

# donlife



For Students

January 31, 2024



## Mechanical Engineering Major at Purdue Fort Wayne Steps Up to Help Hometown Project

In the early stages of a push to renovate the Fort Recovery Morvilius Opera House in Fort Recovery, Ohio, Tracy Evers-Westgerdes was serving as the restoration group's vice president. The structure was built downtown in 1883 at the whopping price of \$5,000 to \$6,000. It sat unused for 80 years, in such disrepair that no one wanted to buy it. The restoration group formed in 2020, estimating the project would require at least \$2 million, with hopes of a reopening date in 2026.

Though only halfway through his first semester as a freshman, Purdue University Fort Wayne's Caleb Evers knew he didn't have a choice when his mother asked for a favor. Still, the **mechanical engineering** major wasn't exactly sure he was capable of pulling it off.

One of the first goals was to repaint the second-floor ceiling where the auditorium is housed, but parts quickly began to crumble after removing two layers of wallpaper. Pictures and hand-written notes were taken, but the painters needed something more detailed to work from. That's when Evers-Westgerdes texted her son.

As Evers describes it, he was halfway volunteered and halfway drafted. If he were married, it would fall under the definition “voluntold.”

[READ MORE](#)



## Original Mastodon Bones Returning for Campus Display

After sleeping for approximately 14,000 years before being discovered on a Steuben County farm in 1968, the mastodon bones that give Purdue University Fort Wayne its nickname have been tucked away for the last half-decade. Coinciding with the school’s 60th anniversary, PFW’s original Don is on track to stand tall again later this semester.

The bones were displayed in Kettler Hall from 1984 to 2016 until being removed during a building renovation. Most were examined, wrapped carefully, and hidden away, while parts were sent for further study to the University of Michigan two years later.

Ever since, there’s been a behind-the-scenes push to build another public display. Ben Dattilo, professor of geology, and Scott Bergeson, assistant professor of biology, have been the de facto caretakers, but gaining momentum for the project was difficult.

During the 2022–23 academic year, Student Government Association leaders pushed through \$200,000 in capital funding for a first-floor display case near the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union. The tentative goal is to complete the mastodon’s enshrinement in April.

[READ MORE](#)



## Homecoming 'Blizzard' Nears Full Strength; Free Food on the Way!

Purdue University Fort Wayne's Homecoming 2024, a "**Blizzard of Dons**," is just getting heated up—if that makes sense. Late developments from the PFW weather center include news of free shuttle service to Friday night's ice skating party and a free feast fit for Dons in the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union on Saturday.

The athletics part of the week's festivities starts today at 7 p.m. when the women's basketball team (14-8) plays Cleveland State (18-4) in Horizon League action at Gates Sports Center. Observing National Girls and Women in Sports Day, the giveaways are commemorative pink T-shirts.

That's followed on Thursday with men's basketball. The Mastodons (14-7) are taking on Milwaukee (10-11) at Memorial Coliseum. This contest starts at 7 p.m. and includes a "White Out" alert, so prepare to wear snowy white.

The men's volleyball team (4-3) is encouraging fans to celebrate a "Snow at the Beach" theme for a Friday match at Gates at 7 p.m. against Saint Francis (Pa.).

That match is followed by a free post-game ice skating party from 9 p.m. to midnight at the SportONE/Parkview Icehouse, 3869 Ice Way. Shuttles will begin picking up students at Gates starting at 9 p.m. and continue throughout the event. Snacks and refreshments will be available.

Maybe the busiest day of PFW's blizzard will be Saturday as the women's basketball team plays IUPUI at 3 p.m. at Gates, followed by the men's volleyball team playing rival and No. 8-ranked Penn State at 7 p.m.

Those looking to fuel up in between the two sessions are invited to grab a free meal from Fresh Ideas at 5 p.m. in the International Ballroom. Games including cornhole and the giant version of Jenga will also be taking place.

The week's events finish with a 2 p.m. tipoff on Sunday as the men's basketball team plays Youngstown State at Gates. Halftime will include a performance by two finalists from last week's Lip-Sync Battle.

Learn more by visiting the Homecoming 2024 [website](#).



## Crisler Celebrated as PFW's Second Indiana Poet Laureate

When Purdue University Fort Wayne's Curtis L. Crisler was a student on campus, he once walked into the office of George Kalamaras, tossed some of his work onto the professor's desk and asked, "Am I a poet?"

"George stated, 'Your work is about love!' And I knew he got it. Yet, he couldn't tell me I was a poet," Crisler recalled. "It was up to me to find that out."

There's no doubt now that Crisler's a real—and great—poet, acknowledged by his peers on Thursday after being named **Indiana's Poet Laureate** by a committee made up of representatives from seven universities and colleges across the state and the Indiana Arts Commission's executive director. The committee's decision was unanimous.

[READ MORE](#)



## Grad Student Supports Those Struggling with Addiction

Carolyn Pang, B.S. '21, began building her leadership résumé at Purdue University Fort Wayne in 2019 when she restarted the student club Psi Chi, the international honor society for psychology, which works to encourage and advance the science of the discipline. Though only a sophomore, Pang helped get the club going again, served as president for two years, and built a foundation that continues.

“As the advisors of Psi Chi, Jody Ross and I were so glad that Carolyn said yes,” said Sara Simpson, administrative assistant for the Department of Psychology. “She entered with many doubts about being a leader, but blossomed in this role. During her two years as president, she supported students and fellow officers with warmth and humor, especially during the pandemic months.”

Because of her work, the Fort Wayne branch of the American Association of University Women selected Pang to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders in 2020. Even as a graduate student, Pang continues to support Psi Chi’s current efforts.

[READ MORE](#)

## Commencement Updates for Graduating Students

Here are some deadlines and details to keep in mind if you are planning to participate in the May 8 commencement at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum:

- If you would like to see your name in the commencement program, remember to apply to graduate by March 31. Complete the application in [goPFW](#) under Registration Tools in the Enrollment section.

- After you apply to graduate, **register yourself and your family** for the event. Tickets aren't needed, but sharing an estimated number of your family and friends who will be attending the ceremony and the after party is very helpful for PFW's advance planning.
- **Order your cap and gown here.** All orders will be shipped directly to the address that you enter, along with a return shipping label. December graduates who aren't planning to attend commencement in May can order a cap and gown for pictures.
- Visit the **commencement website** often for important information, reminders, and updates.

## Submit Your Work to the Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research

Are you involved in faculty-mentored research or creative endeavors? Do you want to have your work published in a peer-reviewed journal that's read system-wide? The **Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research** is open to all Purdue undergraduates.

Purdue Fort Wayne involvement with the journal has grown steadily in recent years. In fact, six PFW students currently sit on its student editorial board.

There are two submission deadlines every year; the spring deadline is Feb. 15.

Reach out to Naomi Gurevich, OAA faculty research fellow, at [gurevich@pfw.edu](mailto:gurevich@pfw.edu) if you have questions, or **visit the website**.



## SAB Hosting Supply Closet Cleanout on Monday

Just like a spokesperson for an auto dealer screaming about the need to move vehicles off the lot, the Student Activities Board has a problem with too much inventory. As a result, SAB is hosting a closet cleanout on Monday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Walb

Student Union, rooms 222 and 226.

“It will be a garage sale-type of thing where people can stop by and grab a couple of items from past inventories,” said Jacob Eck, assistant director of Student Life. “People will get three tickets to pick out three items.”

And it’s all free. The stash includes blankets, beach towels, T-shirts, cups, cowboy hats from Homecoming 2023, Chancellor’s Chili Fest and other mugs, hoodies, and school flags. There might even be some other unique discoveries currently hidden on shelves waiting to be emptied.

When you think about it, the whole thing sounds a little like an old George Carlin bit.

“We have so much stuff, and we need to free up the space to get more,” Eck said.

## Eventful

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*There's always plenty to do at Purdue Fort Wayne. To find your favorites—or discover new activities—check the full [events calendar](#) often to see what's happening on campus.*

FEBRUARY

6

Tues., 5–8 p.m.

### Video GAYmer Night

The Q Center will have Nintendo Switch and and possibly Xbox, but please bring a console, controller, and any games you want. Tabletop games/cards will also be available. Snacks provided while they last...

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FEBRUARY

7

Wed., 10–11 a.m.

### Staycation or Vacation: Traveling on a Budget

Spring Break is just around the corner, and Summer Break will be following shortly after! Do you want to travel and have some fun, see the world, or simply enjoy some time to sit back and relax? Learn if you should plan a staycation or vacation...

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FEBRUARY

7

Wed., noon-1 p.m.

## Career Connections: Real-World Scoop with Fort Financial

A representative from Fort Financial Credit Union will explain how credit scores are calculated and why they are important. Topics will include how credit scores are calculated and why they're important, as well as the different ways you can build, establish, and maintain strong credit...

## News Spotlight

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*A sampling of external news coverage of Purdue University Fort Wayne.*

### News of Crisler's honor picked up state-wide

Local and state media | Thursday

### Purdue Fort Wayne students discuss genocide amid International Holocaust Remembrance Day

FOX 55 | Thursday

## Mastodon Moments

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*Seen and noted around campus. Monitor our university social feeds for more great moments of Mastodon life.*





The Student Activities Board sponsored the first **homecoming week** activity, “Blankets and Bracelets,” on Monday. Students got the chance to finish no-sew tie blankets, make beaded jewelry, consume numerous snacks, and watch a movie.

Athletics



Events Calendar



News Center



Don Life Archive



Don Life is an official university communication sent weekly on Wednesday to all currently enrolled students. Don Life Special Edition is a supplement to the regularly scheduled newsletter. It covers breaking news and time-sensitive information directly related to university operations.

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