


2024 IMPACT REPORT

A M E R I C A N  
**I D E A L**

PRESENTED BY THE OGLEBAY FOUNDATION



Community involvement has been the chief factor in the development of Oglebay as a self-sustaining enterprise and is one of the finest examples of what can result if we put the **American Ideals** to work.

— Courtney Burton, Jr.

*Grandson of Earl & Sallie Oglebay*

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*The Oglebay Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation devoted to inspiring donors to invest in Oglebay and Wheeling Park. The foundation raises strategic support through donations from private individuals, corporations and foundation giving. In 2024, the Foundation received record support for ongoing improvements in the parks. **For more information, visit [www.oglebayfoundation.org](http://www.oglebayfoundation.org).***



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## Dear Friends,

What an incredible year 2024 has been for the Oglebay Foundation and our beloved parks! Thanks to your generosity, we set new records in donations and attendance, proving how vital these spaces are to our community.

Our parks boost the local economy, enhance quality of life and offer places for recreation, education and connection. This year, we've seen remarkable growth:

- **Youth Golf is thriving**, introducing more new players than ever.
- **The Good Zoo is expanding**, increasing its educational and conservation impact.
- **Summer Camps** are experiencing explosive growth.

Beyond these milestones, 2024 was filled with unforgettable experiences. The second annual **Twinkle Trot** became the Ohio Valley's largest 5K. **Wheeling Park's 100th anniversary gala** honored a century of community. Record attendance at outdoor concerts proved how essential our parks are to those who love them.

Much of our momentum is thanks to strong leadership. We're deeply grateful to **Lisa Allen**, our outgoing chair. While transitioning from this role, she remains an active board member. Lisa and her husband, Barry, continue to elevate our parks through leadership training, improving service levels across Oglebay.

Looking ahead, with **incoming Chair Chad Remp**, we're committed to building on this success. By sharing these stories, we hope to inspire more people to experience and support our parks.

If you haven't dined at Oglebay recently, now's the perfect time. Our **GROW LAB** produces fresh herbs, microgreens and lettuces, bringing bold, vibrant flavors straight to your plate.

We are incredibly grateful for you — our donors and friends — who make all of this possible. Your commitment ensures our parks will thrive for generations to come.

With heartfelt appreciation,



ERIKS E. JANELSINS  
President & CEO



CHAD H. REMP  
Chair



The Campaign for an  
Enduring Oglebay

# Then & Now

OGLEBAY THROUGH THE YEARS



The original casino structure in Wheeling Park prior to 1926 and the White Palace today remodeled and modernized in 2023 in advance of Wheeling Park's 100th Anniversary.





# Kick off 2025 and take charge of your IRA.

Direct your distributions to the park you love.

You worked hard and made sacrifices to save for your future. Just because you now have to take Required Minimum Distributions from your IRA doesn't mean you have to incur taxes.

**Let us Help.** Our Planned Giving Guide offers ways you can make a gift to support the park you love directly from your IRA.

Contact your IRA administrator **today** and tell them you want to support the Oglebay Foundation.



[oglebayfoundation.org](http://oglebayfoundation.org)





# WHEELING PARK AT 100

## A GALA CELEBRATION

On Dec. 7, 2024, Wheeling Park officially launched its centennial celebration with a grand Gala at the White Palace, commemorating 100 years of community recreation, history and cherished memories. This year-long celebration will feature special events and beautification projects that honor the park's past while looking forward to its future.







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# A Legacy of COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

Wheeling Park's story began long before it became the beloved public space it is today. Originally known as Hornbrook's Park, the land was once a private estate before transforming into an amusement park. However, by the early 20th century, the park had fallen into disrepair. In 1924, a pivotal moment in Wheeling's history unfolded when local businessmen were given the option to sell the 130-acre property for private development. Instead, a visionary group of civic leaders, led by philanthropist W.E. Stone, saw its potential. They launched a successful community fundraising campaign, raising an impressive \$350,000 by Christmas Eve of that year. These funds led to the establishment of the Wheeling Park Commission, ensuring the park remain a public treasure for generations to come.

From its earliest days, Wheeling Park was designed as a hub for recreation, relaxation and community engagement. The initial transformation included a refurbished casino, a swimming pool and a scenic nine-hole golf course. After a fire destroyed the original casino in 1926, the iconic White Palace was constructed. Remodeled and modernized in 2023, it has been a grand venue for social gatherings, dances and celebrations. Over the next century, Wheeling Park expanded from 130 acres to an impressive 406 acres, adding numerous recreational amenities. These include: the Memorial Ice Rink, completely renovated in 2020; a state-of-the-art pool complex with a water slide and a new Spray & Splash Pad; a tennis bubble; soccer fields; paddleboats; mini golf; picnic shelters;

and, in 2024, the largest and most inclusive playground in West Virginia.

Today, Wheeling Park stands as a testament to community vision and perseverance. It continues to fulfill its founders' dreams by offering diverse recreational opportunities, serving as a gathering place for all ages and preserving Wheeling's rich history.

## 2025 Centennial Celebration Schedule

Throughout 2025, Wheeling Park will host a variety of special events to commemorate its 100-year milestone. These events will honor the park's legacy while inviting the community to come together in celebration.

- **Ice-Skating Spectacular:** A dazzling ice show featuring local skaters, celebrating a century of winter fun at the J.B. Chambers Memorial Ice Rink.
- **Heritage Tree Planting and Community Garden Launch:** A commitment to sustainability, planting new trees and launching a community garden initiative.
- **Great Gatsby/Roaring 1920s Night:** A nostalgic celebration with jazz music, vintage costumes and a 1920s-themed party.
- **Teen Dance Revisited:** A revival of the popular teen dances that once brought generations together at Wheeling Park.



## Upcoming Beautification Projects

As part of its centennial legacy, Wheeling Park will undertake several key beautification projects to enhance its natural beauty and visitor experience:

- **Wayfinding and Signage Enhancements:** Adding new signs and directional markers for better navigation.
- **Sonneborn Gate Restoration:** Reviving the entrance to Wheeling park by cleaning both gate segments, repointing and patching of any delaminated or chipped areas of the stone work and replace missing urns cast to match original plan.
- **Parking Lot Paving and Beautification:** Upgrading parking areas for improved accessibility and aesthetics.
- **Improvements to the Frank Rock Garden:** Restoring and enhancing this beloved garden space.
- **Planting 100 Trees for 100 Years:** A symbolic effort to celebrate the centennial and support environmental conservation.
- **Public Art Installation:** A commemorative art piece celebrating the park's history and cultural significance.

## Looking Ahead

As Wheeling Park embarks on its next century, its commitment to serving the community remains stronger than ever. With new enhancements, exciting events and a dedication to preserving its history, the park will continue to be a cherished destination for recreation and celebration.

Join us throughout 2025 as we honor 100 years of Wheeling Park — a place where history, nature and community come together in perfect harmony. 🌿





# WHEELING PARK'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY OPENING WEEKEND

## THURSDAY, MAY 29:

- **Centennial Street Dinner:** A gourmet, multi-course meal along the park's historic main road, featuring cuisine inspired by each decade of Wheeling Park's history.

## FRIDAY, MAY 30:

- **Enhanced FunFest:** A lively evening with two music acts, festival foods, carnival games, kids' activities and a foam party.

## SATURDAY, MAY 31:

- **King and Queen of the Hill Fun Run:** A race through Wheeling Park's scenic hills, with crowns and sashes for winners.
- **Artist Market:** Held inside the ballrooms (Friday, 5-9 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.)
- **Community Picnic:** A classic picnic with games, sack races and a pie-eating contest. Upgraded picnic baskets will be available for pre-purchase.
- **Historical Exhibit and Park Tours:** A curated exhibit and guided tours showcasing the park's history
- **Full Day lineup of live music**
- **Ribbon Cutting for the Splash Pad:** Unveiling a new summer attraction with family-friendly festivities.
- **Family Fun Zone:** Carnival games, face painting, bounce houses and interactive art for kids.
- **Best Friend Hike:** A celebration for pets, featuring dog hikes and activities at the park's dog park.
- **Drone Show and Fireworks Extravaganza:** A spectacular display over the lake.
- **Strolling Entertainment:** Featuring stilt walkers.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 1:

- **Car Show:** A showcase of classic cars from the past century.
- **Century Golf Scramble:** A family-friendly golf event celebrating 100 years of Wheeling Park.
- **Arts and Crafts Vendor Show:** Local artisans will display their work around the lake and White Palace.





# Oglebayfest

EXPERIENCE









“ The Good Zoo is home to nearly 300 animals representing 65 different species, many of which are rare and endangered.

# Oglebay Good Zoo

**A Legacy of  
Excellence and  
Future Growth**



ACCREDITED BY THE  
ASSOCIATION  
OF ZOOS &  
AQUARIUMS

Oglebay Good Zoo was reaccredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) at its Annual Conference in Calgary, Canada, this past fall. This achievement marks nearly 38 consecutive years of accreditation, a testament to the zoo's dedication to animal welfare, conservation and education. Wheeling remains one of the smallest U.S. cities to host an AZA-accredited institution, highlighting the community's commitment to maintaining a world-class facility.

AZA accreditation is a rigorous process that evaluates animal care, veterinary services, staff training, safety protocols, education initiatives and conservation efforts. AZA President Dan Ashe commended the Good Zoo's commitment to excellence and leadership in wildlife conservation. Meanwhile, Good Zoo Director Dr. Joe Greathouse emphasized that continued community support has played a crucial role in the zoo's long-standing success.

## **Commitment to Conservation and Education**

The Good Zoo is home to nearly 300 animals representing 65 different species, many of which are rare and endangered. Approximately 45 percent of these species participate in the AZA's Species Survival Plan (SSP) programs, which are designed to support genetic diversity and population sustainability in accredited zoos and aquariums.

The zoo's Institutional Collection Plan is carefully designed to ensure that:

- The species housed at the zoo receive exceptional care from trained professionals.
- The zoo provides necessary space and resources for breeding programs that support global conservation efforts.
- Guests can enjoy meaningful experiences that foster appreciation for wildlife through Animal Encounter Programs.

These programs allow visitors to engage in educational, behind-the-scenes experiences with the zoo's animal keepers. Guests learn about each species' natural history, conservation challenges and individual care routines. Additionally, visitors have the rare opportunity to assist keepers in training and feeding the animals and creating lasting memories while gaining deeper insight into wildlife conservation.

Since its introduction in 2008, the Animal Encounter Program has grown into a cornerstone of the Good Zoo's educational mission, connecting thousands of guests each year with unique animal experiences.

## **Advancements in Veterinary Care**

The Good Zoo's veterinary program has recently been strengthened through a significant donation from West Virginia University Medicine. The hospital system provided critical medical equipment, including:

- An exam table/scale for precise weight monitoring and treatment procedures.
- A patient monitor to track vital signs during examinations and procedures.
- A light source with cart to enhance diagnostics and improve medical procedures.
- A bladder scanner to aid in the early detection of health issues.

These tools will dramatically improve diagnostic accuracy and animal health monitoring. The donation aligns with the zoo's broader expansion plans, including the hiring of its first-ever veterinary technician, Leslie Wilson.

Dr. Greathouse expressed deep gratitude for WVU Medicine's partnership, emphasizing that these contributions will enhance the zoo's veterinary care capabilities while supporting its conservation and education efforts.





The collaboration reflects a shared commitment to wildlife health and community engagement.

### **Accessibility and Inclusion Initiatives**

Furthering its mission of community inclusion and accessibility, the Good Zoo has installed a Mamava Pod lactation station — a private, comfortable space for nursing mothers. This initiative was made possible by a generous grant from the Highmark West Virginia Charitable Fund.

Located in the zoo’s main building, the lactation pod features:

- Outlets and USB ports for convenience.
- Spacious seating, accommodating multiple children if needed.
- A quiet, sensory-friendly environment, which also serves neurodivergent guests.

Dr. Greathouse underscored the zoo’s commitment to creating a welcoming space for all visitors, and Highmark West Virginia President Jim Fawcett highlighted the importance of supporting families and fostering healthy communities.

### **New Opportunities for Students and Emerging Professionals**

In July 2024, the Good Zoo, in collaboration with the West Liberty University Zoo Science major, was awarded a 21st Century Museum Professionals grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This funding supports paid six-month post-graduate apprenticeships as well as paid undergraduate internships for students pursuing a Zoo Science major.

Historically, many entry-level positions in zoological fields required experience gained through unpaid internships, creating financial barriers for students. This grant allows the Good Zoo to eliminate those barriers, ensuring that more aspiring professionals have access to hands-on training opportunities in the field of wildlife care and conservation.

This initiative will provide students with:

- Practical, real-world experience working with animal care professionals.
- Mentorship opportunities from seasoned zoologists and conservationists.
- The ability to contribute to meaningful conservation projects that align with AZA and SSP goals.

By investing in the next generation of conservation leaders, the Good Zoo is reinforcing its commitment to education, professional development and long-term sustainability.

# Exciting Future:

## A New Lion Habitat Coming in 2026



Looking ahead, the Good Zoo will introduce lions in 2026, marking a historic addition to its collection. The state-of-the-art, 20,000-square-foot habitat will be one of the largest of its kind in the eastern U.S. and will be the only lion habitat at an AZA-accredited institution in West Virginia.

As the first AZA-accredited zoo to offer up-close lion overnight accommodations, this exhibit will feature:

- Exclusive on-site cottages, offering guests overnight safari-style stays.
- Guided safari tours, providing immersive wildlife experiences.
- Nighttime exploration opportunities, allowing visitors to observe lions' nocturnal behaviors.
- Dining options, complementing the unique adventure experience.

In line with the zoo's conservation mission, proceeds from the lion habitat experience will contribute to the AZA's Lion SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) program, which focuses on African lion protection efforts.

Generous donors, including Flip West, The Helen J. Prince Foundation and the Colcom Foundation, already have contributed to the project, but additional funding will enhance the experience for the lions and overnight guests alike.

## Expanding the Zoo's Impact Through Renovations

Beyond the lion habitat, additional enhancements are in progress, such as renovations to the zoo's main entry plaza, designed to improve visitor experience and accessibility.

These improvements, made possible by a grant from the West Virginia Water Development Authority, are critical to the zoo's long-term sustainability, ensuring that it continues to serve the community for generations.

For nearly 50 years, the Good Zoo at Oglebay has been a beloved community asset, bringing people closer to wildlife while promoting conservation, education and scientific discovery. Thanks to the unwavering support of the Wheeling community, the zoo is well-positioned to grow and thrive for years to come. 🌿





## PLANS

## Making a Difference IN THE PARKS

# LISA AND BARRY ALLEN

Lisa Allen, 67, has spent a lifetime in Oglebay and Wheeling Park. Her earliest memories include waiting for the bus at the end of her neighborhood street with an excited gaggle of friends and siblings, packed lunches in hand, to join hundreds of community friends at Oglebay Day Camp. She fondly recalls the retro, round-nosed 1960 buses bouncing along National Road, with Jon Banco overseeing the camp in those days.

Toward the end of each summer, the Day Camp Carnival was a highlight. Lisa remembers hiking the Oglebay hills with her friends and counselors, collecting plankton leaves to use as carnival currency. Even today, the scent of summer rain hitting hot asphalt instantly transports her back to those cherished camp days.

As a teenager, Lisa worked as a lifeguard at Oglebay, earning \$1.60 an hour. She recalls her boss, Tom Pinto, asking her to help at Schenk Lake or set up tables for events in the Pine Room. After earning

a Parks and Recreation/Management degree from Ohio University, she returned briefly to Oglebay to help open the new indoor pool at the lodge and to work with the National Training Center, where she saw firsthand the impact of a well-trained, empowered staff on guest experiences. Lisa is the immediate past chair of the Oglebay Foundation and is a current board member.

Barry Allen, 61, a proud son of Tennessee, discovered Oglebay later in life. His first memories include driving through the Festival of Lights, attending Oglebay Institute's Board Benefit, watching fireworks from the hillside with their budding family and running six miles through the hills of the park on the morning of their wedding at Palmer House. "Lisa and I got in our early morning run, made breakfast for all of our kids and some guests and got married later that day. It was a full Oglebay Park kind of day!" Barry recalls with an easy laugh. Today, the couple has six children and 16 grandchildren.

## IRA ROLLOVER BENEFITS

An IRA rollover allows people age 70½ and older to reduce their taxable income by making a gift directly from their IRA.

### Benefits of an IRA charitable rollover

- Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to the Oglebay Foundation.
- Make a gift that is not subject to the deduction limits on charitable gifts.
- Support an area of Oglebay or Wheeling Park that you love.

### How an IRA charitable rollover gift works

- Contact your IRA plan administrator to make a gift from your IRA to support the Oglebay Foundation.
- Your IRA funds will be directly transferred to the Oglebay Foundation (FEIN: 55-0750128) to ensure the parks you love are here for generations.
- May satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year.
- Reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions.
- Please contact us if you wish for your gift to be used for a specific purpose.

Throughout their professional careers, they have championed leadership development and collaborative problem solving, as well as inspiring organizations to hire the best people while providing ample, ongoing training and support. "Great guest experiences can become memory-makers when each person recognizes their role in the organization's success, feeling personally connected to the mission and outcomes of the business. Ongoing leadership training and support can inspire those experiences," Lisa explains.

Lisa and Barry direct their financial support of the Oglebay Foundation toward leadership development and staff training. Their contributions have helped the Foundation leverage West Virginia Tourism grants, allowing Oglebay to train all staff in personal ownership and new service standards for the recently renovated Skyline and Trace restaurants.

Additional support from the Allens has funded training in customer-centric service and conflict resolution. "Our parks are an extraordinary asset to the Wheeling community. Investing in leadership and staff development is a long-term investment in the parks themselves," Lisa says. "Great experiences lead to repeat visits and loyal and devoted guests. And when a committed guest thinks, 'Wow, this park is amazing — how can I support it?' their influence comes full circle by learning about, understanding and supporting our Oglebay Foundation."

Barry nods in agreement. "Oglebay is an essential part of our lives. Why wouldn't we give back in a way that develops leaders and provides training to make it even better for everyone today and for future generations?"

Talk about making a difference in the parks.



EARL W. OGLEBAY  
LEGACY SOCIETY

For more information on ways your estate can shape the parks you love, go to [oglebaygiving.org](http://oglebaygiving.org) or contact the Foundation at 304-243-4166.



When one flower blooms,  
spring awakens everywhere.

– John O'Donohue







# GOLF IS COOL AGAIN



Introducing the **next generation** to the skills, values and ethics of golf

**The Professional Golfers' Association of America** (PGA) has spent the last 20 years dedicated to expanding the game of golf, and Oglebay is rising to the challenge — playing under par (for non-golfers, that's a fantastic achievement!).

Oglebay experienced a surge in golf participation during the COVID-19 pandemic when West Virginia permitted outdoor, non-contact sports to continue. With families eager for safe recreational activities, golf emerged as an ideal choice, and its popularity has only continued to grow.

Youth golf programs at Oglebay are expertly led by Kevin Ecker, assistant general manager of Oglebay golf, and Kailey Pettit, a former participant in Oglebay's Summer Golf Academy. Kailey's journey from student to mentor embodies the impact of the programs and their ability to nurture the next generation of golfers.

In addition to the Summer Golf Academy, which welcomed more than 60 young players between the ages of 6 and 15, Oglebay boasts the largest enrollment in West Virginia for the First Tee Program — a nationwide initiative that introduces young players to golf while instilling important life skills. Last year nearly 120 children

participated in the First Tee. The two programs provide hands-on instruction and a solid foundation in the sport.

One of the key drivers behind this growth is the newly added putting green along U.S. 88 at the Par-3 Driving Range. "The new putting green and Par-3 Driving Range are critical components for youth golf and our ability to grow the game," Ecker shared. Kevin and Kailey prioritize fostering an encouraging and engaging environment where young players can develop their skills while having fun and experiencing success at their own pace.

Beyond structured programs, Oglebay's commitment to golf extends to community engagement and accessibility. Several events throughout the year, many at reduced or no cost, promote the game and introduce new players to the sport. These events are supported by organizations such as the West Virginia State Golf Association and the Elks Club. Additionally, Wheeling Park Golf offers a highly popular middle school program, further strengthening youth participation.

A standout initiative has been the annual sale of community-donated gear. Organized by the Crispin Golf staff, this event has quickly become a source of pride, raising



L-R: Assistant General Manager of Oglebay Golf Kevin Ecker, Crispin golf course employees Madge Castilow and Bill Castilow, and Oglebay Foundation President and CEO Eriks Janelins.

nearly \$1,300 in 2024. The proceeds go toward purchasing equipment for children, funding instructional staff and supporting other growth initiatives.

Combined with a community of donors who contributed 75 percent of the program and related equipment costs in 2024, youth golf at Oglebay is secure. The long-term goal is to cover 100 percent of the program costs going forward, starting as early as this year.

As both a resort and a public park, Oglebay serves diverse visitors, from vacationing families to dedicated local and visiting golfers. Providing rental clubs and accessible instruction ensures that even newcomers can enjoy the game, making golf more inclusive and inviting for all.

Golf is more than just a sport — it is a game of character, teaching players honesty, sportsmanship, patience and perseverance. The lessons learned on the course extend far beyond fairways and greens, shaping young athletes into responsible, well-rounded individuals.

Our mission remains steadfast: to introduce the next generation to the skills, values and ethics of golf while equipping them with life lessons

that will serve them well into the future. Through dedication, innovation and a passion for the game, Oglebay continues to drive golf's growth and make a lasting impact on the community.

To donate used equipment for the next sale, please contact Danny Ackerman, general manager of golf 304-243-4150. 🌱

## 2024 Youth Golf Sponsors



**Brendan & Erin Ball**

**Joyce Berdine**



**Ken & Robin Dunbar**



**Chris Muroski**

**Oglebay**



**OGLEBAY**  
WOMEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION

**Floyd Shuler**

**Sharon Sleeth**

**Samuel Stone**





# PARK ACTIVATION

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Wheeling Park  
**funfest**  
FRIDAYS



Every Friday from May 24 — Aug. 30, 2024, Wheeling Park came alive with live music, thanks to the generous sponsorship of Belmont Savings Bank. An average of 400+ attendees gathered each week to enjoy the sights and sounds of the season. Success is now measured by how full the lawn between the JB Chambers Memorial Ice Rink and the tennis bubble becomes! Best of all, Belmont Savings Bank is returning to sponsor the concert series again in 2025.

# SUNDAY FUNDAY



Wrapping up every summer weekend with live music at Oglebay Park's Anne Kuchinka Amphitheater from June 2 — Sept. 1, 2024, Sunday Funday was made possible through generous support from the Elizabeth Stifel Kline Foundation and Southwestern Energy (SWN). More than 6,000 total attendees enjoyed a diverse lineup, from Eli and the Mojo Kings to the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra and everything in between. In exciting news, both Elizabeth Stifel Kline and SWN, now rebranded as expand energy, are making the 2025 series possible again.



ANNIVERSARY **40** CELEBRATION  
YEARS

# FESTIVAL of LIGHTS

PRESENTED BY **WesBanco**

Nov. 7, 2024, marked the 40th Anniversary of Light Up Night with a breathtaking display of 200 synchronized drones, operated by Sky Elements, the premier drone company in the U.S. This stunning combination of technology and holiday magic set the perfect tone for the season of light.



## A GALA Celebration

On Dec. 7, 2024, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Wheeling Park's preservation with a grand gala. 300 attendees gathered to honor the 174 donors from 1924 who gifted the park to the city of Wheeling. See more about the WP Gala on page 6.



This beloved holiday tradition continues to shine! Growing from 800 participants in its inaugural year to an impressive 1,500 in 2024, the Twinkle Trot — now the largest 5K in the valley — unites generations, with participants ranging from 6 months to 79 years old.







## **BEST HOTEL FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

In December 2024, USA TODAY named Oglebay the **Best Hotel for the Holidays** — a testament to the magic we create every season!

# JOIN US!

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WELLNESS  
COMMUNITY  
FOR JUST**

**\$25/**

**MONTH**

for unlimited  
programming!

For more information,  
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**304-243-4130**

**SEE YOU IN THE PARK  
THROUGHOUT 2025!**

2025

# FOCUS ON WELLNESS



2024 was the year of wellness, and its success has proven that these programs are not only popular but vital to our community. In 2025, our expanded wellness programming includes:

## Five 5K Runs

Building on the success of the Twinkle Trot, we're adding four more opportunities to get moving throughout the year!



## Tai Chi

A gentle practice that reduces stress, improves balance and enhances mental clarity, offered in various scenic park settings.



## Pilates & Strength Classes

Tailored to all skill levels, these sessions help improve core strength, posture and flexibility.



## Pool Pilates

Strengthen and stretch with the added benefit of water resistance in our innovative pool-based classes at indoor and outdoor pools.



## Paddleboard Yoga

Experience mindfulness and strength on the water with this unique fusion of yoga and paddleboarding.



## Archery Series

Hone your focus, coordination and strength in our exciting new archery program.

## Morning Movement Walks

Start your day with a refreshing walk, designed to encourage movement, mindfulness and a connection with nature.

## Nature Hikes

Explore Oglebay and Wheeling Park's scenic trails while learning about local flora and fauna.

## Kettlebell Workouts

Full-body, dynamic workouts designed to improve endurance, strength and coordination.

## Cycling

Whether you prefer road biking or off-road trails, our cycling classes offer a fun way to boost cardiovascular health and leg strength.

## Visit with Body Bar

Our collaboration with Body Bar introduces additional fitness classes focused on strength training, mobility and bodyweight exercises.

We're also working on special workshops and seasonal wellness events to surprise and delight you throughout the year.







# 2024 THE BEST YEAR YET

FOR ACTIVATING PARKS  
FOR COMMUNITY YOUTH





The Oglebay Foundation is committed to ensuring that children and young people in the area have access to parks and actively use them for recreation, education and personal growth. Through strategic funding and programmatic initiatives, the Foundation continues to enhance park engagement, leading to remarkable participation increases and lasting community impact.

One of the key tools in achieving this mission is the **Access to the Parks** scholarship program. This initiative provides Ohio County families who qualify as low-income through the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) free access to a range of activities at Oglebay and Wheeling Park for an entire year. In 2024, despite a reported reduction of 559 eligible families compared to 2023, the overall park visitation saw a 37 percent increase, illustrating the growing enthusiasm and utilization of these resources.

### Transformative Impact of Access to the Parks

Breaking down participation by specific attractions within the parks further underscores the program's effectiveness:

- **Good Zoo:** A net increase of 1,700 visits during the summer of 2024.
- **Oglebay Outdoor Pool:** 6,700 visits between May and September.
- **Wheeling Park Pool:** 4,910 visits during the same period.

Swimming, a major activity facilitated through these parks, offers significant health benefits for children. A ten-year-old child burns between **220 and 878 calories per hour** while swimming, depending on weight, stroke, and intensity. Using a conservative estimate of **300 calories burned per hour** translates to over **2 million calories burned collectively** in a single hour of park swimming — an extraordinary contribution to youth fitness and well-being

### OPCA Success

The Oglebay Parks Children's Association (OPCA) summer day camp has seen even greater success. As a free structured recreational and educational program for children aged **6 to 13**, OPCA provides exposure to diverse activities, including tennis, roller skating, golf, swimming, pickleball and soccer, alongside visits to the Schrader Environmental Center and the Good Zoo.

For 2024, the Oglebay team, led by Megan Shoulders, leveraged targeted outreach efforts by collaborating with **Ohio County Schools** and engaging families through flyers, social media, and digital marketing. Additionally, improvements such as a **pre-registration requirement** and **consistent trolley pick-up locations** streamlined participation logistics.

The results were phenomenal:

- **308 percent growth in participation over 2023.**
- **1,046 camper days logged over the 39-day summer program.**
- Introduction of **roller skating and golf** as new program activities.

These enhancements broadened recreational opportunities and reinforced a sense of structure and accessibility for participating children and their families.





## Park Commission's 2024 Commitment to Youth

The Wheeling Park Commission remains steadfast in its dedication to supporting youth development through employment, volunteerism, recreational access and community partnerships. Key achievements for 2024 include:

### Youth Employment:

- **210 participants**
- Over **11,500 teen participants** since the program's inception in 1979

### Oglebay Good Zoo Docents:

- **80 youth volunteers** in 2024
- Over **2,038 youth volunteers** since 1981
- Introduction of the **IMLS New Zoo Paid Internship Program** in collaboration with West Liberty University

### Access to the Parks:

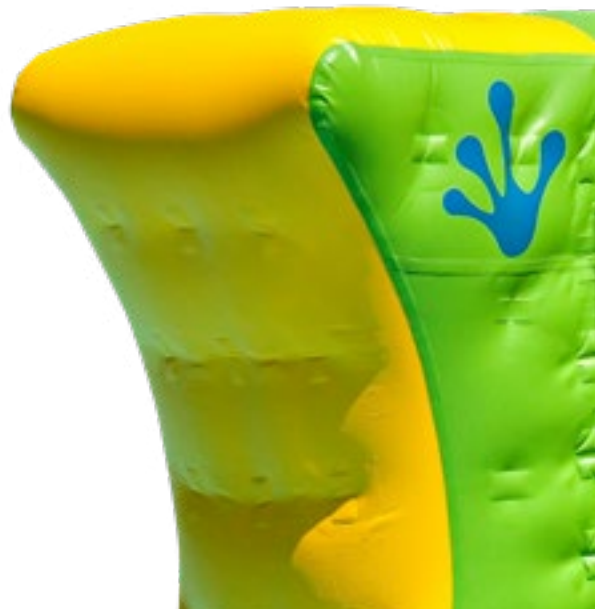
- **18,162 visits in 2024**
- **37 percent increase** over 2023

### OPCA Program:

- **1,046 camper days**
- **308 percent growth** over 2023

## Milestones and Momentum

The unprecedented success of 2024 solidifies Oglebay and Wheeling Park as vital resources for community youth. With continued support, strategic program expansion and capital investments, the future looks even brighter for the next generation of park-goers. The Wheeling Park Commission remains dedicated to fostering an environment where every child has the opportunity to explore, learn and thrive through the power of parks. 🌱









# ACCESS TO THE PARKS

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

19

ACTIVITIES



2

PARKS



20,000  
VISITS  
ANNUALLY

### Support provided by:

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# Grow Lab

**Continuing  
Our Legacy of  
Innovative  
Agriculture  
at Oglebay**



G R O W L A B

Following in the footsteps of Earl Oglebay, our Grow Lab continues a tradition of pioneering agricultural techniques and technologies. Our latest endeavor is reimagining our historic greenhouses on the Hilltop with the introduction of a full-scale hydroponics program. This initiative exemplifies our legacy by utilizing soilless farming methods to grow fresh produce year-round in a controlled, sustainable manner. Managed by our head grower, Nate Harlan, and greenhouse supervisor, Mia Lewis, the Grow Lab is a testament to our commitment to innovation, education and community engagement.

Hydroponics is gaining global recognition as a forward-thinking solution for local food production, reducing reliance on traditional

farmland while maximizing yield efficiency. By controlling environmental factors such as light, nutrients and water, we can optimize plant growth, minimize waste and eliminate the need for chemical pesticides. Our system allows us to cultivate nutrient-rich produce with a smaller environmental footprint, ensuring a fresher and more sustainable dining experience for our guests.

We are thrilled to share this innovation with the public, offering more than just a behind-the-scenes look at our state-of-the-art facility. Visitors are invited to explore our dedicated viewing area, where they can witness the hydroponic growing process firsthand and learn about the science behind it. By bridging the gap between food production and consumer awareness, we





Mia Lewis, Left and Nate Harlan harvesting lettuces in Oglebay's Grow Lab.

hope to inspire a deeper appreciation for sustainable agriculture and encourage the adoption of similar practices in the broader community.

## What We Grow

Currently, our hydroponic system supports a diverse selection of crops, including microgreens, edible flowers, lettuces, Italian basil, citrus basil, parsley, thyme and chives. However, we are constantly experimenting with new crops to enhance our variety and productivity. While yield varies based on crop selection and quantity, we are currently harvesting approximately 100 pounds of produce per week, totaling around 500 pounds as of Dec. 31, 2024. Our projected annual yield exceeds 5,000

pounds — an impressive 2.5 tons of fresh, locally grown produce.

## Adaptive Cultivation And Sustainability

The types and quantities of plants cultivated in Grow Lab are strategically aligned with the seasonal menus designed by our Food & Beverage team. Given our six-week grow cycle, we have the flexibility to pivot based on menu adjustments while maintaining optimal production levels. This adaptability ensures that our guests enjoy the freshest ingredients possible, seamlessly integrating hydroponic produce into our culinary offerings.





In 1900, Earl Oglebay purchased Waddington Farm from his father-in-law's estate and embarked on a transformative journey to advance farming practices. His travels across Europe and Northern Africa exposed him to diverse agricultural methods, inspiring him to bring expert knowledge back to West Virginia. Under his stewardship, Waddington Farm became a center for agricultural research and education.

Some of his most notable contributions include:

- **Dairy innovation:** He introduced Guernsey cattle to the area, which were more efficient in milk production and had higher milk fat content.
- **Food security advocacy:** He personally funded 4-H programs and agricultural extension agents to promote farming education and support local farmers.
- **Pioneering crop rotation:** He conducted research on crop rotation techniques using nitrogen-fixing alfalfa to naturally enrich soil fertility at a time when synthetic fertilizers were unavailable.



Before the advent of modern fertilizers, nitrogen availability was a major limiting factor in crop yields. Earl Oglebay's forward-thinking approach to soil health and sustainable farming practices laid the groundwork for agricultural advancements that continue to benefit the industry today.

Through Grow Lab, we honor his legacy by embracing innovation and sustainability, ensuring that Oglebay remains a leader in agricultural excellence for generations to come.

Grow Lab was made possible thanks to generous grants from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and EQT Foundation. 🌱

Sustainability is at the core of Grow Lab's mission. Our research into produce shelf life has yielded remarkable findings — lettuce heads harvested from our hydroponic system remain fresh for up to two months. This longevity is achieved by leaving the root system intact, which keeps the plant in a suspended state of animation when stored in refrigeration. While we prioritize serving our guests the freshest possible produce, understanding shelf life dynamics allows us to better manage supply and demand, minimizing waste and maximizing efficiency.

### **Future Innovations:** *Garden to Glass*

As we continue to refine our offerings, we are exploring exciting new applications for our hydroponic herbs. One of our upcoming initiatives is a "garden to glass" concept, where we will create herb-infused syrups for cocktail production in the spring. By experimenting with flavors and infusion techniques, we aim to elevate our beverage program and provide guests with unique, fresh and locally sourced cocktail ingredients.

### **A Legacy of Agricultural Excellence:** *Earl Oglebay's Impact*

Oglebay Park's rich history is deeply rooted in agricultural innovation. Originally established as Waddington Farm, the estate was a retreat for Earl Oglebay and his family, offering an escape from city life while serving as a hub for agricultural experimentation. Mr. Oglebay dedicated his time and resources to improving agricultural yields and production techniques, leaving an enduring impact on the region.



G R O W L A B

“

We are currently harvesting approximately 100 pounds of produce per week. Our projected annual yield exceeds 5,000 pounds — an impressive 2.5 tons of fresh, locally grown produce.







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2024  
Light Up Night









# Oglebay

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