



F&S and Commencement by the Numbers

A lot of work goes into putting on a flawless Commencement Weekend. F&S team members play a big behind-the-scenes role in making the magic happen for graduates and their families. Here are just a few of the items that came through as work orders for the 2025 event.

116 folding chairs

Delivered and set up in the Siebel Center for Design.

More than three dozen barriers

Delivered and set up in locations across campus, including four 16' ones at Fourth Street and Kirby Avenue, two 16' ones at the north center entrance to State Farm Center (SFC), a 10' barricade at the Irwin Drive entrance to Lot E24, and a 16' barrier at Oak Street and St. Mary's Road.

Dozens of flowers

Planted in front of Alma Mater prior to Commencement Weekend.

34 sheets of plywood

Delivered to the horseshoe at Memorial Stadium.

3 podiums

Two matching Block I podiums and a Chancellor's podium with logo delivered to the Recruiting Lounge at Memorial Stadium.

250 blue chairs

Delivered to and set up in the Recruiting Lounge.

32 tables (6')

Delivered to the east side of Memorial Stadium.

20 sign standards

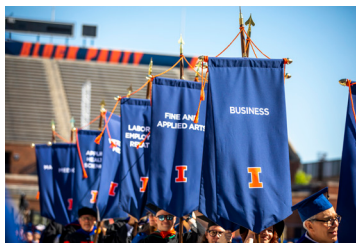
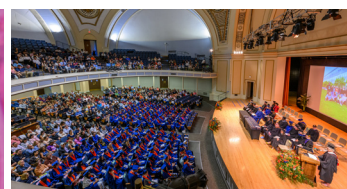
Delivered to Gym 4 in the Activities & Recreation Center (ARC).

37 palm plants

Delivered to ARC, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, SFC, Smith Memorial Hall, Foellinger Auditorium, and the Illini Union.

16 gonfalons and matching bases

Delivered to the dock of SFC for the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony.



F&S also delivered US and State of Illinois flags; sandbags; additional gonfalons, chairs, and barriers; coat racks and hangers; music stands; table skirts, piping, and drape; door stops; and much more to locations across campus and to the Virginia Theatre in Champaign. Additionally, F&S team members tended lawns and gardens; cleaned and supplied buildings, with special attention to bathrooms; provided tent weights; helped with audio equipment; and attended to dozens of other tasks. Of course, everything that had to be delivered and set up also had to be removed.

Kudos to everyone at F&S, including Public Functions, Building Service Workers, Laborers, Grounds, Transportation, Electricians, and more, who helped make the event memorable!

The 20th Successful Boneyard Creek Community Day

To the uninitiated, cleaning up the Boneyard Creek just helps keep the 3.3-mile-long waterway healthy and looking beautiful, but this local cleanup event reaches much further. The Boneyard flows into the Saline Branch of the Salt Fork Vermilion River. That joins up with the Vermilion River and the Wabash River, which in turn merge with the Ohio River and the Mississippi River, with water from the latter ending up in the Gulf of Mexico. That means the water in Boneyard Creek actually travels about 1,400 miles on its journey, and if not kept clean and pollution free, there is the potential to harm the ecosystem—water, plants, and wildlife—the entire length.



Fortunately, Boneyard Creek Community Day volunteers know how important the unassuming creek really is for both our local and expanded waterways. In April, 484 people turned out for the 20th iteration of the event that helps protect

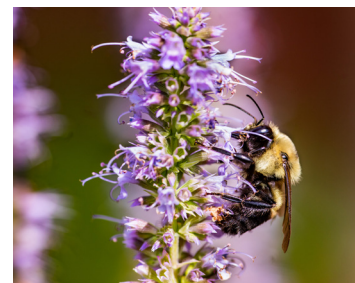
this crucial resource. **This total included 19 people from F&S (and Hank the dog was there, too). The volunteers collected 87 cubic yards of trash, cleaning litter from 1,060 acres, of which 230.73 acres were cleaned by the F&S employees, their family members, and others in the campus portion. F&S also had a tent, and approximately 50 volunteers stopped by there.**

Cigarette butts, plastic bags, and food wrappers were the most collected items, but volunteers also disposed of an air mattress, a metal bed frame, a signed check, and a crayfish trap. In addition to the trash removal, volunteers also pulled nonnative plants and marked storm drains to remind people not to put trash or chemicals down there. Learn more about F&S' co-sponsorship of this annual event at <https://fs.illinois.edu/News/boneyard-creek-community-day/>. You can also visit the Boneyard Creek Community Day web page at <https://www.boneyardcreek.org/>.

A Symbiotic Relationship with Pollinators

Most people don't spend a lot of time thinking about pollinators—bats, birds, beetles, bees (native), and the like—but we should because our fates are intertwined. Pollinators help create approximately one out of every three bites of food humans eat and are critical for growing medicines and certain fibers. They also assist in keeping plants healthy, which in turn helps to prevent soil erosion and increase carbon sequestration.

Some of the people who do spend time thinking about pollinators work at F&S. In fact, the Campus Landscape Master Plan (CLMP) and the Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) both consider pollinators and aim to increase the number of areas that are attractive to them on campus.



As of last December, there are 55 such planting areas on campus, considerably more than the 39 areas originally called for in the 2020 iCAP. F&S grounds crews also use Low Mow Zones to increase pollinator habitat, plant pollinator-friendly ground cover (e.g., under Solar Farm 1.0 and 2.0), and have reduced the use of pesticides that may harm pollinators.

The university has proudly held Bee Campus USA status since 2018, and it was the first Big 10 university to earn the right to use that label. To achieve it, "each college or university makes a commitment to create habitat, reduce pesticide use, and educate the public." A university or college must renew the designation annually by reporting their pollinator-friendly activities.

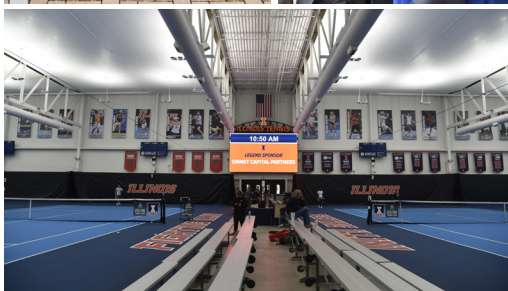
National Pollinator Week was celebrated across campus and around the community the week of June 16–22 with in-person and virtual events. Learn more at <https://publish.illinois.edu/pollinatorweek/>.

F&S at Work

A groundbreaking ceremony was recently held for the new building on the site of the former Illini Hall.



Did you know F&S electricians help install the scoreboards in Division of Intercollegiate Athletics facilities?



Temple Hoyne Buell Hall was the big winner in the 2024 Energy Conservation Incentive Program, reducing their energy use by 42.1 percent and providing cost avoidance of more than \$93,000. See all the winners at <https://go.fs.illinois.edu/ECIP>.



Riders came out to celebrate **Bike for Earth Day** in April.



Noontime Knowledge Recap: Dump & Run®

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign announced record-breaking student numbers in fall 2024. Overall student enrollment was 59,238 (on-campus and online combined), and freshman enrollment hit 9,008. First-year students are required, with few exceptions, to live in the dorms, since it helps create camaraderie and set the tone for the overall four-year student experience. But when nearly 9,000 students move into the dorms in the fall, the same number has to move out in the spring. And with this mass exodus comes stuff. So much stuff.

What to do with usable, but now unwanted/unneeded items? Well, Daphne Hulse, the zero waste coordinator at F&S, and Marc Alexander, director of development and membership at the University YMCA have a plan for that. The duo were the guest speakers at the April Noontime Knowledge hosted by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee in honor of Earth Month.

Together they discussed the Dump & Run—the one held during move out in the spring, the one held in August when some students living in apartments leave and students return (along with the related Big Sale), and the new one to be held in the summer in conjunction with University Housing in the graduate student housing complexes. The goal of all the components of the Dump & Run is to keep usable items out of the landfill, and the Dump & Run does this well, diverting an estimated 30 tons away from the landfill. It's a big job, so Hulse runs the May move-out version, and Alexander organizes the August version.

The Dump & Run began in 2001. At the time, it was not common for college campuses to collect these unwanted items, but the University Y recognized the need, and the first Dump & Run/Big Sale was held that August. In 2012, University Housing asked the Y to help with move-out collections at all residence halls. It was a huge undertaking for the Y, and they asked F&S to partner with them, which they did. When the Y pulled out of the May collections in 2023 to focus on August, F&S picked up the reins.

The end-of-the-school-year Dump & Run lasts a week. Eight 20' × 8' storage units are placed strategically near campus residence halls, so students can place gently used items into them. Among the items collected are minifridges, microwaves, furniture, electronics, housewares, multimedia, books, clothing, and more. Students can also donate leftover nonperishable food. The latter gets redistributed to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank. Most of the nonfood items are consigned to Goodwill.

You may be thinking, “Wait, can’t the students just take their stuff to the foodbank or Goodwill themselves?” In theory, yes, but many students don’t have time or means to make these trips at the end of the semester. Having F&S organize central collections makes it easy, and it keeps more stuff out of the campus waste stream.

In summer, the Y takes over. This year, people (students and community members) can drop their household items at the university’s Stock Pavilion (1402 W. Pennsylvania Ave., Urbana) between Monday, August 4, and Saturday, August 16. If they have larger items to donate, they can arrange for pickup. Alexander explained that more than 1,000 volunteer hours go into making the drop-off period and the Big Sale a huge success. This year, the sale is Saturday, August 23, and Sunday, August 24. Sunday offers a \$3/ per bag sale and half off on furniture in the morning. The last half hour is the “free sale,” where all items are available without charge.

Doing it this way, Alexander says, means there is very little left over that needs to be disposed of in other ways, such as donating to Salt & Light. Hulse and Alexander were both excited to mention the expansion to graduate housing (Ashton Woods and Orchard Downs) sometime in July. They hope this will encourage the circular economy further and divert even more stuff from the landfill.

Hulse and Alexander note that the Dump & Run advances some less tangible wins. It encourages students to think about their donation habits and to consider repurposing and recycling over always buying new. It also helps strengthen community partnerships.

In the Q&A portion following their talk, Hulse and Alexander were asked how often they had to turn away stuff. They said it happened rarely. They can’t, for example, accept tube TVs (just flat screen ones), so they try to steer people to other recycling options in those cases. In one instance, however, someone “donated” three porcelain toilets in the middle of the night.

F&S recycling efforts and Waste Transfer Station operations are critical to meeting campus zero waste goals outlined in the iCAP. The Dump & Run partnership is a big part of this strategy, and it continues to grow and evolve as a way of keeping stuff out of the landfill. To learn more about the Dump & Run, visit <https://fs.illinois.edu/News/2025-dump-run/>.



The Dump & Run® is a registered trademark of the University YMCA

Dispatch Archives Available

Do you ever wonder what it was like to work at F&S 10, 20, 30, or more years ago? Find a window to the past on ERIN, where PDFs of the issues of the *Dispatch* are accessible. There are many gems buried in the archives that may bring you new knowledge. You might know, for example, that the *Dispatch* was still the *Dispatch*, but did you know that F&S used to be called O&M (Operations & Maintenance)? This changed in the early 2000s.

You might also learn that Pete Varney, current director of Transportation & Building Services, became transportation supervisor in 1995. The story (June 1995, page 6, complete with photo) explains that when he came to the university as a student in 1990, he was actually “a customer of the O&M Division. This customer became a student employee at the Campus Garage in late 1991, and now (more than 3 years later) Pete has his degree and a new job.”

To dig into the archives, visit <https://erin.fs.illinois.edu/quick-links/>

[news/dispatch-archive](#). You never know what interesting tidbit you may stumble across, but you can peruse previous *Dispatch* issues back to May 1986. That one was photocopied on green paper. It discussed perennial F&S stories like snow and ice removal and shop safety, had a spotlight on the Water Station operators, made reference to even earlier versions of the *Dispatch* (sadly not part of the archive), noted that “prior to 1964, air conditioning on campus was used exclusively for research,” and more!

The *Dispatch* archive is also an excellent resource for past operational efforts and initiative announcements. Happy Reading!



Spotlight on Safety: Heat Related Illness

Early summer is a great time to review safety recommendations for working in high temperatures. Extremely warm days can put workers at risk, but heat-related illness is preventable if precautions are taken. Pay attention to how you are feeling and keep an eye on coworkers. If you or others show signs of heat stroke or exhaustion, take steps to remedy the situation.

Heat Stroke vs. Heat Exhaustion

Heat stroke is always an emergency! When this occurs, the body can no longer regulate its temperature. The core temperature rises, and the sweating mechanism fails, so the body is unable to cool itself. Here's how to help someone suffering from heat stroke and how to help yourself if you exhibit signs of that or heat exhaustion.

Signs of Heat Stroke



- High body temperature (103°F or higher)
- Heat stroke caused by hot weather usually brings about hot, dry skin, but heat stroke caused by strenuous exercise may be dry or moist; in both cases, flushed, red skin is common
- Fast, strong pulse
- Headache (may be throbbing)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Confusion, slurred speech
- Loss of consciousness, seizures

What Should You Do?



- Call 911! Heat stroke is ALWAYS a medical emergency.
- Move the person to a cooler place. Circulate the air around the person (such as with a fan) to enhance cooling.
- Try to lower the person's temperature, using cool, wet cloths or cool water on the skin; remove excess clothing that may be trapping heat.
- DO NOT give the person anything to drink.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Weak, rapid pulse
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Tiredness or weakness
- Faintness or loss of consciousness
- Muscle cramps
- Decreased urine output

What Should You Do?

- Loosen your clothes; remove any that might trap heat.
- Move to a cool place to rest.
- Try to lower your body temperature with cool, wet cloths or cool water on the skin.
- Sip water or sports drinks.
- Get medical help if you are throwing up, your symptoms get worse, or they last longer than an hour.

Preventing Heat-Related Illness

When the weather is hot and you must work outside, the following steps can help prevent heat-related illness:

- Take frequent breaks for rest and hydration in cooler (shaded or air-conditioned) areas.
- Eat regularly and try to keep electrolytes in balance.
- Use fans, where possible, to help the body cool naturally.

Learn more at <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-illness>.



Move to a shady place



Drink water



Apply ice packs (neck, armpits, groin)



Use a fan



Mist cold water



Facilities & Services

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