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June 4th, 2026

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THE HAMILTON COUNTY REPORTER Your Hometown Newspaper

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026

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



TODAY'S WEATHER

Today: Sunny.
Tonight: Mostly clear evening.
More clouds overnight.

HIGH: 67 LOW: 46



Aspiring firefighter Justin Tilton earns Jackson Township Fire's Rambo Memorial Scholarship

The REPORTER

The Jackson Township Fire Department has selected Hamilton Heights senior Justin Tilton as the recipient of the annual Arcenio "Rambo" Rumbaoa Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship was recently presented by Jackson Township Fire Chief James Carter.

Rumbaoa, affectionately known by everyone simply as "Rambo," was a valued member of the Jackson Township Fire Department family who passed away in 2022. Rambo was deeply committed to serving others and was always working to further his education in firefighting and emergency medical services. In his memory, the scholarship was created to help support students who share those same passions and aspirations in fire and emergency medical services.

Tilton embodies the dedication and drive that this scholarship represents. He has dreamed of becoming a firefighter since he was a young boy and has already taken impressive steps toward achieving that goal. He is currently enrolled in the John Hinds Fire and Rescue program and will graduate with both his Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 certifications. In addition, he has dedicated seven hours every Saturday to EMT classes and is expected to become a certified EMT before graduation.

What truly made Tilton stand out was not only his ambition, but also his heart for service and his commitment to the profession at such a young age. His work ethic, determination, and passion for helping others reflect the same spirit that Rambo carried throughout his life and career.



Photo provided
Justin Tilton accepts his scholarship award from Jackson Township Fire Chief James Carter.

The Jackson Township Fire Department is honored to support Justin Tilton as he begins his journey in the fire and emergency medical field and looks forward to seeing the positive impact he will make in the years ahead.

agency medical field and looks forward to seeing the positive impact he will make in the years ahead.

It's only faire

I've always wanted to attend a Renaissance Faire. I missed the chance to see one only minutes from my house when Hamilton County had the Fishers RenFaire years ago. With two young sons, it was challenging to find the time for it.



So when my now-grown son, Jonathon, and his girlfriend, Olivia, started to attend various Faires a few years ago, I was excited after seeing their photos. My husband and I learned about the Southern Indiana Renaissance Faire last winter and discussed making the trip with Jonathon and Olivia. They were on board.

We picked the "Pirates and Wenches" weekend and decided to attend on Sunday, May 3. Jonathon, Olivia, and John were set with their costumes. John had created an elaborate Grim Reaper costume for Halloween in 2021 that was perfect. I decided to wear a long, flowy blue sundress to keep things simple.

I woke up that morning, however, seeing a high of only 60 on my weather app. Nope. I moved on to Plan B, which was a billowy white shirt and black joggers tucked into boots. If only I had an eye patch and three-pointed hat... I would have made a decent First Mate. Maybe next time.

It's perfectly fine to not dress up to attend a Renaissance Faire. But it added to the fun for the four of us. And seeing others dress up is a hoot! We saw Gandalf from *Lord of the Rings* along with a rather interesting man walking barefoot throughout the grounds covered from head to toe in black - makeup, clothing, etc. He was one fierce-looking Viking.

See Faire . . . Page 2

Sheridan Community Schools extends congratulations to long-time employees

Submitted by Sheridan Community Schools

On Monday, May 11, Sheridan Community Schools (SCS) recognized two individuals for their dedicated service to the district.

Charlotte Snodgrass and Eric Gifford are two individuals who put the district and the students at the forefront. Their dedication not only to the success of students but also to the well-being of all those at SCS will be forever missed.

Charlotte Snodgrass
Valerie Roberts, Sheridan Elementary School (SES) Principal, shared, "Charlotte has been the heart of care and kindness at our school for so many years."

Snodgrass takes care of

SES students each day at the school nurse. But she has done countless little things that have made a big difference. She is always the last to leave our office after charting and entering data. She hangs and organizes the lost and found. She washes coats, hats, gloves, and clothes for students in need. She tends to the front landscape and even adds her personal touch with beautiful flowers.

"She always steps in whenever help is needed," Roberts



Snodgrass



Gifford

ship to all of us will be deeply missed, and we are so grateful for the love and care she gave to our school community!"

Eric Gifford
SCS Superintendent Dave Mundy said that Eric Gifford will be greatly missed because of his unwavering dedication to the school district. Mundy noted that Gifford was once a Sheridan student himself,

said. "Her sweet spirit, gentle heart, and servant attitude have touched so many lives. Charlotte's kindness and friendliness to all of us will be deeply missed, and we are so grateful for the love and care she gave to our school community!"

and the fact that he chose to spend his entire career serving SCS speaks volumes about the strong sense of community within the school corporation.

Gifford began his career with SCS in 2009 as a bus driver before moving into transportation and later leading the grounds crew. Throughout his years of service, he consistently prioritized the safety and well-being of students, often waking early during the winter mornings to help ensure they got to school safely. He is deeply respected and loved by both bus drivers and students alike, carrying out his work each day with grace, dignity, and care. He will truly be missed by the entire Sheridan community.

"Warning: Contents Extremely Awesome"

Duke Energy sparks STEM excitement at Mohawk Trails Elementary

The REPORTER

Excitement filled the room at Mohawk Trails Elementary in Carmel as students eagerly opened boxes labeled "Warning: Contents Extremely Awesome" - and immediately jumped into hands-on STEM exploration.

Thanks to the generosity of Duke Energy, Mohawk Trails Elementary received STEM activity kits filled with supplies and materials for more than 400 students. The kits include engaging projects ranging from binary coding and simple circuits to microscopes and engineering challenges designed specifically for elementary learners.

Students could be heard "oo-hing" and "aahing" as they explored the materials, with many diving right into building, testing, and experimenting within minutes of opening the boxes.

"Duke Energy believes strong communities start with



Photos provided by Carmel Education Foundation

Duke Energy is always happy to help encourage the next generation of engineers.

strong educational opportunities," said Mark LaBarr, Government & Community Relations Manager at Duke Energy. "These hands-on STEM exper-

iences help students explore, create, and build confidence in skills that will serve them far beyond the classroom."

"When young children

build, question, test, and explore, they are not just learning STEM. They are learning how

See Awesome . . . Page 2

Other peony things to do on Festival Day

By KELLY McVEY
President, Indiana Peony Festival, Inc.

We made it to peony week! We are so close to ringing in our sixth Indiana Peony Festival, sponsored by Smith's Jewelers. Whether you're planning to attend our Festival or our Brunch & Blooms event, sponsored by 46 & Spruce, we're so excited to host you this weekend.



Outside of the festival, we have a couple other peony events taking place in downtown Noblesville we wanted to share with you.

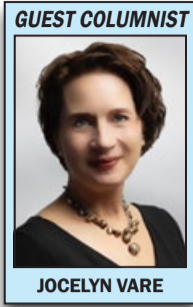
Mill Top Event Center
Our neighbors at the Mill Top will be hosting a "Spring at the Mill Top" vendor shopping market on Saturday, May 16. Located just southwest of Seminary Park, they will be hosting an early shopping extravaganza starting at 8 a.m. Perfect to visit before the festival opens. Open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so be sure to come by before, during, and after all the Peony Festival activities that are happening right down the block.

Noblesville Main Street
Noblesville Main Street's **Farmers Market** is back for the season. Venture to Federal Hill Commons to explore local makers and vendors during the special "Peony Day" themed market from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 16. With a parking garage located right on site, it's the perfect place to park for the day, stroll over to Brunch & Blooms and

See Peony . . . Page 2

“Near flawless” election sent hundreds of Hamilton County voters away

Ray Adler is correct in his **May 13 column**, “Few Snafus Prove Hamilton County’s Elections Work Well.” Indeed, Hamilton County’s election staff, poll workers, technicians, Clerk Kathy Williams, and Elections Administrator Beth Sheller deserve appreciation. Running elections in a fast-growing county is difficult work, and the people who make Election Day happen deserve credit.



JOCELYN VARE

Adler’s editorial left out the most important problem. Some voters arrive at Hamilton County polling places on Election Day and are told they could not vote there because they were assigned somewhere else. At the Holland Park voting location in Fishers, the **Inspector reported** that roughly 700 people arrived there to vote on Election Day, and about 220 had to be redirected to a different polling location.

Nearly one in three people who showed up there to vote were in the wrong place! Some may have been able to get to their correct voting location. Others may not have had the time, transportation, childcare, work flexibility, or patience to go to another location and try again.

If Hamilton County had

vote centers, **like 72 of Indiana’s 92 counties do**, those voters could simply have voted.

Hamilton County had a plan to make that happen. The Hamilton County Council and County Commissioners had already unanimously approved moving from precinct-assigned polling places to countywide vote centers. At the Sept. 18, 2025, Election Board meeting, Republican County Clerk Kathy Williams and Democratic appointee Greg Purvis voted yes to voting centers. Ray Adler himself voted no. And because Indiana requires unanimous Election Board approval, the voting centers proposal failed because of Adler’s nay.

Hamilton County voters deserve to understand why. Adler did not simply vote no as an independent election official weighing the evidence and considering the voters. **Adler voted no after being instructed**

to do so by the Hamilton County Republican chair, who appointed him to the Election Board. A **broadly supported** election improvement was denied to voters because one political party chair directed one appointed board member to block it.

A “near flawless” election is not satisfactory if hundreds of voters in Hamilton County had to be sent away. Hamilton County’s election workers did their job admirably. Now Ray Adler should do his and agree to make voting simpler and more accessible by adopting vote centers in Hamilton County.

Jocelyn Vare is a Fishers resident and Executive Director of ReCenter Indiana, Inc. has served as an Election Day poll watcher, At-Large Fishers City Councilor, State Senate candidate, and chairperson of the Hamilton County Democratic Party.

Enjoy peony-themed brunch at Noblesville’s downtown restaurants

By **KELLY McVEY**
President, Indiana Peony Festival, Inc.



Downtown Noblesville is officially in full bloom.

Leading up to this weekend’s Indiana Peony Festival, local restaurants and florists have teamed up to create immersive floral dining experiences throughout downtown as part of our Brunch with **46&Spruce** activation.

From stunning floral installations and peony-inspired cocktails to beautifully transformed dining spaces, there are so many ways to experience peony season all week long. We highly encourage you to stroll the square, support local, and stop by these beautiful collaborations while they’re in bloom:

- Grindstone Public House
- Rusted Window
- The Courthouse Club
- Camino & Company
- Rosie’s Place
- Bleu Bouquet
- 9th Street Bistro
- Westfield Flower Box
- Spice & Tea Exchange
- Bella Sorella Floral

Design

- Alexander’s On The Square
 - Hittle Floral Design
 - bar ellis
 - A&B Farmhouse
- Whether you’re grabbing dinner, cocktails with friends, brunch on the patio, or simply strolling downtown taking in the floral magic, this is such a special week to experience Noblesville.

A huge thank you to our sponsor, 46&Spruce, for providing complimentary hardgoods product to help bring these installations to life, and to all of the restaurants and florists for fully embracing peony season with us. We can’t wait to celebrate with you this weekend at the Indiana Peony Festival!

FAIRE

The Southern Renaissance Faire takes place at Swifty Farms in Seymour, just 90 minutes from Noblesville off U.S. 31. I think I would have loved going to this farm even if there weren’t a Faire – it’s a gorgeous horse farm. Longtime readers know about my fondness for horses.

If you’ve never been to a Renaissance Faire, you’re in for a treat. We enjoyed hearing a fascinating presentation on falconry to start things off, which included watching the bird eat a mouse right in front of us (hey, it’s nature).

We loved seeing the vendors and their assorted wares, which included more pieces for costumes, along with “pointy things” (swords, knives, etc.). LOTS of pointy things.

And, of course, we had to watch the jousting match. As we sat in the bleachers



Photos provided by Amy Shankland

Our columnist and her family enjoyed the Southern Indiana Renaissance Faire in early May.

with the sun warming us, I was thrilled to see the magnificent horses – surprise, surprise – and their knights. It was fun to cheer our team on, and I felt like a little kid meeting the riders and horses afterwards.

We enjoyed some delicious food and treats at the end and drove back discussing when we’d attend another Faire.

Speaking of ... I discovered Fishers RenFaire is now the Indiana Renaissance Faire in Nineveh, just a little over an hour from Noblesville. This event takes place June 13-14 and 20-21. If those dates don’t work for you, Indiana has more in Greencastle, New Castle, and other locations.

If you want to have a memorable, grand adventure for a reasonable price, consider attending a Renaissance Faire this year!

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.

from Page 1

PEONY

from Page 1

the Indiana Peony Festival, then enjoy a full day exploring downtown Noblesville! Be sure to stop by the Noblesville Main Street tent on your way into the Festival to grab your Duck Race tickets.

Bier Brewery

Bier Brewery is hosting the official after-party to the Indiana Peony Festival! From 4 p.m. to close, Bier Brewery will celebrate our sweet state flower with live music, 10th Street Peony Lagers, a decked-out Biergarten, and of course ... peonies! The limited-edition peony cans will be available for purchase, so stay tuned for the new design reveal! Make sure to swing by this stop for an ice-cold lager while you complete your Brunch & Blooms’ map. Pencil this location as a must-see on May 16.

Noblesville

Preservation Alliance
Stop by the South Alley Community Room (across from Bar Ellis) and visit the **Noblesville Preservation Alliance** to learn more about this year’s 39th annual Historic Home Tour – now expanding into the all-new “Noblesville Heritage

Days – Fall Fest & Historic Tours,” happening Oct. 2 and 3 in collaboration with Noblesville Main Street. While you’re there, grab one of the three Star Brick Ornaments – 50 percent off (\$4 each) while supplies last.

Window Decoration Contest

Don’t forget our Peony Window Decorating Contest, sponsored by Noblesville’s **Hometown Windows & Doors**. Stroll through the square and witness the creativity come alive in each participating retailer’s window display. Our four finalists have officially been selected by Hometown Windows: Left Grain, Noblesville Antiques on the Square, A&B Farmhouse, and Spice & Tea Exchange. Through May 16, we encourage all observers to vote for their favorite finalist on Facebook – vote [here](#).

Plan your visit start to finish with these staggered events and locations around Noblesville. For more information on the Festival, Brunch & Blooms, or additional community events, [click here](#).

AWESOME

from Page 1

to think,” Mohawk Trails Principal Rhonda Turner said. “Thank you, Duke Energy, for your donation of STEM supplies to Mohawk Trails!”

Kathleen Schuetz, Mohawk Trails teacher, shared the impact these opportunities create for students.

“STEM education empowers young learners to think critically, solve real-world problems, and imagine what’s possible for their future,” Schuetz said. “We are incredibly grateful to Duke Energy and Carmel Education Foundation for their generous support in providing STEM supplies that help bring meaningful, hands-on learning experiences to life for our students.”

The partnership was facilitated through Carmel Education Foundation

(CEF), which connected Duke Energy with the opportunity to directly support students through classroom enrichment.

“We love creating connections like this between our schools and community partners,” CEF CEO Jennifer Penix said. “Seeing students this excited about learning is exactly why partnerships matter.”

Community members and businesses interested in supporting STEM learning, robotics, classroom innovation, or real-world readiness opportunities for Carmel Clay Schools students are encouraged to contact CEF to learn more about partnership opportunities.

For more information about CEF and updates on its 60th anniversary celebration, visit ccs.k12.in.us/foundation.

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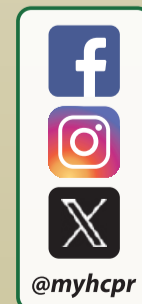
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myhamiltoncountyparks.com

Strawtown Koteewi Park

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South College nursing students complete clinical experience with Hamilton County Coroner's Office

The REPORTER

The Hamilton County Coroner's Office recently welcomed the first group of nursing students from South College School of Nursing as part of an innovative educational partnership designed to expand clinical learning opportunities beyond traditional healthcare settings.

Nursing students Tia Hopson and Brooke Elliott completed their clinical experience with the Coroner's Office, spending the day alongside Chief Deputy Murphy Evans. During their visit, the students reviewed cases, discussed investigation challenges with deputy coroners, and listened to a presentation conducted by a forensic pathologist to gain a deeper understanding of forensic and postmortem investigations.

The partnership provides nursing students with valuable insight into as-

pects of patient care and outcomes that are not often seen during traditional nursing education. By exposing students to forensic processes and interdisciplinary collaboration, the experience helps broaden their understanding of the full continuum of healthcare.

"This partnership represents an innovative way to broaden nursing education," Coroner Jeff Jellison said. "By giving students a firsthand look at the work we do, we can help them better understand the full continuum of care and the importance of every role within it."

The Hamilton County Coroner's Office looks forward to continuing and expanding the partnership with South College School of Nursing to support the next generation of healthcare professionals through hands-on, real-world learning experiences.



Photo provided
(From left) Tia Hopson, Chief Deputy Murphy Evans, and Brooke Elliott.

Detroit lacrosse player charged with battery after allegedly punching Carmel boys player in the head

By ASHLEY FOWLER
WISH-TV | wishtv.com

A Michigan man is facing a felony battery charge after Carmel police say he punched a high school lacrosse player after a game.

The incident happened on May 2, just after the Carmel High School versus Detroit Country Day School game.

The Carmel victim, who is a juvenile, was running to celebrate with teammates after the game when Luke Fisher, 18, "stepped towards him and punched him in the

left temple with his left fist," court documents say.

Court documents allege the punch "was delivered with so much force that it caused his head to snap back and forth in a whiplash-like motion."

The Carmel player was evaluated by school training staff and advised he failed their concussion protocol, court documents allege.

The teenager told his parents that it "hurt to think." He was transported to a hospital where doctors confirmed he had sustained a concussion.

It was noted in the medical release paperwork that the Carmel player complained of headaches and "being foggy."

Hamilton County prosecutors filed a Battery charge against Luke Fisher on Monday. Hamilton County Prosecutor Joshua Kocher said Hamilton County is a "mecca for youth sports," and it's their job to keep everyone safe.

"We take keeping everyone safe very seriously, and we do not tolerate this kind of unnecessary violence," said Kocher. "When tensions

run high in sporting events, that doesn't justify hurting someone or an opponent."

A warrant has been issued for Fisher's arrest.

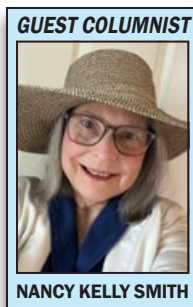
I-Team contacted Detroit Country Day School, but has not received a response. When the I-Team called the school, the person who answered hung up when Kara Kenney identified herself as a reporter.

A spokesperson for Carmel Clay Schools said they are aware of the incident but are not involved in legal proceedings.

This story was originally published by WISH-TV at wishtv.com/news/michigan-man-felony-battery-charge.

Hope for civility?

"We certainly need it!" That's the response I usually get whenever I share that I am very much involved in a national movement promoting "civility." I agree! We DO need to be more



GUEST COLUMNIST
NANCY KELLY SMITH

civil – in politics, community life, and in our family and other relationships.

Is it possible? Allow me to share my experience with a former columnist for *The Hamilton County Reporter* who wrote an informative, thoughtful column (before moving) which detailed meetings of the Noblesville School Board along with her own commentary. While my friend and I identify with the same political party, we often disagree about policy and about political figures.

Before retiring as an English professor, I always told my students that "Respect was non-negotiable." That meant "your respect for me, my respect for you, and your respect for each other." The point was that during discussion, "We can disagree without being disagreeable." And my friend and I "disagree without being disagreeable."

We don't insult each other or disparage each other's points of view. Instead, we explain why we believe what we do and ask questions. "Breaking bread" together, sharing a meal (or having coffee), produces "good vibes" in my experience and is a "win-win" situation. The result? Better understanding and appreciation for each other. Now we share a valued friendship that has enabled us to travel to the Indiana Statehouse together to share our views with our legislators.

Also, like many of you, no doubt, my husband and I recently endured a stressful time on a plane and in an airport. But to my astonishment, I also experienced people expressing "politeness" (etiquette) AND "civility" (having an attitude of respect for another human being).

The location? The At-

lanta Airport. The initial situation? Being stranded on a plane waiting to take off for about three hours while a thunderstorm raged outside and large hail pummeled the plane.

Incredibly, people were patient during that long delay, and no one uttered a complaint or harassed the flight attendants or cursed in frustration. That waiting ordeal ended about 11:30 p.m. when all planes were ordered back to the gates and the passengers had to deplane.

The next phase was to be in a line of 100 to 150 travelers (including mothers with babies and toddlers) having to try and find alternative flights with only ONE Customer Service representative available to shepherd people to half a dozen or so phones to contact the airline flight representatives. By this time everyone was completely exhausted!

Again, I was totally amazed that no one became irate; no one tried to cut in line.

After my husband stood in line for at least an hour, we knew we could not get on the next flight, and we were on a waitlist for the first flight in the morning, and we knew we had seats on the following flight, but it was a plane that took us all the way to New York's JFK Airport in order to catch a connecting flight back to Indianapolis! We decided we had to try to sleep in the Atlanta Airport for what was left of the night.

After so many delays and a flight from JFK, my husband and I arrived back home in Indiana. I could have kissed the ground! I felt thankful.

Is there hope for "civility"? I have hope. Do you?

Nancy Kelly Smith is a retired English professor and published author. She is also an Ambassador for the national civility organization Civic Renaissance. Learn more at civic-renaissance.com.

Public hearing set on increase in state's bobcat hunting & trapping quota

By VAUGHN JACOBSON
WISH-TV | wishtv.com

The Indiana Natural Resource Commission will have a public hearing on a proposal to increase the number of bobcats that are allowed to be recreationally trapped or trophy hunted in 40 counties in the state.

If this rule change is passed, the number of bobcats allowed to be hunted and trapped would increase from 250 to 400, a 60 percent increase. The season would start on Nov. 8 and run through Jan. 31, or until the quota is met, whichever is earlier, consistent with the 2025 season.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources says the hearing will be at 12:30 p.m. May 19 at Fort Harrison State Park in Lawrence. The meeting can also be attended virtually.

Comments can be mailed to: Natural Resources Commission, C/O Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Legal Division, 402 W. Washington St., Room W-261, Indianapolis, IN 46204. The deadline for public comments during this first public comment period is May 19.

The nonprofit Humane World for Animals will be opposing the rule change at the hearing. It claims

that the proposal lacks scientific evidence that justifies killing bobcats, and that trapping bobcats inflicts extreme suffering on them. The organization also claims that the majority of public comments regarding the 2025 hunting season were in opposition.

Last year was the first time bobcats were allowed to be recreationally hunted in Indiana after being legal-ly protected for decades.

This story was originally published by WISH-TV at wishtv.com/news/politics/public-hearing-set-on-increase-in-indianas-bobcat-hunting-and-trapping-quota.

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Clay Township Military Library & Museum open for Armed Forces Day

Submitted
The Clay Township Military Library and Museum will be open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 16 in honor of Armed Forces Day.

Armed Forces Day, observed each year on the third Saturday of May, is set aside to honor the men and women currently serving in every branch of America's military: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Space Force. It is a day of community pride, gratitude,

and connection — exactly the kind of day the museum was built for.

Here's how you can be a part of it:

- **Visit the museum.** Come browse exhibits, explore the honor roll, and help show the community that Hamilton County's only public military library and museum is alive and growing. The museum is located at 10801 N. College Ave., Carmel.

- **Share your story.** If you are a veteran, active-duty service member,

or the descendant of someone who served, you are warmly invited to join for a couple of hours on Saturday to speak with visitors, share your family's history, photos, or memorabilia you'd like to display. Your stories are the heart of what the museum does.

- **Spread the word.** Share this information on Facebook, Nextdoor, or any social media you use, and encourage others to stop by. The more people who know about the museum,

the better it can fulfill the mission of honoring Hamilton County's veterans.

This all-volunteer museum has been preserving and connecting the community to its military heritage since 1997. Every visit, every story shared, and every new friend helps keep that mission alive.

Not able to make it on Saturday? The museum will also open on National Maritime Day, Friday, May 22, and Memorial Day, Monday, May 25 — both from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Garcia Wilburn celebrates signing of child safety law, honors life of Kinsleigh Welty

Submitted by Office of State Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn

On Tuesday, May 12, Governor Mike Braun ceremonially signed **House Bill 1036** into law, marking the culmination of a legislative effort led by State Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn (D-Fishers) to strengthen child safety oversight within Indiana's Department of Child Services (DCS).

The new law requires DCS caseworkers to conduct an in-person visit with a child within 30 days before any case closure or discharge.

While this legislation secures crucially important protections for Indiana children, it was born from tragedy. Multiple times, DCS was called out to five-year-old Kinsleigh Welty's mother's home on allegations of abuse and neglect. But the agency **closed** the cases on Kinsleigh, and she died of starvation without getting the help she deserved.

Kinsleigh's tragic death exposed a dangerous gap in the state's child protection system: Caseworkers could close cases or discharge children from oversight without having physically laid eyes on them in recent weeks. Kinsleigh's grandfather, Brian Welty, shared Kinsleigh's story through testimony during the bill's Senate committee



Photo provided by Office of State Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn

hearing. Her death galvanized Indiana lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, and HEA 1036 passed both chambers of the Indiana General Assembly unanimously.

With Tuesday's signing, that gap is now closed by law.

Garcia Wilburn issued the following statement at the bill signing ceremony:

"Today is for Kinsleigh, a little girl who deserved more protection than she received. With this legislation, we honor Kinsleigh's life by making sure every single child in the DCS system has the right to be seen, heard, and treated with

compassion.

"House Enrolled Act 1036 is a simple law with a profound purpose: Before Indiana closes a case, a caseworker must look that child in the eye. Not rely on old notes or make assumptions. This one requirement could mean the difference between life and death for a child who has no other voice.

"This has been a long road, but at every step, this bill earned unanimous support. Protecting kids is something all of us, regardless of party, can agree is worth fighting for.

"I am deeply grateful to my co-authors, Reps. Alex

Burton, Lori Goss-Reaves, and Julie McGuire, Senate sponsor Sen. Linda Rogers, Braelynn Yerington, and Champions for Children for their tireless advocacy, and Gov. Braun for signing this legislation into law. And above all, I am grateful to Brian Welty, who turned unimaginable grief into action so that no other family has to endure what his did.

"Kinsleigh deserved to be seen. Now, every child in her situation will be."

This bill, along with Garcia Wilburn's **advocacy for HEA 1303 and 1408**, marks her third piece of child welfare legislation signed into law this year.

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WHY THE BIBLE?



EVIDENCES FOR THE BIBLE



This is the "Pilate Stone" which was discovered in 1961 in Caesarea Maritima, Israel. This is a 1st-century limestone block bearing a Latin inscription that identifies Pontius Pilate, the one who ordered Jesus' crucifixion, as the Prefect of Judea.

Why is this significant?

1. **Confirmation that Pontius Pilate was real.** Before the discovery of the Pilate Stone, evidence for Pilate came from ancient writers like Tacitus, Josephus, and the New Testament itself. But this stone provided something even stronger — physical archaeological evidence that Pontius Pilate truly existed.
2. **Confirmation of the political environment in the New Testament accounts.** The stone was discovered in a building dedicated to Emperor Tiberius, confirming the exact political climate described in the New Testament: Roman rule over Judea during the time of Jesus.
3. **Confirmation of Pilates' role as described in scripture.** The inscription identifies Pilate as the "Prefect of Judea," matching the Roman titles used during that period and supporting the New Testament accounts. As prefect, Pilate possessed the authority to rule on capital cases — including the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.

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speakingtruthinlove4.15@gmail.com

Our Assembly times:

Sunday Bible Study | 10:00 AM

Sunday Worship | 11:00 AM

Wednesday Bible Study | 7:00 PM

Free concerts return to NPD AMP Prioritize your mental health & well-being

The REPORTER

Free Tuesday concerts at the Nickel Plate District Amphitheater in Fishers are a tradition. These shows are completely free with no ticket required. Show up with your lawn chair or blanket in tow and enjoy

live entertainment on the NPD AMP stage from local and regional cover bands.

All listed events will begin at 7 p.m. Gates will open at 6 p.m.

2026 Free Tuesdays Lineup
• June 2: Sushi Roll

• June 9: Living Proof, sponsored by Heritage Christian School

• June 16: Blue Water Kings

• June 23: Toy Factory, sponsored by GBC Bank

• June 30: Karma
• July 7: Big Rosco +

The Hammers

• July 14: The Doo Band

• July 21: The Flying Toasters

• July 29: Stella Luna + The Satellites

Click here for more information.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to work together to raise awareness, reduce stigma and take meaningful steps toward supporting mental wellness in Indiana.

This year's national theme is "More Good Days, Together," focusing on community support, meeting people where they are and fostering collaboration to improve mental health.

Indiana is making real progress in mental health. In 2022, we ranked 42nd in the country for mental health access and outcomes. Thanks to the work of dedicated advocates, policy support and organizations like **Mental Health America of Indiana**, we've moved up to 24th. There is more work to do but progress is being made to support Hoosiers' mental health.

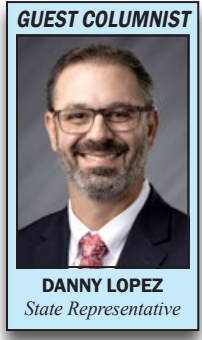
Mental health resources available to you

• **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text 988 for free, 24/7 emotional support.

• **Indiana 211:** Dial 211 for help finding mental health counseling and other community resources.

• **National Helpline:** Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for referrals to local mental health and substance use treatment programs.

What you can do
• Take a free, anonymous mental health screening at mhascreening.org.
• Start a conversation. Ask someone, "How are you, really?"
• Wear green this month to support Mental Health Awareness and be "Seen in Green."



DANNY LOPEZ
State Representative

In 2023, the General Assembly passed a **new law** prioritizing mental health infrastructure through the recommendations of the Indiana Behavioral Health Commission to build a more responsive and accessible behavioral health system. Our new two-year state budget also prioritized mental health funding. This year, I supported a **new law** that increases accountability and transparency for addiction and mental health recovery centers to ensure ethical standards, prioritize patient results and reduce recidivism.

Mental illness impacts around **one in five** U.S. adults annually, and behind every number is a person. Hoosiers, let's commit to building a state where everyone has access to the support they need.

State Rep. Danny Lopez (R-Carmel) represents House District 39, which includes a portion of Hamilton County.

Hamilton County Federation of Democratic Women to hold post-primary deep dive meeting on May 31

Submitted

The Hamilton County Federation of Democratic Women (HCFDW) will hold its third official meeting from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, May 31 at Eller House, 7050 E. 116th St., Fishers.

The gathering will serve as a comprehensive post-primary debrief, bringing together residents at all levels of civic engagement to review elec-

tion outcomes and chart a course for the general election.

The meeting agenda will cover the full breakdown of primary results and the districts they represent, as well as concrete ways attendees can support Democratic candidates heading into the fall. Organizers will also highlight open seats on local boards and commissions and explain how certain posi-



tions can be filled through caucus, opening doors for community members ready to step into leadership.

Whether you're just beginning your civic journey or ready to step into a leadership role, this is the meeting to attend. Come ready

to learn, get energized, and take action.

HCFDW is committed to electing Democratic candidates, empowering women in civic life, and building an engaged, informed community across Hamilton County.

Legislative Council assigns summer study committee topics

Submitted by Office of Speaker Todd Huston

The Indiana General Assembly's **Legislative Council** met Tuesday, May 12 to assign topics for lawmakers to study during the 2026 legislative interim, said Indiana House Speaker Todd Huston (R-Fishers).

Interim study committees are an opportunity for legislators to research and discuss issues impacting

Hoosiers ahead of the next legislative session. Topics this year include child safety, funding sources for child-care, a review of workforce programs, property tax assessments and more.

"During study committees, we can vet legis-



Huston

lative ideas, hear from Hoosiers impacted by policies and prepare for the next session," Speaker Huston said. "We're continuing to focus on making government more efficient, lowering costs for Hoosiers and supporting working families."

House and Senate leaders will assign members to each study committee in the coming weeks. Interim committees, which will be chaired by the House this year, will meet during the summer and fall months in preparation for the 2027 session of the General Assembly.

The resolution outlining the assigned topics can be found at [this link](#).

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US Capitol and White House Tour Requests

My office can help arrange tours throughout our nation's capital.

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East District Office: (765) 639-0671

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Sheridan Elementary celebrates end of the year with annual Carnival

Last Friday, May 8, Sheridan Elementary PTO held its annual Carnival. The event was a huge success, and the school district extends a big thank you to the PTO for all of the hard work and dedication not only to this event but all year long. PTO truly makes a difference not only in students' lives, but also in the lives of staff, teachers, and families. The evening was so special and you are appreciated for everything you do. (Photos by Allison Waitt)



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Hall hauls in support for re-election

County Councilman Mark Hall's May 7 fundraiser at FOP Lodge 103, 7201 E. 196th St., Noblesville, was an opportunity for supporters to gather, discuss local issues, and support Hall's re-election campaign. (Photos by Shawn Zeeshan)



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Noblesville-based BeeFree Snacks goes cross-country

Launches in Bay Area Costco stores with mission-driven Warrior Granola Cookie Bites

Submitted

BeeFree, the Indiana-based clean snack company founded by a mother searching for gluten-free foods to support her son's autism journey, has officially launched its Mega Bag of Warrior Granola Cookie Bites in Bay Area Costco stores.

The expansion marks another major milestone for the woman-owned brand that began as a small farmers' market stand in Indiana and has grown into a mission-driven company focused on both clean ingredients and inclusive employment.

BeeFree's Warrior Granola Cookie Bites deliver a sweet, crunchy snack made with simple ingredients (no seed oils) consumers can feel good about. But behind every bag is a larger purpose: creating meaningful jobs for adults with autism and disabilities.

"We started BeeFree because I wanted better snack options for my son, but it quickly became



(ABOVE LEFT) The new Mega Bag of Warrior Granola Cookie Bites. **(ABOVE RIGHT)** August and Jennifer Wiese in front of the BeeFree training truck.

something much bigger," said founder Jennifer Wiese. "Today, our mission is not only to create delicious snacks families love, but to help open doors for adults with disabilities who are too often overlooked in the workforce."

According to national statistics, approximately 85 percent of adults with disabilities are unemployed or underemployed.

BeeFree is working to help close that gap by building inclusive hiring practices designed to better interview, train, and retain neurodiverse employees. The company says many traditional hiring systems unintentionally screen out talented individuals within the disability community before they have an opportunity to succeed.

Bay Area shoppers can

now find the Costco-exclusive Mega Bag of Warrior Granola Cookie Bites in select locations for a limited time.

Consumers are encouraged to grab a bag before they're gone and support a brand committed to creating cleaner snacks and greater opportunities for underserved communities.

Learn more at BeeFree-GF.com.

Photos provided

Hoosier law enforcement deserves our support

Most Hoosiers wake up every morning and see their children off to school or head to work without event. They live in safety because a select few of their fellow citizens willingly forfeit their own.



SEN. TODD YOUNG

wavering support for law enforcement officers.

It's an opportunity to recognize and give thanks for their unseen acts of heroism, honor and remember those who have

laid down their lives to protect others, and express our solemn appreciation to the loved ones of officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Remembrance is important. So is gratitude. But these alone are not enough. Our police officers defend us, and we, in turn, can deter and punish those who would do them harm.

In the Senate, I am supporting the Protect and Serve Act, introduced by Senator Thom Tillis (R-N.C.). This bill would create a new category of crime for those who attack federal, state, or local law enforcement officers. It would give federal prosecutors more tools to go after those who deliberately target law enforcement officers by making it a federal crime to knowingly cause, or attempt to cause, bodily injury to a law enforcement officer.

Under the bill, offenders would be subject to imprisonment for up to 10 years. An offender could receive a life sentence if a death results from the offense, or the offense includes kidnapping, attempted kidnapping, or attempted murder.

This legislation is a common-sense step at the federal level to better protect those who protect us, and Congress should pass it into law.

Whether they serve on the local, state, or federal level, our law enforcement officers are the best and the bravest. Laws mean little without men and women sworn to uphold them.

During National Police Week, let's reflect on how much we owe them and show our support for the men and women wearing the badge across Indiana.

Todd Young, a Republican, represents Indiana in the United States Senate.

IU Kokomo master's students honored in hooding ceremony

The REPORTER

Indiana University Kokomo honored graduate students in its annual hooding ceremony on Friday, May 8 in Havens Auditorium.

Faculty, staff, family, and friends celebrated with 47 students in the Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Public Management (MPM), Master of Science in Management, Master of Science in Education in Technology for Learning, Master of Arts for Teachers in History, Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling, Master of Lib-

eral Studies, Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Safety, Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Master of Arts for Teachers in Mathematics programs.

Each received hoods in recognition of their achievements in their degree programs, draped by a faculty member who played an important role in their time at IU Kokomo.



Chancellor Mark Canada welcomed the graduates and their family and friends.

"In the year of IU Kokomo's 57th annual Commencement ceremony, we are delighted to celebrate the achievements of these degree candidates with all of you," he said. "We know that our students have counted on the support of family and friends to make this day possible, and we

extend a special welcome to you and share your pride in their accomplishments."

Area graduate students earning master's degrees are listed by degree and hometown. They include:

- Master of Business Administration**
- Noblesville: Brian Zepp
- Westfield: Rekha Pujar
- Master of Arts for Teachers in History**
- Fishers: Megan Leigh Allen
- Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling**
- Noblesville: Jasmine Paige Wilson



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Hungry for more details? Visit westfieldin.gov/internationalfestival.



Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield commits \$1.8 million to support Gleaners Food Bank

The REPORTER

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana announced on Wednesday, May 13 a renewed partnership focused on addressing food insecurity and improving health outcomes across central and southeastern Indiana.

Anthem, through its Government Business organization, is committing \$1.8 million over three years to support Gleaners' hunger-relief efforts across its 21-county service area.

The announcement was made during a check presentation at Gleaners' Indianapolis facility, where leaders from both organizations highlighted the critical connection between access to nutritious food and overall health.

"At Anthem, we believe health begins long before someone walks into a doctor's office," said Neil Steffens, President of Government Business, Anthem

Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana. "Access to nutritious food is foundational to whole health, and this investment reflects our commitment to addressing the root causes of poor health outcomes. 'Food as medicine' is a strategy for us to help people live healthier lives, to strengthen our communities, and to reduce long-term healthcare costs."

Food insecurity remains a significant challenge for many Hoosiers and is closely linked to chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. Through this partnership, Anthem and Gleaners will not only expand access to nutritious food but also connect individuals and families to critical ben-



Steffens



Glass

efits and services that support their broader health needs.

"This multi-year commitment from Anthem allows Gleaners to deepen our impact and better serve neighbors facing hunger," said Fred Glass, President and CEO of Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. "We know that hunger and health are deeply connected. By working together, we can provide stability and improved well-being for the individuals and communities we serve."

Gleaners will use the funding to support its network of hunger-relief agencies, mobile and school-based pantry programs, and outreach efforts that connect individuals to resources

such as SNAP, Medicaid, and utility assistance. Anthem employees also support the partnership through volunteer efforts, including participation in food distribution events.

"The Anthem Government Business organization I lead in Indiana serves many individuals who face complex challenges beyond healthcare alone," Steffens said. "Addressing social drivers of health, like access to nutritious food, is essential to meeting their needs. With today's donation, we believe we can help prevent more serious health issues and create healthier futures for the people we are privileged to serve."

Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana serves 21 counties and distributes food through a network of more than 300 community partners. Since its founding in 1980, the organization has distributed more than one billion pounds of food to Hoosiers in need.

Latest updates from Civic Theatre

The REPORTER

Here is the latest news from the Civic Theatre, 3 Carter Green, Carmel.

Get your tickets for Chess

Now in its second year, Civic in Concert returns with the powerful musical *Chess* at 7 p.m. June 13 at the Payne & Mencias Palladium. A remarkable cast of Civic volunteer actors join forces with a full professional orchestra for this concert presentation of the acclaimed show.

As a key fundraiser for Civic Theatre, Civic in Concert also invites the community to experience something beyond our usual productions, where collaboration, music, and passion take center stage.

[Click here](#) to purchase tickets.

Shrek: the real hero

"Once upon a time, there was a little ogre named Shrek..."

Thus begins the tale of an unlikely hero who finds himself on a life-changing journey alongside a wisecracking Donkey and a feisty princess who resists her rescue. Throw in a short-tempered bad guy, a cookie with an attitude and over a dozen other fairy tale misfits, and you've got the kind of mess that calls for a real hero. Luckily, there's one on hand ... and his name is Shrek.

Shrek Jr. is on stage from June 19 to 24 at The Tarkington.

[Click here](#) to purchase tickets.

Community News

Police Chief Keen & Fire Chief Gaylor to speak at Westfield GOP's June meeting

The Westfield GOP will welcome Westfield Police Chief Shawn Keen and Westfield Fire Chief Rob Gaylor to the club's June meeting, set for 6:15 p.m. at June 16 at Harmony Clubhouse, 1414 W. 151st St. Please RSVP at [this link](#).

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.

OfficeWorks announces merger & expansion into markets outside central Indiana

Submitted

OfficeWorks has announced a strategic merger that brings APG Office Furnishings into the organization.

OfficeWorks will now serve clients across additional markets in Cincinnati, Dayton, and Memphis. This announcement is a reflection of OfficeWorks' continued growth and strategy for expansion outside of central Indiana.

APG will transition to the OfficeWorks name and brand over time.

"Bringing our strengths and capabilities together creates an even stronger organization," OfficeWorks President Larry Martin said. "It supports growth across markets and expands the value we will deliver to clients and partners."

Headquartered in central Indiana, OfficeWorks has spent more than four decades helping organizations

align people, place, and purpose to do their best work.

OfficeWorks provides design, commercial furniture, and workplace solutions delivered through an integrated approach to process and execution. OfficeWorks is a minority-owned business and a certified MBE.

Through this merger, OfficeWorks welcomes APG into an organization positioned for long-term growth while preserving local leadership and trusted client relationships. Clients can expect continuity in service and engagement, alongside expanded capabilities, and expertise across markets.

As Certified MillerKnoll Dealers, OfficeWorks and APG are united by a shared commitment to high-quality service and the collective strength of the MillerKnoll network. Together, they bring deep

experience and a focus on creating thoughtful, high-performing environments.

"OfficeWorks and APG represent the kind of MillerKnoll dealers who raise the bar," said John Michael, President, North America at MillerKnoll. "This creates meaningful growth opportunities across markets and expands their impact."

APG, founded in 1969 and headquartered in Cincinnati, has built a strong legacy serving clients across Ohio and Tennessee. APG serves higher education, commercial, healthcare, and government organizations to plan, design, furnish, and deliver commercial interior environments.

"This decision reflects pride in what we've built and confidence in the future," APG Chief Operating Officer Terry Goins

said. "OfficeWorks shares our commitment to client relationships, service, and long-term thinking. This step strengthens what we provide clients, while keeping our people and values at the center."

Hoosiers name brands they want back most

Submitted

There's something uniquely powerful about the brands we grew up with – the places that weren't just stores, but small rituals woven into everyday life. From Friday night trips to rent a movie to wandering the aisles of a favorite bookstore or toy shop, these experiences stuck.

MarketBeat, a financial media company, surveyed 3,014 respondents aged 45 and over to uncover which defunct chains Hoosiers most want to see make a comeback.

No. 1: Hollywood Video

Hollywood Video was the slightly edgier cousin in the rental world ... a bit less polished, a bit more chaotic, but often the place you went when the other store had nothing left. It had that underdog appeal, where you'd stumble across something unexpected simply because your first choice was gone. For a lot of people, it wasn't just about the movies, but the last-minute pivot, the surprise pick, and the feeling that the best find was rarely the one you planned.

No. 2: Blockbuster

Blockbuster didn't just rent movies; it owned Friday night. It was the place where indecision became a group sport, and you'd spend 40 minutes debating between a new release and something your friend swore was "actually good," only to panic-grab both. The blue-and-yellow glow, the wall of new releases, the thrill of finding the last copy behind the box

... it all felt like an event. Streaming may be easier, but it's never quite matched the ritual, the anticipation, or the low-stakes drama of a Blockbuster run.

No. 3: Borders

Borders was more than a bookstore. It was somewhere you could disappear for a while. Bigger, brighter, and more open than most, it invited you to wander, sit down, and stay longer than you meant to. There was no rush, no pressure to buy, just the quiet promise that you might stumble across something interesting if you gave it enough time. In an era of quick clicks and shorter attention spans, that sense of space and possibility is what people miss most.

No. 4: Fry's Electronics

Fry's wasn't just a store; it was an experience, usually somewhere between fascinating and slightly overwhelming. One minute you were browsing cables, the next you were wandering through themed displays that felt more like a movie set than a shop. It had everything, often in excess, and somehow still felt like you might not find what you came for. But that was part of the appeal: the unpredictability, the scale, and the sense that you were stepping into a world built for people who loved tech a little too much.

No. 5: Hastings Entertainment

Hastings felt like the kind of place that catered to absolutely every hob-

by at once. Part bookstore, part record shop, part video store, part pop-culture rabbit hole, it was the sort of place where you popped in for one thing and somehow lost an hour. It had a slightly chaotic charm to it, like a store built for people who still enjoyed browsing without a plan. For those who grew up with it, Hastings wasn't just convenient, it felt like a local headquarters for movies, music, books, and boredom cures.

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TODAY'S BIBLE READING

Then Balak's anger burned against Balaam. He struck his hands together and said to him, "I summoned you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times. Now leave at once and go home! I said I would reward you handsomely, but the Lord has kept you from being rewarded."

Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not tell the messengers you sent me, 'Even if Balak gave me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not do anything of my own accord, good or bad, to go beyond the command of the Lord—and I must say only what the Lord says'? Now I am going back to my people, but come, let me warn you of what this people will do to your people in days to come."

Numbers 24:10-14 (NIV)

Meeting Notice

The Hamilton Heights School Corporation Board of Trustees will meet at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 20, 2026, in the Board Room at the Hamilton Heights Student Activity Center, 420 W. North St., Arcadia.

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.

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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.

Cruise ships susceptible to rapid spread of infectious disease

Large numbers & close quarters allow viruses to travel quickly

Submitted by Parkview Health

Vacationers hitting the seas on cruise ships set sail for fun and sun, but travelers should also be aware of the unique risks they can face from infectious diseases.

After a recent, deadly outbreak of hantavirus identified on board a Dutch-flagged cruise ship traveling from Argentina to Europe, Dr. Michael Davis, Parkview Physicians Group – Infectious Disease, reminds that viruses can chain quickly in confined spaces and spread far and wide when they infect travelers.

"As we continue to live in a globalized world with increased human-to-human contact, climate change and evolving microbes, we will continue to see the occasional outbreak of uniquely adapted microbes," Davis said. "Cruise ships simply offer one of the best breeding grounds for the spread of microbes that, otherwise, don't typically spread from human to human."

The recent hantavirus outbreak on board a cruise ship that left Argentina on April 1 raised concerns, as that virus, which is common

in rodents and other animals, is not usually contagious between humans. But passengers aboard the ship became ill with symptoms of a rare Andes strain that then spread among others aboard the ship, transiting back to Europe.

Cruises are safe, but disease outbreaks are not uncommon, with about a dozen reported per year on average, **according to data recorded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**. In 2025, the CDC recorded 23 cruise ship outbreaks, defined as 3 percent or more of the total ship population experiencing symptoms of an illness.

Cruise ships have several features that make it easy for disease to spread, Davis said. Cruises bring together a large number of people in a confined space, with lots of overlapping interactions in dining halls and recreational spaces where people can easily pass viruses among each other.

"Most often, we see the spread of respiratory viruses and gastrointestinal viruses between passengers," Davis said. "Cruise ships carry a few thousand passengers



PARKVIEW HEALTH



Davis

who are in close contact with each other, sharing common spaces for a week, touching contaminated surfaces, and breathing shared air. Crowded and contained areas with large volumes of people offer an ideal situation for transmission."

Norovirus, which can cause sudden onset of nausea, abdominal cramping, and diarrhea, is the most notorious virus that impacts cruise ships. Of the 23 outbreaks catalogued by the CDC in 2025, norovirus was identified as the responsible pathogen in 18 of those cases.

Respiratory viruses encountered on cruise ships generally result in common flu-like illnesses with cough, nasal congestion, headache, and body aches, Davis said. In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, ship-based outbreaks were one of the first large instances of rapid transmission of that virus.

Most who encounter these communicable infections will recover after several days, Davis said. However, those travelers with

weakened immune systems are at risk for more severe disease. Although large cruise ships offer medical facilities for travelers in need, they don't have the treatment capabilities of a traditional hospital.

Davis said the recent hantavirus outbreak is a concerning albeit unusual case, since human-to-human transmission is limited to one rare strain. Future outbreaks are unlikely, Davis explained, so hantavirus is probably not a reason for anyone to cancel upcoming trips.

That said, anyone planning to take a cruise should be aware of the risks of exposure to other ship-based illnesses.

"At the moment, I wouldn't expect the current hantavirus outbreak to cause differing safety concerns for future cruises," Davis said. "But when embarking on cruise travel, it's important to keep in mind the risks of acquiring a communicable infection and take necessary risk reduction measures to decrease the chances of picking up one of these viruses."

Thanks for reading The Reporter!

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Contact Information

Email
News@ReadTheReporter.com

Web Address
ReadTheReporter.com

Publisher **Stu Clampitt**
765-365-2316

Subscription Inquiries
Subscribe@ReadTheReporter.com
765-585-9519

Advertising & Public Notices
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Sports Editor **Richie Hall**
Sports@ReadTheReporter.com
Twitter: @Richie_Hall

Mailing Address
136 S. 9th St., Suite 12
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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

Track & Field



Reporter photo by Richie Hall

The Noblesville Millers won the Hamilton County Unified Track meet Wednesday at Carmel Stadium.

Millers win Unified Track county meet

By **RICHIE HALL**
sports@readthereporter.com

CARMEL – Wednesday was cool and windy at Carmel Stadium, but nothing could stop the spirit of the Hamilton County Unified Track meet.

Athletes from all across the county put on a

show at the annual meet. All of the participants had reason to cheer afterwards, including those from Noblesville. The Millers won the team championship (team scores were not available at press time.)

Noblesville swept both the girls and boys 4x100 relays to finish the meet.

“It’s pretty exciting and I love these guys,” said Millers assistant coach Mitch Bonar, who was filling in for head coach Matt Johnston. “They work so hard. They work always to be their best and they work the team first always.”

“I remember when it

first started a few years ago. I never expected it to be this big. It’s beautiful that the whole county does it and I can’t wait to see what happens next year.”

Heat winners in the mixed 100 dash were Carmel’s Ayden Kostelac in Heat 1 Hamilton South-

eastern’s Grace Gerstner in Heat 2 and Noblesville’s Carsten Shidler in Heat 3. In the mixed 400 dash, Carmel’s Maryn Piper was the winner of Heat 1, Fishers’ Carter Schmidt was victorious in Heat 2 and Fishers’ Aaron Schooley won Heat 3.

Westfield’s Gianna Pa-

dilla was the Flight 1 winner of the long jump, while Noblesville won the other two flights: Paul Schutte was first in Flight 2 and Kuljeet Mehra won Flight 3. In the shot put, Ethan Oshimura won Flight 1, George Moser was first in Flight 2 and Cohen Davis was the Flight 3 winner.

Men’s Basketball

Helping Boom players “achieve their dreams”

Chris Defendis joins Noblesville’s G League team as president of business operations

By **RICHIE HALL**
sports@readthereporter.com

Take a look at the resume of Chris Defendis, and you’ll see he has worked for some well-known brands: AT&T, HBO, Warner Bros., the WWE have all been stops on his career journey.

“I have a history of working at best-in-class brands,” said Defendis. That bodes well for the Noblesville Boom, which hired the Westfield resident to become the team’s president of business operations on April 27.

“It’s fantastic,” said Defendis, 48. He noted that on his first day at the job, the team had a town hall downtown, “so I was able to meet the entire PSE&E [Pacers Sports & Entertainment] family. Some players from

the [Indiana] Fever joined to do a little Q&A. Everyone’s been very accommodating, helping me to do a soft landing as I enter the organization.”

The Boom is the NBA G League affiliate of the Indiana Pacers, a team that has been a staple in Indianapolis for over half a century. The Pacers have showcased basketball at a high level throughout that time, from the ABA championship days of the 1970s, the attention-getting playoff runs of the 1990s, to the 2025 NBA Finals, where the Pacers were one Game 7 away from winning a championship.

The success is great, but it also means tickets are hard to come by. Defendis said it’s sometimes “very difficult, given the demand to attend a Pacers game,”

for young people to get close to the action.

“The Arena is a beautiful, modern arena without a bad seat in the house,” said Defendis. “We want to extend the opportunities to the organizations and really work with those organizations to have opportunities to attend Boom games and experience that level of basketball up close, but also transition them to become Pacers fans over the course of their life.”

Defendis said his priority is to extend the awareness of the Boom into Noblesville’s neighboring communities. That includes Kokomo, the north side of Indianapolis – “anywhere within 15 to 20 to 45 minutes away,” he said.

“I think this is a great,



Defendis

family-friendly and affordable alternative,” said Defendis. “It’s high-quality basketball in a state that takes basketball very seriously.”

Defendis graduated from the University of Dayton in 2000, noting that he was the 14th member of his family to do so – “it’s definitely a family legacy,” he said. After working for AT&T for a year, he spent 21 years at HBO, working his way up from account executive to hold various positions at the network and its parent companies.

Defendis worked at the WWE in 2023, then the next year joined Xtreme One Entertainment, where he helped relaunch the company and its flagship property, Xtreme Fighting Champion-

ships. The mandate was to make the organization “the premier global development platform for next-generation MMA athletes,” Defendis said on his [LinkedIn page](#).

“What we were trying to do was give opportunities to those athletes to fulfill their dreams and make it to the UFC,” said Defendis. He wants to continue that with his work at the Boom, giving opportunities to those athletes to achieve their dreams while making the

experience “phenomenal for those players by filling the stands with fans and making sure the community knows and cares about them.”

Defendis knows about how to care for athletes. His son is a baseball player on the Westfield High School baseball team, while his daughter cheers for the Shamrocks. Defendis previously served on the board of Westfield Youth Sports and was a youth baseball coach for several years.

Softball

Huskies swept by Logansport

By **CRAIG ADKINS**
For The Reporter

The Hamilton Heights softball team played their third game in as many nights on Wednesday.

A road trip to Logansport wouldn’t be kind to the Huskies, dropping their fourth in a row and both games in the Hoosier Conference series, the latest 6-3.

Heights scored first when McKenzie Jackson singled in Heather Crays for the early 1-0 score.

The Berries plated three in the bottom on a three-run home run by Brooklynn Hagerty to take a 3-1 lead.

Crays scored her second

run on a Kamryn Rhoton base hit, cutting it to 3-2.

Hagerty smacked another homer to center, her 10th of the season. The Berries scored one more in the third for a 5-2 count.

Ellie Engle trimmed the deficit to 5-3 when she doubled in Kaitlyn Schakel in the fourth.

Logansport got an insurance run in the home half of the sixth to ice the two-game sweep.

The Berries (18-1) won their 17th straight and lead the Hoosier Conference (6-0).

Hamilton Heights (11-6, 3-4 HC) plays next on the road Friday night in a Hoosier Conference placement game.

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Softball

Millers win tough game over Roncalli

THE REPORTER

The Noblesville softball team won a hard-fought home game over Roncalli 7-5 on Wednesday.

Both teams got on the board in the third inning. The Royals put up three runs, with Zadie Brown getting a run back for the Millers in the bottom of the third by scoring after Reese Newsom reached on an error. Brown got on base with a double.

In the fourth inning, Maggie Kern led off with a double and eventually scored on a wild pitch. Roncalli added a run in the top of the fifth to lead 4-2, but Noblesville made its move in the bottom of the fifth.

Newsom blasted a one-out triple to score Izzy Zapp and Kate Ringholz, tying the game at 4-4. Haley Schatko brought in Newsom with a sacrifice fly for the go-ahead run.

The Royals tied the game with a run in the top of the sixth, but the Millers scored twice in the bottom of the inning to take the lead for good. Kinley Westbrook batted in Grace Cummings, then Bella Hughes scored on Zapp's RBI groundout.

Kern hit two doubles while Bella Hughes hit one. Roslyn Ervin pitched 2.2 innings for the win.

Noblesville is 13-6 and plays a Hoosier Crossroads Conference game Friday at Fishers.

Fishes dropped a 4-1 game Wednesday at New

Palestine.

The Dragons scored all four of their runs in the second inning. The Tigers got their run in the fifth inning when Adrienne Cook scored on Bella Balbo's RBI fielder's choice.

Fishers was held to two hits, a double from Frankie Jackson and a single from Cook.

The Tigers are 14-7 and host Noblesville on Friday.

Sheridan fell to Eastern 11-6 in a Tuesday Hoosier Heartland Conference game.

The Blackhawks scored twice in the top of the first inning; Makenzy Terry singled in Hayleigh Kemp and Amiyah Doss. The Comets put up four runs in the bottom of the inning.

Sheridan came back to take a 5-4 lead in the top of the second. Emily Will got home on Doss' RBI groundout, then Adria Jump doubled Ellie Eaton and Kemp home.

Eastern hit a three-run home run in the third inning, then added two more runs in the fourth for a 9-5 lead. The Hawks got one more run in the sixth inning when Norah Adams singled in Abby Dallas.

Jump went 3-for-4 at the plate, while Anna Rusk hit a double. Adams pitched a complete game, striking out three.

Sheridan is 2-4 in conference play and 3-10 overall. The Blackhawks host Clinton Prairie this afternoon in another HHC contest.

Boys Volleyball

Rocks, Millers advance at HSE sectional

The REPORTER

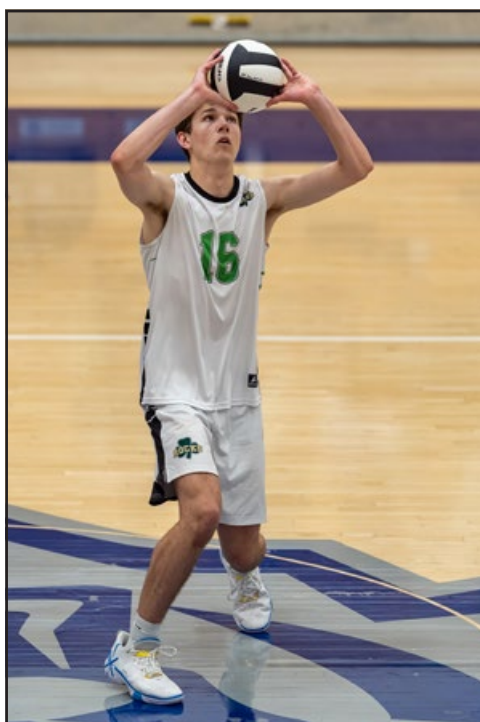
The Westfield and Noblesville boys volleyball teams both swept their first-round matches on Wednesday to advance to the semifinals of the IH-SAA Sectional 8 tournament at Hamilton Southeastern.

The Shamrocks (15-10) beat Kokomo 25-10, 25-13, 25-19. Junior Aidyn Kuzma led the offense with nine kills, while sophomore Simon Falvey put down eight kills. Kuzma also scored four aces, while junior Xavier Lyons dished out 22 assists.

Senior Stevie Alvarez collected seven digs on defense. Lyons made four blocks.

The Millers (12-20) cruised past Peru 25-13, 25-10, 25-14 in the second match of the night. Stats were unavailable at press time.

Westfield and Noblesville will play each other in the first semifinal of Sectional 8, which starts at 11 a.m. Saturday. First-round



Reporter photos by Julie Brown

(ABOVE LEFT) Westfield's Xavier Lyons dished out 22 assists and made four blocks during the Shamrocks' sectional win over Kokomo Wednesday at Hamilton Southeastern. (ABOVE RIGHT) Noblesville senior Ben Naville makes a serve for the Millers, who swept Peru to win their first-round sectional match Wednesday.

matches continue tonight at Southeastern: The Royals play Carmel at 6 p.m., then Guerin Catholic and Fishers face off at 7:30

p.m.

University dropped a five-set match to Park Tudor Wednesday in a first-round match of Sectional 9

at Pike.

The Panthers won 25-20, 20-25, 25-15, 19-25, 16-14. The Trailblazers finished their season 13-8.

Baseball

Golden Eagles fall to Lapel

The REPORTER

The Guerin Catholic baseball team lost at Lapel 12-9 on Wednesday.

The Golden Eagles started the game with three runs in the top of the first inning. Ben Canada scored the first run on Karson Smith's RBI fielder's choice, then Grant Beard doubled in Ian Taylor and Smith.

The Bulldogs came back to score four runs in the bottom of the first. Guerin Catholic answered with four runs in the top of the second inning. Brody Cain batted in Liam Zorger, Tate Troxell singled in Canada for the go-ahead run, then Smith blasted a two-run single to bring in Taylor and Troxell.

The Golden Eagles extended their lead to 9-4 with two runs in the third inning. Nolan Ratcliff doubled Zorger home, then Cain scored on Canada's sacrifice fly. Lapel scored two runs in the fourth inning, then put up six runs in the fifth to

take the lead and eventually win.

Smith and Beard both had two hits.

Guerin Catholic is 17-3-1 and hosts Beech Grove this afternoon.

Sheridan fell to Eastern 11-3 in a Wednesday away Hoosier Heartland Conference game.

Both teams scored a run in the second inning; Crew Spencer got the Blackhawks' run on Jake Hall's sacrifice fly. The Comets put up five runs in the third inning to take control of the game.

Sheridan scored its other two runs in the sixth inning. Braelan Bochner got home on an error, then Austin Hinshaw scored on a wild pitch.

Hinshaw finished with two hits, including a double.

The Blackhawks are 3-3 in conference play and 8-9 overall. Sheridan hosts Clinton Prairie this afternoon in another HHC game.

Motorsports

Daly pushes speed limit past 228 on ideal day at Indy

Submitted by IMS

In nearly ideal conditions, speeds soared Wednesday on the second day of practice for the 110th Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge, with Conor Daly leading two drivers over 228 mph at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Noblesville native Daly continued his strong start to the event by posting the fastest speed of the two days of practice, 228.080 mph, in the No. 23 DRR KINGSPAN Chevrolet of Indy 500-only team Dreyer & Reinbold Racing. Daly turned his top lap in thick traffic, getting an aerodynamic tow, just slightly over an hour into the six-hour session.

Conditions were ideal for speed on the 2.5-mile oval, with air temperatures in the mid-60s and partly cloudy skies.

"Feeling great, but we weren't even flat on that lap," Daly said. "The car feels pretty good. It's going really well. Honestly, it was very exciting out there,

too. I saw more side-by-side racing out there on that run than I've seen in practice for a long time. It seemed good."

Daly was third fastest on Opening Day on Tuesday at 225.838.

Reigning "500" winner and NTT INDYCAR SERIES champion Alex Palou, fastest Tuesday at 225.937, was second today and one of two drivers over 228 mph at 228.026 in the No. 10 DHL Chip Ganassi Racing Honda.

David Malukas was third at 227.139 in the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet, jumping from 10th Tuesday. Graham Rahal continued to show consistent speed, fourth at 226.835 in the No. 15 United Rentals Honda of Rahal Letterman Lanigan after stopping the clocks in sixth Tuesday.

Romain Grosjean also continued the trend of carrying Opening Day speed into today, rounding out the top five at 226.591 in the No. 18 Bmax.IO Honda of Dale



Photo provided by IMS

Coyne Racing. Grosjean was ninth Tuesday.

Ideal conditions and aerodynamic tows from leading cars helped speeds elevate in traffic today. Pato O'Ward was the fastest driver running alone, with a best solo lap of 221.409 in the No. 5 Arrow McLaren Chevrolet. 2016 Indy 500 winner Alexander Rossi was the second-fastest solo driver at 221.392 in the No. 20 Java House Chevrolet of Ed Carpenter Racing.

The top two no-tow speeds were slightly slower than the fastest no-tow speed of 222.062 on Tuesday by Kyle Kirkwood in the No. 27 Sam's Club Honda of Andretti Global.

All 33 cars entered in the event this year combined to turn 2,542 incident-free laps today, a considerable hike from the 1,996 laps recorded on Opening Day. Palou carried the biggest workload, turning a session-high 118 laps after completing just 28 laps Tuesday.

Practice resumes from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday (noon to 4 p.m., FS2; 4 to 6 p.m., FS1; FOX One, INDYCAR Radio powered by OnlyBulls).

The 110th Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge is scheduled for Sunday, May 24 (10 a.m., FOX, FOX Deportes, FOX One, INDYCAR Radio powered by OnlyBulls).

IndyCar drivers thrilled by early sellout of Indy 500

By CHARLES HUIRAS
WISH-TV | wishtv.com

In back-to-back years, all reserved seating for the 110th running of the Indianapolis 500 is sold out. This year's sellout came a week earlier than last year, and several IndyCar drivers expressed their excitement about fans' eagerness to watch the "Greatest Spectacle in Racing."

No. 10 Honda for Chip Ganassi Racing, driven by Alex Palou, won last year's Indy 500, and he can't wait to see the 300,000-plus fans on race day.

"It doesn't surprise me, but it surprises me that it's been a week earlier than last year," Palou said. "I think it's huge for the sport, it's huge for us, for the drivers, for the teams, for the sponsors. It's incredible, and I cannot wait for Sunday."

Graham Rahal is no

stranger to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway as he looks to make his 19th appearance in the Indy 500. Rahal shared how impactful the sellout is for both the Indy 500 and IndyCar itself.

"I think it's a great trend for the sport that the sellout is there," Rahal said. "This race has a lot of momentum, and I think what's proven about the Indianapolis 500 is it's continued to stand the test of time. This is a multi-generational event that's going to continue on for many, many decades. I think a lot of young people engage in the sport and engage in this event."

IndyCar veteran Scott Dixon drives the No. 9 Honda for Chip Ganassi Racing, and he's making his 24th appearance in the Indianapolis 500. The 45-year-old has the second-most Indy 500 experi-



Photo courtesy WISH-TV

Defending Indianapolis 500 champion Alex Palou said he can't wait to see the race fans after it was announced that this year's race will be a sellout.

ence out of the 33 drivers in this year's field, and he's never surprised that racing fans continue to show out on race day.

"I think it's fantastic," Dixon said. "Not surprising, I know early, even in December or early January, they were talking about a sellout amongst the teams. It's an early call, which is

great to see. It's popular right now, which is great."

This year's sellout marks the track's third time since 2016 that a sellout has occurred.

This story originally appeared on WISH-TV at wishtv.com/sports/racing/indycar/indycar-drivers-thrilled-by-early-sellout-of-indy-500.

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Universal Cares seeking teams & sponsors for Softball Slamfest

Submitted

Universal Cares is calling on local businesses, community groups, and residents to step up to the plate by registering teams and becoming sponsors for its upcoming Softball Slamfest, taking place from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 6 at Morse Park & Beach Softball Fields, 19777 Morse Park Lane, Noblesville.

This community-driven event is more than just a morning of softball – it is a critical fundraiser that helps Universal Cares continue its work serving families across Indiana. Proceeds from the event will directly support the organization’s Back-to-School Drive, providing essential items such as backpacks, headphones, tissues, cleaning wipes, and hand sanitizer to students in need.

With planning underway, organizers say team registrations and local sponsorships are essen-

tial to making the event a success and sustaining the nonprofit’s outreach efforts throughout the year.

“Events like Softball Slamfest allow us to meet real needs in our community,” said Jill Hinds of Universal Cares. “But we can’t do it without teams on the field and sponsors who believe in what we do. Their support truly makes the difference.”

Universal Cares invites businesses to partner as sponsors for visibility at the event while supporting a meaningful cause. Community members are also encouraged to gather a team, participate, or attend to show their support.

About Universal Cares

Universal Cares is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening Indiana communities through service, outreach, and partnerships that meet real, everyday needs. Learn more at universal-cares.com/softball-slamfest.

Noblesville’s Allie Thompson commits to Indiana University



Photo courtesy Noblesville Athletics

Allie Thompson has committed to the Indiana University cheerleading team. (Front row, from left) Jason Thompson (father), Allie Thompson, and Jennifer Thompson (mother). (Back row, from left) Ali Alvey (Noblesville Cheerleading Head Coach), Rhonda Smith (grandmother), Ian Thompson (brother), Kenny Smith (grandfather), and Crystal Scott (Noblesville Cheerleading Head Coach).

Noblesville’s Ava Stetnish commits to University of Evansville



Photo courtesy Noblesville Athletics

Ava Stetnish has committed to the University of Evansville dance team. (Front row, from left) Justin Stetnish (father), Ava Stetnish, and Kara Stetnish (mother). (Back row, from left) Bailey Mann (Noblesville Dance Head Coach), Abby Stetnish (sister), and Beth Glaub (Noblesville Dance Assistant Coach).

SPORTS SCHEDULE

Thursday, May 14

BASEBALL

- Clinton Prairie at Sheridan, 5 p.m.
- Beech Grove at Guerin Catholic, 5:30 p.m.
- University at Eastern Hancock, 5:30 p.m.
- McCutcheon at Hamilton Heights, 6 p.m.
- Westfield at Hamilton Southeastern, 6 p.m.
- Brownsburg at Noblesville, 6:30 p.m.
- Franklin Central at Fishers, 6:30 p.m.

GIRLS LACROSSE

INGLA quarterfinal

- Culver Academies at Guerin Catholic, 6:30 p.m.

GOLF

- Hamilton Heights Husky 4-Way, 4:30 p.m. at Bear Slide
- Pioneer Conference meet, 4:30 p.m. at Wood Wind
- Taylor at Sheridan, 4:30 p.m.

SOFTBALL

- Clinton Prairie at Sheridan, 5 p.m.
- Hamilton Southeastern at Yorktown, 6 p.m.

TENNIS

- Fishers at Carmel, 5 p.m.
- Hamilton Southeastern at Mt. Vernon, 5 p.m.
- University at Brownsburg, 5 p.m.

TRACK & FIELD

- Boys county meet, 6 p.m. at Guerin Catholic

UNIFIED TRACK

- Carmel at Zionsville Invitational, 5:30 p.m.
- Westfield at Pendleton Heights, 5:30 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

- Sectional 8 at Hamilton Southeastern
- Hamilton Southeastern vs. Carmel, 6 p.m.
- Guerin Catholic vs. Fishers, 7:30 p.m.

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

Thanks for reading!

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