

Garvin fountain restoration to include array of colored lights

Spotlight on Garvin fountain

By Carol Wersich

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EVANSVILLE — Come spring, the historic Garvin Park Fountain may offer spectacular light shows via new sophisticated ultrathin, submersible light fixtures.

The state-of-the-art, computer-controlled fixtures — designed to provide vibrant colors and color-changing light — are being considered as part of an improvements program scheduled for the deteriorated 87-year-old fountain.

[Keep Evansville Beautiful](#) is heading the project, which Ann Ennis, KEB president, said is expected to cost \$53,700, including funds for the fountain's future maintenance.

So far the beautification agency has secured \$35,000, she said.

A public fundraising campaign is kicking off this week, targeting neighboring businesses and the community for contributions to the fountain project.

Contributions have included:

n \$20,000 from the [E.W. Scripps Foundation](#). The E.W. Scripps Co., sponsor of the foundation, is the parent company of the Evansville Courier & Press.

n \$4,000 from the Downtown Kiwanis Club

n \$2,500 from the Northside Business Association

n More than \$2,000 from the [Evansville Parks Foundation](#)

n \$1,000 from the [Green River Kiwanis Club](#)

n \$1,000 from the Northside Kiwanis Club, plus a pledge for an additional \$1,000 in 2011

n \$250 from Eastland Kiwanis Club

n \$100 from [Historic Newburgh Kiwanis Club](#).

The fountain improvements began in October and should be completed this spring.

"This is a community fountain, and it will take the community to care for it, steward it and nurture it. Then, we can enjoy it for the next 80 years," said Ennis.

Mechanical repairs

The project calls for repairs to the fountain's mechanical system as well as a refurbishing of the gates and cobblestone wall surrounding the fountain.

Tuckpointing, a way of using contrasting colors of mortar in brickwork, and fresh landscaping are planned for March, Ennis said.

Architect Mike Shoulders is supervising the overall improvements project.

Deig Brothers Lumber & Construction Co. Inc. is overseeing the electrical and mechanical work.

Troy Schreiber of N M Bunge Masonry Contracting Inc. is overseeing the masonry work.

Paul Green of the [IBEW Local 16](#) and Raleigh Johnson of [Bricklayers Local 4](#) are also participating.

Other resources include Steve Bohleber of the city parks department's board of trustees, and Dennis Au, the city's historic preservation officer.

Andrew Hannah, Deig Brothers' senior electrical estimator, predicted "a spectrum of color" from the restored fountain.

Hannah said water pumps, filters and the water controller may need to be replaced.

"Hopefully, we will be able to regenerate some of the fountain parts," he said.

The fountain was last restored in 1989, 22 years ago, led by Operation City Beautiful (now KEB).

The restoration efforts also involved local banks, businesses and civic groups.

The fountain has had a history of restorations. It was restored in 1936 by Kiwanians as a public affairs project, after the fountain was hit two years earlier by a car.

It later was restored in 1962.

