



Town of Munster, 1005 Ridge Road

# NEWS YOU CAN USE

Edited by: D.Z.

APRIL 2026

## Town President's Message

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Dear Residents,

As the days grow longer and the temperatures begin to warm, the signs of spring are beginning to appear all around us. This time of year, brings a renewed sense of energy to our town as neighbors return outdoors, community spaces come back to life, and we look ahead to a busy and exciting season.

One of the highlights of this past month was being included by the STOM for the groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new community tennis courts at the high school. This project represents a meaningful investment in both our students and the broader community. The new courts will provide an outstanding facility for our high school tennis programs while also creating a welcoming space where residents of all ages can stay active, play, and gather. It was wonderful to see students, school officials, community leaders, and residents come together to celebrate this milestone.

Another exciting development this season is that the Centennial Park Golf Course has officially begun operating under new management. We are optimistic about the future of the course and the opportunities this change brings to enhance the experience for golfers and visitors alike. Centennial Park has long been a valued recreational asset in our community, and we look forward to seeing continued improvements and strong community participation throughout the upcoming golf season.

As we move into spring, we'll begin to see more people walking, biking, and driving throughout our neighborhoods. I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone about the importance of road safety. Please be mindful of speed limits, especially in residential areas and near schools. Stay alert for pedestrians and cyclists, and remember that a few extra seconds of caution can help keep our streets safe for everyone.

Spring also means the return of community events, youth sports, and opportunities to spend time outdoors with friends and family. Our parks and public spaces will soon be full of activity, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of everything our town has to offer.

Thank you for your continued support and for the pride you take in making our community such a wonderful place to live. I look forward to seeing many of you around town as we welcome the spring season together.

Warm regards,

Joseph Hofferth  
Town President

## Clerk-Treasurer's Message

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Have you checked out *News You Can Use* lately? It is packed with helpful information, updates, reminders, and the occasional nugget you did not know you needed about what is happening around the Town of Munster.

There are some exciting things happening this spring, including the start of service at the new Munster Ridge Road Station and Munster/Dyer Main Street Station, giving residents a new rail option to travel to Chicago and throughout the Region.

Take a moment to give the newsletter a quick read so you do not miss helpful information and town updates.

And as always, if something sparks a question, feel free to reach out. I am always happy to help! Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer, (219) 836-6945 and [wmis@munster.in.gov](mailto:wmis@munster.in.gov)

## Parks & Recreation

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### 2026 Centennial Park Parking Registration

Registration began on March 1, 2026 at [www.centennialparkvehiclereg.com](http://www.centennialparkvehiclereg.com)

Previous registration will not carry over to 2026.

Town of Munster residents can register up to 4 vehicles per household to park for free at Centennial Park for the 2026 parking season.

Registration can also be done at the Parks and Recreation office at Munster Town Hall during regular office hours. Once a vehicle is registered and proof of residency is confirmed, a confirmation email is sent to the resident. At that point, the registered vehicle is safe to park at Centennial Park without receiving a violation notice. **Parking fees are effective and will be enforced from April 1 - October 31, 2026.** If a vehicle is not registered for a free pass and fees are not paid, license plate reading technology will be used to issue notice violations via the mail. Park visitors using the golf course or golf driving range can validate parking inside the Pro Shop but must be done immediately after parking.

Unregistered vehicles have a 15-minute grace period from when they enter the parking lot to either leave the parking lot or to pay at one of the meters or via the ParkByApp app on a smartphone. Credit/debit cards are the only forms of payment accepted. For more information, please visit the Town's website at [www.munster.org](http://www.munster.org).

### Upcoming Munster Parks Programs

The **Munster Car Show** will take place on Saturday, May 2 from 9AM-3PM at the Community Pool Parking lot. Paved parking spots are limited, so pre-register now by stopping into the office to register. This event will also feature judging, awards, food vendors, a DJ, raffle prizes and other vendors. Admission is free. To put your vehicle into the event, there is a \$25 fee for a paved, judged spot.

Purchase a **Dog Park Membership** to get your pooch out and active this upcoming season. Valid for one year from date of purchase, this membership will allow your dog to run and play with other dogs with fenced-in security. Proof of immunizations are required at time of purchase (rabies, Bordetella and distemper shots). Resident 1 dog: \$50, 2<sup>nd</sup> dog: \$30, 3<sup>rd</sup> dog: \$40

Book your **Facility Rentals** now! Graduation Parties, Family reunions, birthday parties, Showers or business meetings, there is a place for everything from the Lion's Club Social Center to multiple Park Shelters. Please call (219) 836-7275 for facility fees, capacity and availability.

Join our instructor, Evelyn Rojas w/ **Hispanic Heritage Dance** and learn music, dance, culture and more! Class will perform on stage May 24 for the public. Open to youth ages: 7-12. Class runs Thursdays, 4/9-5/21 from 5-6:30PM at the Lion's Club Social Center. Questions? Contact Mara at [micarlo@munster.org](mailto:micarlo@munster.org) or (219) 836-6922.

Still looking for a summer job? If passed, **Learn to be a Lifeguard** can give you the certification required and availability to sit for an interview with Munster Pool this summer. After learning the proactive skill set, you will demonstrate competency and take a written exam, scoring an 80% or higher, you will be able to sit for the interview. All online coursework will need to be completed prior to the water day. Questions? Contact Abby at [akresal@munster.org](mailto:akresal@munster.org) or (219) 836-6923 for questions. This class is open to new lifeguards only.

**Cricut – Vinyl Designs** will take place on Saturday, 4/25 from 10AM-12PM at the Lion's Club Social Center for intermediate abilities for \$35. This class will elaborate on the basics and you will create a personalized project. Instructor: Anitra Staley.

**Cash for Clutter** will take place on Saturday, May 9 from 8AM-2PM at the Munster Pool Parking Lot. Purge your home and sell your belongings while we bring the crowd. Vendors will sell out, so register soon! 2 spaces: \$20, 3 Spaces: \$38 – prices increase after 4/27. Admission is free to shoppers. Questions? Contact Abby at [akresal@munster.org](mailto:akresal@munster.org) or (219) 836-6923.

4/1	CSRI All Abilities Gym + Play Group	4/19	Learn to be a Lifeguard
4/8	Babysitting Program Registration Deadline	4/22	Spring Showdown
4/8	The Collective Canvas: Reflections in the Rain	4/23	Twin it to Win it BINGO
4/9	Hispanic Heritage Dance	4/24	Tiny Tykes
4/10	Get Published on Amazon in 24 hours	4/25	Cricut Vinyl Designs – Intermediate
4/11	Spring Soccer Games Begin	4/25	Spring Soccer Picture Day
4/15	Benefits of Funeral Pre-Planning	4/27	Cash for Clutter Early-Bird Deadline
4/17	Kate! Katharine Hepburn Lunch/Show	4/27	Fernwood Botanical Gardens Registration Deadline
4/18	Babysitting Lessons and Safety Training		
4/18	Chat GPT Side Hustle: Making an Income working from home		

**Any questions related to any park events, contact Parks Department at 219-836-7275**

### Spring Cleaning and Fire Safety

As winter fades and warmer weather begins to return, many people start thinking about spring cleaning and outdoor projects. From powering up lawn equipment to clearing debris and touching up paint, these seasonal tasks help prepare our homes for the months ahead. Here's a few key tips from Munster Fire Department to help keep your home and family safe:

#### Properly Use and Store Gasoline

- Use gasoline only as a motor fuel; never as a cleaner, degreaser, or for lighting campfires.
- Store gasoline only in approved fuel containers.
- Never bring gasoline indoors, even in small amounts.
- Do not store gasoline in basements or occupied areas of the home.
- Ensure containers are tightly capped when not in use.
- Keep open flames or burning material away from gasoline containers.

#### Inspect Your Grill

- Remove grease and fat buildup from the grill before first use.
- Check all parts and hoses for leaks and proper function.
- Clear spider webs, nests, and debris.
- Always close the propane tank valve when grill is not in use.
- Store propane tanks outside in a cool area away from your home.

#### Clean Your Clothes Dryer

- Ensure the dryer exhaust vent pipe is clear and unobstructed.
- Make sure the outdoor vent flap opens properly during operation.
- Keep combustible materials away from the dryer.

#### Handle Oily Rags Safely

- Never leave used rags in a pile.
- Hang oily rags outside or spread them out away from buildings to dry.

#### Practice Lithium-Ion Battery Safety

Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries power many everyday devices such as phones, tablets, tools, and e-bikes. Improper charging or damaged batteries can create fire risks.

- Use manufacturer-approved chargers and batteries only.
- Do not charge devices on beds, couches, or other soft surfaces that trap heat.
- Keep devices away from flammable materials while charging.
- Unplug devices once fully charged.
- Stop using batteries that show signs of damage such as swelling, overheating, leaking, or unusual odors.
- Store batteries at room temperature and away from direct sunlight.

Spring cleaning is a great opportunity to refresh your home and reduce fire hazards. Taking a few extra safety steps now can help ensure a safe and enjoyable season ahead!

### MUNSTER CRIME WATCH MEETING

The Munster Police Department invites all Munster residents and business representatives to the next quarterly Munster Crime Watch Meeting on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm at the Munster Town Hall, located at 1005 Ridge Road. **This meeting will include:**

- Crime statistics for the past quarter compared to the past several years
- Updates on recent crime incidents in Munster
- **A presentation from our new Licensed Social Worker Jessica Sternberg** on her role with the department and the valuable resources that she provides to our community
- Crime prevention materials and brochures will be made available
- Several **DOOR PRIZES (gift cards)** will be awarded at the conclusion of the meeting

This meeting will only last approximately one hour and all residents are encouraged to participate. For more information, please contact Sergeant James Ghrist at 219-836-6639 or [jghrist@munster.org](mailto:jghrist@munster.org). We hope to see you there.

## **CHOICE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING**

The Choice Community Council, which is an open forum for ANY Munster resident who would like to help the Munster Police Department with planning programs or events aimed at drug, crime, or violence prevention in Munster, will be holding their next quarterly meeting on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Munster Town Hall (1005 Ridge Road, Conference Room A). The Choice Community Council plans events such as the National Night Out Celebration, Red Ribbon Week Poster Contest, and sponsors special speakers and programs like Dog Walker Watch. Please note that this is not a Crime Watch Meeting. If you'd like to get more involved or help out with planning, please feel free to attend. For more information, please contact Sergeant James Ghrist at 219-836-6639 or [jghrist@munster.org](mailto:jghrist@munster.org).

## **MUNSTER POLICE DEPARTMENT SEEKING 2026 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT EVENT DONATIONS**

The Munster Police Department and Choice Community Council are now seeking monetary donations *through June 17th* towards the 2026 National Night Out Celebration, which is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> (MARK YOUR CALENDARS!). Last year, Munster was ranked as having the **#1 National Night Out event in the United States** for our population category in the United States thanks to great participation and support from our community, and we look forward to holding another great event this year. The event promotes positive police and community partnerships through a large variety of fun and educational activities for all ages in the area of the Munster Community Pool throughout the evening. More details will be announced during the coming months.

**If you would like to provide a monetary donation, please make checks payable to the Town of Munster (memo: NNO) and either mail or drop them off to the Munster Police Department (c/o Sgt. James Ghrist), 1001 Ridge Road, Munster, IN 46321.** For more information about sponsorships and participation, please contact Sgt. Ghrist at 219-836-6639 or [jghrist@munster.org](mailto:jghrist@munster.org). Thank you in advance for your generosity and support this year!

## **Public Works**

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### **DRAIN GRATES**

April showers bring more than May flowers. Spring rains can cause flooding of yards and streets. Most of the time flooding can be prevented by making sure the drain grates are kept free of debris. It doesn't take much to clog a drain and have it cause significant flooding of streets and/or yards. As material such as leaves, twigs, and litter are washed from the ground surface it collects onto the drain grating and acts like a rubber plug. The flow of water runoff into the drainage system is drastically reduced when material collects near or on the drain grate. Residents can do their part by helping keep drains near your home free of debris.

### **BRANCH AND LEAF COLLECTION WILL ONLY OCCUR IN THE FRONT PARKWAY OF THE HOME.**

Branches will no longer be collected in the alley. All branches and sticks are to be placed in front of the home. The equipment cannot easily make the tight turn onto the alley.

### **BRANCH COLLECTION**

Starting Wednesday, April 1, 2026, weather permitting; branches will be picked up with the chipper. These branches should be no longer than 5' long and 7" in diameter.

Twigs and yard waste should be put into your garbage cans or bagged. Small branches should be bundled and tied; these will be picked up with your garbage. If you have any questions, you can contact the Public Works Department at 836-6971.

### **SPRING LEAF COLLECTION**

Starting Wednesday, April 1, 2026, **weather permitting for 2 weeks**. Munster will be having the spring leaf collection. **Do not put leaves in your garbage can, plastic bags or in brown bags, Homewood Disposal Service will not pick them up.** Rake your leaves to the curb for the spring leaf collection. This is a brief collection and then the leaf vacuums will be put away until fall.

Since pick-up quantities are not known, it is difficult to predict exactly which neighborhood will be picked up on which day, so please have your leaves out. We will start on the northwest section of Town and work south.

Please place your leaves in a continuous long pile. We will be using a leaf vacuum to collect your leaves. If your street has curbs, please place your leaves right behind the curb on the grass parkway.

**PLEASE DO NOT PLACE LEAVES IN THE STREET.** If your street does not have curbs, please place your leaves on the edge of the street pavement. Also, please be careful not to mix leaves with large sticks, rocks or other debris, which could cause injury to an employee or damage to the equipment. Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions, you can contact the Public Works Department at 836-6971.

Household Hazardous Waste  
Saturday, April 11, 2026  
Munster Public Works  
508 Fisher Street, Munster  
9 am – 2 pm *Paper Shredding is available*

## Sustainability Committee

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"The Town of Munster has recently launched the Sustainability Committee to help create a greener, healthier, and more resilient community.

Mission Statement:

**The Sustainability Committee is a partnership of residents, schools, and businesses to educate and promote the health and beauty of the Town of Munster.**

The Sustainability Committee is looking for your input to ensure that its work reflects the needs and values of our community.

Please scan the QR code to access the survey/questions. THANK YOU!"



Additionally, the committee has schedule 3 community clean up days and everyone is invited to join us.

Saturday, April 11 at 9 am - Pennsy Greenway / Centennial Park Clean Up – Meet in Windy City Social Parking Lot

Saturday, April 18 at 9 am - Community Park/Calumet Ave Clean Up – Meet in St Thomas More Park Lot just north of Early Childhood Center

Saturday, April 25, 9 am Heritage Park Clean Up – Park at St Paul's Episcopal Church, Meet at Heritage Park

## Our Public Art

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Thank you to the many residents who participated in our Munster Art Contest. Everyone correctly identified that “Rail and Radius” is located in Maple Leaf Crossing on Calumet Avenue, north of 45th Street and the railroad tracks. The contest winners have been notified.

The iconic sculpture “Yesterday and Today for Tomorrow” was erected in Rotary Park and serves as Munster’s first piece of public art. It was dedicated to the Town of Munster, its people, and its heritage on July 4, 1976, in celebration of the bicentennial anniversary of the American Revolution.

The Munster Rotary Club, the Town Board, and the Bicentennial Commission commissioned the sculpture, which features three figures representing Munster’s history: the American Indian who originally inhabited the Munster area, the farmer who worked the land, and the steelworker whose efforts helped transform the region. Appropriately, this tribute to our area’s history is made from Corten steel.

The three figures were designed by metal sculptor Fred Holly and built by Bill Ores.



## Meeting Schedule

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Town Council/Redevelopment Mtg.	April 6, 2026	6:30 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Site Plan Review Mtg.	April 2, 2026	1:30 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Board of Zoning Appeals Mtg.	April 14, 2026	6:00 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Plan Commission Mtg.	April 14, 2026	7:00 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Town Council/Redevelopment Mtg.	April 20, 2026	6:30 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Park Board Mtg.	April 21, 2026	5:00 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Site Plan Review Mtg.	April 16, 2026	1:30 pm	Main Meeting Room (MTH)
Board of Safety Mtg.	April 28, 2026	7:00 am	Main Meeting Room (MTH)

## Elected Officials

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### Town Council Elected Officials:

- George Shinkan, Elected Official, Ward 1, Term: 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027
- Joseph Hofferth, President, Elected Official, Ward 2, Term: 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027
- Chuck Gardiner, Vice President, Elected Official, Ward 3, Term: 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027
- David B. Nellans, Elected Official, Ward 4, Term: 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027
- Jonathan Petersen, Elected Official, Ward 5, Term 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027

### Clerk-Treasurer Elected Official:

- Wendy Mis, Elected Official, Term: 01/01/2024 - 12/31/2027



George Shinkan	Ward #1	(219)718-4481	gshinkan@munster.org
Joseph Hofferth	Ward #2	(219)689-2225	jhofferth@munster.org
Chuck Gardiner	Ward #3	(708)606-7223	cgardiner@munster.org
David Nellans	Ward #4	(219)680-6364	dnellans@munster.org
Jonathan Petersen	Ward #5	(219)803-4550	jpetersen@munster.org
Wendy Mis	Clerk-Treasurer	(219)836-6945	wmis@munster.in.gov

Munster Town Hall, Police Department Records, Public Works and related departments will be closed on Friday, April 3, 2026 in observance of Good Friday.