

See Arts . . . Page 2

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REFLECTIONS

from Page 1

a bargain; if they will stop telling lies about me, I will stop telling the truth about them. Have you heard about the new Democrat value meal at McDonald's? Order anything you like and the guy behind you must pay for it. You can tell I'm much more active tonight. That's thanks to the long nap I had during our last debate. Some of my friends favor abortion and some of my friends are against abortion and I certainly stand with my friends on that issue.

"Politicians and diapers have one thing in common they should both be changed regularly and for the same reason." – Mark Twain

Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than speak out loud and remove all doubt.

"I'm not worried about

the deficit. It is big enough to take care of itself." – Ronald Reagan

Recession is when your neighbor loses his; job depression is when I lose my job; and recovery is when the Democrats lose their jobs. I've noticed that everyone who is for abortion has already been born. The Democrats believe in the art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich and promising to protect each from the other. I love to be able to go to Washington if only to be nearer my money. For the first six months when Harry Truman came to Washington, he wondered how the hell he got there, and for the next six months he wondered how the hell the rest of them ever got there. The Democrats can't fool all the people all the time, that's why we have two parties.

AYER

from Page 1

As an At Large official, Ayer represents all of Noblesville and its voters in city limits and in Noblesville Township. A tireless advocate for the best interests of the city and its residents, Ayer's vision and diligence has been instrumental in many impactful city projects, including Hamilton Town Center, the Pleasant Street east-west corridor, expansion of the city's trail network, acquisition of Finch Creek Park, the Levinson mixed-used development, construction of a new eastside fire station, and partnership with the county for construction of the 146th Street corridor. Since he began serving on the Council, Noblesville's population has more than doubled. Ayer has been a prominent voice for preserving the hometown charm of the community while funding necessary infrastructure and public safe-

ty enhancements.

"I am looking forward to spending more time with my wife, children and grandchildren and concentrating on my real estate business," Ayer said. "We are looking forward to staying a part of the community and enjoying everything Noblesville has to offer. I always say, if you can't find something to do in Noblesville, you're not looking hard enough."

In the community, Ayer is a member of the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce and served on the board and as a past president; member and past board member of Noblesville Main Street; and past board member of Habitat for Humanity of Hamilton County. He also is a member of First United Methodist Church, Noblesville Elks Lodge, and Noblesville Moose Lodge.

Ayer's term will end on Dec. 31, 2023.

ARTS

from Page 1

triangular and green is reminiscent of nature and growth. Whether or not people see that shape as a representation of nature, there is still something they will connect with. Mannell maintains ambiguity so these interpretations allow viewers to engage with the art instead of just admiring it.

See Mannell's full exhibit in the Stephenson House from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

Meet Mannell in person at his free public reception from 6 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 21 on the Nickel Plate Arts campus.

You can also meet artist Caroline Hays, whose "Read Between the Layers" exhibit is featured in Four Day Ray Brewing in Fishers through



Art provided
(Left) Jerry Mannell's "Transtangentialism" exhibit is on display now at the Stephenson House. (Right) Caroline Hays' "Read Between the Layers" exhibit is featured at Four Day Ray Brewing in Fishers through March 28.

March 28, at her free public reception from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 20 at Four Day Ray, 11671 Lantern Road, Fishers.

Artwork can be purchased by contacting Nickel Plate Arts or ordering at

NickelPlateArts.org/exhibits.

About Nickel Plate Arts

Nickel Plate Arts is an umbrella nonprofit organization that creates and coordinates arts and cultural experiences across communities in eastern Hamilton

County and the surrounding areas to improve the quality of life for residents, strengthen local economies and enrich experiences for visitors. Nickel Plate Arts is a project of Hamilton County Tourism, Inc.

I was born and raised right here in Noblesville. I grew up in a home without domestic violence or assault - it wasn't something I saw, or even heard about. But when I was introduced to Prevail of Central Indiana, I was shocked by the number of individuals who are affected by domestic violence. In 2018 alone, Prevail helped more than 4,000 clients in Hamilton County (nearly 80 percent of clients are women and children). Domestic violence and abuse are hard topics to discuss, so you don't often hear about them. But at Tom Wood Volkswagen in Noblesville, we're breaking the taboo and raising awareness for Prevail, an organization that helps families in Hamilton County.

- Mike Bragg, GM of Tom Wood Volkswagen in Noblesville

To help Hamilton County families affected by domestic violence and sexual abuse, you can donate the following items:

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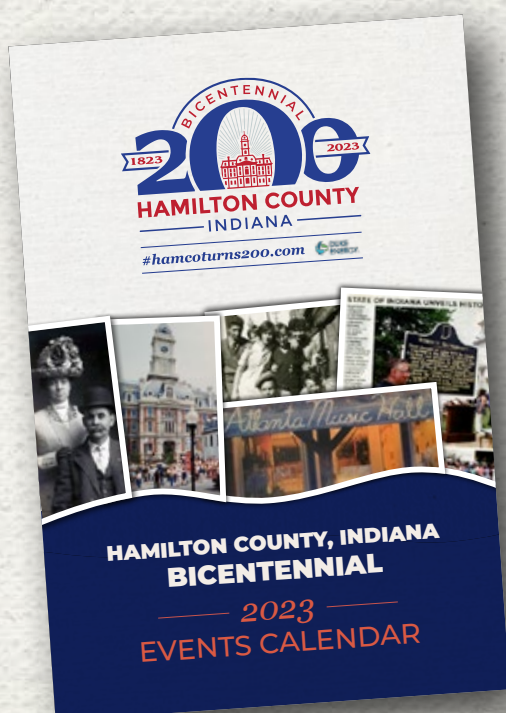
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HAMILTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Center for the Performing Arts launches new Transportation Grant Program

Donor-supported fund will lower cost for student groups to attend educational events

The REPORTER

With a lead gift from a local family, the Center for the Performing Arts has launched a philanthropic fund to help defray the cost for student groups to attend education-related events at the Palladium and other venues on its Carmel campus.

Transportation expenses are among the key hurdles for budget-strapped educators planning off-site enrichment experiences for their students. The Center's new Transportation Grant Program is open to applications from public and private schools as well as homeschool groups. Organizations approved for grants can receive up to \$600 per event in reimbursed costs for drivers and

buses or other vehicles.

Eligible Center Presents education events include the FrontRow preconcert student Q&A sessions with performing artists and this season's *National Geographic* Live speaker series, which offers free matinees for students. Upcoming *Nat Geo* Live events at the Palladium include *T. Rex Rises* with paleontologist Lindsay Zanno on Feb. 21 and *Untamed* with wildlife filmmaker Filipe DeAndrade on April 25.

The initial gift to the grant fund comes from Carmel residents Justin and Jennifer Moffett. Justin is a member of the Center's Board of Directors and CEO of Old Town Companies.

"We are exceedingly

grateful to the Moffetts for recognizing the value of our programming for local youth and the opportunity we have to make these experiences more widely accessible," said Jeffrey C. McDermott, President/CEO of the Center for the Performing Arts. "We hope other supporters will step up to broaden the impact of this new initiative."

Those interested in donating to the Transportation Grant Fund may contact Ana Hammersley, Director of Individual Development, at (317) 819-3536. Donations to the Center's full range of education programs may be made at TheCenterPresents.org/Donate by choosing "Education Fund" from the pull-



Photo provided

Students from Cold Spring School in Indianapolis arrive for a student matinee at the Center for the Performing Arts.

down menu.

More information about

applying for a Transportation Grant is available at

TheCenterPresents.org/TransportationGrant.

Noblesville students welcome three guests for World Read Aloud Day



Photos provided by Noblesville Schools

Noblesville Schools celebrated World Read Aloud Day on Wednesday with special guest readers that included Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen, Deputy Mayor Matt Light, and Superintendent Dr. Dan Hile.

FireStarter CEO & Carmel mayoral candidate named to National Business Leadership Council

Sue Finkam joins team to advocate locally & nationally to help small businesses succeed

Submitted by

Sue Finkam for Mayor

The [National Small Business Association](https://NationalSmallBusinessAssociation.org) (NSBA), the nation's oldest small-business advocacy organization, announced today that Sue Finkam, business executive and CEO of [FireStarter LLC](https://FireStarterLLC.com), a national marketing consultancy headquartered in Carmel, has been named to its [Leadership Council](https://LeadershipCouncil.org).

Finkam, a recognized leader in the Carmel and greater Indianapolis business community, joins the NSBA Leadership Council alongside other small-business advocates from across the country as they work to promote the interests of small businesses to policymakers in Indiana and Washington, D.C.

"I am proud to have Sue Finkam as part of our Leadership Council," NSBA President & CEO Todd McCracken said. "She came to us highly recommended. Her executive business experience, coupled with her background in advocating for the

needs of others, will provide tremendous value. I look forward to collaborating with Sue and ensuring our coordinated efforts have a positive impact on the small-business community."

Finkam joins the NSBA Leadership Council to advocate for solutions that can address the critical issues facing small businesses, including tax reform, regulatory restraint, lower healthcare costs and improved access to capital. The NSBA Leadership Council is focused on providing valuable networking between small-business advocates from across the country while ensuring small businesses have a seat at the table as Congress and regulators take up key proposals that affect them.

"As a small business owner, I know the risk involved in leveraging personal capital to start a business and what it takes to sign the



Finkam

of small businesses, given they are America's economic engine and are the backbone of families in Carmel and across the United States."

Finkam is the founder and CEO of FireStarter, a national marketing consultancy helping organizations better fulfill their missions. FireStarter has grown quickly since Finkam took it full-time in January 2021. Small-business sustainability and growth is important to Finkam, who encourages innovation and investment and supports reducing onerous governmental regulation and taxation.

About National Small Business Association

Celebrating more than 85

years in operation, the [National Small Business Administration](https://NationalSmallBusinessAdministration.gov) is a staunchly nonpartisan organization advocating on behalf of America's entrepreneurs. NSBA's 65,000 members represent every state and every industry in the U.S., and we are proud to be the nation's first small-business advocacy organization.

About FireStarter, LLC

[FireStarter LLC](https://FireStarterLLC.com) is a full-service marketing firm based in Carmel that uses data-driven solutions to ignite brand stories and elevate mission-driven organizations. FireStarter provides expert strategies to aid those looking for marketing support during a time of growth and transition or a dedicated team to help with early-stage brand development. Its award-winning team of marketing strategists, with extensive experience in organ donation and transplantation and specialty physician care, will augment your team by expanding its presence and sparking your brand growth.

HAMILTON COUNTY Soil & Water



CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Public invited to Soil & Water's annual meeting

The REPORTER

The Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its annual meeting from 5 to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 28 in O.V. Winks Building at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds, 2003 Pleasant St., Noblesville.

The guest speaker will be Leslie Taljaard, Director of Hamilton County's HHW Center/SWMD, presenting

on the current state of HHW collection and recycling. There will also be a free chili dinner, a summary report of 2022 activities, and a vote for an open board position.

All attendees will also be entered to win a gift basket donated by Hamilton County Tourism.

The public is invited to attend. RSVP at hamiltonswcd.org/events.

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Carmel Clay Parks & Rec names two new directors

The REPORTER

Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR) has named Eric Mehl as the department’s administration & planning director and Michael Normand as recreation & facilities director.

“Both Eric and Michael have worked with CCPR for over a decade,” said Kurtis Baumgartner, CCPR Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. “During their tenure, they have shown tremendous growth and demonstrated strong leadership capabilities. Their comprehensive experience with our parks, programs, and facilities will be an asset to our team and our community.”

Eric Mehl
Administration & Planning Director

Mehl has worked with the department for 13 years and most recently served as recreation & facilities director.

As administration & planning director, Mehl

oversees CCPR’s business services and human resources teams. He is responsible for coordinating department-wide planning efforts, maintaining department records, and managing administrative planning functions and policies.

Mehl has extensive park and recreation experience. He managed a \$6 million budget for the **Monon Community Center** (MCC) and **The Waterpark**, oversaw facility operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, led 17 full-time staff and over 400 part-time staff seasonally, and managed capital projects.

“I have learned so much during my tenure with Carmel Clay Parks and I



Mehl



Normand

Operations Instructor certifications. He graduated from the National Recreation and Park Association’s Director School in 2019.

Michael Normand
Recreation & Facilities Director

Normand has worked with the department for 14 years and most recently

look forward to what this new chapter holds,” Mehl said. “It is a privilege to continue serving our community and the Carmel Clay Parks team in this new capacity.”

Mehl studied fine arts and design at Ohio State University. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional and holds Aquatics Facility Operations and Aquatics Facility

served as recreation & facilities assistant director.

As recreation & facilities director, Normand oversees operations and staff of the MCC and The Waterpark as well as recreation programming.

Normand first worked with the department as an intern in 2008, later joining the team full-time as a member services supervisor. Over the years he has risen through the ranks garnering experience in customer service, recreation programming, project management, and operations.

“Carmel Clay Parks has offered me incredible opportunities to grow and learn in the field of parks and recreation,” Normand said. “I look forward to serving the team and community in this new role.”

Normand has a degree in tourism, hospitality, and event management from Indiana University. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional.



Photo provided by City of Carmel

Carmel Bike Share program sees record growth in 2022

Submitted by
City of Carmel

Carmel’s rapidly growing central corridor is attracting new residents, small businesses, and corporate offices, creating a vibrancy never seen in Carmel. Add in thousands of tourists who visit throughout the year, and you have the recipe for a record-breaking Carmel Bike Share program.

In 2022, more than 5,300 Bike Share rides were logged, the most of any year since the program began in 2015.

“These numbers are a direct result of our successful redevelopment of Midtown and areas to the north and south along the Monon Greenway,” Mayor Jim Brainard said. “A vital part of creating a high quality of life is to provide options for places to live, work and ways to get around town. Not everyone wants to hop in the car for short trips to dinner or a show at the Palladium. It’s good to see our residents and visitors are taking advantage of Bike Share.”

The city invested in the Bike Share program by replacing the fleet with new bikes in November 2022. There are now 50 bikes spread across seven Bike Share stations. More stations will be added in the future.

Bike Share users **download an app** on their smartphones to rent a bike. A single bike ride costs \$1.50 per half-hour with a cap of \$24 for up to a 24-hour period. You can also sign up for a monthly account and pay \$15 for unlimited rides under one hour. Annual accounts cost \$30 for the same benefit. **Click here** to read all the details.

Here are the current station locations:

- Carmel City Hall
- Central Park on the Monon Greenway
- Carter Green and Monon Greenway
- City Center Drive and Range Line Road
- Main Street and the Monon Greenway
- Midtown Plaza, 365 Monon Boulevard
- 37 E. Main St.

Here are ridership statistics from 2022:

- Annual rides: 5,355 (versus 4,244 in 2021)
- Median trip duration: 42.2 minutes
- Annual hours of usage: 4,632 hours
- Most used station: Midtown Plaza

Interested in sponsoring a new Bike Share station at your company? Please contact David Littlejohn (**dlittlejohn@carmel.in.gov**) or Kevin Whited (**kwhited@carmel.in.gov**) for information.

Rep. Jeter’s bill increasing nonprofit oversight advances to State Senate

The REPORTER

The Indiana House of Representatives recently voted in support of State Rep. Chris Jeter’s (R-Fishers) bill to hold irresponsible nonprofits accountable and better protect Hoosiers.

“Several recent high-profile cases have highlighted the gaps in the oversight of nonprofits in our state,” Jeter said. “The goal of this legislation is to make sure Hoosiers have a seat at the table when going after these bad actors and ensure we can protect consumers.”

According to Jeter, the Office of the Indiana Attorney General is limited in the actions it can take to hold irresponsible nonprofits accountable. Under current law, the attorney general can only seek injunctive relief, dissolution, or permanent removal. Jeter’s legislation would help ensure the at-

torney general’s office has the necessary tools to fine bad actors and provide restitution.

Most recently, this issue was highlighted in the inability of the attorney general to take action against JPC Affordable Housing. JPC, a nonprofit housing provider, was accused of neglecting its Indianapolis tenants and pocketing their utility payments, which prompted Citizens Energy Company to shut off service to 900 units due to a \$1.3 million unpaid bill. But because of Indiana’s nonprofit laws, a judge ruled the attorney general’s office did not have the authority to intervene in the situation.

Under House Bill 1075,



Jeter

records, or does not respond in a good faith manner to a written inquiry. According to Jeter, these changes would align with many of the nonprofit laws nationwide.

Jeter said having additional pathways to hold mismanaged nonprofits accountable would have helped the attorney general’s office seek civil penalties against USA Gymnastics and take action against Wildlife in Need.

After the sexual assault scandal involving former team doctor Larry Nasser,

nization could be dissolved would expand to include one that fails to use property or assets for their intended purpose, commits gross mismanagement of assets, fails to maintain certain

USA Gymnastics filed for bankruptcy and the attorney general could not pursue financial penalties against the nonprofit. Wildlife in Need, which was a roadside zoo registered as a nonprofit in southern Indiana and run by Tim Stark, who was featured in the Netflix show *Tiger King*, was found to have misused corporation funds for personal use, but the attorney general did not have the authority to inspect the organization’s financial records.

House Bill 1075 now heads to the Indiana Senate for further consideration. For more information, or to watch session and committees live, visit **iga.in.gov**.

State Rep. Chris Jeter (R-Fishers) represents House District 88, which includes portions of Hamilton, Hancock, Madison and Marion counties.

Representative Victoria Spartz

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Jeremy Eltz running for Carmel City Council

Submitted

Jeremy Eltz announced his candidacy on Monday for Carmel City Council in the Southeast District. A Democrat, Eltz has lived in Carmel for the past seven years.

“Living in Carmel has been everything I wanted to provide my family with: great schools, parks, and safe neighborhoods,” Eltz said. “I want Carmel to continue to be a place where people can live, work, and play while raising a family, starting a business, and making friends. I grew up one of seven kids and our family moved around (Greencastle, Martinsville, Logansport) as my parents pursued work and better pay to give my siblings and me a better life than they had. My wife and I chose to move to Carmel because of the excellent schools and to be closer to Handel’s Homemade Ice Cream (within 10 minutes of two locations now).”

With a bachelor’s degree in biology, a master’s degree in teaching, and a PhD in educational leadership, Eltz has been a long-time leader in STEM education throughout Indiana.

Eltz said he intends to leverage his background and expertise to pursue an innovative approach to city development and will make sure neighbors have real input on new projects rather than just the big campaign donors, as he says has been the case recently.

“My campaign will not be paid for by big donors, unlike my opponent,” Eltz

said. “I am committed to limiting donations to under \$100 per individual. We have to get big money out of politics to ensure our neighbors have a real opportunity to influence city council decisions. My commitment to small donations may tie one hand behind my back, but it is a core belief of mine. Because of this belief, I can promise my neighbors that my city council vote can’t be bought, it will be decided by the people of the Southeast District!”

Eltz currently serves as the Director of Rural Education for the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis. He has served in leadership positions within civic organizations such as the Carmel Democratic Club and the board of the Indiana Afterschool Network. He also serves as Vice Precinct Chair of Clay 42 after losing his reelection bid for Chair last year to his wife, Missy (which she never reminds him of).

Jeremy resides in the Southeast Council District with his wife of 15 years, Missy, and daughters Macy and Mallory.

The 2023 municipal primary election for Carmel City Council is in May and the general election is this November. To learn more about Eltz, reach out to him directly at electeltz@gmail.com or visit his Facebook ([facebook.com/electeltz](https://www.facebook.com/electeltz)) or Instagram ([instagram.com/electeltz](https://www.instagram.com/electeltz)).



Eltz

Attorney General Rokita wins \$66.5M settlement with major healthcare company following allegations of overcharging

The REPORTER

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita announced on Tuesday a **\$66,496,758 settlement** on behalf of the State of Indiana to resolve allegations against Centene Corp., a major healthcare-services company.

The allegations include claims that Centene, in the course of providing pharmacy services, overcharged Indiana’s Medicaid program for pharmaceutical costs. Centene made no admission of liability and maintains that its business practices were lawful.

“Companies must be held accountable for their actions,” Rokita said. “On Hoosiers’ behalf, my team and I are committed to making sure that happens.”

Rokita thanked the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration for its significant contributions to investigating Centene’s

practices. He also thanked his staff and the Liston & Deas law firm for their critical expertise.



Rokita

While functioning as a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM), Centene allegedly failed to disclose true pharmacy benefits and services costs. Among other functions, PBMs contract with pharmacies and reimburse them for filling prescriptions on behalf of insurance plans – in this case, on behalf of the State of Indiana.

As a result of Centene’s failure to disclose true costs, Centene allegedly inflated dispensing fees causing an added cost to the Medicaid program.

Indiana is one of at least 18 states to investigate Centene’s alleged overcharges. The agreement requires Centene to pay the State of Indiana the total amount of the settlement in two installments over 12 months.

Commercial courts can make judicial process business friendly

Pre-trial disclosures help prevent dozens of trials

The REPORTER

If you ask Hamilton County Superior Court 2 Judge Jon Brown about the benefits of commercial court, you’ll get an earful. As a former bankruptcy/commercial litigation attorney, Judge Brown understands how drawn out and cumbersome complex litigation can be.

“Commercial courts help improve court efficiency and allow business and commercial disputes to be resolved quicker with more predictability,” Judge Brown said. “Plus, the e-filing, e-discovery, and video conferencing technologies help us come to resolutions faster. It’s really like playing open-hand euchre.”

Attorney Sean Clapp with Fishers-based Clapp Ferrucci Attorneys at Law was part of the original

committee that helped the Indiana Supreme Court create commercial courts.

“The courts were too busy with non-business-related cases to leave sufficient time to properly review and analyze complex business cases,” Clapp said. “These cases are much more document intensive, so commercial court requires mandatory disclosures at the beginning of the case. It’s similar to the federal court system.”

Once a commercial case has been filed, parties must confer to discuss



Brown



Clapp

case management and create a plan to expedite the exchange of evidence between the parties. The case management conference with the Court must occur within 45 days.

“This process really helps cut to the chase and forces efficiency right out of the gate,” Judge Brown said. “I’ve presided over 25 commercial cases so far and have yet to have one proceed to trial because both sides were able to resolve the conflict before it made it that far.”

“Given the choice, I use commercial courts any time

I can,” Clapp added. “Businesses don’t want their litigation languishing in the system. It’s timely and expensive. Plus, commercial court is administered by judges trained in business law which helps set consistent precedent that can be used to advise business clients and maybe prevent future litigation.”

Hamilton County is one of 10 Indiana counties with a commercial court. Businesses can file their complaints in any of the commercial courts, but both sides must agree to participate. Common cases include shareholder disputes, breach of contract, trade secrets, non-compete agreements, indemnification issues, unfair competition, securities, insurance disputes, environmental claims, and antitrust cases.

Hamilton County launches innovative Hospitality Training Program in jail

Providing inmates job skills while aiding tourism recovery

The REPORTER

Multiple Hamilton County community organizations and governmental partners have launched an innovative Hospitality Training Program in the Hamilton County Jail. The 10-week program provides participants with valuable communication, problem-solving, and customer service skills to pursue careers in the hospitality industry.

The training was made possible through funding from Hamilton County’s ARPA Committee and is operated through a partnership between the Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office, Hamilton County Tourism, and Invest Hamilton County. So far two cohorts of men have passed their certifications with a 100 percent pass rate. A women’s cohort begins Feb. 6.

“We know that giving individuals a second chance is the right thing to do,” County Commissioner Mark Heirbrandt said. “Programs like this that attach that second chance to economic opportunity are another example of forward-thinking, innovation, and collabora-

tion in our community.”

Hamilton County’s hospitality industry was among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting labor shortage. The ARPA grant is meant to support the industry’s rebound.

“When new workforce shortages were a barrier for our local lodging partners so the support provided by the Hamilton County Council and Commissioners and the talents of Invest enabled us to take action,” Hamilton County Tourism President/CEO Brenda Myers said. “Our local hospitality industry includes quality workplaces that care about their people and the community. In meeting the men in this program, I believe many of them will find great success in this industry.”

All participants earn nationally recognized *Guest Service Gold* and most of the *Certified Front Desk Representative* credential from the American Hotel

and Lodging Education Institute.

“We are exploring the skill and credential needs of our ecosystem on a consistent basis,” Invest Hamilton County President & CEO Mike Thibideau said. “Customer service and the other skills attached to this program prepare individuals for multiple pathways of opportunity.”

The Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office and the jail, through the TOWER and Launch HOPE programs, provide therapeutic environments focused on reducing recidivism and helping individuals find long-term recovery for substance use and mental health struggles.

“We are proud of the program and the hard work that the program participants put in, not only to better themselves but to lay the foundation for a good future,” Sheriff Dennis Quakenbush said.

The partnership has a

goal to continue trainings into the foreseeable future. Any employers interested in participating may contact Mike Thibideau at mthibideau@investhamilton-county.com.

About Hamilton County Tourism

Hamilton County Tourism Inc. is a nonprofit destination management organization that promotes tourism growth through strategic marketing, hospitality and development initiatives providing hospitality to more than four million visitors to Hamilton County each year.

About Invest Hamilton County

The Hamilton County Economic Development Corporation (dba Invest Hamilton County) is an economic development organization focused on talent attraction, retention, development, and quality of life initiatives throughout Hamilton County. Invest Hamilton County works with diverse and dynamic stakeholders from throughout the community to help local residents, businesses, and communities address barrier to economic vitality.



Heirbrandt



Myers



Thibideau



Quakenbush

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Meeting Notices

The Hamilton County Board of Commissioners have canceled the highway meeting scheduled for Friday, Feb. 3, 2023.

The Noblesville Common Council will meet in a special session at 6 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023, in Room A214 at Noblesville City Hall, 16 S. 10th St.

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TODAY'S BIBLE READING

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Revelation 5:11-14 (NIV)

Indiana Democrats issue statement on Black History Month

The REPORTER

The Indiana Democratic Party on Wednesday issued the following statement by Chair Mike Schmuhl and Vice Chair Myla Eldridge:

"As we begin Black History Month, the Indiana Democratic Party honors the countless contributions and sacrifices made by African Americans in shaping our state and nation's history.

"From the fight for civil rights to the ongoing strug-

gle for social and economic justice, the Black community has been at the forefront of progress and change. We pay homage to the trailblazers who paved the way for future generations and recommit ourselves to the work of creating a more equitable and just society.

"Let us celebrate and learn from the rich heritage and culture of African Americans and work towards a brighter future for all Hoosiers."



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Noblesville Bicentennial Committee announces first two "Trailblazers"

Submitted by Noblesville Bicentennial Committee

Editor's note: Information on monthly Trailblazers is written by Hamilton County Historian David Heighway. To read more about each Noblesville Trailblazers, visit cityofnoblesville.org/trailblazers.

As the City of Noblesville celebrates its 200th birthday, the Noblesville Bicentennial Committee has partnered with Hamilton County Historian David Heighway to share information about our community. Each month, we will highlight "Noblesville Trailblazers" — individuals and groups that made an impact to our history.

Solmon Oliver "Sol" Levinson (1865-1941)

Known as "Sol" when he lived here, Levinson was the eldest son of his family. He excelled in the local schools, graduating at the age of 16, and was a leading member of the local baseball team in the 1880s. He graduated from Yale in 1888, received his LLB from Lake Forest University in 1891, and was admitted to the Illinois Bar that same year where he practiced law in Chicago.

Sol continued his family's involvement in charitable work in Noblesville. He began giving an annual award to the Ladies Aid Society in memory of his mother who had been an important member of the group. He and his brother Harry also contributed money in memory of their father to construct the Noblesville Masonic Lodge in 1915.

Sol's most generous gift to the city was in 1917, when he gave \$10,000 toward the construction of a new high school gymnasium which

was most recently part of the Boys & Girls Club. For many years after this, the high school newspaper was called the "Levin Sun." Another of his gifts still in use today is the Forest Park Golf Course, which he gave \$1,000 for its construction in 1927.

Levinson was famous nationally for his work in the concept of outlawing war. He had written most of the text of the document known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact or Pact of Paris. For this, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1929 and received the Rosenberger Medal from the University of Chicago in 1931 and the French Legion of Honor in 1934.

Pete Smith

Pete Smith left no records himself and the information Hamilton County Historian David Heighway has found during his research is based on reminiscences written down 60 years or more after the fact. Nevertheless, Heighway says Smith's story illustrates some important facts about the early settlement of the area and should be told if we are to understand how this community was created.

Smith was a Black man



Sol Levinson

about where he had come from or why he was there, but instead offered to help them. He became a trusted friend of the settlers and provided assistance in their times of need and helped prevent a possible confrontation with the Delaware Indians over a pair of missing shoes. When the settlement was ravaged by malaria during the summer, Smith helped families raise corn.

In 1820, Smith was working for William Conner, raising a field of corn and doing some trapping on his own. In all probability, Smith was helping the settlers and working for Conner because he planned to stay with the settlement and establish his own home and farm.

By 1821, land buyers were coming in from all over to speculate in these newly-available western

lands. That year, a man came up from Kentucky to purchase land to resell. According to later accounts, he saw Smith, returned to Kentucky, and soon reappeared in this area with a group of men and papers saying that Pete Smith was an enslaved individual who had escaped from his farm. Smith denied that he knew the man and the settlers confronted the Kentuckian.

Conner, an influential man at that time, was asked by the settlers to intervene and free Smith. He examined the Kentuckian's papers and then announced to the settlers that they were legally correct. Conner warned them that if the settlers attempted to stop the Kentuckian, they would be guilty of breaking the law. Without this support, they could do nothing. The Kentuckian then took Smith away and he was never heard from again. However, his story of significant local impact was passed down by others.

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About the Noblesville Bicentennial Committee

The Noblesville Bicentennial Committee is planning the city's Bicentennial Celebration in 2023, the 200th anniversary of Noblesville being platted. Bret Richardson and Megan Wiles serve as the honorary chairs to oversee the planning and programming of the celebration, while residents will help provide input and volunteer at the events. William Conner and Josiah Polk laid out what is now downtown Noblesville in 1823, which was designated as the Hamilton County seat in 1824 and incorporated in 1851. For more information, visit cityofnoblesville.org/bicentennial.



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NOBLESVILLE, CARMEL, WESTFIELD, SHERIDAN, HAMILTON HEIGHTS, FISHERS, UNIVERSITY, GUERIN CATHOLIC, HAMILTON SOUTHEASTERN

In 1972, Noblesville's Advance Babe Ruth State Champions were . . .

A Powerhouse Team

By DR. TERRY COOMER
For The Reporter

In 1972, Noblesville (population 7,548) had its first state championship baseball team.

It was a magical season when Noblesville won the Advance Babe Ruth State Championship and went on to play in a seven-state championship playoff in Alpena, Mich. In 1972 in Noblesville, Forest Park was the place to be! The swimming pool, the ballpark, and the music! The park was buzzing with people and the ballpark was crowded. Everyone realized this was a special team and they came out to watch! The lazy, hazy, days of summer! It was an awesome summer for the players, fans, and the community! We walked through the season taking on all comers and beating them! I want to apologize upfront if I forgot anyone's contribution or do not remember someone.

The team members were Tad Donoff, Carl Lowery, Alan Dunlap, Ray Lytle, Mike Swaynie, Gary Parks, Jim Harger, Doug Latham, Terry Coomer, Mike Beadle, Dave Beaty, and Randy Wilson. Coaches were Don Dunker and Carl Lowery. We were sponsored by the Noblesville American Legion.

This team obviously had outstanding pitchers. The three starting pitchers were Gary Parks, Ray Lytle and me, Terry Coomer. We also had great defense, team speed, and power hitters. Mike Swaynie, Tad Donoff and Dave Beaty in the outfield had real speed and ran down several balls and they also ran out several base hits and stolen bases. Doug Latham at second base and Carl Lowery at shortstop were an awesome combination of defense and they hit the ball well. Raw power at the plate with Randy Wilson, Ray Lytle, Terry Coomer, Dave Beaty, Allan Dunlap, Gary Parks, and Mike Beadle. In fact, all of the starters on this team were capable of taking the ball out of the park at any time. We hit a lot of home runs. There were line drives that were just scorches!

However, it did not start there. Two men were responsible: Don Jellison, the hall of fame and iconic sports editor and Don Dunker, the Noblesville High School baseball coach. Don Jellison was a relentless promoter of Babe Ruth baseball all over the State of Indiana. For several years he was the President of Babe Ruth baseball in Indiana. Don also believed Noblesville could compete with any city in Indiana and we did.

Don Jellison was the coach of the Noblesville Babe Ruth 14-15-year-old



Photo provided

The Noblesville American Legion team, coached by Don Dunker, won the 1972 Advanced Babe Ruth State Championship. The team earned a spot in a seven-state playoff in Alpena, Mich.

team. It was a feeder program to Don Dunker's high school team and summer American Legion and Advance Babe Ruth team. I played for both Coach Jellison and Coach Dunker. Don Jellison was my friend for 50 years and Don Dunker was a mentor to me in many areas. The high school baseball field at Noblesville is the Donald J. Dunker field. A well-deserved honor!

This all started with the 14 and 15-year-old Babe Ruth team, which was outstanding. The team broke records and was the start of Noblesville High School winning its first-ever baseball sectional championship in 1970. Noblesville went on a run and won four consecutive sectional championships from 1970 to 1973. No one has done that since.

In 1970 as a freshman, Coach Dunker had me start in left field. At that time, I was the first freshman to ever play on the varsity team. In the sectional I hit .400 and tied a sectional record with three hits in a game. The team was led by senior co-captains Greg Daniels, Larry Howard, and junior Butch Reel. The outstanding pitching by Larry Howard was dominant in this first sectional win ever for Noblesville High School.

Don Jellison wrote an article in the middle 1990's in the local paper called, "Noblesville Had Awesome Pitching in the Early 1970's." Every team has rivalries. For us to win the high school baseball sectional we had to beat one team all four years. Let me make it clear – this group of Noblesville baseball players from 1970 to 1973 beat our rival Carmel in four straight sectionals to take these championships and none of the games were close. By that comment I suppose you know who I lived to beat! I was privileged to be the

only player to play on all four sectional championship teams.

Let me digress for a minute. This article is about the 1972 team. However, in 1973 with Ray Lytle and Gary Parks graduated, I pitched the sectional championship game against Carmel. Don Jellison had written a full-page article on the sport page of the newspaper telling Noblesville that I was going to be drafted by Major League Baseball the day after the sectional championship and the community needed to come out and support the team and me. They did with more than 2,000 people coming out to the game. All stands were full and two to three rows deep of people standing up the fence lines into the outfield. This was in 1973 and radar guns were first starting to be used. Every major league team was present in the stands and many college scouts were at Forest Park. Kim, my girlfriend and now my wife for many years, was sitting right behind the scouts and watching the radar gun. My first pitch was high and tight on the hitter, and I knocked him down and scared him to death! Kim jumped up and yelled out 95 miles per hour! The crowd roared and was on fire after that. In that game after the first inning, I struck out 14 Carmel Greyhounds in a row and Noblesville won the game! Four sectional championships in a row! Now back to the rest of the article!

For the 1972 team pitching was huge! In the 1990's article Don Jellison said, "Terry Coomer and Ray Lytle were the first two hurlers to record a pair of shutouts in the local sectional ever. Coomer did it in 1971 and 1972 and Lytle in 1970 and 1972. Coomer's first shutout was shall we say perfect. He hurled a perfect game as

Noblesville defeated a very good Tipton team 6-0. He struck out 19 of 21 batters in the process. Coomer fanned nine consecutive hitters through the middle innings and then finished with eight straight strikeouts. He threw only 99 pitches. Eight of the 19 strikeouts came on called third strikes. His second shutout in the sectional was in 1972 which was also a no hitter."

Don Jellison also wrote in the article, "that the 1972 Noblesville team might have had the best pitching staff in the history of Hamilton County baseball. Along with Coomer, Dunker had Gary Parks, Ray Lytle and Mike Beadle."

Storm Club from Cincinnati, the three-time Ohio Advance Babe Ruth State Champions which eventually won the Ohio Advanced Babe Ruth State Championship in 1972, came to Forest Park undefeated 30-0. Gary Parks was a 6-feet, 5-inch left-hander who could bring it with a great fastball and wicked curve ball pitched against them. We won the game 4-3. Gary was drafted by the Chicago White Sox in the ninth round but went on to pitch for Purdue University. After this win we knew we were on the road when we beat the Ohio undefeated State Champion for the past two years! We knew now we could play and beat anyone.

Ray Lytle was also an awesome pitcher and threw very hard. He threw some no hitters as well and went on to play baseball in college.

As the tournament started, we walked through it behind the three pitchers, Lytle, Parks, and Coomer. Back then you had to play a district tournament, area tournament, as well as a state tournament. However, we were also playing simultaneously in the American Legion tournament as well. We won that tournament;

impressive offense.

Then we went a few days later to Alpena, Mich. to play against seven state champions. Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Major talent on this field. Big time pitching and hitting with more than 50 professional and college scouts watching the games. We never paid anything to eat or travel as the American Legion had a community fundraiser for us and many parents and baseball enthusiasts traveled to northern Michigan to watch us play. We are thankful for the Noblesville American Legion and all the people who gave for us to represent Noblesville and Indiana in this playoff. There are no easy teams or slouches in this tournament! They are all state champions!

Gary Parks pitched the opening game for us against the Wisconsin State Champion, and we lost 1-0 on a passed ball. Gary struck out 15 hitters in the game. Then it was my turn. We played Kentucky, who had John LeMaster playing for them. The following year, John would be the No. 5 pick in the draft in all of Major League Baseball. John was the shortstop for Kentucky hitting .574 coming into the tournament. He was fast, he had a rocket for an arm, and obviously could hit. I struck out 16 hitters in the game, and we won. I struck out John two times in the game. When John I were seniors in high school the next year, we were both drafted by the San Francisco Giants and became teammates. John was the No. 5 pick overall and I was the 78th pick overall in the Major League Baseball draft. I was the first player in Noblesville's history to that point to be drafted and signed by a major league baseball team. I was the first player drafted from Indiana in 1973.

In 1972 my record as a pitcher in high school and the summer with our state championship team was 19 wins and one loss.

Ray Lytle pitched for us in the third game against the Illinois State Champion and again we lost 1-0. He pitched a great game as well.

The city of Noblesville came out and supported us and followed us all season. It was a powerhouse team! Yes, Forest Park was the place to be in the summer of 1972 to watch a great baseball team. We will forever be thankful for everyone that helped to make it happen. Great thanks to the city of Noblesville in 1972, you helped us make it happen! The first state championship team in Noblesville baseball history!

You may reach Dr. Terry Coomer at drterrycoomer19@gmail.com.

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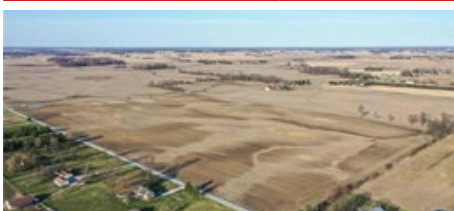
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Noblesville Middle School wrestlers have great showing at state dual championship



The Noblesville Middle School wrestling team finished third at the ISWA Middle School State Dual Wrestling Championships, which took place this past weekend at Franklin Community High School. The Millers are the first team in Hamilton County to place that high at the middle school meet. Kayden Coppage finished the tournament with a 5-0 record, while four more wrestlers had 4-1 days: Henry Antrobus, Aidan Kincaide, Jackson Nelson and Blake Weimer. Two more wrestlers went 3-1: Evan Gordon and Kyle Howard.

Photo provided

Football players across Hamilton County make Coaches Association's Academic All-State team

The REPORTER

Several Hamilton County football players were named to the Indiana Football Coaches Association's Academic All-State team for the 2022-23 school year. All eight county schools are represented on this year's list. Most of the schools are in the IFCA's Region 8, except for Hamilton Heights, which is in Region 5. Here is a full list of Academic All-State honorees:

Carmel: Mason Bard-

well, Reece Bellin, Ken Bruntlett, Cam Carmichael, Kyle Fedorcha, Patrick Greene, Tim Haas, Will Hel-dt, Jack Kazmierczak, Blake Matthews, Vincent Neal, Will Rizzutto, Ben Spon-sler, Caden Weaver, Cade Williams.
Fishers: Jonathan Abeny, Jack Buchenberger, Carson Dunn, Cavitt Fowl-er, Chris Godleski, David Jacobs, Lucas Minns, Ja-cob Pearlman, William Schnefke, Grant Shelton,

Grady Stanley, Hunter Strole, Aidan Zimmer.
Guerin Catholic: An-thony Ferrucci, Will Fre-mion, Evan Guenthner, Brendan McIlvenna, Luke Moody, Sam Tabor, Patrick Wolf, Joe Youngman.
Hamilton Heights: Ogden Aspy, Vincent Har-ley, Kaleb Murray, Trevor Tuma.
Hamilton Southeast-ern: Clayton Allen, Alex Boothby, Ty Bradle, Eli Brantman, Levi Burke,

Peyton Daniels, Cole Ear-lewine, Shane Gastineau, Griffen Haas, Teddy John-son, David Nease, Clayton Wilke, Kyle Young.
Noblesville: Jacob Am-bler, Blake Cole, Ben Deck-er, Christ Degni, Drew Page. Sheridan: Peyton Cross, Keagan Hampton, Dagan Johnson.
Westfield: Cole Ballard, Will Byers, Charlie Dager, Tyler Dikos, Tom Ewing, Dillon Thieneman, Reece Weyer.



Kent Graham / File photo
Carmel's Kole Mathison, shown here receiving the IHSAA Mental Attitude Award during last fall's cross country state finals, received another award this week. Mathison was named the 2022-23 Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Player of the Year.

Mathison named Cross Country Player of the Year

The REPORTER

In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade announced on Monday that Kole Mathison of Carmel High School is the 2022-23 Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Mathison is the second Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Carmel High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Mathison as Indiana's best high school boys cross country player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Player of the Year award to be announced in February, Mathison joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Parker Wolfe (2020-21, Cherry Creek High School, Greenwood Village, Colo.), Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park, Calif.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.) and Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.).

The 6-foot-4, 155-pound senior raced to victory by a commanding 11 seconds at the Champs Sports National Championships with a time of 14:56.60 this past season. Mathison also took fourth at the Nike Cross Nationals to earn All-America honors at both meets. He broke the tape at the IHSAA state championships in 15:02.80, pacing the Greyhounds to the team title. The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, he concluded his prep cross country career as a four-time All-American.

Mathison has volunteered locally for Champions Together, which promotes servant leadership and social inclusion through Unified sports pairing special needs children with non-disabled student-athletes. He has also donated his time by fundraising for Runway For Riley supporting the Riley Children's Hospital and Mt. Carmel, a talent show that supports the Special Olympics. "Kole Mathison proved to be the most durable runner in the nation come championship

time, posting the best combination placing — fourth at Nike Cross Nationals and first at Champs Sports — in the two national meets after enduring a pair of challenging regional meets to qualify," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "The University of Colorado signee also led the Greyhounds to the state title."

Mathison has maintained a weighted 4.13 grade-point average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Colorado at Boulder this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport.

The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Two-time winner Mathison joins recent Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Izaiah Steury (2020-21, Angola High School), Gabriel Sanchez (2019-20, Lowell High School), and Cole Hocker (2018-19, Cathedral High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Thursday, Feb. 2 BOYS BASKETBALL Carmel at Lawrence North, 7:30 p.m. Fishers at Westfield, 7:30 p.m. Franklin Central at Hamilton Southeastern, 7:30 p.m. Hamilton Heights at Frankton, 7:30 p.m. Herron at Sheridan, 7:30 p.m. Mount Vernon at Noblesville, 7:30 p.m. GIRLS SWIMMING SECTIONAL PRELIMS University at West Lafayette, 5:30 p.m. Guerin Catholic, Noblesville, Westfield at Carmel, 6 p.m. Hamilton Heights, Hamilton Southeastern at Fishers, 6 p.m. GYMNASTICS Fishers at Shelbyville (with Franklin Central), 6 p.m. Please email schedule changes or corrections to sports@readthereporter.com .
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| Boys Junior Varsity | HCTV Sports
7:30 pm Mt Vernon (Fortville) vs Noblesville
| Boys Varsity | HCTV Sports
7:30 pm Fishers at Westfield
| Boys Varsity | HCTV Sports

Friday, Feb 3, Girls Basketball
6:00 pm Class 4A Sectional 8
| Fishers vs Noblesville | HCTV Sports
7:45 pm Class 4A Sectional 8
| Zionsville vs Hamilton Southeastern | HCTV Sports

Saturday, Feb 4, Girls Basketball
7:30 pm Class 4A Sectional 8
| Championship | HCTV Sports

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