

# Happy Port-a-versary!

Executive Director Tom Brown celebrated his second year at the Port this month! The staff and Board of Directors wish him well as he begins year three as director.

Check out what Tom had to say about his second year in his position.

## Year in Review

When my staff reminded me that it was time for my second year in review column I was astounded how much time has flown by. This has absolutely been the fastest two years of my life, but I would also say it feels like I have always been here. 2018 brought a ton of excitement but more importantly a lot of progress. We capped off 2018 by unveiling our new Lorain Port Authority Strategic Plan. This ambitious plan will drive our port authority mission for years to come. While we have always been



great at public access and supporting maritime commerce, the third prong of our mission needed an infusion of energy and some professional affirmation from outside experts to push us to not only embrace this part of our powers and authorities, but to also make this a priority and guiding principle of our organization. The analysis by The Counsel of Development Finance Authorities (CDFA) brought together experts to assess our strengths and our weaknesses as an organization, board and staff. While uncomfortable at times, the process was invaluable. Internally we implemented a lot of the recommendations prior to the plans' unveiling which has helped us to hit the ground running. In the next year we have a lot of work to do and we look forward to solidifying our presence and services with the City of Lorain while maintaining our working relationship with the County as well. Our board's support and enthusiasm has been instrumental not only in the original analysis but also in the early implementation. By streamlining board procedure and policy we have freed the staff to concentrate on the mission at hand: being the leader in finance and economic development in Lorain. Another key component in that goal was the need to stabilize and retain the current staff. The Board support in that endeavor was greatly appreciated and we work very hard to earn that support every day.

We had a very successful event schedule in my second year as well. Our boat tours continue to grow in popularity and attendance and we strive to show as many people the wonders of Lorain's waterfront each season. We are supported in that mission by a great group of boat captains who provide great customer service. Our Marine Patrol Program had another

safe and successful season and continue to make sure that all boaters and paddlers are not only safe and protected but educated as well. And Grumpy is well...Grumpy, but on a serious note he continues to maintain and operate our launch facilities and kayak rentals. Speaking of kayaks, another partner, the LoCo 'Yaks continue to assist in our mission by organizing clean up events in and around our waterways and leading the way in paddler education and site tours. Our festivals were all well attended and for the most part the weather cooperated with us. Rockin' on the River had a super successful season and Bob and Sandy Earley have been great partners. We were very happy to continue our contract with them for two additional seasons. To support all those activities, we reinvested in our shuttle boats and in our sites to ensure that our equipment and facilities remain top notch. It will be an ongoing process, but we remain committed to making sure that our guests have safe, secure and well-maintained places to visit. We also looked to the future and completed a full LED upgrade to every light fixture, both inside and outside, on all port sites to ensure we are efficiently operating and conserving energy.

Our partnership with Ariel on Broadway has resulted in quite a bit of excitement and education as well. The announcement of the Ohio Historic Tax Credit award, the first State of Ohio Energy Loan in over three years, the creation of the Lorain Energy Special Improvement District, CRA and TIF all highlight some of the creative financing arrangements we were able to employ to re-develop this historic structure at the beginning of our downtown district. Working with Radhika and her team has been phenomenal, and we cannot wait to have the grand opening of this wonderful project. Each week the building is being brought back to life and in turn has helped to create enthusiasm on Broadway. With this project and the Streetscape both being completed in 2019, we eagerly look forward to what 2020 and beyond holds for our downtown.

I remain confident that with our staff of Tiffany, Yvonne, Kelsey, Lynn and even Lil (our goose dog), we will continue to provide the leadership and energy needed to make sure that The Lorain Port Authority is an integral piece of Lorain's present but more importantly future success.

Take a lot of pictures.... because a lot is going to change in the next year!



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Click below to read our Strategic Plan and learn about how we plan to continue to positively impact Lorain.

[SEE MORE DEALS](#)

Port Happenings is a periodically emailed newsletter that is sent as new and exciting information becomes available. It compliments our monthly Lorain Port Press newsletter which includes information about ongoing/upcoming events, economic development and our board meetings.