



YOUR fit city CONNECTION

Fit City to Promote Little Free Libraries

Your Fit City initiative is supporting Free Little Libraries in Valparaiso Parks and invites the community to participate. Free Little Libraries are mini libraries, housed in charming little wooden boxes, where people may take a book and leave a book. "Promoting literacy and a love of reading helps promote mental fitness, which is another mission behind our Fit City initiative," said Mayor Jon Costas who created Fit City in 2005 to promote fitness of body, character, community, and mind.

Fit City will sponsor five Little Free Libraries, to be built by volunteers and placed in the following Valparaiso locations later this summer:

- **City Hall, 166 E. Lincolnway**
- **200 East Park, 2501 McCord Rd.**
- **Butterfly Meadows at Foundation Meadows, 3210 N. Campbell**
- **Jessee-Pifer Park, 400 Elmhurst Ave**
- **Will Park, 354 Morgan Blvd.**

These Little Free Libraries will join more than 36,000 other Little Free Libraries worldwide, including several others already in Valparaiso. "Not only are these little libraries wonderful ways to promote reading, but they also promote community and neighborhoods as we get together to share books," said Mayor Costas. The Valparaiso Public Library will also be involved in providing books to initiate the sharing.



To learn how to host your own Little Free Library, visit littlefreelibrary.org.

Valpo Gets Growing Community Gardener Dig In

The city's community garden at Foundation Meadows is alive with activity, as 42 community garden plots are green and growing. "This is my second year and I've expanded to two plots," said Kathy Lyons of Valparaiso. "I live in an apartment so this is a great opportunity for me to grow my own fresh veggies, relax, and meet people all at the same time," she said.

Though last year was Lyons' first year of gardening, she was among the most successful gardeners. "I had a bumper crop of tomatoes," she smiled. Lyons' sister, a master gardener, helped her to plan her garden. "I learned that it's important to space your plants well and to choose the right plants for your space. Since we're sharing the garden, I shy away from plants that trail or can't be contained," she said.

The city's community garden was established in 2011 near the Parks office at 3210 Campbell St., beginning with 40 garden plots. In 2013, Parks added two new raised beds, especially designed to be more accessible. Also added in 2013 were two new water sources and a gate.

Master gardeners partner with the Parks Department to plant, grow, and harvest two plots of veggies that are donated to local food pantries. Community gardeners also donate extra produce from their plots. "With the new fencing we hope we don't have to share as many crops with the deer this year," said Master Gardener Linda Mapes. "We donate produce grown here to seven food pantries. We're looking forward to a productive and fun growing season," she said.



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Shaping a fit city



Since Mayor Costas first introduced the Fit City initiative in 2005, more than 5,000 of us have participated in programming to make us healthier and more active. "We want to be the fittest city in Indiana. With our pathways and parks and gardens, we all have so many opportunities to get out there and stay healthy," said Mayor Jon Costas.

 "Like" us on
Facebook

Fit City is an initiative between the Mayor's Office, and the Valparaiso Department of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with Porter Regional Hospital. A steering committee of community volunteers organizes Fit City programming. To learn more, "like" Fit City Valparaiso on Facebook or visit Valparaisoparks.org and click on "Fit City" under "Classes and Programs."

Mayor Jon Costas leads the Fit City charge by example. Each year he leads the Bike to Work Day event and even works at a standing desk to promote fitness. In fact, the City of Valparaiso has been recognized as one of the state's healthiest employers.

5,000+
participants in Fit City programs since 2005

42
community garden plots are planted for the season!

21
fitness stations are part of the LifeTrail system at Fairgrounds Park

19
opportunities to participate in Wellness Wednesdays and Fit Fridays this year (See schedule on this page!)

17+
miles of pathway in the city by the end of 2016

14
Valparaiso parks invite you to get out and get active

Join Us for Wellness Wednesdays & Fit Fridays

Put on your gym clothes and grab your water bottle for these fun and free events all summer.

Sponsored by Porter Health Care System at the Porter Health Amphitheater at Central Park Plaza, 70 Lafayette Street in downtown Valpo.



Wellness Wednesdays

6 to 7 am at the Urschel Pavilion

Date	Activity	Leader
June 8	Yoga	Younique Yoga
June 15	Fun Run/Walk	Extra Mile
June 22	Full Body Conditioning	Pumps Fitness
June 29	Boot Camp	Integrated Movement
July 6	Body Weight Boot Camp	Valpo YMCA
July 13	Boot Camp	TruFIT
July 20	Fun Run/Walk	Extra Mile
July 27	Yoga	Younique Yoga
August 3	Wake-up Yoga	Valpo YMCA
August 10	Fun Run/Walk	Extra Mile

Fit Fridays

Noon to 1 pm at the Porter Health Amphitheater

Date	Activity	Leader
June 10	Zumba	Valpo YMCA
June 17	Kid Boot Camp	Integrated Movement
June 24	Yoga	Younique Yoga
July 8	Body Weight Boot Camp	Valpo YMCA
July 15	Mat Pilates	Pumps Fitness
July 22	Yoga	Valpo YMCA
July 29	Boot Camp	TruFIT
August 5	Kid Yoga	Younique Yoga
August 12	Family Fitness	Valpo YMCA