

HILL
CHADWICK
FOR JUDGE

VOTE FOR CHADWICK HILL
SUPERIOR COURT 4
MAY 5TH

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Chadwick Hill

THE HAMILTON COUNTY
REPORTER
Your Hometown Newspaper

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

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



TODAY'S WEATHER

Today: Mostly sunny.
 Tonight: Partly cloudy.



HIGH: 80 LOW: 61

Sheridan Education Foundation celebrates its student members

Submitted

On Tuesday, April 14, the Sheridan Education Foundation, Inc. (SEFI) played host to a special celebratory dinner to recognize the contributions that the student board members have made. The evening specifically highlighted senior leaders Emily Will and Brianna Duke.

Both Will and Duke joined the board in November 2023 through the A Chance To Serve (ACTS) program. ACTS is designed for freshman students across Hamilton County to come together and get the chance to serve in a local organization. This program promotes already exceptional students and gets them involved in their communities.

Will and Duke joined SEFI when the board was still relatively young, as it had only begun in August of that year. Since then, they have paved the way for an important role that students have played in the organization.

Student members contribute ideas, promote events, and



(From left) Amiyah Doss, Emily Will, Brianna Duke, Brielle Garner, Marah Faussett, and Kameron Alexander.

serve as leaders and mentors to other Sheridan students. In addition to Will and Duke, student board members include Kameron Alexander, Jordan Byrne, John Crowder, Amiyah Doss, Marah Fausset, Brielle Garner, Henry Hewitt, and Sadie Timme. All of these young adults have supported the Foundation's ongoing efforts, which is to help and serve Sheridan Community Schools (SCS)

teachers and faculty.

Since January 2024, SEFI has contributed more than \$54,000 to SCS classrooms. These contributions support all grade levels, from Kindergarten to seniors, and help meet a wide range of student needs. The celebratory dinner helped to highlight the leadership and service that the SEFI and its student members have provided.

"They have been a signifi-

cant help to us," Sharon Brimberry said. "And they have provided valuable input into our organization. They will most definitely continue to make a positive impact on their school community and those around them."

You may make donations to SEFI at sheridan.revtrak.net/education-foundation. SEFI is a 501(c)(3) and all donations are tax-deductible.

Look up to the Light

For those of you who have been paying attention to my column and this paper in general, you may have noticed I had a major event recently. I couldn't have asked for a better book launch. The love of family, friends, and soon-to-be friends was incredible. The book is already helping people (thank you God!)



AMY SHANKLAND
Perfectly Imperfect

So, you would think I would have been floating on a cloud all last week. But life often throws us surprises. Multiple ones in a matter of hours. Negative surprises that make us feel like the world is tilting on its axis.

This happened to me on the Monday evening only three days after my launch. Personal issues smacked me upside the head – some had been simmering for months, others popped up over the weekend.

My professional life decided to throw some punches my way as well. Finally, after one more hit, I had, as my dear friend and fellow columnist Jan says, a "come apart." I may have slid some chairs violently into our dining room table as I wailed, cried, and threw down my purse.

The last straw was me trying to help myself through journaling at bedtime but opening my book to a sweet memory of my mother ... whom I've been missing lately. Wailing and crying were nothing compared to the sobs that escaped me at that moment.

See *Light* . . . Page 2

Chad Ballenger named Prevail's School Health Educator of the Year

Submitted by Hamilton Heights School Corp.

Hamilton Heights School Corporation announces that Chad Ballenger, high school health teacher and head boys basketball coach, has been named the 2026 School Health Educator of the Year by Prevail, Inc.

This honor is part of Prevail's annual recognition during National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 19 to 26, 2026), a time dedicated to acknowledging the individuals and partners who support survivors and work to prevent violence in local communities. Each year, Prevail highlights educators, first responders, and community leaders whose commitment strengthens safety, advocacy, and healing for those they serve.

In announcing the award, Prevail shared its deep appreciation for Ballenger's ongoing partnership and his unwavering dedication to student well-being.

"This award is a testament to your dedication and the lasting impact you make every day as an educator," the organization noted in its recognition message.

Ballenger's work in the

classroom and on the court reflects a consistent focus on building trust, fostering resilience, and equipping students with the knowledge and skills to make healthy, informed decisions. His leadership extends beyond curriculum – shaping a culture of respect, safety, and support throughout the school community.

"I am deeply honored to receive this award from Prevail," Ballenger said. "I am a believer in what Prevail stands for and I appreciate all they do for our school and community. Prevail helps build a foundation for our students on learning about healthy and unhealthy relationships in the classroom and within our basketball program. I appreciate all they do for us."

Prevail honored Ballenger, along with all 2026 award recipients and nominees, at a community recognition event on April 15.

Hamilton Heights congratulates Ballenger on this well-deserved recognition and thanks Prevail for its continued partnership in supporting students, families, and survivors.



Hamilton Heights' Chad Ballenger is this year's recipient of Prevail's School Health Educator of the Year award. He is pictured here with Prevail Executive Director Tami Wanninger.



Downtown Noblesville merchants invited to decorate their windows

The REPORTER

The Indiana Peony Festival is less than a month away.

In anticipation of this year's festival, businesses in downtown Noblesville can take part in the Peony Window Decorating Contest, sponsored by [Hometown Windows](http://HometownWindows.com).

Stroll through the square and witness the creativity come alive in each participating retailer's window display. This contest invites all downtown merchants to design their own peony display for the delight of all shoppers.

The top five finalists will be selected by Hometown Windows on Friday, May 8, and will receive a finalist piece to display in their window. From May 8 to 16, all observers can vote for their favorite finalist on [Facebook](http://Facebook.com).

The winning window will be announced on festival day and will be awarded a grand prize of \$1,000. Don't miss out on the opportunity to visit the Hometown Windows booth at the festival. There, you can learn more about the contest voting perks, exciting giveaways, and the support they provide to local businesses.

VOTE SWENSON MAY 5TH 2026

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ANGELA SWENSON FOR JUDGE

HAMILTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT 4

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PAID FOR BY THE SWENSON FOR JUDGE COMMITTEE

Come meet the candidates

The Reporter is doing our part to help voters make informed decisions when casting their ballots whether early, absentee, or on Election Day.

The Reporter will publish Candidate Bios for all candidates who choose to engage with our readers. Those will appear with every online edition through Election Day (and at [this link](#)), and those pages will be updated as more candidates choose to send us their information.

This is a free public service we are providing both to candidates and our readers.



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SATURDAY, MAY 16, 10AM-4PM
DOWNTOWN NOBLESVILLE

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BY STRAIGHT



Early Voting Totals

Below are the number of early voters as of Wednesday, April 22, listed by polling location. [Click here](#) for more information on early voting.

Judicial Center	986
4-H Fairgrounds	1,372
Roy G. Holland Park (Fishers)	132
Billericay Park (Fishers)	142
Westfield City Hall	54
Washington Twp. Office	49
Cool Creek Nature Center	112
Jill Perelman Pavilion (Carmel)	117
Wilfong Pavilion (Carmel)	64
Carmel Clay Public Library	120
TOTAL	3,148

Where to vote early

Noblesville

Judicial Center, 1 Hamilton County Square

- April 23 and 24 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- April 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- April 27 to May 1 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- May 2 from 9 to 4 p.m.
- May 4 from 8 a.m. to noon

Hamilton County Fairgrounds, 2003 Pleasant St.

- April 23 to 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- April 27 to May 2 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- May 4 from 8 a.m. to noon

Carmel

Wilfong Pavilion, 11675 Hazel Dell Pkwy., Building A

Jill Perelman Pavilion, 3000 W. 116th St.

Carmel Public Library, 425 E. Main St.

- April 23 from 2 to 7 p.m.
- April 24 & 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- April 29 & 30 from 2 to 7 p.m.
- May 1 & 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Fishers

Roy G Holland Memorial Park Building, 1 Park Drive

Billericay Park Building, 12690 Promise Road

- April 23 from 2 to 7 p.m.
- April 24 & 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- April 29 & 30 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- May 1 & 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Westfield

Westfield City Hall, 130 Penn St.

Cool Creek Nature Center, 2000-1 E. 151st St.

Westfield Washington Twp. Offices, 17400 Westfield Blvd.

- April 23 from 2 to 7 p.m.
- April 24 & 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- April 29 & 30 from 2 to 7 p.m.
- May 1 & 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Noblesville's Janet Hart Leonard earns international recognition



Photos provided by Tim Armstrong

The accolades keep pouring in for Noblesville author and Reporter columnist Janet Hart Leonard! During her book signing last Sunday, April 19 at Ginger's Café in Noblesville, she was presented with the International Christian Book Award by Christian author and Andrews, Ind. native Valerie Juillerat. Leonard will be featured on Juillerat's new show, *Faith Written Forward*, set to premiere in June on the Vision TV Network. Congratulations to you, Janet, for proving the importance of faith and perseverance.

LIGHT

from Page 1

When I finally did sleep, I had constant nightmares.

When I woke up Tuesday morning, prying my swollen eyelids open, I didn't want to get out of bed. I was in the bottom of "the pit," as I call it, a dark place I go to when depression strikes. No, I don't have clinical depression. I have dear friends and family who battle this, so I don't throw the term around lightly. But I was definitely depressed.

If I hadn't had a big grant application deadline that day and a client crisis needing to be resolved, I would have stayed in bed. I reached out to my bestie

who encouraged me to take one step at a time. So that's what I did, pausing with a short, "Help, God" prayer now and then. My head hurt and I was exhausted all day.

When I made it to 4:30, my normal quitting time, I thanked God I survived. I told my team I'd be taking the next day off for a Mental Health Day. I was in pajamas by 6 watching a Pixar movie and in bed by 8:30.

I know many of my readers have had moments like this. Moments where you're in the dark pit of life, desperately looking up trying to find the light. Moments where you remember the person

you normally are but can't find again to save your life.

It's okay to be in the pit. To cry out to God or the universe simply saying "HELP!" It was the best I could do last week. We gotta hold to our faith, breathe, and take one step at a time.

When I woke up Wednesday, I felt better physically. John and I ran errands, some I had been meaning to do for months. I wasn't my perky self, but I saw glimpses of my light. And by Wednesday evening, God began to answer my prayers one by one in unexpected ways. I'm still in awe about it all as I write this.

If you're temporarily in the pit, please know there is light above. Look up to find it and don't hesitate to ask for help.

And if you've been depressed for more than two weeks, please talk to your doctor, therapist, counselor, or pastor. We live in a world with so many resources to help. You are loved, and you are not alone.

Amy Shankland is an empty-nester, writer, and fundraising professional living in Noblesville with her husband John and two dogs. You can reach her via email at amys@greenavenue.info.

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Carmel prepares for EidFest

Submitted by
City of Carmel

The EidFest committee, in partnership with the City of Carmel, announces the second annual EidFest, set for 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday, May 30 at One Civic Square.

Building on the success of last year's inaugural event, the committee has created a vibrant festival designed to showcase the rich tapestry of Muslim heritage from around the world. The City of Carmel is honored to host this community-led celebration, providing a central stage for neighbors to gather, share traditions, and celebrate the cultural diversity that strengthens the city.

Community members organizing EidFest represent more than 15 countries from around the world including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Guinea, Iraq, Libya, and more. They are excited to share their food, traditions



Photo provided by City of Carmel

and joy.

"Returning for our second year, EidFest has become an exciting thread in the fabric of Carmel," said Ashhar Madni, member of the Mayor's Advisory Commission on Human Relations and festival organizer. "This celebration is an invitation for all

neighbors to experience the beauty of our traditions, firsthand. By sharing our stories, food and art, we continue to strengthen bonds of friendship and understanding that make Carmel such a welcoming place to call home."

Eid-al-Fitr, one of two major Muslim holidays,

commemorates the end of the holy month of Ramadan. This year, Ramadan began on Feb. 18 and concluded on March 19. The second major Muslim holiday, Eid-al-Adha, honors the spirit of sacrifice and is observed later in the year; this year, it is projected to fall on Wednesday, May 27.

Maggie Hultman named next assistant director of Westfield Washington Schools' Early Learning Programs

Submitted by Westfield Washington Schools

The Westfield Washington Schools (WWS) Board of Trustees approved the promotion of Maggie Hultman to Assistant Director of Early Learning Programs at the district's Early Learning Center (ELC) during its meeting Tuesday, April 21.

Hultman, who currently serves at the ELC as BAC Assistant Director, joined the team in fall 2023 and has been a key leader in supporting students, staff, and families within the program. In her new role, she will continue to support early learning initiatives while helping further strengthen programming at the ELC.

Hultman brings a strong background in both classroom instruction and educational leadership. Prior to joining WWS, she served as an elementary teacher in Noblesville Schools, work-

ing across kindergarten and upper elementary grade levels with a focus on individualized instruction, collaboration, and student growth. She holds both her Bachelor's and Master's de-

grees from Ball State University and is licensed in elementary education.

"I'm most excited to step into this role and continue the great work happening in our building, especially when it comes to inclusion," Hultman said. "Our Early Learning Center is unique in that we serve both a childcare setting and developmental preschool students with a wide range of needs. We are proud to support an inclusive environment where students learn alongside one another, whether



Hultman

that's students from developmental preschool classrooms joining general education settings or their peers spending time in those classrooms. These opportunities help kids build relationships, empathy, and a deeper understanding of all learners."

Director of Early Learning Programs Marci Derado and current Assistant Director of Early Learning Programs Caylie Dicken (who will take over as Director in the 2026-2027 school year) both expressed strong support for Hultman's transition into this expanded leadership role.

"Maggie joined the Early Learning Center in the fall of 2023 and has been a great addition to our administrative staff," Derado

Superior 9
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May 5, 2026
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Fishers Early Voting Locations
Roy G. Holland Memorial Park Building
1 Park Drive, Fishers
Billericay Park Building
12690 Promise Road, Fishers

Lawrence Early Voting Location
Indianapolis Public Library - Fort Ben Branch
9330 E. 56th Street, Indianapolis

Fishers Early Voting Hours
Wednesday-Thursday
April 22-23 | 2:00 PM-7:00 PM
Friday-Saturday
April 24-25 | 10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Wednesday-Thursday
April 29-30 | 2:00 PM-7:00 PM
Friday-Saturday
May 1-2 | 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

Lawrence Early Voting Hours
Saturday, April 25-Sunday
May 3 | 11:00 AM-6:00 PM

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DIXONFORSHERRIFF.COM

Dem lawmakers blast newly created special adviser position for ex-DCS director

By KARA KENNEY
WISH-TV | wistv.com

Indiana lawmakers are raising questions about a newly created state position in state government.

"Our priorities are wrong," Rep. Greg Porter, D-Indianapolis said. "It's very alarming to me."

Republican Gov. Mike Braun announced Wednesday that former Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) director Adam Krupp will serve as "special advisor to the Governor on child welfare issues."

Krupp's salary will remain at \$210,000 in his newly appointed role. That's the same salary as new DCS Director Jennifer Dorfmeier.

Dorfmeier, appointed Tuesday, will lead the state's third-largest agency with more than 4,000 employees.

Dorfmeier served as the interim director from mid-January to mid-April while Krupp was on a leave of absence.

I-Team 8 has asked the Governor's Office and State Personnel Department several questions including:

- Is there a job description for the special adviser to the governor?
- Was the job posted?
- Are there set hours for the position? Is it salaried?
- Will this position be funded out of the Child Services' 2026 budget?
- What is the time range for this position?

State Senator Fady Qaddoura, D-Indianapolis, said the governor owes the taxpayers an explanation.

"I am concerned because this is out of the normal of how government works," Qaddoura said. "State government is not a private company, it's a public institution funded by taxpayers. So taxpayers are they deserve to know the answers to these questions."

Qaddoura has served on the Family and Children Services Committee and he serves on the Appropria-

tions Committee. "This position as a governor's adviser never existed before for that specific role," Qaddoura said. "It seems that this was a personal privilege that was afforded to a government employee that was not extended to others. That special treatment and favoritism is not something that I support."

The senator said the special adviser position will likely be absorbed into the 2026 budget.

"The budget for the \$210,000 has to come from the Governor's office, given that the appointed advisory position will report to the governor," Qaddoura said. "They could potentially structure it in a way that the director Krupp is actually paid by DCS while still working for the governor's office. We have not seen the details, but I will assume they will absorb the cost within the 2026 appropriations."

The Child Services' budget for fiscal year 2026 is \$1.54 billion.

Under Krupp and the agency's Project Awaken, dozens of Child Services employees were terminated or reassigned citing "operational efficiencies" and "restructuring of certain administrative functions and roles."

Both Qaddoura and Porter say it sends mixed messages.

Qaddoura said, "I find it extremely difficult to understand the logic behind creating additional layers of bureaucracy in state government, who are letting the frontline workers be either terminated or underinvested in and underpaid and overworked. I would have been more in favor of using a quarter million dollars to hire three additional case managers that actually can oversee cases and reduce the workload and improve the quality and oversight of investigations that DCS performs."

Porter said, "Dollars that we have should be go-

ing toward keeping children safe. This is not good governance."

I-Team 8 asked Braun's office for an on-camera interview but did not hear back before this story aired Wednesday night.

On Wednesday, Braun released a statement on the appointments.

"I am grateful for Adam Krupp's service and the changes he has made to improve DCS. I have every confidence in Jennifer and her ability to lead this important work at such a critical agency."

State lawmakers also say they're concerned the position could create confusion as to who is really in charge of Child Services, the new director or the special adviser.

In addition, Dr. Gloria Sachdev oversees Child Services, the Indiana Department of Health, and the Family and Social Services Administration as the state's secretary of Health and Family Services.

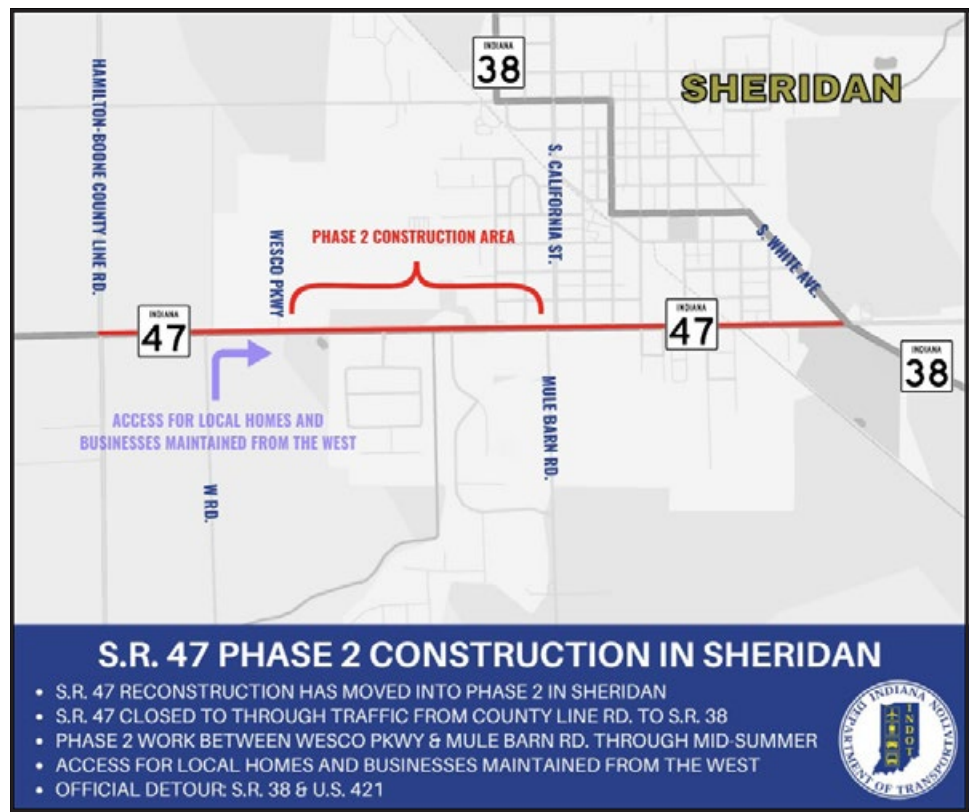
Qaddoura said, "This creates a third layer of oversight and management of the same agency. My first concern is government efficiency. Who really makes the decisions for the agency?"

I-Team 8 reached out to multiple Republican lawmakers for their response.

The State Personnel Department (SPD) responded with this statement:

"Adam's role is a regular full time, salaried state position, and no special employment code is being created. The position will be paid through DCS for administrative purposes, while functionally reporting to the Governor's Office. He will have the option to enroll in the State Employee Health Plan, consistent with other full time state employees."

This story was originally published by WISH-TV at wistv.com/news/i-team-8/lawmakers-blast-newly-created-special-advisor-position-for-ex-dcs-director.



Graphic provided by INDOT

SR 47 reconstruction project moves into Phase 2 in Sheridan

The REPORTER

The Indiana Department of Transportation announces that the State Road 47 Reconstruction Project in Sheridan has moved into Phase 2.

Phase 2 work includes a complete reconstruction of SR 47 between Wesco Parkway and Mule Barn Road.

That work is expected to last through mid-summer. Through traffic remains closed between Hamilton-Boone County Line Road and State Road 38. Access for local homes and businesses will be maintained from the west.

Drivers are encouraged to follow the official de-

tour of SR 38 and U.S. 421. Learn more about the SR 47 Reconstruction project [here](#).

INDOT reminds drivers to slow down, avoid distractions, and use extra caution while traveling in and around work zones. All work is weather-dependent, and schedules are subject to change.

One day only: Humane Society for Hamilton County extends adoption hours

Submitted

For the first time since 2023, the Humane Society for Hamilton County (HSHC) is extending its adoption hours to 7 p.m. Thursday, April 30 in celebration of National Adopt a Pet Day. The shelter hopes to use this day to rally the community in the face of a growing crisis that has affected shelters across the country for over two years: dogs in their care are deteriorating mentally and emotionally after months – and in some cases, over a year – of waiting for homes.

"It's heartbreaking to see just how long so many of our animals are forced to wait for a forever home," HSHC Community En-

agement Manager Emma Nobbe said. "We hope that our community will rally on a day that is nationally recognized for finding homes for shelter pets."

In addition to extended adoption hours, all adoption fees for adult pets will be reduced to \$30 in the hopes of finding loving homes for the shelter pets in their care. (Some exclusions apply.)

With hundreds of animals in the building, HSHC has pets of all breeds, ages, and personalities to choose from. Most importantly, the shelter has the pet you've always dreamed of right behind one of their kennel doors.

All adoptions include:

- Spay/neuter surgery
 - Microchip
 - Age-appropriate vaccinations, deworming, and flea and tick treatment
 - A wellness exam at a participating vet
 - A starter bag of food
 - Post-adoption support and resources
 - A customized bone for all dogs, generously donated by HSHC volunteer Pat Lines
 - A delicious Churu treat for all cats, generously donated by HSHC volunteer, Pat Lines
- The Humane Society for Hamilton County is located at 10501 Hauge Road, Fishers. Learn more at HSHC-adoptions.com.

THE ESTATE OF MOLLY DONIKIAN

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 10:00 AM
PREVIEW: FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1-6 PM

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American Family Association of Indiana PAC endorses Lowes for Hamilton County Sheriff

Submitted

The American Family Association of Indiana PAC has announced its endorsement of John Lowes for Hamilton County Sheriff.

“Voters in Hamilton County have a unique opportunity to continue the outstanding record of keeping families safe set by Sheriff Dennis Quakenbush by electing John Lowes as sheriff,” said Micah Clark, President of the American Family Association of Indiana PAC. “John understands that Noblesville, Fishers, Carmel, Westfield and all the great towns in Hamilton County are rated as one of the safest places to live in America because the Sheriff’s Office makes safety a priority while recognizing the that strong families, vibrant churches, safe schools and active community organizations play a critical role in our county.”

“At all levels of government, Hoosiers are looking for leaders who share their values and will listen to

their concerns. Chief Deputy John Lowes is that candidate. He is an impressive leader with an enthusiasm for service, a qualified resume of accomplishments, and commitment to preserving the commonsense values that make Hamilton County great.



Lowes

“The Hamilton County Sheriff’s office has a budget of \$34 million. John Lowes has a degree in business management, post-graduate certification in police leadership, and more than 27 years of management and law enforcement experience. John Lowes is ready to continue the solid record that the next sheriff will inherit. I encourage all Hamilton County voters to look at John’s record and support him in the May primary.”

The AFA of Indiana Political Action Committee was formed in March 2006 for the purpose of educating voters about candidates who embrace traditional values and issues that benefit families, churches, and communities.

Noblesville native authors murder mystery set in his hometown

Submitted

A native of Noblesville has written his first fiction novel, and he uses his former hometown and Westfield as the setting for three murders that go unsolved for 30 years. The central character is an Indiana State Police detective whose family was impacted by those crimes, and he saw the killers just before the murder in his neighborhood.

William Oakes is the author of the just-released novel *Chasing Evil*, published by Barnes and Noble publishing. His early career was as a broadcast reporter and later a newspaper reporter and columnist. After retiring from his second career in hospital administration, he began his journey as a novelist.

“Writing a novel is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time,” Oakes said. “It’s a very different form of writing from journalism. It took two years of writing and rewriting to get to the final version.”

The book is a fictional crime thriller that describes Indiana State Police Captain of Detectives Conor Cavanaugh’s quest to solve a 30-year-old murder of a neighbor and an older couple in Westfield. Cavanaugh and his family live in Franklin, Ind. The story line also brings the killer to Cavanaugh’s home and family.

The book begins when Cavanaugh’s father is assaulted at a construction site east of Noblesville. Hours later Cavanaugh, then a 15-year-old, sees two strangers in his neighborhood. At dinner his father

describes the men who attacked him and Conor realizes they are the men he saw. Within minutes their dinner is interrupted by sirens, and they soon learn a neighbor has been murdered.

Despite Conor’s eyewitness account, the murder goes unsolved for 30 years.

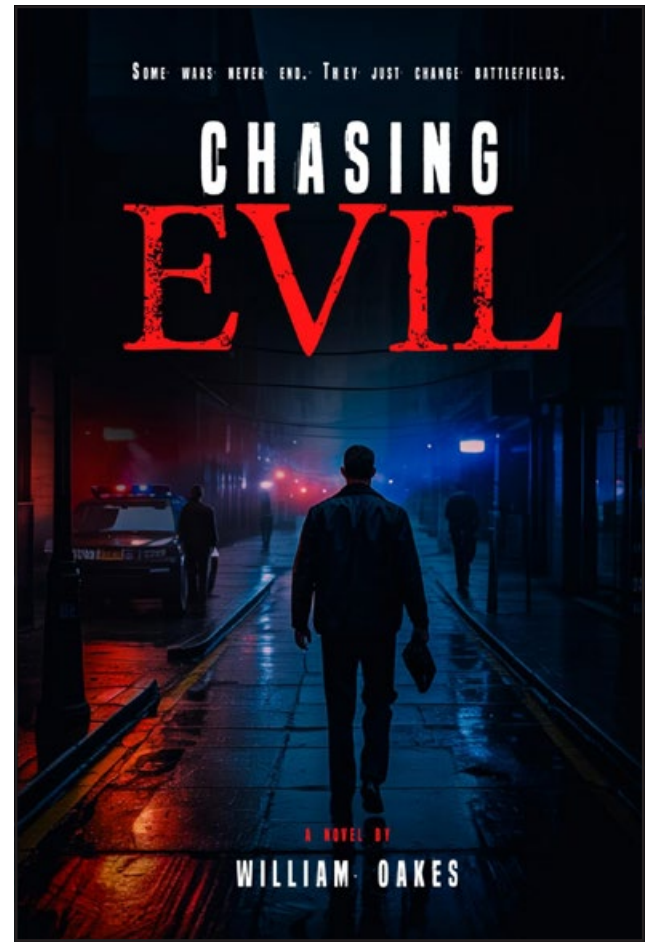
In the present, Cavanaugh is a decorated former Army Special Operations officer and now a well-known Indiana State Police investigator. On his way home one night he stops a strong-armed robbery. The suspect is killed in an exchange of gunfire and reveals a clue that connects back to Cavanaugh’s memory the day of the murder.

This leads him on a cross-country pursuit of the killers and winds back in Indiana. At a critical moment Cavanaugh must decide between justice and revenge.

Oakes, who lives in Franklin, said part of his decision to try to write a novel were the COVID restrictions that lingered into 2022 and 2023. He also got the opportunity to attend several author presentations sponsored by the Johnson County Public Library. After meeting and hearing programs by J.A. Jance, Jack Carr, C.J. Box, David Baldacci, and Craig Johnson, he was motivated to start writing.

He admits it wasn’t a smooth start.

“Retired Franklin College Professor David Carlsson had a two-session class on writing a novel,” Oakes said. “I had about 60 pages written at that point. After his class I went home



Graphic provided

and deleted most of what I wrote. A year later he repeated the class. I was almost done and from that class I was convinced I was on the right track. Six months later I was talking to publishers.

“I thought it would be fun to write a novel with ties back to my hometown and build a cast of characters around people I covered and wrote about, got to know in the business world.”

Oakes added that his wife’s love of the *Longmire* TV series fashioned after Craig Johnson’s *Longmire* book series also played a role. They traveled to Buffalo, Wyo., in the summer of 2024 and he got to speak with Johnson twice and picked up some helpful advice.

It all came together in the spring of 2025. Since then, it has been months of

the other work authors have to do to get their work published.

Oakes said, “When it is your first novel everything is new and you’re placing your trust in people you hope know the business, because I didn’t. But I look forward to seeing the response and talking to readers about the book and the effort it took to get where I am. I’ve already started writing a follow up novel.”

Chasing Evil is available through Amazon. Oakes also has a website, WilliamOakesWrites.com, where the book can be downloaded or ordered. The website also features an excerpt from the novel for readers to try. He also has a Facebook page where he hopes to actively engage with readers.

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Keep the blood supply stable: give blood or platelets with Red Cross

The REPORTER

The American Red Cross urges donors to give blood or platelets now to help hospitals and transfusion centers stay prepared to help all patients. Donors of all blood types and those looking to give for the first time are encouraged to book an appointment in the coming days or weeks ahead.

In addition to the return of outdoor activities and warmer weather, spring vacations can interrupt blood donation patterns. When plans shift away from normal routines, even small disruptions can lead to a quick drop in available blood products.

Spread kindness this



American Red Cross

spring. Book a time to give blood or platelets now by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

Those who come to give April 13-30, 2026, will receive a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant of their choice. See RedCrossBlood.org/Hope for details.

All who come to give May 1-17, 2026, will receive a \$20 Amazon Gift Card by email, thanks to our partners at Amazon. See RedCrossBlood.org/Amazon for details.

Upcoming Donation Opportunities

Carmel

- May 11 from noon to 5 p.m. at Cool Creek Nature Center, 2000 E. 151st St.
- May 16 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 11257 Temple Drive

Fishers

- April 30 from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Sun King Brewing, 9713 District North Drive, Suite 1220
- May 13 from 1 to 6 p.m. at Billerica Park Multi-Purpose Community Building, 12690 Promise Road
- May 15 from 1 to 6 p.m. at IU Health Fishers Medical Office Building, 13100 E. 136th St.

Noblesville

- April 29, May 6, 13 from noon to 6:15 p.m. at the Noblesville Blood Donation Center, 14765 Hazel Dell Crossing, Suite 700
- April 30, May 7, 14 from noon to 6:30 p.m. at the Noblesville Blood Donation Center
- April 25, 28, May 2, 5, 9, 12, 16 from 8 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. at the Noblesville Blood Donation Center

Lapel

- May 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Ford Street United Methodist Church, 925 Ford St.

Bank fraud dealings, or why I have pulled all the hair out of my head

Not many things can grab your attention first thing in the morning like checking your bank website and seeing that somehow over \$3,000 has been taken out of your savings account and transferred into an investment company you have never had anything to do with.

Lots of questions come to your stunned and flabbergasted mind at that moment. Who is this company? How could they just take out all that money? Will I be able to get it back? Where do I start?

Clicking around on the site, I see that if I have a question about my account, I should call the number on the back of my credit card. This I do – and in the great tradition of Customer Non-service I am treated to a progression of welcomes, followed by information about taxes, and finally a list of possible places I can go if I press 1 or 2 or 3. And finally, at the end, “If you’d like to speak to a customer service representative, please press zero.” (Why isn’t that at the beginning of the list?)

So, pressing zero, I am immediately connected halfway around the world to a guy in India. Really, I have nothing against the Indian people – they have a wonderful culture and due to Great Britain’s long stay there, we share a language. But I, and perhaps you as well, have a difficult time understanding their dialect. Yet India is the location of most, if not all, primary-level phone-in



COLUMNIST
KEN KLINGEMEIER
Another Opinion

customer service reps. (Another frustrated – Why?)

So I’m having my usual difficulties understanding the man – who must be at home as I can hear his television in the background. He listens to my situation, asks me a few questions, I ask him to repeat what he said, he does, and I answer with what I think is a logical reply. After a few more similar exchanges he says he is very sorry for the fraud problem I am having, but he can’t really help me with that so he must forward my call to someone who can.

I wait. I get forwarded. Same situation. Same difficulties.

I’m forwarded again, and again(!), and once more but this time – this time!! – while waiting for the next voice to come on, I get a dial tone.

Cut off. (Yet another – WHY?)

I take a break. I really need it. While I am recovering, I think to ask AI on my Copilot app for a reliable, higher-level, Customer Service number for my bank. He (at least I think he is a he) gives me one and it is a slightly different experience. Still an Indian connection, but I get helped and am able to go through the steps needed to make a claim against the illegitimate debit on our account, and to block the company from access to it.

But there is more to this story.

I have to wait on some

forms that I must fill out and return regarding the claim. So, nine or 10 times, I have gotten an email saying there is an very important letter in my online bank mailbox. I check. Of course, there is nothing there. (Why not?!?)

Also – just to top things, the next morning upon logging on to my bank website, another surprise: \$1,340 had been removed from a different account – checking, this time – which I had not seen the day before. And so the process begins again. (Why, oh why, oh why?)

All this led to a visit to our bank branch to have both

affected accounts closed and to open new ones.

Questions remain, of course. Mainly, how did someone get the information they needed to transfer money out of our accounts to open investment accounts in my wife’s name?

Keep an eye on your accounts, my friend!

Ken Klingemeier is known in the pages of The Reporter for his reviews of local theater productions in the Greater Indianapolis area, which you can read on his blog, A Seat on the Aisle. He also occasionally opines on other topics.

Community News

Nieshalla to speak at next Fishers GOP meeting

The next meeting of the Fishers GOP and Young Republicans will take place at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 28 at Gaylor Electric, 10405 Crosspoint Blvd., Fishers. The program will begin at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

Indiana Comptroller Elise Nieshalla will join for a conversation on how the state is managing taxpayer dollars and planning for the future.

Please RSVP by emailing Tiffanie Ditlevson at tiffanie@hamiltoncountygop.org or John Weingardt at john@psw-cpa.com.

Enjoy Bourbon & Bites in Cicero

The Cicero Friends of the Park will play host to a “Bourbon and Bites” bourbon tasting from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 24 at Red Bridge Park, 697 W. Jackson St., Cicero.

Enjoy great pours from more than eight distilleries, as well as barbecue sliders and hors d’oeuvres. The cost is \$50.

If you have any questions, please contact John Lewis at lewis7955@gmail.com.

Cicero gets fired up about pancakes

The Cicero Fire Department’s annual Pancake Breakfast will take place from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 9 at the Fire Department, 1359 Stringtown Pike.

The breakfast will include pancakes and sausage as well as all the fixings. Speaking of which ...

What’s your favorite go-to pancake topping? Fresh strawberries, blueberries, chocolate chips, bananas and whipped cream, maple syrup, or something unique? The Fire Departments wants to know what you like on your pancakes. [Click here](#) and comment on the Facebook post. Your suggestion could end up on this year’s topping bar.

The cost is a free-will offering. Proceeds go to Cicero Fire & Community Outreach.

Coffee Hour for Veterans

Attention Veterans in northern Hamilton County ...

From 9 to 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month, Veterans and the general public are welcome to get together at Remnant Coffee Shop, 101 W. Main St. (266th Street), Arcadia.

Come get to know other Veterans in the area. Tea drinkers are welcome.

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Letter guidelines this election season

With the approach of the May 5 Primary Election, the Hamilton County Reporter is establishing some Letters to the Editor guidelines to keep things fair and balanced.

Letters addressing new topics about the upcoming election or the policies of individual candidates will be accepted until the end of the business day on Thursday, April 23 and will be published on Friday, April 24.

Letters in response to new topics published in our April 24 edition will be accepted until Tuesday, April 28 and will be published in our April 29 edition.

These deadlines will give candidates and their supporters the opportunity to reply to letters addressing new topics.

Please send your letters to News@ReadTheReporter.com.

Letters to the Editor do not represent the opinions of The Reporter or our staff.



Lions & Feeding Team work together to feed the hungry



Photo provided by Lisa Dick, Noblesville Lions Club

The Noblesville and Westfield Lions Clubs, along with The Feeding Team, distributed food from Gleaners to 160 families this past weekend at Hamilton Heights High School. The next distribution will be from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 28 at Harbour Shores Church 8011 E. 216th St., Cicero.

Indiana Members Credit Union donates \$10K to Strides for Sarcoma

Submitted

On behalf of Indiana Members Credit Union (IMCU) members, IMCU recently presented a check for \$10,000 to Strides for Sarcoma as part of its exclusive Cancer Awareness Debit Card Program. IMCU members nominate a different local cancer-related organization to be the beneficiary each year. Strides for Sarcoma was the selected beneficiary for the past year, receiving a contribution for each signature-based transaction made with this card from March 2025 to February 2026.

IMCU presented the check to board members of Strides for Sarcoma on Feb. 28.

“We are incredibly grateful to IMCU for their continued support of Strides for Sarcoma and our mission,” Strides for Sarcoma Co-Founder Gabriella Conjelko said. “Partnerships like this not only help fund critical research, but also bring much-needed awareness to sarcoma, a cancer that remains underfunded and often overlooked. Together, we are making meaningful strides toward better treatments and, ultimately, a cure.”

IMCU President and CEO John Newett stated, “IMCU was proud to support Strides for Sarcoma on behalf of our members. Our Cancer Awareness Debit Card was created to benefit organizations that are making a meaningful impact, and Strides for Sarcoma’s commitment to raising awareness, supporting patients, and advancing



Photo provided

(From left) Sophie Schneider, Board Member of Strides for Sarcoma; Lexy Mercury, Secretary of Strides for Sarcoma; Gabriella Conjelkom Co-Founder of Strides for Sarcoma; Amber Coryell, Senior Business Development Officer at Indiana Members Credit Union; and Julie Conjelko, Executive Director of Strides for Sarcoma.

research for sarcoma aligns perfectly with that mission.”

Founded by twins Gabriella and Nicholas Conjelko, Strides for Sarcoma was created after their family experienced the devastating impact of childhood cancer firsthand. Inspired by the courageous fight of their cousin Maia against Ewing’s Sarcoma, the organization was established in her honor to advance research, raise awareness, and support children and families affected by sarcoma. They are working toward a future where sarcoma is no longer a life-limiting diagnosis.

The card is available for issue to members at IMCU’s 32 Indiana locations. The IMCU Cancer Awareness Debit Card is an option to members with a free checking account and can be issued immediately through IMCU’s instant issue program, allowing members to receive their debit card on the spot.

The new beneficiary for the IMCU Cancer Awareness Debit Card will be announced in the coming weeks on IMCU’s website and social media platforms. For more information about the IMCU Cancer Awareness Debit Card, please visit imcu.com or visit an IMCU branch for details.

About Strides for Sarcoma

Strides for Sarcoma’s mission is to improve outcomes for children and young adults facing sarcoma by advancing innovative research, raising awareness, and supporting childhood cancer warriors and their families. Founded in honor of Maia and inspired by the firsthand experiences of its founders, the organization is committed to driving progress toward better treatments and a future where sarcoma is no longer a life-limiting diagnosis. For more information, please visit StridesForSarcoma.com.

7th Circuit upholds Indiana law protecting young children from early sexuality instruction

Submitted by Office of AG Todd Rokita

The 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals has sided with Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita’s arguments and upheld an Indiana law that prohibits public schools from providing instruction on human sexuality to students in pre-kindergarten through third grade, delivering a strong victory for parental authority, childhood innocence, and commonsense education priorities.

“This decision is a huge win for Hoosier parents and common sense,” AG Rokita said. “Human sexuality should not be taught in public schools, period. These are sensitive topics best left to parents and families, not government employees in the classroom.”

In 2023 – the same year the law was enacted – a first-year teacher from Indianapolis Public Schools sued the

state. She claimed the law violated her First Amendment rights and was unconstitutionally vague. Just as a federal district court did previously, the federal appeals court rejected both those contentions.

“Our law is clear that primary teachers in public schools have only limited speech rights just like other public employees,” **the court stated in its ruling.** “Even more, their in-classroom instruction does not enjoy First Amendment protection.”

In other words, the people of Indiana, through their elected representatives, have the right and authority to make laws regulating the content of public school curricula.

AG Rokita thanked So-

licitor General James Barta and his team for their work on this case.

Tuesday’s decision represents the second time this week that the 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals has ruled in Indiana’s favor. On Monday,

it granted the state’s emergency motion to stay a preliminary injunction against Indiana’s commonsense law clarifying that college- and university-issued IDs cannot be used to vote. Only secure, government-issued IDs like Indiana driver’s licenses are accepted at the polls – a needed provision to close loopholes, prevent potential fraud by out-of-state or ineligible voters, ensure every ballot belongs to a verified Hoosier, and preserve public confidence in fair, honest, and transparent elections.



Rokita

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Noblesville High School Marching Band to perform in Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade

The REPROTER

The 500 Festival has selected 13 marching bands from across the U.S. to perform in the 70th annual Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade, on Saturday, May 23, in downtown Indianapolis.

On the day before the Indianapolis 500, the IPS All-City marching band will march the streets of downtown Indianapolis for one of the nation's largest parades, the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade. The selected marching bands will perform for more than 200,000 spectators lining the 2-mile parade route. An additional 1 million TV viewers from around the country will tune in to the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade's Indianapolis market broadcast on WTHR, Channel 13.

Band line up for the 2026 Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade:

- Noblesville High School Marching Millers, Noblesville – Director, Eric Thornbury
- National Band Association Indiana All-Star Band, Zionsville – Director, Mick-

ey Stisher

- Marching Patriots, Portland – Director, Charles Roesch
- Marching Highlanders, Anderson – Director, Richard Geisler
- Greenwood Marching Woodmen, Greenwood – Director, Luke Aylsworth
- Clark County High School Marching Band, Kahoka, Mo. – Director, Robert Dooley
- Berlin Bears Marching Band, Delaware, Ohio – Director, Michael Reeves
- 38th Infantry Division Band, Indianapolis – Director, Catherine Maloney
- Indianapolis Public Schools All-City Marching Band, Indianapolis – Director, Josh Goodman
- Speedway High School 500 Regiment Band, Speedway – Director, Delaney Ruble
- Northwestern High School Tiger Pride Band, Kokomo – Director, Jeremy Snyder
- Purdue University "All-American" Marching Band, West Lafayette - Director, Matt Conaway
- Squadron of Sound,

Monroe – Director, Cory Kelley

"As we celebrate 70 years of parade tradition and this year's 'Racing Through History' theme, these bands play an important role in bringing that story to life," said Dave Neff, president and CEO of the 500 Festival. "Their talent, passion, and pride create an unforgettable experience for fans and help carry forward the spirit of this iconic celebration."

One of the 500 Festival's original events, the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade is one of the nation's largest, most respected parades, consistently earning national acclaim alongside the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. More than 200,000 people will line the streets of downtown Indianapolis to experience the magic, fanfare, and excitement of the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade. An iconic race-weekend tradition, the Parade will feature spectacular floats, larger-than-life helium balloons, marching bands from across the country, celebrities and

everyday heroes, and the 33 drivers that will be competing in the 110th Running of the Indianapolis 500, presented by Gainbridge.

The 2026 Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade will take place on Saturday, May 23, with festivities starting at 11:45 a.m. in downtown Indianapolis, and the Parade starting at noon.

Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade tickets can be purchased at 500festival.com/tickets.

For more information about the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade, please visit 500festival.com/parade.

Support of the Lucas Oil 500 Festival Parade is provided by: Lucas Oil, AES Indiana, American Dairy Association of Indiana, Central Indiana Chevy Dealers, Eli Lilly, Franciscan Health, Indianapolis Colts, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, IU Simon End Lunch Cancer Now, KSM CPAs & Advisors, Meijer, OneAmerica Financial, Purdue University, Regions Bank, Republic Airways, Shell Starship, Sullivan Hardware & Garden, and WTHR-13.



Democratic women invited to second HCFDW meeting

Submitted

Democratic women from across Hamilton County are invited to attend the second meeting of the Hamilton County Federation of Democratic Women (HCFDW) at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 26 at Eller House, 7050 E. 116th St., Fishers.

The meeting marks the launch of a new caucus dedicated to educating, energizing, and empowering Democratic women while expanding civic engagement and leadership opportunities across the county.

As Democratic women across Indiana mobilize ahead of an important election cycle, the HCFDW aims to connect women who want to become more involved in local politics, support Democratic candidates, and build a stronger pipeline of women leaders in the party and public office.

This meeting will include a panel discussion featuring Democratic women leaders from three different levels of local government:

State Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn, Former Fishers City Councilor Crystal Neumann, and Carmel Clay School Board Member Kristina Wheeler.

The aim is to help attendees better understand how these positions function individually and as part of a whole.

"We hope women will not only see how they can assist in bringing vital issues that matter to the forefront of their governing bodies, but also envision how each of them is valuable to the process of democracy," Party Communications Chair Libby Hogan said.

Organizers encourage women to come ready with their burning questions.

All Democratic women in Hamilton County, whether longtime volunteers, new activists, or those simply interested in learning more, are encouraged to attend, meet fellow community members, and help build this new organization together.

New Alzheimer's Association report reveals Americans value brain health but lack guidance

The REPORTER

Americans say brain health is as important as physical health as they age, yet most do not know how to protect it, according to the [Alzheimer's Association's 2026 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures](#) report and a nationwide survey released today by the Alzheimer's Association.

The annual report provides an in-depth look at the latest national and state-by-state data on Alzheimer's prevalence, mortality, dementia care workforce, costs of care and impact on caregivers. The new report estimates that 7.4 million people age 65 and older in the U.S. are living with Alzheimer's disease, including 121,300 in Indiana.

This year the cost of caring for people living with Alzheimer's and other dementia is projected to reach \$409 billion, a \$25 billion increase from a year ago. This does not include unpaid care provided by family caregivers and friends. Last

year in Indiana there were 221,000 family caregivers, providing 329 million hours of unpaid care valued at nearly \$6.6 billion.

"The latest data show Alzheimer's remains a growing challenge for families in Indiana," said Natalie Sutton, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association Indiana Chapter. "That's why it's critical to keep advancing research and developing treatments that can improve outcomes and support everyone facing the disease, including people with Alzheimer's and other dementias in Indiana and their families."

Brain health in America
Understanding & supporting lifelong cognitive health

An accompanying special report, *Brain Health in America: Understanding and Supporting Lifelong Cognitive Health*, highlights survey findings from more than 3,800 adults age 40 and older. Nearly all respondents said brain health

is at least as important as physical health, yet only 9 percent said they know a lot about how to maintain it. More than two-thirds reported worrying about their brain health or developing dementia.

While most adults believe healthy lifestyle behaviors support brain health, fewer make the connection to reducing dementia risk. Three-quarters said behaviors such as diet, exercise and sleep are important for brain health, but less than half strongly linked those habits to lowering their risk of Alzheimer's or other types of dementia.

The survey also found strong interest in brain health programs, particularly in midlife, but barriers remain. Nearly three-quarters said they would participate in brain health programs, preferring flexible, low-cost options. Most adults said they want guidance from their health care provider, yet few reported having those conversations.

"The survey makes clear that Americans care deeply about brain health, but many want more clarity about what steps to take," Sutton said. "There's a real opportunity to strengthen awareness and empower people with straightforward guidance that fits into everyday life."

To address the needs identified in the survey, the Alzheimer's Association is working with partners to deliver research-backed information and programs to help people support their brain health across community, workplace, and health care settings. These efforts are informed by the landmark **U.S. POINTER study**, which found that combining multiple healthy habits can protect cognition function.

The full 2026 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report is available at alz.org/facts and will be published in the April 2026 issue of *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association*.

Crash causes sewage leak in area of 126th & Hazel Dell

Submitted by City of Carmel

At approximately 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 21, emergency crews responded to a vehicle crash near the intersection of 126th Street and Hazel Dell Parkway in Carmel.

The crash resulted in damage to sanitary sewer infrastructure and a temporary sewage leak. Although the leak has since been contained, a portion of the sewage entered nearby ponds prior to full containment.

City officials are overseeing a coordinated cleanup effort involving multiple departments and partner agencies. Ongoing work includes recovering and treating the leaked sewage, flushing and cleaning the affected storm sewer system,

and conducting frequent water quality testing to monitor surface water conditions.

Currently, there is no immediate risk to public health or safety. As a safeguard, affected areas will be marked with cones and precautionary signage. Residents and their pets should avoid direct contact with the signed surface waters until the cleanup operation is complete and the signage is removed.

Residents in the immediate vicinity of 126th Street and Hazel Dell Parkway may notice intermittent sewage odors as cleanup activities continue.

The city will continue to monitor the situation closely and provide updates as needed.

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Noblesville Parks & Recreation receives generous accessible playground donation

Submitted

The Noblesville Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Noblesville Parks Foundation, has announced the development of a new accessible playground at Seminary Park, home to the Indiana Peony Festival, made possible through a generous gift from Tom and Soni Sheehan through the Timothy J. Sheehan Memorial Endowment Fund.

Designed to create play experiences for all abilities, the vision for this playground was thoughtfully crafted through a collaboration with the Noblesville Parks Department, Tracey Sheehan and family members, the Noblesville Parks Foundation, Noblesville Parks Board, and Commercial Recreation Group.

"Thank you to the Sheehan Family for this generous donation and investment to enhance Seminary Park," Mayor Chris Jensen said. "Making our parks accessible for all and having a playground where people of all abilities can interact, participate alongside their peers, and fully engage in the playground experience furthers our commitment to



Rendering provided

inclusivity in Noblesville. This playground also enhances and elevates Seminary Park, which is located in the heart of downtown Noblesville, and the home of the Indiana Peony Festival that attracts over 40,000 attendees annually."

Tom and Soni Sheehan were dedicated philanthropists whose impact was felt throughout Noblesville and Hamilton County. Their legacy lives on through the Thomas P. and Sondra D. Sheehan Charitable Foundation, which is committed to improving the lives of children. The playground will feature inclusive play equipment designed to create a welcoming and acces-

sible environment for children of all abilities, bringing families together to enjoy and celebrate the Sheehan's dedication and commitment to serving the residents of Hamilton County.

"Seeing this project to fruition has been wonderful," Tracey Sheehan said. "My parents led by example, teaching us the importance of helping others and giving back to the community. Carrying forward their charitable work isn't an obligation, it's an honor and through every act of kindness I feel their presence and guidance as I continue the legacy they so selflessly began. How lucky am I!"

The ribbon cutting cere-

mony for the playground will take place at 9 a.m. Thursday, May 14 at Seminary Park, 350 S. 10th St. The event is open to the public.

"This project is a meaningful reflection of what community partnership can accomplish," Noblesville Parks & Recreation Director Savannah Wines said. "It is exciting that we are able to bring this project to life thanks to the Sheehan Family's generosity. Noblesville Parks continues to make investments in creating inclusive spaces for all abilities, and this new park improvement is a major milestone and sets the tone for future playground upgrades across the community."

Four local students applauded at IU Kokomo honors night

Submitted

Faculty and staff in the Indiana University Kokomo School of Humanities and Social Sciences and School of Sciences celebrated student academic achievement during their honors program April 20 in Havens Auditorium.

Chancellor Mark Canada; Scott Jones, executive vice chancellor for academic affairs; Chris Darr, dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Patrick Motl, dean of the School of Sciences welcomed students, their family and friends, and faculty to the celebration.

Darr congratulated students on their accomplishments, saying they arrived there through their own hard work and the support of family and friends. The honorees studied long nights and weekends, participated in clubs and activities, worked jobs on and off campus, and overcome obstacles.

"Our two schools share many things. One of these is a belief in the central importance of lifelong learning," Darr said. "Benjamin Franklin, a tireless proponent of public education, insisted

that an educated, well-informed citizenry was crucial for a democratic society. He thought that reason and free inquiry were essential, and that dedication to lifelong learning helped us develop not just knowledge and skills, but moral virtue as well. Our faculty work tirelessly to ensure that our students learn about the natural and social worlds, and more broadly, we hope to instill in them the value of reason and free inquiry; Educated citizens must think critically; they must seek truth; they must distinguish between fact and opinion; and they must remain open-minded while demanding evidence. These efforts are needed now more than ever."

Local outstanding student award recipients included:

- Communications: Jenna Waterman, Noblesville
 - Health sciences: Breanna Koester, Westfield
 - Data science: Mary-Clare Burch, Noblesville
- Scholarship recipients honored included:
- Robert Roales NIMS Scholarship: Emilia Lamoreaux, Arcadia

Williams Creek Management partners with Westfield for upcoming environmental events

Submitted

Williams Creek Management is partnering with the Westfield Parks and Recreation Department for upcoming events focused on outdoor recreation, sustainability, and ecological stewardship.

Williams Creek's mission has always been to enhance livability, strengthen infra-

structure resilience, and improve the quality of life in the communities in which individuals live, work, and play.

"As a valued long-term partner, we take great pride in working alongside the City of Westfield to shape the natural spaces that define this vibrant, fast-growing community," Williams Creek President and CEO

Neil Myers said. "We are proud to serve as the Environmental & Parks Programming Sponsor for several upcoming initiatives at two locations we helped create and continue to sustain: Grand Junction Park & Plaza and Simon Moon Park."

Westfield residents are invited to join Williams Creek and the Parks and

Recreation Department this season to experience these spaces through environmental education, recreation, and community engagement:

- **Green Day:** Saturday, April 25 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Grand Junction Plaza
- **Creek Stomps:** Every Thursday, May 28 through July 30 from 10 to 11 a.m. at Grand Junction Plaza and

the Wetland Amphitheater

• **Fishing with Friends:** Saturday, June 6 from 9 a.m. to noon at Simon Moon Park
 "Westfield Parks and Recreation values our long-standing relationship with Williams Creek as they continue to provide amazing installation and maintenance services for all our native planting areas," Parks and

Recreation Director Christopher McConnell said. "We are now incredibly excited to strengthen this relationship and bring Williams Creek on as the Sponsor of our environmental programming for the 2026 and 2027 seasons."

Learn more about Williams Creek and the company's impact on the natural world [here](#).

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Second Indianapolis man charged in murder of poker player in Westfield

By GREGG MONTGOMERY
WISH-TV | wistv.com

A second Indianapolis man has been accused in the **homicide of a Westfield man who was an international poker player and a known marijuana dealer**, police said Wednesday afternoon.

James "Matt" Lushin, 47, was found dead shortly after 7:25 p.m. March 12 with trauma at his home in the 3900 block of Westfield Road, also known as State Road 32. Someone had called police when Lushin didn't show up for an appointment. **Police found Lushin dead from multiple gunshot wounds.** Police said it was the first homicide in the Hamilton County city in about seven or eight years.

Ronald Dewayne Brown Jr., 50, was charged March 30 in Hamilton Circuit Court with murder in the case.

On Wednesday, Westfield Police Department said in a media notification that Justin A. Jones, 40, was taken into custody for his suspected involvement in this case. An arrest warrant for Jones was issued Friday

from Hamilton Superior Court 5 with preliminary felony charges of murder; conspiracy to commit murder; armed robbery; and theft where the value is between \$750 and \$50,000. He also was charged with a misdemeanor count of dealing in marijuana. Online court records showed no initial hearing had yet been set for Jones.

Westfield Police Department said its officers served arrest and search warrants about 6:45 a.m. Wednesday in the 1900 block of Bremen Lane on the far east side of Indianapolis, where Jones was taken into custody.

The media notification from Westfield Police Department was sent after the Hamilton County Clerk's Office had closed, so court documents that police submitted to prosecutors on Jones' case were not immediately available publicly.

Regarding the previous arrest in the homicide, prosecutors in March said that Brown had been paying Lushin for more than a year for marijuana.

Court documents show that detectives found several

pouches in Lushin's home containing marijuana and cellphones. They said friends and family told them Lushin dealt marijuana. Lushin was also a known gambler, including trips to Amsterdam and Spain as well as local cash games, police learned. During a follow-up search of Lushin's property, detectives found nearly \$16,000 in cash in the master bedroom and nearly 11 pounds of marijuana in a safe in a nearby structure.

Investigators found Lushin had ties to Brown. Sources told detectives that Lushin had loaned Brown somewhere between \$20,000 and \$70,000 worth of marijuana, and that Brown owed Lushin money. Investigators said Brown paid Lushin a total of \$17,900 in a series of installments through CashApp from January 2025 through March 5.

Police said in March that investigators on March 27 served search warrants at three Indianapolis homes associated with Brown, taking him into custody at one on the east side in the 3300 block of North Butler Avenue. In the home, in-

vestigators found packages of marijuana, cellphones and laptops, and a handgun loaded with ammunition that matched shells found at the crime scene.

Hamilton County Prosecutor Josh Kocher said in March that his office has several theories for a motive but would not offer any details, saying they were circumstantial. He said in March that prosecutors did not have any additional suspects in the case, although prosecutors expected more people could come forward with new information.

Lushin's obituary said the Kokomo native was a key partner with the real estate investment company, FLF Property. **The obituary** also said, "Matt was also a respected and accomplished member of the international poker community. He traveled the world competing in tournaments and built an impressive and successful career."

This story was originally published by WISH-TV at wistv.com/news/crime-watch-8/2nd-indianapolis-man-charged-in-murder-of-poker-player-in-westfield.

Indiana Wesleyan University evolves online higher education with 'Fast Forward' 90-hour degree programs

The REPORTER

Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU), a national leader in online degree completion for nearly 40 years, has announced its "Fast Forward" 90-credit online degree programs, an emerging alternative to traditional 120-credit programs.

The Fast Forward programs reimagine how students gain career-ready skills through intentional, outcomes-focused learning. Offering students both depth and breadth across high-demand fields, the university is launching multiple industry-relevant 90-credit bachelor's degrees, with several already open for enrollment and additional programs set to roll out in summer and fall 2026. Continued expansion is planned in the years ahead.

Designed for today's learners, Fast Forward programs span business, education, and artificial intelligence and feature a purpose-built curriculum that is affordable, efficient and focused on career readiness. Enrollment is now open for IWU's Bachelor of Applied AI Analytics, with specializations in human resources, supply chain and logistics, and marketing, as well as Bachelor of Education degrees in middle school science, secondary English language arts and secondary mathematics.

"As a pioneer in online education, IWU is proud to launch Fast Forward degree programs that expand access and accelerate opportunity

for students," IWU President Jon Kulaga, Ph.D. said "Our Fast Forward 90-hour degrees are both rooted and relevant. Rooted in our commitment to Christ-centered education, these programs develop students in character, scholarship and leadership while remaining relevant to the rapidly changing workforce."

Fast Forward programs are designed to be both accelerated and affordable, offering flexible pathways for students at different stages of life, including recent high school graduates, working adults and those exploring college options. This model reduces financial barriers while maintaining academic quality and rigor, providing a clear pathway to career advancement and postgraduate success. Programs are intentionally designed around high-demand career fields and evolving workforce needs, ensuring graduates are equipped with skills employers are actively seeking.

In addition to core coursework, Fast Forward programs include stackable certificate credentials, microcredentials and applied-learning experiences. Certificates in areas such as education, applied business functions and AI foundations are integrated throughout the curriculum. Students also build professional portfolios through virtual internships and applied projects developed in collaboration with employer partners. Technology and AI-informed learning are integrated

across programs, preparing graduates for an increasingly AI-driven workforce.

IWU's Bachelor of Applied AI Analytics prepares students to apply artificial intelligence and data analytics in real-world business settings. The program emphasizes practical application, equipping students to improve decision-making, automate processes and enhance organizational performance. While delivered fully online, the program includes personalized support through curriculum advisors, peer engagement and faculty interaction.

Fast Forward programs currently open for enrollment include:

- Bachelor of Education in Middle School Science Education
- Bachelor of Education in Secondary English Language Arts Education

- Bachelor of Education in Secondary Mathematics Education

- Bachelor of Applied AI Analytics, Human Resources specialization

- Bachelor of Applied AI Analytics, Marketing specialization

- Bachelor of Applied AI Analytics, Supply Chain and Logistics specialization

Additional programs in development include:

- Bachelor of AI Marketing
 - Bachelor of Applied Business
 - Bachelor of Human Services Leadership
 - Bachelor of Intelligence and Criminal Analysis
 - Bachelor of Justice Leadership and Public Safety
- Learn more about Fast Forward programs at indwes.edu/program/90-credit-degree.

Carmel-based Delta Faucet Company president Jill Ehnes gets expanded leadership role

The REPORTER

Masco Corporation has announced the upcoming retirements of longstanding executives, Jai Shah, Group President of Plumbing and Wellness, and Rick Marshall, Vice President of Masco Operating System, effective July and September 2026, respectively.



Ehnes

The company has implemented plans to ensure a smooth transition, enhance its procurement expertise, and further streamline the organization. In conjunction with these plans, the company is announcing the following leadership appointments:

• Jill Ehnes is assuming an expanded leadership role with her appointment as President of Delta Faucet Company, based in Carmel, and North America Plumb-

ing. She will continue to be a member of Masco's Executive Committee.

• Arun Iyer has been promoted to Masco's Vice President, Chief Supply Chain Officer & Masco Operating System and appointed to Masco's Executive Committee. He previously served as Delta Faucet Company's Vice President, Supply Chain & Service.

• Steven Nikolopoulos has been named Masco's Vice President, Chief Procurement Officer and appointed to Masco's Executive Committee. He joins the organization from Newell Brands, where he held the position of Chief Procurement Officer for the last nine years.

For more information about Masco Corporation, visit masco.com.

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SOFT CLOSE BEGINS: Saturday, April 25th @ 6pm
PREVIEW DATES: Tuesday, Thursday, April 23rd From Noon - 6pm
FIREARMS PREVIEW: Thursday, April 23rd From 3pm - 5pm
PICK-UP DAYS: Monday, April 27th. Tuesday and April 28th From Noon - 6pm

Coins, Morgan Dollars; Currency, Copper; Advertising, Pocket Knives; Vtg. Watch Fobs; Oil Lamps; Native American Items; Arrowheads & Artifacts; Straight Razors; Keen Kutter Cutlery; Flatware, Sterling Silver; Occupied Japan; Antiques & Rarities; Large Jewel Tea ; Collection of Dishes; Household & Advertising; Old Sleepy Eye; Pottery & Adv. Coll.; Depression Glass; Crystal, Pottery, Crocks; Cast Iron, Dirilyte; Display Cases & Curios; Furniture, Appliances; Household, Longaberger; Adirondack & Trapper Baskets; China, Roseville Pottery; Red Wing Pottery; Blue & White Pottery; Hall's China; Vtg. Calendars; Hudson Bay Advertising; BB Guns, Vtg. Toys; JD Pedal Tractor; Signs, Thermometers; Wool Blankets; Musical Instruments; Singer Sewing Machines; Totes, Tools

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TODAY'S BIBLE READING

BALAK SUMMONS BALAAM

Then the Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho.

Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, and Moab was terrified because there were so many people. Indeed, Moab was filled with dread because of the Israelites.

The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field."

So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the Euphrates River, in his native land. Balak said:

"A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed."

The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination. When they came to Balaam, they told him what Balak had said.

"Spend the night here," Balaam said to them, "and I will report back to you with the answer the Lord gives me." So the Moabite officials stayed with him.

God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?"

Balaam said to God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent me this message: 'A people that has come out of Egypt covers the face of the land. Now come and put a curse on them for me. Perhaps then I will be able to fight them and drive them away.'"

But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed."

Numbers 22:1-12 (NIV)

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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.

Submit obituaries under 500 words online at ReadTheReporter.com/obitform.

Meeting Notices

The Cicero Fire Merit Commission meeting originally scheduled for May 7, 2026, has been moved to Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 7 p.m. at Cicero Fire Station, 1359 Stringtown Pike.

The Sheridan Community Schools Board of Trustees will meet in an executive session at 6 p.m. Monday, April 27, 2026, pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(11) To train school board members with an outside consultant about the performance of the role of the members as public officials.

The Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District Board will meet at noon on Monday, April 27, 2026, in the Commissioners' Courtroom at the Hamilton County Government and Judicial Center, 1 Hamilton County Square, Noblesville.

The Hamilton County Commissioners will meet in an executive session at 12:15 p.m. Monday, April 27, 2026.

A regular meeting will follow at 1:15 p.m. in the Commissioners' Courtroom at the Hamilton County Government and Judicial Center, 1 Hamilton County Square, Noblesville.

The Noblesville Council PACE Committee meeting scheduled for 9 a.m. Friday, April 24, 2026, has been moved from City Hall to Noble Coffee & Tea Company, 933 Logan St.

A list of each appointed officer's name, their appointing authority, and term dates is available at noblesville.in.gov/447/Boards-Commissions.

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.

**Send Meeting Notices to:
News@ReadTheReporter.com**

Carolyn Marie Bond

June 18, 1942 – April 7, 2026

Carolyn Marie Bond departed this life on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at the age of 82 years. She was the first of three children born to Laura Jeanetta Gilliam Duvall and Bismarck Gladstone Duvall on June 18, 1943, in Hamilton County. Carolyn attended the Hamilton County school system and graduated from Jackson Central High School in 1962. One of her proudest achievements was receiving an associate's degree in programming.



As a young woman, she moved to Indianapolis and met the love of her life, Arthur J. Bond. They were united in holy matrimony on January 27, 1968. Carolyn was a loving and committed wife, and they enjoyed nearly 44 years together until his death in December 2012.

Her early life was spent on her parents' farm where she learned how to preserve their fresh farm produce; canning, making jelly, and helping to make bread and butter pickles with her mother. These early farm years instilled in her a life-long love of gardening. She loved planting flowers and always had a vegetable garden wherever she lived.

Mrs. Bond retired from the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Government (TARCOG), which serves five communities (DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, and Marshall) with 13 years of dedicated service to the Aging Department Nutrition Program, where she was an Administrative Assistant/Data Entry Clerk.

Sister Carolyn was one of the founding members of Grady-Madison AME Church. Over the past 25 years she was a loyal member of the Steward Board, Trustee Board, Stewardess Board, Women's Missionary Society, and the Lay Organization. She faithfully served as the Church School Secretary and chaired many Vacation Bible School programs.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents, and a brother, Lawrence Duvall. She is survived by a sister, Janine (Emmett) Harris, a sister-in-law, Allison Bond, and nieces and nephews. And finally, she is survived by many relatives and friends of the Roberts Settlement community in Atlanta, Ind.

Visitation for Carolyn will be held at Hartley-Dunnichay Funeral Home, 209 W. Jackson St., Cicero, on Friday, April 24, 2026, at 11 a.m. with a funeral service at noon. Directly following the service will be a graveside service at Roberts Chapel Cemetery, Atlanta, Ind.

We ask that friends and family share memories, stories, and photos on the memorial page as a tribute to her life. Your recollections will serve as a testament to the life of a woman who was, in every sense, truly remarkable.

Condolences: hartleyfuneralhomes.com

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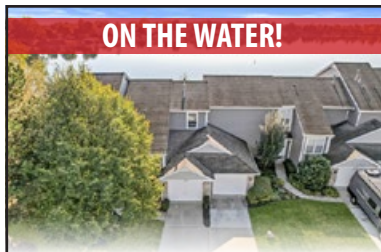
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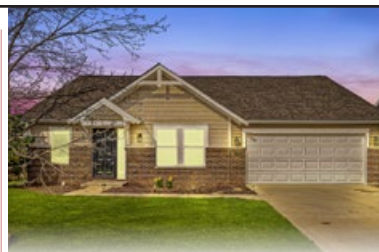
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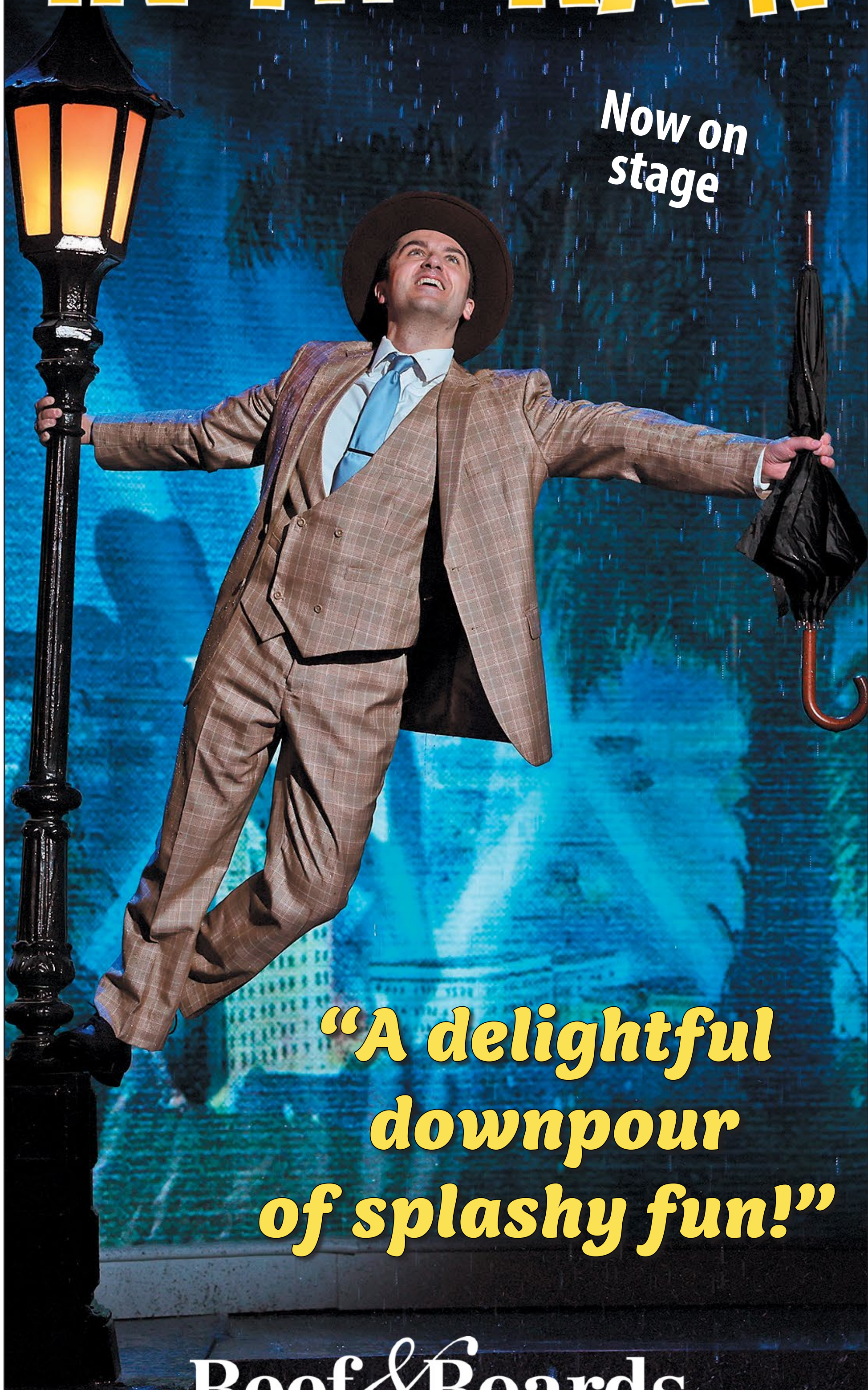
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REPORTER SPORTS THURSDAY

Sports Editor Richie Hall | Sports@ReadTheReporter.com | Twitter @Richie_Hall

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



Photo by Morgan Andrews

Noblesville baseball coach Justin Kever became the Millers' all-time winningest coach on April 8. It was Kever's 379th victory at Noblesville.

Justin Kever becomes Noblesville baseball's all-time winningest coach

By CRAIG ADKINS
For The Reporter

He's as humble, modest and real as they come. It's all about the Noblesville players, program and community.

"I'm humbled and blessed that I have been able to coach great players, at a great place, with great people, for great people, for a long time," said 22nd-year Noblesville head coach Justin Kever.

On April 8 when the Millers beat Avon 10-0 for Kever's 379th career win, it was a big deal, but he didn't treat it like it was.

Kever was aware that he overtook former coach Dennis Kas, but his focus is keeping his team on the right track for the here and now.

"We knew we were taking over a very proud, established and winning program, so not only did we think we could, it was the expectation. The players were eager to be coached and ready to learn. They had the experience of a healthy program under the leadership of Coach Kas," Kever stated. "Early on, I personally had to progress

conceptually from not just coaching a team, but properly running a healthy program. I wanted to make sure we stood for something beyond being good ball-players. If all they get out of our experience together is to become a better ball-player, then we have missed a tremendous opportunity."

He was an assistant coach at Avon before he took over the program in 2005. Right away won sectional and regional championships and did the same in '07, as well as a third sectional in 2010.

"We knew we were taking over a very proud, established and winning program that was led by Hall Of Fame Coach Dennis Kas, so not only did we think we could, it was the expectation," Kever said.

The fourth sectional trophy paved a different trail. That '14 team won the Lafayette regional and the north semi-state at Plymouth. On June 20, 2014, Kever won the Class 4A state championship win 2-1 over Terre Haute North, the first baseball state title in Hamilton County history.

See Coach . . . Page 15

Smith, Theieneman get their special day

Westfield star athletes honored in Grand Park celebration

By RICHIE HALL
sports@readthereporter.com

WESTFIELD – A Westfield sports hero returned home to a celebration on Wednesday.

Braden Smith was one of the honorees at a special ceremony that took place at the Grand Park Events Center that evening. Smith was a star for the Shamrocks' basketball team and just finished four highly successful years at Purdue University, leading the Boilermakers to a national runner-up finish in 2024, his sophomore year.

Over 100 people were at the Events Center to celebrate Smith and his fellow Westfield graduate Dillon Thieneman, a Shamrocks football star who played at Purdue and the University of Oregon. Westfield Mayor Scott Willis was on hand to announce that April 22 was "Braden Smith Dillon Thieneman Day," with both men receiving plaques commemorating the day.

Thieneman could not attend the event, as he is in Pittsburgh preparing for the NFL Draft, which begins this evening. Former Westfield football coach Jake Gilbert accepted Thieneman's plaque on his behalf. Thieneman prepared a short video, thanking the



Reporter photos by Richie Hall

(ABOVE) Braden Smith smiles as he signs an autograph for a fan during a ceremony honoring him and football star Dillon Thieneman Wednesday at the Grand Park Events Center. **(BELOW)** Former Westfield football coach Jake Gilbert speaks about Dillon Thieneman after accepting a plaque on his behalf. Thieneman is in Pittsburgh attending the NFL Draft.

fans and coaches, as well as Grand Park and its partner Skylake Adventures for the event.

Smith said a few words before participating in a shootaround with some of the young basketball fans at the event, then spent some time signing autographs.

"It's awesome seeing people here," said Smith. "I think that's the biggest thing that makes Westfield and Purdue so special is the community."

See Day . . . Page 15



Softball



Photo provided

The Westfield softball team honored individuals and families impacted by cancer during its Cancer Awareness Game on April 2.

Rocks host meaningful Cancer Awareness Game

The REPORTER

The Westfield High School Varsity Softball team combined purpose, gratitude, and strong play on April 2 during its Cancer

Awareness Game at Monon Fields Complex, defeating Pendleton Heights High School 7-3.

The evening was centered on honoring individu-

als and families impacted by cancer. Recognized during the event were Dan McMahon, honored by his family and granddaughter, senior Sofia Easterhaus, Terry Mallory and family, and Coach Matt Moore in honor of his late mother and father.

On the field, the Shamrocks delivered an impressive team performance with 11 hits.

Sydney Jordan led the offense with a perfect 3-for-3 night at the plate. Sofia Easterhaus went 2-for-3 and drove in two runs. Bella Blakely and Makayla Wat-

son each added multiple hits. In the circle, Makenzie Delph provided dominant relief pitching, throwing three scoreless innings to help secure the victory.

While the final score favored Westfield, the larger win came in the shared support, remembrance, and community connection shown throughout the night.

The Westfield Varsity Softball program remains committed to using athletics as a platform to celebrate others, honor stories that matter, and strengthen the community it represents.

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Baseball

Tipton beats Heights to split series

By **CRAIG ADKINS**
For The Reporter

Last night, the Hamilton Heights Huskies baseball team played the second of a two-game series with Tipton, this time on the road.

After edging the Blue Devils 5-4 in Arcadia on Tuesday, Tipton returned the favor to split the series with a 4-2 win over Heights.

The Blue Devils grabbed a 3-0 lead early with two in the first and a run in the second.

PJ Wright hit a one-out double in the top of the third and Dillon Pitts followed with a walk for two on. Landon Hickman drove in

Wright with a ground out to short to cut it to 3-1.

The deficit was narrowed to 3-2 in the fifth. This time, Hickman hit a sacrifice fly to score Austin Kappes.

Tipton grabbed an insurance run in the home half of the fifth to account for the 4-2 final.

Both teams had eight hits. Heights was led at the plate by Wright's 3-for-4 night, along with Tyson Upchurch getting two hits in his three at-bats.

It's a quick turnaround for Hamilton Heights (4-6) as they head to the northwest side of Indianapolis to face Brebeuf Jesuit (2-8) tonight at 6 p.m.

Boys Golf

Huskies edge out Tipton

The REPORTER

The Hamilton Heights boys golf team picked up a dual meet win over Tipton, 171-172 on Tuesday.

Kole Kirtley and Justin Overton shared medalist

honors, with both players scoring 42. Bryce Hutcherson carded 43 and Drew Woodruff scored 44.

Noblesville won a dual match over Cathedral

Wednesday at Fox Prairie.

The Millers scored 296 to the Irish's 317. Tyler Marucci led Noblesville with a medalist round of 34. Luke Decker was next with 36.

Dalen Rippy, Vaughn Twilla and J.T. Kelley all scored 37s. Other Millers scores were Jackson Mahan 38, Dustin Turpin 38, Brody Motz 39, Garrett Hoover 39 and Blake Weimer 40.

Girls Tennis

Golden Eagles beat Blazers

The REPORTER

The Guerin Catholic girls tennis team won a dual meet over University 4-1 on Wednesday.

The Golden Eagles won

matches at No. 2 singles (CeCe Phillips 6-1, 6-0) and No. 3 singles (Anna Kolb 6-0, 6-0). Guerin Catholic swept both doubles matches, with No. 1 Abby

Quaylan and Maddy Hood winning 6-3, 6-2 and No. 2 Courtney Bassi and Liliana Su winning 6-1, 6-0.

Trailblazers No. 1 singles Laurel Buttrick won

her match 6-1, 6-1.

The Golden Eagles will play at the Carmel Invitational this weekend, while University plays at the Park Tudor Invitational.

Softball

Huskies cruise past Tipton to complete sweep

By **CRAIG ADKINS**
For The Reporter

For the Hamilton Heights softball team, wins just keep coming and the Huskies seem to do it with ease.

In their last four games, the Huskies have outscored Sheridan, Bishop Chatard and Tipton by a combined 64-9. Wednesday night was their second straight shutout with a 15-0 dominating win at Tipton.

Scoring early and often, Heights belted 12 hits.

They scored in the first on a wild pitch. Four more came home in the second on two doubles, an error and a ground out.

Three more touched

home in the third and five in the fourth, led by a pair of doubles from Lily Cash and Kaitlyn Schakel.

Two more in the top of the fifth helped put the exclamation point on their fourth straight victory. Kamryn Rhoton doubled and was driven home on Ellie Engle's home run.

Cash went 3-for-3 with three runs scored and two RBIs. Engle scored twice and drove in two with her long ball. Taya Trospier also had two hits and scored two times, while Melanee Forrester had two hits for the second night in a row.

Hamilton Heights (9-1) hosts Lawrence Central (4-4) on Friday at 7 p.m.

DAY

from Page 14

Smith helped the Shamrocks to their first-ever sectional championship in boys basketball in 2022, during his senior season and was also named Mr. Basketball. He became an instant star for the Boilermakers, playing every single game during his four seasons at Purdue.

Smith also set a record for the ages this year, becoming the NCAA's all-time assist leader. He finished his career with 1,103 assists.

"I still have to pinch myself a little bit that Braden Smith's the all-time NCAA assist leader and what's he done in his career," said Westfield boys basketball coach Shane Sumpter.

Sumpter is confident that Smith will be selected during the NBA Draft, which takes place June 23 and 24. He said that Smith's height of 6 feet doesn't matter, noting that he "plays a lot bigger than he's listed because his arms of so long."

"He'll be in the NBA, and he's going to be a great player and he's going to have a really good NBA career," said Sumpter. "I just don't have any doubt about that."

Along with putting Westfield on the map, Smith hopes to be an inspiration for young players that are "similar" to him who go to schools like Westfield to "be able to go do whatever they want and achieve their dreams," whether it's basketball or anything else.

"I think for me, my job is to pay it back and for people to have that understanding that it's possible and that

they can do the same," said Smith.

High pick

Thieneman could probably say the same. The 2023 Westfield graduate totaled 246 tackles during his Shamrocks career and helped the team to a pair of Class 6A state runner-up finishes and another sectional title his senior year.

At Purdue, Thieneman won the Thompson-Randle El Freshman of the Year award, setting Boilermaker records with 74 solo tackles and six interceptions. He transferred to Oregon for his junior year, where he made 96 combined tackles.

Gilbert remembered seeing Thieneman as an elementary school player.

"He was just so focused, locked in all the time," said Gilbert. "For an elementary kid, he was always pretty serious. He loved football from the beginning. He thought he was going to be a football player for a living."

That dream may soon be realized. Chris Pflum of SBNation predicts that Thieneman will be a high first-round pick, calling him "a smart, versatile, and explosively athletic safety prospect."

Gilbert said the potential of two pro athletes from Westfield "speaks a lot to Westfield High School, the athletic department, Tavio Henson as a strength and condition coach, the community and coaching staffs that poured into them. But it still speaks the most about what those kids did."

"The credit still goes to Dillon and Braden," said Gilbert.

COACH

During his first 20 seasons, the Millers have won Hoosier Crossroads Conference championships in 2008, 2014, 2016, 2023 and 2024, along with eight seasons of 20-plus wins.

"They're different challenges. Winning the HCC is about consistency. It's a 14-game grind against really good programs," Kever stated. "The tournament is different. It's a compressed, matchup-driven tournament, heavily influenced by timing. It's less forgiving and more volatile. That's just the reality of baseball, especially in a single-elimination format vs outstanding programs."

A successful team always has great assistants.

"There are so many seasons that stick out. Obviously, 2014 was a special season, but there are so many additional instances and years where you saw players and teams improve not only as ballplayers but, more importantly, as teammates. What keeps me going are the relationships and the chase. Whether we catch what we are chasing or we don't, it's more important who we become as a result of the chase."

— Justin Kever, Noblesville baseball head coach

The Millers have one of the more experienced coaching staffs around.

"All of our coaches commit themselves to bettering the program with extreme ownership in our roles as stewards. They love this place and these kids. They love the program and what it stands for. Our coaches have been in our program for multiple years, none longer than Kevin Fitzgerald, who's been with me since 2007."

Kever's philosophy keeps the program top tier in the state every season.

"Everyone commits to a hierarchy of Program > Team > Individual. We are committed, selfless, and sober to reality, but work to improve every day while putting the team above self. This requires us to constantly embrace servant leadership, gratitude, unity, passion & humility. We have talented players work

from Page 14

tirelessly on their skills. Baseball is very important to them. We are trying to use competition in the sport we love to teach us life lessons," added Kever. "The people from the top down, there is a commitment to excellence in giving our guys a great team experience. I have been blessed to work for some great administrators who have been incredibly supportive, especially our AD, Leah Wooldridge. She does everything in her power to equip our programs to be the best they can be. Our families are tremendous; they allow their kids to be coached and embrace a philosophy that embodies an investment in something bigger than themselves."

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Upcoming Broadcasts

Wed April 22 - Lacrosse

5:10 pm Culver Academy vs Park Tudor | 2026 Girls Lacrosse | IndianaSRN
6:15 pm Brownsburg vs Hamilton SE | Boys JV Lacrosse | Southeastern Sports
8:00 pm Brownsburg vs Hamilton SE | Boys Varsity Lacrosse | Southeastern Sports

Thur April 23 - Volleyball

5:55 pm Westfield vs Fishers | Boys JV Volleyball | Fishers Sports Network
7:15 pm Westfield vs Fishers | Boys Varsity Volleyball | Fishers Sports Network

Fri April 24 - Baseball \ Lacrosse

6:30 pm Franklin Central vs Noblesville | HCC Baseball | HCTV Sports
7:15 pm Olentangy Liberty vs Hamilton SE | Boys Lacrosse | Southeastern Sports

Sat April 25 - Baseball \ Lacrosse

11:00 am Homestead vs Noblesville | Boys Varsity Lacrosse | Noblesville High School
1:00 pm Eastern vs Noblesville | 2026 Noblesville Baseball
2:15 pm Twin Lakes vs Hamilton SE | Baseball | Southeastern Sports Network

Mon April 27 - Baseball

6:30 pm Carmel vs Noblesville | Baseball | HCTV Sports

Tues April 28 - Softball

5:45 pm Fishers vs Hamilton SE | Softball | Southeastern Sports Network



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SPORTS SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 23

BASEBALL

Delphi at Sheridan, 6 p.m.
Westfield at Fishers, 6 p.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Avon, 6:30 p.m.
Noblesville at Franklin Central, 6:30 p.m.

GIRLS LACROSSE

Westfield at Cathedral, 7 p.m.
Guerin Catholic at Noblesville, 7:30 p.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Carmel, 7:30 p.m.

GOLF

University vs. Sheridan and Clinton Central, 4:30 p.m. at Frankfort Commons
Hamilton Heights vs. Clinton Prairie and Lafayette Central Catholic, 4:45 p.m. at Deer Track

SOFTBALL

Hamilton Southeastern at Lawrence North, 5:30 p.m.
Yorktown at Fishers, 5:30 p.m.
Sheridan at Delphi, 6 p.m.

TENNIS

Hamilton Heights at Northwestern, 5 p.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Noblesville, 5:30 p.m.
Zionsville at Westfield, 5:30 p.m.
Pendleton Heights at Guerin Catholic, 5 p.m.
Fishers at Avon, 6 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD

Tipton at Hamilton Heights, 5 p.m.
Fishers at Carmel boys, 5:30 p.m.

UNIFIED TRACK

Noblesville at Avon (with Zionsville), 6 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

Shortridge at Guerin Catholic, 6:30 p.m.
Carmel at Monrovia, 7 p.m.
Westfield at Fishers, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 24

BASEBALL

Covenant Christian at Guerin Catholic, 5:30 p.m.
Fishers at Westfield, 6 p.m.
Franklin Central at Noblesville, 6:30 p.m.
Seton Catholic at University, 6 p.m.

BOYS LACROSSE

Fishers at Avon, 7 p.m.
Heritage Christian at Westfield, 7:30 p.m.
Olentangy Liberty (Ohio) at Hamilton Southeastern, 7:30 p.m.
Crown Point at Guerin Catholic, TBA

SOFTBALL

Decatur Central at Guerin Catholic, 5:30 p.m.
Noblesville at Carmel Invitational, 5:30 p.m.
Westfield at Kokomo Tournament, 6 p.m.
Lawrence Central at Hamilton Heights, 7 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD

Carmel at Dennis McNulty Invitational, 5:30 p.m. at Warren Central
Fishers, Guerin Catholic, Hamilton Southeastern, Noblesville, Westfield at Carmel Distance Showcase, 5:30 p.m.
Fishers, Hamilton Southeastern at Charlie Riley Invitational, 5:30 p.m. at North Central

Saturday, April 25

BASEBALL

Tipton at Sheridan, 10 a.m.
University at Liberty Christian, 10 a.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Lapel, 10:30 a.m.
Fort Wayne Carroll at Carmel doubleheader, 11 a.m.
Twin Lakes at Fishers, 11 a.m.
Andrean at Westfield, noon
University at Anderson Prep Academy, noon
Eastern at Noblesville, 1 p.m.
Twin Lakes at Hamilton Southeastern, 2 p.m.
Andrean at Fishers, 5 p.m.

BOYS LACROSSE

Homestead at Noblesville, 11 a.m.
Olentangy Liberty (Ohio) at Carmel, 11 a.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Culver Academies, 3 p.m.

GIRLS LACROSSE

Crown Point at Hamilton Southeastern, 11:15 a.m.
Westfield at Culver Academies, noon
Crown Point at Fishers, 2 p.m.
Westfield vs. Leo, 2 p.m. at Culver Academies
Guerin Catholic at Springboro (Ohio), TBA

GOLF

Guerin Catholic, Hamilton Southeastern, Westfield at Spring Showcase, 8 a.m. at Sultan's Run
Hamilton Heights at Westfield JV Invitational, 8:30 a.m. at Wood Wind
Guerin Catholic, Westfield at Lake Central Invitational, 10 a.m. at Sandy Pines
Carmel, Fishers, Hamilton Heights at Noblesville Bob Spacey Invitational, 11 a.m. at Fox Prairie

SOFTBALL

Noblesville at Carmel Invitational, 9 a.m.
Westfield at Kokomo Invitational, 10 a.m.
Hamilton Southeastern at Whiteland Warrior Invitational, 11 a.m.

TENNIS

Fishers, Hamilton Southeastern, University at Park Tudor Invitational, 8 a.m.
Guerin Catholic, Westfield at Carmel Invitational, 9 a.m.
Noblesville at Crawfordsville Athenian Boosters Invitational, 9 a.m.
Hamilton Heights at Pendleton Heights, 11 a.m.

TRACK & FIELD

Hamilton Heights, University at Guerin Catholic Invitational, 10 a.m.

UNIFIED TRACK

Carmel, Westfield at West Lafayette Invitational, 3 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

Guerin Catholic at Noblesville Miller Invitational, 8 a.m.

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

Softball

Tigers get rebound victory

The REPORTER

Fishers rebounded from its Tuesday loss to Westfield with an 11-1, five-inning victory over Lawrence North Wednesday at the Tigers' field.

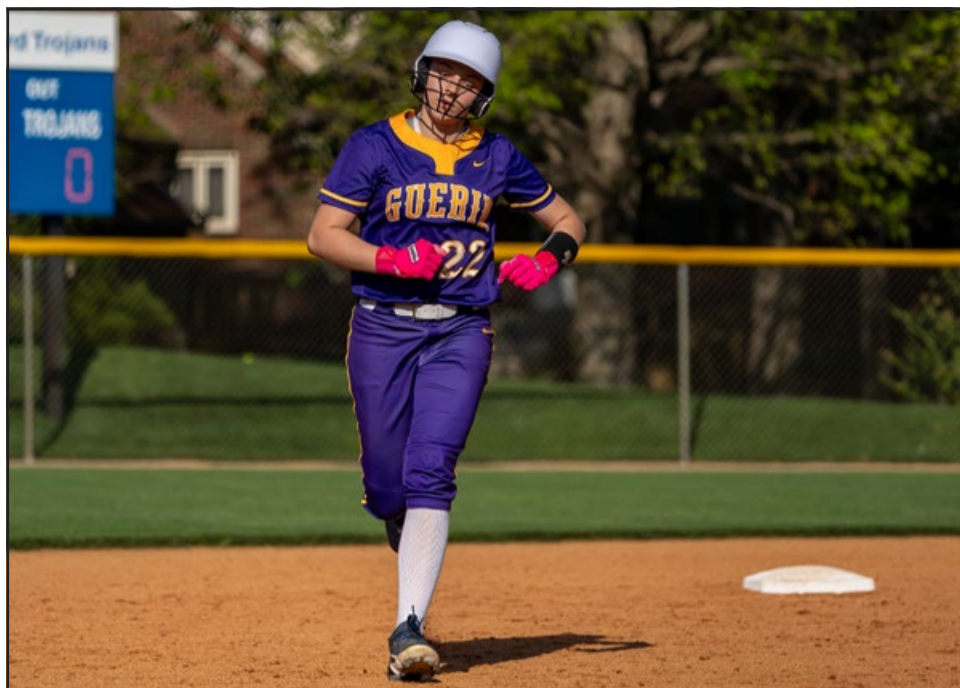
Fishers scored in each inning. Joni Oliver hit a home run, while Cate Summerfield smacked two triples. Frankie Jackson, Anna McGrath and Abigail Shannon all hit one double.

Oliver pitched four innings for the win.

The Tigers are 11-3 and host Yorktown this afternoon.

Guerin Catholic dropped a 12-4 Circle City Conference game at Bishop Chatard on Wednesday.

Both teams got on the board with two runs in the second inning. Gia Crishon led off the top of the inning with a home run for the Golden Eagles, then Halle Hunter scored on



Reporter photo by Julie Brown
Guerin Catholic's Gia Crishon hit a home run during the Golden Eagles' game at Bishop Chatard on Wednesday.

Aggie Waymouth's RBI groundout.

Guerin Catholic scored two more runs in the third inning. Crishon singled in Ava Augustinovicz, then

was brought home by a Waymouth single. But the Trojans tied the game in the fourth inning, then scored three runs in the fifth to take control.

Augustinovicz pitched 4.2 innings, striking out seven.

The Golden Eagles are 3-4 and host Decatur Central on Friday.

Baseball

Golden Eagles complete sweep of Braves

The REPORTER

The Guerin Catholic baseball team rolled to another win on Wednesday, beating Brebeuf Jesuit 17-1 in a five-inning home game that completed a Circle City Conference sweep.

The Golden Eagles scored in each inning, including seven runs in the third inning. Carson Kail and Cade Harmon both hit home runs, with Kail totaling five RBIs. Ian Taylor hit a triple, while Liam Zorger and Grant Beard counted a double among their two hits.

Luke Gremelspacher pitched three innings for the win, striking out four and allowing only one hit. Jackson Baker pitched two hitless innings to finish the game.

Guerin Catholic is 4-0 in CCC play and 12-1-1 overall. The Golden Eagles host Covenant Christian on Friday.

University also got a run-rule win on Wednesday, cruising past Brownsburg 17-5 in five innings at the Bulldogs' field.

The Trailblazers scored in each inning, putting up eight runs in the third. That included a grand slam by Beckett Suh. Finn Stein-

er cracked two home runs, while Ryan Castetter and Cooper Cammack both hit one homer.

Castetter, Cammack and Sterling Davis Jr. all hit one double. Castetter, Suh, Cammack and Steiner all collected three hits. Steiner also pitched three innings for the win.

University is 8-5 and hosts Seton Catholic on Friday in a Pioneer Conference game.

Sheridan won a Hoosier Heartland Conference game on Wednesday, beating Carroll 8-4 on the road.

The Blackhawks scored a run in the first inning.

Levi Gellert hit a two-out double, then was sent home by a Brayden Whisman double. The Cougars tied the game in the second inning, but Sheridan added two runs in the third for a 3-1 lead. Gellert singled in Chance Spencer, then scored on a wild pitch.

Carroll tied the game again in the bottom of the third before the Blackhawks pulled away with five runs in the fourth. Atticus Clayton scored the go-ahead run on an error. Sheridan loaded the bases, then Spencer scored when Whisman drew a walk. Austin Hinshaw and

Gellert both got home on separate wild pitches, then Jake Hall singled in Whisman.

Spencer also hit a double. Hall got the pitching win, tossing five strikeouts in five innings.

The Hawks are 4-5 and host Delphi this afternoon.

Carmel beat Zionsville 7-5 in a Wednesday game at Hartman Field.

John Zangrilli scored the Greyhounds' first run in the opening inning when Jackson Treadway hit a sacrifice fly. The Eagles tied the game in the top of the second, but Carmel jumped ahead by scoring four runs in the bottom of that inning.

Nate Steele cracked a left field hit to score Kane Hare and Zangrilli. Jackson Harris doubled Kane to third, then Adam Fouts came in to run for Harris. Treadway singled in Steele and Fouts to make the score 5-1.

Zangrilli added a sixth-inning run on a Treadway RBI fielder's choice. Zangrilli scored again in the sixth inning on Steele's sacrifice fly, giving him four runs scored for the game. Zangrilli got on base in the sixth with a triple.

Mark Neels also hit a

double. Keagan O'Brien pitched a complete game for the win.

The Greyhounds are 4-6 and host Fort Wayne Carroll for a Saturday doubleheader.

Hamilton Southeastern dropped its first Hoosier Crossroads Conference game of the season Wednesday falling to Avon 18-6 in five innings at Ken Seitz Field.

The Orioles scored four runs in the top of the first inning. The Royals got two runs back in the bottom of the first, as Clark Bucher hit a home run that also scored Jackson Bixler. But Avon put up six runs in the second inning then added five more in the fourth for a 15-2 lead.

Southeastern scored twice in the fourth inning. Bixler doubled Kian Kelly home, then scored on a Bucher base hit. Avon added three runs in the top of the fifth to go up 18-4.

Chase Bradle hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the fifth that also brought Alex Shepherd home, but the Orioles held on from there.

The Royals are 4-1 in HCC play and 9-3 overall, and finish the conference series this evening at Avon.

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VanAlstine signs to cheer for Grace College

Submitted by Hamilton Heights School Corp.

Hamilton Heights senior Lyla VanAlstine has committed to continuing her education and cheer career at Grace College, an NAIA institution competing in the Crossroads League. She is the daughter of Benjamin and Carrie VanAlstine.

During her time as a Husky, VanAlstine earned multiple honors, including Most Improved Cheerleader (2024, 2025) and Most Valuable Cheerleader (2026). She also contributed to several programs, participating in Competitive Cheer, Unified Track & Field, and Unified Bowling.

Grace College felt like home because VanAlstine's faith is the most important part of who she is.

"Grace integrates biblical principles into academics, campus life, and community, creating an environment where I can grow spiritually and academically," said VanAlstine, who plans to major in exercise science. "Their strong pre-chiropractic program will help me pursue my goal of becoming a Doctor of Chiropractic. Cheering is another reason I chose Grace. At a smaller, faith-

based college, athletics feel community-centered and relationship-driven. I love competing and supporting teams on game day, but I also value close connections and a faith-based community."

Her path to cheer began her sophomore year where she quickly found her passion.

"Starting later than my peers pushed me to work harder," she recalled. "Every day, I focused on becoming a better cheerleader for myself, my teammates, and my coaches. Their encouragement shaped me into the athlete I am today."

VanAlstine credits Coach Engle and Coach Kuhn have played a major role in her growth.

"They pushed me beyond my comfort zone, encouraged me to build strength and confidence, and believed in me even when I doubted myself," she said. "I'm incredibly grateful for the lasting impact they've had on me."

Outside of cheer, VanAlstine is active in the community. She is a member of the Hamilton County Llamas 4-H Club, dances at Laura Hayden's School of Dance, volunteers with

Our Town Cicero and Cicero Friends of the Park, and works at Cicero Chiropractic.

"It has been an absolute pleasure to coach Lyla throughout her high school cheerleading career," said Amanda Engle, Hamilton Heights Varsity Cheerleading Coach. "She is a natural-born leader who leads her teammates with quiet confidence, class, and respect. Lyla has dedicated countless hours to improving her skills and consistently strives to be the best version of herself. Not only is she a talented cheerleader, but she is also a kind, respectful, and self-driven young woman. Coaching Lyla has been a true joy, and she will be deeply missed. We are incredibly excited to see all that she will accomplish at Grace."

Kurt Ogden, Hamilton Heights Athletic Director, said, "Lyla has been the epitome of everything we ask for from our student/athletes. She's a strong student, a respectful young lady, and she's very much respected by both her peers and teachers here at Hamilton Heights. We are extremely excited that Lyla gets to continue the sport she loves at Grace College."



Photo provided
Hamilton Heights senior Lyla VanAlstine has signed a letter of intent to join the cheerleading squad for the Grace College Lancers at Winona Lake, Ind. VanAlstine (seated) is pictured (from left) with Ben VanAlstine (father), Levi VanAlstine (brother), and Carrie VanAlstine (mother).

IU Coach Curt Cignetti bobblehead unveiled

The REPORTER

On Thursday morning, April 23, ahead of Indiana Football's Spring Game, the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum unveiled a **Curt Cignetti Indiana Hoosiers Talking Championship Bobblehead** featuring the Hoosiers' head coach that led the program to its first National Championship.

The officially licensed talking bobblehead plays the audio from the Dec. 23, 2023, National Signing Day press conference when Cignetti was asked how he sells the vision of his culture to recruits and said, "It's pretty simple. I win. Google me." The line quickly became a symbol of his confident approach to winning, generating national buzz for the program.

On Jan. 19, 2026, the Indiana Hoosiers and Coach Cignetti got the ultimate win when the Hoosiers defeated the Miami Hurricanes to capture the 2025 College Football Playoff National Championship, which was the first in program history. The special edition bobblehead is being produced by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum, an official licensee of Indiana University Bloomington, and in conjunction with Coach Cignetti.

Coach Cignetti is donating all of his proceeds from the sale of the bobbleheads to Riley Hospital for Children.

Standing behind a podium on a red base bearing his name, the Cignetti bobblehead is speaking into a microphone and delivering his memorable soundbite. The Indiana Hoosiers 2025 College Football Playoff Champions logo is featured prominently on the front of the podium and backing of the base. The bobbleheads, which will be individually numbered, are available through the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum's **Online Store**. The bobbleheads, which are expected to ship in August, cost \$40 each, plus a flat-rate shipping charge of \$8 per order.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., the 64-year-old Cignetti was named head football coach at Indiana University on Nov. 30, 2023, after leading the James Madison University program from 2019 to 2023. In his first season guiding Indiana, the Hoosiers achieved their first-ever 11-win season, earned a top-five ranking, and a College Football Playoff berth. Prior to the 2024 season, Indiana's previous 8-0 start was in 1967.

Midway through his first season, Cignetti was rewarded with a new eight-year contract. At the conclusion of the season, Cignetti received seven Coach of the Year awards, most notably from The Associated Press, the Big Ten Conference, and the American Football Coaches Association. Cignetti is the only college football coach to start a season 10-0 with two different teams. He achieved the unique distinction in consecutive seasons with James Madison in 2023 and Indiana in 2024 and 2025.

Cignetti, a former quarterback at West Virginia University, began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at Pittsburgh in 1983. He also had coaching stints at Davidson, Rice, Temple, NC State, and Alabama before receiving his first head coaching job at NCAA Division II Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2011. In six seasons at IUP, Cignetti led the team to a 53-17 record and four playoff berths. After coaching at Elon University for two seasons and leading the team to a 14-9 record with two FCS playoff appearances, Cignetti moved on to James Madison. With the Dukes, Cignetti compiled a record of 52-9 in five seasons along

with three FCS playoff appearances, along with a national runner-up finish. In its first season at the FBS level in 2022, JMU finished with an 8-3 record and was invited to play in the Armed Forces Bowl.

"We're excited to unveil the Championship edition of the wildly popular Curt Cignetti Talking Bobblehead after the first edition sold out in record time last year," National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum co-founder and CEO Phil Sklar said. "Coach Cignetti's 'Google me' quote was a viral hit among Hoosier fans and college football fans alike. Indiana's success since the arrival of Coach Cignetti has been one of college football's greatest stories, and this bobblehead is sure to be a must-have for Hoosiers fans everywhere following Indiana's remarkable championship season!"

The new bobblehead joins several previously released officially licensed



Photo illustration provided

bobbleheads featuring Curt Cignetti, Hoosier the Bison, and Fernando Mendoza that were produced to celebrate Indiana's 2025-26 National Championship season.

About the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum

The National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Mu-

seum, which is located at 170 S. 1st St. in Milwaukee, Wis., opened to the public on Feb. 1, 2019. The HOF and Museum also produces high-quality, customized bobbleheads for retail sale as well as organizations, individuals, and teams across the country. Learn more at bobbleheadhall.com.

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