

Coffee with the Mayor

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These last couple weeks have been fairly normal for coffee. I've been enjoying my Gevalia coffee at home and should have enough to last for some time. However, in stopping by Hometown Donuts I did learn they have Highland Grog coffee every day. Knowing that, I will probably enjoy a cup there on a regular basis!

There has been a renewed interest in the area north of town known as the Conservation Club, originally known as Lee-Sherrard Park. The Conservation Club building is leased to the Civitan Club on a yearly basis, and they have made considerable improvements to both the main building and the building in front. The wooded area east of the buildings has been closed to the general public for some time for a number of reasons. Based on a 2020 settlement, only city employees can access the wooded area which is used to dispose of compostable materials. Historically, and I remember this from my Indiana History class in Junior High, there is a marker located in this area marking the national center of population for the period 1930-1940. The marker is still there, one thing Linton is known for. One bit of trivia I recently learned about the marker is that it was originally made of coal in recognition of the coal mines in the area. However, later, as the need for home heating increased the coal in the marker was removed. Stone was used for the replacement, which is there to this day. At least that's one story I've heard.

The area has several lakes that in years past were used for swimming and fishing. Several people have memories of spending time there doing both with family members and friends. Later bike trails were added for additional recreation. Local archery clubs utilized the area as well to hold qualification tournaments. It was accessible to the general public for many years. Along with the good comes the not-so-good. Unfortunately, the area also became a dumping ground utilized by local citizens to throw away unwanted items. This illegal dumping became a major issue which resulted in locked gates placed at the entrances and city resources used to remove the waste.

The locked gates eventually led to a settlement that prevented opening the area to the general public. By the agreement, only city personnel were allowed to access the area, and one part of the area was used to dump compostable material approved by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. That's the current status of the area.

Since the July Council meeting, a committee has been formed to review the status of the area and make recommendations for opening the area for general use. Along with the recommendations the projected costs of that recommendation would be included. The committee has met twice to discuss the way ahead. The second meeting consisted of viewing the actual area. Even though it had been several years since the bike trails were utilized there was still evidence of the trails. The access roads are in good condition as

well. At some point in the past the water levels in the lakes had been lowered and evidently had been for some time. It was the consensus of the committee to see the water levels restored to a higher level.

The next step will be to discuss and start to prepare a workable plan to consider recreational opportunities, obtaining necessary funds and making the area accessible. The committee is composed of community members and includes the two members of the Mayors' Youth Council. Their involvement will help in making the area available for their generation!

Now for an update. The Veterans Hall of Honor organization has been looking for some time for a location in which to display the veterans' photos from Shields Hardware. A location has now been identified. The Board of Directors at Glenburn Senior Living have overwhelmingly approved for us to utilize the William T Murphy Community Building to display the photos. This is the building south of Glenburn on the corner of Glenburn and 5th street NW. The area located at the west end of the building will be used to populate as many photos as possible. There are currently 365 photos to be displayed with more turned in every week. The Twin Rivers construction class will be taking measurements and making display cases that will be mounted on the available wall space plus making a moveable wall for additional display. We don't have a projected timeline but hope to have an open house before or around Veterans Day this year. Stay tuned for more updates as they happen.