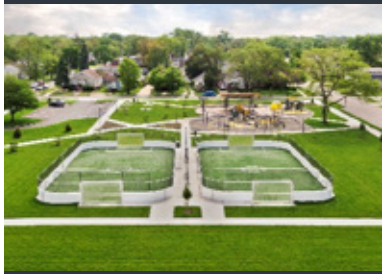
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# Edison Park's Winning Renovations

By: Selina Baez

Recreation Programs Supervisor



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## Outstanding architecture in Hammond, Indiana

**Edison Park has undergone major renovations, all of which have been noticed.**

After word broke that Edison Park was getting a makeover, the community expressed their excitement. One community member said "This is awesome! I'm so excited we'll finally have a decent playground within walking distance!"

**The park improvement was done as a part of the \$2 million 2017 Park Bond Issue.**

These improvements included the demolition of the previous park amenities and the construction of the new amenities. This renovation was headed by MCR Partners with assistance from the HWC Engineering team.

**"When I heard kids were hopping the fence after hours, I knew we had a successful park design." – Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.**

The newly improved Edison Park now has a brand new playground with fall zone surfacing, two artificial turf mini soccer fields with dasher boards, a community shelter, a 'skate spot' skate area, concrete bean bag boards, open lawn space, a 1/3 mile walking path, new park benches and swings covering 4.5 acres of land.

The grand opening of the park took place in November of 2018 with an official ribbon cutting by Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr, 4<sup>th</sup> District Councilman William Emerson and the Hammond Board of Park Commissioners.

The Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (INASLA) strives to raise appreciation and increase awareness of the architecture profession.

Each year, the INASLA recognizes outstanding projects completed by individuals or organizations within the State of Indiana.

One of the awards INASLA has is the Design Award for projects totaling over \$1 million. The award looks at architectural elements in addition to the overall design of the project.

Edison Park was nominated for this award amongst others. The projects were juried by the St. Louis (MO) Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

**After deliberation from INASLA, Hammond's newly renovated park was selected as a recipient of this award.**

The formal award ceremony took place at a banquet on September 27, 2019 in Carmel, Indiana.





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# Indiana University Executive Development Program: Educating and Creating Networking Opportunities for Parks and Recreation Professionals from Across the United States

By Dr. Julie Knapp, Indiana University, (812) 856.1068, [julknapp@indiana.edu](mailto:julknapp@indiana.edu)



The 2019 Indiana University Executive Development Program hosted over 100 park and recreation professionals (from over 18 different States) on the campus of Indiana University at Bloomington. Several IPRA members take part in the planning and implementation of the continuing education program that has been in existence for 52 years. Four IPRA members serve on the Indiana University Executive Development Board of Trustees which include Becky Barrick-Higgins (Board Chair), Dan Bortner, Julie Knapp, and Joe Wynns.

The program opened on Sunday April 14th with a welcome dinner. The opening session—The Great Game of Business—was presented by John Kennedy, a Motivational Speaker from Virginia. A

social, followed the opening session at the Indiana University Club. The EDP educational sessions began on Monday April 15th where the first and second year EDP participants had the opportunity to be involved in two and a half days of interactive executive development classes that focused on issues facing professionals such as team building, challenging conventional thinking in parks and recreation, succession and job progression planning, social equity, risk management, employee selection and interviewing, Round Tables, Financial GAPS, and more.

Out of class networking and social opportunities were also part of the 2019 Executive Development Program. After the EDP students spent the

morning and afternoon hours in continuing education sessions, they had the opportunity to experience tours of Bloomington Park and Recreation Department's new Switchyard park, IU Athletic facilities and a Monday evening social at Brown County State Park that included live music, a Dinner, a Birds of Prey interpretive program, cornhole and horseshoe matches, tours of the Abe Martin Lodge cabins and more. Throughout EDP, students also dined at a variety of restaurants on Kirkwood Avenue and enjoyed Bloomington's active nightlife.

The 2019 Executive Development Program concluded on Wednesday April 17th with an evaluation of the program and graduation luncheon where 1st and 2nd year EDP participants were awarded Continuing Education Certificates. In addition, the 2nd year students were recognized for completing the two year program by receiving Indiana University Executive Development Program diplomas. The IU EDP Silent Auction raised over \$1800 for 2020 EDP Scholarships. Eight EDP scholarships will be awarded for the 2020 program (the deadline for application for the scholarships is December 15, 2019). Please mark your calendars for the 2020 Program which is scheduled for April 19th-22nd at Indiana University in Bloomington.





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# Tractors and Mowers and Pavers, Oh My!

By Felisha Canillas, Development Coordinator, IPRA



Tractors and mowers and pavers, oh my! The inaugural IPRA Maintenance Expo was held on October 2, 2019. This event was created out of a need for maintenance education and professional development for an audience of parks professionals that often get forgotten. Attendees were educated on the latest topics and trends in the park maintenance profession. Exhibitors were also in attendance showcasing their best products and services that appeal to all things park maintenance.

Topics of presentations included Lawncare, Splashpad Maintenance, Mixing Pesticides, Playground Maintenance and Winterizing Equipment. Speakers for the day included, Pierre Birdger from Vibrant Outdoors, Bill Smith with Vortex Aquatics, Jeff Branham and Rocki Stilson of Sinclair Recreation and the ever-popular Fred Whitford Clinical Engagement Professor with the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service.

The title sponsor for this event was Midstate's Recreation. Beyond their state-of-the-art playground equipment, Midstate's Recreation also offers a variety of shade structures, shelters, surfacing and site furnishings such as trash receptacles, parks benches and outdoor grills.

The lunch sponsor for the Maintenance Expo was Mean Green Mowers. Mean Green is the leader in commercial grade 100% electric, zero emission lawn mowers. Their mowers are capable of mowing all day long, and at the same speed as

traditional gas or diesel units. Electric mowers cost about \$2 per day to operate, have almost no maintenance, make half the noise of a normal mower and eliminate the emissions equivalent of over 140 cars per year. Many parks and recreation departments and municipalities, including the City of Indianapolis, are adopting Mean Green Mowers as a cost and environmental saver!

We also want to recognize McGavic Outdoor Power and SealMaster, who were the supporting sponsors of the event. Without the support of our generous sponsors this event would not have been possible.

This event was a huge success with nearly 150 people in attendance and we are excited to see the growth of this event in years to come!

Our goal at IPRA is to find more opportunities to provide education to maintenance professionals. If you are a maintenance professional, we encourage you to get involved with IPRA and help us plan future maintenance events!



# A Beautiful Night to Party in the Park

By Felisha Canillas, Development Coordinator, IPRA



Saturday, September 7th was an evening to be remembered filled with community members and families enjoying entertainment. All proceeds from the event benefited the Indiana Park and Recreation Foundation scholarship fund. This fund provides scholarships and professional development grants to current and future park professionals. As the need for parks professionals continues to grow in cities and towns across Indiana, the foundation exists to ensure people are able to get the education necessary to fulfill the needs in their communities.

The eager first one hundred attendees received a tote bag, sponsored by

Community Hospital North filled with goodies and gift cards that encouraged visits to sponsor and vendor booths located onsite at the event. Throughout the event, attendees had the opportunity to rejoice in their contributions by sipping local beer and wine from the Beer Garden, sponsored by Advanced Office Logistics and Sinclair Recreation LLC. BlueSky Technology Partners made it possible for the 1,500 attendees to relax in the grass of the Federal Hill Commons while being entertained by a performance by My Yellow Rickshaw. Families had the opportunity to visit the Kid's Zone, sponsored by Harley Davidson of Indianapolis, packed with face-painting, inflatables, games, arts and crafts and more.

Party in the Park was a huge success and brought in more than \$13,000. Event sponsors that helped the Foundation reach our goals included Gaylor Electric, Metro Plastics Technologies, and Duke Energy. In addition to all our sponsors, the community

support did not go unnoticed and we are grateful to each and every attendee that partied with us!

We'd like to extend our sincerest thank you to the following sponsors of this event for your unwavering support of the foundation.

**Beer Garden Sponsor:**  
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and Sinclair Recreation LLC

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# Promenade Park Revives Fort Wayne's Riverfront

By Rob Hines, Public Information Officer, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation



On August 9, 2019, the city of Fort Wayne opened Promenade Park along its riverfront. The park is creating a new chapter in the city's history while reviving a resource that was crucial to its development decades earlier.

Although Northeast Indiana has many rivers, the Maumee, St. Joseph and St. Marys have played a special role in local history, converging in downtown Fort Wayne. The city of Fort Wayne built up around this busy hub of activity, and once it was established in 1829, our three rivers became part of a larger network of transportation in the entire region, too. By the mid-1800s, Fort Wayne held a key position in the great Pennsylvania Railroad as the "Altoona of the West," and its location on the Wabash and Erie Canal earned it the nickname "Summit City" because it was the highest point above sea level on the canal route.

The three rivers continued to bring prosperity and commerce to Northeast Indiana throughout the early- to mid-1900s. During this time, Fort Wayne's Park and Boulevard System was significantly shaped by the famous landscape architect George Kessler. In Kessler's 1912 master plan, he organized and expanded the city's

urban landscape to incorporate our three rivers. Among many accomplishments, he envisioned a green space for recreation and floodwater control in the bend of the St. Marys River.

But as with many communities, Fort Wayne began to withdraw from its downtown in the late 1900s as residents relocated to the suburbs. During this time, our rivers largely fell to disuse. After major flooding in 1982 and 1985, city workers helped the US Army Corps of Engineers build ten miles of higher levees along the three rivers to help protect against floodwaters, and our rivers disappeared behind these walls and natural brush.

In the 2000s, Northeast Indiana's residents began to recognize the importance of the three rivers again. Mayor Tom Henry established Legacy Fort Wayne in 2011 to guide the spending of approximately \$75 million through the Light Lease Settlement and Fort Wayne Community Trust funds. The Mayor solicited hundreds of ideas from the community on how best to utilize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and the desire for riverfront development rose to the top of the list. This led to Phase I of Riverfront Fort Wayne, which would become Promenade Park.

Construction began in July 2017 on the south and north sides of the St. Marys River in downtown Fort Wayne, and when it was complete, Promenade Park opened to a massive crowd of approximately 35,000 visitors over three days. Concerts, boat races, art installations and more created a constant buzz of activity over the grand opening weekend.

That momentum has been nonstop as Promenade Park welcomes an impressive number of visitors every day, and its variety of engaging elements continues to impress. The park features the Ambassador Enterprises Amphitheater along the river, the Sweetwater Bandshell, the Rotary Fountain splashpad, the Fort Wayne Park Foundation Pavilion and more. Arguably, the most popular new feature is the Parkview Tree Canopy Trail which allows visitors to stroll through the treetops over the north side of the river. Many have marveled at the unique and spectacular views of the city this walkway offers.

Whether visitors want to enjoy a recreational activity on the river or a cold drink underneath the Fort Wayne skyline, there is plenty to do for the whole family.

**Continued on page 25**



## Promenade Park Revives Fort Wayne's Riverfront page 24



docking areas on both sides of the St. Marys, kayaks, pontoons and tour boats are constantly

arriving and departing from the park.

Promenade Park is bringing Fort Wayne back to the water and citizens are finally revisiting the rivers that are forgotten no more.

The Doermer Kids Canal and PNC Playground are perfect for the little ones. Meanwhile, the grown-ups can enjoy some drink and dining options at Trubble Riverside Café & Tap. Cornhole and ping pong stations in the middle of the park provide some fun and games for visitors of all ages.

Promenade Park also offers a new space for innovative and engaging programs. Movie nights and 21+ parties have drawn crowds who are looking for nightlife alternatives in the city. Families are enjoying the many nature programs that highlight the unique ecosystem of the rivers. Weekly Citizen Science classes explore everything from stargazing to birdwatching and even squirrel tracking!

However, the ultimate goal of riverfront development in Fort Wayne is providing greater access to these important natural resources, and Promenade Park makes getting on the water even easier. With

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