

HENDRICKS COUNTY ICON

December 29, 2023 • myhcion.com



2023
ICON
of the
YEAR

Yvonne Culpepper continues to serve community through her legacy of leadership at Hendricks Regional Health

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Avon police and elected officials honored for service to community

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Washington Township Fire Chief Danny Brock reports on possible increased need of service

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Jerry Vornholdt voted to HCEDP Board

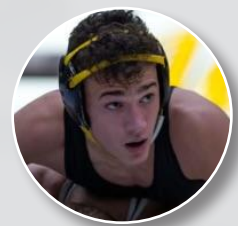
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ICON of the Week

Kelly DiBenedetto

Working to advance the town of Danville every day

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IU Health West Hendricks County Iconic Athlete Luke Rioux

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**Stories/News?**

Have any news tips? Want to submit a calendar event? Have a photograph to share? Call Kate Anderson at (317) 451-4088 or email her at kate@myiconmedia.com. Remember, our news deadlines are several days prior to print.



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HENDRICKS COUNTY
ICON on the **WEB**

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State Bank of Brownsburg Campus on 56th Street Celebrated Grand Re-Opening



State Bank of Brownsburg ribbon cutting at grand re-opening. (submitted photo)

State Bank of Brownsburg Campus on 56th street celebrated their grand re-opening and the expansion of their newly remodeled banking center and main office on Saturday, Dec. 16. To commemorate the event, State Bank offered free professional family photos with Santa, a free document shredding service, and holiday treats for those in attendance and fun was had by all. State Bank of Brownsburg looks forward to serving the community in the coming New Year and beyond.

Retractions

In the "Meet your Neighbor" article of the Dec. 15 edition about Tony Gude, we printed that he was an "agnostic atheist". This statement was incorrect and should have been printed that he is an "agnostic theist". We deeply apologize for this error.

Definition of Theist:

"A person who believes in the existence of a god or gods, specifically of a creator who intervenes in the universe."



State Bank offered free family photos with Santa. (submitted photo)

What is your idea of success?

"Many years ago, I resolved to never bother with New Year's resolutions, and I've stuck with it ever since"- Dave Beard

EDITOR'S NOTE

By Kate Anderson

I never miss an opportunity to write a good "to-do" list. If you know me, you know my love of post-it notes in all their many forms. The idea of organizing my thoughts, ideas, goals, and wants on paper is exciting and oddly calming. It gives me a sense of direction and really puts everything in the forefront of my mind. Although this is completely low-tech, it is my process, and it works for me. Resolutions are funny things. Like everyone else, I find myself feeling compelled to make the requisite list of things I want to change about myself, and how I want to improve my life. On Jan. 1, I get out my largest post-it notes, sit down with a cup of coffee, and plan out my year. I find myself focusing on mostly impossible goals and letting the tangible ones fade into the background. I let the big, shiny goals take precedence over the little, and sometimes more meaningful ones. Yes, my fitness, health, and financial goals are very important, but so are the tiny goals of seeing my nephews more, incorporating self-care into my routine, and taking time for myself. For some reason, the little ones seem more selfish than the standard, obligatory ones. I sweep these thoughts under the rug and get set to accomplish my goals with gusto.

I buy new shoes, a new vitamin holder, and make all those doctor appointments I have been putting off. Yet, with all my enthusiasm for self-improvement, I find myself wavering by week four. Life happens, work takes over, failure creeps in, and I end up feeling more defeated and disappointed than I did before I took myself on this journey. Why do I do this to myself? How about you? Are you a list-writer and resolution-maker? What compels us to make concrete decisions to instantly improve ourselves to the point that we end up disappointing ourselves? I don't know about you, but I have decided that in 2024 I will be keeping my large post-it notes in the drawer. I am resolving not to make any resolutions. As I get older, I am looking for a kinder, gentler approach to self-improvement. I have the same goals, but I am going to give myself the grace to achieve them in time. Like the adage goes, "slow and steady wins the race". Goals are sometimes intangible. I look forward to working on myself all year long without taking stock of my failures. What are your goals? Is your plan more concrete or flexible? We are all a work in progress. As we approach 2024, I wish you great success in the New Year and beyond. Give yourself some grace, and I believe you'll succeed more than you imagined.

Police Officers recognized for 20+ years of service

Compiled by Amanda Babinec

The Avon Town Council met Dec. 21. Meetings can be viewed at avonindiana.gov/livestream. The council will meet at 7 p.m. the first and third Thursdays of the month for the balance of the year at Avon Town Hall, 6570 E US HWY 36. The next scheduled meeting is Jan. 11.

WHAT HAPPENED: Ryan Cannon, Town Manager, and Sean Stoops, Chief of Police, recognized several employees and elected officials for their years of service.

WHAT IT MEANS: Steve Eisenbarth was recognized for his eight years of service as a town councilman and was provided a police letter of commendation.

Mike Wittl was recognized for his 20 years with the Avon Police Dept. Brian Nugent was recognized for his 20 years with the Avon Police Dept. Dave Margason was recognized for his 25 years with the Avon Police Dept.

WHAT HAPPENED: Pasare, LLC, who is the developer of the Easton Grey project, is seeking voluntary annexation of land located at 5918 E US 36, Avon.

WHAT IT MEANS: The land will ultimately become part of Easton Grey. The town council approved to accept the voluntary annexation unanimously.

WHAT HAPPENED: Approximately four months ago, the planning dept. posted a request for qualifications to update their comprehensive Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) plan. They received four proposals which were reviewed by a selection committee. When the RFQ's were initially reviewed, they eliminated two submissions and then the committee interviewed HWC and Houseal Lavigne. HWC is a local firm and Houseal Lavigne is from Chicago.

WHAT IT MEANS: After interviews, the committee chose HWC and is asking for approval from the town council so they can secure a contract for their plan. Concern was expressed choosing a firm from Chicago and having to pay extensive travel expenses. Councilman Steve Eisenbarth spoke favorably about HWC, while council members Dawn Lowden and Greg Zusan expressed concern that HWC had been difficult to work with the last time they went through this process. It was discussed that they would have a different project manager this time around and with that information, the town council approved the request unanimously.

WHAT HAPPENED: Rainy Day Fund transfer.

WHAT IT MEANS: The Town Council authorized the Clerk Treasurer to transfer up to \$150,000 of revenue if available from the General Fund to the Rainy-Day fund prior to March 30, 2024. The resolution passed unanimously.

WHAT HAPPENED: Several amendments were made to the Unified Development Ordinance.

WHAT IT MEANS: Gasoline service stations had been in a category that restricted their hours of operation from 7 a.m. - 10 p.m. The category was changed so gasoline service stations can now be open from 5 a.m. - 11 p.m. There were additional restrictions placed on off-premise advertising signs, standards for front yard fencing, standards for mobile home parks, and several others.

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GLASSWATER CREEK
PLAINFIELD

Washington Township Fire Dept. Hires Axis Architecture

Compiled by Amanda Babinec

The Washington Township Board met Dec. 19. Meetings can be viewed on the township's Facebook page or YouTube channel. The board meets monthly at the Washington Township Government Center, 311 Production Drive, Avon. The next scheduled meeting is Jan. 2 at 3 p.m.

WHAT HAPPENED: Lora Helmick, Parks Director, presented the Parks & Rec. dept. report.

WHAT IT MEANS: The ice rink was officially opened in November and the dept. hosted a Polar Express event that brought in over 700 patrons. The Explorer Extended Care program at Avon Community Schools continues to be at capacity. The park staff attended the Indiana Parks & Recreation Association state conference in November and were awarded the creative event award for their Polar Express Experience program, exceptional park design award for Murphy Park and the Parks Director, Lora Helmick, won the Outstanding Professional Award.

WHAT HAPPENED: Fire Chief, Danny Brock, presented the fire dept. report.

WHAT IT MEANS: Fire Operations, to include Fire and EMS Training divisions, participated in a multi-agency drill for ASHER Response Operations that included Brownsburg Fire Territory, Pittsboro Fire Dept., and Avon Police Dept. The fire dept., also signed with Axis Architecture for architect and engineering plans for the Station 143 remodel, station 142 planning (either remodel or rebuild) and the upcoming build out of Station 145. Finally, Chief Brock made the board aware that it has been confirmed that Wayne Township Fire Dept. will be merging with the Indianapolis Fire Dept. This could cause increased runs for Washington Township.

Brownsburg Town Council approves purchase of 1.78 acre parcel of land

Compiled by Amanda Babinec

The Brownsburg Town Council met Dec. 21. Meetings can be viewed at <https://www.brownsburg.org>. The council meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of every month at Brownsburg Town Hall, 61 N. Green St. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 11.

WHAT HAPPENED: Bid awards were presented by Asst. Town Manager Shawn Pabst for the resurfacing of roads within the Town of Brownsburg using the Community Crossing Match Grant that the town has been awarded from the Indiana Dept. of Transportation (INDOT).

WHAT IT MEANS: The town received six applicants and the lowest bid was DC Construction at \$1,535,159.12. This will equate to a matching grant of \$767,579 from INDOT. The bid was approved by the town council unanimously with the condition that the bid be subject to and conditioned upon a contract that is approved by staff.

WHAT HAPPENED: Jenna Wertman, Development Services Director, presented the Board of Zone Appeals and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Report.

WHAT IT MEANS: At the direction of the town council from the Nov. meeting, Jenna's staff has been working on making changes and updates to the Unified Development Ordinance guidelines. There is little land left for residential purposes in Brownsburg so the town council wants to see stronger guidelines proposed for any remaining developments to the town.

WHAT HAPPENED: Kathy Dillon, Water Utility Director, recognized and awarded her staff of four that competed last spring at the IWEA conference in Lafayette.

WHAT IT MEANS: The team came in first place and got the opportunity to represent Brownsburg in Chicago at a national competition. Ms. Dillon presented awards to each member of the team. The team consisted of Matt Huckstep, Shane Russell, Nate Ballard, and Jason Luwin. They call themselves the Brownsburg Biohazards.

WHAT HAPPENED: Asst. Town Manager, Shawn Pabst, presented a resolution for the purchase of property at 411 Johnson Lane. The resolution was approved unanimously by the town council.

WHAT IT MEANS: This parcel is 1.78 acres and the asking price is \$142,400, which is the tax value of the property. There are multiple reasons that the town would benefit from this parcel, whether it's for an additional entry and exit for Lincolnwood Park or an alternate use.

WHAT HAPPENED: The state was awarded opioid settlement funding from several pharmaceutical companies because of the opioid crisis. It flowed through the state to the cities and towns and Brownsburg has received a restricted amount and unrestricted amount. After conversations, the town and police dept. feel the best use of those funds is to help youth under the age of 18. Consent was provided by the town council unanimously.

WHAT IT MEANS: The town came to an agreement with The Willow Center that will provide treatment for youth that need it. Chase Cotton from The Willow Center outlined that this is a scholarship for treatment and will be available to Brownsburg resident students who are uninsured or under-insured.

WHAT HAPPENED: Town Councilman Chris Worley was presented a plaque for his many years of service.

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FOR HENDRICKS COUNTY

Where Local Good Grows
Hendricks County
Community Foundation

#GIVINGTUESDAY | November 28, 2023

Danville Town Council approves joining the Central Indiana Regional Development Authority

Compiled by Ronald Hera

The Danville Town Council met on Dec. 20, 2023. These meetings can be viewed on the town's YouTube channel. The council meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Danville Town Hall, 49 N. Wayne Street. The next scheduled meeting is Jan. 3, 2024.

WHAT HAPPENED: The Danville Town Council considered joining the Central Indiana Regional Development Authority (CIRDA). After hearing the advantages of being part of the regional organization, they voted unanimously to join and signed the necessary documents. The membership will be for at least five years.

WHAT IT MEANS: The CIRDA is a regional organization of towns and counties whereby projects are submitted that affect the towns and counties that belong. Danville, being a part of the CIRDA, can submit projects and receive federal grants that require matching funds from the town. The town would also have the ability to coordinate with other cities, towns, or counties on projects that may benefit Danville. Potential partners include towns in central Indiana.

WHAT HAPPENED: Town Manager, Mark Morgan, nominated Jerry Vornholt to a position on the Hendricks County Economic Development Partnership Board. The Town Council voted to accept the nomination.

WHAT IT MEANS: Jerry Vornholt will be an appointee on the Hendricks County Economic Development Partnership Board at the recommendation of the Town Council. The Hendricks County Economic Development Partnership is made up of individuals who are continually working to improve and enhance the lives of those living, working, and building businesses within Hendricks County.

WHAT HAPPENED: The Town Council agreed to enter into an agreement with Waste Management to perform certain street sweeping services for streets used for Waste Management business, and Waste Management will agree to pay the town for those services.

WHAT IT MEANS: The town will sweep the portion of Twin Bridges Road southeast of U.S. 36 to 1013 feet southeast of the 120 Twin Bridges Road entrance Monday through Friday on both sides. Waste Management will pay the town \$650 per week for the services.

ICONIC brief

The Plainfield High School Interact Club met on Wednesday, Dec. 13 to fill Christmas stockings for Sheltering Wings located in Danville, IN. The club members gathered gifts that will benefit approximately 20 children. A variety of gifts were put into each stocking and the gifts varied by age. Gifts were gathered and sorted for babies, toddlers, elementary school students (early and late elementary), middle school students, and high school students. The gifts included pacifiers, baby blankets, baby toys, coloring books, crayons, card games, match boxes, yoyos, candy, lip balm, socks, cups, toothbrushes, barrettes, and hair items, etc.



ICONIC brief

Local Schools Receive Literacy Grants

From the Desk of Senator John Crane Serving Senate District 24

With roughly one in five Hoosier third graders not reading at their grade level during the 2021-22 school year, our students need support - now more than ever - to build foundational reading skills.

To help address this, the state awarded our local schools nearly \$750,000 in grant funding to help implement Science of Reading instruction in their classrooms.

This investment is the result of \$20 million allocated in the 2024-25 state budget to expand Science of Reading instruction in our schools - a research-based strategy that uses phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to teach literacy.

In Senate District 24 the following schools received grants:
Avon Community School Corporation received \$448,411.
Danville Community School Corporation received \$150,000.
To learn more about the Science of Reading Instruction, visit www.in.gov/doe/files/3-science-reading.pdf



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Hendricks County ICON of the Week

Kelly DiBenedetto: Working to Advance the Town of Danville Every Day

By Julie Brackemyre

Kelly DiBenedetto is the Executive Director of The Greater Danville Chamber of Commerce, serving in that role since 2019. As the Executive Director, Kelly develops, promotes, and plans events and functions, communicates with members, and implements an annual budget that advances the prosperity of Danville. Prior to joining the Danville Chamber, Kelly served as the Director of Sales and Marketing for an Indianapolis-based financial institution. Born and raised in Brownsburg, she now resides in Danville with her husband Chris and young adult children Katie and Christopher. Outside of her "day jobs," over the past 18 years, Kelly has founded or served in many volunteer roles in organizations helping Hoosiers at both the county and state levels. In 2008, Kelly and Chris formed a not-for-profit charity in honor of their daughter Katie. "Katie's Hear to Help Foundation" provides financial assistance to families of children in need of hearing aids and other auditory assistive equipment. She has also worked on legislation aimed at improving access to funding for hearing aids for children in Indiana through both private and public means, and she helped form the legislation to create the Center for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing. In 2015, Kelly was honored to be appointed by Governor Mike Pence to the school board for Indiana School for the Deaf where she currently serves as Chairman of the Board. Kelly also serves as the President of Board Member for Level Two, and President of the Danville Education Foundation. Kelly has maintained a lifelong passion for the game of golf, and also currently serves as head coach of the Danville Warriors girls' golf team.

1. What do you consider your greatest virtue?

I would say friendly. I hope that people are happier after having an interaction with me.

2. What do you most deplore in others?

My family would laugh at this one. People who leave sugar or sweetener packets on the counter after using them.

3. What do you like most about working in Hendricks County?

PEOPLE!!! I love the people of Hendricks County.

4. If you had to live anywhere else, where would it be?

I would live on an ocean. I love water!

5. If you could begin life over, what would you change?

I would take my youthful figure and health much more seriously.

6. If money weren't an issue, where would you spend it?

Making others happy and ensuring that every child who is deaf or hard of hearing has the resources they require to be successful.

7. What makes you happiest?

Family!

8. What is your favorite vacation spot?

Anywhere my kids will go with me!

9. What do you do with your idle time?

What is idle time??? Do people really have that?

10. What is it that makes you angry?

Mistreatment of children

11. What do you do to escape from reality?

Read

12. What/who is the greatest love of your life?

My husband - I could not imagine having anyone more supportive.

13. What is the quality you most like in a person?

Kindness. It spreads and makes the world a better place.

14. What is your greatest extravaganza?

I would say I have had the opportunity to be a part of great program opportunities.

With the Chamber, we put on our community awards and it has been fun to watch it evolve into

an amazing evening celebrating our community. I also

have had the opportunity over the last several years to co-produce our Mr.

Warrior program for Danville. It has been a great way

to raise money for post prom, and this year the funds will go to

our education foundation.

15. What is your favorite restaurant?

That is a tough one. I will go with one I only get once or twice a year. It would be Tripoli Pizza and Bakery.

16. Who is the person most influential in your life?

I would say both of my parents, but my dad has had one of the greatest impacts on who I strive to be more like every day. He taught me so much, but one that has driven me most is "If you don't like it, do something to change it".

17. What are your fears/phobias?

Rodents and snakes

18. Which talent would you most like to possess?

I wish I could sing. I love to sing but sound like a cat in a blender.

19. What do you most value in your friends?

They accept me and my messy!

20. Who is your favorite historical figure?

Jesus Christ

21. What is your greatest regret?

This resonates with me the most. "I have often regretted my speech, never my silence." Publilius Syrus

22. What tenet do you live by?

Proverbs 3:5-6: Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.



Yvonne Culpepper: ICON of the YEAR

Serving the community with her iconic legacy at Hendricks Regional Health

By Kate Anderson

There are many words that could be used to describe Yvonne Culpepper. Nurse, leader, innovator, groundbreaker, legacy-maker, to name a few. Now she can add “retired” and “ICON” to this list. After a 48-year career, 33 of which she spent at Hendricks Regional Health, she is hanging up her hat. She leaves behind her a legacy and standard of leadership that is unparalleled. She didn’t always want to work for Hendricks, though. In fact, her love for Hendricks Regional Health snuck up on her. “The Hendricks County community stole my heart. I fell in love with Hendricks Regional Health,” says Culpepper.

Culpepper, originally from Crown Point, has lived in Brownsburg for 32 years with her husband Allen where they raised their three children, who also live in Hendricks County. She now enjoys her four grandchildren as much as she can. “It’s so great to get my grandma fix. I often say that if I had known about grandchildren, I would have had them first,” she says jokingly.

Culpepper earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Indiana University in Bloomington and decided to complete her clinicals in downtown Indianapolis at Methodist Hospital, where after graduation, she began her career. She stayed at Methodist Hospital for 15 years, learning and growing her passion for nursing. She spent seven years in the trauma unit and eight years in dialysis and transplant. She continued her studies and completed her Master of Science in Nursing from Indiana University. When it came to choosing where she would complete her clinicals for this next step in her career, she had some decisions to make. “Methodist was and still is a large hospital. I really wanted a different change of pace, where there wasn’t so much turnover,” said Culpepper. A friend told her that she might be a good fit for Hendricks. “Hendricks? That is in my own backyard, and I have never been west of 267 in my life,” she said. After some thought and encouragement, she decided to give Hendricks a try. “I was happily surprised at the level of technology and care that the patients were given. I was home.” Though she did return to Methodist for a time, her heart was in Hendricks County. I discovered that bigger isn’t always better,” she said. At Methodist, she excelled in her leadership role, but when she heard of an opening at Hendricks Regional, she went for it and was brought on as Vice President of Nursing, now called Chief Nursing Officer, in 1990. She later earned her Ph.D. from Purdue University in West Lafayette. In 2014 she was named COO, or Chief Operating Officer, and in 2015 was named Corporate Compliance Officer. In

2016, Culpepper was instrumental in bringing hospital care services to the Brownsburg area with the addition of Brownsburg Ambulatory Care, now called Hendricks Regional Health-Brownsburg Hospital. What started out as an ambulance only facility developed into something more. The facilities in Brownsburg now offer such services as immediate care, labs, radiology, rehab services, cardiac rehab, women’s center, inpatient medical unit, etc. “I was involved in the development of many projects. We saw a need in the community, and we got to work,” Culpepper said. Although she didn’t have architectural know-how, she could look at blueprints and give input. “I was able to look at the blueprints and see it from a nursing point of view. I knew the design needed to be with the whole staff in mind. It needed to be user friendly for everyone,” she said. She helped gather input from different departments, including support staff, physical therapy, nursing, doctors, etc. “It was

“The Hendricks County community stole my heart. I fell in love with Hendricks Regional Health.”

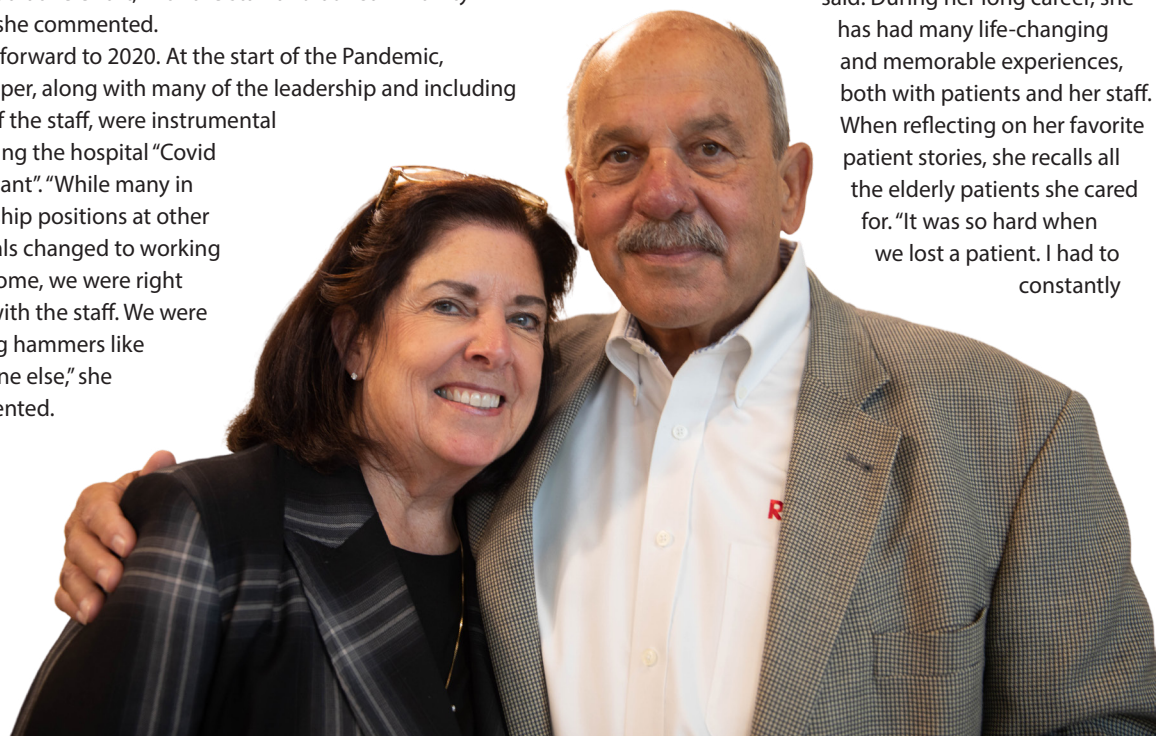
a collaborative effort, with the staff and our community in mind,” she commented.

Fast-forward to 2020. At the start of the Pandemic, Culpepper, along with many of the leadership and including most of the staff, were instrumental in making the hospital “Covid Compliant.” “While many in leadership positions at other hospitals changed to working from home, we were right there with the staff. We were slinging hammers like everyone else,” she commented.

Culpepper was not above moving beds down hallways, setting up new equipment and spent her weekends preparing for new protocols. She helped create the new Covid ICU, transforming the hospital into a safe environment for both patients and staff. “This was what I call the ‘dark side’ of healthcare. Everything had to change, and everyone had to adapt. We worked around the clock to prepare. Most days felt like we were in the movie ‘Groundhog Day’ and never knew what day it actually was,” she said. She suited up in PPE with the rest of the staff and helped with patients in any way she could. “I have such deep respect for all the nurses, doctors, and staff that worked so hard under such conditions during that time,” Culpepper said. One of her most cherished memories of that time was a letter that a patient wrote to her that said, “I wasn’t ready for Covid, but Hendricks was ready for me.” “It’s memories like this that kept me going,” she said.

Culpepper clearly has a passion for the nursing profession. When asked what motivated her to go to work every day, she simply said, “serving my community and my patients.” “I am and will always be a nurse at heart.” Though she has been in her leadership role for many years, she doesn’t mind jumping in and working with patients. She makes a point of being a support for the other nurses, answering phones when needed and helping patients

whenever she is able. “It was never beneath me to help a patient in need,” she said. During her long career, she has had many life-changing and memorable experiences, both with patients and her staff. When reflecting on her favorite patient stories, she recalls all the elderly patients she cared for. “It was so hard when we lost a patient. I had to constantly



Yvonne with her husband, Allen. (submitted photo)

remind myself that when it comes to patients, 'we help birth them into this world and we are probably the best at transitioning them out'. This always gave me comfort," she said. She says her hardest patient was her husband. "After the most recent surgery he had, he said that he was going to report me to the police because I was such a bad nurse. I told him, 'Get up and do those exercises! He didn't like that very much,'" she said.

Some of her proudest moments while working with Hendricks is working with the staff and leadership to achieve Magnet Status designation for the hospital. This is the "Gold Standard", the highest award nursing can achieve. "This took a 'buy in' from the whole nursing staff. It's about looking at our practices and working together to create the best patient care experience we can offer," she said. With Culpepper's help they recently submitted a 3,000-page application for their fourth Magnet designation.

As Culpepper's time with Hendricks Regional Health comes to an end, she thinks back on her career and has hundreds of memorable moments. One, given the "Daisy Leadership Award", which recognizes excellence in Nursing and Leadership. "I was so touched and so very thankful," she said. Secondly, while at the Hendricks Regional Health Gala this year, finding out that they created a scholarship in her name. The Yvonne Culpepper Health Careers Scholarship will help provide financial support for a student(s) for pursuing a degree in preparation for a career in healthcare. "I was shocked. I was completely speechless. I cannot tell you my gratitude,"

Culpepper said. When asked about the scholarship, Dr. Michelle Fenoughty, M.D., MBA, President and CEO of Hendricks Regional Health, said, "We need talented, dedicated healthcare professionals to keep us moving forward. To support that goal, we are launching the Yvonne Culpepper Health Careers Scholarship endowment. Yvonne served Hendricks and our community for 33 years before retiring in October. She is the embodiment of everything this scholarship stands for and I am so excited to see her legacy and Hendricks carried on in this way."

She is, indeed an ICON, leaving a legacy and example of excellence in every life she has touched while at Hendricks Regional Health. "I can't say enough about Yvonne as a leader in Hendricks County and in healthcare. She is a servant leader who gave everything, everyday to make sure that our patients and staff had everything they needed. Personally, she has been an amazing mentor and friend. She has truly been an ICON in the lives of so many," states Shane Sommers, Chief Operating Officer at Hendricks Regional Health.

In her retirement, Culpepper plans on relaxing, seeing what experiences and opportunities might come her way. "It's still so new to me. I am still settling into this new chapter. Right now, I am just looking forward to enjoying the holidays with my family," she said. She looks towards the future with an open mind and excitement in her heart. With her love of community and leadership, the world is her oyster, as they say.

Congratulations, Yvonne!



Yvonne with other nurses during COVID. (submitted photo)

Avon-Washington Township Fire Dept. dispatched to active residence fire

Avon-Washington Township Fire Department was dispatched to an active residence fire in the Lexington Woods neighborhood, Tuesday, Dec. 19. The fire department arrived quickly and was able to get the fire under control quickly. All occupants, including the family dog, made it out safely and there were no injuries reported. Crews assisting with fire control were Wayne Township Fire Department and Plainfield Fire Territory. Avon-Washington Township did sustain damage to their equipment essential to fighting this fire when a vehicle ran over their hose lines, creating holes. Luckily, this damage was not critical and did not impede the fire department from fighting the fire, but upon further examination these hoses now have to be replaced. The fire department asks that anyone navigating around active fire equipment be aware of their surroundings.

The affected family lost everything in their home, including all of their vehicles. The family's neighbors quickly went to work and arranged a collection of items to help the family. There has been an amazing outpouring of clothing donations from our community. The family is asking for Visa, Kohl's, Target, Kroger, and Meijer Gift Cards to cover other expenses incurred and replacing lost items.

If you have any questions and would like to donate, please contact Elizabeth Meyer Hurst at meyerelizabethg@gmail.com or 317-370-1304.





We love our Hendricks County communities. If you have something you believe we should know about, please send to editorial@icontimes.com.

Electric cooperatives honor 'power and hope' of Indiana Youth

2023 Youth Power and Hope Awards winners announced

Indiana's electric cooperatives and their statewide magazine, Indiana Connection, recently honored four young Hoosiers in fifth-eighth grade who are making a difference in their communities. On Dec. 4, they received Youth Power and Hope Awards during the Indiana Electric Cooperatives Annual Meeting.

The recipients each received \$500 to further their community service activities and will be featured in the January 2024 issue of Indiana Connection magazine.

The recipient of the 2023 Youth Power and Hope Awards from Hendricks County was:

Leah Cox, Plainfield. Cox is an eighth grader at Plainfield Community Middle School. She is a National Junior Honor Society member and assists with a kindergarten class. She participates in the Special Winning Attitude Team (SWAT) through her karate dojo where she will eventually teach younger students the skills she is learning. Cox also volunteers at her church and fosters cats with her family.



Thank you!

FROM OUR ICON FAMILY TO YOURS A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND OUR READERS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO BRING YOU THE NEWS AND SERVE OUR COMMUNITY IN THE NEW YEAR!



Hendricks County ICON & 4-H Fairgrounds Make Donation

With the proceeds of the 2023 ICON Craft Show, held on Nov. 11, the Hendricks County ICON and the Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds donated \$500 to each of the following organizations: Brownsburg Lions Club, Plainfield Lions Club, and Boy Scout Troop #394. Thank you to all involved in making the craft show a huge success. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Craft Show next year!



ICONIC brief

Christmas Magic Comes Alive at Hendricks Symphony Concert

The Hendricks Symphony performed their 17th annual holiday concert earlier this month, featuring works from the Nutcracker Suite, the Hallelujah Chorus from The Messiah, the Concert Suite from Polar Express, and other famous holiday pieces. Santa Claus made a special appearance to give Conductor Amy Eggleston a unique Christmas tree decoration. The concert sold out in record time for both Friday and Sunday.

An audience favorite was the piece Angels From the Realms of Glory, arranged and transcribed by Dr. Al Lilly. Soloist Sam Hinkle was joined by Ye Olde Handbell Quire and the Hendricks Symphony Chorus and Orchestra. "The addition of so many talented soloists and groups made the experience truly magical and unforgettable" said one concert attendee, "My Christmas season isn't complete if I don't attend the holiday concert".

The Hendricks Symphony has two upcoming concerts in the month of February. The free Chamber Concert will take place on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. at Bartlett Chapel. The Magic of Mozart concert, featuring works Magic Flute and Requiem, will take place the weekend of Feb. 16. Tickets are on sale now. Visit the Hendricks Symphony website to learn more at www.hendrickssymphony.org.

About the Hendricks Symphony

Founded in 2007, the Hendricks Symphonic Society (HSS) has been a community staple for arts and music education. The HSS was founded as the result of a collaboration between a group of music lovers from Hendricks County with the shared vision of making quality music available in the area for a reasonable cost. Today, the HSS performs several concerts in a year, working year-round to provide an enjoyable experience for all music lovers in the area.

ICONIC brief

Indiana National Guard soldiers, airmen exempt from state income tax

INDIANAPOLIS – As tax season approaches, Hoosier National Guardsmen, which number approximately 12,000 troops, will no longer pay state income tax starting with their 2023 tax returns.

In April, the Indiana legislature passed the military exemption bill, House Bill 1034, and on May 1, Gov. Eric J. Holcomb signed it into law.

"By completely phasing out state taxes on military veteran retirement in 2022 and eliminating the state income tax for Hoosier Guardsmen in 2023, Indiana continues to demonstrate our state's enduring appreciation for the exemplary women and men who serve our local communities, state, and nation in the Indiana National Guard," Gov. Holcomb said.

The tax exemption applies to all Hoosier Guardsmen, which includes traditional members, military technicians, and full-time National Guard soldiers and airmen.

"I'm grateful for Gov. Holcomb's and the legislature's meaningful support for Hoosier Guardsmen through this exemption from state income tax," said Maj. Gen. Dale Lyles, Indiana's adjutant general. "Soldiers and airmen in our many uniquely rewarding careers will enjoy the additional benefit of keeping more of what they earn while serving our state and nation."

According to the Indiana Department of Revenue, a member of the National Guard is allowed a deduction from adjusted gross income for wages earned as a result of the member's military service, including service for National Guard state active-duty missions and federalized overseas missions.

The exemption also includes wages earned as a dual-status military technician. A dual-status technician is one who works full-time for the National Guard and must serve in the National Guard for that employment.

Exemptions do not apply for non dual-status technicians or independent military contractors. Exemptions also do not apply for wages earned from employment outside of military service.

Military personnel are required to file an Indiana income tax return if their gross income exceeds their exemptions. Income from all sources, both military and non-military, excluding military combat zone compensation, should be reported on the Indiana resident return, Form IT-40, even if the income is deducted in full for Indiana tax purposes.

More information can be found online at <https://www.in.gov/dor/files/reference/ib27.pdf>. Learn more about the Indiana National Guard at NationalGuard.IN.gov.



West Hospital Hendricks County ICONIC Athlete

SUCCESSING ON AND OFF THE MAT

Avon standout having a great senior year as a wrestler but also as a leader

By Josh George

Luke Rioux has always been around wrestling. He first started wrestling when he was just three years old. He is the second oldest of five brothers and they all wrestle as well. When he was young and new to wrestling, it was fun for him to go to practice and wrestle in tournaments. He wrestled for the Contenders Wrestling Academy and Avon dual team growing up. However, his journey has not always been smooth. There was a time he did not want to continue to wrestle and almost quit. Towards the end of middle school, the number one ranked team in the country called "Team Shutt" wanted him and his brother to wrestle for them. Luke says, "This showed me I was still able to compete at the national level. Since then, I have never backed down from a challenge and love the chance to get better and better opportunities."

Luke credits much of his success to his coaches around him, his teammates, and his parents. Luke had this to say about his parents, "My parents have always been supportive of everything I do with wrestling. My mom has pushed me to challenge myself more and more through every level I have competed at. My dad has supported me and informed me as best he can with every opportunity that has come my way." Coach Parrish at Contenders Wrestling Academy has influenced Luke throughout his entire life and proven to him that he can work through anything. Coach Alex Johns and Coach Sturgill at Avon have

told him they believe he can beat anyone he faces while also preparing him for any scenario that could happen. They make sure he works hard and improves every day. Luke loves the brotherhood he has with his high school team. They love hanging out with each other off the field. Rioux says, "There are no other teammates I would want."

Luke's list of accolades as a wrestler seems to be endless. He has qualified for semi-state every season that Coach Johns has been there. His

sophomore season, Luke qualified for the IHSAA State Finals and placed sixth at 106 lbs. Last season, Luke lost three matches. All three of his losses came to the kids who finished as state champ, state runner-up, and third place. Luke currently is ranked third in the state at the 126 lb. weight class. He picked up his 100th career win a few weeks ago which is a remarkable and special accomplishment. Luke said, "It meant a lot to me. To look up into the stands and see all my teammates and all the parents holding up signs and posters they made was an amazing night. I have not had many matches that felt like that one did. It

was such an amazing experience."

From talking with Luke's coaches and parents, it is apparent that he is a leader on and off the mat. Coach Alex Johns had this to say about Luke: "Luke is a competitor and a great leader. He has received our

leadership award the last two seasons, and many of his teammates look to him for guidance. He has also gone above and beyond to coach and mentor youth wrestlers in our Avon Wrestling Club program.

He attends practices and tournaments and has become a great role model for our youth wrestlers. Luke is a team captain. He is a vocal leader who also leads by example. He has been one of the most consistent team members in our line-up." As mentioned above, Luke helps coach youth wrestlers in the Avon community. He is also on the unified track team for Avon. It is evident that Luke is a great kid with great leadership ability.

Luke and his coaches have some high expectations for himself and the Avon team the rest of the season. The Avon wrestling

team is currently ranked number four in the state with six individuals (including Luke) all ranked in the top 10 in their weight class. Avon is 18-1 winning the Cathedral Super Six, Castle Six-Way, and the New Haven Super 10. This past weekend, they learned they have qualified for the 4A IHSWCA Team State Duals which will take place on Saturday, Jan. 6, 2024 at Brownsburg High School. Alex had two goals coming into the year - for his Avon team to make state and for himself to win state. He knows his team, coaches, and himself are willing and hungry to put the work in to make these a reality.

The Rioux name is well known in the Avon wrestling community. His oldest brother, Ray, wrestles at the University of Indianapolis and was a 2x state runner-up for Avon. He has another brother, Nathan, that is currently a sophomore and wrestles for Avon and was a state runner-up last season for Avon. His younger brother, Sam, wrestles for the middle school, and his youngest brother, Miles, wrestles for the Avon Wrestling Club. Luke hopes to follow in his oldest brother's footsteps and wrestle in college. He is not committed but very interested in the University of Indianapolis, Marian, Wabash, and Ivy Tech. Luke has certainly left his mark on the Avon wrestling program! **We wish Luke and his team the best of luck moving on in the season and congratulations on being the Hendricks County ICONIC Athlete of the Week!**



Welcome Amna Ahmed, MD
to the cardiology team at IU Health West Hospital.
Call **317.962.0500** to schedule an appointment.



West Hospital

Notables

Compiled by Josh George

Girls Basketball



Avon – 62 | Brownsburg – 58

Avon wins the B&O Bell

Avon:

Makaylee Butts – 22 Points

Aniah Smith – 18 Points

Danville – 62 | Greencastle – 26

Danville:

Emma Ancelet – 19 Points, 8 Rebounds,
7 Assists, 10 Steals

Boys Basketball

Cascade – 36 | North Putnam – 34

*Carter Sanders with the buzzer beater to
win it for the Cadets!*

Tri-West – 58 | Harrison – 54

Miller, Sorgi, Gardner, Dakin – 9 Points

Robertson, Ward – 8 Points



Brownsburg – 59 | Avon – 42

Brownsburg wins the B&O Bell!

Jordan Lomax – 22 Points

Grant Porath – 9 Points

Jesiah Sloss – 4 Blocks

Plainfield Swimming and Diving

*Girls finish 1st at the Hendricks
County Invite, Boys finish 2nd*

Brownsburg Wrestling

Wins the Carnahan Invitational

Local Candidates Sworn In

On Nov. 7, 2023 citizens from Hendricks County went to the polls to let their voice be heard and on Dec. 21 those men and women that were elected to local office were sworn in by the Hon. Judge Ryan Tanselle at the Hendricks County Courthouse, amongst their friends and family. The Danville American Legion Post #118 presented the colors and Anne Engelhardt, chairman of the GOP, gave the invocation. Congratulations to our county's newest elected officials and thank you for serving your community.

Amo Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Barbara Strahl**

Amo Town Council, At Large: **A Rene Gay**

Amo Town Council, At Large: **Donna Watson**

Amo Town Council, At Large: **Mark Wicks**

Avon Town Council, Treasurer: **Julie Loker**

Avon Town Council, At Large: **Robert Pope**

Avon Town Council, At Large: **Jayson Puckett**

Brownsburg Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Ann Hathaway**

Brownsburg Town Council, Ward 2: **Glenn Adams**

Brownsburg Town Council, Ward 3: **Cynthia Hohman**

Brownsburg Town Council, Ward 4: **Matt Simpson**

Brownsburg Town Judge: **Charles (Gene) Hostetter**

Clayton Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Ginny McKamey**

Clayton Town Council, At Large: **Doug Bignell**

Clayton Town Council, At Large: **John Culley**

Clayton Town Council, At Large: **David Ernest**

Coatesville Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Ronald Slover**

Coatesville Town Council, At Large: **Jerry Decker**

Coatesville Town Council, At Large: **James Ellett**

Coatesville Town Council, At Large: **Chris Johnson**

Danville Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Carrie Lofton**

Danville Town Council, At Large: **Bret Doub**

Danville Town Council, At Large: **Dave Potter**

Lizton Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Nicole Kish**

Lizton Town Council, At Large: **Robert Fisher**

Lizton Town Council, At Large: **Stephen Rothgerber**

Plainfield Town Clerk: **Mark Todisco**

Plainfield Town Council, Ward 1: **Gary Everling**

Plainfield Town Council, Ward 4: **Robin Brandgard**

Plainfield Town Council, Ward 5: **Dan Bridget**

Plainfield Town Judge: **Scott Knierim**

Pittsboro Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Shari Ping**

Pittsboro Town Council, Ward 1: **Larry Compton**

Pittsboro Town Council, Ward 2: **Jarod Baker**

Pittsboro Town Council, Ward 3: **Terry Northern**

Stilesville Town Clerk-Treasurer: **Dana Carter**

Stilesville Town Council, At Large: **Ernest Newbie**

Stilesville Town Council, At Large: **Kevin Turnbull**

Stilesville Town Council, At Large: **Barbara Webster**



Jayson Puckett is sworn in by the Hon. Judge Tanselle. (Submitted photo)



HENDRICKS REGIONAL HEALTH CELEBRATES THE UNSTOPPABLE SPIRIT OF TOMORROW'S LEADERS

A feature in the Hendricks County ICON highlighting leaders of tomorrow.

Demonstrating a passion for leadership through her love of ballet

By Kate Anderson

Have you ever met an individual that inspires you just by talking to them? Someone that just exudes a passion for something, and their excitement is almost palpable? Addi Thomas is one of those individuals. Thomas, a senior at Danville High School, is a young woman of many talents and interests. At the young age of three, her parents enrolled her in ballet classes at The Children's Ballet in Danville, which focuses on being a classical school of dance. She quickly grew to love dance and has never looked back. "My passion for ballet has always been unwavering, and I will always want to be part of this world," said Thomas. At 11 years old, her passion and commitment to dance allowed her to advance to en-pointe ballet, where a dancer uses the tip of her foot to support her weight on the floor.

Two years ago, and as a more senior member of the school, she began an internship with The Children's Ballet. With the encouragement and leadership examples of Miss Emily, Creative Director, and Anne Johansson, Owner of The Children's Ballet, Thomas began a more involved role with the school. What started out as simply demonstrating and assisting Miss Emily's classes has led her teaching her own class of five through seven-year-olds and to learning more about the ins and outs of owning and running a studio. "I love teaching my class. I love encouraging my students to push past their limits and challenge themselves. It is

a great reward to see their smiling faces when they accomplish something they didn't think they could do. I love to watch them learn and grow," says Thomas. She now subs for instructors as needed and assists in other projects for The Children's Ballet on both a small and large scale. She has organized fundraising for them and has assisted in the grand opening of the school's newest location in Plainfield, across from Hendricks Live!, the new and upcoming Performing Arts Center.

Though she has an intense love for ballet, she has developed other interests as well. Her devotion to ballet has led her to a focus on fitness to build her stamina and endurance, both of which are key to performance of any length, but especially those that are more involved and in depth. What started out as simple weightlifting as part of a fitness regimen morphed into powerlifting at the competitive level. "I feel like ballet helps with the mental aspect of powerlifting and powerlifting helps with



the physical aspect of ballet. They work side by side in many ways," said Thomas. She also manages to further balance her time and is the student manager of Danville High School's Wrestling Team, and this past semester was elected President of the Student Council.

During this holiday season, she performed in The Children's Ballet performance of "The Nutcracker". Though she assists with rehearsals with younger children, she will also be performing herself in four different roles. "The roles are intense and there is a lot of choreography for each character. I find myself not only practicing at the school, but also at home," said Thomas. When asked how she prepared for her performance she simply states, "I let faith guide me. I pray for my performance and the performance of others. I love the people I dance with and without them, I couldn't do what I love."

Now in her 15th year and final year with the school she will complete her internship next semester and is starting to turn her

focus towards the future. She is committed to attending college at Anderson University as a double major in the School of Nursing and the School of Dance. The Children's Ballet is her home in so many ways and she has grown up with this group of students she has come to know so well. The gifts of leadership and strength of character she learned will stay with her long after she leaves. "In ballet, I have learned to push myself past my limits and break through barriers I never knew I could. I will always have dance in my life," said Thomas. Though she has learned so much from her teachers throughout the years, she has learned to be a true leader herself. "One of the things that sets The Children's Ballet apart is our apprentice program in which we offer students the opportunity to assist with classes and help with rehearsals during the season. Addi is an example of an apprentice who has the temperament and exemplary skills necessary to teach her own class. We are very proud of her leadership, dedication to her dancers, and commitment to our school," said Anne Johansson, executive director. Addi's future holds nothing but promise and it can be said that she is "pointing" in the right direction. Look for great things to come from this young woman.

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DEI BWN, Holiday Meal Making, Plainfield

Duke Energy Indiana's Business Womens' Network hosted holiday meal making volunteer events to support Family Promise of Hendricks County and Lifeline Christian Mission. Pre-made casserole meals were assembled for homeless families and individuals served by Family Promise and stored in a deep freezer purchased by the Duke Energy Foundation. BWN also provided a \$2,500 donation. A second team of volunteers assembled meals to benefit international communities such as Haiti and Somalia. Lifeline Christian Ministry works to feed hungry and malnourished populations in the U.S. and abroad. Duke Energy also provided a \$1,000 donation.



LET US BOOK YOUR 2023 EVENT OR WEDDING!



The 33,000 sq. ft. Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds and Conference Complex is designed to meet any of your social meeting needs: banquets, meetings, seminars or wedding events - we can do it all! Our friendly and knowledgeable staff are ready to make your event worry-free and memorable!



\$50 OFF
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or more

Must present coupon at time of order. Expires 12-31-23.



SPECIAL FEATURES

- Nine conference classrooms and boardrooms
- Complete commercial kitchen
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317-718-6153 | www.4HComplex.org

NIGHT & day

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
ENTERTAINING

EVENTS calendar

JANUARY

On-Going Activity

Indoor Play Spaces

There are a few local churches that offer indoor play spaces to the community for free. They're great places for kids to run off some energy during the winter months.

Plainfield Christian Church in Plainfield offers their indoor playground The Treehouse on Tuesdays or Thursdays. They are open year-round.

The Center at Northview Church in Danville recently opened this year and offers an indoor playscape, a turf field, and meeting rooms. Fields Coffee is also in the space. So, you can grab a coffee while the kids play. They have tables and chairs throughout as well so it's a great place to meet up with friends or have a snack after playing. They are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. There is no entrance fee, and you can reserve some of the space on their site.

30 Saturday

Last Saturday Live

7 - 10 p.m., The Prewitt Restaurant and Lounge, 121 W. Main St., Plainfield. Join us on the last Saturday of EVERY month for live music from 7 - 10 p.m. and our Chef's Prime Rib feature! This is an event you won't want to miss. No cover charge or reservation required.

31 Sunday

Brightly's NYE Bash: A Kids-Only Party
2 - 4 p.m. and 2:15 - 4:15 p.m., Brightly Art Studio, 22 E. Main St., Brownsburg.

Come ring in a creative new year! This two-hour drop-off party will be full of artmaking, sensory play, and celebrating! It's going to be an epic bash! What they want: a fun time for just the kids to create, play, and laugh! What you want: a few hours during this busy season to check off some to-dos & maybe grab a peaceful meal! Let us win the day, friends! We encourage artists to dress for a mess. \$45.50 per person

31 Sunday

Bicentennial Birthday Bash

5 - 7 p.m., Washington Township Park Pavilion Center, 435 Whipple Lane, Avon. Join Washington Township, Washington Township Parks Department, Washington Township Avon Fire Department, and the Avon Public Library for a family-friendly New Year's Eve Celebration. The evening culminates in a dazzling fireworks display at 7 p.m. thanks to event sponsors, RL Turner Corporation. For more information, visit wtp.recdesk.com

31 Sunday

X-Golf New Year's Eve Party

8 p.m. - 1 a.m., X-Golf Plainfield, 313 Marketplace Mile, Suite 120, Plainfield. Tee off 2024 right! Eat, Drink, and Play! Enjoy live music by Kevin Jones Project Band starting at 8 p.m.. Complimentary Champagne Toast at Midnight. Reservations required.

1 January 2024 Monday

Luminary First Day Hike

5:30 p.m., Arbuckle Acres Park/ Recreation/Park & Gardens, 200 N. Green St., Brownsburg. Kick off the New Year on the right foot and get out in nature! Join the park naturalist on a luminary stroll through Arbuckle Acres Park and discover some

unique Brownsburg history along the way. For more information, visit brownsburgparks.com.

2 Tuesday

Trivia Night

7 p.m., Brew Link Brewing, 4710 E. US Hwy 40, Plainfield. Trivia Buffs! NapTown Trivia will be hanging at the pub every Tuesday! Bring your best friend, have a pint, and let's finally figure out which one of you is smarter!

2 & 4 Tuesday & Thursday

Open Skate

5 - 7 p.m., Penguin Park, Murphy Aquatic Park, 753 S. CR 625 E., Avon. \$8 per person.

2 Tuesday

Hambone's Trivia Night

7 - 8:30 p.m., The Prewitt Restaurant and Lounge, 121 W. Main St., Plainfield. Introducing Tuesday Trivia at The Prewitt. Bring your friends, enjoy \$4 draft beers, and put your knowledge to the test. The game will begin at 7 p.m. and the winning team will receive a \$50 gift card.

3 Wednesday

Winter Family Program

4:30 - 6:30 p.m., Brownsburg Public Library, 450 S. Jefferson St., Brownsburg. Kick off the New Year by stopping by the Children's Department for games, crafts, fun reading activities, and more! For all ages. No registration required.

4 Thursday

Puppet Show: The Frog Prince

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. Danville-Center Township Public Library, 101 S. Indiana St., Danville. The Puppet Show will feature the story of The Frog Prince.

Registration is open to children of all ages. For more information, visit: dplindiana.org or call 317-745-2604.

4 Thursday

Gentle Slow-Flow Yoga

9:15 - 11:15 a.m., Brownsburg Public Library, 450 S. Jefferson St., Brownsburg. A 60-minute class that incorporates conscious breathwork along with a sequence of dynamic and energetic poses designed to increase strength, flexibility, and balance in the body, mind, and spirit. The teacher will provide modifications of the different poses to meet the varying skills among the students in the class. Props will be provided but please bring your own mat. Adults only. Cost per class is \$10 and paid at the door. Scholarships available, if needed.

8 January - 18 February

Reading is my happy place: Winter Reading Challenge Virtual Challenge

Age Group: Family, Infant (0-1 yrs), Toddler (1-3 ½ yrs), Preschool (3 ½-6 yrs), School Age (6-10 yrs), Tween (Grades 6-8), Teen (Grades 9-12), Adult. This challenge is open to all ages. Make a BINGO (vertical, horizontal, or diagonal) by finding YOUR happy place to read. Follow the suggested prompts to find new places and ways to enjoy reading. Read as little or as much as you like, for a chance to win a prize bundle. Every registration earns a pair of eclipse glasses, too! Register or log onto <https://bburglibrary.beanstack.com> or use the Beanstack app to get started. For more information, email askus@bburglibrary.net or call 317-852-3167.

9 Tuesday

Hendricks County Winter Farmers Market

4 - 7 p.m., Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds and Conference Complex,

1900 E. Main St., Danville. Shop local, spend local, eat local, enjoy local. Come out and support local farmers, producers, food inspired companies, and arts and craft during the fall/winter season. For more information, call 317-603-0751.

9 Tuesday
Trivia Night

7 p.m., Brew Link Brewing, 4710 E. US Hwy 40, Plainfield. Trivia Buffs! NapTown Trivia will be hanging at the pub every Tuesday! Bring your best friend, have a pint, and let's finally figure out which one of you is smarter!

9 Tuesday
Sensory Skate

2 - 3 p.m., Penguin Park, Murphy Aquatic Park, 753 S. CR 625 E., Avon. A quieter and less stimulating environment. \$6 per person, skates included. Spectators and children under three are free.

9 Tuesday
Hambone's Trivia Night

7 - 8:30 p.m., The Prewitt Restaurant and Lounge, 121 W. Main St., Plainfield. Introducing Tuesday Trivia at The Prewitt. Bring your friends, enjoy \$4 draft beers, and put your knowledge to the test. The game will begin at 7 p.m. and the winning team will receive a \$50 gift card.

11 Thursday
Live Music

7 - 9 p.m., The Prewitt Restaurant and Lounge, 121 W. Main St., Plainfield. Live music is on stage every Thursday from 7 - 9 p.m. Check out our music calendar on our website for upcoming performers. For more information, visit prewittdining.com.

11 Thursday
Chair Yoga

10:30-11:30 am, Brownsburg Public Library, 450 S. Jefferson St., Brownsburg. Find your center and get grounded in body, mind, and spirit in this gentle class. Chair yoga is practiced either sitting or using chairs for support in various postures and is designed to mindfully increase range of motion while meeting students where they are. We will work on stretching, range of motion, balance, breathing, and overall, a sense of wellbeing. This class is ideal for students with limited mobility or healing from injury. Appropriate for students of all levels. Adults only. Cost is \$10 per class and paid at the door. Scholarships available, if needed.

11 Thursday
Homeschool Skate

2 - 3 p.m., Penguin Park, Murphy Aquatic Park, 753 S. CR 625 E., Avon. \$6 per person, skates included. Spectators and children under 3 are free.

FIRST HIKE OF THE YEAR AT POCK WOODS

\$4.00/PERSON

1:00-2:00PM

JANUARY 6, 2024

• CHILDREN UNDER 5 - FREE
• DOGS ON LEASH WELCOME

Pecar Park

BE SAFE DURING THE
HO-HO-HOLIDAYS
10 TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY JOLLY



Before you plan out your new holiday lighting scheme or repeat last year's festive design, keep these 10 safety tips in mind when decorating outdoors:

- 1 Do not toss light strands up into the air. They could get too close to or come into contact with a power line.
- 2 Before using a ladder, always look up and assess all power line locations.
- 3 Carry a ladder horizontally when transporting it.
- 4 Keep at least 10 feet between yourself (and any item you are holding) and a power line.
- 5 Do not use staples or nails or tacks to secure light strands, cords, wires or extension cords.
- 6 String together no more than the number of strands (or fewer) recommended by the manufacturer.
- 7 Plug all lights and extension cords into GFCI-protected outlets.
- 8 Use lights and extension cords rated for outdoor use.
- 9 Do not use frayed, cracked or otherwise damaged cords, plugs or lights.
- 10 Use only lights and products certified by a reputable testing lab.

Safe Electricity.org[®] LEARN MORE AT:



Tom Iles named Lion of the Year for 2022-2023

Club President Tom Iles was named Lion of the Year for 2022-2023 by the Plainfield Lions Club during their annual Christmas dinner with District Governor Patti Foxx on Dec. 11th. "The Lion of the Year is one of the most prestigious awards presented by members of the Club in recognition of a Lion who best exhibits the principles of Lionism within the Club and in the community" said Past District Governor and Plainfield club member Gary Lawson. The Club Excellence Award was also presented to President Tom Iles by District Governor Foxx on behalf of Lions International in recognition of his leadership as president for excelling in the areas of membership, service, leadership and organizational excellence, and marketing. Tom received a 10-year membership chevron and Wayne Carter received a 40-year membership chevron by District Governor Foxx during the festivities.

According to Past District Governor Gary Lawson, Tom epitomizes the motto of Lions: "We Serve". Lion Tom is an exemplar Lion and lives to serve each day. If it has anything to do with public service or Lions, this member consistently shows dependability, leadership, cooperation, sincerity of purpose, and exhibits the best attitude when representing Lionism to the Club, community or District." He has been involved in all of the Club's community and service activities undertaken

in his 10-year membership and has volunteered for many other activities outside the Club. Tom's newest project was heading up a fourth craft fair in addition to the annual citrus sale. Almost \$10,800 was raised, all going to fund the Club's service projects. Tom's pet project is preschool vision screenings for preventable causes of blindness. Under Tom's guidance, the Plainfield Lions has grown the program into the state's largest preschool vision screening by Indiana Lions having screened 540 children from 13 locations in 2023. Twenty children have been referred for additional screening by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. All the children received a free age appropriate book to promote literacy.



Tom Iles (submitted photo)

A Festivus airing of grammar grievances

GRAMMAR GUY

By Curtis Honeycutt

I do my best to put a positive spin on grammar. After all, having a solid grasp of the English language can help you get ahead in life. I'll take that truth to my grave.

However, I occasionally receive visits in the night from holiday hoodlums. In fact, just the other night, I recorded this conversation between the Grammar Grinch and Syntax Scrooge. These guys are the Statler and Waldorf of word nerdery. I recorded them airing their grammar

Grievances. Frank Costanza would be proud.

Scrooge: I can't believe people still add apostrophes on their holiday cards. "Season's Greetings from the Miller's?!" The Miller's what? The Miller's dog? Never add an apostrophe to your last name on a holiday card!

Grinch: I know, right? Kids these days — going to heck in a holiday handbasket. Just the other day, I heard a few street youths dropping "to be" from their sentences! I heard one say, "The clothes need washed!" The next thing you know, they'll drop Shakespeare from English lit!

Scrooge: To be, or not to be.

Grinch: Preach.

Scrooge: I like the idea of Festivus. That "Seinfeld" show had a lot going for it. Now, it's time for the feats of strength.

Grinch: Thanks for that fruitcake, by the way. Talk about "feats of strength"

— that thing is tougher than a brick. It's not the least bit moist!

Scrooge: Ewwwww...did you have to say "moist"?

Grinch: I tell it like it is.

Scrooge: How about this one — a whole 'nother!

Grinch: Oh, brother.

Scrooge: I know the Instagram hipsters are saying this. I saw a video reposted from a TikTok reposted from a VHS tape in which a crazy uncle said, "That's not my president! He's a whole 'nother type of crazy!" What is the world coming to?

Grinch: Did you just end your sentence with a preposition?

Scrooge: Allow me to rephrase that: What is the world coming to, you jerk?

Grinch: Touche.

Scrooge: Mr. Grinch, I'd like to raise a glass of heavily rummed eggnog to you and all the word nerds out there. Let's quaff heartily to taking over the world with good grammar!

Grinch: Hear, hear! You're making my heart grow three sizes over here. Happy Festivus, old friend. A donation has been made in your name to The Human Fund.

Scrooge: Better than socks, I suppose. Happy Festivus, ol' buddy. Watch your use of the passive voice.



Curtis Honeycutt is a wildly popular syndicated humor columnist. He is the author of *Good Grammar is the Life of the Party: Tips for a Wildly Successful Life*. Find more at curtishoneycutt.com

DUMB LAW

Our nation has all sorts of arcane, nonsensical laws on the books. Each issue, we'll share one with you ...

In California, it is illegal to set a mousetrap without a hunting license.

Source: dumblaws.com

Coloring Contest Winner Announced

Brought to you by the Hendricks County ICON and Chick-fil-A of Avon



Thank you to all kiddos that submitted coloring pages for the coloring contest. We are excited to announce Zarah Ford as our grand prize winner! Runners-up were Ivy Wade, Faith Helbig, Madison Pope, EJ and Teague Shelby and Channing Crawford.

Zarah Ford - Grand Prize Winner

Zarah is 13 years old and is in seventh grade at Paul Hadley Middle School where her favorite subject is Language Arts. She would like a Sphynx cat for Christmas and loves to play outside with her friends. She entered the coloring contest at the urging of her grandmother because she thought it would be fun.

Runners-Up

Faith Helbig

Faith lives in Avon and is home schooled. She wants a sewing kit and books for Christmas and loves to read and write.

EJ & Teague Shelby

EJ is in seventh grade at Brownsburg East and her brother Teague is in second grade. EJ would like court shoes for tennis for Christmas. She loves playing tennis and plays both singles and doubles.

Madison Pope

Madison attends Avon Intermediate West and wants a cat for Christmas. She loves playing with animals and playing her saxophone and enjoys being in guard.

Ivy Wade

Ivy is home schooled and lives in Avon. She wants slime for Christmas and loves making homemade slime!



THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

By Dick Wolfsie

Each year I devote two columns to review what I wrote about during the previous 11 months. For example, last winter I wrote about a cruise we took to Puerto Rico. Getting on the ship's elevator required us to scan our room card. I kept swiping but the elevator door didn't open. A fellow passenger walked by. "You're scanning the hand sanitizer," he told me.

One night I carried the TV remote onto the veranda outside our room that overlooked the ocean. The device slipped out of my hand when the ship rocked and it landed in the Atlantic.

"That's never happened before," said the steward. "What were you doing when you dropped it?"

"I was channel surfing," I told him.

I made reservations for our trip to the nation's capital to attend a college reunion. Mary Ellen asked me to call and confirm that our hotel was close enough

to walk to some of the area highlights.

"How far are you from the White House?" I asked the clerk.

"About three thousand miles," he told me. I booked a hotel in Washington, alright. In Seattle, Washington.

I was frustrated that a website rejected some new passwords, so I just ran my fingers haphazardly across the keyboard. VERY STRONG, said the prompt. Please remember to write it down. But I had no idea what I had typed. Was it K\$DFJHG%\$ or was it YQW%KW?0&? Then I tried something simpler. I tried HERCULES, but it was rejected as WEAK. Then I tried SAMPSON. This time it said VERY WEAK. The people at this website have not read their mythology. But it did answer the age-old question of who was stronger.

I asked an AI program to write an essay on why Dick Wolfsie was not funny, just to see what it would come up with. My wife was not impressed when she read it.

"Dick this is outrageous; it's full of inaccuracies. You didn't bore people for 30 years on TV."

"Thank you, Mary Ellen."

"Wasn't it closer to 40?"

With all the Artificial Intelligence warnings, my wife is paranoid that someone might steal one of our identities. Recently I called Mary Ellen to get her Social Security number for a form I was filling out. That's when she gave me a little quiz to be sure it was me....like what's your brother's name? What was the name of your first dog? She still wasn't convinced.

"Mary Ellen, you may ask one more question. Make it a good one."

"Okay, Dick—or whoever you are,—when we got married, we stayed in a magnificent vacation spot in Big Sur, California. You said it was the most romantic, glorious hotel you had ever been in and it was a weekend you would never forget. What was the name of the hotel?"

"I don't have a clue."

"Okay, it's definitely you."

This past spring, we went downtown to a cute little Bed and Breakfast to celebrate our wedding anniversary. The owner took us upstairs to show us the room, which was very quaint. There was one tiny bed. I'd say, it was a double bed. But, barely.

"Do you like your accommodations?" asked the proprietor.

"I love it," said my wife, "but where is my husband going to sleep?"

The woman winked at me. "This is your romantic anniversary. I'm sure you will make it work."

"Even on our honeymoon, this wouldn't have worked," said Mary Ellen.



Dick Wolfsie's weekly humor column is published in more than 30 newspapers. Dick has written 14 books, including *Mornings with Barney* and *Indiana Curiosities*. His newest book, *The Right Fluff*, is a compilation of his most popular humor columns. He lives in Fishers with his wife Mary Ellen and a cat who doesn't like him.

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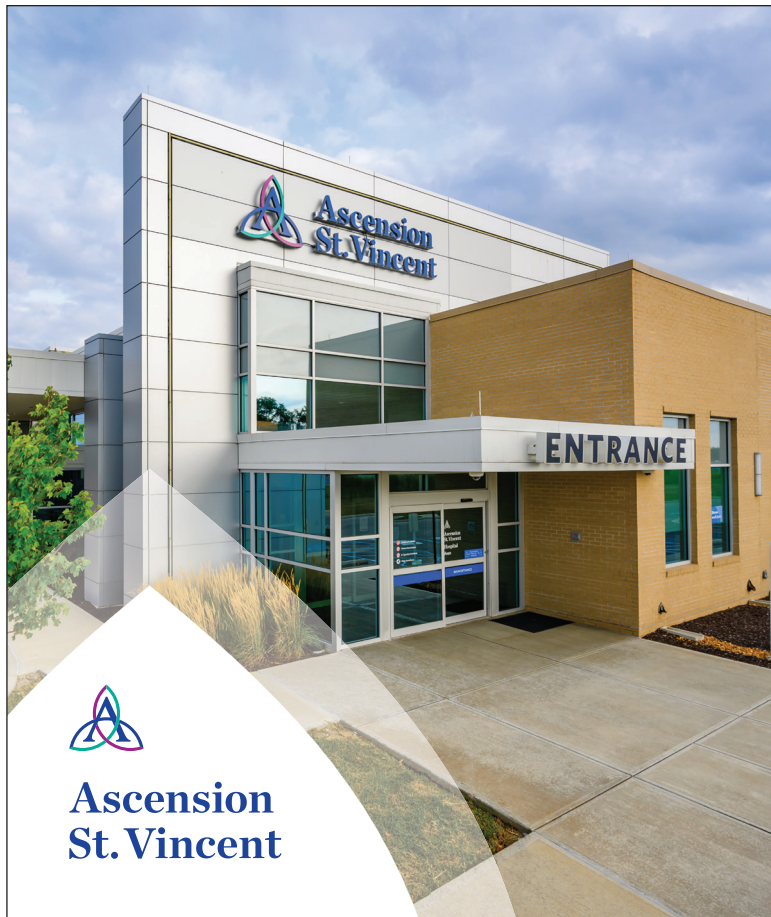


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Let's Talk: Period.

By: Dr. Jessica Healey, OB/GYN at IU Health West

Menstruation is a normal and healthy part of life for most women, but as common as it is, it can be difficult to talk about. Dr. Jessica Healey, OB/GYN at IU Health West and mom of two young daughters, knows it's important for young girls to be prepared and informed. She answered questions about the menstrual cycle, how to approach conversations surrounding the topic, and how an OB/GYN can help.

What is the menstrual cycle?

"When a girl reaches puberty, the brain will start to produce hormones that signal changes in the body, which are meant to prepare her body to be able to become pregnant. Those hormones will thicken an inner layer of tissue inside the uterus called the endometrium so that it can provide blood flow to a potential pregnancy. A menstrual period occurs when the body then recognizes that it's not pregnant and will shed this endometrial lining. Women will often experience cramping as the muscle of the uterus contracts to help push out this old blood and tissue. This is experienced by women as the blood and tissue leave the uterus through its opening called the cervix. It then comes out through the vagina and is seen as blood, or better known as a period."

When do girls typically get their first period?

"Average age of starting the first period is 12 or 13.

Some girls can start as young as age eight and others may not start until as late as age 15. If they haven't started by about age 15, they probably should start having conversations with their doctor."

Do you have any tips on how to approach these conversations?

"I think listening to the curiosity your child has and being willing and open to discuss those things when they come to you is important. Being able to just educate yourself on the menstrual cycle and what your child might experience is also key. A lot of adults still don't really understand what it is or why it's happening or the timeline of how things happen. If that's the case, do your own research, or if you have an OB/GYN, you can ask them those questions. If you feel very uncomfortable, it's also very reasonable and appropriate to ask either your child's pediatrician or have your child see an OB/GYN to have these initial discussions."

For more information, visit iuhealth.org/womens-health or rileychildrens.org/avonpeds.



Jessica Healey is a gynecologist at IU Health West.

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Lori Lee

By Julie Brackemyre

1. In what town do you live, and how long have you lived in Hendricks County?

I moved to Plainfield from Logansport (where I grew up) in 1987 to give my children more opportunities to thrive. Best decision I've ever made.

2. Describe your immediate family to us.

Husband - Rick Lee
Three children; Jen and Jimmy (twins), daughter Julie, two stepchildren, and seven grandchildren.

3. Does your family identify with a certain faith, and if so, can you tell us more about the traditions in your faith?

Member of The Branches Church; we are a collection of families who grow in our faith together and worship together.

4. If you do not identify with a certain faith, what inspires you?

I believe faith is the ability to have "faith"



even when times are tough. Faith that life will move on; things will be fine in some way even when it doesn't seem possible. That to me is inspiring.

5. Describe your perfect family outing.

I love picnics. Family getting together to go hiking. Sitting together on the beach with a lot of food and snacks. Just being together.

6. What is your favorite family tradition?

Christmas at the Zoo; family bingo with prizes; Birthday parties with my homemade chocolate éclair cake which is always requested.

7. What are three words to describe the reasons you choose to live in Hendricks County?

Amenities
Education
Opportunities

8. Ask your youngest child (or spouse or sibling) to describe you.

Rick, my husband, says I never stop moving. He calls me a "hummingbird."

PUZZLES ANSWERS FROM PAGE 21

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Answers to HOOSIER HODGEPODGE:

Parts: CLIFF, FACE, GORGE, LEDGE, RIDGE, SUMMIT;
Breads: BAGUETTE, FOCACCIA, RYE, SOURDOUGH, WHITE;
Sections: FICTION, HISTORY, HUMOR, TRAVEL;
Bills: GAS, RENT, WATER;
Counties: TIPPECANOE, TIPTON;

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*“Celebrate endings -
For they precede new
beginnings.”*

— Jonathan Huie

FORtheRECORD - HC OBITUARIES

AVON

Leon Brewer

Leon Brewer, 72, Avon, passed away on December 12, 2023. He was born on August 5, 1951. A Celebration of Life was held on December 18, 2023, at Conkle Funeral Home in Avon.

Mary Edith (Mitchell) Christie

Mary Edith (Mitchell) Christie, 93, Avon, passed away on December 11th, 2023. She was born on July 11th, 1930. Cremation arrangements have been entrusted to Jones Family Mortuary in Mooresville.

Nancy J. Coats

Nancy J. Coats, 63, Avon, passed away on December 20, 2023. She was born on October 13, 1960. Services were held on December 28, 2023, at Matthews Mortuary in Brownsburg.

Henry "Hank" Freitag Jr.

Henry "Hank" Freitag Jr., 86, Avon, passed away on December 20, 2023. He was born on September 30, 1937. Hank was a United States Air Force veteran. Funeral services will be Saturday, December 30, 2023, at 1 p.m. in Hampton-Gentry Funeral Home with visitation from 11 a.m. until the time of service at 1 p.m. Burial will follow in Maple Hill Cemetery.

Sharon R. Graf

Sharon R. Graf, 79, Avon, passed away on December 13, 2023. She was born on March 13, 1944. Services were held on December 22, 2023, at St. Anthony Catholic Church. Memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association or the Hendricks County Humane Society.

Wilma Stidam

Wilma Stidam, 79, Avon, passed away on December 12, 2023. She was born on July 28, 1944. Memorial donations may be made in Wilma's name to the Alzheimer's Association. Helton & Harris Funeral Homes are entrusted with arrangements.

BROWNSBURG

Jeffrey Dean Crose

Jeffrey Dean Crose, 62, Brownsburg, passed away on December 17, 2023. He was born on November 10, 1961. He was a United States Army Veteran. Services were held on December 22, 2023, at Matthews Mortuary in Brownsburg.

Howard Haight

Howard Haight, 71, Brownsburg, passed away on December 13, 2023. He was born on April 20, 1952. Arrangements are entrusted to Eric M.D. Bell Funeral Home.

Helen A. Hubbell

Helen A. Hubbell, 101, Brownsburg, passed away on December 10, 2023. She was born on May 26, 1922. Services were held on December 13, 2023, at Matthews Mortuary in Brownsburg.

Ronald E. Watts

Ronald E. Watts, 82, Brownsburg, passed away on December 12, 2023. He was born on July 20, 1941. He was a United States Army Veteran. Services were held on December 18, 2023, at Matthews Mortuary in Brownsburg.

CLAYTON:

Raymond Larry Dillon

Raymond Larry Dillon, 68, Clayton, passed away on December 12, 2023. He was born on August 03, 1955. He was a United States Marine Corp. Veteran. Services were held on December 15, 2023, in the Hazelwood Christian Church. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the DAV- Disabled American Veterans P. O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250-0301. Baker Funeral Home in Danville is handling the arrangements.

DANVILLE

Ryan James Stoneking

Ryan James Stoneking, 35, Danville, passed away on December 18, 2023. He was born on December 16, 1988. Baker Funeral Home in Danville is handling the arrangements. There will be no services at this time. A memorial gathering will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Hendricks County Animal Shelter, 250 E. Campus Blvd., Danville, IN 46122.

PLAINFIELD

Nancy L. Anderson

Nancy L. Anderson, 71, Plainfield, passed away on December 13, 2023. She was born on March 17, 1952. Arrangements are currently pending in the care of Eric MD Bell Funeral Home and Cremation Services in Pittsboro.

Beverly A. Brodie

Beverly A. Brodie, 81, Plainfield, passed away on December 17, 2023. She was born on December 25, 1941. Final care and arrangements have been entrusted to Carlisle-Branson Funeral Service & Crematory in Mooresville. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

John E. Dingman

John E. Dingman, 80, Plainfield, passed away on December 17, 2023. He was born on September 7, 1943. John was a United States Army Veteran. Services were held on December 22, 2023. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Camp Allendale (4605 S. Allendale Dr., Trafalgar, IN 46181) <https://www.camp-allendale.org/memorial> or the International Disaster Emergency Service.

Paul S. Gunning

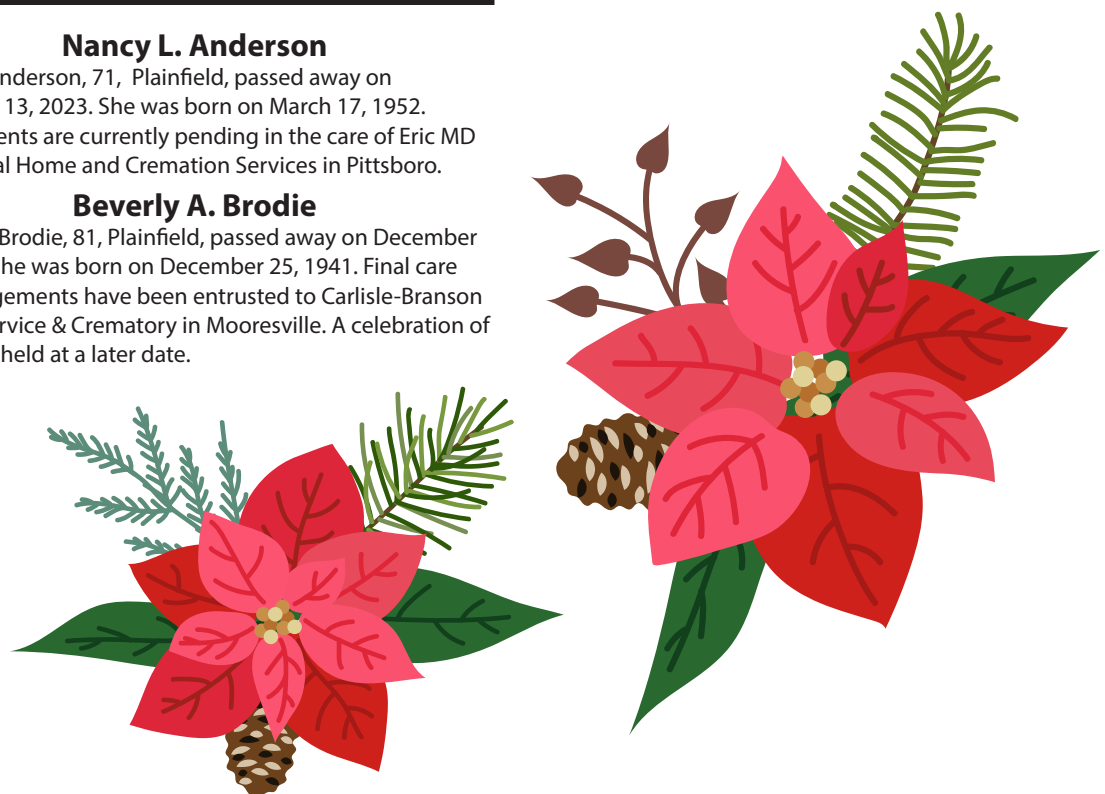
Paul S. Gunning, 87, Plainfield, passed away on December 11, 2023. He was born on September 23, 1936. Paul was a United States Air Force Veteran. Services were held on December 18, 2023, at Hampton-Gentry Funeral Home.

Ruth "Jo" Hamilton

Ruth "Jo" Hamilton, 80, Plainfield, passed away on December 19, 2023. She was born on December 29, 1942. Family and friends will gather to celebrate Ruth's life on Saturday, December 30 from 9 - 11 a.m. at Carlisle Branson Funeral Service & Crematory Mooresville, with services beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday in the funeral home. Burial will follow the services in West Newton Cemetery.

Jessica D. Stoebick

Jessica D. Stoebick, 47, Plainfield passed away on December 18, 2023. She was born on July 23, 1976. Services were held on December 21, 2023, at Hall-Baker Funeral Home in Plainfield. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Sheltering Wings, 1251 Sycamore Lane, Danville, Indiana 46122.



In Loving Memory of Dorothy Ann Reece

Dorothy A. (Raymer) Reece, a beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, passed away on December 16, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of love, warmth, and cherished memories. She was 86 years old.

Born and raised in the charming town of Bowling Green, Kentucky, Dorothy was the daughter of loving parents, Vanda Ruth Raymer and George Raymer, who have preceded her in death. She shared her childhood with a dear sister, Georgia Mae (Raymer) Sweatt, who has also passed away, leaving behind a trove of shared experiences and memories.

Dorothy dedicated much of her life to nurturing and providing for her family. A devoted mother, she leaves behind three children, Jay A. (Tony) Taylor, Robin Rene Mills and Laura Kay Mason. Her love extended even further to embrace six grandchildren, Chad (Becky) Taylor, Tiffany (Michael) Deininger, Jay (Emily) Taylor, Dustin (Ryann) Mills, Dane (Heather) Mills and Jordan Reeves. Dorothy also had eight great-grandchildren, each of whom brought immeasurable joy to her life.

Dorothy was born on December 22, 1936, in Bowling Green, Kentucky and graduated from Bowling Green High School in 1955. She and her husband, Goebel Kenton Reece, moved to Indianapolis, Indiana in 1960, but somehow, she managed to never lose her southern accent.

For many years, Dorothy served as the cafeteria manager at Robey Elementary in Wayne Township School System, where her kindness and culinary skills endeared her to generations of students and staff. She was not only a proficient manager but also a talented cook, renowned for her mastery of southern comfort food. Her recipes, filled with love and tradition, became a source of comfort and delight for those fortunate enough to savor her creations. Dorothy's kitchen was a place of warmth and laughter, where family and friends gathered to enjoy delicious meals and create lasting memories. Her legacy lives on not only in the hearts of those who knew her best but also in the culinary traditions she passed down through the generations. Beyond her talents in the kitchen, Dorothy was known for her unwavering kindness, gentle spirit, and selfless nature. Her love knew no bounds, and she touched the lives of many with her generosity and warmth.



Dorothy, a woman of faith was a long-time member of Brownsburg Church of Christ. Her family will miss her big presence in their lives but is content knowing she is in peace and resting with God.

As we mourn the loss of Dorothy Ann Reece, let us also celebrate the beautiful life she lived and the indelible mark she left on the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know her. May her memory be a source of comfort and inspiration as we remember the legacy of love she leaves behind. A memorial service will be held on January 5, 2024, at Conkle Funeral Home, in Avon, Indiana. Visitation from 3-5 p.m. and service beginning at 5 p.m. In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to the Alzheimer's Association in her memory.

The family would like to thank the staff at Life's Journey for their excellent, kind and tender care of Dorothy.

Rest in peace, dear Dorothy. You will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

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Preview: Friday, January 12th, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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<u>MORGAN & PEACE DOLLARS</u>	<u>AMERICAN EAGLE GOLD SETS</u>
<u>SILVER COINS - MERCURY DIME</u>	<u>INDIAN & LIBERTY GOLD COINS</u>
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The Winter Beauty of Hawthorns

GARDENING By John Chapin

An ornamental tree that never fails to attract attention this time of the year is the hawthorn, with its displays of brilliant red fruit that persist well into the coldest winter months. Of the over 200 hawthorn species worldwide, nine are native to North America, and three have varieties that are widely planted. Although the fruit, known as haws or thornberries, will eventually be eaten by songbirds, especially chickadees, mockingbirds, catbirds, and cedar waxwings, but also turkeys, the softer fruit of crabapples, dogwoods, and viburnums are the first choice, so hawthorn berries provide beautiful winter interest for months.



The straight species of Cockspur Hawthorn (*Crataegus crusgalli*) certainly earns its name with 2" thorns that can cause serious injury. Luckily, the variety 'Thornless Cockspur' has all of the good features of the species except for the thorns! The pure white blooms, which are rather foul-smelling, bloom in May for over a week, followed by lustrous dark green leaves that turn bronze-red to purple in fall. The deep red fruit persist for months after leaf drop.

The Washington Hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*) blooms last of the three species, and the profuse flowers are not badly scented. Unfolding leaves are reddish purple, gradually changing to lustrous dark green; fall color varies from orange to scarlet through purplish. The variety 'Washington Lustre' has significantly fewer thorns and bright, glossy red fruit that persist all winter.

The Green Hawthorn (*Crataegus viridis*) is regarded as the most outstanding hawthorn species for landscape use. The variety 'Winter King' was introduced by the Simpson Nursery Co. in Vincennes, Indiana, and is probably the most widely planted variety. It has a lovely rounded habit, with almost vase-shaped branching structure. The white flowers are followed by bright red, very persistent fruits that are larger than the species, and the stems are often thornless. Leaves are a lustrous medium green, changing to purple and scarlet in the fall.

These three hawthorn species can grow over 20' tall and wide, but are more often the size of dogwoods or redbuds. With thoughtful placement, keeping in mind those thorns, they can be a beautiful addition to the landscape.

Happy Gardening!



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John Chapin is a retired school teacher and sole proprietor of Chapin Landscaping in Danville. He has over 30 years' experience in the landscaping business. Contact him at jchapinlandscaping@gmail.com

Best Time to Book Travel

TRAVEL By Amy Maharas

With January just around the corner, we are approaching what is referred to as "Wave Season" in the travel industry. This is the time of year when guests often plan travel for the year and a "wave" of new clients reaches out to travel professionals for help with doing so. January through March often bring some of the best travel promotions of the year, especially tempting to those of us who experience the "winter blues." Who doesn't want to escape Indiana winter to sip pina colodas on the beach or climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge in Australia? (I admit, my fear of heights would be a challenge for that one!)

Wave season is when cruise lines typically offer the best discounts. Many cruise lines experienced their best "wave season" yet in 2023, and 2024 is looking to be another great year for the cruise industry. Whether guests are looking to cruise on an ocean or river cruise, there will be some great deals to be had!

Reach out to a local professional to find out more about wave season offerings!



Amy Maharas is an Avon resident and travel planner with Hi Ho Vacations. Contact her at Amy@HiHoVacations.com



Disney Cruise (submitted photo)

ICONIC brief

Gold Coin Dropped into Salvation Army Red Kettle

Surprise donation discovered in kettle that had been placed at the Walmart store in Plainfield

INDIANAPOLIS (December 11, 2023) – When Salvation Army volunteers are busy counting and sorting donations at the end of a long day of bell ringing, they never expect to see the sort of donation that was pulled out of a Central Indiana Red Kettle late last week: a gold coin worth at least \$2,000.

The \$50 Gold American Eagle Coin was discovered last week in a Red Kettle that had been outside the Walmart store on East Main Street in Plainfield. It was nestled among other bills and coins that had been placed in the kettle and was found while counting the donations at the end of the day.

"Whether it's a penny or a hundred-dollar bill, we presume every donation we receive is given with a measure of sacrifice," said Major David Martinez of The Salvation Army Eagle Creek Corps Community Center. "We count this as another opportunity to thank God that our community finds us worthy of such generosity."

The gold coin will support programs and ministries at the Eagle Creek Corps in 2024. The Salvation Army will have the coin appraised for authenticity before it is sold. As of Dec. 11, 2023, the price of gold is \$1,994.83 per ounce, according to American Hartford Gold.

"Receiving a gift like this in a kettle is really a double portion for us," added Major Rachel Stouder, Central Indiana Area Commander. "We are grateful not only for its monetary value but also the morale booster of receiving such a valuable sacrifice from a caring donor. Central Indiana truly does have some of the very best people."

This isn't the first time valuable coins have been donated to The Salvation Army of Central Indiana. Five coins made of silver, gold, and platinum were dropped into Central Indiana Red Kettles last year. The coins had a total value of \$1,800.

The annual Red Kettle Campaign has a goal of raising \$3.6 million through the Red Kettles located throughout Central Indiana. Bells started ringing early this year at various locations like Kroger, Cabela's, Walgreens, Walmart, Sam's Club, Needler's Fresh Market, Hobby Lobby, and Simon Malls. Volunteer bell ringers are needed to keep the kettles out all the way until Dec. 23, so supporters are encouraged to visit RegisterToRing.com today to sign up for a two-hour shift at a location of your choice.

Every donation dropped into Red Kettles during November and December provides help and hope to those in need, and all gifts stay right here in Central Indiana. Visit SACentralIndiana.org to learn more about how you can help The Salvation Army ensure that we can Love Beyond Christmas and continue to help those in need in 2024.





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