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53rd Atlanta New Earth Festival

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REPORTER

THE HAMILTON COUNTY

Your Hometown Newspaper

TUESDAY, SEPT. 22, 2026

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CARMEL | FISHERS | NOBLESVILLE | WESTFIELD



TODAY'S WEATHER

Today: Mostly cloudy.
Tonight: Mostly cloudy.



HIGH: 67 LOW: 57

SERVE Village receives Fishers Century Club's quarterly award

Nonprofit recognized for work supporting Hamilton County flood victims

The REPORTER

The Fishers Century Club selected SERVE Village as the recipient of its quarterly crowd-giving funds during the Club's meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 15. The meeting focused exclusively on local nonprofit organizations that stepped forward to help Hamilton County residents affected by the recent flooding.

SERVE Village helped coordinate the community's flood response, bringing together volunteers, government agencies and nonprofit partners to assist residents throughout Hamilton County. Its efforts included organizing cleanup and "muck-out" teams, distributing essential supplies and connecting affected families with available resources. Those efforts are ongoing today as cleanup across the county continues.

"SERVE Village stepped up when our community needed it the most," Fishers Century Club Founder Adam Kallick said. "They brought people and resources together, organized volunteers, and helped families begin the difficult process of



cleaning up and recovering. Our members wanted to recognize that incredible response and provide additional support for the important work that continues."

The final donation total is expected to be in the \$3,000 to \$4,000 range. Contributions are still being collected from those who were unable to attend the meeting. Once the final tally is completed, the Fishers Century Club will present SERVE Village with a check representing the full amount raised.

"The flood didn't create the Village, it revealed it," SERVE Village's Broad President, Michelle Schmidt said. "We are incredibly proud of what SERVE Village helped coordinate, but even more proud of the community that showed up for one another. Thank you Fishers Cen-



Photo illustration provided by SERVE Village
Even as the flood was occurring, the good people of SERVE Village jumped in and began helping anyone affected. That work continued long after the water receded.

tury Club for being part of the village, we are so grateful!"

Those who would still like to participate may contribute through the Fishers Century

Club's online Grapevine giving platform at tinyurl.com/OnlineGivingFCC.

See *SERVE* . . . Page 2

Did you know that Sheridan is homegrown?

Submitted by Sheridan Community Schools

"Sheridan is homegrown." What does that mean?

Sheridan Community Schools (SCS) has built a history and legacy of giving back to its community, even if that just means coming home. For SCS, coming home is shown throughout the district in the many educators, administrators, coaches, and staff members who once walked the halls as Sheridan students and have returned to serve the next generation of Blackhawks. Over 22 percent of Sheridan employees also attended and graduated from Sheridan.

Among those homegrown Blackhawks are Sheridan High School (SHS) Principal Rick Davis and Sheridan Elementary School (SES) Principal Valerie Roberts, both of whom graduated from SHS before building

careers in education and ultimately returning to the community that helped shape them.

For Davis, who graduated from Sheridan in 1988, his experience as a student played an important role in his decision to return.

"I truly believe attending Sheridan provided opportunities for me to be involved in any and everything I wanted," he said.

Davis said the small-school environment allowed him to build meaningful relationships with teachers and staff while also providing a supportive en-



Davis



Roberts



ty and his master's degree from Indiana Wesleyan University. He spent 12 years teaching biology, genetics, and anatomy and physiology at Western School Corporation before becoming assistant principal at Western High School. After two years as assistant principal, he served as Western High School's principal for 11 years before accepting the opportunity to return to Sheridan.

Today, Davis serves as SHS principal and, this year, is also serving as principal of Sheridan Middle School.

"Whenever you are a principal, you always have tremendous pride in the school you serve ... But when it is your alma mater, it can't help but run deeper," he said. "I feel like I get to give back to the community and school that gave so much to me. It is awesome to know the community, the people, the history, all while helping to shape the future of Sheridan Community Schools."

Roberts shares a similar story. A 1986 Sheridan High School graduate, Roberts earned her degree from Purdue University in 1991 and her Master's in Educational Leadership from Indiana Wesleyan in 2010. She began her teaching career in Fort Wayne and later

See *Homegrown* . . . Page 2

Hamilton Heights Fall Homecoming set for Friday, Oct. 2

Submitted by Hamilton Heights School Corp.

Attention Husky fans and enthusiasts! Hamilton Heights High School's Fall Homecoming will take place on Friday, Oct. 2.

The days before Homecoming will be filled with various fun and spirit-filled activities to rally the Dawgs before the big game against the Benton Central Bison.

Dancing in the Moonlight Homecoming Dance kicks off the festivities on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 8 to 10 p.m. at the North Gate by the Football field. Monday, Sept. 28 through Friday, Oct. 2 are designated "spirit" days where students and staff can participate and show their spirit. Monday is Adam Sandler Day, Tuesday is Nowhere to Wear This Day, Wednesday is Twin Day, Thursday is Class Shirt/Dress As Your Halfway Day, and Friday is Orange and White Day.

All grades will vie for bragging rights at the annual Powder Puff football game on Thursday, Oct. 1. The night will start with an inner squad scrimmage at the

Homecoming Parade Route

1. Illinois from the school parking lot – north to Main – turn left
2. West on Main to Dora – turn left
3. Dora – Parade stops – the high school band – will disperse and return to school on buses located at the middle school – athletes will join their respective teams
4. South on Dora to South Street – turn left
5. East on South to East Street – turn right
6. South on East Street to Franklin – turn left
7. East on Franklin to Illinois – turn right
8. South on Illinois – back to the high school

high school football field with the Unified Flag Football team at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Powder Puff game at 6 p.m. Admission is free.

On Friday, a student pep session featuring the award-winning Hamilton Heights band, cheerleaders, and football team will be held at the football field from 2:10 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The parade line-up begins at 3 p.m.

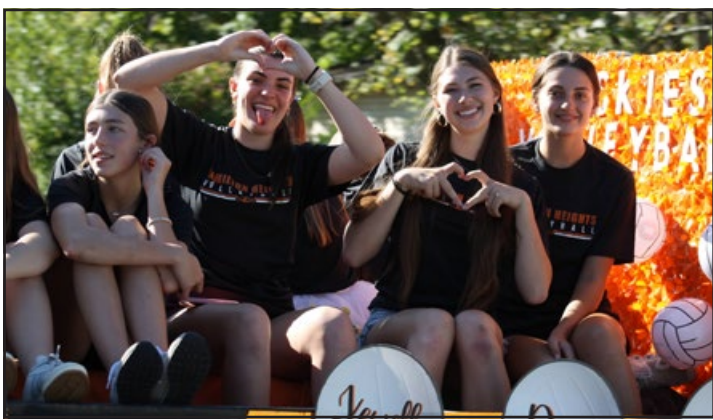


Photo provided by Hamilton Heights School Corporation
Hamilton Heights High School's annual Homecoming is a long-standing tradition that involves students, faculty, staff, families, organizations, and businesses in the greater Northern Hamilton County area. This year's Homecoming Parade is set for 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 2.

in the front high school parking lot. The Hamilton Heights High School Band and Amber Guard will lead the parade with the school song and impressive flag routine through the streets of Arcadia beginning at 4 p.m. Kick off is at 7:30.

Halftime Festivities include recognition of alumni from the classes of 1977, 1987, 1997, 2007, and 2017, followed by the

presentation of the 2026 Homecoming Court and the crowning of this year's Homecoming King and Queen.

On Saturday, Oct. 3, Hamilton Heights will honor and induct the Class of 2026 to the Athletic Hall of Fame with lunch (ticketholders only) at noon followed by the induction ceremony in the high school gymnasium.

New executive order will cause more vaccine fear

In January, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., issued drastic changes to the widely endorsed Childhood Immunization Schedule. A district federal judge temporarily blocked Kennedy's new recommendations, ruling that he likely violated federal procedures. The American Academy of Pediatrics, and other medical-professional organizations expressed outrage. The AAP filed suit.

On Aug. 10, President Donald Trump signed an executive order mirroring Kennedy's new changes, implementing what the court blocked. Whether the order will withstand legal challenges is uncertain.

The order decreased 17 routine childhood vaccines to 11, recommending:

- All children receive measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, *Haemophilus influenzae*, pneumococcal disease, human papillomavirus, and varicella.
- High-risk children also receive hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningococcal B, meningococcal ACYW, dengue, and respiratory syncytial virus (a non-vaccine antibody).
- After shared decision-making with a provider, children may receive hepatitis A, hepatitis B, rotavirus, meningococcal disease, influenza, and COVID-19.

Part of the rationale for reducing the number of vaccinations is that the U.S. has recommended more immunizations than European countries – not a justified comparison. There are many differences in disease risks, population characteristics, and health-care systems. Millions of U.S. childhood infections have been prevented by administering vaccines not routinely recommended in Europe (CDC data).

See *Vaccine* . . . Page 2

AI agrees with me

AI has become a prominent current topic of discussion.

I recently happened to overhear my techno-genius partner, Seth Wilson, debating the issue with our recently hired Eric Foley. Eric had just received word that he passed the Indiana Bar Exam and will soon be admitted to practice in October of this year. Eric was up for a serious discussion. The debate became lively, and it soon drew in other participants from our office.

Like President Bush, I have opinions, very strong opinions, but I don't always agree with them.

In this particular case, however, I felt sure that the youngest debater among us was on the right track.

Continued debate seemed to bring no consensus.

That is when I wisely interrupted and said, "Gentlemen, let's run it on AI." At that point, the topic of debate temporarily changed and revolved around whether we should use ChatGPT, Grok, or Gemini. With an agreed-upon AI platform selected, the issue was presented and AI had what I thought was a remarkably good answer. It mirrored my own opinion on the topic almost word for word. The young man had won!

But wait, Techno-Genius Seth has a follow-up question, "What is the source authority for the AI opinion we received?"

More work followed on AI to determine the source information used to create the opinion. That inquiry revealed a shocking source and showed why Seth is a techno-genius.

It was a newspaper article written by Ray Adler on the topic! AI agreed with me exactly because it had cited me as a source of its authority!

The result was artificial but not necessarily intelligent, or at least not more so than if they had asked me directly.

Ray Adler is a longtime attorney with offices at The Adler Building, 136 S. 9th St., Downtown Noblesville. He is also one of the owners of The Hamilton County Reporter Newspaper.

COLUMNIST



RICHARD D. FELDMAN, M.D.
State of Our Health

COLUMNIST



RAY ADLER
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VACCINE

Trump said, “Nothing bad can happen from what we’re doing.” But the new schedule is not grounded in evidence-based science. Changing vaccine recommendations should be based on rigorous reviews of new evidence rather than on personal agendas, disinformation, and pseudoscience.

The executive order also endorses splitting the MMR vaccine into three separate shots at separate visits (and all combination shots as feasible) and spreading the entire childhood schedule over an extended time. The president stated, without justification, that there are claims that the MMR vaccine is “quite lethal” and that dividing the MMR into separate vaccines would have a huge impact on autism. No evidence exists indicating that multiple vac-

cines given concurrently are dangerous or pose an autism risk, or that spreading out vaccines is safer.

Patients are more likely to complete the recommended vaccine series with combination vaccines, and fewer shots are involved. Trump called for separating all the vaccines given at age one into five separate visits. Seriously?

Trump astonishingly embarrassed himself, displaying incredible ignorance, foolishness, and recklessness. His claim that the volume of the immunizations given at one year of age equals a bottle of soda is beyond ridiculous.

The executive order signing was infused with repeated suggestions from Trump, Kennedy, and others that vaccines cause autism

without offering evidence. The research to the contrary, conducted over decades involving millions of children, is overwhelming and is considered settled science.

When asked what his evidence was that vaccines cause autism, he replied, “What I’ve heard is that there are some people that say it is that way...” Huh?

The executive order has no mandatory effect. But given the president’s impact, especially in red states, the order may have considerable influence.

It will cause vaccine fear, confusion, hesitancy, and refusal; more doctor visits and medical costs; missed work; more injections; delayed or skipped immunizations; and doubt about the necessity of vaccines.

Kennedy spoke briefly,

stating that HHS was comprehensively researching environmental factors that might explain autism, including vaccines. Kennedy and administration officials mostly parroted Trump’s comments.

Seek your physician’s advice. If your physician embraces the Trump/Kennedy nonsense, find a new physician.

We are experiencing the largest outbreak of measles in 35 years. Whooping cough is surging; expect new waves of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Children will die.

Richard D. Feldman, M.D. is an Indianapolis family physician and former Indiana State Health Commissioner who served in the administration of Governor Frank O’Bannon.

HOMEGROWN

Clarkston, Mich. When the opportunity arose to return in 1999, she knew she was coming home.

“Being a Sheridan student gave me a deep appreciation for what it means to be part of a school community where people know you, care about you, and believe in you,” she said. “There is something incredibly special about walking the same halls where you once walked as a student and now have the opportunity to serve students and families.”

Roberts said she remembers the teachers and adults who made an impact on her as a student, and those experiences continued to influence her throughout her career.

“I remember what it felt like to sit in those classrooms, and that perspective has stayed with me throughout my career,” she said.

Roberts said Sheridan is more than a school district to her.

“There is a strong sense of tradition and pride here, but there is also a genuine commitment to helping every student become the best version of themselves,” she said. “Being able to contribute to that, in the same community that helped shape who I am, is something I never take for granted.”

The presence of homegrown educators also helps Sheridan build a unique connection between past, present, and the next generation of Blackhawks.

PHI BETA PSI SORORITY

LASAGNA DINNER

FRIDAY, SEPT. 25th, 5:00-7:00 PM

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TICKET PRICES

Adults: \$15 pre-sale and at the door
Children (3-12 yrs): \$8 pre-sale & at the door
Tickets available from members and at Sheridan Public Library

Proceeds go toward two \$1000 medical scholarships for Sheridan seniors.

Our annual lasagna dinner is held in loving memory of our sister, Martha Rokey.

SERVE

The meeting also produced a new opportunity to support each organization presented to the club. Mike Pratt, who runs the popular Vicious Biscuit in Fishers, attended the meeting and, after learning more about the club and charities, offered to host future dine-to-donate events benefiting the organizations presented, including those not selected as the quarterly winner.

The Fishers Century Club is a local crowd-giving organization that meets quarterly to hear presentations about area charities, vote on a recipient and combine individual contributions into a larger community gift. All funds collected go directly to the selected nonprofit. The next quarterly meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 15 at The Club Coworking, 9800 Crosspoint Blvd.

For more information and a list of previous winners, please visit fisherscenturyclub.com or visit

Facebook.com/fisherscenturyclub.

About Fishers Century Club

The Fishers Century Club, founded in 2021, is a group of individuals committed to making a positive impact on the local community. Through collective giving and active participation, the Club aims to support and uplift deserving charities, ultimately contributing to the betterment of Fishers and the local community. The Club has donated approximately \$80,000 since its inception.

About SERVE Village

SERVE Village connects volunteers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government partners to meet community needs. During the recent Hamilton County flooding, the organization coordinated volunteers and resources to help residents with cleanup, recovery, and other immediate needs. More information is available at servevillage.org.



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Hamilton County leads state in life expectancy

High incomes, community amenities & access to healthcare contribute to longer lives

From Riverview Health in partnership with Parkview Health

When it comes to living longer lives, no county in Indiana does it better than Hamilton County.

And it's not just the best in the state, but also one of the best-performing counties in the U.S.

As a state leader in household income and public safety and with broad access to fitness opportunities, healthy food and high-quality healthcare, Hamilton County's population is perennially the best at living to 75 years old and beyond.

"Doctors look at a tool called a survival curve, where if an individual makes numerous positive lifestyle choices, it's amazing to watch them add up," said Dr. Eric Marcotte, chief medical officer for Riverview Health. "But on the other end, if you're not making healthy choices, you can see a 30-year drop in life expectancy."

Best in state

Hamilton County ranks No. 1 in Indiana when looking at a life expectancy of 81.2 years, according to the national long-running County Health Rankings and Roadmaps database run by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Hamilton County is also the statewide leader in preventing "premature death," defined as deaths occurring before age 75.

Hamilton County has a two-year lead over No. 2 Hendricks County, which has a life expectancy of 79.2 years and is significantly better than the statewide average of 75.6 years. Indy-metro neighbors Boone County (78.6 years), Hancock County (77.3), and Johnson County (76.9) are also within the highest third of the state.

Marion County, the state's biggest county by population, is worse than the overall state average at 73.7 years of life expectancy, while Morgan County sits right near the statewide average at 75.5 years.

When thinking about life expectancy and premature death, Dr. Ashley Reinert, primary care physician with Riverview Health, said to think of the life arc in a couple of critical age periods.

The first major hurdle to get over is birth and early childhood. Infant mortality and infectious disease are the major threats in this age range, but Hamilton County has among the state's highest childhood vaccination rates and good access to numerous primary care providers and quality hospitals.

Once a child hits 5 years old, the greatest risks of death through about age 40 are accidents, overdoses, suicide, and violence. Hamilton County excels in this age range as a very safe county. Public safety goes beyond police and fire but also includes community investments such as roundabouts, which help reduce traffic accidents.

After 40 years of age, potential life-threatening medical conditions start to come into play, and regular medical care and preventative screenings are key to extending life expectancy. As one example, Hamilton County is tied for best in the state for mammogram screening rate, according to County Health Rankings.

Socio-economic factors and healthy habits make impact

Looking at the arc of life expectancy, Marcotte pointed out that disease isn't the biggest threat to individuals for a long period of their life.

"It's interesting to note how little of this has to do with actual healthcare," Marcotte said.

Living a long and healthy life takes a multi-faceted approach, a balancing act



Marcotte



Reinert

between positive health choices and risk factors. Eating well and exercising regularly doesn't guarantee that any one person will live longer than someone who is overweight or someone who smokes regularly, but making more good choices than bad choices, on average, is likely to lead to better health for longer.

"The younger you start making healthy habits and the more you do, the higher chance you have of living to 85 to 95," Reinert said. "The entire body is changed by those good habits, and the opposite is true as well."

The socio-economic status of Hamilton County plays a role here, too. Hamilton County has long been No. 1 in Indiana in household income and educational attainment, and the greater financial firepower allows more families to invest in activities beneficial to their health such as eating healthier food; engaging in fitness, whether that's joining and attending a gym or taking exercise classes; and keeping up with routine healthcare such as annual physicals, cancer screenings, or managing chronic conditions.

Public amenities like copious parks and walking trails promote physical activity and mental well-being, while bigger household incomes support a robust commercial sector with grocery stores, fitness centers, and entertainment options that are good for physical, mental, and social well-being.

Access to healthcare is also a boon for Hamilton County residents, Marcotte said. Riverview Health has invested in a large primary care network so that patients can find and see a doctor when they need one, as well as its high-quality county

hospital located in Noblesville. But even for Hamilton County residents who don't choose Riverview, most people live within about 10 miles of a hospital at one of five different health systems, which is important for emergencies like heart attack or stroke where time to treatment is a major factor leading to better outcomes, Marcotte said.

Good health is a marathon, not a sprint, Marcotte noted, and it's never too late to make some changes that can have a long-range, compounding impact.

"Any improvement you make now matters, no matter how small," Marcotte said. "One less cigarette every day makes an impact on your blood count and lung function. Changing

from sugary soda to diet reduces your risk of diabetes. That five pounds you lose may make your knee feel so much better and then inspire you to be even more active."

For a full report of health information and outcomes on Hamilton County, any other county or Indiana as a whole, visit county-healthrankings.org.

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HSE Schools to hold public meetings on referendum

Submitted by HSE Schools

Hamilton Southeastern Schools will hold two public information sessions on the upcoming referendum, both on Tuesday, Sept. 22:

- **Virtual Lunch & Learn with HSE Student Services**, noon to 1

p.m. (online): This online session will focus on the referendum and how the proposed funding relates to student well-being and school safety.

- **Referendum Information Night**, 6 p.m. at the Delaware Township Community Building,

9090 E. 131st St., Fishers: The evening session is the second of three in-person community meetings and will include an opportunity for attendees to learn more about the proposal and ask questions.

Both events are open to the public.

Labor – Class I, I, III Position

The Cicero Street and Utilities Department has a full-time position opening for a **Labor-Class I, II, III**.

The position will be responsible for a variety of duties involved with operating, repairing/maintaining the street, potable water and wastewater operations and facilities according to applicable rules, regulations and laws for the Town of Cicero. For a full job description, please visit the Town of Cicero's website at www.ciceroin.org and click on the Government tab followed by the Job Opportunities tab.

From here you will also be able to access the Town's application, which will be required.

Applications will be accepted through October 9, 2026.

Please send application, along with any other pertinent documents to

Terry Cooper,

1159 Stringtown Pike, PO Box 391,

Cicero, IN 46034

or tcooper@townofcicero.in.gov

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POSTER ART + DESIGN BY WOODEN

Get your tickets now for The Pride of Westfield's Community Night

The REPORTER

Get your tickets for The Pride of Westfield's Community Night. Set for Friday, Oct. 9, at Riverview Health Stadium at Westfield High School, gates open at 5:30 p.m. and the performance starts at 8 p.m.

Come enjoy dinner, community, and the full "To Dream Again" production as The Pride would perform it in competition (full uniform, hair, make-up, props, and of course, that "home stadium").

Tickets are available [online now](#); choose

your favorite band or guard member from the drop down to ensure they get credit. Dinner ticket sales close Oct. 4. Show only tickets are available through the day of show.

Find out more at westfield.band/powcommunitynight.

Members of the General Assembly join Central Indiana mayors & police chiefs for third public safety summit meeting

The REPORTER

The third iteration of the Regional Mayors' Public Safety Partnership Summit took place Thursday morning, Sept. 17, at Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, where Central Indiana mayors, police chiefs, and members of the Indiana General Assembly discussed gaps and barriers in the legal system and how each pillar of government can help close those gaps to prevent crime.

Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, and Marion counties were represented by their mayors along with several police chiefs.

"Public safety doesn't stop at a city or county line, and neither do the

gaps in our justice system," Carmel Mayor Sue Finkam said. "When repeat offenders cycle back into our neighborhoods, it tells us that something fundamental isn't working.

Our goal is to collaborate to pinpoint these gaps and ensure real accountability ... We're trying to accomplish a lot in a short amount of time. We'll keep working together to maintain this momentum and deliver results. We still have work ahead, but we hope to have tangible progress to show in this legislative session."

Conversation focused on data-driven safety strategies and emerging technology. Attendees discussed collaborative initiatives, such as a data-sharing software pilot program aimed at improving inter-agency communication, strengthening collaboration and information shar-



Finkam

ing and finding general tools for law enforcement to stop habitual offenders.

"It is imperative that different perspectives are brought to the table when discussing how we can ensure our criminal justice system works effectively," Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett said. "I am grateful for the members of the Indiana General Assembly who joined this month's Regional Mayors' Public Safety Meeting to bring their viewpoint as state legislators. Their collaboration and shared commitment to keeping our Central Indiana communities safe is greatly appreciated."

The next Regional Mayors' Public Safety Partnership Summit meeting will focus on compiling information and recommendations from the series to be shared with the public.

EQUIPMENT & MACHINERY AUCTION Combined with Equipment From Retiring Farmers BRIAN UNDERWOOD & DENNIS REYNOLDS ON-LINE ONLY

BIDDING OPENS: Sunday, September 13th @ 5pm

SOFT CLOSE BEGINS: Saturday, September 26th @ 6pm

PREVIEW DATES: Tuesday-Thursday, Sept. 22nd-24th from 10am - 5pm

PICK-UP DAYS: Monday & Tuesday, September 28th & 29th
from 10am-5pm

EQUIPMENT OF BRIAN UNDERWOOD TRIPLE U FARMS

1997 Mack CH600 Semi, 1990 Int'l 4900 Semi, 2012 Navistar Int'l ProStar Semi, JD 8100 2-wd Tractor (7627 hrs), Westfield MKX 10-63 Auger, Westfield WR 100-31, KSI 086625 Conveyor, 2013 Kinze 3600 16/32 Planter, Unverferth 1225 35' Rolling Harrow, (4) Killbros Wagons on JD 1075 Gears, (2) Killbros Wagons on Killbros 2386 Gears

EQUIPMENT OF DENNIS REYNOLDS

JD 8285R MFWD Tractor, JD 9560 STS Combine, JD 625F Grain Platform on E-Z Trail 680 Head Cart, 2008 Drago 8-Row Cornhead on Unverferth HT25 Head Cart, Sunflower 6630 Vertical Till, Glenco 11-Shank Soil Saver w/ New Twisted Points, Krause 4830-530R 3-pt. 5-Shank Ripper, JD 724 Mulch Tiller, JD 750 Grain Drill w/ Yetter Markers, Kinze 3600 12/23 Planter, Strobel 2-Box Seed Tender, E-Z Trail 510 Grain Cart w/ Scales, Killbros 350 Gravity Wagon w/ Seed Tender (Tarp & Poly Auger) on Killbros Gear, Harvest Flow Gravity Wagon, Yetter Seed Jet, 72" Land Pride Grader Box, 1993 GMC Topkick Tandem Twin Screw Grain Truck, 1986 Mack MH6 Semi, 2004 Wilson WH5 Hopper Bottom Trailer

ADDITIONAL MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT

Tractors: 1951 Allis-Chalmers CA w/ 2-Bottom Plow, Cultivators, 7' Disk & Fr and Rear Wgts., 1952 JD 60 Tractor, 1951 FarmAll Super C Narrow Front, Allis-Chalmers D-14 w/ Loader & Rear Hitch, Int'l 884 Tractor w/ 2250 Loader (3596 hrs), 1949 FarmAll H w/ Loader, 1953 Minneapolis-Moline UB Tractor, 1978 IH 1086 (One Owner)

Combines/Heads/Carts: 2015 JD S680 Combine, Int'l 1083 8-Row Corn Head on Killbros Cart, New Idea 2-Row Corn Picker

Tillage: Brillion 10-Shank 3-pt Chisel Plow, Oliver 565

4-Bottom Plow, 24' Krause Disk

Sprayers: Bestway Field-Pro II 1200-Gallon Pull-Type, Model AT200 2-Wheel Sprayer Tank, Stainless Chem Farm Tanks w/ Pump & Mounting Brackets, 2015 JD 4045 Sprayer w/ 120' Booms

Grain Handling: Brent 420 Grain Cart, 1990 Handlair 660 Grain Vac, Killbros, J&M, Parker & Unverferth Gravity Wagons, Kewanee 600 Conveyor, 8" x 61 Buhler Auger, Neco Grain Cleaner

Semi's, Vehicles, Trailers: 1986 Ford 9000 (855 Big Rig Cummins), 1992 Int'l 4900 Truck (DT 466, Manual 5-sp), 2002 Mack CH600 Semi, 2013 1-Axle Livestock Trailer, 16' B-B Sprayer Trailer w/ Hydr. Brakes on all Axles, 2003 Chevrolet Corvette, 2013 Ram 2500ST Truck, 2007 Jeep Wrangler Sahara

Mowers: JD 506 3-pt. Rotary Cutter, 6' Ford 930 3-pt Finish Mower, 15' Bush Hog 12615 Batwing Rotary Cutter, Bush Hog 2615 Legend

Heavy Equipment: JD 312G R Skid Steer w/ D60 Bucket, JD Pallet Fork & Hay Spear, Clark Fork Truck

Misc Equip: 7' JD 45 3-pt. Grader Blade, 3-pt. Boom, Cattle Gates & Panels, Goat Tote, Load-Out Chute, 4-Head Sheep Stall, Feedlot Roller Mill, (5) Tender Feet, 48" Professional Power Driveway Groomer, CAT 1 Drawbar, Dearborn 19-6 3-pt Slip Scoop, (4) 100# Suitcase Weights, JD 3-pt. Ballast Box, JD 290 Planter, J&M Model 1074 Running Gear, New Idea 2-Row Corn Picker/Sheller (30" Rows), Hay Wagons. 2021 Ram Dually Truck Bed, 6' Case IH Utility Bucket, New Idea 3632 Manure Spreader w/ New Metal Floor, Truck & Implement Tires & Wheels, Red Bull Spray Boom

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Post-flood routines & changes

Recovering from last month's flood has meant more than just a loss of properties, a loss of home life, and a loss of normalcy. It has been a daily reckoning with a surprising, new, and tiring routine.

Mrs. K and I have settled in to a post-flood tempo of sleeping in our unfinished house, eating breakfast in our RV tiny-home, going out shopping for the items that have come to the fore on the stuff-to-do-to-fix-the-house list, making decisions re: those items, finding lunch somewhere, staying cool while staying out of the workers' way, having a late afternoon cocktail, finding dinner, coming back to our fixed-a-little-further home, and settling into evening time, sleep, and doing it all again.

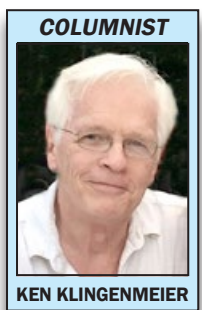
It's called progress, and it is what's necessary for us to be going through to accomplish something every day.

The other side of what we do repeatedly is ... what we *don't* do any more.

We are not going out to see theatre productions. With all that is going on, managing my *A Seat on the Aisle* blog and column was a distraction. I chose to deal with it by suspending that activity for a while. Seeing shows is something Mrs. K and I really enjoy and we'll hope to get back to it as soon as we can, but for now – we'll miss a few.

Likewise, the *A Seat at the Table* column – covering our usual Wednesday adventure seeking good Happy Hours – will also have to wait. Again, we enjoyed the heck out of discovering different places to HH, but we have not even given this one much thought lately.

Our attention to world,



KEN KLINGENMEIER

national, and political events has waned to almost nothing. Turns out, this is probably a good thing. Troubling ourselves about what is happening out there is an unnecessary

energy-thief and we need all those energies for what fate has placed before us with this flood recovery. I really don't miss the insanity. There's nothing we can do about any of it anyway. It'll continue without us watching.

My attention to sports has also been affected. I caught most of the Colts' loss last Sunday, but probably won't manage to stay awake for their upcoming Sunday night game. My favorite college teams, IU and Notre Dame, also are subject to what time they are being broadcast. Late games that I used to stay up for are just too difficult to stay up for now. But really, I just don't care as much.

We are also missing special events, particularly our granddaughter's wedding in Las Vegas. For months we planned to go out there for the celebration, but all the money it would cost is better used elsewhere and the energy to make the trip is lacking anyway. Still, it's a heart-breaking change in plans.

Also, no video game playing, online comic reading, walks (too tired), outings, or visits. It's all been changed – the energies, the caring, the passions.

Dealing with the life-altering effects of this event have sapped us of much of our interests, strengths, and patience. Doing the stuff that once easily brought us happiness is just too hard. We'll be so glad to get back to our more regular routines.

I'm certain we will – given time.

Thanks for reading
The Reporter!

Hamilton County is fortunate to call Beck’s our neighbor

Last month, 15,000 farmers and their families traveled to Atlanta, Ind., for Becknology Days at Beck’s Hybrids headquarters.

I’ve been to Beck’s too many times to count, but I left, as I always do, with a renewed appreciation for how fortunate Hamilton County is to have this company as a neighbor. Standing in that crowd, it was hard not to notice how closely Beck’s success and our county’s are tied together.

Beck’s is America’s largest family-owned seed company. Across five generations of family leadership, the Beck family has grown their business out of the same Hamilton County town, maintaining a deliberate commitment to the farmers, employees, and community who made that success possible. That commitment has never been one-sided.

You can see it in the ground itself. Over the past



GUEST COLUMNIST
MARK HEIRBRANDT

several years, the county has invested in the northern corridor, namely utilities along U.S. 31 and road capacity on 236th and 276th streets. This year, that infrastructure carried 15,000 visitors to Becknology Days, along with industry leaders and elected officials like Senator Todd Young and Governor Mike Braun. Beck’s gives the county a reason to build, and the county’s willingness to build gives Beck’s room to host an event of that scale.

The same is true of the people. Beck’s employs hundreds of Hoosiers, supports community programs across the county, and lends us a visibility we wouldn’t otherwise have. But its most important work is for farmers. Amid rising operating costs, softer crop values, and market uncertainty many haven’t faced before, a local partner with real research

capacity and agronomic depth is essential – and Beck’s has provided that to farmers here and nationwide for nearly 90 years.

That partnership shows up in places most people never see. When the county set out to close the broadband gap in our northern communities, Beck’s was already at the table, helping bring the right providers into the conversation. The result was high-speed fiber reaching farms, homes, and the Hamilton Heights schools that had gone without it for years. We opened the door; Beck’s helped walk through it and brought others along.

Hamilton County has a great deal to be proud of. Among those strengths, the presence of America’s largest family-owned seed company shouldn’t be taken for granted. Beck’s has built something genuinely worth celebrating.

On behalf of Hamilton County, thank you.

Mark Heirbrandt is a Hamilton County Commissioner representing District 3.

Duke Energy doubles energy bill assistance available to Hoosiers this year

The REPORTER

Duke Energy is doubling its available financial assistance to help Hoosiers pay their energy bills. This boost for 2026 comes from the company’s **Share the Light Fund**, which is supported by Duke Energy shareholders, its foundation and voluntary contributions from customers and employees.

By the numbers

Last year, Duke Energy Indiana provided \$450,000 in shareholder funding for direct bill assistance through its Share the Light Fund. This year, the company is providing \$900,000 in funding from shareholders through a combination of its Share the Light Fund and its new Summer Energy Credit program.

Since 2022, Share the Light Fund has provided more than \$2.8 million in bill assistance, helping support more than 9,700 Indiana households

This boost to assistance is timely, as this summer has been particularly warm, which can drive up energy use. For example, already this month, Indiana’s “cooling degree days” are 70 percent higher than normal for September. Cooling degree days are a measure of how much cooling is needed

based on outdoor temperatures.

How to access Share the Light funds

Duke Energy works with the Indiana Community Action Association to distribute funds to qualifying residents to pay utility bills, deposits, and reconnection/connection charges.

- Eligibility for the Share the Light Fund is based on income, family size, and the availability of resources.

- Qualifying Hoosiers can receive up to a \$250 credit annually on their account.

- Individuals should contact their local community action agency to see if they are eligible. [Click here](#) to find a listing of service providers by county.

“Through the heat of the summer and the chill of winter, we want to be there when our customers need us most,” Duke Energy Indiana President Stan Pinegar said. “Extreme temperatures can drive up energy bills and the Share the Light Fund can help. We encourage our customers to look into it and see if they qualify.”

Duke Energy offers a number of other tools and resources to help custom-



Pinegar

ers take control of their energy use and save money, including:

- **Payment Assistance Finder**, a free online tool that directs customers to local assistance resources in their area through a simple zip code search.

- **Usage Alerts** that send customers a notification of how much electricity they are using and its cost midway through their billing cycle so they can make adjustments before their billing period ends.

- The **“Smart Usage Option”** – a new time-of-use rate for residential customers that helps them save on their bills by shifting typical household chores to times when there is less demand for power.

- Free home energy audits, where energy professionals assess a home in-person or virtually for efficiency and provide customers with a toolkit of energy-saving devices.

- **Installment payment plans** for customers needing flexibility.

To learn more about these programs, visit duke-energy.com/SeasonalSavings.

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- Poultry Chili
- Vegetarian Chili
- Other Meats Chili + Grand Prize Winner!

Register Chili Here >>>

For Our Neighbor is an effort of CrossRoads Church at Westfield to meet, know, engage, and serve our local neighbors. Find our more online at ForOurNeighbor.Life

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Hamilton County Council wraps up 2027 budget hearings

New courts & public safety center drive staffing needs

The REPORTER

The Hamilton County Council recently completed two days of hearings on the proposed 2027 budget, with much of the discussion focused on staffing two new courts and the county's new Public Safety Center scheduled to open next year.

County Financial Consultant Mike Reuter opened the Sept. 1 hearings by giving Council members the "lay of the land," outlining the revenues and resources

available heading into 2027. The county has a cash balance of approximately \$115 million and is projected to receive approximately \$15.4 million in interest income.

"Hamilton County remains in a strong financial position, but we're operating in a different environment than we have in years past," County



Beaver

Council President Brad Beaver said. "Property and income taxes remain our largest revenue sources, but assessed values declined this year. It makes careful budgeting and long-term planning even more important as we look ahead."

Much of the proposed new spending is tied to fa-

cilities and services coming online in 2027. Hamilton Superior Courts 8 and 9 are scheduled to begin operating in January, requiring additional staffing throughout the justice system. In addition to the two judges to be elected in November, requests include four new employees in the Clerk's Office, seven employees for the two new courts, two deputy prosecutors and one support

See *Budget . . . Page 8*

Noblesville group brings global Pokémon GO weekend to Forest Park

Submitted

When Niantic runs Pokémon GO Wild Area: Global on Nov. 14 and 15, most cities will experience it entirely through a phone screen. Noblesville will have a park full of people.

Shiny Hunters of Noblesville, a free Pokémon GO community group that meets three to seven times a week around the city, will hold a two-day gathering at Forest Park Shelter 5 from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. both days. The event is free. There are no tickets, no registration, and no dues.

The group's July event drew roughly 900 people to Forest Park over a weekend, and organizers say a good share of them were families who don't play the game at all.

"We built this so you don't have to know what a raid is to have a good afternoon," said Eric Knutson, who organizes the group. "Bring the kids, get a corn dog, get your face painted, wander the trails. Nobody checks your level at the door."

The weekend's activities include free face painting with eight Pokémon designs created for the event, free character headbands, and a hidden Poké Ball hunt in which five balls are placed around the park each day and finders can trade them in for \$10 to \$50 in in-game



currency. A 15-prize raffle lets participants choose which prize their tickets go toward rather than drawing at random, and children too young to check in still receive tickets. Drawings are at 5:30 p.m. each day.

The first 100 attendees each day receive a free "survival kit" containing an event patch, an in-game item code and extra raffle tickets. The count resets on Sunday.

Three local vendors are on site: Blue Smoke BBQ, Fenny's Hot Dogs, and Café Huesca, a mobile coffee cart appearing Sunday only. Both shelters have phone charging stations.

The event is held in partnership with Noblesville Parks and Recreation. Shiny Hunters of Noblesville is an official Niantic Community



Photos provided

Approximately 900 people came to Forest Park in Noblesville to look for Pokémon during one weekend in July. Obviously, the folks in these photos are but a small sample of that crowd.

Ambassador group. Details, maps, and up-

dates are at inshinyhunters.com/go-wild-2026.

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Community News

State Rep. Garcia Wilburn to hold Education Town Hall in Fishers

State Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn (D-Fishers) will hold an education town hall from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23, at the Hamilton East Public Library’s Center/Stage Meeting Room, 5 Municipal Drive, Fishers.

Guests will hear about legislative changes in education along with other legislative issues and have an opportunity to share thoughts and ask questions.

Sheridan Phi Beta Psi’s annual Lasagna Dinner

Friday, Sept. 25 from 5 to 7 p.m.
Sheridan High School cafeteria

Lasagna, breadsticks, salad, dessert & drink
Gluten-free & carry-out available

Adult Tickets: \$15 both pre-sale and at the door
Children ages 3 to 12: \$8 pre-sale and at the door
Tickets available from members and at the Sheridan Public Library

Proceeds go to two \$1,000 medical studies scholarships for Sheridan High School seniors. The annual Lasagna Dinner is held in loving memory of Sheridan Phi Beta Psi sister Martha Rockey.

Three Indiana Pacers coming to Fishers to sign autographs

Front Row Collectables will hold a public autograph signing with Indiana Pacers players T.J. McConnell, Johnny Furphy, and Braden Smith from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 3, at Best Choice Fieldhouse, 11825 Technology Drive, Fishers.

This event will be part of the Midwest Monster Card Show (J&J All Star Card Shows, Oct. 2 and 3).

Tickets and mail-in orders can be purchased at frontrowcollectables.com.



Huston



Jeter



Lopez



Shonkwiler



Smith

State awards funding to local schools for safety upgrades

Submitted

Hamilton County schools recently received nearly \$1 million from Indiana’s **Secured School Safety Grant Program**, according to local Republican state legislators.

House Speaker Todd Huston (R-Fishers) said the program, which was established through legislation the General Assembly passed in 2013, provides matching grants to school corporations, accredited non-public schools, and charter schools to help pay for critical safety improvements.

“Hoosier families want to know their kids are in the safest possible environment during the school day,” Huston said. “These grants help schools accomplish that, providing resources and support to modernize their buildings,

hire school resource officers and prioritize student safety.”

State Rep. Chris Jeter (R-Fishers) said this year the Indiana Department of Homeland Security provided more than \$26 million in grants to nearly 500 schools and corporations.

“Every school has different circumstances, which is why this program gives local leaders the flexibility to invest where their communities need it most,” Jeter said. “These grants help schools take meaningful steps to strengthen safety before a crisis ever occurs.”

Area schools receiving grants include:

- Carmel Clay Schools, \$85,594;
- Carmel Latin School, \$43,000;
- Coram Deo Academy,

\$17,436;

- Eman Schools, \$30,100;
- Fishers Christian Academy, \$30,100;
- Guerin Catholic High School, \$28,364;
- Hamilton Heights School Corp., \$43,000;
- Hamilton Southeastern Schools, \$86,000;
- Indiana Academy, \$21,065;
- Indiana Agriculture and Technology, \$86,000;
- Midwest Academy, \$43,000;
- Noblesville Schools, \$86,000;
- Options Schools, Inc., \$86,000;
- Our Lady of Grace School (Noblesville), \$30,100;
- Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, \$9,746;
- Saint Maria Goretti School, \$21,500;
- Sheridan Community Schools, \$86,000;
- St. Louis de Montfort Catholic School, \$43,000;
- University High School of Indiana, \$30,100; and
- Westfield Washington Schools, \$86,000.

State Rep. Danny Lopez (R-Carmel) said the matching grants can be used for a variety of safety measures, including hiring school resource officers (SRO), assessing site vulnerabilities, purchasing equipment and technology, and implementing bullying prevention.

“A safe school is the

foundation for a successful school,” said Lopez, a member of the House Ways and Means Committee. “By helping districts address their individual needs, Indiana is making sure educators can focus on teaching and students can focus on learning.”

State Rep. Hunter Smith (R-Zionsville), a member of the House Education Committee, said with this round of funding Indiana has invested more than \$240 million in school safety since the program started.

“School safety is not a one-time conversation,” Smith said. “It requires ongoing attention, preparation and investment, and these grants give schools the resources to keep improving their safety plans year after year.”

“Parents deserve confidence when they send their children to school each morning,” said State Rep. Alaina Shonkwiler (R-Noblesville), who is the wife of an SRO. “Supporting local safety improvements is one of the most important ways we can provide that peace of mind.”

In 2025, House Republicans passed [legislation](#) moving the Office of School Safety to IDHS, centralizing safety efforts and providing additional support and resources to schools. Visit in.gov/dhs/school-safety to learn more about state efforts to keep schools safe.

Finkam appointed as Vice Chair of the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger

The REPORER

Effective January 2027, Carmel Mayor Sue Finkam will begin serving as the Vice Chair of the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger. She will serve alongside Mayor Alyia Gaskins of Alexandria, Va., who was appointed Chair.

This nonpartisan collective of civic leaders works together to make meaningful steps to end childhood hunger nationwide. The cohort initiative began in 2022, and Mayor Finkam has served as a member since becoming mayor in 2024.

“No child should ever have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, yet too many families in our communities face this reality every day,” Finkam

said. “I am honored to partner with Mayor Gaskins in leading the Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger.

By bringing mayors together to share innovative programs, expand meal access and leverage local resources, we can ensure every child has the nutrition they need to learn, grow and thrive.”

The Mayors Alliance works to partner member mayors with local stakeholders to find community-based solutions and expand access to essential food programs, ensuring that all children have reliable nutrition through efforts such as afterschool and summer meal programs.

Mayor Finkam will serve as Vice Chair throughout the duration of 2027.



Finkam

BUDGET

from Page 7

position in the Prosecutor’s Office, and three additional Sheriff’s Office employees for the Judicial Center.

The county is also preparing to open its new Public Safety Communications Center in 2027. The \$85 million, three-story facility will provide 108,000 square feet for 911 dispatch and emergency operations. Later in 2027, the new Public Safety Training Center will be available to serve

multiple municipalities and towns police, fire, and EMS. At least seven new Buildings & Grounds employees have been requested to help operate and maintain the new facilities.

The final 2027 budget is scheduled to be adopted at a special session of the Hamilton County Council on Oct. 19 before being sent to the State of Indiana for approval. Once approved, it will take effect Jan. 1, 2027.

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Fishers Arts Council announces Juried Exhibit of Hamilton County Artists winners

The REPORTER

Fishers Municipal Center welcomed the Fishers Arts Council (FAC) into its bright, open gallery space for the seventh annual Juried Exhibit of Hamilton County Artists awards ceremony on Friday evening, Sept. 11.

As in the previous six years, Jiffy Lube of Indiana was the art competition's title sponsor. Noblesville Creates returned as the People's Choice award sponsor, with their Executive Director, Ailithir McGill presenting the award. Sixty-four artists were selected for this year's exhibit by the juror, Carol Strock Wasson of Union City, Ind.

The "Best in Show" winner was Fishers resident Abigail Staffelbach for her oil painting *Through Clouds, Blue*. She received an award of \$1,000, a solo exhibit for 2027, and the following comment from the Strock Wasson:

"My first impression was of the overall impact of the piece. Its red-yellow-blue color harmony, with blue as the dominant color, brings the entire composition together. The sensitive edge work and convincing atmospheric depth demonstrate the artist's command of her medium and clarity of intent. This is a memorable painting that will remain with me for many days to come."

Best Landscape, sponsored by Wasson Nursery, was awarded to Neal Snapp of Fishers for *The Cool Edge of Sunset*. His artwork quickly sold before the evening was over. Wesley Dallas Merritt, formerly of Sheridan, won Best Portrait/Figurative, sponsored by Five Star Bath Solutions, for his watercolor *Treasures in the Fog*. Another watercolor artist, Rich Ernsting received Best Floral/Other,

sponsored by Renewal by Andersen, for his transparent watercolor painting, *Tranquility. Sunset on Kona*, painted by Valerie Bielski of Noblesville, won Best Abstract, sponsored by Uptown Cafe. Bielski's art was sold the day the exhibit opened. Best 3D, sponsored by Noblesville Creates, was Susan Hirsch of Fishers for her stoneware piece, *Have I Done Enough?* Each of these artists received \$600. Two merit awards at \$250 each were also presented: Craig Mullins of Indianapolis for *Fly Adrift Along the Aspens* and Brenda Whicker, formerly of Fishers, for *Blushing Mums*.

In partnership between FAC and the Fishers Art Center, located on the east side of the Fishers Municipal Center, the 3D art and more 2D artworks were on display in the Art Center galleries. The Fishers Art Center is operated in partnership between the City of Fishers and Indy Art Center, located in Broad Ripple.

"It's a truly beautiful display opportunity for these artists and we're so thankful for Indy Art Center Exhibition Manager, Alex Moore, and his expertise during the installation in their gallery spaces," FAC Executive Director Les Reinhardt said.

There was also stiff competition for the Noblesville Creates People's Choice award, with patrons voting on Facebook and in-person in the gallery. The winner, for the second year in a row, was Fishers resident Asma Siddiqui with her textured acrylic and mixed media art, *Memory of a Rising Wave*. It received the most overall votes, both online and in-person and a \$250 cash prize. Almost all of these award-winning paintings are for sale, as are most of the other equally amazing works in the gal-



Photo provided by Fishers Arts Council

(Back row, from left) Matthew Porter and David Pedersen of Five Star Bath Solutions, Fishers Arts Council President Chris Hayes, Susan Hirsch (Best 3D), and Rich Ernsting (Best Flora/Other). (Front row, from left) Ailithir McGill of Noblesville Creates, Valerie Bielski (Best Abstract), Neal Snapp (Best Landscape), Abigail Staffelbach (Best in Show), Asma Siddiqui (People's Choice), Brenda Whicker (Merit Award), Craig Mullins (Merit Award), and Carol Strock Wasson (juror).

lery through Oct. 2. FAC hopes that many Hamilton County residents, and others, will visit the Art Gallery at City Hall in the Fishers Municipal Center and experience the art and enjoy the work of many talented people in our area.

Guests can visit the gallery in person at 1 Municipal Drive from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, and on Saturdays during the Fishers Farmers' Market from 9 a.m. to noon. You can also see the juried exhibit in their online gallery at [Facebook.com/FishersArt](https://www.facebook.com/FishersArt).

About Fishers Arts Council

Fishers Arts Council is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization whose mission is to support, advocate, and cultivate visual and performing arts opportunities that educate and/or enhance the lives of those who live, work, and visit Fishers. Visit the gallery space inside Fishers Municipal Center at 1 Municipal Drive. FAC also maintains the Build BW Gallery at 11 Municipal Drive and the Ball State



Art provided

Abigail Staffelbach of Fishers won Best in Show for her work, *Through Clouds, Blue*.

Gallery-Fishers at 8626 E. out FAC online at [Fishers Arts Council.org](https://www.fishersarts.org) or text (317) 537-1670 for more information.

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Pence Media Group expands video production with Emmy Award-winning journalist, Nicole Griffin

The REPORTER

Pence Media Group (PMG) announces the hire of Nicole Griffin, PR & Video Storytelling Strategist, to grow the consultancy's in-house video production capabilities. "We're thrilled to welcome Nicole Griffin to the Pence Media Group team and expand the ways we can tell meaningful stories for our clients,"

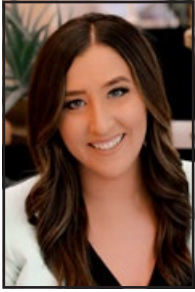
PMG Owner Nicole Pence Becker said. "As the communications landscape continues to evolve, strong storytelling goes far beyond the written word. Nicole's Emmy Award-winning experience will help continue to bring our clients' stories to life in compelling, creative ways."

As a PR & Video Storytelling Strategist, Griffin will bring PMG clients' brand stories to life through visual storytelling while also supporting public relations strategy and execution. She is an Emmy Award-winning journalist with 12 years of broadcast experience, including nine years at WRTV in Indianap-

olis, where she served as a primetime evening anchor for five years.

PMG is a full-service public relations, branding, digital and marketing consultancy working with public, private and nonprofit clients. Nicole Pence Becker established PMG in 2017, which has grown to become a dynamic, award-winning team. For the fourth year in a row, PMG was selected as a MUSE Creative Best Small Agency of the Year in 2026.

PMG is made up of professionals who are experts in public relations, digital and paid media, marketing, strategic communications, and brand development. A certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) in the state of Indiana, PMG's team serves a wide range of clients with unparalleled expertise and creativity. PMG recently launched a new website to better communicate its services and capabilities. To learn more about PMG and PMG's services, visit pencemediagroup.com.



Griffin



Teachers say Indiana's 'bell-to-bell' phone ban makes enforcement easier

Confiscation, fines accompany new policy in some schools

By MACKENZI KLEMANN
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana's new "bell-to-bell" ban on student cellphones in K-12 schools has made it easier for teachers like Andrew Biller to confiscate phones or send students to the principal's office.

The Anderson High School student publications advisor said few teachers in the past wanted to enforce the school's "silent-and-away" policy, which previously permitted students to use their phones outside the classroom, because they believed students would continue breaking the rules.

Now, the rules are clear: Students must turn off and store their phones and other personal devices in their locker until the final bell, or risk having their phone confiscated.

Biller and other teachers who spoke to the Indiana Capital Chronicle say policies that were once loosely enforced now carry the power of state law – resulting in real consequences, improved behavior, and fewer distractions for students.

"That has really, really

helped enforce consequences across the board and get regular classroom teachers on board with say, 'OK, I'm going to send this kid that has a cellphone out (to the dean) because I know that there's going to be something done about it,' Biller said. "... It will instill in them the importance of not having it out, rather than just saying, 'Put it away,' and then they get it out in the next class."

Changing 'learned behavior'

Lawmakers expanded the state's ban on student cellphone use in K-12 classrooms to cover the entire school day through Senate Enrolled Act 78, which took effect July 1.

Schools may ban cellphones and other personal devices entirely, or require students to keep their phones powered off and inaccessible until the end of the day.

The law, which applies to both public and charter schools, makes exceptions for emergencies, medical needs and students with special accommodations outlined in Individualized Education Programs or 504 plans.

How schools define "in-accessible" varies.

Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) purchased magnetic-sealed pouches for students to lock their phones, smartwatches, and earbuds when the district piloted its own bell-to-bell personal device ban two years ago.

"The school board decided, 'Let's take action to help

the teachers,'" said Scott Murray, communications manager for FWCS. "It took a lot of pressure off teachers to not have to continuously say, 'Put your phone away.'"

The pouches proved an effective deterrent, but came at a cost: The district spent \$420,000 the first year to purchase Yondr-brand pouches, plus another \$120,000 for replacement pouches from a similar brand named Rooz, he said.

"The main goal is: We have to change the learned behavior," Murray said. "We're all addicted to this. So the goal was to give the teachers a tool."

At LaVille Jr.-Sr. High School, students must keep their phones in their locker while school is in session.

Phones are confiscated until the end of the school day on first offense, but repeat offenses result in a \$25 fine the school will contribute toward attendance and behavioral awards.

Superintendent Keith Burke said the school, with a population of just 600 students south of South Bend, hasn't had any offenses to date this school year.

"Our families have told their kids, the majority of them, that you won't be getting your phone back because we're not paying the fine," he said, "and I think the kids have responded, which is the intent." He added, "Our goal is that we never have to give a fine."

There aren't enough lockers for each student at

Center Grove High School, so students are expected to keep their phones off and stored away in their backpacks.

Melissa Warner, who teaches English and journalism at Center Grove, said the school confiscated 17 phones in the first three days, but she hasn't seen many phones since then.

"They're either keeping them in their backpack or they're doing a better job of hiding them," she said.

Exceptions cause confusion

Warner started asking students several years ago to store their phones in a pocket hanging from her front board, with few issues. She's since taken the pockets down, but said her students appear more engaged and less distracted by drama on Snapchat.

"Before that it was just a constant fight if they see a notification – they're almost addicted and have to check it," she said, adding: "That was just nice to have one more support system to say, 'No, we have to do this. State law says your phone has to be away during class.'"

While Warner is pleased with the results in her English classroom, the law's inflexibility for instructional use of student cellphones has created problems in her journalism classes, where students routinely used their phones to record interviews or take high-resolution photographs.

See Phone . . . Page 11

Carmel Fraternal Order of Police endorses Danny Lopez for State Representative

Submitted

The Carmel Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) has endorsed Danny Lopez in his reelection campaign for Indiana State House District 39.

"The Carmel FOP 185 is proud to endorse Danny Lopez. He has been a tried and true partner with our lodge on a multitude of issues," said Matthew Broadnax, Vice President of the Carmel FOP Lodge 185. "We know he is the right leader to help our community tackle our current challenges and those to come, and we look forward

to continuing our partnership with him."

The Carmel FOP, chartered in 1984, represents more than 160 sworn officers of the Carmel Police Department and the IU Health North Police Department. The organization is the voice of those who are committed to keeping our communities and our families safe.

"I am proud to have earned the support of the officers of the Carmel FOP



Lopez

for our reelection campaign, particularly as the safety of our schools and our neighborhoods are top of mind for so many residents," Lopez said. "I have worked hard to bring policy solutions in the legislature on issues that impact Carmel's public safety, and I look forward to continuing that work alongside the Carmel FOP."

Learn more about Danny and join his campaign at LopezForIndiana.com.



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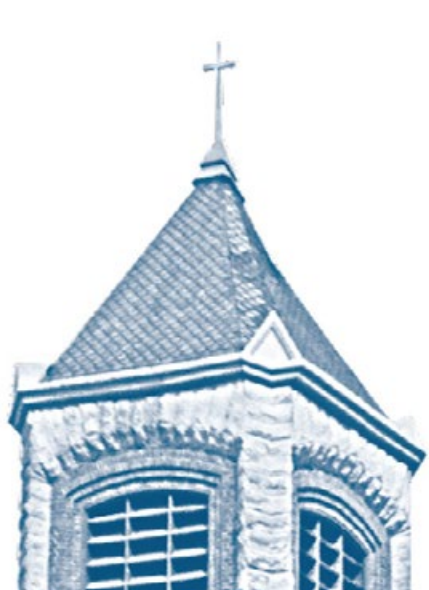
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Upcoming Broadcasts

Wed Sept 16 - Soccer and Volleyball
5:30 pm Zionsville vs **Noblesville** | Boys JV Gold Soccer | Noblesville Sports Network
6:00 pm Brownsburg vs **Fishers** | Girls JV Soccer | Fishers Sports Network
7:20 pm Monrovia vs Covenant Christian | Girls Volleyball | Indiana SRN
7:30 pm Brownsburg vs **Fishers** | Girls Varsity Soccer | Fishers Sports Network

Thurs Sept 17 - Volleyball
6:00 pm Zionsville vs **Noblesville** | Junior Varsity Volleyball | HCTV Sports
6:50 pm Bethesda vs Horizon Christian | Volleyball | Indiana SRN
7:30 pm Zionsville vs **Noblesville** | Varsity Volleyball | HCTV Sports

Fri Sept 18 - Football
6:45 pm **Sheridan** vs Clinton Prairie | IHSAA Football | Bragg Sports Media
6:50 pm **Noblesville** vs Zionsville | IHSAA Football | Indiana SRN
6:50 pm Bloomington South vs Greenfield Central | IHSAA Football | Indiana SRN
6:50 pm Seccina vs Covenant Christian | IHSAA Football | Indiana SRN
6:50 pm Wes Del vs Heritage Christian | IHSAA Football | Indiana SRN
7:00 pm Brownsburg vs **Fishers** | IHSAA Football | Fishers Sports Network
7:00 pm Western vs **Hamilton Heights** | IHSAA Football | Husky Sports Network

Sat Sept 19 - Football and Boys Soccer
10:00am Brownsburg vs **Fishers** | Fresman Football | Fishers Sports Network
12:00pm Center Grove vs **Noblesville** | JV Gold Boys Soccer | Noblesville Sports
1:15 pm Calvin vs Franklin College | HCAC Football | Indiana SRN



Available on the Web www.HCTV1.com  www.HCTV2.com

On your Roku TV or Roku Device Search for HCTV1  On your Amazon Fire TV or Device Search for Hamilton County TV



Spartz seeks accountability for Indiana Economic Development Corporation & LEAP district

Submitted by Office of U.S. Rep. Victoria Spartz

In light of the upcoming Sept. 29 meeting of the Indiana Legislative Council Audit and Financial Reporting Subcommittee, Congresswoman Victoria Spartz (R-Ind.-05) sent a letter to the Subcommittee raising serious concerns about the adequacy of state audit and legislative oversight of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and the rapidly expanding LEAP Research and Innovation District.

Under Indiana law, the Subcommittee has statutory responsibility for independent review and oversight of the State Board of Accounts (SBOA) and the state examination process, including reviewing examination reports, internal accounting controls, and corrective actions.

“Indiana taxpayers deserve to know what happened, why our existing audit and oversight mech-

anisms failed to identify these serious problems, whether any wrongdoing occurred, and whether anyone should be held accountable,” Rep. Spartz said. “With significant state and federal resources involved, we need proper independent oversight – not just changes in policies going forward.”

State audit & legislative oversight

Rep. Spartz’s letter raises questions about oversight of IEDC and LEAP as IEDC’s funding, authority, land holdings, contractual commitments, and development activities expanded significantly beginning in 2022.

The letter asks how IEDC’s changing risk profile was evaluated under the State’s risk-based examination process; what oversight



Spartz

the Subcommittee conducted of IEDC, IEDF, and LEAP; what actions were taken following prior audit findings; and why significant governance, contracting, conflict, internal-control, and compliance concerns subsequently identified by FTI Consulting were not identified through the existing examination and oversight process.

The October 2, 2025 FTI forensic review identified 45 findings and observations involving governance, internal controls, contracting, conflicts, compliance, and financial oversight. FTI also expressly stated that its work was not an audit or comprehensive investigation and was not designed to identify all errors, irregularities, or potential fraud.

Rep. Spartz is asking the Subcommittee to address these matters at its upcoming meeting and has offered to participate in the discussion.

[Click here](#) to read the letter to the Indiana Legislative Council Audit and Financial Reporting Subcommittee.

Additional GAO inquiry

Rep. Spartz also sent an additional inquiry to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) requesting a federal review of IEDC and LEAP, including federal funding, financial controls, compliance, and federal agency oversight.

This GAO inquiry is separate from Rep. Spartz’s earlier request concerning the Citizens–Lebanon water project and its use of federally capitalized Drinking Water State Revolving Fund financing.

[Click here](#) to read the letter to the GAO.

PHONE

from Page 10

SEA 78 grants exceptions for school-issued devices and certain student devices sanctioned by the school for instructional purposes, but cellphones and smartwatches are excluded.

Only school-issued devices will be permitted come July 1, 2028.

Warner purchased a few digital recorders, but does not have enough to supply the entire newsroom staff. “We used to operate much like a professional newsroom did, and now we’re backtracking,” she said.

Carroll High School Principal Cleve Million observed similar challenges in dual-credit and advanced placement classes.

Students may be asked to scan a QR code to access material provided by university partners, but Million said universities are now working on alternative ways to

access the material in states with bell-to-bell bans.

Another concern for Million is the law’s exception for students with documented medical conditions or IEP accommodations, which he said has led some parents to seek exceptions for dubious reasons.

Million said those exceptions make sense for diabetic and heart rate monitors, but he’s also witnessed attempts to write questionable exceptions into a student’s IEP.

“That’s something we’ve had pushback from, but granted we’ve pushed back as well, trying to justify why they would need it,” he said. “And when there’s no justification, then it’s obvious your child doesn’t need it.”

This story was published on Sept. 21, 2026, at [indianacapitalchronicle.com](#).

Meeting Notices

The Carmel Clay Schools Board of Trustees will meet at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2026, at the Carmel Clay Schools Educational Services Center, 5201 E. Main St.

The Carmel Mayor’s Advisory Commission on Housing will meet at 9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 24, 2026, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of Carmel City Hall, 1 Civic Square.

The Noblesville PACE (Parks, Arts, and Community Engagement) Council Committee meeting scheduled for 9 a.m. Friday, Sept. 25, 2026, will take place at The Green Room at Federal Hill Commons, 107 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](#).

Pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-5 (a) The Hamilton County Council will meet in a work session at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2026, in Conference Room 1A at the Hamilton County Judicial Center, 1 Hamilton County Square, Noblesville. The purpose of this meeting is for an update on Riverview Hospital.

The Westfield Washington Schools will meet in an executive session at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026, to discuss soliciting proposals for the purpose of awarding contracts for goods or services, when: (A) proprietary data, trade secrets, or other information is contained in the bidder’s proposal relating to the bidder’s unique methods of: (i) conducting business; or (ii) determining prices or premium rates to be charged for services under the terms of the proposal; and (B) public knowledge regarding the discussion would reasonably be expected to result in private loss to the providers of the information described in clause (A).

A work session will follow at 6:45 p.m., then a public hearing on the 2027 budget at 7:45 p.m. at the Westfield Washington Schools Administration Center, 19500 Tomlinson Road, Suite B.

The Carmel Board of Zoning Appeals will hold a Hearing Officer meeting at 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 28, 2026, in the Council Chambers on the second floor of Carmel City Hall, 1 Civic Square. A regular meeting will follow at 6 p.m. in the same location.

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](#).

TODAY’S BIBLE READING

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

These are the commandments the Lord proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was ablaze with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. And you said, “The Lord our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks with them. But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any longer. For what mortal has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and survived? Go near and listen to all that the Lord our God says. Then tell us whatever the Lord our God tells you. We will listen and obey.”

The Lord heard you when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, “I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

Deuteronomy 5:22-29 (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](#).

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