SUMMER

AMERICAN IDEAL

PRESENTED BY THE OGLEBAY FOUNDATION

Oglebay Foundation

oglebayfoundation.org

2026 | ISSUE 03

> 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 2025, the Foundation received record support for ongoing improvements in the parks. ***For more information, visit www.oglebayfoundation.org.***

Welcome Amy Rutherford

Amy Rutherford was named vice president and director of the Oglebay Good Zoo in June. She brings more than 15 years of leadership experience in zoological education, conservation engagement and organizational development. A native of Canton, Ohio, Rutherford has deep family ties to West Virginia and says Oglebay Park Resort has long held a special place in her professional journey.

We look forward to sharing more of Amy's story in a future issue of the *American Ideal*.

Oglebay Foundation

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FOREVER YOURS
The Campaign for an Enduring Oglebay

Dear Friends,

The beauty of our parks extends far beyond lush gardens, towering trees and scenic landscapes. It is found in their continued growth and evolution — honoring the past while embracing the possibilities of tomorrow. Most of all, it is found in continuity: how one generation shapes the next through generosity, stewardship and shared experiences.

In this issue of the *American Ideal*, you'll discover stories that reflect that enduring cycle. You'll read how innovation and strategic investment are helping sustain the Festival of Lights for future generations. You'll learn how a bronze statue honors Earl Oglebay's extraordinary generosity and how generations of the Speidel family helped shape the parks through philanthropy. You'll meet donors whose personal stories have become lasting tributes, and you'll see how these efforts work together to connect families across generations.

As we assembled this issue, it became clear that these stories tell more than the history of our parks. Together, they tell the story of a living institution — one that honors those who came before us while inviting today's supporters to shape its next century.

With the Good Zoo preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2027, and Oglebay Park Resort approaching its centennial in 2028, we are reminded that every generation inherits something worth preserving and has the opportunity to leave it even stronger than it was found. Whether preserving a cherished tradition, honoring those who came before us or creating new memories for those yet to come, our shared responsibility remains the same: to support the experiences families cherish, strengthen the places that bring us together, sustain the traditions that define our parks and safeguard these remarkable community treasures for generations.

While beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, some of life's greatest beauty cannot be seen — it needs to be experienced.

See you in the parks,

ERIKS E. JANELSINS
President & CEO

Then&Now

OGLEBAY PARK THROUGH THE YEARS

Today's red brick pathway is a tangible connection to Oglebay's earliest days. Earl and Sallie Oglebay once walked this hilltop path on pink pea gravel. More than a century later, visitors follow the same route along red brick — an enduring reminder that some of Oglebay's most treasured places have changed very little.

Kick off 2026 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.

FOREVER YOURS
The Campaign for an Enduring Oglebay

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BUILT ON GENEROSITY, SUSTAINED BY STEWARDSHIP

A major irrigation upgrade will help preserve the Jones Course's championship-caliber playing conditions while advancing sustainability for decades to come.

Golf has been part of Oglebay's story from the beginning.

Planning for Crispin, the park's first golf course, began in 1927, a year before the city of Wheeling accepted Earl Oglebay's Waddington Farm as the park we know today. The front nine holes opened on July 4, 1930, launching a tradition that continues nearly a century later.

That tradition expanded in the 1950s when the Speidel family donated more than 300 acres adjacent to the park, then known as Jobetty Farm. Their generosity made two important additions to Oglebay Golf: land along U.S. 88 for the Par 3 course, which opened soon afterward, and the acreage that made possible the long-envisioned championship course that would become the Jones Course.

In 1965, the Wheeling Park Commission selected renowned golf course architect Robert Trent Jones Sr. to design the new course. Construction began in 1968, the front nine holes opened in 1970, and the remaining nine holes were completed the next year.

For more than 50 years, the Jones Course has challenged and inspired generations of golfers, hosted championship competitions, attracted visitors from across the region and helped establish Oglebay as a respected golf destination.

Today, that legacy is entering a new chapter through a comprehensive modernization of the course's irrigation system.

"Robert Trent Jones Sr. described the course as a 'true test of golf,'" said Oglebay Foundation President and CEO Eriks Janelsins. "This infrastructure investment will help ensure exceptional playing conditions while meeting golfers' expectations."

The project replaces aging infrastructure with a state-of-the-art irrigation network designed to improve course conditions, conserve water and support the long-term sustainability of the Jones Course. More than 700 individually controlled sprinkler heads, connected through miles of underground piping and advanced communications technology, allow water to be delivered with remarkable precision.

Unlike traditional irrigation systems that treat large sections of a course the same way, the new system can target specific areas based on terrain, soil conditions and turf needs. The result is healthier playing surfaces, greater consistency and more efficient water use.

At the heart of the upgrade is an advanced central control platform that enables Oglebay Golf's agronomy team to monitor and adjust irrigation in real time. Using weather data and remote-access technology, staff can respond quickly to changing conditions and ensure water is applied only where and when it is needed.

"The benefits of this investment extend beyond the game of golf," said Danny Ackerman, Oglebay's director of golf. "Precision irrigation will reduce water waste, minimize runoff and support responsible environmental stewardship. This durable new infrastructure is also expected to improve reliability and reduce maintenance needs for years to come."

Just as the Speidel family's generosity helped shape the future of golf at Oglebay more than 70 years ago, this investment reflects a continued commitment to preserving and enhancing one of the park's most treasured amenities.

By combining innovation with stewardship, this investment honors the generosity that built Oglebay Golf while ensuring the Jones Course continues to inspire golfers for generations to come.

Under the Same Stars

The restoration of a community treasure and the telescope that has inspired generations.

Photo credit: Amanda Carlson/ 1636Creative

Speidel Observatory during the renovation process.

For nearly 80 years, a small observatory nestled on a hillside below Oglebay's Wilson Lodge has invited visitors to explore the wonders of the night sky.

The Speidel Observatory, home to a historic Carl Zeiss telescope, has been a fixture at Oglebay since 1947, when it was donated by the Speidel family. The observatory originally stood on Jobetty Farm, a 300-acre property that later became part of the park system.

"We've all looked up at the night sky at some point in our lives — in childhood wonder, in moments of reflection, in times of grief or joy," said Eriks Janelsins, president and CEO of the Oglebay Foundation. "The stars remind us that we are part of something far greater than ourselves, a universe that is both humbling and awe-inspiring."

Today, the observatory continues to educate and inspire through weekly summer skywatching sessions and seasonal astronomy programs hosted by the Oglebay Astronomy Club.

Observatory being moved to its current location.

Oglebay Astronomy Club members gather near the observatory to stargaze.

Its historical significance was formally recognized in 2015, when an architectural and historical survey identified the observatory as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with Oglebay's mid-20th century development.

"As Oglebay prepares to celebrate its centennial in 2028, preserving landmarks such as the Speidel Observatory remains an important part of honoring the park's rich history while ensuring future generations can enjoy its educational and recreational opportunities," Janelsins said.

Recent restoration efforts have helped preserve the observatory for future generations. Following the refurbishment of its historic telescope, the Oglebay Foundation received support from the J.B. Chambers Memorial Foundation to restore the building's interior and exterior, upgrade its electrical system and enhance the surrounding landscape.

The observatory once welcomed thousands of visitors annually. During the 1980s, more than 3,000 people participated in programs led by resident astronomer Henry Winchester.

Although the telescope has not been fully operational for much of the past two decades, members of the Oglebay Astronomy Club have kept the tradition alive by hosting weekly summer star parties and special events, including Astronomy Day and eclipse viewings.

At the heart of the observatory is a Carl Zeiss refracting telescope that dates to the early 1900s. Historians have identified components manufactured between 1906 and 1910, making it one of the oldest scientific instruments in Oglebay's collection. Its original tripod also survives — a rarity among telescopes of its age.

Thanks to the dedication of volunteers and the partnership among the Oglebay Astronomy Club, Oglebay Park, Oglebay Institute and the Oglebay Foundation, this unique community resource is being preserved.

Soon, visitors will once again experience the night sky through a telescope that has inspired stargazers for more than a century. Together, these efforts ensure future generations can continue discovering the vastness of the universe from their own backyard.

The inside of the observatory received a fresh coat of white paint on the walls and the dome was painted light blue instead of black.

Brandmark and serial number of the Zeiss telescope at the Speidel Observatory.

Pre-restoration Zeiss telescope inside the Speidel Observatory.

Engineer Thomas Snyder installing the lens.

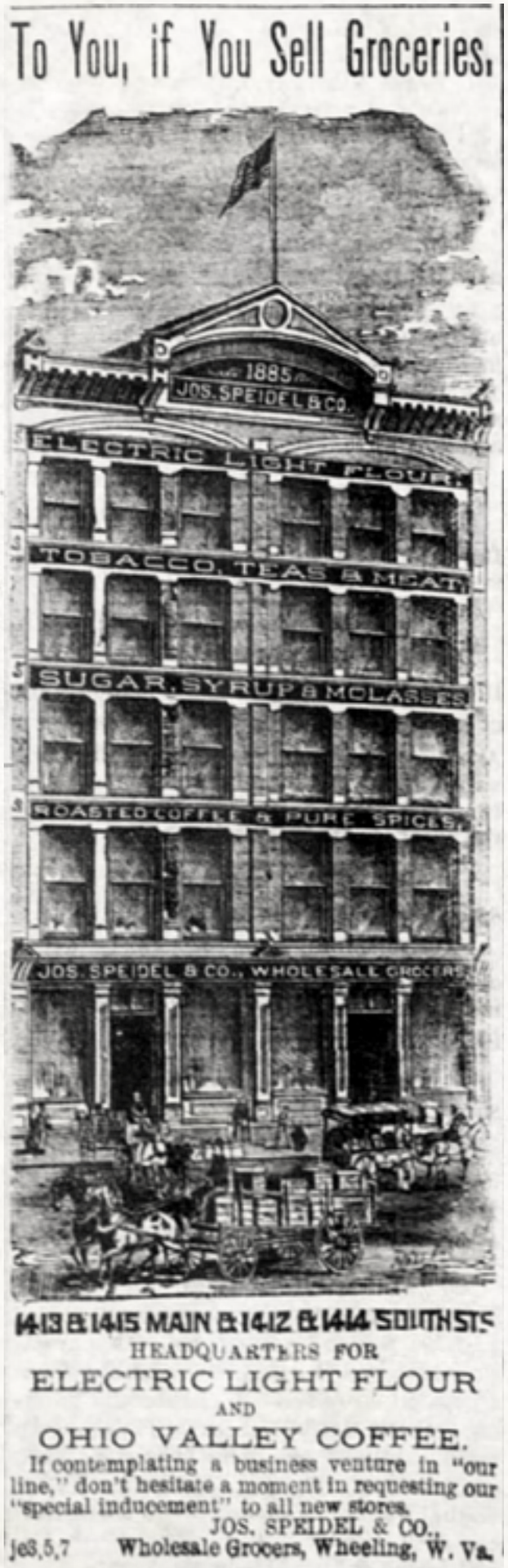
A Clock That Tracks the Stars

One of the most remarkable artifacts inside the Speidel Observatory isn't the telescope — it's the clock.

The observatory houses a sidereal clock believed to have operated in the unheated building for more than 75 years. Unlike a traditional clock, a sidereal clock measures Earth's rotation relative to the stars rather than the sun, helping astronomers precisely track celestial objects across the night sky.

The historic clock was recently restored by Glen White of White's Watch and Clock Service in Wheeling's Centre Market district, who generously donated his time and expertise to the project.

Thanks to White's craftsmanship, the clock is ready to return to service, continuing a tradition of helping observers navigate the heavens.



A Family's Mark on the Parks

Few families have left a larger imprint on Wheeling than the Speidels. The family's roots in the city date to the mid-19th century, when grocer **Benedict Speidel** relocated his family to Wheeling, beginning a tradition of business leadership, public service and philanthropy that would span four generations.

Benedict's son, **Joseph Speidel Sr. (1843-1918)**, founded the Joseph Speidel Grocery Co. in 1863 and built it into one of the region's largest wholesale businesses, serving customers throughout West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland. A self-made businessman, he also served 16 years as an Ohio County commissioner and was a director of Dollar Savings Bank, now part of WesBanco.

His son, **Joseph Speidel Jr. (1876-1940)**, managed the company's Grafton branch and became known as an accomplished horseman. He was Earl and Sallie Oglebay's neighbor, as owner and operator of Jobetty Farm, famous for its prize Guernsey cattle. His wife Elizabeth McLure Speidel grew up at Elm Hill, adjacent to the former Wheeling Country Club, which Joseph sold to Tom Bloch in 1936 upon the death of his in-laws.

Left: Ad for Joseph Speidel & Co. from The Daily Register, *June 19, 1889.*

The family's philanthropic tradition continued with **Joseph "Joe" Speidel III (1922-2003)**, a decorated World War II pilot, broadcaster and civic leader. He is perhaps best remembered for donating the 280-acre Jobetty Farm to the Oglebay Foundation, expanding the park's footprint for future generations.

The Speidel name remains closely associated with two of Oglebay's most cherished attractions. In 1947, Joe Speidel presented the Speidel Observatory and its Zeiss telescope to Oglebay in memory of Joseph Speidel Jr. Decades later, his gift of Jobetty Farm helped preserve and expand the park and made Oglebay's first championship golf course possible.

Today, the legacy of four generations of the Speidel family can still be seen across Oglebay — from the stars above the observatory to the fairways and rolling hills below.

Home of Joseph Speidel Jr. at Jobetty Farm.

Home of Joseph Speidel Sr. circa 1976. Courtesy of the Ohio County Public Library, Wheeling, WV.

JOSEPH SPEIDEL, SR.

The above cut was made from an enlargement of a group photograph taken last winter at Winter Park, Florida. In the group are ten or twelve gentlemen, most of them Wheeling men, who were known as "the 500 crowd" last year at Winter Park. Mr. Speidel is shown sitting, and the light striking his face detracts somewhat from the clearness of the portrait. Others in the group were Cecil A. Robinson, Joseph Gibbs, Ben Hildreth, Dr. E. A. Hildreth and Joseph F. Paull.

JOSEPH SPEIDEL, SR., PASSES AWAY SUDDENLY AT HOSPITAL

ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN ILL FOR YEAR, DEATH CAME AS A GREAT SHOCK.

Was One of Foremost Business Men, and Was Well Known Over the Entire State.

ALIEN MAYOR NABBED WHEN HE VENTURES INTO BARRED ZONE

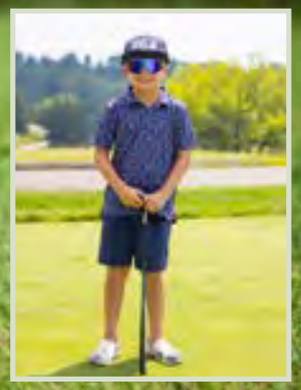
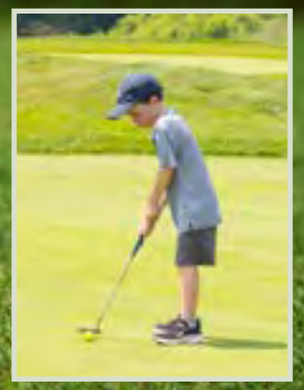
MAY BE BOY FROM WEST ALEXANDER

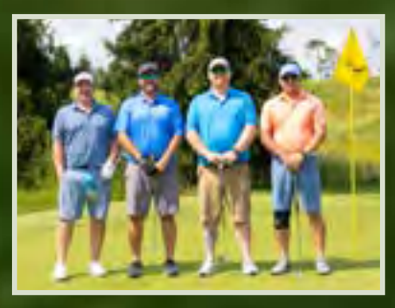
MAY BE STOPPED

Step Lively! Corns Quit with "Gets-It"

Obituary of Joseph Speidel Sr. as it appeared in the Wheeling Intelligencer, *April 24, 1918.*

2026 OGLEBAY FOUNDATION GOLF SCRAMBLE



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“CHILDREN STILL NEED A CHILDHOOD WITH DIRT, MUD, PUDDLES, TREES, STICKS AND TADPOLES.

— BROOK HAMPTON

PLANS

Making a Difference IN THE PARKS

Joy Jaeger

Fourteen years ago, after retiring from a 40-year nursing career in Florida, Wheeling native M. Joy Jaeger returned to the city where she spent her childhood. Today, she splits her time between Florida winters and Wheeling summers.

"My earliest memories revolve around swimming at Wheeling Park and Oglebay," Joy said. "I would pack my train case with hair curlers and Coppertone, meeting local friends at the pool. Since pool culture in the 1960s was the social network at the time, we'd spend our days making new friends from different schools and neighborhoods. It was a special time."

Joy, 74, lived in Wheeling until she was 17, creating memories that still shape her connection to the parks. She remembers conquering the diving boards at Wheeling Park, skating at the ice rink, attending teen dances, riding with the saddle club at Oglebay Stables and exploring the arboretum.

"After getting my driver's license, my dad let me drive his beloved '67 popsicle-blue Mustang convertible to Oglebay along with our family dalmatian, Queenie, and we walked the trails together," Joy recalled.

Those experiences inspired a lifelong appreciation for nature.

"Every child should grow up with the chance to play outside," Joy said. "Being in nature shouldn't feel like a special event — something as simple as a picnic or stargazing in your backyard can have a huge impact. Access to parks and wellness is what drives me."

A self-described nature lover, Joy especially values the parks' mature trees, arborist programs and Grow Lab. Her appreciation inspired her to endow Jaeger Cottage in honor of her parents, Earl and Sophia Brown. She established the gift through her DAF (donor-advised fund — an investment vehicle used to make charitable contributions), ensuring the cottage will continue creating meaningful experiences for families well into the future.

Those memories are already taking shape. Her oldest granddaughter, Kendall, gathered friends for a ski trip to Oglebay. "Christmas at Oglebay is like being in a Hallmark movie," they all agreed.

"They had the best time skiing, roasting marshmallows around the fire pits and staying at what we call Camp Jaeger," Joy said with a laugh. "They're already planning their next visit."

For Joy, seeing a new generation create memories in the parks she has loved since childhood and passing a love of nature on to future generations by being good stewards of the Earth is the greatest reward. Through her generosity, those traditions will continue for countless families.

Talk about making a difference in the parks.

Leave a Legacy, Receive an Income.

Benefits of a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)

A charitable remainder trust is a tax-exempt, irrevocable trust that lets you support a cause you care about — while still receiving income from the assets you contribute.

How It Works:

1. You donate assets to a trust.
2. You (or someone you choose) receive income for life or a set number of years.
3. When the trust ends, the remaining assets go to your chosen charity.

Key Benefits:

- Steady income for you or your loved ones
- Charitable deduction for part of your gift
- Avoid capital gains tax when donating appreciated assets
- Estate planning tool to reduce estate taxes
- Lasting impact on the causes that matter most to you

Is a CRT Right for You?

If you want to:

- Support a charitable mission
- Receive income during your lifetime
- Reduce taxes
- Create a lasting legacy

… a CRT might be the perfect fit.

Let Us Help

Learn how a CRT can meet your financial and philanthropic goals.

Amy Dobkin
Vice President & Director of Development
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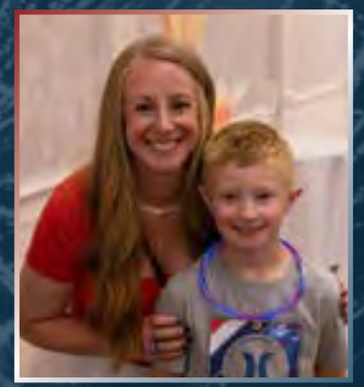
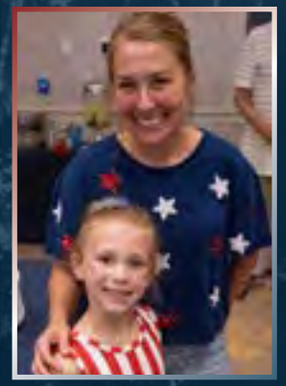
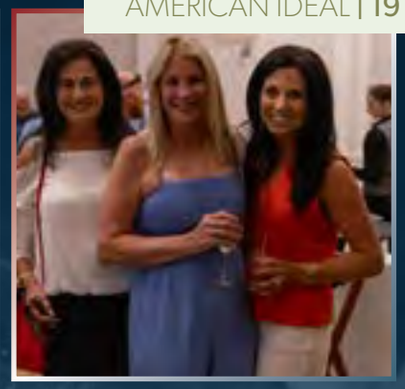
EARL W. OGLEBAY
LEGACY SOCIETY

Salute to Patriotism







A LEGACY

Cast in Bronze

One hundred years after his death, the legacy of Earl W. Oglebay continues to shape life in the Ohio Valley.

This past West Virginia Day, June 20, community leaders, donors and supporters gathered at Oglebay Park to unveil a new bronze statue honoring the man whose extraordinary generosity transformed Waddington Farm into one of the nation's premier public park systems.

Oglebay died June 22, 1926, leaving his beloved estate to the people of Wheeling and the surrounding region for public recreation. At the time, the gift was hailed by the *Wheeling News-Register* as "Our Great Opportunity" — a challenge for future generations to steward and improve the property he entrusted to the community.

A century later, that challenge remains.

"One hundred years ago, Col. Oglebay made a decision that would shape the future of our city for generations," said Wheeling Mayor Denny Magruder. "He gave us a vision."

That vision has grown far beyond the original estate. Generations of families have created memories at Oglebay, while donors, volunteers and community leaders have invested in its future through new attractions, restored landmarks and expanded opportunities for recreation, education and conservation.

Created by nationally recognized sculptor Alan Cottrill, the statue captures Oglebay in a familiar pose — leaning on his cane with his trademark fedora. It now stands among the gardens and historic buildings that were once part of his country estate.

During the dedication, speakers reflected on a simple truth: Oglebay's story did not end with his gift. It continues through every person who chooses to support and strengthen the parks for future generations.

The bronze statue will stand for centuries. More importantly, so will the legacy of generosity it represents.

The question for today's supporters is the same one facing Wheeling in 1926: How will we build upon the opportunity we have been given, and what legacy will we leave for the generations that follow?

Below: From left, Alan Cottrill, sculptor, with Oglebay Foundation board members, Joseph Eddy and Christopher Freeman.

Earl Oglebay Statue

Leadership Donor Reception

A Brighter TRADITION

Major investments ensure Oglebay's Winter Festival of Lights continues to shine.

For 40 years, the Winter Festival of Lights has been woven into the holiday traditions of families throughout the Ohio Valley and beyond. Generations have bundled up for a drive through Oglebay Park Resort, pointing out favorite displays, singing along to Christmas music and creating memories that last long after the season ends.

As Oglebay looks ahead to its centennial in 2028, the Wheeling Park Commission is making a significant investment to ensure those traditions continue. Following the successful addition of the illuminated sphere on Schenk Lake during the festival's 40th anniversary season in 2025, the commission has committed $1 million over the next two years to enhance and preserve the Winter Festival of Lights.

The festival itself began with a simple vision. In the mid-1980s, Oglebay's Randy Worls and Jamboree USA's Ross Felton set out to find new ways to attract visitors to Wheeling during the quiet winter months. What emerged became one of the nation's largest holiday light displays and a destination that has welcomed millions of visitors.

"This investment isn't about changing what people love about the Winter Festival of Lights," said Eriks Janelsins, president and CEO of the Oglebay Foundation. "It's about preserving a cherished tradition while introducing new experiences that will inspire future generations. We want today's children to bring their own families here someday and share the same sense of wonder."

That balance between honoring the past and embracing the future is guiding the next chapter of the festival.

Many of the nostalgic displays that have become part of the holiday experience will remain. Several legacy displays will be grouped thematically near Speidel, creating new opportunities for guests to enjoy some of the festival's most beloved pieces.

At the same time, many of the large, stationary displays along the 6-mile route will be upgraded with RGB lighting technology, allowing for enhanced animation, movement and color transitions.

"The Candy Cane Wreath visible from Lodge Drive will remain in its original location," said Chris Jarrett, festival consulting technician. "It's the last legacy display still standing where it was installed when the festival began. Preserving pieces like that is important because they connect us to the festival's history even as we introduce new technology."

Visitors will notice the difference throughout the route. The iconic poinsettia display at the Good Zoo entrance will be able to transition through multiple colors and animated sequences, while many new displays will be synchronized to music broadcast through visitors' car radios, creating an immersive holiday experience.

Additional enhancements include upgraded drive-through tunnels, new walk-through tunnels on the Historic Hilltop and at Levenson Shelter, illuminated geometric displays along pedestrian pathways and a 30-foot tower of lighted spheres designed to transform with the seasons.

In partnership with Wheeling Park High School, Oglebay will also create a hillside sign inspired by the iconic Hollywood landmark visible from Skyline Kitchen & Bar and lake-facing guest rooms at Wilson Lodge.

That balance between honoring the past and embracing the future is guiding the next chapter of the festival.

While guests will see dramatic changes throughout the festival, some of the most important investments will happen behind the scenes.

"The displays are only part of the story," said Ryan Wilson, director of horticulture and grounds. "We're also investing in the infrastructure needed to protect and maintain these assets. These improvements ensure that this investment will continue benefiting visitors long into the future."

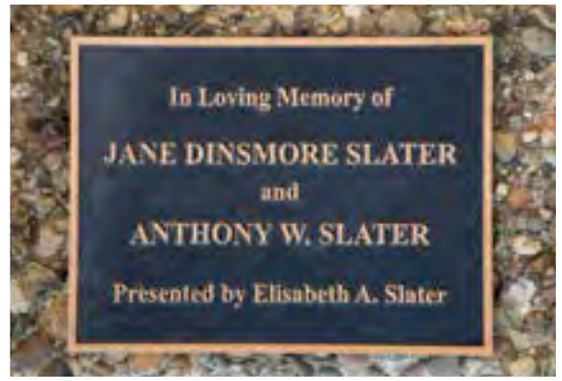
Since its debut, the Winter Festival of Lights remains one of Oglebay's most treasured traditions. By investing in both innovation and preservation, Oglebay is ensuring that generations yet to come will experience the same sense of wonder that has welcomed families for the past 40 years.

Top: Frame for 30-foot tower of spheres shown with a snowman hat. Bottom: Alternate pumpkin sphere to be used during the fall season.

Example of the lighted candy cane walk to be added at Levenson Shelter.

Example of the illuminated geometric displays to be added along the walkways.

Where Memories Bloom



Elisabeth "Libby" Slater, 52, grew up in Wheeling's Woodsdale neighborhood, making Oglebay an extension of her childhood backyard.

"Oglebay was a big part of my entire family's life. My dad went to Caddy Camp in the 1950s, my parents married at Wilson Lodge in 1971, and I spent my childhood swimming at the Oglebay pool," Libby said. "We were inaugural members of the Good Zoo. I worked at Schenk Lake during high school, and I married my husband, Dan Willming, at the Dalby Gates in 2009, followed by a reception in the Pine Room."

Those milestones, along with countless memories, inspired Libby to find a meaningful way to honor her parents, Anthony W. Slater, who died in 1980, and Jane Dinsmore Slater, who died in 2020.

"At first, I thought about endowing a park bench or a lamppost with a hanging flower basket through the Oglebay Foundation, but the locations didn't feel quite right, so I put the idea on hold," she said. "After a lot of conversations and careful consideration, I revisited the idea with the Foundation's development team. They shared a map of flowerbeds that could be endowed and named in perpetuity, and I immediately thought, 'This feels right.'"

The decision reflected more than family history. Libby and Dan have long shared their lives with Golden retrievers, and Oglebay continues to be part of their daily routine.

"Toby, our third Golden retriever, and I used to walk in the park five or six days a week," Libby said. "Now that he's 11, has a little arthritis and doesn't tolerate the heat as well, we walk together two or three times a week, and I do the other days on my own."

When Libby studied the map of available flowerbeds, one location immediately stood out.

"The view sold me," she said. "Knowing the bed I chose is along the path that's part of my regular routine means I'll experience it through every season for many years to come."

"We've known Libby for a long time, and our conversations about how and where to honor her mom and dad happened organically," said Eriks Janelsins, president and CEO of the Oglebay Foundation. "The best outcomes happen when the right place or project aligns with a donor's personal story. Libby's memorial gift is a beautiful tribute to her parents and a lasting investment in a place that has meant so much to her family."

Libby's story is one example of the many ways donors create lasting legacies throughout Oglebay and Wheeling Park. Whether honoring a loved one, celebrating a family tradition or investing in a place that has shaped generations of memories, each gift helps ensure these treasured spaces continue to inspire those who visit for years to come.

Oglebay Foundation

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For further information please contact us.

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