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THE HAMILTON COUNTY
REPORTER
Your Hometown Newspaper

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026

ARCADIA | ATLANTA | CICERO | SHERIDAN
CARMEL | FISHERS | NOBLESVILLE | WESTFIELD



TODAY'S WEATHER



Today: Morning clouds and light snow. Totals of an inch or less. Some afternoon sun.
Tonight: Partly to mostly cloudy.
HIGH: 44 **LOW:** 33



Honoring the families of the fallen, one diploma at a time

Another world major

The REPORTER

Folds of Honor Indiana is known for its commitment to providing life-changing educational scholarships to spouses and children of fallen or disabled military personnel and first responders. Since its inception in 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded nearly 73,000 scholarships totaling over \$340 million across the United States.



Daggett

Folds of Honor Indiana has opened its scholarship applications for 2026 through March 31.

The Reporter spoke with Folds of Honor Indiana President Mike Daggett about the program

itself, and how readers can contribute to this worthy cause.

Daggett is a U.S. Air Force Veteran and retired in 2019 after 27 total years of service.

"The current conflict, for lack of a better term, brings awareness to the need," Daggett said. "When military members or first responders are wounded in action or killed in action, they don't come home, or

they don't come home the same way. We feel very strongly that that sacrifice deserves a little extra attention to the family unit. There's plenty of nonprofits that take care of the veteran, right-

About Folds of Honor

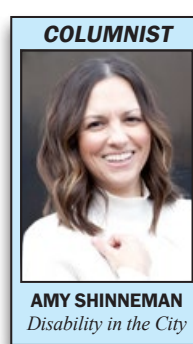
Since 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded over 73,000 educational scholarships. Those scholarships represent about \$340 million in educational impact. Folds of Honor is proud to have a cumulative average ratio of 91 percent of every dollar raised going to the scholarship program. Folds of Honor is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides educational scholarships to spouses and children of fallen or disabled military and first responders. Scholarships support private school tuition or tutoring in grades K-12, tuition for college, technical or trade school, and post-graduate work, including a master's degree, doctorate, or professional program.

fully so, and we don't compete with them. We recognized a need where sometimes the family members, the spouse, and the children didn't qualify for a lot of the benefits that we thought they needed, predominantly in the education space. We raise money and we give away scholarship dollars to the children and

spouses of those military members who sacrificed so much for our freedom." Folds of Honor raises money all year long for the scholarship program. Ninety-one percent of every scholarship dollar goes directly to the school.

See Honor . . . Page 2

Team Humbly Courageous has exciting news. We are taking on the Sydney, Australia Marathon in August! This will be the fifth world major marathon for my husband and me, who run marathons together as a duo team.



With Sydney being the furthest away, it will be our most challenging adventure yet. The travel alone will be a big mountain to conquer. Traveling with a disability adds all kinds of "fun" obstacles into the mix.

We are incredibly excited and honored to have been chosen for such a moment as this.

Perhaps even more exciting than running the Sydney marathon is that I will meet (fingers crossed) and spend time with my Aussie friend Rhi, who also lives with Bethlem Myopathy. If this meeting indeed happens, it will be the first time either of us has ever met someone living with our same disease in person.

I have thought about a meet up like this for most of my life. The chance to spend time with someone "just like me." I have wondered what it will feel like to walk alongside of someone who walks like me, and who I know totally understands. I imagine it will be an emotional meeting for us and those with us.

See Major . . . Page 2

What would Lincoln say about this year's GOP Lincoln Day?



Reporter photos

Even a (hopefully) last blast of winter weather and a day with white-out driving conditions could not keep Republicans away from the 2026 Hamilton County Republican Party Lincoln Day Dinner held at Embassy Suites, 13700 Conference Center Drive South, Noblesville, on March 16. A total of 712 seats were sold, many of whom came specifically to hear NCAA Swimmer & Women's Sports Advocate Riley Gaines give the keynote address. She spoke at length about her own experience with male-born trans athletes competing in women's sports, a discussion which received two standing ovations. **See more photos on Page 3 and at ReadTheReporter.com.**

Noblesville Schools announces four 2026 Hall of Fame honorees

Submitted by Noblesville Schools

Noblesville Schools has announced four new honorees as the Hall of Fame Class of 2026. The honorees are:

Chris Beaver

An NHS graduate, Miller Ambassador, district sponsor, and president of the Miller Backers athletic boosters, Chris Beaver represents a legacy of giving back to the Noblesville community that spans five generations.

An active donor with the Noblesville Schools Education Foundation and leader of the Noblesville Masonic Lodge, he has been a tireless advocate for Noblesville students and staff. He is known for his hands-on dedication and can often be found running concession stands during events. He has been a significant and longtime contributor to Noblesville Schools in many roles including as a student, athlete, parent, coach, business leader and philanthropist.

Sally Crow

Sally Crow taught Language Arts at Noblesville Schools for over 30 years, but her commitment to excellence extends far beyond the classroom. She has



Photo illustration provided by Noblesville Schools

mentored fellow teachers, supported numerous extracurriculars including Spell Bowl, and led the NHS Girls Golf team to two state championships.

Already a member of the NHS Athletic Hall of Fame, her coaching led to NHS securing the first IHSAA championship in 1987 for any Noblesville girls' team.

In retirement, she continues to be an active communi-

ty leader, volunteering with Riverview Health for over 20 years, and supporting many organizations and causes in the Noblesville community.

Fred Farley

Throughout 34 years of dedicated service, Fred Farley supported multiple schools as a facilities supervisor and also led the district's Transportation Department. He was known for both his operational excellence and his

strong personal connections.

A quiet leader, he transformed school maintenance into an opportunity for mentorship, famously engaging students with magic tricks, classroom reading, and secret handshakes. From hosting staff hayrides to his recent leadership award from the State of Indiana, his legacy is defined by his

See Fame . . . Page 2

Auditor's Office earns national financial reporting award for 37th consecutive year

The REPORTER

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has once again awarded Hamilton County the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

This marks the 37th consecutive year Hamilton County has received the prestigious national honor, widely considered the highest recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting.



Clevenger

"This award means the citizens of Hamilton County can be confident their local government is managing public funds with transparency, accountability, and professionalism," Hamilton County Auditor Todd Clevenger said.

The GFOA award recognizes governments whose financial reports go beyond basic reporting requirements to clearly communicate their financial condition in a way that is transparent and understandable to citizens, elected officials, and financial professionals. Independent reviewers evaluate the report to ensure it meets the highest national standards and demonstrates a "constructive spirit of full disclosure."

Producing the county's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is a major undertaking led by the Auditor's Office and supported by every county department and elected office. The report compiles and verifies financial information from across county government to provide a complete picture of the county's finances.

"This achievement reflects the dedication of our entire Auditor's Office team as well as the cooperation of elected officials and department leaders throughout county government," Clevenger said. "It truly is a countywide effort."

Hamilton County also works with outside financial professionals, including advisors at Baker Tilly, to ensure reporting continues to meet evolving government accounting standards.

See Financial . . . Page 2

HONOR

“We send it directly to the school,” Daggett said. “It’s based on unmet needs. So if there’s no bill due at the school, then we don’t send them any money, but if there’s a bill due at the school, then we pay up to \$2,500 a semester, \$5,000 a year, to help them further their education. Honoring the sacrifice and educating the legacy is really our tagline. Our scholarship window is open currently. It closes at the end of this month.”

The scholarships are not just for the children of fall-

en or disabled veterans and first responders, but also for spouses.

“A lot of times what happens is the couple had a plan for their future and for their kids, and when one income stream is lost, the other person suddenly has to shift and reprioritize and completely change their life,” Daggett said. “That’s where a lot of [the need] comes from. They say, ‘I need to go back to school because whatever I was doing isn’t going to suffice. I was counting on a larger pool of income.’ So

it’s a significant part of our program. We see so many spouses that rebuild their lives and say, ‘I have to do this.’”

The scholarships are available to support private school tuition or tutoring in grades K-12, tuition for college, technical or trade school, and post-graduate work, including a master’s degree, doctorate, or professional program.

The reason the scholarships can be applied to private schools is because Folds of Honor wants the family to be able to contin-

ue building the life already planned for their children.

“We want to honor the wishes of whatever the parents feel the educational direction for their child is,” Daggett said. “We want to be able to assist in that opportunity. Public school is great, private school is great, trade school is great. There’s a lot of opportunities to just get educated in a meaningful way. To say, ‘I’m in charge of my own life now. I need to go make it happen.’ So whatever you feel is your path, we want to

be able to support it.”

Scholarships are based on unmet need, and can cover tuition, fees, on-campus dormitory housing, meal plans, and required textbooks.

Scholarship recipients are required to maintain a 2.0 or higher grade-point average for the two most recent academic terms.

Applications are accepted through the Folds of Honor website at foldsofhonor.org/scholarships.

If you are not the family member of a disabled or fall-

en veteran or first responder, but you would like to help those you are, you can make a charitable donation to this 501(c)(3) non-profit.

Your donation will go to needs-based scholarships to the spouses and children of America’s fallen and disabled service members and first responders, including police, firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics right here in Indiana.

Learn more about Folds of Honor and how you can donate online at indiana.foldsofhonor.org.

from Page 1

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BeholdTheLamb.com

FAME

servant’s heart and a commitment to ensuring everyone in his school felt welcomed.

Bruce Hitchcock

For over 40 years as an educator, Bruce Hitchcock challenged his students to think critically through social studies. Known for his high standards, written essay assignments, and his “Devil’s Advocate” approach to questioning, he fostered in his students a deep appreciation for American history.

To extend learning beyond the classroom, he created the Washington, D.C. study program. By leveraging his connections with government leaders, he provided unparalleled access to national landmarks and began the district’s D.C. trip tradition.

His enduring legacy lives on in the generations of engaged citizens he inspired through his passion and commitment to excellence.

“We’re honored to recognize the significant contributions of these special individuals who have played an important role in strengthening our schools and the Noblesville community,” Superintendent Dr. Dan Hile said. “We look forward to celebrating their induction into the Hall of Fame with their family and friends later this year.”

This is the second year of the district’s new Hall of Fame program, which celebrates the legacy of those who have positively impacted the students, staff, and overall success of Noblesville Schools. The district solicited Hall of Fame nominations from the community, and a selection committee chose individuals who best demonstrated exceptional service, support, accomplishments, or contributions to Noblesville Schools.

The Hall of Fame ini-

tiative is a collaboration between Noblesville Schools and the Noblesville Schools Education Foundation (NSEF). The new Class of 2026 honorees was announced at NSEF’s Miller-Palooza event on Friday, March 13.

The district plans to induct the Class of 2026 honorees at a celebration this fall at the new Hall of Fame Courtyard outside of the Noblesville Schools Community Center.

Last year’s Class of 2025 Hall of Fame honorees includes Dick Dellinger, Vickie Ely, Julia Kozicki, John Land, Bryan Mills, Tony Oilar, Rick Towle, and Kathy Williams. They will have their formal induction ceremony next month.

Nominations are open for future Hall of Fame inductees. Eligibility criteria, nomination guidelines and the application to nominate can be found [here](#).

from Page 1

MAJOR

With each marathon we have both learned so much, and we are excited for this big adventure ahead.

Chicago was our first marathon together. My husband had done several before we ran together as a duo team. In Chicago, everything was so new to me and a bit overwhelming. The crowds were phenomenal, but I got a little sick from the trapped adrenaline. I had never experienced adrenaline with that intensity before. In the end, it was a favorite marathon, especially because we had family and friends there to see us cross our first finish line together.

New York was meaningful because we got to run that marathon with our oldest son, and our youngest son was at the finish line. It was such an emotional and beautiful day in our lives. Truly priceless.

Boston was my biggest physical test. By the end of that incredible marathon, I had exhausted myself to the point of needing medical

attention. Riding in the duo bike is much harder than it seems and is taxing on the body in its own unique way. As miserable as I was, I will never forget those medical angels that surrounded me and the gentle care they provided to me.

Anytime you get the privilege of experiencing human kindness in its purest form is a gift.

Berlin was our first overseas marathon and was not without many difficulties. In many ways, it was our most challenging marathon to date. There were so many little hurdles everywhere to overcome, but we figured it out and learned some valuable life lessons together.

Many would not understand why we even do this. Some have called us crazy; some think it is amazing. Once people take time to listen to our “why,” we have changed some opinions along the way of those who called us crazy.

My husband puts it best when he talks about a young lady who was a spectator at

the Chicago marathon. She was in a wheelchair, and he says the look on her face when she saw us run by was like, *yeah, I could do that, too.*

Impossibilities are just an opportunity to reevaluate and investigate different and unique ways to achieve things.

I always wanted to be an athlete, but my body had other plans. I still have that drive within me to be active and have an “athletic” determination and mindset, which has served me well throughout my life.

Running marathons together is just one example of transforming the impossible to possible.

Until next time ...
Amy Shinneman is a former National Ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, disability blogger, freelance writer, wife, and mom of two boys. She is the recipient of the Reporter's Winter 2025 Ink-Stained Wretch award. You can find her blog at humblycourageous.com and reach her on Instagram @ashinneman.

from Page 1

FINANCIAL

The county’s longstanding record of excellence was built by former Hamilton County Auditors Robin Mills and Dawn Coverdale, whose leadership established the strong financial reporting standards the county continues today. Maintaining that tradition has become increasingly challenging as government accounting standards con-

tinue to evolve and expand.

“Each year the reporting requirements become more complex,” Clevenger said. “Continuing this 37-year tradition requires an incredible level of professionalism, attention to detail, and commitment from our staff.”

For Hamilton County government, the Certificate of Achievement represents

more than a financial document, it reflects a culture of accountability.

“Our responsibility is to ensure every taxpayer dollar is tracked, reported, and managed responsibly,” Clevenger said. “This award demonstrates that Hamilton County remains committed to openness, fiscal responsibility, and the highest level of public service.”

from Page 1

CD rates that are better than they have to be?

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Republicans pack the house, & this page, for Lincoln Day

As always, the Lincoln Day Dinner was so filled with smiling faces that they could barely fit in the space available at Embassy Suites, 13700 Conference Center Drive South, Noblesville. They would certainly not all fit on one page of this newspaper. To those of you who were there and do not appear in today's edition, we offer this fact by way of apology: time and space are limited resources. It would have taken an entire edition to capture it all. The event program, including a full list of speakers and a sponsor list is available at [this link](#). (Reporter photos)



Westfield City Council codifies Advisory Council on Disabilities



Photo provided by City of Westfield

The Westfield City Council passed a resolution during its March 9 meeting officially codifying the current disability council to become the Westfield Advisory Council on Disabilities. This resolution continues to lay the groundwork for years to come in the City of Westfield and Washington Township. Now codified, nine members will be appointed to the council to provide input regarding impacts to public safety, accessibility, workforce development, community engagement, and more. As a quickly growing community, this council is now poised to be near the forefront of so many impactful decisions for residents and the disability community. [Click here](#) to learn more about the Council.

Indiana American Water provides customers with leak-saving tips during Fix a Leak Week

Submitted

Indiana American Water is recognizing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Fix a Leak Week 2026 by sharing simple, practical tips customers can use to locate and address common household leaks that waste water, drive up bills, and strain home plumbing.

"Finding and fixing leaks can help customers protect their water, homes, businesses and monthly bills," said Kari Britto, Vice President of Operations, Indiana American Water. "At the same time, Indiana American Water is investing over \$200 million annually for the next several

years to modernize water and wastewater infrastructure in our 75 communities across the Hoosier State."

Household leaks are more common than many people realize. According to the EPA, leaks affect about one in 10 homes and can waste more than 90 gallons of water each day.

Here are a few places where leaks are often found:

- **Toilets:** A defective plunger ball or flapper valve can waste water by causing the tank to continually drain and refill. To test, drop a dye-tracing tablet or a small amount of food coloring in the tank and wait five minutes. If the dye-colored water seeps into the bowl, you

may have a leak and need to replace the defective part.

- **Faucets:** A leaky faucet can waste nearly 3,200 gallons of water per year. If you notice one dripping, try closing it tightly. If it continues to drip, the washer may need to be replaced.

- **Washing Machines and Dishwashers:** If you see water on the floor near your washing machine or dishwasher, that could indicate a leak. You may want to call your repair service.

- **Bathtubs and Showers:** Check the spout and showerhead for dripping water. New washers may be needed on the faucet handles.

- **Boiler Systems:** If

the sound of running water is continuous and does not stop and start periodically, there may be a leak. Contact a professional to check it out and perform repairs.

Learn more by downloading [Indiana American Water's leak-detection kit](#) and checking out the company's [Fix a Leak Week blog post](#). Customers can also review water use for unexpected spikes and manage accounts through [MyWater](#), Indiana American Water's online customer portal.

Additional tips on water conservation and the value of water are available through the company's [Water Learning Center](#).

Lucky enough for kindness

March has a personality of its own.

It arrives in shades of green, carrying wishes of luck, four-leaf clovers, and cheerful greetings of "may the luck be with you." At the same time, it sweeps us into the energy of March Madness – brackets, buzzer-beaters, and the thrill of unexpected outcomes.

Luck and momentum. Chance and competition.

But somewhere in the middle of all this, I've been thinking about something that doesn't rely on luck at all: the quiet, intentional difference between being nice and being kind.

We often use these words as if they mean the same thing. They don't.

Niceness is easy. It's the polite smile, the agreeable nod, the instinct to keep things comfortable. Niceness keeps everything feeling like it's going right, even when it's not.

Kindness asks more of us.

In the spirit of Taste of Community, I've seen this difference unfold in small, human moments around shared tables. During one gathering, someone shared a food memory rooted not in celebration, but in struggle – stretching meals, making do, carrying quiet resilience. It would have been easy to respond with a quick smile and move on.

That would have been nice.

Instead, someone paused and said, "That must have been really hard."

The room shifted. It slowed down. Others leaned in – not to fix, but to understand. More stories followed, deeper and more honest than before.

It wasn't the easiest moment. But it was the kindest one.

Niceness protects the moment.

Kindness protects the person.

In another instance, while planning a community event, an idea was shared that sounded inclusive – but unintentionally missed the mark. The "nice" response would have been to agree and keep things moving.

But someone gently spoke up: "I wonder if this leaves someone out."

It created a pause. A little discomfort – like a game turning in its final seconds. But just like in March Madness, those turning points matter.

Because that wasn't just feedback. That was care in action.

Kindness is willing to risk a brief discomfort to create something more honest and inclusive.

And no, kindness isn't about being harsh. It's not about saying things blunt-



ly and calling it truth. Real kindness carries intention. It asks, "Am I helping? Am I honoring? Am I making space for something better?"

Because without that intention, honesty can easily lose its heart.

And if I'm being honest, this hasn't always been easy for me.

I'm not always the "nice" person with the constant, beaming smile. But I've learned that having a kind heart is an intentional practice. It's choosing to speak the truth with care, to be that voice when something feels off, to be that neighbor or friend who is willing to sit in a little discomfort – if it means something more honest can grow.

Maybe that's where this season offers us an unexpected lesson.

We often talk about being "lucky" to have good people and strong communities. But as we say in Gujarati,

“નસીબ તો બહાનું છે, મહેનત અને મનથી કરેલું કામ જ સાચું ફળ આપે.”

(Luck is often an excuse; it is effort and intention that truly bring meaningful results.)

What if community isn't just luck?

What if it is built – moment by moment – through choices?

Through choosing to speak when it would be easier to stay silent.

Through choosing to listen when it would be easier to move on.

Through choosing kindness, even when niceness would be more comfortable.

Because the strongest communities aren't the ones where everything feels perfect.

They're the ones where people feel safe enough to be real.

And maybe that is the most meaningful kind of good fortune we can share – with intention, with honesty, and with heart.

Pooja Thakkar is working to build cultural connections. You can read her column each week in the pages of The Reporter.

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Thanks for reading!

Don't just ride the rails ... Bike them!

Forest Park Rail Adventure

An 8-mile round trip rail bike ride starting at Hobbs Station in Forest Park.

White River Family Cruise

Enjoy this short, scenic rail bike ride from Hobbs Station in Forest Park.

NickelPlateExpress.com/railbike-rides

Artists compete & create at Ignite Studio's third annual Make-Off

The REPORTER

Celebrating creativity and innovation in Hamilton East Public Library's (HEPL) makerspace, Ignite Studio presents its third annual Make-Off from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 21 at the Fishers Library.

Selected artists will compete to create an original piece of art using Ignite Studio equipment, kits, or other in-house materials, showcasing the creative possibilities of making. Each artist will have six hours to complete their work, with monetary prizes awarded for first, second, and third place. This year's theme is mixed media. The day begins at 9 a.m. in the Ignite Studio, with awards presented at 4 p.m.

Patrons are invited to watch the creative process, participate in hands-on activities, and join the patron art challenge.

"The Fishers Make-Off is a chance to showcase artists who find unique and creative ways to use the materials and resources at Ignite Studio and provide in-



Photos provided

The third-annual Fishers Make-Off will feature hands-on creative activities for artists of all ages and abilities.

spiration to patrons in their own art making," HEPL Arts Engagement Coordinator Kris Hurst said. "This event highlights artistic expression as a form of storytelling and connection, central to the library's mission."

Activities for the public include:

- Free art kits for the first 50 guests
- Collage: Make your own mixed media artwork with our mini collage kits complete with shadowbox frame.
- Assemblage wall: Add funky shapes, forms, and

textures to the community wall.

- Metallic mandalas: Create your own multi-layered mandala using various materials.

- Public Maker Challenge (10 a.m. to noon): Participants ages 8 and up can learn the Chine-collé printmaking technique, combining prints and thin papers in a unique mixed media creation. Awards will be given in Youth, Teen, Adult, and Family categories. Registration is required to participate in the Public Maker Challenge.

All ages are invited to experience the artistic process firsthand and create their own art projects. For more information, visit ignite.hamiltoneastpl.org.

About the Ignite Studio

The Ignite Studio is located in the lower level of the Fishers Library and is an art studio and makerspace available to the community. The Ignite Studio is a place to discover, collaborate, and experience in creative ways. Everyone is an artist and a maker, no matter their age, background, or experience level at the Ignite Studio.

Amy Summerfield appointed to Humane Society for Hamilton County Advisory Council

Submitted

Amy Summerfield has been appointed to the Advisory Council of the Humane Society for Hamilton County (HSHC), continuing her long-standing commitment to animal welfare and public safety in the community.

The HSHC Advisory Council is comprised of subject-matter experts and community leaders who are dedicated to the organization's mission of saving lives, educating communities, and completing families.

The council was initially formed to support the organization's goal to build a state-of-the-art facility at its current location in Fishers at 106th Street and Hague Road. The council was also instrumental in helping or-

ganization raise the \$12.5 million required to successfully complete the project.

"In just under five years, we officially paid off the loan for this facility in January," HSHC President and CEO Rebecca Stevens said. "Now it's time to tap both current and new Advisory Council members to help us achieve new goals, new dreams, and navigate today's incredibly challenging landscape of animal welfare. Amy has been an animal welfare warrior behind the scenes for many years, so we couldn't think of anyone better to offer counsel on the growing number legal and jurisdictional questions that impact HSHC and the animals we serve."

Summerfield's col-



laboration with HSHC began during her time as Deputy Prosecutor, where she worked with HSHC staff and local law enforcement to strengthen investigations, and ultimately prosecute, serious crimes involving animal cruelty and neglect. Through that collaboration, Summerfield helped improve coordination between agencies and supported more effective case outcomes for vulnerable animals.



Summerfield

After transitioning to the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office as Legal Advisor, Summerfield continued her work in animal welfare policy. She played a key role in the comprehensive rewrite of Hamilton County's animal ordinances, which were ultimately adopted countywide as well as by all four major cities within Hamilton County. These updates modernized

See Advisory . . . Page 6

Letter to the Editor

Veteran endorses Barrows for judge

Dear Editor:

I am writing to strongly endorse Christopher Barrows as Judge for Hamilton County Superior Court 9.

I have known Christopher Barrows for over 40 years and have seen him grow and flourish from childhood to being a stellar young man serving his Hamilton County community. He strongly believes in the rule of law, in civility in the courtroom, and in the importance of integrity in our judiciary. He has spent his whole life serving Hamilton County as a father, volunteer, youth coach, neighbor, and friend. His focus has always been on serving his family, clients, and community, not on courting politicians.

Christopher Barrows' knowledge and experience make him by far the most qualified candidate running for Judge for Superior Court 9. He has spent more than 25 years as an attorney in Hamilton County courtrooms, and in that time he has been a Guardian ad Litem, mediator, arbitrator, Judge Pro Tem, and appointed Judicial Officer. For the past four years, he has presided over the County's Title IV-D child support and parentage court.

He has the right experience to be the first judge of new Superior Court 9.

As a Veteran who has worked with Christopher Barrows through my years of assisting our Hamilton County Military Veteran community, he is exactly the kind of person we need on the bench.

Bill Doss

Fishers

Letters to the Editor do not reflect the opinions of The Reporter, its publisher or its staff. You can submit your own Letter to the Editor by email to News@ReadTheReporter.com. Please include your phone number and city of residence. The Reporter will publish one letter per person per week.

Rachel Murphy of Carmel makes Concordia Dean's List

The REPORTER

Concordia University Wisconsin officials have released the Fall Honors List for the 2025-26 academic year.

Rachel Murphy, a freshman from Carmel studying theology, made the Dean's List.

The Dean's List for the University is composed each semester of those full-time students who have a semester grade-point average of 3.6 or above. Students must earn at least 12 undergraduate credits in a semester to be eligible; graduate credits are not considered for this honor.

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ADVISORY

from Page 5

enforcement tools, clarified standards of care, and strengthened protections for animals while ensuring consistency across jurisdictions. In her current role, Summerfield continues to work with HSHC and law enforcement agencies on training initiatives, supporting best practices in investigation, enforcement, and prosecution of animal-related offenses.

"I've seen firsthand how critical collaboration is when it comes to protecting animals and supporting the professionals who serve them," Summerfield said. "This appointment is truly an honor as advocating for the most at-risk animals imaginable has always been a personal and professional priority for me."

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Noblesville Lions get '411' on voting from Lisa Dick

Submitted

At their March 11 meeting, the Noblesville Lions Club heard from member Lisa Dick about her volunteer work with the League of Women Voters (LWV) of Hamilton County and the Vote411 election guide.

LWV is a nonpartisan political organization, encouraging informed and active participation in government.

The Hamilton County League is currently surveying the 147 candidates running for public office in the 2026 Indiana primary. Candidates have been mailed or emailed a survey asking general biographical questions as well as race-specific questions. The League will pub-

lish candidates' responses to the Vote411 website later in March, ahead of early voting and the May 5 primary.

The League does not support or endorse parties or candidates, but they do encourage all registered voters to make informed decisions. Voter registration closes on April 6 and early voting begins on April 7.

Citizens can find additional information about early voting, election day polling locations, and ballot information at Vote411.org. Vote411 is funded by the Education Fund of the League of Women Voters.

To learn more about the League of Women Voters of Hamilton County, visit lwvhcin.org.



Photo provided by Noblesville Lions Club
 Noblesville Lions President Walt Scheid and Lion and League of Women Voters member Lisa Dick.

Firefighters & St. Patrick's fans, two great groups that go green together

By RENEE BUTTS

Carmel Fire Public Education Officer

On Saturday, March 14, the Carmel Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 4444 proudly hosted its annual St. Patrick's Day celebration at the Brockway Public House in Carmel, bringing the community together for a day of fun, camaraderie, and an important cause since 2008.

The event raised funds for the Local 4444 Bereavement Fund, an effort dedicated to supporting the families of firefighters during times of loss and hardship.

"This is a great event for our firefighters that goes to directly benefit them during a time of need, and we are grateful Kevin and Lainey Paul of Brockway Pub for this partnership," L4444 President Sean Sutton said.

What better way for firefighters to celebrate than by giving back and taking care of its own? Across the fire service, cancer rates continue to rise at an alarming pace, making it more important than ever to support one another and strengthen the bonds that make the fire service family so unique. Events like this not only raise critical funds but also provide an opportunity for firefighters, families, and community members to come together in a positive and uplifting atmosphere.

This year's event carried special meaning, as more than one of their own members is currently battling cancer. The support

shown throughout the day was a powerful reminder that no firefighter stands alone when facing life's toughest challenges.

The celebration kicked off at noon with live music from The Ian Reppert Experience, who energized the crowd and set the tone for a great afternoon. Attendees then enjoyed classic firehouse-style competitions, including a pumper pull and a keg toss, both of which drew enthusiastic participation and plenty of cheers from the crowd.

From start to finish, the day was filled with laughter, friendly competition, and strong community spirit. Thanks to everyone who attended, volunteered, and supported the event. It truly was a great day for a great cause, and a reminder that the strength of the fire service lies in the way we stand together – on and off the job.

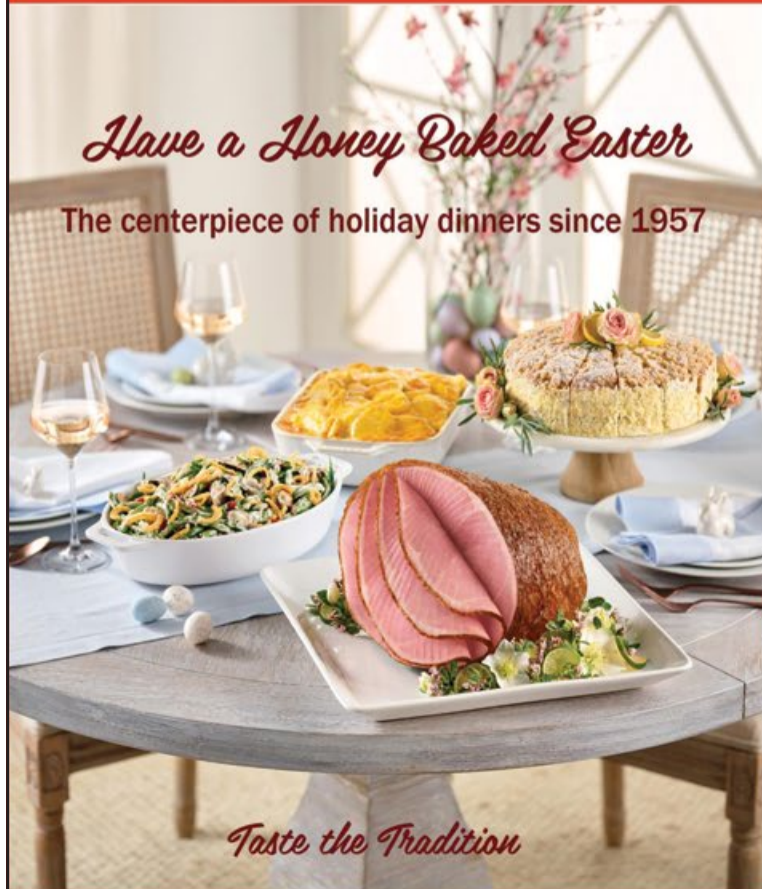


Photos provided by Carmel Fire Department
 (TOP, from left) Hamilton County Councilman Tim Griffin; Erin and Marc Deitsch, L4444 Union Vice President; Carmel City Councilwoman Shannon Minnaar; Sean Sutton, L4444 Union President; and David Minnaar. (ABOVE) Ian Reppert performs for the crowd.



Photo provided by Carmel Fire Department
 In the spirit of "Where's Waldo?" can you spot Carmel Fire Chief Joel Thacker?

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Photo provided

Stunning arias & memorable melodies

Don't miss *The Three Italian Tenors*, direct from Rome

The REPORTER

The Three Italian Tenors' program *Italia Musica Amore* is a unique tribute to Italian song and aria, saluting the tradition of great Italian tenors such as Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli, Mario Lanza and Enrico Caruso.

This concert is set for 7 p.m. Sunday, March 29 at the Payne & Mencias Palladium. [Click here](#) for tickets.

This exhilarating musical event features original arrangements of universally loved Italian song and tenor arias, presenting a nostalgic program filled with memorable melodies. This is the first concert tour of North America by the spectacular Three Italian Tenors: Alessandro Fantoni, Gianni Leccese, and Ugo Tarquini, accompanied by Fabrizio Mocata on piano.

Five films honored by Heartland Film in 2025 win Academy Awards

Submitted

The 98th Academy Awards took place on Sunday, March 15. Five films honored by Heartland Film won Oscars, including "The Singers," which received the Oscar-qualifying Narrative Grand Prize Award at the 2025 Indy Shorts Film Festival.

Three short films showcased at the festivals took home Oscars. "The Singers" and "Two People Exchanging Saliva" were both Official Selections at the Indy Shorts Film Festival in 2025, and they share the Oscar for Best Live Action Short. Along with winning the Narrative Grand Prize Award at Indy Shorts, "The Singers" won the Narrative Audience Choice Award.

"All the Empty Rooms" was a Special Presentation at the Heartland Film Festival in 2025 and won the Oscar for Best Documentary Short. Director Joshua Sefitel has a close relationship with Heartland Film. This is his second Oscar-nominated short film to come through the festivals. His documentary short, "Stranger at the Gate," won the Academy Award-qualifying Grand Prize at the 2023 Indy Shorts Film Festival and went on to receive an Oscar Nomination that year.

"Congratulations to the newly-minted Oscar win-

ners," said Greg Sorvig, Artistic Director of Heartland Film. "Three short films showcased by Heartland Film won an Academy Award, which is an organization record!"

Two feature films celebrated by Heartland Film received Academy Awards. "Sentimental Value" from Neon was the International Closing Night film at the 2025 Heartland Film Festival and won the Oscar for Best International Feature Film. Heartland Film also presents the Truly Moving Picture Award to studio titles that do more than entertain. "Hamnet" was honored with the Truly Moving Picture Award in 2025, and Jessie Buckley took home the Oscar for Best Lead Actress for her role. The full list of Academy Award Winners can be found [here](#).

Heartland Film has now showcased a total of 13 Oscar-winning short films. Film submissions are open for both the Indy Shorts Film Festival in July and the Heartland Film Festival in October. Last week, the Heartland Film Festival was named the No. 1 Best Film Festival by *USA TODAY* 2026 10Best Readers' Choice Awards. Filmmakers can submit their films through [FilmFreeway.com](#).

Both heartbreaking & hilarious

By CARRIE NEAL
A Seat on the Aisle

We are living in unsettling times, and that cannot help but impact the lens through which we view all kinds of art. So often when reviewing over the past year or so, I've thought "this lands differently" or "this hits harder," or have simply been overwhelmed by the poignancy of the words within the context of our world right now.

When IRT selected *English*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Iranian-American playwright Sanaz Toossi, for their current season they couldn't have known that the United States would be dropping bombs on Iran by the time the play was performed. But that fact serves to make the setting and subject matter all the more affecting.

English takes place in Karaj, a suburb north of Tehran, but all of the action occurs inside of one classroom. This classroom belongs to Marjan, an instructor for advanced English speakers who is helping her students prepare for the TOEFL exam (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Each of her four students has a unique and compelling reason for taking the course, which is revealed as

the 90-minute, one-act play unfolds.

Playwright Toossi uses an ingenious technique to break down the language barrier between Farsi and English: whenever the characters are speaking English, they speak English more haltingly and with an Iranian accent. When they're speaking Farsi, they also speak English but more rapidly and fluently, with no Iranian accent. It may take a minute or two for audience members to adjust to this device, but it's astonishingly effective.

As teacher Marjan, Neagheen Homaifar is just the steady influence we need. Clear-eyed and serene, yet wonderfully emotive as well, she's the perfect touchstone for her four very different students. At first she seems to exist only as a sounding board, but Marjan turns out to have her own complicated backstory. As oldest student Roya, Leyla Modirzadeh has the smallest but perhaps most impactful role; she begins as comic relief but takes the audience on a journey of devastation. As young Goli, Emelia Maryam Mosay is just beginning her career on stage but you'd never know it; her Ricky Martin monologue is an absolute highlight of the show.

The heart of the play is



Photo by Zach Rosing

Neagheen Homaifar as Marjan.

the character Elham, beautifully portrayed by Natasha Behnam. An aspiring med student, she dreams of studying in Australia but has failed the TOEFL five times. Despite being highly intelligent, English doesn't come easily to her, so she's particularly frustrated by her nemesis Omid, played by Revon Yousif. Omid's facility with English seems to come effortlessly, but he has a secret that might be a factor.

We come to love each and every one of these characters during the six classroom lessons that com-

prise the course of the play. I must admit that I thought this production might be too niche for the Indianapolis market, but I'm so happy to have been mistaken. Director Azar Kazemi takes us on a journey that I expected to be heartbreaking but which was equally hilarious.

English is a must-see, and will be running at IRT on the Janet Allen Stage (Upperstage) selected dates through April 4. Tickets are available at [irtlive.com](#).

Read more great play reviews from *A Seat on the Aisle* at [asota.wordpress.com](#).

Spring Swing returns to the Bridgewater Club

Submitted by City of Westfield

Westfield's popular family dance event, Spring Swing, returns to The Bridgewater Club, 3535 E. 161st St., on Saturday, April 18, for music, dancing, and family activities.

Spring Swing combines the long-standing tradition of father-daughter and mother-son dances and adds

a "Someone Special" category, open to any child and a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, foster parent, or other loved one. The addition allows families of all kinds to participate.

Each dance session will feature family-friendly music from a professional DJ, crafts, airbrush and balloon artists, snacks and refreshments, outdoor games and

activities, and a professional portrait station by Tenth Street Photography. All activities are included with admission.

Tickets are required for each attendee and cost \$20 per person, regardless of age. Tickets go on sale at 10 a.m. today, Wednesday, March 18, and are expected to sell out.

Dance sessions include:

- Someone Special

Dance: 2 to 4 p.m.

- Mother-Son Dance: 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

- Father-Daughter Dance: 7 to 9 p.m.

All ages are welcome, though the event is recommended for children ages 3 to 10.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [westfieldin.gov/spring-swing](#).

Stewart running for Noblesville Township Board

Submitted

Jenna Stewart recently announced her candidacy for Noblesville Township Board.

Stewart is a mom, lawyer, and community advocate. She and her husband, Doug, have lived in Noblesville for over 25 years and have two children who attend Noblesville Schools. "I am running for No-

blesville Township Board because I believe our community can be well served through local control of carefully managed tax dollars," she said.

Stewart has worked as a Deputy Attorney General, a Hamilton



Stewart

County Deputy Prosecutor, and a juvenile defense and child welfare attorney.

She has served as past President of her homeowners association and volunteered with the League of Women Voters. Stewart will appear on

the Democratic Party ballot in the May 5, 2026, primary election and will be among the candidates competing for three board seats in the November 3, 2026, general election.

You can learn more about Jenna Stewart and her campaign on Facebook, Instagram and ActBlue by searching "Elect Jenna Stewart."



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Numerous Carmel students advance to 2026 National History Day in Indiana state contest

The REPORTER

The Indiana Historical Society (IHS) has announced that students from across north central Indiana are advancing to the 2026 National History Day in Indiana (NHDI) State Contest after a successful regional competition held Saturday, March 14.

The North Central regional contest, hosted at Carmel High School, brought together nearly 200 students from Delaware, Hamilton, Lake, Madison, and Marion counties. After presenting projects representing months of in-depth research and preparation, top finalists earned the opportunity to compete at the 2026 NHDI State Contest on April 18 at Marian University in Indianapolis.

Locally, the following Carmel students were recognized:

• **Junior Individual Documentary:** “Hippies: The Counterculture of Artistic Revolution” – Lucy Feng (Clay Middle School)

• **Senior Paper:** “The Labor Revolution: How Eugene V. Debs Transformed Socialism and Worker Rights Across America” – Jack Stevenson (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Individual Documentary:** “Actus Reus of Revolutions: The Thin Blue Line and Reforms in Consequence” – Erin An (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Group Documentary:** “The Reformation of Nuclear History: Lisbon Protocol 1992” – Austin Szalavari and Ivan Florman (Carmel High School); “The Crime of the Century: How the Kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh Jr. Changed the Law Enforcement System of Dealing with Kidnapping Cases, and Media Coverage in Crime” – Gianna Gaskill, Mia Elliott (Carmel High School); “From Reaction to Reform: How ACT UP’s



Students from across north central Indiana came to Carmel High School for the regional competition. Photo provided

“Inside-Outside” Strategy Revolutionized AIDS Activism” – Benjamin Lu, Divya Ariyur, Emma An, Shawn Feng (Carmel High School); “Navajo Code Talkers: A Symbol of Pride” – Emma Gavrilut, Avery Brenner (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Individual Website:** “The Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire of 1911’s Effect on Labor Laws in the United States” – Mia Taliaferro (Carmel High School); “Free Riders or Fair Share? How an Indiana Agency Shop Battle Reshaped American Labor Law” – Sheza Nawaz (Carmel High School); “Resisting Hate: Notre Dame Students’ Revolutionary Response to the Ku Klux Klan” – Katelyn Chen (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Group Website:** “The War Powers Resolution: Redefining the Separation of Powers in the Vietnam Era” – Katie Zhao, Olivia Lim, Stephanie Tan, Valerie Fu (Carmel High School); “Indianapolis Streetcar Strike of 1913” – Evyn Arockia, Jeonghu Yang, Luke Zhang (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Individual Exhibit:** “Reaction, Reform, and Quakers” – Grant Block (Carmel High School); “The Floating Hells and the Voyage to Modern Prisons” – Sophia Andres (Carmel High

School); “Blood Money The True Story Behind the UK Blood Scandal and How it Reformulated the NHS and Health Regulations” – Thea Purvis (Carmel High School); “The Berlin Wall: The Wall That Helped Expand Democracy” – Ashley Kent (Carmel High School); “Reforms in Food Consumer Safety: Welcome To The Jungle” – Beatrix Marshall (Carmel High School)

• **Senior Group Exhibit:** “When Words Became War: Political and Religious Tensions Result in the Navoo Expositor Incident – a Turning Point in American Religious History” – Josslyn Pellin, Mackenzie Millis (Carmel High School); “Dorothea Dix and the Central State Hospital” – Isabella Henderson, Kate Templeman (Carmel High School); “Insulin: A Partnership, a Revolution, and Millions of Lives” – Thomas Washburn, Tyler Carlston (Carmel High School)

NHDI is a yearlong academic program designed to strengthen history education for students in grades four through 12. Each year, participants select a historical topic connected to an annual theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary source research. The 2025-2026 theme, “Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History,” challenges students to explore how individuals, communities,

and governments have balanced freedoms and civic duties throughout history.

Students present their findings in one of five categories: documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website. Advancement to the state contest requires qualification through one of seven regional competitions held across Indiana. “National History Day gives students the opportunity to dive deeply into history and discover how the past continues to shape the world around them,” IHS CEO Jody Blankenship said. “The level of research, creativity and thoughtful analysis displayed is remarkable. We are proud to see these students contribute to the ongoing story of how we understand our past.”

Through its project-based, inquiry-driven model, NHDI gives students ownership of their learning by guiding them to develop research questions, analyze evidence and present conclusions in creative and compelling ways. From classroom projects to regional and state competitions, the program builds critical thinking, analytical, and presentation skills while fostering meaningful collaboration between students and educators.

For more information about National History Day in Indiana, visit indiana-history.org/historyday or call (317) 232-1882.

Dr. Joseph F. Fitzgerald

November 8, 1935 – February 19, 2026

Dr. Joseph F. Fitzgerald passed away on February 19,



2026, at the age of 90. A pioneering pediatric gastroenterologist, devoted husband, father, grandfather, and man of deep Christian faith, Joe lived a life defined by discipline, intellectual rigor, humor, and abiding love for his family.

Joe grew up in Chicago where, by his own account, he had little direction. That changed during his service in the U.S. Army when he was chosen to train as an operating room nurse, an opportunity that awakened a calling to medicine that shaped the rest of Joe’s life.

While Joe was stationed in Aberdeen, Md., friends arranged a blind date with Nell Norris, a schoolteacher from Boone, N.C. It was love at first sight. He was, in his words, “head over heels in love with this little southerner.” They were married five months later on May 3, 1958, shortly before Joe’s scheduled discharge. He knew he could not leave without her.

After Joe graduated from St. Joseph’s College in Rensselaer, Ind., the young couple moved to Indianapolis so Joe could begin medical school at Indiana University. Those years were marked by hard work and sacrifice. Joe worked as a phlebotomist, drawing blood each morning at 6:30 a.m. before classes. At night, he swept and cleaned the tunnels that connected the medical center buildings. He studied after returning home, often late into the evening.

It was during these years that Joe and Nell’s three daughters were born. Joe often described these as the best three days of his life.

Following Joe’s residency and a fellowship in adult gastroenterology at IU, Dr. Morris Green recruited Joe to stay in academic medicine and develop what was then a nascent field: pediatric gastroenterology. At a time when pediatric subspecialties were just emerging nationally, Joe founded the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology at Riley Hospital for Children in 1969.

Over the course of Joe’s career, he introduced and advanced innovations in pediatric GI and liver disease care that saved and improved many lives. He performed Riley’s first percutaneous liver biopsies, pioneered the use of parenteral nutrition to significantly reduce mortality in critically ill infants, led treatment innovations during outbreaks of Reye’s syndrome, and played a key role in the early development of pediatric liver transplantation at Riley. Through his research, publications, and the physicians he trained, Joe’s influence extended far beyond his own patients – saving and improving the lives of countless children.

Colleagues knew him as exacting, disciplined, and committed to high standards, but also humble. As he would often tell his GI fellows, he just wanted to “do a little doctoring.” His legacy lives on in the division he built, the physicians he trained, and the children whose lives were made better by his work.

Joe and Nell were married for 67 years until her passing in August 2025. Their partnership was marked by resilience, humor, and deep mutual devotion. He often spoke in recent months of his reunion with her.

Joe is survived by his daughters: Catherine (David) Duclos, Susan (Anthony) Bonanno, and Judith Fitzgerald (Cynthia Collins); his granddaughters Alyssa Bonanno (Will) Mayer, Gabrielle Bonanno, Isabella Bonanno, and Elizabeth Fitzgerald Farrell; along with extended family, colleagues, former students, and grateful patients.

Joe’s family will celebrate his life during a service at 5 p.m. Thursday, March 19, 2026, at Faith Church, 9125 N. College Ave., Indianapolis, with a reception to follow. The family will be available for visitation before the service beginning at 4 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to **Actors Theatre of Indiana (“ATI”)** or mailed to Actors Theatre of Indiana, 510 3rd Ave. SW, Carmel, IN 46032. Joe helped establish ATI and faithfully served as a founding board member. A loving father of ATI’s Co-Founder and Artistic Director, Judy Fitzgerald, he took immense pride in supporting the theatre and its artistic mission. Gifts made in his memory will continue the artistic work and legacy in which he believed so deeply.

Condolences: flannerbuchanan.com

Meeting Notice

Pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-5, the Hamilton County Council will meet in an executive session at 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2026, in Conference Room 1A at the Hamilton County Government and Judicial Center, 1 Hamilton County Square, Noblesville, for discussion concerning Attorney-Client Privilege pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1.

Each year, the Hamilton County Reporter requests government entities to notify us of public meetings as their Open Door Law notification under I.C. 5-14-1.5-5. The Reporter publishes these notices as a public service in our Tuesday through Friday digital editions. Meeting notices for Open Door Law compliance can be sent to PublicNotices@ReadTheReporter.com.

— ATLANTA —

NOTICE

The Town of Atlanta will hold an Executive Session on March 24, 2026 at 4 p.m. in the Atlanta Town Hall, 105 E. Main St., Atlanta in accordance with In accordance with IC 5-14-1.5-6.1 (b). To discuss a job performance evaluation of individual employees. This subdivision does not apply to a discussion of the salary, compensation, or benefits of employees during a budget process. The Atlanta Town Council will hold a Special Meeting on March 24, 2026, 105 E. Main St. Atlanta, IN 46031, immediately following the 4:00 p.m. Executive Session. R7656 3/18/26, 3/23/26

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TODAY'S BIBLE READING

KORAH, DATHAN AND ABIRAM

The Lord said to Moses, "Tell Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, to remove the censers from the charred remains and scatter the coals some distance away, for the censers are holy—the censers of the men who sinned at the cost of their lives. Hammer the censers into sheets to overlay the altar, for they were presented before the Lord and have become holy. Let them be a sign to the Israelites."

So Eleazar the priest collected the bronze censers brought by those who had been burned to death, and he had them hammered out to overlay the altar, as the Lord directed him through Moses. This was to remind the Israelites that no one except a descendant of Aaron should come to burn incense before the Lord, or he would become like Korah and his followers.

Numbers 16:36-40 (NIV)

Michele C. Spaulding

December 11, 1953 – March 15, 2026

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of our cherished Mother, Wife, and Grandmother, Michele Catherine Spaulding. She died peacefully at age 72 on March 15 at her home in Cicero, surrounded by her husband and son.

Michele was born on December 11, 1953, in South Bend, Ind. She was a creative soul who brought joy and warmth into the lives of many. Her generosity was known by all who met her, as she always insisted that all were welcome at her table. Michele was a beloved resident of Cicero, where she lived with her husband, Michael Spaulding, to whom she was married on the 29th of November, 1975.

Michele was an interior decorator by trade and loved to decorate. She had a passion for the fine arts and was known for her work with Photographics. However, her role as a homemaker was one she cherished most, filling her home with love and warmth for her family and friends. She loved to entertain, regularly hosting dinners and fellowship gatherings. Michele also enjoyed going out on the lake to boat. Her hobbies reflected her creative and generous spirit, and she will be remembered for the love and joy she brought into the lives of those around her.

Michele is survived by her husband Michael Spaulding, her daughter Brooke Abrams and son-in-law Brad, her son Brodie Spaulding and daughter-in-law Clair, and her granddaughter Phoebe Abrams. She is also survived by her sister, Georgia Palmer, Ann Yoder, and her brothers Joseph and William Phillips. She was preceded in death by her parents, George and Jo Ann Phillips.

A visitation will be held for Michele on Monday, March 23, 2026, from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, 410 Pearl St., Cicero. This will be followed by a Funeral Mass at 11 a.m. at the same location. Services will be under the direction of Hartley-Dunnichay Funeral Homes – Cicero.

Memorial contributions may be made in Michele's name to the American Cancer Society.

In honor of Michele's compassionate and loving spirit, we encourage those who knew her to share their memories and upload photos to the memorial page. Her life was filled with love and generosity, and sharing these memories will help us all remember the joy she brought into our lives.

Condolences: hartleyfuneralhomes.com

Douglas Scott Henderson

May 11, 1955 – March 15, 2026

Douglas Scott Henderson, 70, passed away on March 15, 2026, at Riverview Hospital in Noblesville after a brief illness. He will be remembered as a gentle soul who brought light to every room he entered with his humor and kindness. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Barbara Anne Henderson.

He was born on May 11, 1955, in Delphi, Ind., the son of the late William Stanley Henderson and Thelma June Henderson. He attended Ball State University and worked as a recruiter for the Morley Group before transitioning to a career at Freedom Mortgage.

He enjoyed watching and supporting the Indianapolis Colts, fishing, cooking, and spending time with his family. He especially loved visiting Brown County, Ind., and spending time with his dog, Pumpkin.

He is survived by his second wife, Joanna Jo Henderson; his son and daughter-in-law, Andrew and Heaven Henderson; and his stepsons, Noah, Hayden, and Jack Fischer.

A service will be held at Castleton Community Church, 5825 E. 91st St., Indianapolis, on Monday, March 23, with visitation from noon to 2 p.m., followed by the service at 2 p.m. Flowers may be sent to the church on the day of the service.

Condolences: randallroberts.com

Louise Fritz Latty

October 27, 1932 – March 14, 2026

Louise Fritz Latty, 93, Fishers, passed away on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at St. Vincent/Ascension Hospital in Indianapolis. She was born on October 27, 1932, to Roy and Mary (Trapp) Fritz in Ripley, Ohio.

Louise worked at Sears in customer service for 25 years before retiring. She spent time volunteering at St. Louis de Montfort in the food pantry and counting the offertory collection. Louise enjoyed playing cards, reading, and crocheting. Most of all she loved spending time with family and spoiling her grandchildren.

She is survived by her sons, Dale (Cindy) Latty, Bob (Eileen) Latty, Mike (Cindy) Latty, Chris (Sallie) Latty, and Joe (Michelle) Latty; grandchildren, Matt, Christina, Robert, Andrew, James, Evan, Melanie, Nick, Hannah, Sam, Coleman, Ben, and Olivia; and seven great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Roger Dale Latty; and brothers, Louis Fritz and Pat Fritz.

Mass will be held at 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 20, 2026, at St. Louis de Montfort Catholic Church, 11441 Hague Road in Fishers, with Father Travis Stephens officiating. Visitation will be from 9:30 a.m. to the time of service at the church. Burial will be a private ceremony at Oaklawn Memorial Gardens in Indianapolis.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America in memory of Louise's Aunt, Helen Schultz. At a pivotal time in her youth, Aunt Helen and Uncle Bob Schultz welcomed Louise into their home and into their hearts. Their compassion and generosity helped shape the path that led to the meaningful life and lasting legacy she leaves with all of us. Go to mysaa.org/donate/honor-and-memorial-donations. If you wish to send a notification of your donation, please add "louise_latty@yahoo.com" to the "Recipient's Email" field in the donation form. You can also send donations to: MSA, Attn: Donor Relations, 375 Kings Highway North, Suite B, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.

Condolences: randallroberts.com

Norma Jean Goodnight

November 6, 1941 – March 12, 2026

Norma Jean Goodnight, 84, passed away peacefully at her home in Westfield on Thursday afternoon, March 12, 2026, surrounded by her loving family and caregivers. Born November 6, 1941, in Howard County, Ind., she was the daughter of Robert Conduff and Odella (Stamps) Conduff-Pickett.

She attended the Michigantown Country Chapel Church of God.

She attended Tipton High School and later hired on with United Feeds in Sheridan. Norma saw many different aspects of the operation during her 32 years with the company. She began as an assistant controller and later worked as the office manager. She served as an executive secretary in the latter part of her career. While her work ethic and attention to detail served her well, it was her warm personality and caring nature that made her a true asset.

When Norma was younger, she enjoyed roller skating. At that time there were plenty of opportunities to compete and show what you could do on wheels, so that is exactly what she did – and she brought home some hardware along the way. Norma eventually hung up her skates as her interests turned toward crocheting, reading, crafting, and flower gardening. Cooking was among her favorite pastimes; it was her way of bringing everybody together. She loved watching cooking shows and had her favorite TV chefs, and she was always looking for new things to try. Those dishes (both new ones, as well as old favorites) were always at the center of her favorite activity of all: family get-togethers. Norma also had a deep appreciation for music and the comforting effects that listening had on her.

To Norma, time together with family was the most important, no matter the reason. One example is the time spent traveling with her husband. During Kenneth's career as a commercial driver, he caught the travel bug, and he wanted to roam the countryside with his family. Although Norma was a bit of a homebody who didn't care much about travel, she cared deeply for Kenneth, so off on their adventures they went. The destinations never really mattered to her; it was spending that time together that truly made every adventure special. Norma especially enjoyed spending time with their grandchildren.

Norma is survived by her two sons, Jeffrey D. "JD" Goodnight (Donna) of Westfield, and Brian K. Goodnight (Kathy) of Westfield; three grandchildren, Kristen Frye (Shane), Adam Goodnight (Lisa), and Shelby Geist (Nate); five great-grandchildren, Cameron Frye, Jameson Goodnight, Beckett Goodnight, Kate Geist, and Gavin Geist; one great-great grandchild, Xochitl Frye; and many nieces and nephews.

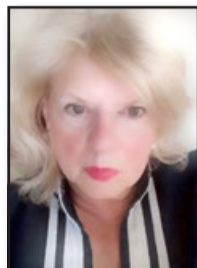
She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert Conduff and Odella (Stamps) Conduff-Pickett; and her sister, Vicki Young.

Services will be held at 1 p.m. Friday, March 20, 2026, at Kercheval Funeral Home, 306 E. 10th St., Sheridan, with visitation from 11 a.m. until the time of service.

Burial will follow at Green Lawn Cemetery in Frankfort, Ind., where she will be laid to rest in the Garden of Prayer. Norma's grandson-in-law, Pastor Shane Frye will be officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be presented to either the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, or to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Condolences: kerchevalfuneralhome.com



The Reporter's policy on obituaries

The Hamilton County Reporter does not charge families for publishing obituary notices in our pages. Every obituary appearing in online editions Wednesday through Saturday also appears in our Monday print editions. In order to continue to offer this as a community service, we ask that obituaries not exceed 500 words. The limitations of space may not allow for longer ones to appear in print.

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Sports Editor Richie Hall
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REPORTER SPORTS WEDNESDAY

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



Joshua Herd / File photo



Joshua Herd / File photo



Julie Brown / File photo



Julie Brown / File photo

The four local student-athletes are (from left) Cooper Zachary, Kennedy Holman, Alex Koo (top right), and Emily Wolf.

Four county athletes among HCC Winter Athletes of the Year

The REPORTER

Four Hamilton County student-athletes are among the Hoosier Crossroads Conference's list of Winter Athletes of the Year.

The local athletes are as follows:

Boys basketball:

Cooper Zachary, Fishers

Zachary, a junior, has led the Tigers to three consecutive HCC titles, including a 25-game HCC win streak.

Zachary has earned All-HCC First Team status his sophomore and junior seasons after being named Second Team as a freshman. Zachary was also an integral part Fishers' run to a state championship his freshman year and a state runner-up finish his sophomore season.

This season, Zachary led the HCC with 5.3 assists while averaging 15.0 points per game and 2.9 steals. He also shot 92 percent from the free-throw line.

"Cooper is one of the toughest players I have had the privilege to coach," said Fishers coach Garrett Winegar. "Above all, he is a WINNER. He is 83-3 as a starting point guard. Midway through his junior year he had already set the school record

in career 3s, steals and assists. Even with all those records, so much of what he does to impact winning does not show up on the stat sheet. He does more on the floor to impact winning than anyone in the state. On top of everything he does on the floor, he is a great kid, a great leader and a great student."

Girls basketball: Kennedy Holman, Hamilton Southeastern

During her career, the senior Holman played on four HCC championship teams. She was a three-year starter and earned four letters. The Royals are currently riding a 24-game HCC win streak, on which Holman has played a vital role.

Holman was also an integral part of two sectional championships and one regional title for the Royals. This year, the senior led the HCC in scoring at 17.6 points per game. In addition, she had a team leading 7.6 rebounds per game, 3.1 assists per game, 2.5 steals per game and 1.4 blocks per game. Holman holds the HSE career assist record with 477.

"I have been blessed to coach Kennedy Holman," said Royals coach Brian Satter-

field. "She has been a tremendous asset to our program. Just watching her compete at a high level every day at both ends of the floor is what separates her from most. When your best player is one of your hardest workers, it makes coaching a lot easier. Kennedy also has been a leader as she helped our younger players grow and gain confidence throughout the year. Kennedy will be hard to replace, but she has left a stamp on the program for the returners to follow."

Kennedy will continue her education and basketball career at the University of Florida.

Boys swimming: Alex Koo, Fishers

Koo, a junior, won the 100 butterfly and finished a strong second in the 50 freestyle at this year's IHSAA state meet. At the HCC Meet, Koo won both the 50 and 100 freestyles, leading Fishers to a team championship.

"Alex has made huge improvements during his Junior Year," said Tigers coach Joe Keller. "Those improvements have occurred in the pool and weight room due to the level of focus he has brought to training

on a daily basis. His effort and attention to detail have been high level. Likewise, the growth in confidence has been a by-product of the process and afforded him the opportunities he maximized this year."

Girls swimming: Emily Wolf, Fishers

A three-time IHSAA state champion, the junior Wolf won both the 200 and 500 freestyles at this year's state meet. Wolf won both the 200 free and 500 free at this year's HCC meet, setting a new meet record in the latter at 4:55.25.

"Emily has had a fantastic Junior year as she made USA Swimming's National Junior Team in the fall," said Keller. "Since, she has grown in her preparation, self-talk and commitment as a champion. Her success is the result of being process oriented while recognizing and understanding the potential outcomes. Finally, the leadership she demonstrates daily continues to raise the level of every athlete in the program."

Wolf will continue her education and swim career at North Carolina State University.

Other winner

Boys wrestling: Nate Rioux, Avon.

Football

Fishers Freight win season opener

The REPORTER

The Fishers Freight began its second season of competition with a victory.

The Freight defeated the Quad City Steamwheelers 45-27 in their season opener Saturday, March 14 at the Fishers Event Center. Fishers held an early lead, held off a comeback by the Steamwheelers, then finished the game with 21 unanswered points.

JT Stokes scored the Freight's first touchdown on a two-yard run. After a Quad City touchdowns, Harper threw his first TD pass, finding CJ Windham for a six-yard score.

Calum Sutherland kicked both extra points after the touchdowns, then opened the second quarter with a 29-yard field goal, giving Fishers a 17-6 lead.

The Steamwheelers came back with two touchdowns in the period to lead



Photos by Joshua Herd

(ABOVE) Felix Harper threw for two touchdown passes and scored a rushing TD for the Fishers Freight during their Saturday, March 14 season-opening win over the Quad City Steamrollers. (RIGHT) Fishers' Josiah King scored a 16-yard rushing touchdown.



20-17, but Harper punched the ball in from the one-yard line in the final seconds of the half. Sutherland's kick gave the Freight a 24-20 halftime lead.

Quad City scored one more touchdown early in the third quarter to go up

27-24, but it was all Fishers after that. Josiah King took off for a 16-yard touchdown run, then Harper tossed another TD throw to Windham, this one for 12 yards.

Sutherland again made both extra-point kicks, making him 5-for-5 for the

game. He wasn't done yet.

The Freight led 38-27 going into the fourth quarter, and picked up two points early with a safety. Sutherland kicked a 29-yard field goal, then later scored points with a "deuce," a free kick that passes through the

uprights with under a minute left in a half.

Harper was 12-for-16 and totaled 95 yards passing. Windham and Stokes both made four catches. King was the top rusher, with 42 yards in 10 attempts. (An indoor football

field is half the size of a regular football field.)

The Freight will play its first road game Saturday, March 21 at the Green Bay Blizzard, then return home to the Fishers Event Center on Sunday, April 5 to host the Arizona Rattlers.

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Braden Smith's family reflects on journey at Purdue

By ANGELA MORYAN
WISH-TV | wishtv.com

"It's been nothing short of spectacular."

Purdue senior guard Braden Smith has had the career of a lifetime with the Boilermakers. Smith has shot, stole and passed his way into the hearts of Purdue fans for the last four years. But his life didn't start out that way, even with two basketball players – and coaches – as parents.

"He wanted nothing to do with basketball, so for both of us, being a college basketball player, loving the game, it was like, 'Man, what do we do?'" Smith's father Dustin said. "We moved back to Indiana, and he came to us and said, 'Man, I want to start playing basketball.' So we're like, 'Thank goodness.' So here we are."

It took some time, but once Smith hit middle school, you could tell he was on another level.

"He would make a pass and you'd be like, 'How did he see that?' Or you know, 'Where did that come from?'" his mother Ginny Smith said. "That just became more and more prevalent in what he was doing, and I think the more that you watched him, the more that you could see like he just saw the game a little bit differently than maybe his teammates were seeing the game."

That certainly didn't stop when he playing at Westfield High School. Smith was named Indiana's Mr. Basketball after leading the Rocks in scoring and assists.

Despite his success at Westfield, it took until late April his junior year for a



Braden Smith's parents, Dustin and Ginny Smith, spoke to WISH-TV about their son's "spectacular" journey on the Purdue men's basketball team.

Photo courtesy WISH-TV

Power 4 school to call. It was Purdue, and Smith's decision was made immediately.

"I think in his mind, he was like, 'This is my shot. I could win a national championship there,'" Ginny said. "We wanted him to understand, 'Are you willing to go somewhere and sit on the bench because that could happen, and you've never had to do that before.' ... His response was classic. He's like, 'Why would I sit on the bench?'"

"He has some resolve about him. He was like, 'I'm going to go to Purdue, and I'm going to start,'" Ginny said.

That's exactly what he did, and he's started every game since.

"This has been unbelievable," Dustin said "Just the coaching staff, the fans, the players, all the families around, all the fans, all the Purdue fans from around the U.S., like when they come up and they talk to us, it's been unbelievable. I don't know if I could've scripted this."

"I tell Braden all the time, 'Thanks for taking us on this journey with you.'" Ginny said. "That's kind of what he's done. He has allowed us to be a part of something special with a really, really great group of guys."

It's also been special for his younger brother Maddox, who's currently an eighth grader at Westfield Middle School. He said the coolest part about being All-American Braden Smith's younger brother is the chance to break his records.

"Knowing that I need to be better than he is, I'd say [is the coolest part]," Maddox said. "When he comes home, we go to the gym. We play one-on-one, trying to beat him. I've come close a couple times, but I'll get there. He wouldn't let me win. If it comes down to anything – it could be a dollar on the line, he's still not letting me win. So he's very competitive."

The competitive fire has fueled Braden to be just two assists away from breaking the NCAA's all-time record. "It's surreal. I mean, I

don't know how else to describe it," Ginny said. "I don't even know if I can articulate what it's going to feel like."

"Seeing your son's name as No. 1 is going to be... it's awesome, right?" Dustin said. "And the way he did it. Braden is so unselfish, to a fault sometimes... He just wants to win. and if he's got to go out and score 25 to win, he'll do it, but he loves seeing his teammates be successful. Like, he gets so much joy out of that."

"I think what probably makes us the proudest is, you know, he's just a kid that has been overlooked because his metrics don't meet whatever... He's not passing any eye tests, right?" Ginny said. "So I think for us, it's a testament to what hard work, what resiliency, a grittiness can get you."

Perhaps even that elusive national championship. This story originally appeared on WISH-TV at wishtv.com/news/exclusive-braden-smiths-family-reflects-on-journey-at-purdue.

Football— Five county players on North/South All-Star Game roster

The REPORTER

Five Hamilton County senior football players are on the South roster for the 2026 Indiana Football Coaches Association's North/South Football All Star Classic.

Three players will compete on offense. Fishers' Vincent Rozzi and Hamilton Southeastern's Kendrick Pennybaker will be wide receivers, while Carmel's Cade Clark will play center. Two Westfield players

have been named to the defense. Ja'Deon Smith is a defensive tackle and Alex Arambales will play defensive end.

Westfield assistant coach Ryan Sosinski will serve as one of the South team's assistants, with Emme Burton serving as one of the South team's managers.

The All Star Classic takes place Friday, July 10 at Decatur Central High School. More information is available at this link.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Wednesday, March 18

BOYS LACROSSE

Guerin Catholic at Noblesville, 6 p.m.
Westfield at Brebeuf Jesuit, 7:30 p.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Center Grove, 8 p.m.
North Central at Carmel, 8 p.m.

GIRLS LACROSSE

Fishers at North Central, 6 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

Noblesville scrimmage at Brebeuf Jesuit, 5:30 p.m.
Fishers scrimmage at Hamilton Southeastern, 6 p.m.
Westfield scrimmage at Lafayette Jefferson, 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 19

BOYS LACROSSE

Noblesville at Park Tudor, 6 p.m.

GIRLS LACROSSE

Bishop Chatard at Westfield, 7:30 p.m.
Guerin Catholic at Hamilton Southeastern, 7:30 p.m.

SOFTBALL

Brownsburg scrimmage at Carmel, 6 p.m.
Fishers scrimmage at Frankton, 6 p.m.
Westfield scrimmage at Plainfield, 6 p.m.

TRACK AND FIELD

Fishers, Noblesville boys, Westfield at HSR Qualifier, 6 p.m. at Indiana State Fairgrounds

Please email schedule changes or corrections to sports@readthereporter.com.

Indiana University head football coach Curt Cignetti to drive Indy 500 Pace Car

Two-time National Coach of the Year to lead field to green flag

Submitted

Curt Cignetti, in celebration of Indiana University Football's epic undefeated National Championship season, has been named honorary Pace Car driver for the 110th Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge.

Cignetti will drive the all-new Chevrolet Corvette ZR1X – the most advanced Corvette ever, designed and built right here in the United States – to lead the field of 33 drivers to the start of "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing." Exact Pace Car details, including the one-of-a-kind Indianapolis 500 livery, will be unveiled at a later date.

The 2026 Indy 500 is set for Sunday, May 24, with FOX's live coverage kicking off at 10 a.m. ET.

Cignetti and the Hoosiers have been on a meteoric and inspirational run following his announcement as head coach in December 2023. This includes a nation's-best 27 victories across two seasons, a pair of College Football Playoff appearances and IU's first national title (2025-26).

Cignetti is the first-ever Division I head coach to start 8-0 or better in consecutive seasons at different institutions and the third ever to begin consecutive seasons at 10-0. He is also just the third Big Ten head coach to start each of his first two seasons with at least an 8-0 record.

He won 14 of the 17 national Coach of the Year awards for which he was eligible in his first two seasons in Indiana. Cignetti is the first FBS coach to win consecutive national Coach of the Year awards from the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA),

Associated Press, ESPN Home Depot, The Sporting News and Walter Camp Foundation.

Along with the national accolades, Cignetti is the first coach to win both the Hayes-Schembechler (coaches vote) and Dave McClain (media vote) Big Ten Coach of the Year awards in consecutive seasons in conference history.

"Coach Cignetti will have our field in a special victory lap formation as he leads the stars of the NTT INDYCAR SERIES to the green flag at this year's Indy 500," INDYCAR and IMS President J. Douglas Boles said. "His Hoosiers have been nothing short of remarkable, and their National Championship run inspired our entire state. He's the perfect choice to drive the Chevrolet Pace Car, and I know his introduction on Race Day will bring out a special roar of appreciation from our crowd."

Previous Indy 500 Pace Car drivers include Michael Strahan, Morgan Freeman, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Robin Roberts,



Graphic provided by IMS

Patrick Dempsey, Ken Griffey Jr., Tyrese Haliburton and more esteemed Race Day guests.

FOX Sports is the exclusive home of all INDYCAR action, with all 18 NTT INDYCAR SERIES races set to broadcast on network television via FOX in 2026. This includes the world-famous Indianapolis 500, annually the largest single-day spectator sporting event on the globe. Coverage of "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing" will be extensive for fans across the country, with a six-hour Race Day window on FOX for the second consecutive year.

Tickets for the 110th Running of the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge on Sunday, May

24 and all other Month of May events are available at IMS.com/Tickets or via the IMS Ticket Office at (317) 492-6700.

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