

La Porte 4th of July Parade

 **Kiwanis**
Club of La Porte



2025



PARADE INFO

COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN FULL BLOOM!

A NEW PARK AND GREEN SPACE COMING TO LA PORTE IN 2025



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Happy Birthday, USA!

Welcome to downtown La Porte, Indiana - Lincolnway to be exact - where thousands of citizens, family members, and friends from near and far share this day of national and local celebration together.

You're officially part of our 79-year long La Porte tradition, whether you are a first-timer or part of multiple generations who stake out their favorite spots along the parade route with chairs and blankets up to 24 hours in advance every year.

The parade begins today with a jet flyover scheduled to begin between 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. The floats, bands, vintage cars, dignitaries, and more will start down Lincolnway immediately following the flyover. The Kiwanis Club of La Porte is once again proud to organize this event as well as to accept the honor seeing La Porte recognized as "Indiana Capital for the Day".

Community Spirit in Full Bloom was chosen as our theme for 2025 because it celebrates how consistently our community comes together in so many different groups and organizations to work on things that matter, support those who need assistance, and take pride in our local traditions. And of course, everything is in full bloom in the summer - from the flowers to the fruits and vegetables to the people achieving success in their everyday lives. We hope this theme inspires gratitude and optimism for you as it did for us.

Speaking of gratitude, we are immensely grateful for the host of parade sponsors that help fund this event, the novel and traditional entries that will capture our attention for the next couple of hours, and all the volunteer hours and donations of time and service that come together to make today special. We hope you'll take the time to review this booklet and visit our website at www.kiwanis4thofjulyparade.org to appreciate the sponsors and even vote in the window contest!

On behalf of the Kiwanis Club of La Porte, we also invite you to join us in our mission to improve the world, one child and one community at a time. Whether with us or elsewhere, be sure to share your gifts and talents with groups, causes, and organizations working to enrich La Porte and keep our community spirits in full bloom!

Trudy Menke
Kiwanis President-Elect
Parade Chair

Bob Taschler
Kiwanis Vice President
Parade Co-Chair



[OFFICIAL]

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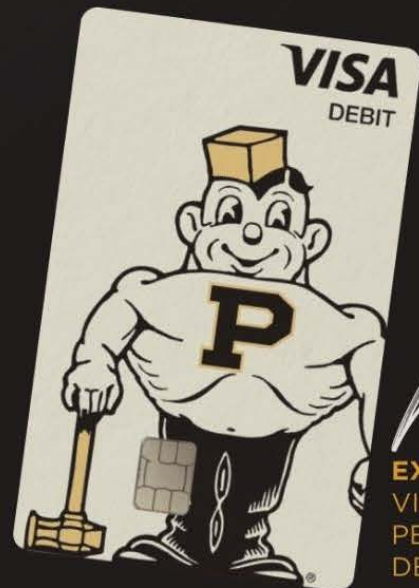


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New
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GRAND CELEBRATION MARSHAL

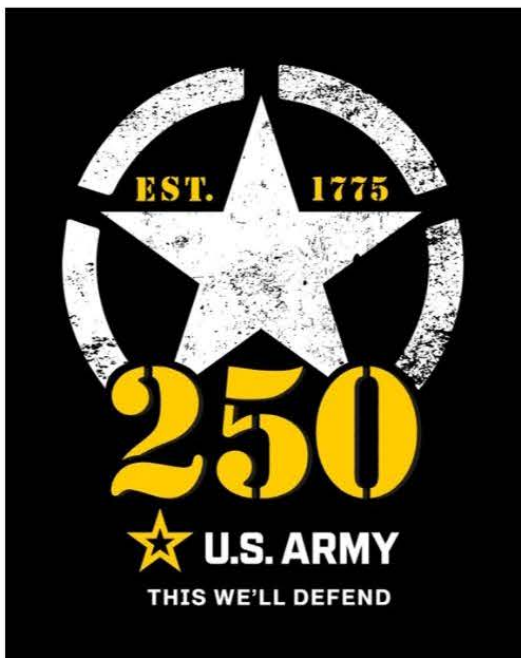
Retired Master Sergeant Charles Martin



June 14th marked the 250th anniversary of the Continental Army's establishment by the Second Continental Congress in 1775, more than a year before the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776. The Kiwanis Club of La Porte selected Mr. Charles Martin as a local veteran to represent the Army's anniversary. What a find in retired Master Sergeant Charles Martin! Mr. Martin was born in La Porte County (Wanatah) in 1934, and he enlisted in the Army in 1954, retiring in 1975. Four of his five brothers also served in the Army. Married to his wife, Mary, for 39 years before she passed, he served two tours in Korea (where he arranged for the adoption of their youngest daughter), one tour each in Ethiopia, France, and Vietnam, plus a temporary duty in South Wales. He returned to our community and worked for another 22 years at Howmet as he and Mary raised their two daughters. Mr. Martin remains extremely active at the age of 91.

Our community is fortunate to benefit from Mr. Martin's continued service at the VFW Post 1130, Post 83 American Legion Honor Guard, AMVETS (Secretary), Vietnam Veterans (Secretary), American Legion Post 403 (Service Officer), Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans, Life Member of the VFW, and membership in the 40 & 8 (an honor society of military veterans). A full life of service worthy of recognition and gratitude brings us together to honor Mr. Charles Martin for his example, commitment, and a lifetime of service.

U.S. Army's 250th Birthday Celebration



As a matter of history, the Army was established in June, 1775, the Navy in October, 1775, and the Marines in November, 1775. This year marks the 250th anniversary of all 3 branches of the Armed Forces. Much later, President Truman established the Air Force in September 1947 once we had planes! The National Guard actually celebrates its origin from December 1636, when the first militia regiments in North America were organized in Massachusetts.

We thank all our military veterans from each branch of service as we celebrate and appreciate their commitment and sacrifice on behalf of their country and their fellow citizens.

La Porte Park & Recreation Plans Teen Bash with Kiwanis Club Support

One age group in our community underserved by parks – teens – actually stands to benefit the most from being outdoors in social and recreational activities. Providing spaces and events for teens promotes mental and physical wellness, develops social skills and encourages new experiences.

With that in mind, the Kiwanis Club of La Porte and the City of La Porte Park and Recreation Department are collaborating on a teen initiative this summer. After meeting with students from La Porte High School's Key Club (a student service club sponsored by Kiwanis), the teens have planned a Teen Bash – designed by teens, for teens – on **Saturday, August 9th**, at Fox Park. Planned activities include:

- Painting trash and recycling cans (leaving a legacy)
- Hosting a craft area (morse code bracelets, t-shirt decorating)
- 3-on-3 basketball tournament
- DJ entertainment and food trucks
- Skatepark showcase or contest
- Scavenger hunt with interactive stations

This event not only aligns with the Park Department's mission to engage the youth but also strengthens community ties and showcases the positive impact of collaborative efforts. The hope is the Teen Bash will be a memorable experience for all participants and set a precedent for future community events. Kiwanis Club, beyond supporting the Key Club efforts, has provided a \$4,000 contribution to cover the event expenses. The Kiwanis Club vision is one of being a positive influence in communities worldwide – so that one day, all children will wake up in communities that believe in them, nurture them and provide the support they need to thrive.

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LaPorte 4th of July Parade



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City of La Porte is Capital for the Day



Since the mid-1940s, the City of La Porte has been recognized for its excellence in 4th of July celebrations. This year is the 79th in which the sitting Governor of the State of Indiana has seen fit to name the City of La Porte, "Capital for the Day". Thanks to its citizenry, which lines the two-mile-long parade route, La Porte continues to rise above the rest. As written in the Proclamation:

- **Whereas**, July 4th is a day set aside for celebration and renewed dedication to American Freedom; and
- **Whereas**, the mantle of responsibility for the continuation of our free nation rests on the shoulders of every American citizen; and
- **Whereas**, our nation will remain strong only through continued vigilance, education, and commitment to the preservation of liberty and justice, for all; and
- **Whereas**, the Kiwanis Club of La Porte seeks to encourage such recognition and respect for the traditions and principles of our American heritage by sponsoring an annual celebration of our national Declaration of Independence: "Community Spirit in Full Bloom."

Now, therefore, I, Mike Braun, Governor of the State of Indiana, do hereby proclaim July 4th, 2025, as **City of La Porte Capital for the Day...**

FLYOVERS

Our annual parade is never complete without the traditional flyover, and almost every year has brought this spectacle of sight and sound to the La Porte 4th of July parade. While never confirmed until just days before the parade, for the last several years our community can thank the Indiana Air National Guard in Fort Wayne for a safe and spectacular kick-off! It's scheduled to be overhead between 10:00-10:30 a.m.



LAPORTE PROUD!

GRAND PARADE MARSHAL

Dr. Dee McDonald, Bethel University President

We are excited to celebrate Dr. Dee McDonald, who was unanimously selected as the ninth president of Bethel University in Mishawaka, Indiana. He's a 2001 graduate of La Porte High School and starting catcher on the Slicers baseball team that clinched the state championship in 2000. This appointment to Bethel brings him closer to his roots, fulfilling a long-held desire to live back in Indiana and make a difference in the local area for good.

Although Dee and his wife, Amanda (Ludlow), are high school sweethearts and have resided far away from the area for more than two decades now, they always try to get back for the LaPorte 4th of July Parade and enjoy the flyover and festivities that La Porte has to offer. Dr. McDonald resides in the South Bend area with his wife and their two children. He credits much of his professional life to the enduring values and community that shaped his passion for leadership, excellence, and hard work.

McDonald's professional journey spans nearly two decades in Christian higher education, including leadership roles at Olivet Nazarene University, North Central University, Southeastern University, and most recently, as Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing at Crown College in Minnesota.



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AND HAPPY
FOURTH
OF JULY!**



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GRAND PARADE MARSHAL

Maggi Spartz, President/Founder of Unity Foundation



As Unity Foundation of La Porte County's founding president, Maggi Spartz has led the organization since its creation in 1992. For more than three decades, her unmatched dedication has transformed local philanthropy and inspired countless acts of generosity. Under Maggi's leadership, Unity has directly raised \$55 million and supported another \$23 million in grants to benefit local communities. Maggi's legacy includes awarding nearly \$29 million in grants and scholarships, building permanent endowment funds, and launching collaborative efforts in education, housing, the environment, youth development, and economic growth. She also helped bring \$18 million from the Lilly Endowment to support literacy and education for over 67,000 learners, reflecting her deep commitment to lifelong learning. Maggi is married to her husband, Tom, and they have three sons. She enjoys sailing both as a hobby and competitively, racing in

29 Chicago-Mackinac yacht races and placing First Overall with her team in 2015. A tireless connector, Maggi has strengthened nonprofit capacity, mentored emerging leaders, and promoted innovation across the region. Her work continues to shape La Porte County's future and serves as a model of what's possible when vision meets community. Join us as we celebrate Maggi Spartz today!

The logo for the X Insurance Great Lakes Grand Prix. It features a stylized 'X' shape with a checkered pattern. Inside the 'X' is a speedboat with 'X INSURANCE' written on its side. Below the boat, it says 'michigan city, indiana'. To the right of the 'X' is a large, dynamic splash of water.

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La Porte County Family YMCA Launches Mobile Youth Unit in Collaboration with Kiwanis Club of La Porte

The La Porte County Family YMCA and the Kiwanis Club of La Porte are thrilled to announce an exciting new initiative designed to expand youth outreach and eliminate barriers to participation: the **Mobile Youth Unit**. Bolstered by Kiwanis' awarding the idea as their winner for an innovative "Spark Starter" project in late 2024, their \$25,000 contribution, and additional community partnerships, the YMCA is launching a fully equipped 22-foot vehicle that will function as a mobile hub for youth programming. This collaborative outreach project is rooted in a shared mission—to support youth development, promote equity, and make a lasting impact throughout the La Porte community. The Mobile Youth Unit will travel to underserved neighborhoods and community events, bringing a wide range of engaging, free programs right to the heart of where kids live and play. By removing transportation and cost obstacles, the unit makes it easier for families to access valuable resources and enrichment opportunities.



What the Mobile Youth Unit Offers:

- Sports programming to encourage active play and teamwork
- STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) inspired activities
- Healthy snacks to support growing minds and bodies

This mobile initiative embodies the YMCA and Kiwanis Club's shared commitment to youth development, equity, and community impact. By meeting kids where they are, we hope to make lasting connections, spark curiosity, and support their growth in fun and meaningful ways. Together, the YMCA and Kiwanis Club of La Porte are paving the way for a more connected, equitable, and empowered future for our community's youth.

Interested in joining the Kiwanis Club of La Porte?

As a Kiwanian, it is our mission to improve the world one child and one community at a time. There are several volunteer opportunities and ways to get involved, such as:

- **Two Wednesday meetings a month (at noon)**
- **4th of July Parade planning and coordinating**
- **Spring pancake breakfast - free to the community**
- **Pop-up picnics at area parks - free to the community**
- **Student-led clubs in our schools - sponsored by Kiwanis**
- **Shenanigans and new friends**
- **Fundraisers like "Radio Days" and an annual golf outing**
- **Impactful financial donations to youth-related organizations and programs serving La Porte**

Contact Kiwanis Club of La Porte President, Anthony Swedersky, at kiwaniscluboflaporte@gmail.com



2025 PARADE LINE-UP

As of June 25, 2025

1. American Flag - LaSalle Council-Potawatomi District Scouting BSA
2. Vietnam Veterans Inc., La Porte, IN
3. **Grand Celebration Marshal - Retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant Charles Martin**
*****U.S. Army Celebrating 250th Anniversary*****
4. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1130, La Porte, IN
5. Roger Galloway, PROUDLY SUPPORTS VETERANS
6. La Porte County Voiture 276 of La 40 & 8 Societe' (Veterans Honor Society)
7. American Legion Post 83
8. Guardian Riders
9. The Great Lakes Museum of Military History
10. City of La Porte Mayor Tom Dermody
11. La Porte City Band
12. Hoosier A's Model A Club
13. Indiana State Police
14. Westville Correctional Facility Emergency Response Operations (ERO)
15. La Porte County Sheriff's Office
16. La Porte County Sheriff's Office Mounted Posse
17. La Porte County EMS
18. La Porte City Police Department
19. La Porte City Fire Department
20. Coolspring Township Volunteer Fire Department
21. Lincoln Township Volunteer Fire Department
22. Center Township Volunteer Fire Department
23. Kingsford Union Fire Department
24. Kankakee Township Volunteer Fire Department
25. Kingsbury Township Volunteer Fire Department
26. Noble Township Volunteer Fire Department
27. Scipio Township Volunteer Fire Department
28. Springfield Township Volunteer Fire Department
29. Pleasant Township Volunteer Fire Department
30. J&B West Roofing and Construction
31. State Representative Jim Pressel
32. Honorary Parade Marshals LaPorte High School State Qualifiers
33. La Porte High School Marching Band
34. Polish National Alliance
35. Swanson Center Mental Health
36. Michiana Clowns
37. La Porte High School Pom and Dance Team
38. La Porte Pop Warner
39. La Porte Slice Baseball
40. Servpro of LaPorte & Porter County
41. Kiwanis "Come Grow with US"
42. Edison Jr-Sr High School "Eagle Squadron" Marching Band
43. **Grand Parade Marshal - Dr. Dee McDonald, Bethel University President**
44. La Porte County Republican Party
45. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa
46. South Central Rockettes Varsity Dance Team
47. IBEW local 531 LP, EWMC/RENEW Committee
48. Orak Shrine Oriental Band
49. Orak Shrine Fezz Float
50. La Porte County Public Library Bubble Mobile



Scan for Most
Current Line-Up

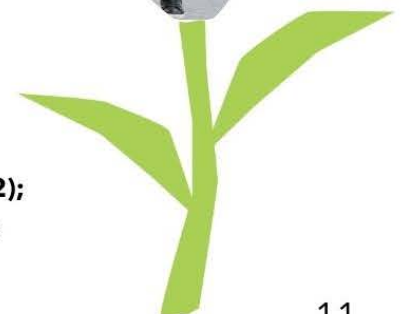


2025 PARADE LINE-UP

As of June 25, 2025

51. Bethany Church Local Heroes Raffle Car
52. Polish Falcons
53. La Porte County Sunday Farmers
54. Rumely-Allis Chalmers La Porte Heritage Center
55. E-Pak Machinery, Inc.
56. Culver's of La Porte 586
57. Kiwanis Supports youth Athletics
58. Michigan City High School Wolfpack Pride
59. Xinsurance Great Lakes Grand Prix
60. Logan's Heros Offshore Racing
61. Kabelin Ace Hardware
62. Calvary Baptist Church
63. La Porte High School Cheerleading
- 64. Grand Parade Marshal - Maggie Spartz, President/Founder Unity Foundation of La Porte County**
65. Girl Scouts Community 204
66. QCC
67. La Porte Municipal Airport
68. Arts in the Park
69. Horizon Bank
70. Eldridge's ATA Leadership Martial Arts
71. Carpenters Local 1485
72. La Porte County Meals on Wheels
73. Pioneer Land
74. La Porte County Fair and 2025 Fair Queen & Contestants
75. La Porte County 4-H Horse & Pony E-X Riders Drill Team
76. Commissioner Steve Holifield
- 76A. La Porte Lions Club

77. Meghan Maddox, Realtor MTM Realty Group & Peggy Loza, The Mortgage Exchange
78. La Porte County Democratic Party
79. Howmet Aerospace
80. New Prairie High School Marching Cougars
81. New Prairie High School Cheerleading
82. New York Blower
83. Jimmy Pressel La Porte County Council
84. Summers of La Porte
85. Arby's AES
86. La Porte County Special Olympics
87. La Porte Community Federal Credit Union
88. ASM Mechanical/Crush Baseball
89. Mangled Axles Jeep Krew
90. Robert Tylisz Appliance
91. Gann Mechanical
92. Coates Racing - Andrew Coates La Porte
93. Chaotic Empire LLC
94. A Fresh Start Cleaning Services
95. RE/MAX Diamond Properties
96. Michiana Renaissance Festival
97. Door Village Harvest Festival
98. Niles Scream Park
99. La Porte LifeWise Academy
100. Bennett's Up Towne Shoppes/Hoosier Travel LLC
101. Diaz Construction & Roofing
102. Dumpster Dudez
103. Waste Management



Portable Toilets

2 at Old Aldi location (Andrew Ave/Hwy 2);
2 at Triangle property-Bethany Church;
2 at Courthouse & 2 at La Porte Pantry
(Lincolnway/Tipton)



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HONORARY PARADE MARSHALS

~ State Qualifiers ~

The Kiwanis Club of La Porte is proud to have communicated with all our community public high schools in an effort to offer state qualifying teams, individuals, and clubs an opportunity to be recognized as Honorary Parade Marshals in the 4th of July parade. Teams, clubs, and individual achievers are recognized below - please cheer them on as they pass by, and join us in celebrating with them today! (Achievers participate in the parade with their schools.)

La Porte High School

TEAMS

- 2024-2025 Dance Team



INDIVIDUALS

- Girls Cross County - **Caitlyn Cannes, Faith Spain**
- Boys Cross County - **Liam Lilly**
- Boys Swimming - **Chaise Adrian, Roman Garay, Abbas Hakim, Otto Wildhart**
- Boys Wrestling - **Josh England**
- Boys Track - **Landyn Hunt, Liam Lilly, Jack Miskowicz, Hunger Quadlin, Tayshaun Williams, Gavin Wilson**
- Choir - **Molly Cooper, Nevaeh Nelson, Noah Parmer**
- Band - **Mya Moore**



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**Riley
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Thank you to our 2025 Run for Riley Sponsors!



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Indiana Kiwanians have supported the work of Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis for over 100 years, and the La Porte Kiwanis Club has been repeatedly acknowledged for its long commitment to fundraising support and generous donations to Riley.

The Kiwanis Club of La Porte organizes the 4th of July "Run for Riley". The race is traditionally run in the morning just prior to the parade, and the route travels back and forth along the entire parade route. 100% of net proceeds from the run are directed to Riley. The sponsors listed above have graciously provided the seed money to cover the related expenses, and the net fees from runners last year sent funds in excess of **\$8,200** to make a difference! Thank you to all the businesses that sponsor and the runners, young and old, who run for so much more than a medal!



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Wishing everyone a safe and happy Independence Day!

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**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY
4TH OF JULY**



**We Love
Our
Community

HAPPY
4TH of JULY!**

1006 Lincolnway, La Porte

La Porte: A Community that Comes Together!

Give us a minute to notice those within the club and the community who contributed to this year's parade. Though we highlight sponsors in our program and on our website, the parade doesn't happen without a lot of support from our Kiwanians, other community-minded individuals, and generous local businesses!

- **Kiwanis Parade Committee** - prioritizing the planning and stepping up in big and small ways
- **Kiwanians** - coordinating Run for Riley, the 3rd Annual Window Decorating Contest, and building our Kiwanis Club of La Porte float
- **Kiwanians and Volunteers** - logistics, sponsorships, communications, social media, accounting, design and preparation of the parade sponsor book, starters, and road rangers
- **Bob Wellinski and others** - various photographs generously shared for public use
- **La Porte Chrysler** - use of a van to distribute all the program books
- **Al Ott & LPHS Girls Basketball Team** - Trash Box Distribution, year after year
- **Packaging Logic** - generous ongoing contributions of all the cardboard trash boxes that line the route
- **Waste Management** - Trash Box Pick Up - always dependable
- **Hawkins Print Shop** - support for parade sponsor book printing
- **Haynes International** - custom made medals by Haynes with lanyards gifted for Run for Riley winners
- **Urban Enterprise Association** (UEA) grant award - financial support and encouragement
- **City of La Porte** - assistance with road closures, police protection, proclamation request, security, emergency preparedness, and more
- **Flyovers** - Indiana Air National Guard

We apologize in advance, because we know we likely forgot someone!

Let us know if we did, and we'll add you to our post-parade THANK YOUs on social media!



Kids need Kiwanis, and Kiwanis needs you! www.kiwaniscluboflaporte.org



THANK YOU

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www.laportelakefest.com

CARPENTERS

LOCAL 1485



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LAPORTE, IN

The graphic features a radio tower on a yellow circle with blue waves below it. To the right are red and blue fireworks. The text "WIMS" is in large blue letters, with "95.1 FM/AM 1420" and "VALPARAISO 106.7 FM" below it. The message "Happy 4th of July! Team WIMS wishes you a fun and safe holiday, from our family to yours!" is at the bottom right.

WIMS
95.1 FM/AM 1420
VALPARAISO 106.7 FM

Happy 4th of July!
Team WIMS wishes you a fun and safe
holiday, from our family to yours!

Happy Fourth of July! 

ALCO | **ACCESS**
LA PORTE COUNTY
www.accesslaportecounty.org

You're at the LaPorte 4th of July Parade? So are we!
We will have the replay of today's parade available
for you to enjoy tomorrow night (or anytime after!).

Where to watch:
Comcast Cable Channel 97 and 99 in
Michigan City and LaPorte
(Guaranteed Showing on Saturday, July 5 at 7 p.m.)
Streaming on our website at www.accesslaportecounty.org
(Guaranteed Showing on Saturday, July 5 at 7 p.m.)
Watch it anytime at our YouTube Channel
[@AccessLaPorteCountyMedia](https://www.youtube.com/@AccessLaPorteCountyMedia)
(Available on or before Saturday, July 5 at 7 p.m.)

Third Annual Window Decorating Contest

Right now your votes are needed! Voting ends at midnight on the 4th of July. Visit the parade website at www.kiwanis4thofjulyparade.org or scan the QR code below to view the photos from those that entered the contest. From there, click over to the survey to register your vote! The top three with the most votes receive \$250, \$100, and \$50 accordingly, as well as a business spotlight on WIMS Radio, a commemorative Kiwanis branded gift and a free entry in the 2026 parade – plus bragging rights!



**Brokerworks Real Estate Group
2024 Winning Window Decorating Contest Display**



**Scan
Scroll
Vote**

After hundreds of votes from the community in 2024, 1st, 2nd and 3rd places were awarded to Brokerworks Real Estate Group, Midwest Eye Consultants, and Center Township Trustee - Lisa Pierzakowski, respectively. The Kiwanis 4th of July Parade

Committee would like to thank the businesses who entered this year's contest to display their 4th of July patriotism and all of those who voted to reward their efforts. The wonderful displays in our area business windows add to the celebration and are another way to welcome everyone to La Porte for the 79th annual 4th of July parade - VOTE today!





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Drawing
August 24, 2024

#21
Jake Huelat
Indiana Farm
Bureau
109 J St

#22
David Shreve
Indiana Farm
Bureau
109 J St

#23
Mat Blair's Golf
Studio
304 J St

#24
Hometown Health
& Wellness
1104 6th St

#25
Automotive
Color & Supply
1104 W St Rd 2

#26
Center Township
Trustee
1108 W St Rd 2

#27
Healthy Life
1112 W St Rd 2

#28
Kabelin Ace
Hardware
512 Andrew Ave

#1
YOUR BUSINESS
NEXT YEAR!

#20
House of Stitches
Cross Stitch &
Framing
1700 Lincolnway

#19
Barber
Mental Health
101 W 18th St

#18
Cannon's
Automotive
710 Tyler St

#17
Danny's
Fireworks
1006 Lincolnway

#16
Indian Deli &
Catering
805 Indiana

#15
Thaddeus C.
Gallery
822 Lincolnway



SHOP THE ROUTE!

Lincolnway to the J



#2
Immediate
Movers
1730 E
Lincolnway

#3
Grandma's House
of Pancakes
502 State St.

#4
HotSpot Cafe
602 Lincolnway

#5
Downtown
Delights
604 Lincolnway

#6
Mucho Mas
609 Lincolnway

#7
Thode Floral
610 Lincolnway

#14
Emmy's Bakery
810 Lincolnway

#13
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#9
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Boutique
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#8
Red Door Fire
Kitchen & Lounge
612 Lincolnway



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