SPARK

2018 Midwest Junior NBA Champions

SKY DIGG Soldiers

2018 Midwest Junior NBA Champions

Winter Warriors
VPA Behind the Scenes
p.16
"I love working at VPA because every day brings the potential to brighten someone’s day, encourage someone to try something new or different, or share information on something that they didn’t know about."

- Amy Roush,
Volunteer Coordinator
for Venues Parks & Arts

RUM VILLAGE PARK

The 160 acres of rolling woodlands are home to deer, foxes, reptiles, amphibians, and numerous species of birds. With much to see and many programs and activities to do, it is no wonder that many people are rediscovering Rum Village.
SPARK SPOTLIGHT: OUR VENUES

350,000 people. 650 events. $22M economic impact. These statistics are the results from two incredible buildings and three outstanding operations. Alongside our partners at SMG and Navarre Hospitality, our dedicated staff work tirelessly to maintain the Century Center, Morris Performing Arts Center, and Palais Royale Historic Ballroom.

But these buildings are so much more than that! They are places where memories are made, business is conducted, and friendships are renewed. In 2022, we will celebrate 100 years of the Morris. Elvis, Frank Sinatra, Betty Davis, Stevie Wonder, B.B. King, and so many more have graced the stage during that time building upon the legacy of the Morris and solidifying the theatre's place in South Bend history.

And it’s not just about our history but about our future as well. The Morris will have more than 100 events in 2018. The Palais continues to be the premier destination for couples to celebrate their vows as well as for groups to unite for a common purpose. The Century Center is undergoing a feasibility study to evaluate the use of our space and the opportunity for expansion. We have invested, with our partners at the Hotel Motel Tax Board, more than $850,000 in each of the last five years to ensure the next 40 years of the Century Center provide an even greater return for the citizens of South Bend.

VPA works hard to deliver upon our vision of making sure ‘every resident of South Bend is positively engaged at least once every year’. A lot of brick and mortar went into the construction of these two buildings, but there’s even more love, passion, and dedication that brings them to life each and every day for our citizens and guests. Unlike the statistics offered in the opening line, the results of that commitment cannot be quantified but are undoubtedly felt and remembered for a lifetime.

Jeff Jarnecke, Executive Director of Venues, VPA
SKY DIGG SOLDIERS

Congratulations 2018 Midwest Junior NBA Champions

Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center’s Sky Digg Soldiers traveling basketball program represented the Midwest Region in the first-ever Junior NBA World Championship on August 7 - 12 at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex near Orlando, Fla.

LEAGUES AT
O’Brien Center
Charles Black Center
Martin Luther King, Jr. Center

Registration is open from
September 4 - October 12
Practice begins October 15
Season: November 3 – March 9
Scholarships available

Registration information available at
sbvpa.org  574.299.4765

*Formerly River City Basketball

Spark is the newest resident of South Bend! She is a firefly, which is a native insect to Indiana. Fireflies are friendly and communicate with light, which is why Spark lights up.

Catch a glimpse of her? Come say hi! Spark loves to give hugs and high-fives to everyone she meets, spreading surprise and delight wherever she goes.
Are you welcomed home with a slobbery wet kiss and wagging tail after a long day at work or school? Nearly 44% of all households in the United States are, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). As the popularity of owning a dog increases, so does the new era for dog-specific products and services. Moreover, studies have shown Millennials are likely to spend their discretionary income on their fur-babies.

What does this have to do with South Bend? A growing Millennial population in our city means a new type of demand—the Rum Village Dog Park. Want to throw your pup a birthday party? Bring balloons, because the city’s newest dog park can accommodate with a specific fenced-in area for rent. Want to take a scenic walk with your dog off the leash? Rum Village’s dog park is the perfect place to get some exercise in for you and your furry friend. The location will feature areas for large and small dogs as well a socialization area, so whether your pet is big or small, there’s a place for them at the Rum Village Dog Park!

“Dog parks make South Bend a better place. It’s not just great for the animals; it’s great for community. The more things that different kinds of people have in common, the better.”

- Mayor Pete Buttigieg

**Fun DOG FACTS**

- Americans spend over $60 billion annually on their pets since 2015, according to American Pet Products Association.
- 36% of Americans give their dog birthday presents and have a form of birthday parties for them, according to Pet Secure.
- 74% of pet owners experienced mental health improvements from pet ownership, according to Human Animal Bond Research Institute.
- Dog parks have grown by 89% since 2007, according to The Trust for Public Land.
- It’s estimated that 78 million dogs are owned in the U.S., according to ASPCA.

For more information about the new Rum Village Dog Park, go to mysbparksandtrails.com/projects/rum-village
Charles Black Recreation Center Renovations

For years, Charles Black Recreation Center has been a pride and joy for the LaSalle Park neighborhood.

Walking into the center, you might come across seniors eating lunch provided by REAL Services in the cafeteria, tennis shoes thumping on the gymnasium floor during the children’s after-school program, and chattering of teens as they share about their day at school and work on homework. However, it was unlikely that these activities would happen simultaneously, because the facility simply didn’t have the capacity to host several programs at once.

That was until now.

After a year of tireless construction, center staff are prepared for the grand opening of the remodeled facility and the season ahead.

“It’s been a journey but well worth the wait,” said Cynthia Taylor, the center’s supervisor.

Not only will the center have increased capacity, allowing senior citizens, children, and high school students to share the center at the same time, it will also feature brand new amenities that aim to positively impact the community.

Need help sending an email or searching a subject on the Internet? The caring staff will be there to help. A student needs a safe place to go after school? The remodeled building creates room for them to play basketball, listen to some tunes, or come together in the gathering area. Plus, the new bike shop will give individuals the opportunity to learn how to repair bikes. Participants can even earn a bike by going through a 6-week workshop.

Beyond the facility updates, Taylor said, “We are looking forward to the new programming, experiences, and memories. We are coming back bigger and better than ever!” With its amplified ability to offer new opportunities and increase accessibility, Charles Black Recreation Center will be, not only the pride of LaSalle Park neighborhood, but a place of pride for the City of South Bend as a whole.

A FEW new FEATURES AT THE CENTER

Three new practice basketball courts and a larger fitness center, allowing plenty of space for exercise and play

A music studio for creative music-makers to jam out together

A new gathering area with charging stations for mobile devices and a concession area where guests can lounge and converse

A new computer lab, where visitors can study, write an email, find information, and more

A new bike repair shop in-house, where anyone is welcome to have their bike repaired or even learn to make minor repairs themselves

These additions aim to open a new world of possibilities to visitors of Charles Black Recreation Center!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT mysbsparksandtrails.com/projects

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band | September 9
Alison Krauss | September 12
Newsboys United | October 7
There’s One in Every Family | October 19
Disney Jr. Dance Party On Tour | October 24
Theresa Caputo | October 26
John Crist: The Human Being Tour | November 4
Rumours of Fleetwood Mac | November 7
Straight No Chaser | November 28
The Nutcracker | December 8-9
Mansheim Steamroller Christmas | December 12
A Charlie Brown Christmas Live! | December 20
Swan Lake | January 18
Evita | January 25-27
Stomp | February 24

For tickets and a full list of all upcoming events visit morriscenter.org or MPAC box office at 211 N. Michigan St.

SOUTH BEND’S MOST UNIQUE WEDDING VENUES

MORRIS PAC
211 N. Michigan St. | 574-235-9190
morriscenter.org

CENTURY CENTER
120 S. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd | 574-235-9711
centurycenter.org

PALAIS ROYALE
105 W. Colfax | 574-235-5612
palaisroyale.org

Modest Mouse
September 24

The Sound of Music
Nov. 30-Dec. 2

Les Misérables
March 19-23

The Morris
Performing Arts Center - South Bend, IN

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT mysbsparksandtrails.com/projects
Meet Sam Centellas. You might know him as the Executive Director of La Casa de Amistad, a community center on the Westside of South Bend, you might recognize him as one of the key coordinators of Westside Wednesday, or perhaps you may have seen this early morning gym-goer at O’Brien Fitness Center, cycling on a spin bike or participating in 5:30 a.m. yoga. In any capacity, Sam has achieved many successes this past year, including losing over 50 pounds with a membership at O’Brien Fitness Center.

Motivated by the need to live a healthy life and set a good example for his kids, Sam implemented a fitness journey, which started with an early morning workout.

“I have heart disease in my family and have always put off doing more to get in shape,” Sam wrote on his blog regarding the start of his lifestyle change.

Sam committed to a goal of losing 25 pounds before he turned 40. Like many others who like to get sweaty before 6 a.m., he began using O’Brien Fitness Center in the mornings to fit in with his busy schedule. He attributed the inviting and low-pressure atmosphere as one of the reasons that he loves going to O’Brien, as there is no judgment toward newcomers.
Inspired by the progress he was making at O’Brien, he continued his fitness regime at home by doing push-ups as part of his routine – nearly 200 a day.

“I spend about 45 minutes to an hour at the gym, 4-5 days per week. On the days off, I still do push-ups or some curls at home with my weights,” said Sam, “I started a weekly yoga class. I usually try to get my son to do some with me, or like last Friday, I took both the younger ones with me to a Zumba class.”

Sam had been a member of O’Brien for a year before he began using the facility consistently, and now, he utilizes the fitness center several times a week.

In addition to working out, Sam also changed his diet to include healthier foods. With the combination of spending time at O’Brien Fitness Center and eating a healthy diet, Sam doubled his original weight loss goal.

Sam commented, “After losing the first 35 pounds, I ventured and tried running again […] Now, 50 pounds down, I am running regularly, and it makes me glad I pushed myself. I love running early in the morning and watching a South Bend sunrise.”

This goes to show that it’s never too late to improve your health. Sam had been a member of O’Brien for a year before he began using the facility consistently, and now, he utilizes the fitness center several times a week.

Whether you’re already an avid visitor of the gym or you just want to get moving a little more throughout your day, the staff at O’Brien Fitness Center is there to help you realize and achieve your health goals.

Sam said, “I appreciate the staff being so supportive of my goals. Their smiles keep me coming back!”

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O’BRIEN FITNESS CENTER
TRIAL

Come meet friendly staff and kickstart your journey to health

*For complete details go to sbva.org/fitness
*Exclusions may apply.
After about three days of snowmen, sledding, and snowball fights, that beautiful pure white snow has turned into gray slush. The days are getting shorter and the nights are getting longer. Dragging yourself out of bed in the morning gets that much harder. And then – just when you wonder how long it'll be until you see daylight again – twinkle lights start going up around the city, the snow-covered streets are cleared throughout the night, and the city heads to work.

Have you ever wondered about the people who bring light to the city in the darkest of months? From the festive lights to plowing snow in the dead of night, Venues Parks & Arts staff is out there every day.

One of the most necessary tasks to keep the city running in the winter months is snow clearing. As long as there's snow on the ground, Facilities and Grounds staff will clock in. “Some winters are good, some winters are bad,” said Jim Byers, Grounds Operations Manager. Byers, who has been with Facilities & Grounds for over 40 years, remembers the blizzard of 1978 where 19.5 inches of snow fell on South Bend. “The most gratifying thing about my job is seeing how much we can accomplish and how much snow we can clear,” he said.

When the clock strikes 3 a.m., you can find twenty Facilities & Ground workers pulling up in Bobcats all around the city. By the time the city wakes up, they’ve plowed, blown, and shoveled the most trafficked areas of South Bend. The entire city takes some time, especially navigating around benches, bike racks, and planters, but their goal is to haul the snow out within 24 hours.

“It takes dedication and a lot of experience,” Byers emphasized. Between working 12-hour days, weekends, and holidays, they make sure the roads and sidewalks are ready for you to get out and around the city. Even under several inches of snow, South Bend doesn’t stop.

Among Facilities & Grounds, you may also bump into a smiling face in a red shirt while you’re out. A kind of jack-of-all-trades, the ambassadors work 24/7 to provide safety, event assistance, hospitality, and seasonal decorations to make South Bend more inviting.

“I like to see people smile,” Downtown Team Lead Ambassador Darrell Pargo beamed, “People see our passion, that it’s not all about work.”

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“I like to see people smile,” Downtown Team Lead Ambassador Darrell Pargo beamed, “People see our passion, that it’s not all about work.”

From placing mini Christmas trees in sidewalk planters to lights strung around downtown, the ambassadors work every day to make South Bend a welcoming city. Even though the cold may not always be appealing, VPA staff keeps the city exciting, inviting, and festive.

Speaking of festive, if you’ve been around for a South Bend winter, you’ve probably noticed the giant Christmas tree that goes up on Jon Hunt Plaza in front of the Morris. Arborists with the Forestry Department spend a day to string the tree top-to-bottom with over 13,000 glittering lights.

It’s easy to get caught up trudging through the deep snow and maneuvering through the slush. This winter, perhaps you’ll look up and notice the thousands of tiny lights lighting up the sky or the freshly cleared roads as you drive to grab that early morning coffee. It’s moments like this that Facilities & Grounds, Forestry, Ambassadors and countless others strive for – a more livable and lovable South Bend.
Venues Parks & Arts staff members give you five things they’re looking forward to this fall and winter.

1. GET OUT + GET ACTIVE

The chilly weather might be coming in, but it’s not too late to make memories for life this season in your favorite South Bend parks. From autumn nature hikes to sledding, come enjoy the great outdoors year-round!

“‘I enjoy taking walks at Rum Village Park during my lunch time. I think it’s the best place to enjoy flowers and the wildlife as I do my walk around the park.’

-Rose Kaufman, Center Supervisor

“My daughters absolutely love trick-or-treating downtown and have a blast every time.”

-Kyle Miller, Production Manager

“The Nutcracker is a wonderful wintertime tradition in South Bend, and one that every family should experience!”

-Elizabeth Leachman, Special Events Coordinator

“The O’Brien Fitness Center is the perfect place to feel like part of a family. It’s not just about getting a workout in. It’s about an environment that allows everyone of all types to feel comfortable.”

-Michael Self, Arborist

“Being able to take my son to the Mom Son Dance and make those memories with him was exciting. A great night out, spending time together!”

-Amanda Yasko, Fitness/Wellness Supervisor

2. TRICK-OR-TREATING

We’re ready for colorful leaves, sweaters, and pumpkin-flavored everything. Another one of our favorite parts of fall? Trick-or-treating throughout the city! Check out sbvpa.org in October to find the best spots for dressing up and enjoying treats this Halloween season.

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3. HOLIDAYS AT THE MORRIS

Morris Performing Arts Center will feature some holiday favorites this winter. Here are some of the classics to get excited about:

• Mannheim Steamroller Christmas by Chip David
• A Charlie Brown Christmas Live!
• The Nutcracker Ballet
• Swan Lake

According to a Nielsen survey, “staying fit and healthy” is our top New Year’s resolution as Americans, followed by losing weight. The O’Brien Fitness Center is here to help! With supportive staff and the ability to work at your own pace, the center is a great place to begin your fitness journey.

4. NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION

Looking for something to do with the kids? Santa is coming to town for the Tree Lighting Ceremony and the whole family can visit him all month at his in-town workshop for pictures. Also, stuff those stockings with Daddy/Daughter and Mom/Son Dance tickets this year! Tickets will be on sale online in early November.

5. KIDS EVENTS

South Bend Venues & Arts is always looking for interested parties to volunteer and support programs, venues, events, and facilities. For more information about ways to get involved, visit:

SBVPA.ORG/SPONSORS/VOLUNTEER
To all those who got their hands dirty, partnered to create new memories, or marked their calendars for one of our events—

Thank you!
WE'RE UNITED FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, AND WE'D LOVE TO GET TO KNOW YOU.

YOU’RE THE REASON WE’RE HERE.

Since day one, we’ve understood it’s less about where our buildings stand and more about how we can serve those who are standing next to us. While we take great pride in our work inside each of our branches, it’s the work we do on the outside that truly defines us.

Stop by and see us soon or give us a call today!

IRELAND ROAD
223 W. Ireland Road
South Bend, IN 46614

EDISON LAKES PARKWAY
4840 N. Main Street
Mishawaka, IN 46545

Insured by NCUA. Equal Opportunity Lender. Equal Housing Lender. NMLS #471962.