



Westside Improvement Association Inc.

# Pointing Westward

Volume 32, Issue 3 | March 2024

## Join Us for Our March General Meeting

We are thrilled to announce the distinguished lineup for our March general meeting! Our program speakers will include Evansville Mayor Stephanie Terry, Deputy Mayor Lindsay Locasto, and Executive Parks Director Danielle Crook. Together, they will be presenting on a range of exciting initiatives specific to the westside.

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, March 20th at 6 PM**, as we gather at the Howell Shelter House (1101 S. Barker Ave.). Don't miss out on this opportunity to learn, engage, and connect with our local leaders.

As always, refreshments will be provided, offering a chance to mingle and network with fellow attendees. We look forward to seeing you there!

**REMINDER: 2024 Dues are due in March!**

**Please bring a non-perishable food item to support the Westside Community Center's "Little Food Pantry."**



## Howell Park Clean Up!

We're cleaning up Howell Park **Saturday March 23, 9-11 AM**.

Please meet at the back of the Howell Shelter House parking lot. Bags, gloves and grabbers will be provided. Many hands make light work!

We will have donuts, water and coffee!

# Howell Park Shelter House - A Look Back (And Forward)

An Excerpt from *Pointing Westward*, Vol. 20, Issue 6, June 2015

By John Drone

Here's a little history on the Howell Shelter House and Club. The Howell Booster Club was chartered in 1940 to promote improvements to Howell Park and the surrounding community. Most of the park land was considered to be a swamp and served as a dump and mosquito nursery. In the early years, the Club took up the challenge of developing the park by purchasing land, constructing sports facilities, and hosting carnivals, concerts, and public movie exhibitions in the Park. In 1955, the Booster Club, in partnership with the City Parks Department, built the shelter house on what was once a shallow lake. The original shelter had a fireplace and overhead garage-style doors for windows. Apparently, it was quite drafty and could only be used during the warmer months. Still, all the revenue generated by the Booster Club back then, as with today, was used to continually improve the park and promote park-related activities.

The Club maintained and operated the shelter for the first 15 years; however, there was a period when the shelter was not managed by the Booster Club. Sometime in the late 1960s, a dispute between the Club and the city administration led to a lawsuit over control of the shelter. The official reason given was that the city could not allow one of its

properties to be managed by a non-governmental organization. The lawsuit settled that issue in the Club's favor; however, the contract was not renewed lending suspicion to a more political and, as yet, unclear motive. Between 1970 and 1979, both the shelter and the golf course were administered by the city. It was not successful. By the end of the decade, these facilities were being described in the *Courier* as "graveyards."

The Booster Club agreed to take over the operations again in 1980 and has steadily increased public attendance to the park ever since. A few notable improvements to the shelter under Booster Club management include the addition of air conditioning units, installation of modern windows, kitchen facilities, and the asphalt parking lot. In the past year, the Club has repainted the interior and exterior, remodeled the bathrooms, and had a high-strength concrete pad poured. This would not have been possible without the assistance of Lowe's Home Improvement, Painters Union Local 156, Bob's Gym, Deig Bros, IMI Concrete, the WIA and Nut Club, and the Evansville Parks Foundation and Parks Department. These organizations are listed, not just to show appreciation, but to demonstrate there are many people out there who

share our commitment to the city parks.

The next major improvement the Club would like to see completed at the shelter facility would be the addition of a trailhead at the southeast entrance to the Howell Wetland Trail. The trail actually connects to the west side of the shelter parking lot, however, most people do not know it is there and would be hesitant to use it in its current condition.

While we do not track the actual number of attendees at each event, a realistic estimate would be around 75 attendees per rental day. The number of rental days has consistently been more than 70 rentals per year for the past decade and with the recent improvements, we hope to increase the number to more than 100 rentals per year. It is part of our mission to provide these facilities at an affordable cost to all citizens. We believe our facility rents for a much lower cost than any other comparable city facility.

The types of events drawn to the shelter include family reunions, birthday and graduation parties, weddings and anniversaries, class reunions, church gatherings, and company picnics. We also donate the shelter to other non-profit organizations such as the EJFL, EVSC-Special Needs, Boys/Girls Club, Howell Swim, Special Olympics, Evansville Arc, and many others.

The real benefit of having a facility such as the Howell Shelter House is the opportunity to bring these people together. You only have to think of your own family gatherings to know that with these types of events: old relations will be there to remember, new relationships will be created, and the children will come home to visit.



# Gateway Garden is Ready for Spring!

On Saturday, March 2nd, we gathered to spruce up the Helfrich Park Gateway Garden! We pulled a lot of weeds, picked up trash and pruned shrubs. The goal was to get the garden looking its best for spring.

We had a fantastic turnout with 17 people showing up to volunteer their time. Special thanks to all who pitched in! We also want to extend our gratitude to Gordon Dingman and Steve Craig for their generous donation of equipment and supplies.



## Doc's Words of Wisdom

*"Never argue with stupid people. They will drag you down to their level, then beat you with experience!"*  
- Mark Twain

## Upcoming Community Events

### Coffee With A Cop

Tuesday, March 19th  
7 - 9 AM  
Donut Bank  
210 N. St. Joseph Ave.



### Tox Away Day

Saturday, March 23rd  
8 AM - 12 PM  
Civic Center Parking Lot  
9th & Walnut St.



# WIA Welcomes A New Board Member

Traditionally, our board of directors is elected during our November Appreciation Banquet. However, we are always welcoming new members to join our ranks. This past January, we were pleased to welcome John Drone as a newly elected member to the board.

In describing himself, John expressed his deep sense of pride in being a part of an organization that has played a significant role in advocating for the Westside throughout his life. As a member of the Howell Booster Club, he expressed his eagerness to continue efforts to promote Howell Park and the Howell Wetlands as valuable assets for our city while also bringing our two organizations closer.



With a background in working with organizations such as the EVPL Outreach and Evansville Parks Foundation, John has gained a profound appreciation for the importance of community-driven initiatives like the WIA, Howell Booster Club, and Wesselman Woods.

We are thrilled to welcome John Drone to our board of directors and look forward to his valuable contributions as we continue our mission.

**Welcome, John!**



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## WIA 2024 Membership Form

**Please Circle: Student - \$10 /year Individual - \$15 /year Household - \$20 /year  
Corporate / Organization - \$30 /year Century Member - \$100 / year**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clip & mail to:**

**WIA – P.O. Box 6172 – West Wabash Station – Evansville, IN 47719-0172**

**You Can Now Join WIA & Pay Your 2024 Dues Online!**

**[WestsideImprovement.com/Membership](https://WestsideImprovement.com/Membership)**

**Questions? Contact Melanie Stagg (812) 483-9570**

# Thank You Century Members

For Your Positive Impact on Our Westside Community



Sheriff Noah Robinson



David K. Robinson



Bill Long



Ryan Payne  
Agent | CCRE | Key Associates



Edward Jones  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING  
Roger A. Nurrenbern, AAMS®  
Financial Advisor



North Park  
Shopping Center  
EVANSVILLE, INDIANA



Bill Schenk



MATT ZELLER ELECTRIC  
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL  
24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE



Richard Mitchell ASLA Inc.

Landscape Architect



HOWELL PAR 3



In Memory of Martha Jo Peak

In Memory of Charlie Stocker

Jeffrey & Sue Kreig

In Memory of Paul Farmer

In Memory of Fred Padget

George Hollander

Carol & Larry Haller

Gordon & Carol Dingman

Jack Huffman

Keith & Sharon Hollander

Monie & Mark Freeman

Steve & Patrice Craig

Cheryl & Robert Musgrave

Mike & Ann Ennis

Rick & Karen Reising

Dan & Laura Niemeier

Randy & Janice Ricketts

# Westside Improvement Association Inc.

A Member of UNOE

P.O. Box 6172

West Wabash Station

Evansville, IN 47719-0172

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To enhance the natural environment of the west side of Vanderburgh County and serve the common good of its residents by exerting influence on public and private sector.



## What's Happening in the WIA Community



March 20, 6 PM

WIA General Meeting

Howell Shelter House

March 23, 9 - 11 AM

Howell Park Cleanup

Howell Shelter House

Park in Back of Lot

Check out our website: [www.WestsideImprovement.com](http://www.WestsideImprovement.com)

Follow us on social media or contact us at  
[Westside.Improvement78@gmail.com](mailto:Westside.Improvement78@gmail.com)

