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For Students

May 1, 2024



Where Were You the Night Flo Rida Came to Our House?

The vibes at Gates Sports Center on Friday night were strong. Driven by the sound system's thundering bass that led to a nearly constant bounce to the beat from students on the main floor, Flo Rida's performance energized the crowd and did not disappoint.

"That was the most fun I've ever had as a PFW student," one concertgoer was heard saying just after the show concluded.

Even those who started the night more curious than confident about what they'd witness came away impressed with the way the bestselling rapper engaged with the herd, helping everyone create unforgettable memories.

Here are some sights and sounds of the night Flo Rida came to PFW's house:

[WATCH VIDEO](#)



Exploring the Love of Turtles with Unreserved Passion

While traveling to Costa Rica two years ago as part of a marine biology class spring break trip, Allyssa Hennessey was ready for anything. As soon as the field biologist started yelling “Baula! Baula!”—which means leatherback in Spanish—Hennessey started sprinting. Nothing was going to stop her from seeing her first sea turtle.

Hennessey, B.S. '23, was able to log statistics on the first sea turtle she ever saw, a process that included sticking her head into the egg chamber to collect measurable data.

“For lack of a better term, it was like a high I had never felt before,” Hennessey said. “These animals are so amazing. I think that was the moment I said, ‘This is something I want to do for as long as I can.’”

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College of Liberal Arts Announces Inaugural Day Camp June 10–14

Proving that not all summer camp experiences require sunscreen and bug spray, a first-of-its-kind offering from the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue University Fort Wayne will give anyone age 14 to 18 a different way to stay entertained and sharp during their upcoming break.

“The Collaboratory” is a day camp that will engage participants in collaborative activities, exciting field trips to museums and archives in Fort Wayne, and thought-provoking conversations centered around a wide range of topics related to the liberal arts.

The camp takes place daily June 10–14 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

“The liberal arts are frequently misunderstood and undervalued,” said Janet Badia, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “One of our goals is to foster a deeper appreciation for the value of the humanities and social sciences, especially the ways everyone’s lives and communities have been shaped by such knowledge. The liberal arts are more relevant than ever—and the more complex our world becomes, the more important the liberal arts are.”

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Shannon Bischoff, chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, is presented the Outstanding Research Award by Carl Drummond, vice chancellor for academic affairs.

Bischoff Earns Purdue Fort Wayne Outstanding Research Award for 2023–24

Shannon Bischoff, chair of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Purdue University Fort Wayne, was officially presented with the 2023–24 Outstanding Research Award at a ceremony on Friday.

Bischoff’s areas of specialty include linguistic anthropology, language policy and planning, educational linguistics, computational linguistics, formal linguistics, linguistic rights, and human rights.

The Outstanding Research Award honors a tenured, full-time faculty member for outstanding performance in the area of research, scholarly activity, or creative endeavor. The honoree must have achieved an exceptional record of contributions to the body of knowledge or creative works in his or her discipline—and must also have had great success communicating that information to a wide audience. Bischoff was chosen for the honor by the Outstanding Research Award committee that consisted of past ORA recipients and his peers. The award is sponsored by the Office of Academic Affairs.

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Beschloss Stresses the Importance of Protecting Democracy before It's History

Even with final exams at Purdue Fort Wayne starting this week, there was still time for one last inspiring lesson on Thursday night. Best-selling author Michael Beschloss delivered a masterclass on presidential history as the final presenter in the 2023–24 Omnibus Speaker Series.

Assuring the audience that he is nonpartisan and has voted for presidential candidates from both major parties—while also saying he would avoid naming any current candidate—Beschloss made pointed comments about living political figures to draw parallels to other moments in time.

“I think we are as close to a potential choice between dictatorship and democracy as we have ever been in American history, including in 1940 and 1860,” Beschloss said after being introduced by Richard Weiner, chair of the Department of History. “Too many people have given up their lives on the battlefield, abroad and domestically; in civil rights marches and women’s marches to expand the rights of all of us. Where we should be going is our rights as individual Americans should be expanding. That used to be a conservative notion, to protect individual rights.”

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New Safety Measures at Commencement Made Easier with Earlier Access to Coliseum

For added peace of mind, all those wishing to enter the Coliseum's main arena before and during the 4 p.m. ceremony will participate in safety and security measures consistent with many major events across the country. All ceremony participants, students, and guests will pass through metal detectors, and bags and purses will be physically screened by security personnel. Small items such as keys, phones, and wallets may be carried by hand through one of 8–10 screening zones.

To accommodate these new steps, doors to the Coliseum will open earlier this year for ceremony participants and students, who may begin entering at 1 p.m. Guests may begin entering at 2 p.m.

The university and representatives of the Coliseum are in regular contact to review expected traffic patterns so the flow of individuals into the main arena can be completed as quickly as possible. The idea is to give everyone plenty of time to find where they need to be and the perfect seat. Continue to check the 2024 [Commencement website](#) for all updates and additional information.



Volunteers Needed for Commencement After-Party and New Alumni Dinner Setup

The Mastodon Alumni Community is seeking volunteers to help set up for the Commencement After-Party and New Alumni Dinner on May 8. Volunteers are welcome to help on either May 7 or 8 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum.

This is a great way to show support for PFW graduates and join the celebration!

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Mastodon Family Zoo Day Scheduled for May 18

The Mastodon Alumni Community is hosting its first Mastodon Family Zoo Day on May 18 at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo. The event is open to alumni, faculty, staff, students, community members, and their families. Tickets are \$30 per person.

Admission includes all-day zoo access, a picnic lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., ice cream treats, and unlimited passes on select rides. Tickets are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Fitness Center Summer Hours

Fitness center summer hours will begin Saturday, as follows:

Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–7 p.m.

Saturday, 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

Sunday, noon–5 p.m.

News Spotlight

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

Famed historian visits Purdue Fort Wayne for speaker series

Fort Wayne-area media | April 25–26

PFW's 'Big Give' achieves biggest results yet

Fort Wayne-area media | April 25–26

Mastodon Moments

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



The atmosphere was electric Friday night at the Gates Sports Center during the Flo Rida concert.

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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