



Future Margerum Government and Community Center

## CITY HALL MOVING ALONG

Demolition of the inside of the historic 1929 Morton building is underway. It is the most critical point in the renovation. The technically-complex work of shoring up the building while removing load-bearing walls and installing steel beams takes time and effort to ensure precision and safety. Once the beams are in place on both floors, floor openings and electrical work will take place, along with totally renovating the interior to create a modern municipal building.

Rebuilding commences in March and should be move-in ready by January 2021. The entire City staff and all departments will be in the new space, except Police, Fire, Street & Sanitation, and Wastewater Treatment. It will be a permanent home for the City. Thankfully, the building is moving along, so the staff won't have to anymore.

The first floor will indeed be a community space, containing a large reception area, Council Chambers, and community rooms that groups may rent for events and meetings, warming kitchen included. There will be two entrances into the building: the west entrance facing the library and a new east entrance which is fully ADA-accessible. The north and south doors will be egresses for fire safety. The second floor will house staff offices and meeting space for internal government functions.

Plans to host community events and groups, such as Global Fest and Walla, are fully intended to resume at the location. Essential documents and treasured memorabilia, including beautiful artwork from Sam Posthelwait, have been saved and will be incorporated throughout the building. Having a public showplace for West Lafayette's rich history is just another way to put us on the map.



## 2020'S BEST COLLEGE TOWNS

West Lafayette made the top 25 in *2020's Best College Town and Cities in America* list, topping all other Indiana college towns! The ranking was published in December by [wallethub.com](http://wallethub.com) based on wallet-friendliness, social environment, and academic and economic opportunities.



JOHN DENNIS

## MAYOR'S COLUMN

### MORTON MEETS SONYA

It couldn't be more fitting to name the new City Hall after West Lafayette's late and great Mayor: Sonya Margerum. Sonya, a Democrat, was West Lafayette's first female Mayor from 1980 – 2006, serving six terms. She reached across the aisle and across the river, seeing our community through joint-city collaborations; her most significant legacy was the decades-long process of railroad relocation. Sonya worked closely with local and state officials of both parties to bring SIA to Greater Lafayette in 1987, launched curbside recycling in 1990, and supported the development of the Celery Bog and Wabash Landing. She was one of the first mayors in Indiana to develop a Strategic Plan, whose blueprint we use today. Her resume of accomplishments is impressive and too lengthy to list here but is certainly worth the read. She truly made a difference in West Lafayette and to me personally.

My relationship with Sonya goes back to the West Lafayette High School 1976 football season, where I was a player and she was a "football mom" serving us boys breakfasts on game days. She was gracious then (and a good cook) and ended up being a well-respected Mayor years later during my days on the Lafayette Police force. Her leadership as Mayor sowed

No one ever made a difference by being like everyone else.

P.T. Barnum



Late Mayor Sonya Margerum and Mayor John Dennis sharing a laugh.



Construction is underway in the Margerum Government and Community Center.

the seeds of success that we are still reaping today. When I began my tenure as Mayor, it was Sonya who helped guide me that first year, giving me the references and history I needed to lead the City. Her stamp of approval opened many doors and helped me to do my job more effectively. When a question would come up, I would think, "What Would Sonya Do?" She was more than a mentor; she was a dear friend.

In one of our last conversations when she was living at University Place, I asked her if I could have her permission to name City Hall after her. She just smiled that wide, open smile and said, "Oh my, that would be so sweet." It is my honor to name the building after Sonya Margerum, our most loved Mayor. The newly-renovated building, located in the previous Morton Community Center, is slated to open in early 2021 or sooner and will be christened the Margerum Government and Community Center.

On a last note, make sure to participate in the 2020 Census this year. Everyone living in West Lafayette on April 1, whether a permanent resident or college student, is counted in our state and federal funding allotments for the next ten years. To make future improvements on roads, schools, development, parks, and everything else that makes for a great community, we need you to stand up and be counted.

More information can be found at [wl.in.gov/2020census](http://wl.in.gov/2020census). It's what Sonya would do.

People resist a census, but give them a profile page and they'll spend all day telling you who they are.

Max Barry



## THE ROAD AHEAD

**Newman Road between State Road 26 and Benson Drive** will close in early spring until late fall. The road will be completely reconstructed and the narrow bridge removed in order to open access to the aerospace district on US 231.

**State Road 26** will be closed west of US 231 between June 1 – July 15 to build a new roundabout the intersection of 26 and Newman Road. Please follow detours and use caution while traveling near construction zones.

Listening is where love begins: listening to ourselves and then to our neighbors.

Mr. Rogers

## CREATING VITAL NEIGHBORHOODS

A program called Block Talks was started in 2018 to facilitate conversations between neighbors about their neighborhood: how to make neighborhoods better, safer, friendlier, more attractive, and cleaner – in essence, more vital. Investing in the life of your community benefits everyone. Block Talks help engage and empower residents to solve problems and disperse important information about what's happening down your street. Block Talks can be as simple as gathering over a cup of coffee to meet each other and brainstorm ideas. Contact Bryce Patz [bpatz@wl.in.gov](mailto:bpatz@wl.in.gov) to help organize and send invites to fellow neighbors, bringing in City departments into the conversation if needed.



## 2020 CENSUS

### 10 minutes for Survey for 10 Years of Impact

Newsflash! For the first time, the U.S. Census Bureau is allowing self-reporting to make it easier than ever to respond to the census. The census comes every ten years and is a snapshot of who is living here on April 1, regardless of whether you're a permanent resident, renter, or college student.

Once you receive your mailing from the bureau, you can respond online, by phone, or by mail. The whole process takes about ten minutes. Your identity is completely confidential and will not be shared with other government agencies. No citizenship questions are asked. The data determines the population, thus designating funding for

public services, schools, and communities. It's all about the numbers.

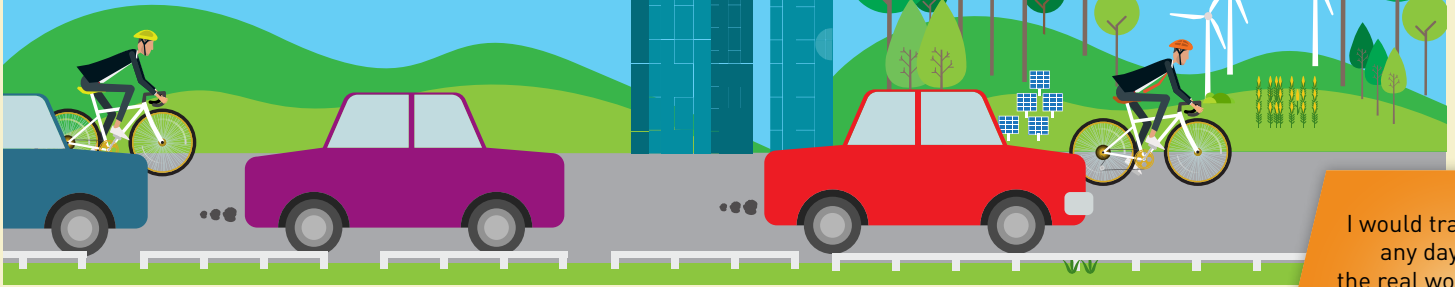
If you self-report, you will not receive a home visit by a census worker. Starting in July, census-takers will visit those who have not yet responded. The form is in English and Spanish, and the U.S. Census can provide additional forms in 12 languages upon request. Hiring is underway for census workers in Greater Lafayette who desire part-time, flexible hours at a fair wage. For the scoop on the upcoming census, as well as employment opportunities, please visit [wl.in.gov/2020census](http://wl.in.gov/2020census) or Bryce Patz at [bpatz@wl.in.gov](mailto:bpatz@wl.in.gov).

## ART IN BLOOM

Tour flowering gardens filled with beautiful artwork at Art in Bloom on **Saturday, June 27, from 10 am – 2 pm**. Visit the City website to see who will host the annual event this year. It's a mid-summer delight for the senses and a chance to get garden ideas or purchase a piece of local art. Each home on the tour will feature coral and white annuals, the flower colors of the year. Be a part of the beautiful buzz by planting these colorful annuals to show community unity. Art in Bloom tour information and order forms are on the City website. Flower pickup is on Saturday, May 9, at the West Lafayette Farmers Market, just in time for Mother's Day.



## Drivers Be Aware! Bike Season is Coming Soon



I would trade  
any day in  
the real world  
for a minute  
at camp.

Camp  
confessions

## WANTED – MORE FRIENDS

*Although birds and squirrels  
love me, I can't reach  
my full potential  
without your help.  
My limbs grow so  
fast and block  
your vision or touch  
powerlines. I can't help  
it that I'm so tall. But think  
of all the things I do for you!  
I give you oxygen, remove  
pollutants, provide beauty and shade,  
capture stormwater, and provide shelter for  
animals. Certain members of my family  
provide joy at Christmas, others produce  
fruit or nuts, and some provide warmth  
when their lives are over. But I need  
your help. If you love trees like me, won't  
you be my friend?*

Old Oak

West Lafayette Tree Friends need more volunteers to prune trees on Fridays or Saturdays, knit tree sweaters, or provide funding for street trees. Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at City Hall at 11 am. See Tree Friends Facebook page or [wltreefriends.wordpress.com](https://www.wltreefriends.wordpress.com) for pruning schedules and more information on how to become involved.

## SUMMER CAMP RETURNS

It's time to start thinking about summer plans for your young children. The camp's first year was a big success – most weeks were at capacity. Registration is underway. Since space is limited and camp fills up quickly, register now at [wl.in.gov/parks](http://wl.in.gov/parks) or call **765-775-5110**. The May 20 Orientation meeting at City Hall (formerly Happy Hollow School) will provide further details for those who are registered.

Summer Camp sessions are \$120 per week and go from May 26 - August 7 from 9 am – 4 pm, with additional before/aftercare from 7:30 – 9 am and 4 – 5:30 pm. Activities include swimming, games, crafts, guest speakers, and cool field trips to area attractions and parks. New activities and field trips are in the works. The camp is open to all 6 – 12-year-olds and 5-year-olds if they attended kindergarten or all-day daycare. It may not feel like summer quite yet, but you'll be glad you planned ahead!



## ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

**Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Need** is completing a rigorous master's level course to give him the distinction as Executive Fire Officer. He will graduate from the National Fire Academy's four-year program in April to earn this designation. The program is fully-funded by the Federal government. The coursework includes attending two-week/year sessions in Emmitsburg, Maryland, doing research, and writing three papers. Jeff's papers concerned officer evaluations, social media use, and his capstone project *Windshield Survey* – which gauged how well-prepared communities are for a disaster and how to triage priorities during a massive emergency. This year, he will defend the *Windshield Survey* paper. His research is accessible to all firefighters from the NFA library and is implemented here in West Lafayette.

Jeff received his B.S. from Purdue and is enrolled in the EFO program. He joined the WLF in 1998 and has served as a training instructor, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain. Jeff is currently the deputy chief of operations. He and his wife, Lori, have two married children, Rachel and Brady. His mission statement is to leave the world a better place.



Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Need and family

**Assistant City Engineer Marcus Smith** just earned his Professional Engineering license after passing his PE Exam. To become professionally licensed, engineers must complete a four-year college degree, work under a Professional Engineer for at least four years, and pass two intensive competency exams from the State board. Marcus' focus is on transportation and traffic systems. Although the



Assistant City Engineer Marcus Smith and his wife, Emily

license is not required for his position, it gives him broader knowledge to keep West Lafayette running smoothly.

Marcus had first-hand construction experience in helping his family build their house while he was in middle school. This involvement prompted him to pursue a civil engineering degree from Trine University. Since then, his resume includes working at Trine and for the Indiana Department of Transportation. He has served as the Assistant Engineer for the City for the last three years. Marcus enjoys spending time with friends and remodeling his home. He and his wife, Emily, are expecting a boy in April.

## CITY NEWS

### NEW HIRES

#### David Kessler

Help Desk Technician | IT

#### Cassandra Leuck

Probationary Officer  
West Lafayette Police

#### Samuel Smith

Probationary Patrol Dispatcher  
West Lafayette Police





John Dennis • Mayor  
765/775-5100  
mayor@wl.in.gov

Sana Booker • Clerk  
765/775-5150  
clerk@wl.in.gov

**wl.in.gov**

West Lafayette City Hall  
1200 N. Salisbury Street  
West Lafayette, IN 47906

City and State officials "breaking ground" inside the new Margerum Government and Community Center.

Committed to Going Greener



A Tree City USA



LET'S GO EVENT CALENDAR



**RX/OTC Take-Back**

2nd Thursdays | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm  
March 12 | April 9 | May 14  
West Lafayette Police Station

**City Offices CLOSED**

Good Friday | Friday | April 10  
Memorial Day | Monday | May 25

**Riverside Skating Center**

Call for hours | (765) 743-7465  
\$5 per person | \$3 skate rental

**WL E-Waste Day**

Saturday | April 4 | 8 am – 2 pm  
Harrison High School

**Tapawingo Park**

Purdue Spring Fest and Bug Bowl  
Saturday | April 18 | 10 am – 6 pm  
[ag.purdue.edu/springfest/home](http://ag.purdue.edu/springfest/home)

HELLO  
Spring



ART IN  
BLOOM



**Purdue Grand Prix**

Saturday | April 25  
Purdue Grand Prix Track  
[purduegrandprix.org](http://purduegrandprix.org)

**26th Annual Mor' Danc'n Recital**

Saturday | May 2  
Purdue Loeb Playhouse

**West Lafayette Farmers Market**

Wednesdays beginning May 6  
3 – 7 pm | Cumberland Park

**48th Annual Round the Fountain Art Fair**

Saturday | May 23 | 9 am – 4:30 pm  
Court House Square – Lafayette

**Art in Bloom**

Saturday | June 27 | 10 am – 2 pm  
[wl.in.gov](http://wl.in.gov)