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## NEWS FROM THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL • DELPHI, INDIANA July 2023



[www.wabashanderiecanal.org](http://www.wabashanderiecanal.org)

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### Volunteer Highlight: Dean "Dino" Smoll

Each month, we want to highlight one of our many volunteers in recognition of their service and to share

## Canal Days and a Super Summer



A few weeks ago, we celebrated in style with the Canal Days Festival, and we pulled out all the stops! If you weren't able to join us (or if you want to relive the memories), here's a quick recap of how we got to share and enjoy Indiana history with guests from all over!

First, the crew of *The Delphi* heroically ran seven voyages up and down this restored portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal, the only navigable and publicly accessible portion of the canal remaining in Indiana!

ways that you can get involved in our mission of preservation, education, and recreation.

This month, we'll hear from Dean "Dino" Smoll.



**What do you do at the Canal?** I drive the boat and help maintain it. I tried narrating too, but I need to brush up and get better at that.

I'm a maintenance electrician, so the electronic control system on the boat is right in my wheelhouse, pun intended. I've helped with diagnosing motor troubles and swapping motors out to keep the boat running smoothly.

**Where are you from, and how long have you been volunteering at the Canal?** I grew up in Central Wisconsin, but home to me is this Northwest Indiana. I've been here a lot longer than anywhere else! I went to school in Chicago and flipped a coin to decide whether I would move back north or head south. This is my second year on the boat crew.



In the Pioneer Village, there were demonstrations galore where children and adults could get hands-on with different historic trades (and even take their treasures home!). Above we see a young carpenter working under the guidance of Rob Lawson building a birdhouse, just as Rob's father-in-law, Jim French, did for many years!

Below, you can see Linda Cooper at the Paper-Maker's Shop. Visitors had a chance to make their very own paper using traditional methods, thanks to Linda sharing her expertise and help!



Do you know why we celebrate Canal Days on July 4th weekend? The answer has to do with American canal history! The Erie Canal's construction began on July 4, 1817, and it was an astounding success. In subsequent years, almost every internal improvement project started on July 4 as a hopeful token of good luck. Historian Alvin Harlow noted, "The canal project which did not turn its first earth on the Fourth was considered to have made a bad start." Construction on the Wabash & Erie Canal began on George Washington's birthday (February 22), so maybe the July 4th tradition was worth observing!



**How did you get involved at the Canal?** It was all Mike's fault. I was skeptical at first because I didn't know what to expect. After getting a tour of the facility and seeing the boat, I was totally on board (pun intended).

Once you see what has been done here, how the organization has done an incredible job turning a swampy canal into a destination for people to learn history, it's hard not to want to join!

**What is your favorite part of volunteering at the Canal?**

It's fun being around the people, both guests and fellow volunteers. It's a great feeling to see people board the boat, excited for the ride. It's rewarding to see people smile when they get off the boat having had a great experience.

**Do you have a favorite Canal Era fun fact?** I got this from Wikipedia, but I've verified with friends too: canals had to be lined with a special clay to keep water inside. At the same time, muskrats are the most dangerous thing because they burrow through the clay lining and could cause real



Also in the Pioneer Village, Karen Bradshaw set up games and activities for children (and children at heart) to enjoy. Above we see some explorers completing Karen's scavenger hunt with different locations and items in Canal Park.



A unique feature of Wabash & Erie Canal Park is its long, narrow shape. Thankfully, we had expert golf cart chauffeurs with Peggy Braden and camp host Roger Circle showing guests a great time as they rode through the park.



Beverly Seese has made a tradition of making hand-churned ice cream, and it's always a hit! Working the churn might be hard work,

damage. Who would've thought?

**Anything else you'd like to share about your experience?** I'd say that I'm a better person for having volunteered at the Canal because I'm contributing to something greater than myself!

*Click the link below for more information about volunteering with us!*

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**[VOLUNTEER TODAY!](#)**

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## Upcoming Canal Events

Here are some ways you can experience the Canal for yourself in the coming month!



**July 29:** Canal Season  
Saturday, 1-4PM

**August 5:** Canal Season  
Saturday, 1-4PM

**August 11:** Bobbin Lace and  
Tatting classes, session 1

**August 12:** Kids' Fun Day, 1-4PM

but the finished product is a sweet reward indeed.



And of course, we can't forget the volunteers like Tom Baugues (organ grinder), Joe Newlin (pump organist), and others who provide music and other special activities for festivals like Canal Days. It takes well over **50** volunteers to make such a community event possible, but the payoff is seeing the smiling faces of so many guests who get to experience history and have fun while doing so!

Canal Season will be going strong every Saturday afternoon through September 9, so make sure you don't miss your chance to join the fun!

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## Fall 2023 Historic Trades Classes

Whether you've already enjoyed a class at the Canal or if you're looking to try one for the first time, historic classes are **BACK** for Fall 2023 and they're better than ever!



There will be offerings for all interests and individuals, and we are so grateful for the incredible instructors who make the classes possible! All classes will be held at Wabash & Erie Canal Park in Delphi.

**August 12:** Bobbin Lace and Tatting classes, session 2

**August 19:** Canal Season Saturday 1-4PM

**August 25:** Bobbin Lace and Tatting classes, session 3

**August 26:** Canal Season Saturday, 1-4PM

**August 26:** Broom Making class, Bobbin Lace and Tatting classes, session 4

### Did you know...?



You can hold your wedding, corporate meeting, or birthday celebration at the Canal Center?



We offer a variety of options for each different type of event. We offer free wifi and can accommodate up to 300 guests!

### [Save your date today!](#)



Perhaps you've strolled through the Pioneer Village and seen what the artisans make and you've thought, "I could *never* make that!" This is your chance to make those items and take home your handmade creations!

Classes will take place between August and October, and below is a list of what you can try:

- Tatting** (August 11, 12, 25, 26, 9AM-Noon each day)
- Bobbin Lace** (August 11, 12, 25, 26, 1-4PM each day)
- Broom Making** (August 26, 9AM-Noon)
- Papermaking** (September 2, 9AM-12:30PM)
- Coopering Tools** (September 15-16, 9AM-5PM each day)
- Weaving** (September 16, 9AM-4PM)
- Hand Quilting** (September 16, 9AM-4PM)
- Wool Felting** (September 16, 9AM-2PM)
- Basket Making** (September 16, 9AM-3PM)
- Whitewashing** (September 16, 9AM-Noon)
- Beading** (September 23, 9AM-3PM)
- Coopering Bucket** (October 13-14, 9AM-5PM each day)
- Hearth Cooking** (October 14, 9AM-3PM)



More information will be available soon on our website ([wabashanderiecanal.org](http://wabashanderiecanal.org)), but you can also get more information by checking out the [online registration form at this link!](#)

## Thanks to Our Business Supporters!

We are fortunate to have many generous businesses in the community who place great value on preservation, education, and recreation.

If you have need of any services offered by the businesses below, we strongly recommend you reach out to them! They are all wonderful organizations who care about the community they serve!

### **Festival Sponsors (\$1000)**

- *Horizon Veterinary Service*

### **Bronze Supporters (\$500)**

- *Camflo*
- *Carroll-White REMC*
- *Indiana Packers*
- *H&R Block of Crawfordsville*

### **Community Supporters (\$100+)**

- *Brick & Mortar Pub*
- *Collisions Unlimited*
- *D-K Construction*
- *Deiwert Insurance*
- *Fieldings Jewelry & Time*
- *Helms Lawn Specialists, Inc*
- *Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance*
- *Pizza Hut Delphi*
- *Visit Lafayette-West Lafayette*

If you'd like to add your business to this list, please

We hope to see you soon at the Canal for a one-of-a-kind learning experience!

## Bringing the Trains vs. Canal Rivalry to Life

Trains and canals have historically not been the best of friends. In fact, the railroad was perhaps the biggest factor that brought about the end of the American Canal Era.



In the interactive museum at Canal Park, we don't shy away from sharing this history, because it's all part of Hoosier transportation heritage! While there is a terrific exhibit that illustrates this rivalry, it has been dormant due to mechanical issues.

In the April 2022 issue of the newsletter, we sent out the call for help, and the amazing volunteers at the Canal have answered!

email:  
director@canalcenter.org for  
information about  
sponsorships.



For a complete list of activities  
please visit us at  
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Gary Stanley has been working his electrical engineering magic to create a lasting solution to get the train (and canal boat) back in motion! So far, the process has involved extensive testing, removing the old track, laying new track, and fixing it in place.



Mac Carlisle and the Monday-Wednesday-Friday Crew have also joined the efforts, and it has been a wonder to see the exhibit coming back to life!

Once the finishing touches are applied, the train exhibit will make a triumphant return to the museum and visitors of all ages will delight in seeing the train zoom around the track as the canal boat journeys

up and down its course. While the train might be faster, I think we can all agree that the canal boat ride seems much more luxurious and smooth!

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