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A CITY OF VALPARAISO QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

valparaiso Citytalk





Valparaiso Dedicates a Baby Box

The City of Valparaiso recently dedicated a Baby Box at Valparaiso Fire Station I, 205 Indiana Ave. A Baby Box is a place where a mother in crisis can legally, safely and anonymously surrender a newborn.

"The Valparaiso Fire Department is committed to serving our community and I can think of no greater cause than saving the life of a child," said Fire Chief Chad Dutz. The Baby Box is in an area free from surveillance cameras. allowing for an anonymous drop off. Once placed in the box, two separate alarms signal 911 dispatchers so that the baby receives immediate care. Valparaiso's Baby Box was funded by a generous donation from an anonymous local grandmother, along with financial support from the Porter County Trustee's Office and the Valparaiso Fire Department, which will support the initiative moving forward.

VPD Once Again Achieves Gold-Standard

CALEA Accreditation demonstrates oversight and review

This summer, the Valparaiso Police Department is scheduled to have its certification renewed by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., (CALEA), once again demonstrating extensive internal and external review, and third-party validation of the VPD's policies and procedures in community policing.

The VPD is one of just 15 police departments in Indiana (and less than 800 nationwide) to earn CALEA accreditation and has been accredited since 2010. "When it comes to policing, Valparaiso has a well-trained team that has long made fairness and community policing top priorities," said Mayor Matt Murphy. "Our



community is both safer and more inclusive because of our VPD," he said.

The VPD works consistently to strengthen community relationships through its popular Citizens Police Academy and Junior Academy, programs within the schools, and frequent opportunities for interaction, such as Coffee with a Cop and Breakfast and Badges. "These programs are not new nor a reaction to recent

national events, but an ongoing, longstanding commitment to community policing," said Murphy. "In a time when policing is rightfully under close scrutiny nationwide, we're very fortunate to have such community minded and dedicated professionals in Valparaiso," he said. "I invite you to

interact with the VPD and city administration, taking advantage of the many opportunities we extend to the community. Fairness and equality remain top priorities and we applaud the positive efforts we see daily by our first responders as well as our citizens."





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s Launches Master Plan Project

Attend a forum to share your ideas!

Valparaiso Parks may be more than 75 years old, yet it continues to reinvent itself, adding properties and experiences, such as the recently opened **ValPAWraiso Dog Park** on Campbell Street and the **Creekside Trails** cycling pathway on the city's south side, while continuing to make major reinvestments in legacy parks like Bicentennial and Tower in the last several years. To ensure Parks continues to stay at the forefront of recreation for residents and visitors, Valpo Parks is launching a new Master Plan process in 2020, looking to the community for the best ideas.

"Some of our best ideas have come from collaborations, like **ValPlayso** and the new dog park," said Parks Director John Seibert. "We're interested in learning what our community likes best and where they want us to place priorities for the coming decades," he said.

The Master Plan process is designed to:

- Identify the community's ideas for needs and priorities for Parks properties and programs
- Identify funding priorities and income streams to ensure sustainability
- 3 Create the plan that determines what gets done

Public Forums – Please share your ideas!

To make it easy for the public to participate, the public forums will be a combination of in-person and online opportunities. Here are opportunities to participate:

- Beginning in August, the public will be encouraged to weigh in via an online survey
- Multiple virtual and in-person neighborhood meetings will be hosted in August
- Plan updates will be shared at Valpo Parks Board meetings on Sept. 22, Oct. 27 and Nov. 24, and public comment is welcome

The final plan will be presented to the Valparaiso City Council in November. Please visit ValpoParks.org and the Valpo Parks Facebook page for updates and opportunities to contribute your ideas.

Neighborhood Improvement Grants

Apply Before August 31

Inspired by the City of Valparaiso's Neighborhood Grant Program, the Banta Neighborhood Association came together to design this colorful intersection art, serving as a traffic-calming feature and creating a sense of place for the neighborhood. Pictured is one of two intersections enhanced by the grant.

This project was one of 14 neighborhood projects chosen by the City to receive funding for the 2019 grant cycle. Student artists Alastair Anderson-Schelling and Henry Durnell and from Central Elementary had their art chosen by the Banta Neighborhood Association, with support from the Valparaiso Creative Council and muralist Pete Cortese completed the installation.



How your neighborhood can apply

In 2020, grants of up to \$15,000 each are available to neighborhood groups, funding projects like signage, landscaping, sidewalks and more. To learn more about how to apply for a grant and unite your neighborhood in other ways, visit the Community Engagement page at VALPO.US. Applications for the 2020 grant cycle are due by Aug. 31, 2020.



citytalk



Paving Season is Underway Boosted by \$1 Million Roadway Grant

Those seasonal orange cones and detours are sure signs of paving progress throughout the city and the 2020 season promises to be a positive one for Valpo. The City of Valparaiso was awarded a \$1 million Community Crossings Grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation this year. This 50/50 matching grant will fund the resurfacing of eight streets, totaling just over six miles within the city. "We're grateful to have this significant additional funding which will kick start our roadway improvements for the year," said Mayor Matt Murphy. "We've always been aggressive about pursuing all available grant funding and using smart road-extending techniques, which add up to better road surfaces for our city," he said.

The roadways targeted in the Community Crossings Grant include:

- Campbell Street (Northview Drive to 100' south of Cottage View Terrace)
- Burlington Beach Road (Campbell Street to Bloomingdale Drive)
- Lincolnway (230' west of Madison Street to Campbell Drive)
- Eastport Center Drive (Redbow Drive to Mariposa Drive)
- Valparaiso Street (Wall Street to Bullseye Lake Road)
- Hemlock Drive (Evergreen Drive to Burlington Beach Road)
- Oak Grove Drive (Bullseye Lake Road to Burlington Beach Road)
- Oak Grove Circle (Oak Grove Circle to 235' south of Oak Grove Circle)

Additional streets will be added later in the season as part of the city's annual pavement rehabilitation program. Over the past decade, Valparaiso has made roads a top priority, spending more than \$20 million in road repairs and maintenance since 2006. This year, the Indiana Department of Transportation awarded more than \$126.5 million in Community Crossings grants.

Deciding which roads to improve is based on a national rating system, with 1 being the worst condition and 10 being the best. The city re-evaluates all roadways every two years. In addition to this rating, roadways are evaluated for work based on whether they're arterial, collector or local streets, plus their safety, scope, cost, flooding potential, and economic impact.

Once finalized, a complete list of paving projects will be posted on the city's website, **VALPO.US**.



US 30: An Update

While the resurfacing project on US 30 may not be a City of Valparaiso project (handled by the Indiana Department of Transportation), it does affect many motorists and businesses. The City communicates regularly with

INDOT and works to ensure that closures and restrictions are as brief and minimal as safely possible. **The project is anticipated to be complete early this fall.**

Dear Neighbors,

It's great to be back with a new issue of

CityTalk, connecting again and sharing updates with you all. We've all been touched by the effects of the GOVID-19 pandemic and, as a city, we've come up with new ways of working and communicating – staying connected while maximizing good health. We've added remote meeting options. We've amped up our online presence on Valpo.us and at Facebook.com/ValparaisoNow. And we've added Moments with the Mayor – short video snips where you can virtually visit the latest news around town.

As a city, I'm very proud of the way we've all supported one another. We've lined up at the curb and called for delivery. We've given blood and food and time. We've checked on our neighbors and cheered each other on. So that the good continues and multiplies, we're supporting a Lift Up Valpo initiative to encourage shopping and dining locally. We have extraordinary businesses here in Valpo and we encourage everyone to think Valpo first.

Finally, I want to thank the entire community for the patience as we all learn new ways of living and working, as we listen to each other's needs and ideas, and as we find ways to celebrate the season and each other. Over the past several months, we've proven that together we can accomplish big things. We'll keep listening – to our community and to CDC guidelines. And we encourage you to join us as we Lift Up Valpo!

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Sincerely,

Matt Murphy, Mayor





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What's Happening this Year

The team at Valparaiso Events is working hard to adapt events to maximize the fun as well as the safety. Here's what's in store:

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

By popular demand, Summer Concerts are a go!

However, to allow for social distancing, FREE tickets will be required for admission. Each concert will also be live streamed to allow for viewing from home.

Tickets will be available on Mondays in advance of the Thursday concerts, via Eventbrite. If you secure a ticket and find you are no longer able to attend, please release your ticket through Eventbrite so another may enjoy. Those interested in attending may continue to check Eventbrite for availability of tickets up to showtime.

All concerts begin at 7:00 PM.

Here's the summer line-up:

July 9 - Crawpuppies

July 16 - Mike & Joe

July 23 - Cowboy Jukebox

July 30 - Rosie and the Rivets

August 6 - Hairbangers Ball

August 13 - Dick Diamond and the Dusters

August 20 – Dancing Queen: An #ABBA Salute

August 27 – Marrakesh Express – a CSNY Experience



VALPARAISO MARKET

Every Tuesday and Saturday 9 am - I pm at William E. Urschel Pavilion Stop in for local, fresh, artisanal goods. Visit **ValparaisoEvents.com** for a list of vendors and guidelines for safe shopping.

POPCORN FESTIVAL

After careful consideration, Popcorn Festival, hosted by Valparaiso Events, has been suspended for 2020. It simply was impossible to host this extraordinary event in a way that would allow the 60,000+ participants to enjoy the day safely. The Popcorn Panic will continue on Sept. 12, 2020. For details, visit ValpoParks.org



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