

JOHNSON COUNTY

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April 22-May 19, 2024 • myJCICON.com

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NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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Meet YOUR NEIGHBOR

By Julie Brackemyre

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

I live in Whiteland. I have lived in the Johnson County area for 14 plus years. I attended Franklin College (class of 2006) and lived in Franklin for about five years after graduating.

2. Describe your immediate family to us.

It's just me and my German Shepherd Ally at home, but I have my parents, a brother, sister, brother-in-law, a niece, and nephew in nearby Marion County.

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

I grew up in the Presbyterian church, left organized religion for a while, and then recently found a church home at Tapestry Church off of Whiteland road in Bargersville.

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

Besides my faith, I have long been inspired by my good friend Joyce, who passed away in 2005. She fought heart issues most of her life, but always did so with a smile on her face, good humor, and grace. If you met her, you likely wouldn't have known the battles

she fought bravely and fervently. I aspire to live up to her example of grace.

5. Describe your perfect family outing.

I enjoy travelling; recently, I have visited Alaska, California, New York, Canada, and Costa Rica. Seeing new sights and collecting new experiences and memories is always a perfect outing, whether it's through travel or locally. Locally, I enjoy Johnson County's many great parks, restaurants, and watching movies at the Artcraft Theater.

6. What is your favorite family tradition?

I enjoy making my family endure at least part of the 24 hours of "A Christmas Story" every year. It's one of my favorite movies.

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

Affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, and small towns close to the amenities of the larger cities.

Stefanie Davis

Adult Services Librarian
Johnson County Public Library, White River Branch

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

I asked my older sister to describe me, and here is what she said: "Stefanie is a lifelong learner. She loves her family, but probably loves her dog Ally slightly more. She's always been a fighter throughout her life—from not being expected to make it past her first year of life, to being the only one of the three of us to get their masters degree. She is loyal and fierce."

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Kate Anderson

"Life is what happens to us while we are making other plans."

– Allen Saunders

Life happens. Work happens. Stuff happens, sometimes to our dismay. Who's busy? Are you busy? I feel like I am so busy all day long. So much so, that I feel like some days there isn't any room in my schedule to fit anything else in, let alone any joy, and that's a crying shame. That seems so negative, so bleh, but so honest. It comes down to both attitude and perspective. Why am I not finding joy in my day? Why am I taking life so seriously? As my mom used to tell me when I was a teenager, "You need an attitude adjustment," and she is so right. I need to start seeing life through rose-colored glasses. There are so many wonderful things in my life such as my friends, my little family consisting of my husband and my dogs, all of which fill me with so much love. It is almost as though I am not making enough time in my day to remember

and to appreciate the little joys and surprises that every day offers. The question I should ask myself is, "What do I want out of this life?" Do I want to identify as a work-a-holic or someone who takes the time to stop and smell the flowers? I think as a group, most of us strive to be the latter, and although this thing called life gets in the way, we should take time to walk the dog, hug our families, laugh a little, and lift our heads up to the sky to enjoy the sunshine once in a while. After all, we are only given one life, and time flies by so quickly that if we don't grab it by the handful, we will have missed so many opportunities that mean so much more in the end. It comes down to this. Let's make plans to let life and the little things happen, and if we keep our chins up, the good stuff in life will follow.



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Athlete of the Month

Charlie LaRocca



By Ken Severson

Winning one individual state championship in anything is an accomplishment. Not only is it difficult to do with healthy competition, but other intangibles can make it hard: pressure, motivation, schoolwork, desire, and having everyone wanting to knock them off the top pedestal. Winning two is extraordinary. It means one has overcome everything above and then some.

Charlie LaRocca overcame.

The Center Grove senior, who won the 113-pound championship in wrestling last year, did it again, only this time 120 pounds. He did this back in February and became the first back-to-back champion in school history since Ron Gaskins, who won back-to-back titles in 1976-77 at 105 and 112 pounds. He finished the season at 37-5, and LaRocca's two-year title run record overall was a glittery 79-7.

"When you come in as a champion, you have a big target on your back and are expected to win a title," Center Grove wrestling coach Maurice Swain said. "I'm extremely proud of him. When you win a state title, you come in the next year with a big target on your back and you're expected to win."

Asking any multi-champion is akin to asking parents who their favorite child is, but LaRocca didn't have to deal with any sibling rivalry when asked this question. "I would have to say this year's title was better because there's nothing like winning it the first time, but I faced a lot more adversity this year," LaRocca said. "It was a lot sweeter." Even better was LaRocca helped the Trojans garner their second consecutive team runner-up finish in the IHSAA wrestling state finals, held in Evansville for the first time.

LaRocca began his quest with a pin over senior Adrian Origel of North Newton at the 3:31 mark. A 9-1 major decision win over Greenfield-Central's Jeff McGuire moved LaRocca to the semifinals against No. 1-ranked Gavin Jendreas of Crown Point. LaRocca held off Jendreas 3-2 and avenged an earlier loss to the Bulldog grappler. This was sweet revenge for LaRocca.

"(Jendreas) has been giving me problems for the past couple of years, and I have never beaten him before," LaRocca said. It was by the same 3-2 score that LaRocca won his second state title over junior Ty Henderson of Evansville Mater Dei. And like Jendreas, LaRocca avenged an earlier loss. Henderson had pinned LaRocca earlier in the season. Not this time.

"I was familiar with him and went in knowing I could win," LaRocca said. This was one of those grind-it-out kind of matches. In a close match where both traded escapes and countering moves, LaRocca got his points and held off the Mater Dei grappler.

"It was all about getting that last takedown, and after a good shot from him, I got my takedown," LaRocca said. "He escaped but I held him off. Henderson was a great opponent." It's hard to imagine any troubles LaRocca had during the season, but LaRocca was candid about it. So was Swain.

"Charlie had some adversity this year as far as winning and losing; he lost some matches to guys he had beaten and just wasn't wrestling to his best, but he believed in the process," Swain said. "We had a tough conversation with him in getting that mentality back to win the title. He was able to get back to competing the way that we've seen him compete throughout his career."

LaRocca said it was a mindset thing. After those losses, he met Swain and an assistant at Swain's office. They watched film of his matches and talked. "They told it like it was. It wasn't easy, but I needed to hear it," LaRocca said. "I wrestled scared. Maybe it was the No. 1 ranking by my name, maybe it was my confidence. I had to turn on the gas now if I wanted to win another state championship. I was laser focused and remembered that I was the man." And to be the man, you have to beat the man, and though it was close, nobody beat the man. LaRocca was inspired not only by his coaches, but also friends and family. But LaRocca cites Coach Swain, and his assistants and Contenders Wrestling Academy coach Sean Schmaltz for the motivation and change in his wrestling. "Without them, freshman Charlie would not have thought this was possible," LaRocca said. "Great things happened because of the change. I've always been aggressive and had the technique, but they trained my confidence."

In the classroom, LaRocca has been sporting a 4.7 GPA, but admits that may have suffered just a little during the couple of weeks during tournament time. But he is getting the grades back and it's going well. "I'm still carrying an A," LaRocca said with a laugh.

He's also set to go to the Air Force Academy to join former Center Grove teammate and state champion Drake Buchanan and wrestle for the Falcons. "(Drake's) parents got me in contact with the (Air Force) coaches. I went out there and enjoyed it. I'm thinking fighter pilot



Center Grove senior and wrestler Charlie LaRocca. (Photo by Beth Kreisa of Kreisa Media Art)

when I go in. I'm set on it at this point," LaRocca said. He's going to go for new accomplishments, but he won't forget the past ones. "A lot of things went right. We were proud of what we accomplished," LaRocca said. "I have wrestled with my teammates since grade school. I grew up with these guys. I'm going to miss it."

THE LAROCKA FILE

NAME: Charlie LaRocca

HEIGHT: 5-foot-8

SCHOOL: Center Grove

HOBBIES: Playing guitar, running, weightlifting, cooking, reading, playing video games

COLLEGE PLANS: United States Air Force Academy

FAVORITE SUBJECT(S): AP calculus BC, AP physics, advanced student media

FAVORITE ATHLETE(S): David Taylor

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT: Cedar Point

PARENTS' NAMES: Nicole and Adam LaRocca

SIBLINGS: Michael, Sophia, Daniel



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National Autism Awareness Month

Center Grove graduate opens Life-Long Behavior Therapy for children with autism

Compiled by Nancy Hammerstrom

In late 2022, CGHS graduate Hunter Long had a discussion with his brother-in-law Casey Gore about starting a center for individuals with autism. "I would talk to him about how hard it was to see families not receiving appropriate therapy and services," Long said. "Some families are placed on a waitlist for six months to a year. I wanted to open up a center on the Southside that was also close to some of the more rural areas of Greenwood (Trafalgar, Mooresville, Bargersville)."

When Long studied for his undergraduate degree from Indiana University-Bloomington, "I got started in the ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) field at a small center and quickly realized this was the right field for me," he said. ABA therapy is for children on the autism spectrum. Long went on to start a master's program for ABA at Ball State University and completed the board exam for his Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

In 2023, Long, who has seven years of experience working in the field of ABA, opened Life-Long Behavior Therapy in Greenwood.

Q&A with Hunter Long

What inspired you to work with those with disabilities?

In college, I worked with adults with disabilities as a DSP (Direct Support Professional). This included working with adult males in a group living facility. I would assist them with daily living skills including showering, medication management, cleaning, and cooking. We would also go on outings daily around town which was the highlight of all our days. This was my first time working with individuals with disabilities and it was so important to me.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Seeing all of our learners on a daily basis, in a safe environment, to play and learn is so special to me. Creating a space where they can grow and be with caring staff makes everyday worth it. I want parents to feel confident that whoever is working with their child, they are in the best care possible.

How is ABA therapy beneficial for those with autism?

When families receive a diagnosis of autism, they often wonder "what now?" or "what can we do?" When we work with families, we want to know what their

biggest concerns are. This can be deficits in communication, daily living skills, social/peer-related skills, or even behaviors that might be concerning. ABA therapy addresses this by observing and analyzing behavior in order to understand the function or purpose behind it, and then develop interventions to work on these goals. It is true that there are families all over the state and country on waitlists for services, which is a large part of why I wanted to start this company.

Please tell us about the part-time and full-time ABA therapy offered.

We really try to work with families and see what best meets their needs. Some families only request/require part-time services. This can range from 15-20 hours per week of therapy. For learners that would benefit from full-time therapy, we would look into 35-40 hours per week. We do our best to schedule their day to match with their specific goals, but more time spent can often lead to faster progress. When we meet with families for an initial assessment, we discuss their concerns and their child's current skill level. Some learners have other therapies such as occupational therapy or speech therapy, and some are enrolled in school as well.

How does your center differ from other local autism centers?

There are many options when it comes to ABA services in Greenwood. Being the owner and a BCBA, I communicate directly to families as well as the staff that provide direct therapy to our learners, so it is very collaborative. When hiring therapists, we look for the most experienced candidates. In having a smaller center, I have found it really helpful when it comes to parent communication, communication with staff, and delivery of quality therapy, as I am able to devote more time to overseeing the center's needs, compared to a larger center.

Please tell us about the therapists, their training, and how they teach children.

All of the therapists are Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT). To become an RBT, they must go through extensive training and a certification exam that prepares them to work in direct therapy. We use iPads that have all of our learners' goals listed that the RBTs use throughout the day to collect data. Teaching methods can range from natural teaching for our younger learners, to more direct instruction for our older learners that



Children have plenty of areas to learn and have fun at the same time. (Submitted photos) | (Cover) Whether inside or outside, kids have safe places with caring staff.

might use ABA as a stepping stone to an academic setting. All of our RBTs work directly under a BCBA who sits in on weekly consultations with the RBT and learners. We teach our staff to use all areas of our center as "teaching moments" to capitalize on growth and learning.

What equipment do you have at your facility for play? How is that helpful for children?

Our center has a wide range of areas for our learners to play and engage with. I wanted a space where they could learn but also have fun in the process. Our biggest room has gym equipment for gross motor activities, a swing, and areas for sitting down to play as well. These areas are made so our therapists and learners can engage in activities together, and we can see what is most motivating for the learner, which in turn helps with teaching.

Please tell us about your parent training, what is involved, and how that is helpful for parents and children.

I like to meet with families at least once a month; this allows us to discuss progress both in-center, and how goals are transitioning to the home. Parent training can include a variety of things, but I really focus on what the parents have concerns with most. For example, is there a specific behavior at home that concerns you? Are there daily living skills that we are working on at the center but would like to start at home as well? I love to show parents progress that their child is making in the center by showing them data from past

therapy sessions. You can see progress over time with our graphs, and they are easy to read and explain.

When do you plan to add speech and occupational therapists?

My plan is to add some sort of speech/occupational therapy option to our families soon. This might be someone who comes to the center throughout the week for visits, or a more permanent option. Time will tell! Collaboration between ABA, Speech, and OT are crucial to learner success.

Tell us about your playground.

I'm so excited about our playground space, as I have many ideas of what I want to use the space for. It's a fenced-in area attached to our center. At the moment, we have some small play items (swing set, teeter totter, slide). I want to add more equipment, but also some picnic tables so when the weather is nice, staff and learners can eat and play outside.

For more information, email Hunter Long at hunter.long@lifelongbehavior.com. "I love meeting families in person and giving tours of our center so they can get an idea of what we have to offer!" he said.

Q&A with Liana, a parent of a child who receives services at Life-Long Behavior Therapy

Please describe how therapy has helped your son.

He talks more and it's more pronounced. He is more willing to play with peers his age. Also, he knows and can articulate all of the safety questions in case of an emergency.

What activities does he enjoy?

He loves playing board games with his friends!

What changes have you noticed compared to before he started therapy?

He is a lot more independent. He is now fully potty trained. He is able to communicate when the restroom is needed or if it is not.

Why would you recommend Life-Long Behavior Therapy to other families?

They not only know what they are doing but are also great at it. They care about the kids and bend over backward to meet every need. For lack of a better term, they care! They conduct themselves as if the child 100 percent comes first!



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

Aspire 2024 General Assembly recap: childcare seats, workforce pipeline...and Happy Hour

By Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance

After significant discussion that the 2024 General Assembly session was to be a “do nothing/emergency issues only” session, legislators debated and passed major pieces of policy with lots of fireworks until the very end.

It was another very productive and positive session for Aspire. We successfully advocated for our priorities to support workforce development. We supported other bills we believed to be good for business that did not pass, and we opposed some language we believed would stymie economic growth.

“Workforce development issues continue to determine the degree of economic and business success,” noted Aspire President and CEO Christian Maslowski. “Individual company talent

attraction and retention efforts have helped boost success, but statewide policy and program enhancements can help Hoosier workforce development go from good to great.”

The private sector has made dramatic adjustments and investments in its talent recruiting and retention efforts over the last few years. Ultimately, some statewide challenges remain an obstacle to Indiana achieving its full potential in labor participation rate, average wage, and economic output.

Nearly 175 pieces of legislation passed through both chambers. The Governor vetoed just one. For a rundown of the 2024 session results, starting with Aspire’s main efforts, go to aspirejohnsoncounty.com/aspire-2024-general-assembly-recap-childcare-seats-workforce-pipeline-and-happy-hour.



Aspire President and CEO Christian Maslowski. (Submitted photo)

Roncalli announces 2024 valedictorian and salutatorian

Senior Emily Sering was named the valedictorian, and senior Lachlan Borders was named salutatorian for the Roncalli High School class of 2024.



Emily Sering, valedictorian, and Lachlan Borders, salutatorian, Roncalli class of 2024. (Submitted photo)

Emily Sering excelled both inside and outside of the classroom. Earning the Academic Honors Diploma with Distinction, she will graduate with a 4.47 cumulative GPA. She has taken 38 semesters of classes at the Honors level and above, has volunteered over 900 service hours, and plans to pursue a career in mathematics. Throughout her high school career, she has embodied hard work as a student council co-president, captain of her varsity soccer team, co-leader of Roncalli Community Service Club, board member of Anna’s Celebration of Life Foundation, and an active member of the youth ministry at her parish.

Her guidance counselor stated, “Emily walks the walk, and remains consistent in her beliefs. Her sincerity is evident, and she exudes joy. She is beloved, as validated by her being voted prom queen. It has been my privilege to have known her since she was a very young child and to watch her grow into the amazing young lady she is today.” Emily graduated from St. Jude Catholic School and is the daughter of Jill and Joseph Sering.

Lachlan Borders has shown incredible dedication throughout high school. He is an Indiana Rising Star, a state spell bowl

champion, an Indiana Academic All Star Nominee, and is earning an Academic Honors Diploma with Distinction taking one of the hardest course loads a student at Roncalli can take. Lachlan attended St. Roch Catholic School and plans to study finance and business in college. He is the son of Alicia and Jeff Borders.

With Roncalli High School putting a large emphasis on the traits of its namesake, Saint John XXIII, Lachlan’s band director wrote, “Lachlan dedicates his time and service every week performing in Mass. He has amazing character and maturity. He is always kind and never complains. He has such a busy schedule and still puts others first. I have never known him to turn down an opportunity, even if it means he has to sacrifice other things. He is a great leader and leads by example. Others look up to his character.”

Roncalli Principal Kevin Banich (Roncalli 2009) said, “We are extremely proud of this well-deserved honor for Emily and Lachlan. Their transcripts and records speak for themselves in terms of the excellence that they have achieved. When you look beyond their records and transcripts, you will find two incredible young adults who have made a positive impact on Roncalli!”

Franklin College professor of art and artist in residence showcases art at Hilbert Circle Theatre

Franklin College Professor of Art and Artist in Residence David Cunningham, M.F.A. is one of 18 artists selected to exhibit his work in the Clowes Collaborative 2024 Invitational Exhibition. The display brought together three of Indiana’s most enduring arts and arts-supporting organizations: the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra (ISO), the Hoosier Art Salon, and the Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc. Art included in the Clowes Collaborative 2024 Invitational Exhibition will remain on display for the duration of the ISO’s performances at the Hilbert Circle Theatre through June 9, and for 30 days after the close of the exhibit on the Hoosier Art Salon website. All of the art is available for purchase. Over the past decade, Cunningham has showcased his work in nine exhibitions and has maintained a status as a top award winner. “It is a huge honor to be only one of 18 from across the region. I’m grateful to be asked and included,” said Cunningham. Cunningham joined the faculty at Franklin College in 2003. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Evansville and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Indiana University.

Johnson County ICON of the Month

Airick Drogan

By Julie Brackemyre

Airick Drogan is the owner and operator of Angels and Demons Tattoo in Bargersville. Drogan and his wife started the business 15 years ago. Drogan started tattooing in 1996, the same year that it became legal in the state of Indiana. Since then, Drogan has apprenticed four other artists and done thousands of tattoos for the great folks of Johnson County. Drogan also paints, sculpts, and makes jewelry, basically anything artistic. He has a YouTube show about the collectables in his industry and curates one of the largest collections of industry items in Johnson County, which he proudly displays in his shop.

What do you consider your greatest virtue?

A willingness to hear the ideas of others, and work with them to accomplish their artistic goals

What do you most deplore in others?

I find that deploring anything is a waste of time.

What do you like most about working in Johnson County?

I find the people here are definitely easy to work with, especially compared to other larger cities.

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

This is the place we chose above all else. We have bought a house and are growing roots.

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

Not a single thing

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

The art store or the Apple store

What makes you happiest?

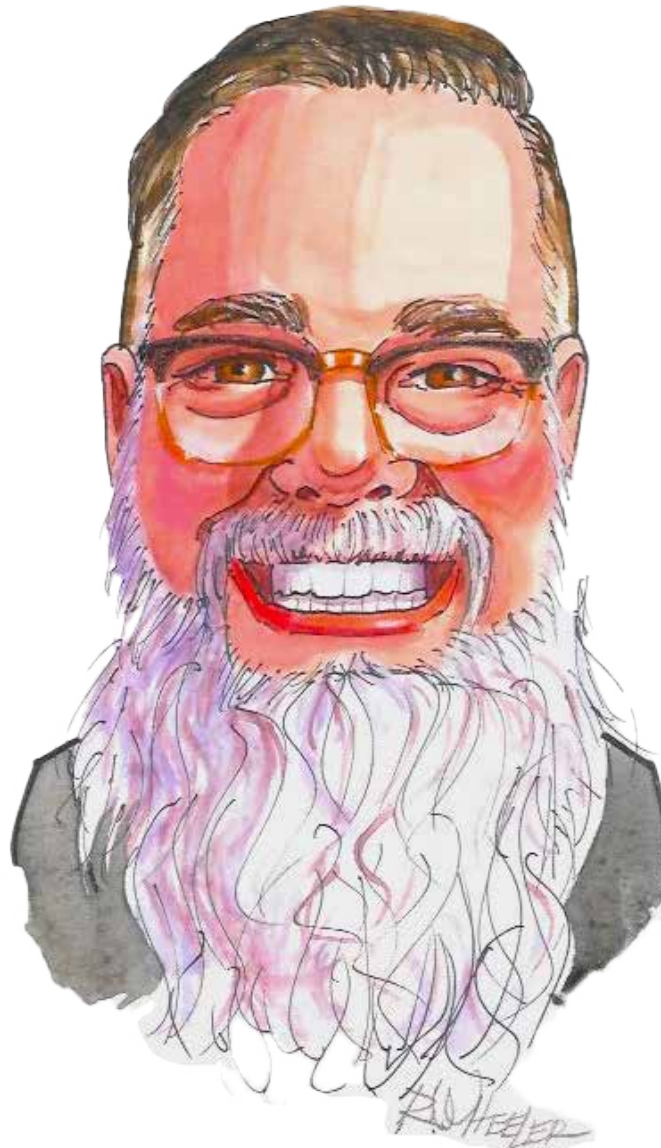
Quite simply put, art

What is your favorite vacation spot?

Mexico

What do you do with your idle time?

Art mostly, but the occasional video game



What is it that makes you angry?

I stay away from things that anger me, except traffic.

What do you do to escape from reality?

Video games or painting

What/who is the greatest love of your life?

My lovely wife, Ellie.

What is the quality you most like in a person?

Honesty

What is your greatest extravagance?

Tattoo collectibles. I have developed a tattoo machine problem I'll most likely never recover from.

What is your favorite restaurant?

Stones Crossing

Who is the person most influential in your life?

Lyle Tuttle

What are your fears/phobias?

Losing my ability to tattoo

Which talent would you most like to possess?

Playing guitar

What do you most value in your friends?

Loyalty, honesty

Who is your favorite historical figure?

I would say it's a tie between Samuel O'Reilly and Charlie Wagner.

What is your greatest regret?

Not getting into the tattoo industry earlier

What tenet do you live by?

Art without the attitude

'Realizing the Dream' recipient thanks Roncalli educator

Twenty-nine first-generation Indiana college students got a boost to their education funds this academic year and reconnected with influential educators who helped along the way after being named "Realizing the Dream" recipients by Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI). These 29 scholarship recipients, one from each of Indiana's private, nonprofit colleges, and universities, were celebrated at the Eiteljorg Museum.

Sierra Adkins, a graduate of Roncalli and student at Hanover College, thanked Roncalli educator Gerard Striby.

Stephany Gutierrez, a student at Marian University in Indianapolis, thanked Patricia Lawton, an educator with Central Nine Career Center in Greenwood.

Made possible by a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., the scholarship program annually recognizes first-generation college students from ICI colleges and universities. Students

are selected for the \$4,000 award for outstanding achievement as they successfully advance toward completing their bachelor's degrees.

To honor recipients, ICI created individual videos of each student describing what it means to them to be a first-generation college student and thanking the influential educator they have chosen to honor. Videos can be found at icindiana.org/rtd.

"Thanks to the continued support of Lilly Endowment, we get the opportunity to hear the inspiring stories of these first-generation students and the impact local educators have had on their drive to succeed academically," said Dottie L. King, ICI's president and CEO. "These scholarship awards will provide critical support for these young people who are dreaming of future success."

In addition to the students' scholarship awards, the influential educators also receive \$1,000 in professional development grants.



Sierra Adkins, a graduate of Roncalli High School and current student at Hanover College, with Gerard Striby, community service coordinator at Roncalli. (Photo courtesy of Miss Cara Photography)

Franklin College Music Department offers free concerts this spring

The Franklin College Music Department has announced the dates of several upcoming concerts in April and May. All performances will be held in the Clarence E. And Inez R. Custer Theatre in Old Main and are free and open to the public.

- April 23 at 7 p.m. – Senior Recital featuring students Mars Casey of Martinsville, Lauren Minks of Crawfordsville, Samantha Schick of Indianapolis (46221), and Josie Lyons of Coatesville.
- April 30 at 7 p.m. – Senior Recital featuring students Jady List of Newburgh, Emily Peters of Trafalgar, and Jason Arbogast of Gas City.
- May 3 at 7 p.m. and May 4 at 2 p.m. – Spring Choral Concert, featuring the FC Singers, the Women's Chorus, and the Men's Chorus.
- May 7 at 7 p.m. – Spring Instrumental Concert, featuring the FC Wind Ensemble, the FC String Ensemble, and the FC Jazz Collective.

For more information, contact the Franklin College Office of Communications at 317-738-8185.

Fight Back Fitness rallies community for annual 'Month to Move' 5K for Parkinson's Awareness Month



April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, and to celebrate, Fight Back Fitness (FBF), a local nonprofit, is encouraging their community both local and nationwide to join in their annual Month to Move Community 5K Walk/Run. The event takes place on April 27 at Williams Park in Brownsburg. In addition, there is a virtual 5K option that is open all month. All proceeds from the event support physical programming for those fighting Parkinson's, empowering them to fight back.

Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder that can cause motor skills, balance, speech, and sensory functions to degenerate. The cause is largely unknown and while there is no cure, treatment options include medication and surgery. The Parkinson's Foundation estimates there are over one million people in the U.S. living with Parkinson's disease and over 60,000 people diagnosed each year.

Recent studies, most notably at Cleveland Clinic, suggest that certain kinds of exercises may be neuro-protective and actually slow disease progression. Fight Back Fitness offers Rock Steady Boxing and Pedaling for Parkinson's programming. For Rock Steady Boxing, exercises are largely adapted from boxing drills, and Parkinson's disease is the opponent. Boxers condition to improve speed, agility, muscular endurance, accuracy, hand-eye coordination, footwork, and strength. Pedaling for Parkinson's centers on stationary cycling to improve muscular endurance and reduce symptoms.

Over the past 10 years, Fight Back

Fitness has not only helped improve the quality of life for over 125 members, but also provided them with a community of others dealing with the same struggles. Karen Allgood, celebrating her sixth year as a boxer and second year serving as Boxer Relations Chair on the FBF Board, is forever grateful for the program. "The boxers have become my family along with the coaches. We all support each other. Fight Back Fitness has been there for me since March 16, 2016; pushing me, guiding me, listening to what I might need - no matter what!" said Allgood.

Join FBF for the Community 5K on April 27 at Williams Park to celebrate Month to Move and Parkinson's Awareness month. Packet pick-up begins at 8 a.m., and the run/walk begins at 9 a.m. For more information and to sign up for Month to Move, visit: runsignup.com/Race/IN/Brownsburg/MonthtoMove. Register for the Month to Move by April 8.

To support Fight Back Fitness without participating in the 5K, donations may be made online at runsignup.com/Race/

Donate/IN/Brownsburg/MonthtoMove. Local organizations can contact Rock Steady Boxing of Brownsburg at brownsburg@rsbaffiliate.com or 317-939-0166 for more information on sponsorship opportunities.

Rock Steady Boxing at The Social of Greenwood

The mission of Rock Steady Boxing is to empower people with Parkinson's disease to fight back.

Please visit myactivecenter.com to register for classes using the account information provided to you by The Social. If you have not received your account information or are having issues with registration, please contact us at 317-882-4810. Registration will be open one week at a time and will open each Friday at 10 a.m. for the following week.

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PERSONNEL MATTERS

Let's talk prime time

By Mike Heffner

Every year, I have the opportunity to gather with fellow Express Employment Professionals office leaders from across the country. These meetings offer a valuable opportunity to learn, grow, and collaborate, all in pursuit of our shared goal: helping clients find good people and associates find employment. We always have good speakers and this year, in Denver, "Neon" Deion Sanders was a treat for me to hear speak. You may know him today as Coach Prime, but as a kid, I knew him as the two-sport phenom that played for my favorite team, the Cowboys. I was not sure what to expect, but below are a few things I took away from Prime Time. He is a confident man, but he humbly speaks the truth. Some like him, some don't. But I love what Prime is all about: finding a way to win.

1. When life knocks you down, get back up – You must Want it, Work for it, and Win it! Keep showing up, no matter how tough it gets. We are all going through something. If you want it enough, you will work for it and eventually win it.

- 2. The pain of today will not last forever** – Every trial and tribulation we face contributes to our strength, resilience, and capability for tomorrow. The key is to believe in the process and never give up, even when the journey seems daunting. If you can see where you want to go, you can get there.
- 3. Others are going through stuff just like you** – Life is not all roses, as you have seen on social media. Do not get sucked into thinking everyone else has it made. We all have areas of weakness and things we need help with. Rather than succumbing to comparisons or negativity, Prime urged us to remain positive and focus on possibilities rather than doubts.
- 4. Support each other** – At work, at home. Life is hard, but by lifting each other up and fostering a culture of mutual support, we can navigate its complexities with resilience and grace. Spend time with people that support you and be there for others that need support.
- 5. Take care of yourself** – How can you help others succeed and do remarkable

things if you are not doing the things to take care of yourself? We need our physical, mental, and spiritual selves to be strong and prepared. By establishing routines and discipline, we can show up as our best selves for our families and colleagues.

Coach Prime also shared that he had a few things he looks for in players – Smart, Tough, Fast, Discipline, and Character. Those are things we should look for when we add anyone to our teams. Patrick Lencioni says something similar. We should look for teammates that are Humble (Character), Hungry (Tough and Fast), and Smart. I think I like what Prime adds, though – Discipline. You must be committed and disciplined to win.

Another key that Prime emphasized is the foundational elements of effective leadership – Relationships, Trust, Dependability, and Connection. Our job is to help those we lead understand how

to be successful and utilize their strengths to reach their goals. It was obvious Prime was about creating a bond with his team. No matter what business you are in – it is about growing relationships through trust and connection. I have learned and developed great relationships over the years with Express franchise owners across the country. I love to connect with other like-minded people who care about helping each other succeed. I hope you have or find mentors, peers, and like-minded people to share with in your life. Together, let's forge connections and support one another on our journeys.



This article is written by Mike Heffner, the owner of the local Greenwood Express Employment Professionals franchise. Contact Mike at Mike.Heffner@expresspros.com, @IndySouthMike on X (Formerly Twitter), Instagram or visit ExpressIndySouth.com.

PEER TO PEER

20 bucks an hour; now what?

By Howard Hubler

Several years ago, I walked into a McDonald's and noticed new kiosks. A cashier asked if she could help us learn to use them to order our meals. At that time if you used the kiosk, you would get your meal before those that used the cash register because the kiosk order was faster at going to the kitchen and placing the order, while those going to the cashier had to lose maybe two or three minutes.

As we were enjoying our lunch, our cashier/teacher walked around the dining room, merrily asking how everyone was doing. Once she reached us, my buddy looked at her and said, "You seem awfully happy and excited today." She said, "I've never done PR work like this, and it's really enjoyable." She added that since using both the kiosk and the cash register, orders were going so quickly, the free cashiers were assisting customers at their seats. My friend looked somewhat puzzled, frowned at her, and suggested if he were the cashier, he would not be so happy. To that she mused, "And why shouldn't I be happy? I enjoy this job."

"I have a clue that you will not be working here," he said. As the cashier frowned, she asked, "Why? I am a great

employee." My buddy responded that there would be a new cashier taking her place – him. "You just taught me how to use the kiosk," he said.

California is leading the nation in a \$20 an hour mandatory minimum wage. The intended consequence is that plenty of people will be able to sustain a modest lifestyle. In California, no one sustains a modest lifestyle with \$30 an hour, much less \$20. People performing entry-level jobs for \$20 an hour are being laid off by automation by tens of thousands. The "employees" were denied entry-paying jobs when they were in a place in life to need what these jobs offered. The "employers" were denied a stream of people, many of whom would show leadership that could've been hired to perform higher levels of activity and take over many entry management positions. For those that just got laid off from their \$20 an hour job, now what?



Howard Hubler can be reached at howard@hubler.com.

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The inevitable backswing of the pendulum ... AI and EV

*"Darling, I don't know why I go to extremes."
- William Martin Joel*

By Jeff Binkley

You can't read a business newspaper nor watch a stock market program anymore without hearing about how artificial intelligence, or AI, is about to change the world. Not gonna lie, I think so too. The promise of AI and how it will change our daily lives cannot be understated. I can remember a world before the internet and how it changed our lives in then unthinkable and unknowable ways. AI has the potential to bring about the same tectonic shift that the internet brought.

But.

Markets have a tendency to, like Mr. Joel's lyric, "go to extremes." Especially early on when a new, unproven, and unknowable technology is in its emerging stages. Yes, I think AI will change our world again, but I'm cautioning my clients to temper their enthusiasm and not jump whole-heartedly on this fast-moving train just yet. Why? Let me share a recent historical example to illustrate my point.

Electric vehicles (EVs) have been around for decades now, but it's only been in the last few years that they've really come into acceptance as a viable alternative to internally combusted vehicles. EVs have had limited range and a minimal network of charging stations. Owners of EVs willingly made those sacrifices in order to ... well, I actually don't know why they were willing to make those sacrifices. And in order to not offend you EV owners, I want to make a disclosure that I drive an EV. But it's a hybrid. I like the knowledge that I carry my generator with me wherever I go, and I don't need to plan my long-distance trips or even my daily drives by checking my current charge or picking a destination where I can (or must) plug in when I get there. Alas, I'm still a dirty fossil fuel burner and have been looking into atonement via buying carbon offsets, but I digress.

The point I'm trying to make is that when the EV pendulum started its swing forward it had a whole bunch of

momentum behind it: high gas prices, full government support, including heavy government grants for manufacturers, and significant subsidies via tax credits for consumer EV buyers. But, as in so many technologically leading innovations, EV and many of its followers (investors) got out in front of their skis. We've now seen the EV pendulum swing back with manufacturers reporting dramatically slowing sales, 400-plus day inventories of unsold vehicles, and astonishing losses from EV vehicle investment amidst those less than expected sales. (In 2023, Ford reported a \$4.5 billion dollar loss from its EV push, losing \$36,000 on each EV it sold.)

Now with the AI pendulum in full swing forward, I would caution would-be prudent investors not to go to extremes. Yes, AI will change the world in dramatic and unknowable ways. And I would agree with some prognosticators that AI will be more impactful than even the full embrace of the internet.

But give it time before you as a prudent investor jump on that train. If you must, buy an ETF with an AI focus and diversified holdings. Or better yet, do some research and buy a few of the established tech companies that are investing some of their monies in the AI world. That way you not only benefit from the research and due diligence they have done on their AI investments; you also benefit from investing in an already known company with a good track record.

The AI pendulum will swing back. Don't get knocked over by standing in front of it when it does.



Jeff Binkley is the Founder and Managing Director of Binkley Wealth Management Group, an Independent Fee-Only Registered Investment Advisory Firm. Mr. Binkley is adding a few new select clients from those who qualify. For further information or an appointment contact him at Jeff@thebinkleygroup.com or 317-697-1618.

Emotional decisions can be good

By Susan Rozzi

Here's where my head is today ... I am tired of hearing that emotions have no place in the workforce. Emotions impact us ALL the time. We don't just leave them at the door when we clock in. I'd love it if we could reframe how we use emotional awareness to maximize our choices and improve our decision making.

Here's a few examples of how emotions have impacted my clients just this week:

- A coworker was trying to get another coworker to meet a deadline, and the coworker got so frustrated by the pressure, they yelled, "get off my back, I'll get it done." [Emotions present: Anger / Concern]
- Just before I was training a group of leaders, one of the leaders shared with me that they got a new job. YET, when I asked the class what they were celebrating, this leader did not share because they didn't think it was worth mentioning. [Emotions present: Excitement / Hesitance]
- A young worker continues to get negative feedback from their manager, and it's constant dwelling on the 10 percent they aren't doing perfect. The young worker is beginning to believe there is no hope that they will succeed and is wondering if they need to look for a new job. [Emotions present: Judgement / Depression]
- A leader has an opportunity to present a new idea before their executive team. [Emotions present: Determination / Hope]
- A leader admitted their optimism about a situation that caused them to not account for the pressure a decision would have on the team. As a result, they've accepted two resignations in the last few weeks. [Emotions present: Optimism / Sadness]
- A leader made a decision without consulting their team because they were tired of their team dragging their feet. [Emotions present: Frustration / Avoidance]

In these situations, there were both positive and negative emotions present. They may or may not have been what was needed in the moment or produced the best outcome. Yet, they still existed.

Emotional intelligence reminds us that:

- You can't choose your first thought,
- You can choose your second thought, and
- You can choose your first action.

The space between your first and second thought is where the emotional intelligence skills of impulse control and reality testing are used.

You can't choose your first thought – this is the thought or feeling that comes so naturally and quickly.

With practice, you can press your internal pause button after the first thought. This allows a moment to gain perspective and assess the situation.

Here are a few powerful questions you can quickly ask yourself:

- What is really happening here? Not in the past. Not in the future. Right now, in this situation.
- What do I want to accomplish through this situation?
- How can I see the 10 percent that is good in this situation and not dwell on what is not right?
- Have I accounted for all the factors, not just the ones important to me?
- How can I turn this into an insight, a gift, or an opportunity to move in the direction I really want?

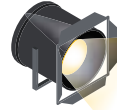
By answering these questions, you are more equipped to choose your first action, which can improve decision making by focusing on producing a positive response and maximizing the potential of the situation.

Truth be told, sometimes you don't have time to do the analysis in the moment. That's OK. Just take time later.

Emotions impact us ALL the time. Are you acknowledging and using them to make the BEST choices?

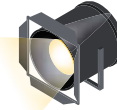


Susan Rozzi is the president of Rozzi and Associates, a leadership and organizational development company helping good leaders become great! Our programs start with the premise that great leadership skills are a product of time, practice and focused development. Our leadership development, emotional intelligence insight and career management programs can be customized to meet your desired outcomes and needs. Contact Susan at susan@rozziandassociates.com.



Local Business Spotlight

OnStage LIVE! Cabaret



How many years has OnStage LIVE! Cabaret been in business, and what inspired you to start/purchase/work with this business?

Our 501(c)(3) nonprofit performing arts organization was founded on Nov. 18, 2022. As the former private owner of the Catered Cabaret, which ended up permanently closed down due to the COVID pandemic, I never thought I'd venture into show biz again. But at the urging of many past patrons, colleagues, family, and friends, and with the backing and support, a board of directors was formed, and I took the help as executive director. Our original intention was to produce and perform shows in existing performing arts theatres in central Indiana. As fate would have it, the owner of Vista Run Plaza reached out and we negotiated a deal to reopen in the former theatre. Having just completed a \$150,000-plus renovation, the theatre is truly one of the most beautiful performing arts venues in all of Indiana! We are very proud.

Describe your typical workday.

All of us have full-time jobs, so taking this on has been a LOT! It's a labor of love, and honestly, we all love what we do. Whether it's being an artist on stage, a tech person running sound and lights, a receptionist checking patrons in at the door, tending bar ... we work long hours preparing our shows for all to enjoy.

What inspires your work, and what sets you apart from everyone else?

Our shared passion is to ensure professional, live theatre experiences are easily accessible and available for our greater Greenwood/Southside community. What really sets us apart is the quality of our productions – utilizing local talent, having beautiful costumes, stage settings and lighting, and the welcoming environment each and every one of us exudes to and for our guests. Our guest experience is our No.1 priority!

If you could go back to the beginning knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently?

As the former owner of the theatre, when initially opening, I would have established the theatre as a 501(c)(3) from the beginning. Every theatre in Indiana, with the exception of two dinner theatres, operates under a 501(c)(3) status. Doing so allows us to apply for operating grants, endowments, sponsorships, and more. It's the only way to successfully operate in the Midwest.

What's your best advice for someone who wants to start their own business?

RESEARCH!!! It is so critically important to remain "objective" when making decisions. It doesn't matter what "we think, feel, or like" – it's about what consumers want. Never, ever forget that. ...

The guest experience is first and foremost over everything!

Check out the owner:

On-Stage LIVE! Entertainment, an Indiana 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a board of directors and operated by Chris Tompkins, executive director.

How long have you worked with OnStage LIVE! Cabaret? Tell me a little about your background and how you developed your skill set.

I've been in the cruise, hospitality, private club, and entertainment business for over 40+ years. Experience ... that's the greatest education of all. Always be open to learn new things, accept and embrace your mistakes, brush your knees off, get back up, and move forward. Don't look back ... but learn and move forward.

What has been your biggest success to date, and what has been your biggest challenge?

Raising the necessary \$110,000 minimum we needed to get started and doing it in less than only six weeks! Now the challenge is to grow awareness that there's a terrific performing arts theatre ready to welcome folks from greater Greenwood, Indy's Southside, and all of central Indiana.

What inspires you to hit the ground running each morning?

Passion for what WE do. Bringing smiles to those who come to see shows. Bringing joy by providing a stage to some incredible local talent ... and there's SO MUCH talent in central Indiana. Making others happy makes me and all of us so, so happy!

Tell me some of your hobbies, outside of working for OnStage LIVE! Cabaret.

Honestly, this nonprofit organization is my hobby and "the" hobby for most everyone involved. When we're not working our full-time jobs, we're working at the theatre. When we aren't doing one of those two things, we're either collaborating, researching new show ideas, or sleeping!

What's an interesting fact about your business that most people don't know?

There's a LEGIT THEATRE right here in Greenwood!

What's an interesting fact about you that most people don't know?

Our talent is local, most of our shows are original works we create from scratch without a script, and we do this for love of people and the performing arts.



(Submitted photos)



Online Life In Indy Campaign boosts attraction and retention for Central Indiana

By Aspire Economic Development
+ Chamber Alliance

Life In Indy, a project initiated in October 2020 with support from the Lilly Endowment, has blossomed into a crucial attraction and retention resource for the Indianapolis region.

Joe Pellman, executive director of Regional Image Marketing at the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, spoke on the project's inception and impact.

"The idea was simple: develop a livability blog that features content on neighborhoods across the nine-county Indianapolis region, things to do, and career opportunities," said Pellman.

"Something that replaces the moving trucks and storage facilities from top Google searches for those considering a move to the Indy market."

The platform, LifeInIndy.com, launched in March 2021, backed by a network of local influencers called "Indyfluencers" who contribute content and engage with potential residents directly.

Pellman emphasized the economic significance of attracting new residents to the region. "Based on research from the IU Public Policy Institute, a new resident has

an annual economic impact of roughly \$71,250 when averaging urban and suburban dwellers," he said.

"Based on this datapoint, Life In Indy can account for at least \$4.7 million in economic impact to date from individuals attracted or retained in the Indy region that interacted with Life In Indy tools and resources based on our own tracking."

However, Pellman noted that quantifying the platform's full impact is challenging.

Pellman and the Indy Chamber have opened the Life In Indy campaign up to general community engagement.

"Step #1 is browsing LifeInIndy.com," added Pellman. "If someone sees a gap in content they feel could be beneficial for newcomers to central Indiana or topics they wish they would have known when they chose to build their life here, we want to know about it."

Pellman recommended for those who are passionate about their municipality and want to share that enthusiasm with potential residents to join their Indyfluencer network.

The Indyfluencer network is a program of volunteer residents and local social media influencers who work with the Life

In Indy campaign to connect with and welcome prospective new residents.

Reflecting on Life In Indy's progress, Pellman described it as "narrative infrastructure," boasting over 40 neighborhood articles, hundreds of stories, and a strong social media presence. However, he stressed the importance of scaling efforts through increased awareness and adoption by local employers.

To expand their outreach, Life In Indy is collaborating with organizations like Aspire Johnson County. Life In Indy's website features the neighborhoods and assets of Johnson County and Indianapolis's Southside to potential future residents.

"I couldn't be more excited to work with Aspire to focus a portion of our national advertising campaigns on the specific workforce needs of Johnson County," said Pellman.

Pellman expressed enthusiasm for future collaborations and the opportunity to further promote the region's appeal.

"The Aspire team has always been willing to test new ideas and partner in mutually beneficial ways," he said.



(Photo courtesy of Life In Indy)

CHAMBER MEETINGS: APRIL AND MAY 2024

25-Celebrate Aspire

Aspire Economic Development + Chamber Alliance invites you to celebrate the local economy and our work this past year in the Johnson County area community. Network with local business leaders. Meet Aspire's governance teams. Learn about our work driving economic development and business success. And discover the Aspire Business Award winners! Thursday, April 25, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Garment Factory Events, 101 E. Wayne St., Franklin. For more information, go to web. aspirejohnsoncounty.com.

1-Top Floor Women by Everyday Leaders Consulting

Join Top Floor Women, Indy's Southside Premier Women's Monthly Networking Events. We meet the first Wednesday of every month for personal and professional development. All women seeking personal and professional development and connection are welcome! Wednesday, May 1, 8-9:30 a.m. at JPtheGeek, 156 S. Park Blvd., Greenwood. For more information, go to topfloorwomen.org.

2-Leadership Johnson County

Lunch and Learn: Finding Flow: Change How You Manage and Improve Results. Businesses, organizations, and individuals are invited to join Leadership Johnson County for our monthly Lunch and Learn Series. These sessions include a variety of topics and speakers in a one-hour, virtual format. Finding time for continuing professional development can be difficult during different seasons of your career. These sessions are designed to help busy leaders stay connected! Thursday, May 2, 11 a.m.-noon virtually. For more information, go to LeadershipJohnsonCounty.org or email Bea Northcott at bnorthcott@franklincollege.edu

Tech's place in a strategic plan

By Chet Cromer

Does your business have a strategic plan? I don't mean those concise vision and mission statements that we come up with after a few days of brainstorming. Nor do I mean a set of core values that guide your business and help you dial in ideal opportunities. When I ask this, I mean that next step ... the step where we take those nice, concise statements and turn them into a real plan – one with specific, measurable goals, and one that we can hold our stakeholders accountable to. Do you have one of those?

At my business, we drafted our first strategic plan back in 2018. I use the word "drafted" because it was always viewed as a living document. It wasn't set in stone, but it was made up of specifics that we thought long and hard about and didn't plan to change for several years. This plan took us through 2022, and while we did a good job "coasting" through 2023, it's time for a refresh. We are revamping it this year as we continue to evaluate our success, find areas to improve, and chart the course for what's next.

Our plan includes a key section we call "Critical Goal Categories" where we came up with five key areas that our goals would live within, and then came up with specific goals within each of these that we sought to achieve over the course of three-four years. Categories like Team Autonomy, Growth Facilitation, and Long-Term Planning were among the areas we knew we needed to invest in.

This plan will be our guiding light for several years. It points us to the people we needed to hire next, the types of partnerships we needed to put in place, and the financial environment we need to maintain to see those goals come to life. One thing I've noticed: the C2IT strategic plan has little to say about technology. It doesn't say we'll focus on the C# language or set our sights on a specific Cybersecurity tool. It doesn't even dive into the areas of technology services we'll focus on, like mobile app development or content curation and delivery.

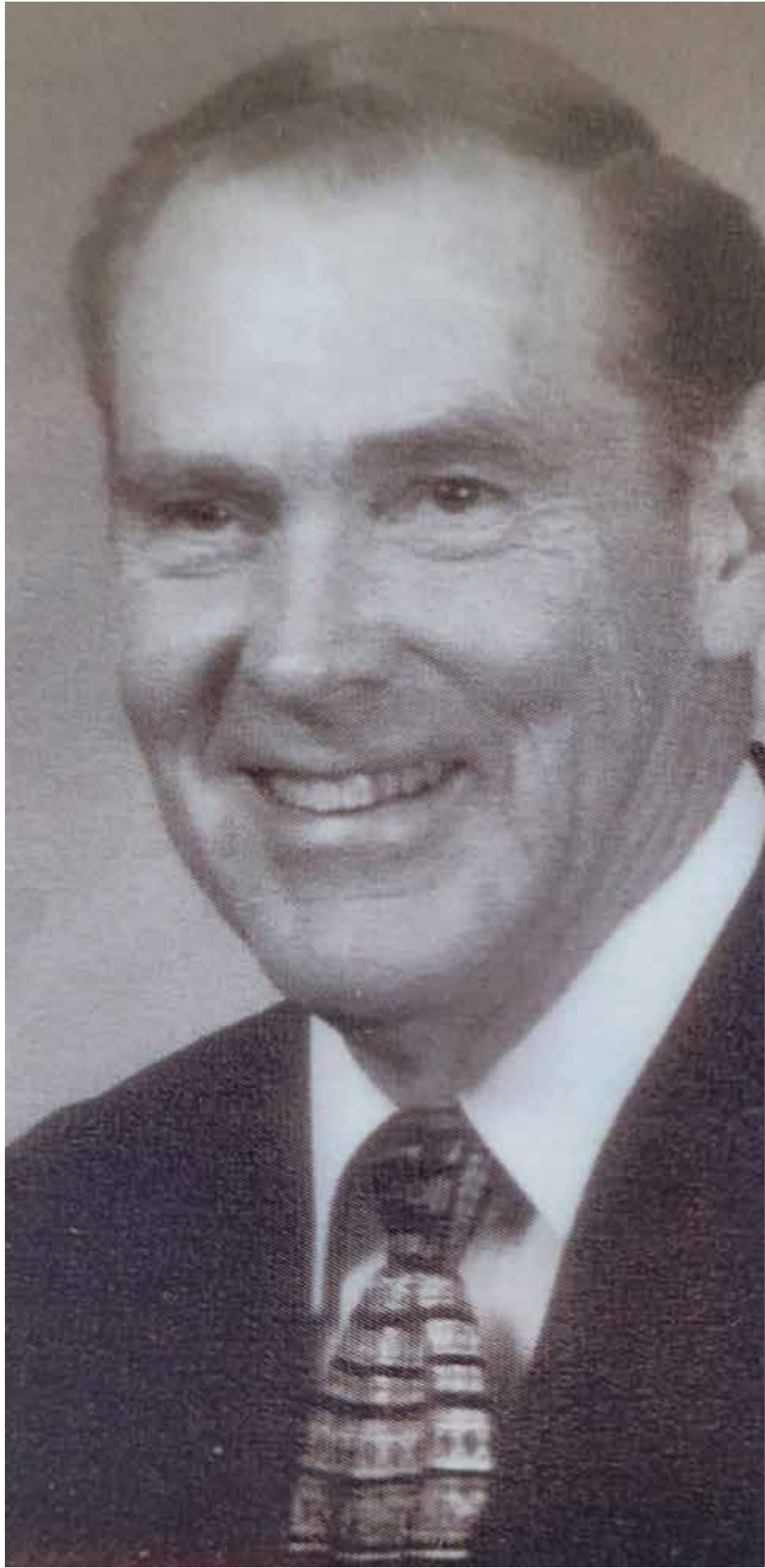
I imagine if we looked at your plan, we'd find a similar thread. ... **The tools we use to achieve our goals pale in comparison to the goals themselves.** Yes, it's important

to have the right set of tools to achieve high customer satisfaction or increase profitability ... but how we get there is not as important as knowing where we want to get to in the first place. In my world, these tools are the technology tools of hardware and software. In yours, they might be the "tech" of a new fleet of vehicles or the mobile app your team uses to do their job. But in the end ... technology's place in our strategic plan is to SUPPORT the plan, not BE the plan.

As we begin to execute our new plan, I expect to see some recurring themes from the past, but I'm also excited about some of the new vision-based goals. I'd love to hear what your own plan looks like, talk about the bumps you've experienced, and learn from the successes you've seen as you take the time to plan what's important to you and your team.



Chet Cromer is the president of C2IT Consulting, Inc., a Plainfield-based technology business that provides websites, mobile apps, and IT consulting/support to businesses across central Indiana. He can be reached at chetcromer@c2itconsulting.net or 317-721-2248.

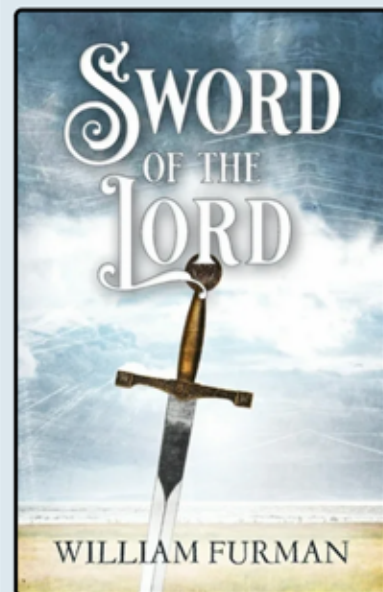


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Empowering our residents to pursue their passions

By Peggy Bryson, director of sales and marketing at Avalon Senior Living



Fostering a sense of community involvement, socialization, and a purposeful lifestyle is paramount for our residents at Avalon Senior Living.

Avalon offers more than just senior housing. We provide a vibrant environment where seniors can engage in various activities, form meaningful connections, and maintain a sense of purpose.

Community involvement activities such as shuffleboard games and stuffing Easter eggs help our residents build friendships while contributing their skills and smiles. Socialization activities ranging from group outings to game nights combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, promoting mental and emotional well-being.

Moreover, Avalon Senior Living offers purpose-driven programs such as educational workshops or hobby groups, empowering residents to pursue their passions. By prioritizing community involvement, socialization, and purposeful living, Avalon Senior Living creates fulfilling environments where seniors can thrive in their golden years.



(Photos by Peggy Bryson of Avalon Senior Living)

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Why choosing the right funeral home matters

By Paul C. St.Pierre



Talk to anyone who has lost a loved one recently and they'll likely mention how and why they selected a particular funeral home.

Maybe their friend or family member put their own arrangements in place ahead of time, including their preference of funeral home. Maybe generations of families have turned to a certain funeral home in the Indianapolis area, and they followed suit. Perhaps they called around to different funeral homes to see what each offered and how they differentiated themselves from the rest.

The staff at St.Pierre Family Funeral & Cremation locations understands that choosing a funeral home is a significant decision to make during an already difficult time. We're here to help Marion and Johnson County neighbors any way we can, including providing information to make this decision easier.

After a loved one dies and your family needs the services of a funeral home, keep these factors in mind:

Does the staff have knowledge of my loved one's specific culture and religion? Our counties have become diverse, and you need a funeral home that is knowledgeable about your specific customs and traditions. With our decades of experience, we assure families that the services they select will reflect their faith and culture. Since we are an integral part of the community, we also understand the values and traditions of those who live here, and we know how to incorporate them into a final farewell.

How much do different services cost? The cost of a funeral is dependent on what options you choose, and you need to make sure your funeral home offers a variety that suits your preferences. We offer a wide range of funeral, cremation, and burial options for all budgets. We're here to help you tell the story of a life, and we proudly do that while keeping our costs reasonable. You can also prepay for your own funeral to ensure today's cost.

Is the funeral home easy to find? The location of the funeral home should be convenient for you and your guests. If you've had the experience of getting lost or having trouble with parking when attending a funeral, you know how frustrating and nerve-wracking this can be. When it comes to our locations, you can rest assured they are easy to find and

access. Plus, our building was carefully designed and decorated for a family's optimal comfort.

When it comes to a facility, ask yourself these questions:

- **Is the interior and exterior clean and well-kept?**
- **Is there enough space for all visitors?**
- **How do you feel about the décor? Does it suit your taste?**

Being aware of your wants and needs will help you make the best choice for your family.

Does the funeral home offer the services we have in mind? You want to be sure the funeral home you select offers all of the services you want, from transportation options to military honors and veteran benefits to ways to add a personal touch to the funeral, reception, or burial. We take pride in providing all of the above – and so much more. Our staff is here for families before, during, and after the funeral is over making sure your needs are met.

It's also important to note that since we're owned and operated by a family, and our owners are Southside rooted in funeral service for over six generations. We have not lived or operated in multiple states like other area funeral homes. Experience and reputation matters, and our compassion and care come across in everything we do because it's genuine!

Selecting the right funeral home is a significant decision, but we are here to make it easier. Contact Paul or Kristin St.Pierre directly today about questions you have or about the many ways we can assist you.

Paul C. St.Pierre is the president of St.Pierre Family Funeral & Cremation Services, operating under the names Wilson St.Pierre Funeral Service, Singleton & St.Pierre, and Simplicity Funeral & Cremation Care. He is a sixth-generation funeral director. The St.Pierre family has been serving families locally with their funeral homes and crematories since 1897.



Paul St. Pierre
President & Funeral Director

Kristin St. Pierre
Advanced Planning Manager

Your Care is Our Calling

Six generations of our family have supported and assisted this community during difficult times. Today, we continue to help those who need our services. As a local, family-owned funeral home, we are deeply committed to every family who walks through our doors. You can trust our expertise when the time comes.

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Medicare — is enrollment over until the Annual Enrollment Period on Oct. 15?

By Linda Begley
NPN 1482386
Independent Medicare Agent

Since the OEP (Open Enrollment Period) is over as of March 31, what now? Who can change from one MAPD (Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Coverage) to a different one? What if someone finds a better MAPD plan?

If a person who is on Medicare A and B gets approved for Medicaid, they can change plans every month.

If a person is on disability for 23 months, that person can enroll in Medicare A and B on the 24th month of disability — regardless of age. At that time, they can also get on an MAPD.

If a person decides to retire (and is 65 or over) and is eligible for Part A (meaning he has worked for 40 quarters/10 years or more) and has Part B, he is eligible for enrollment for the extras provided in an MAPD.

What about the wife who has been on her husband's group insurance? He is retiring and is eligible for Medicare — but she is only 46 years old. This situation has many couples

re-thinking retirement. In this particular case, the 46-year-old wife was on disability and had been for 20 years. She was eligible for Medicare, so her husband was able to retire without trying to find affordable insurance for his wife. There are other situations where the husband (usually) continues working because insurance would be too costly for his wife.

Medicare continues to be more complicated, especially for those who need or are on Medicaid. Indiana was \$1 billion in debt this past year due to Medicaid complications (last April was considered the end of COVID). So regardless of income, many people lost their Medicaid coverage and are having to apply again.

In general, a person who is about to turn 65 needs to begin the process to get on Medicare 90 days in advance. For example, a person who turns 65 on Dec. 28 must apply for Medicare in September so it is active on Dec. 1.

Linda Begley is a retired teacher and counselor for Greenwood Community Schools. I have spent the last four years teaching and sorting out Medicare issues. Don't hesitate to call with your questions. Linda Begley 317-522-7230

Physical Therapy Following Total Knee Replacement Surgery

By Linda P Barnes, OTR
Owner/president, Therapy On Wheels, Inc.



More than 600,000 total knee replacement procedures are performed each year in the United States. As our population ages and obesity levels continue to increase, knee replacement surgeries are expected to increase.

One of the most important success factors following a total knee replacement is physical therapy and a lifelong exercise program.

Physical therapy typically begins during the hospital stay with the initial goals of getting the individual up and walking, decreasing swelling in the knee, and increasing range of motion. On the day of surgery, you likely will be using a walker and taking a few steps with the physical therapist.

In the next few weeks, you will be doing a variety of exercises with the therapist,

including, but not limited to leg raises, ankle pumps, knee straightening, and supported knee bends with a goal of reaching 90-degree flexion.

In three to six weeks, you can expect use of a cane or no device at all for walking. You will start doing normal daily tasks at home such as making your own coffee, showering, dressing, etc. You will also be working on scar mobilization and strengthening as you progress.

In seven to 12 weeks, you should have a wide range of motion and will continue with scar mobilization and strengthening as needed.

Therapy On Wheels (TOW) physical therapists can help you recover from your knee replacement in the comfort of your own home as an outpatient. We don't just have a good team at Therapy On Wheels Inc., we have a GREAT team!! Contact our office at 317-332-9861 for information or visit our website at therapyonwheelsinc.com.

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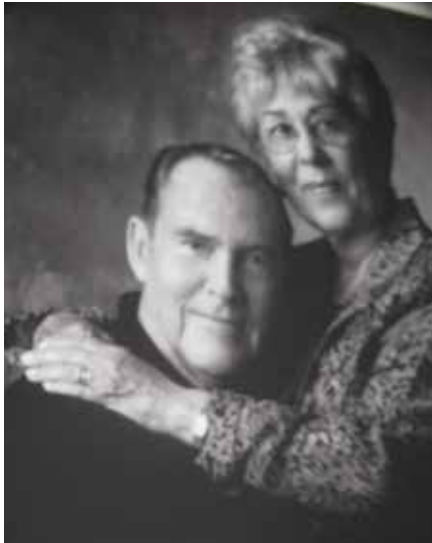
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A storied life inspires a collection of family and biblical history

By Kate Anderson



(Submitted photo)

Life is full of twists and turns, highs and lows, profound happiness, and unimaginable sadness. For 88-year-old Plainfield resident William Furman, or Bill, as his friends call him, his story is one of many life experiences and service to his community and devotion to his family.

Born in Nebraska on July 15, 1935, and a child of the Great Depression, Furman remembers the effects it had on his family. As a child he remembers watching his mother dry used coffee grounds on pages of the Sears Catalog so that they could be used again and never knowing what mealtime would hold and how much food there would be to pass around the table, let alone what each day would hold. Like so many, this time in history molded a part of his upbringing and these sensibilities he would carry with him through his life. Later in his childhood, he relocated to Stilesville where he would go on to graduate high school and then enlist in the Air Force

with a desire to serve in the Korean War. Before the war ended, he was afforded the opportunity to transfer to the Air Force Reserves and attend college. He then obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from Butler University and went on to work for Eli Lilly for 32 years.

During these years he and his first wife had a son who, for unforeseen reasons, he would go on to raise on his own. This was a trying time for Furman, and he felt like he had hit the bottom of the barrel. It turned his world upside down and he wasn't sure what steps to take next, but he knew he had to make some important decisions. In an effort to give his young son a good foundation, he began taking him to Sunday School at Plainfield Christian Church. It was while he was attending church that he met the beautiful woman that he would go on to marry. She was a divorcee with five children and together they made a wonderful, blended family. "Meeting and marrying my wife, Barbara is the best and smartest thing I have ever done in my life," said Furman. They were happily married for over 55 years until his beloved wife passed away in 2022 from Alzheimer's disease.

It was in the years that his wife was in the throes of her illness that he devoted himself to her comfort and care. As her illness progressed, he became determined to keep her at home, so he hired help when necessary to assist with her care. At night when she was asleep, he found himself thinking of his past and where he came from. He had begun to research his family geology and he got the notion of writing down his family history. He started with the story of his great-grandfather who traveled to Nebraska to put roots down for his family and his future. Thoughts, fragments, and short stories morphed into a book that he titled "A Season of Remembrance." It felt cathartic to journal his family's history, so he made the decision to dive back in, writing his grandfather's story and thus the

story of his father and himself. This book was titled, "A Man of the Prairie." His writing, along with his various volunteer endeavors in the Plainfield community, temporarily took him away from his worries about his wife's advancing illness.

When Barbara passed away, he continued to volunteer whenever he could and fervently worked on his writing projects. One day when he was reading his Bible, he came across a character that was mentioned in Acts Chapter 10. He was described as "a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion, a devout man and one that feared God with all." This man was a Roman soldier who was a Christian, which was not a popular belief at that time. It intrigued Furman that this man's history was not mentioned in any way. Who was he? What was his story? These questions perplexed him to no end and since he couldn't find any more information on him, he decided to give him a life and thus his next book was born. "From Slave to Soldier to Servant" is the historical fiction story of Cornelius' life from birth to death. He continued this historical fiction journey of Cornelius and brought to life the story

of his family and his wife's journey of spreading the gospel with his book, "Sword of the Lord" that will be released this July.

In this current season of his life, Furman loves to spend his time with his children, who all live close by and keep an eye on him, and when he can, his 13 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. His family is immensely proud of his writing endeavors. For the most part, he has discontinued his volunteer efforts and is enjoying the quiet life, reflecting on his life full of both trials and blessings. "I believe that the Lord has intervened in my life at many different times and for the betterment of my life. He has opened many doors and closed many windows," said Furman. Ultimately, he trusts the Lord and his timing. He is grateful for the gifts he has been given and has loved the journey his writing has taken him. Though very humble, he does take pride in his writing and hopes others will enjoy his efforts. "No matter how old you are you can still do great things," said Furman. This should be a lesson to all of us to get out there, work hard, and enjoy our lives to the fullest.

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Parkinson's Support Group at The Social of Greenwood

Meeting the first and third Wednesday of each month at 11 a.m. in the conference room.

Join fellow boxers to share common experiences. Through sharing, you can provide and receive comfort, encouragement, knowledge, advice, and inspiration. For more information go to thesocialofgreenwood.org/rock-steady-boxing or call 317-882-4810. The Social of Greenwood is at 550 Polk St., Greenwood.

EVENTScalendar

Woodcarving

No cost. | When: Mondays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. | Where: The Social of Greenwood, 550 Polk St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/news

Rock Steady Boxing

For individuals of all ages with Parkinson's disease to fight their symptoms by providing non-contact boxing-style fitness programs that improve their quality of life, sense of efficacy and self-worth. | When: Various classes and skill levels, Monday through Saturday. | Where: The Social of Greenwood, 550 Polk St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/rock-steady-boxing

Super Samba

Cost: \$1. | When: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. | Where: The Social of Greenwood, 550 Polk St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/news

Stretch and Flex

Stretch and Flex is a seated exercise that uses resistance bands to warm up muscles, improving flexibility and balancing. \$3. | When: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. | Where: The Social of Greenwood, 550 Polk St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/news

Wednesday Bingo

\$1,000 cover-all pot 50 numbers or less; \$500 or more cover-all guaranteed pot (paid with 90 or more players). Early birds (warm-ups) start at 6:30 p.m. All games end around 10 p.m. Public welcome! Basics starting package: \$17. Large new playing room. Food and beverages available. Join in on the fun! | When: April 24 (every Wednesday), 6:30 p.m. | Where: Greenwood VFW Post 5864, 1842 Veterans Way, Greenwood. | Info: 317-888-2488; steve.milbourn@aol.com

Purse Bingo Benefiting Greenwood Choir Parents Organization

Play bingo for the chance to win designer purses. There will also be 50/50 raffle baskets and food available for purchase. Must be 18 or older to attend. | When: April 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Where: Greenwood Moose Lodge, 813 W. Smith Valley Road, Greenwood. | Info: facebook.com/gcpobagbingo24

Mexican Train - Dominoes

Cost: \$1. | When: Fridays, 12:30 p.m. | Where: The Social of Greenwood, 550 Polk St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/news

On-Stage Live! Presents: A Tribute to the King and Queen of Rock & Roll

See Elvis and Tina Turner tribute artists in this exciting show. | When: April 26-May 4, Friday and Saturday shows, 7:30 p.m.; additional 2 p.m. show on Friday, May 3. | Where: On-Stage LIVE! Cabaret, 916 E. Main St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-300-0603; onstagelivecabaret.com/shows

Greenwood VFW Presents: HeartStone Crossing

Tickets: \$6 in advance; \$8 at the door. Open to the public. | When: April 27, 8 p.m. | Where: Greenwood VFW Post 5864, 578 Commerce Parkway W. Drive, Greenwood. | Info: 317-888-2488; heartstonemusic.com; greenwoodfw.co

Greenwood Farmers Market

Organized by the Old Town Greenwood Association, this market features farm fresh produce and other items. | When: May 4, 8 a.m.-noon. | Where: 525 N. Madison Ave. Greenwood. | Info: greenwoodinfarmersmarket@gmail.com; facebook.com/people/Greenwood-Indiana-Farmers-Market/100046967125244

Johnson County Garden Celebration

This annual event at Scott Hall and Herring Hall includes indoor and outdoor vendors, and workshops related to gardening. Entrance fee is \$2. Parking is free. | When: May 4, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground St., Franklin. | Info: 317-346-7316; jcgardenclub@gmail.com; facebook.com/JohnsonCountyGardenClubandGardenCelebration

Classic Car Cruise-in

Bring your classic car and enjoy food vendors, games, music, and more. There will be no fees or awards. | When: May 4, noon-5 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Park, 6484 S. Schoolhouse Road, Nineveh. | Info: 812-526-6809; facebook.com/injocoparks/events

11th Annual Ride for Autism Awareness

Benefiting autism awareness. \$35 per rider; \$10 per passenger; ride leaves VFW Post 5864. Breakfast available for purchase: 9 to 11:30 a.m. Ride ends at Crowbar Restaurant and Lounge, 209 State Road 135, Trafalgar. Raffles, silent auction, door prizes, 50/50. | When: Sunday,

May 5, Registration: 9:30 to 11 a.m., ride leaves 11:30 a.m. Rain Date is Saturday, May 11. | Where: Greenwood VFW Post 5864, 1842 Veterans Way, Greenwood. | Info: 317-888-2488; steve.milbourn@aol.com

Mother's Night Out Designer Purse Bingo

Enjoy 20 games of bingo for the chance to win a designer purse. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and games start at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$35. This is an 18 and older event. Bring any non-perishable food item for an extra door prize ticket. Food, drinks, additional bingo cards, raffle tickets, and 50/50 tickets will be available for purchase. Cash only. | When: May 8, 6:30-9:30 p.m. | Where: Greenwood Moose Lodge, 813 W. Smith Valley Road, Greenwood. | Info: 317-340-4294; trikappa.greenwood.bingo@gmail.com; festivalcountryindiana.com/mother-s-night-out-designer-purse-bingo

25th Annual Senior Expo

Free admission. Free health screenings. More than 60 vendors, healthcare providers, legal services, local agencies, financial services, health insurance, senior living, health and wellness, travel agents, and more! | When: May 9, 9 a.m.-noon. | Where: Greenwood Community Center, 1000 Surina Way, Greenwood. | Info: 317-882-4810; thesocialofgreenwood.org/seniorexpo

Senior Movie Series

Enjoy a free movie, popcorn and soda if you are 55 or older. | When: May 9, 1:30-3:30 p.m. | Where: The Historic Artcraft Theatre, 57 N. Main St., Franklin. | Info: 317-736-6823; historicartcrafttheatre.org/movie-and-events-schedule.html

17th Annual VFW Golf Tournament

The net proceeds of the tournament will be used to fund programs for homeless veterans and many local charitable programs. The cost is \$280 per foursome or \$70 per person. The price includes green fees, cart, unlimited beverages on the course, a buffet with hamburgers/bratwurst, baked beans, potato salad, chips, and of course various beverages at the VFW after the tournament. Each player will be provided with a "Ditty Bag," which will include coupons and business gratuities. Contributions and sponsorships are 100% tax deductible as VFW Post 5864 is a nonprofit organization. | When: June 8, check in at 7:30 a.m.; shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. | Where: Valle Vista Golf Course, 755 E. Main St., Greenwood. | Info: 317-525-7291; steve.milbourn@aol.com

AARP Indiana 'Asks the Candidates'

AARP Indiana has released its video series entitled "AARP Asks the Candidates." These videos, focusing on the top Republican candidates for governor, are part of AARP Indiana's continued efforts to ensure 50-plus voters know where candidates stand on the issues.

AARP Indiana will be posting the "AARP Asks the Candidate" series online, as well as promoting the guides through a variety of ways, including email, social media, and our network of volunteers.

AARP Indiana's non-partisan voter engagement guidelines limited participation to the candidates who registered at least 5 percent of voter support in a public statistically significant poll that was conducted by news

media or another independent organization. Polls done for a political party or candidate did not qualify.

The survey conducted by Emerson College Polling and sponsored by Nexstar Media was used to determine the participants in "AARP Asks the Candidates." The survey was also used for the Fox 59/CBS 4 debate on March 26, which AARP Indiana sponsored.

Each candidate was asked the following questions:

- Caregiving – What financial policies or programs would you implement to support family caregivers?
- Saving for Retirement – What policies or programs would you implement to ensure working Hoosiers can

save their own money for retirement?

- Multi-Sector Plan on Aging – What will you do to ensure that Indiana's Multi-Sector Plan on Aging is fully developed, implemented, and supported?

You can find up-to-date information regarding mail ballots, early and in-person voting, as well as other important deadlines in AARP Indiana's 2024 Election Guide. You can also text INVOTES to 22777 to receive a one-time text message with a link to Indiana voter information and additional advocacy information and alerts. Message and data rates may apply. Terms apply: aarp.info/tcadv.

Tips from Bax Wellness

Tips to improve our emotional well-being, Part 1

By Beth Bax

Did you know that one of the keys to living a longer, healthier life is emotional wellness? This article is the first in a three-part series on the topic of emotional wellness.

Emotional wellness is the ability to successfully handle life's stresses and adapt to change and difficult times. The National Institutes of Health provides six tips for improving our emotional health. The first tip is to develop a more positive mindset.

Emotionally well people have fewer negative emotions and are able to bounce back from difficulties faster. They're also able to hold onto positive emotions longer and appreciate the good times in their lives.

Here are six ways to develop this mindset:

1. Remember your good deeds and be proud of them.
2. Forgive yourself. We all make mistakes.
3. Practice gratitude. Create positive emotions by being thankful every day.
4. Spend more time with your friends. Good friends lift us up!
5. Explore your beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life. We all have a purpose.
6. Develop healthy physical habits such as exercising and eating nutritious food.

The second tip for improving our emotional health is to reduce stress.

Everyone feels stressed from time to time. Stress can give us a rush of energy when it's needed most. But if stress lasts a long time, a condition known as chronic stress, those changes become harmful rather than helpful. So, it's important to learn healthy ways to cope with stress.

Here are seven ways to do just that:

1. Get enough sleep. Lack of it can cause many serious health issues.
2. Exercise regularly. Strength, stability, and stretching exercises are your friend.
3. Build a social support network. We all need friends we can talk to when we're feeling stressed.
4. Set priorities. As my children's grandfather always said, "Tackle your most challenging task of the day first, then the rest of the day should be a breeze."
5. Show compassion for yourself. The popular phrase "Be Kind" refers to how we treat ourselves as well.
6. Try relaxation methods. Some that I often recommend to my clients are meditation, breathing exercises, and journaling.
7. Seek help from a professional such as a life coach, health coach, or therapist.



(Submitted photo)

Both chronic stress and negative thinking take a toll on our overall health. I hope these tips help you in your journey to be your healthiest and happiest.

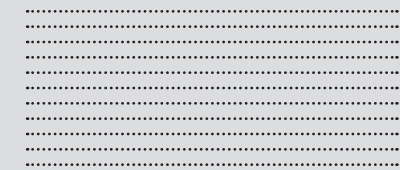
What to do with my 'STUFF'

By Paul Ellsworth

For many, we spend lifetimes collecting treasures to fill our homes. Dolls, dishes, figurines, books, and so much more. There comes a point where we need to downsize and start to get rid of these sentimental items. What do we do with them? That can be an overwhelming process. Do my children/grandchildren want them? Probably not, because the younger generations are putting more value in experiences than items. Knick knacks have been replaced by trips. Can I donate them? For many items, yes. There are numerous organizations and nonprofits that work hard to provide items to members of the community that are in need. Do they need to be disposed of? Some yes. Many times the circumstances that force these decisions mean that we need help to get it done. Where does this help come from? Children, siblings, and relatives may be available. Friends or neighbors could help. However, they are all busy and don't have unlimited availability. We can try to do it ourselves, but that may take months and that time is not an option. Another option is that there are companies that specialize in helping seniors with these services, including downsizing, decluttering, relocation, liquidation, donation, and disposal. Downsizing and decluttering can be done at a slower pace and over time. If you try to declutter your entire house in one weekend, you will get overwhelmed and frustrated. You want to start with smaller, more manageable projects. Kitchen junk drawer, Tupperware cabinet, one closet, one dresser. After each successful step, you should take some time to celebrate. There are organizations that can help with relocation. As you downsize, space planning is important, so you only move what fits. Assistance with packing and resettling can be provided. Your new space is set up before you arrive. Finally, all of the heavy lifting can be done by others. There are several options for liquidation. Again something that you can do yourself, but it is a great deal of work. Or you can get help, sit back, and relax. Estate sites, online auctions, and posting on some social media sources are some options. If you want to sell, you must realize that your items may not have the value that you think. At a minimum, liquidation will help cover the cost of emptying your house. Donation is another way to repurpose items, save them from the dump, and help the community. There are solutions that are easier, and with some asking and research, there are solutions that can be very targeted for specific groups. An example would be Teachers Treasures, who provides support to local teachers. Some locations will pick up. If your goal is an empty house to sell, the final piece is a clean out. There are probably chemicals that need proper disposal with a tox drop. You have found papers that need shredding. Many electronics will need recycling. There will be some larger furniture pieces, scrap lumber, rusted outdoor furniture, and other items that need to be disposed of. Again, this could be done by you, or with assistance.

In conclusion, although this process can be very overwhelming, it can be accomplished. I would be happy to answer questions, provide helpful information, or be of assistance.

Paul Ellsworth
 President, Caring Transitions Indy West
 317-777-1014
 pellsworth@caringtransitions.com
 caringtransitionsindywest.com



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Puzzle Time Answers

SEE PAGE 14

Answers to HOOSIER HODGEPODGE:

Stores: COACH, GAMESTOP, JCPENNEY, LIDS, MACY'S, OLD NAVY;

Parts: ANVIL, DRUM, HAMMER, LOBE, STIRRUP;

Breeds: BOXER, COLLIE, HUSKY, POODLE;

Jack: KNIFE, POT, RABBIT;

Streets: MAIN, MERIDIAN;

County: BARTHOLOMEW

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6	7	5	2	4	8	3	9	1
8	1	2	9	7	3	6	5	4



Investment/cryptocurrency scams riskiest in 2023, according to new BBB report

The findings shed light on how scams are perpetrated, who is being targeted, which scams have the greatest impact, and which behaviors and factors may impact a person's susceptibility.



Investment scams, including those involving cryptocurrency, are now the riskiest scam type, according to a new report from the Better Business Bureau. More than 80 percent of people who were targeted by this scam type reported losing money to BBB Scam TrackerSM. It also had the second highest median dollar loss at \$3,800.

Investment scams take many forms, including pressure to purchase, trade, or store digital assets (cryptocurrency) with fraudulent exchanges.

While investment and cryptocurrency scams had a significant impact in 2023, particularly for people 45 and older, anyone can be targeted and therefore should always beware of opportunities that sound too good to be true. Remember, no investment opportunity will come with zero risk.

Employment scam reports remained the second riskiest scam type in 2023. Reports increased 54.2 percent from the year before. Employment scams had a median dollar loss of \$1,995, significantly higher than the overall median dollar loss of \$100 reported for all scam types.

Online purchase (shopping) scams dropped from the riskiest scam type for the first time since 2019, landing at number three on the list. This year, 41.9 percent of scams submitted to BBB Scam Tracker were online purchase scams, and 82.6 percent reported losing money.

Key findings of the report include:

- Scams perpetrated online continued to grow, making up 68.4 percent of all reports. More concerning, online scams were more likely to result in a reported monetary loss than scams perpetrated in person or via phone.
- Overall reported susceptibility (the percentage of reports with a monetary loss) rose 27.8 percent from 2022 to 2023. Overall reported median dollar loss fell 41.5 percent.
- For the second year in a row, people ages 18-24 reported the highest median dollar loss of all age groups (\$155).
- The percentage of people who reported engaging with a scammer via social media rose 63.8 percent from 2022 to 2023.
- Credit cards remained the most reported payment method with a monetary loss, followed by bank account debit and online payment systems. Reports of bank account debit with a monetary loss increased 66.4 percent.
- Employment scams were No. 1 riskiest for ages 18-44. Investment/cryptocurrency scams were No. 1 riskiest for ages 45+.
- According to our survey research, people between the ages of 18 and 44 named anxiety/stress as

the number one emotion they felt after being targeted by a scam, while people 45+ cited anger as the number one emotion.

The five most impersonated organizations reported to BBB Scam Tracker in 2023:

- U.S. Postal Service
- Amazon
- Publishers Clearing House
- Geek Squad
- Norton

A list of the top 20 is provided in the report.

RESOURCES

For more highlights from the 2023 BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report, visit BBBMarketplaceTrust.org/RiskReport.

Go to BBB.org/ScamTracker to report a scam, learn more about other risky scams on BBB.org/ScamTips, and visit our news feed.

ABOUT BBB RISK INDEX & BBB SCAM TRACKER RISK REPORT

To better understand which scam types pose the highest risk, BBB Institute assesses risk based on the BBB Risk Index: **Exposure x Susceptibility** (or likelihood of loss) x Monetary Loss. These three factors help us understand the impact of scams and who is most vulnerable. Each year, BBB Institute publishes its annual findings in the BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report. The report

also includes survey research conducted with those who reported scams to BBB Scam Tracker. BBB Scam Tracker was voted the Best Scam Fighting Tool by the Global Anti-Scam Alliance and ScamAdviser.com.

ABOUT BBB SCAM TRACKER

BBB Scam Tracker (BBB.org/ScamTracker) is an online platform that enables consumers and businesses to report attempted and successful acts of fraud. The platform also enables people to search the scam reports to help determine if they are being targeted by a scam. The platform was upgraded in 2022 with support from Amazon and Capital One.

ABOUT THE BBB INSTITUTE FOR MARKETPLACE TRUST

The BBB Institute for Marketplace Trust (BBB Institute) is the educational foundation of the International Association of Better Business Bureaus. Our mission is to educate and protect consumers, promote best practices for businesses, and solve complex marketplace problems. Our consumer educational programs, which include a wide array of resources on fraud prevention and education, are delivered digitally and in person by BBBs serving communities across the United States and Canada. You can find more information about BBB Institute and its programs at BBBMarketplaceTrust.org.

IEWS

HUMOR



Top 10 things not to do over the Public Address system

By Torry Stiles

(Dear readers: Some of you may know that I, your faithful lister, also serve as the Public Address announcer at the Indianapolis Speedrome and Circle City Raceway. As I prepare for the upcoming racing season, I always note a few things that I need to never do.)

10. Page Mike Hunt.
9. Mistake two bald-headed audience members for Dolly Parton.
8. Ask anyone with a complaint to go to Helen Waite at the ticket office.
7. Announce half-off on leftover concession food without first making sure there are leftovers.
6. Mispronounce the name of any kid whose mom is in the row in front of the announcer's booth.
5. Attempt to sing the Whitney Houston version of "The Star-Spangled Banner."
4. Play the Carl Lewis version of "The Star-Spangled Banner."
3. Play the Rosie O'Donnell version of "The Star-Spangled Banner."
2. Play the Jimi Hendrix version of "The Star-Spangled Banner" except as a wake-up call.
1. Announce a "Happy Anniversary" at the request of an ex-wife.

DUMB LAW

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

In Belgium, public games are prohibited unless prior written consent is provided by the mayor at least eight days in advance.

Source: dumblaws.com

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Our environment, the world in which we live and work, is a mirror of our attitudes and expectations.

Earl Nightingale

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[^]APR is Annual Percentage Rate. Offer applies to new home equity lines of credit only. The 3.99% introductory APR is guaranteed for six (6) months from the date of closing. After the introductory rate, the APR will be a variable rate based on the prime rate as published in the Wall Street Journal, plus a margin. The current lowest variable APR available as of 3/18/24 is 8.50% APR, which includes a .25% discount for automatic payment from your IUCU checking account. The maximum APR that can be imposed is 18%. \$50 annual fee waived the first year. Minimum line of credit amount is \$10,000; fee of \$150 applies for approved lines of credit less than \$20,000. Closing cost may apply if title insurance is required. Some restrictions may apply. Contact the Credit Union for membership details. Property insurance is required. Investment mortgages are not eligible for this program. Rates, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Loans subject to credit approval.



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FRANKLIN

Authors at JCPL presents Megan Miranda

JCPL welcomes Megan Miranda, the New York Times bestselling author of "All the Missing Girls." The first 100 JCPL cardholders to register and attend will receive a copy of "Daughter of Mine." Please, only one free book per library cardholder. Reciprocal borrowers are not eligible for the free book. General admission tickets may be reserved by anyone; you do not need a library card to attend. Copies of the author's books will also be available for purchase from Wild Geese Bookshop. Registration opened Friday, March 22 at 9 a.m. *Please contact Kelly Staten (kstaten@jcpln.org or 317-738-9835) with accessibility or interpretive needs. | When: April 22, 7-9 p.m. | Where: The Historic Artcraft Theatre, 57 N. Main St., Franklin. | Info: pageafterpage.org/authors-at-jcpl; 317-738-2833

Wine, Cheese, and All That Jazz

Come out and enjoy local wines, hors d'oeuvres, live music, and a silent auction fundraiser. Tickets may be purchased in advance at the museum or at the door. This event is 21 and older. | When: April 27, 6:30-9 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Museum of History, 135 N. Main St., Franklin | Info: 317-346-4500; johnsoncountymuseum.org/wine-and-cheese-and-all-that-jazz

Here We Grow Again - Indy South Kids Consignment Sale 2

The organizers pack out two expo halls with more than 40,000 kids items from more than 200 families. Earn cash on your kid's outgrown items, stock up on the things they need now at a fraction of retail cost. Plus, help support local families in our own community. Most items are half off on Saturday. | When: Thursday, April 25, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, April 26, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground St., Franklin. | Info: 317-345-1798; facebook.com/HereWeGrowAgainIndySouth/events

Meet Pigeon Storytime

Pigeon, the star of "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!" by Mo Willems, joins us for

this special storytime. Photo opportunities are available. | When: Thursday, April 25, 4:30 p.m. | Where: JCPL, Franklin Branch, 401 State St., Franklin. | Info: pageafterpage.org/meet-pigeon

All Day Bag Sale

Join the Friends of JCPL for their \$5 All-day Bag Sale! There will be thousands of books, single DVDs, music CDs, and audiobooks available outdoors in the parking lot. Join us at the Franklin Branch's parking lot. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. | When: April 27, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. | Where: Franklin Branch parking lot, 401 State St., Franklin. | Info: jcpln.libnet.info/event/9644538

Grizzgrapple Series Jiu Jitsu Competition

The Warrior 110 presents the Grizzgrapple Series Jiu Jitsu competition. This adrenaline-pumping event includes matches for all levels. Competitors can compete for free. Admission for spectators is \$10 cash or \$12 for electronic payments at the door. There will be food and beverages from Chilly Water Brewery and Tasties Acai Bowls. | When: April 27, 4-8 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Armory, 325 Minuteman Way, Franklin. | Info: 317-714-2002; facebook.com/events/s/the-warrior-110-presents-grizz/1132610868094398

Garden Celebration XIX

The Johnson County Garden Club is hosting its annual garden celebration featuring 75 vendors and three speakers who will educate regarding native plants and wildlife rehabilitation. General admission is \$2 a person, cash only. For breakfast and lunch, visit the Garden Café featuring Jodie Beasley Catering and the MoBow! food truck. Enjoy Windy Knoll Bakery's Amish baked goods for dessert or take-home. Visit social media for updates regarding vendors and speakers. | When: May 4, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Where: Johnson County Fairgrounds, Scott and Herring

Halls, 250 Fairground St., Franklin. | Info: Questions can be directed to Gary Kiesel by emailing jcgardenclub@gmail.com

GREENWOOD

Speed Dating

KIC-IT presents a fun evening of Speed Dating. Admission for this 21-and-older event is \$25. | When: April 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Where: Barn at Bay Horse Inn,

1468 W. Stones Crossing Road, Greenwood. | Info: facebook.com/barnatbayhorse

Mother's Night Out Designer Bag Bingo

Tickets currently on sale for Greenwood Tri Kappa, Delta Lambda Chapter Designer Bag Bingo. \$35 per person, includes 20 games all with

designer purse prizes, bingo dauber, and a door prize ticket. Additional bingo cards, raffle basket tickets, 50/50 tickets available for purchase from the Women of the Moose. Must be 18 to enter. Cash only. Bring any non-perishable food item for an extra door prize ticket. All proceeds stay local to support charities and scholarships. | When: May 8, doors open at 5:30 p.m. Bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. | Where: Greenwood Moose Lodge, 813 W. Smith Valley Road, Greenwood. | Info: Go online to purchase tickets at rb.gy/u40u8l; email trikappa.greewood.bingo@gmail.com or call 317-340-4294

'Memories of Mother' Dinner at Dye's Walk Country Club

Join the Indy South Women's Connection group for a fun evening of dinner and a motivational speaker. Also featuring a photo boot, prizes, tea tastings, and more! | When: May 14, 6:15-7:45 p.m. | Where: Dye's Walk Country Club, 2080 S. State Road 135, Greenwood. | Info: Contact Jeannie at 317-899-4760 or email indysouthwomensconnection@yahoo.com

TRAFALGAR

Meet Pigeon Storytime

Pigeon, the star of "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!" by Mo Willems, joins us for this special storytime. Photo opportunities are available. | When: April 25, 10 a.m. | Where: JCPL, Clark Pleasant Branch, 350 Clearwater Blvd., Whiteland. | Info: pageafterpage.org/meet-pigeon

WHITELAND

Meet Pigeon Storytime

Pigeon, the star of "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!" by Mo Willems, joins us for this special storytime. Photo opportunities are available. | When: April 23, 10 a.m. | Where: JCPL, Clark Pleasant Branch, 350 Clearwater Blvd., Whiteland. | Info: pageafterpage.org/meet-pigeon

Community Conversations

Join us for a panel discussion on public safety in Johnson County, featuring representatives from the Town of Whiteland and New Whiteland and Clark-Pleasant Schools and local fire and police departments. | When: April 27, 2 p.m. | Where: Clark Pleasant Branch Library, 350 Clearwater Blvd., Whiteland. | Info: jcpln.libnet.info/event/9625997

Celebrate Dia!

Experience different cultures and languages in Johnson County. | When: April 28, 2-4 p.m. | Where: Clark Pleasant Branch Library, 350 Clearwater Blvd., Whiteland. | Info: jcpln.libnet.info/event/9541452

Students named to Trine University president's list

Trine University students were named to the president's list for the fall 2023 semester. To earn president's list honors, students must complete a minimum of 12 hours and have a grade point average of 3.750-4.000. The following area students were named to the president's list: Noah Glassman of Greenwood, majoring in chemical engineering and Carson Wools of Greenwood, majoring in design engineering technology.

★★★★ • R • Comedy/Fantasy • 1 hour, 40 minutes

Dream Scenario

Raucous laughs and face-curling cringe

MOVIE REVIEW

By Bradley Lane

Nic Cage has developed a personal brand so strong and so idiosyncratic that character work is nearly impossible for him. Make no mistake, Cage is a supremely serious and talented actor, but his most extreme moments of performance have been clipped out of context and ruthlessly mocked and memed until they no longer bear any semblance of their original emotions. It leaves Cage in a bit of an awkward place, wanting to be seen as a serious artist, but having to play along with the joke (see 2022's *The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent* for how soulless and sad that looks). However, together with writer-director Kristoffer Borgli, Cage is able to

more fully express how frustrating it is to lose control of a public image.

Following a cycle of viral fame we've seen time and time again Cage's character Paul Matthews finds himself in the limelight for reasons far beyond his understanding. In real life this usually involves funny viral videos, weird tweets, or random news appearances; in Paul's case he begins showing up in people's dreams. This newfound fame initially beguiles Paul, but soon, just like in real life, for reasons beyond his control the attention begins to sour and complicate each and every one of his relationships.

Part of what makes *Dream Scenario* work as well as it does as a comedy is Nic Cage's

public persona. Many times, the joke of a scene is just Cage's nonchalant saunter through the subconscious of unwitting dreamers. He has a persona that lends itself well to absurdity and his physicality as a performer and attention to detail lead to moments of both laugh-out-loud hilarity and sober sadness. Without Cage the film simply doesn't work.

Despite the film working on that level, however, its critique of what it is depicting falls a lot shorter of what it seemingly set out to achieve. I might be more online than the typical audience member but the cycle of fame, ruin, and inevitable prolonged absorption into capitalism is so obvious to me that I was waiting for the film to

subvert that idea in some way, but it plays that idea pretty straight all the way to the very end. It doesn't hurt the film except for some pacing issues, but it also keeps it from reaching its full potential.

Despite not living up to its incredible premise, *Dream Scenario* is a great time. It made me laugh like a maniac and is another in a streak of great performances by a once-in-a-lifetime talent. *Dream Scenario* is exclusively available to stream on Max. - 3.5/5 stars



Bradley is a Beech Grove High School alumnus and has been enamored by film for as long as he can remember. He recently graduated from IUPUI, with a degree in Media and Public Affairs with a minor in Film. Bradley can be contacted at blane2214@gmail.com.

AN OPTION

LINDO MEXICO

For those of you who love to celebrate Cinco de Mayo (coming up on May 5), you're probably looking for the ideal place to enjoy a margarita (or two or three), tasty and seasoned, yet inexpensive food, and fast and friendly service; go to Lindo Mexico, voted Indy's Best Mexican Restaurant by Fox 59 last year. Located in Emerson Pointe, "Lindo has an expansive menu, and it is definitely a step up from your run-of-the-mill Mexican joint," stated a Yelp reviewer. "Authentic birria, lots of seafood options, etc. The food quality is great, and the salsa is fantastic." Added another, "Absolutely killer fresh margaritas. You have to try the margarita flight! I loved the guava, so fresh with a hint of mint. It was delicious and tried the smoky tamarind and the passion fruit pineapple, too." Guests love the chicken enchiladas with verde sauce, steak fajitas taco salad, shrimp or beef tip chimichangas, arroz con pollo, and strawberry mandarin margaritas. "The service is remarkable as well," added a Google reviewer. "I sat an empty chip tray and salsa bowl at the end of my table, and within a matter of 60 seconds without saying a word, I had a new tray of chips and a full bowl of salsa."



Margaritas aplenty at Lindo Mexico. (Photo courtesy of Lindo Mexico)

Hours: Sunday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Address: 997 E. County Line Road, Greenwood. For more information, call 317-859-1336 or go to greenwoodinlindomexico.com

SPOTLIGHT

'YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE'

Member artists will exhibit artworks that follow the theme, "You Are My Sunshine" for the free SALI Members Spring Exhibit 2024 at the Southside Art League Off Broadway Gallery. A wide variety of styles, subjects, media, and prices will be available, including framed and unframed original paintings, matted giclee prints, ceramic sculpture, paper sculpture, and greeting cards. A layaway plan is available. Come and enjoy the artwork during regular hours Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Closed Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. The SALI Members Spring Exhibit will be displayed for three months, from April 3 - June 29. The Southside Art League, Inc. (SALI) Off Broadway Gallery is at 299 E. Broadway St., Greenwood, IN 46143, two blocks north of Main Street and six blocks east of Madison Avenue in historic Old Town Greenwood. Please call SALI at 317-882-5562 to arrange for viewing by appointment at any other time.



Emu. (Pastel artwork by Marianne Hamilton)

Washburn announces Ashlynn Wolff is dean's list honoree for fall 2023

Washburn University has announced its fall 2023 dean's list honorees. To qualify for the dean's list, a student must be enrolled in 12 hours of graded credits and earn a semester grade point average of 3.4 to 3.99. Dean's list honorees include Ashlynn Wolff from Greenwood.

'Wandering Stars'

Haunting historical Native American story of segregation, murder, and addiction

BOOK REVIEW

By Stefanie Davis

"Wandering Stars" by Tommy Orange is considered both a prequel and sequel to his popular debut novel, "There There." I must admit that I have not yet read that one but was still able to follow along with this story. In this compelling, complex, and haunting literary read, the story begins with the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864 following Jude Star and his family. While Jude was able to escape the Sand Creek Massacre, he is later imprisoned in Florida. Following his imprisonment, history comes full circle with Jude's jailer founding and then instructing Jude's son at the infamous Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The Carlisle Indian Industrial School's mission was "kill the Indian to save the man." Much of the school's dark history of stripping Native Americans of their culture is covered in this story. Then, the story moves forward in time to 2018 where Orville Red Feather is recovering at home in Oakland after being hit by a stray bullet at a powwow. This part of the story details Orville's struggle with addiction, similar to many other Native American's experiences. This story will leave you haunted by America's history of assimilation, segregation, and murder of Native Americans. For related reads, check out "A Council of Dolls" by Mona Susan Power, "Betty" by Tiffany McDaniel, and "The Removed" by Brandon Hobson.



This review is written by Stefanie Davis, the adult services librarian of the Johnson County Public Library – White River Branch. She enjoys reading, water aerobics and spending time with her German Shepherd. Contact Stefanie at sdavis@jcpln.org.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Adult:

"End of Story: A Novel"
by A.J. Finn

"The Fox Wife"
by Yangsze Choo

"The Heiress"
by Rachel Hawkins

"The Real Hoosiers: Crispus Attucks High School, Oscar Robertson, and The Hidden History of Hoops"
by Jack McCallum

Young adult:

"Eyes Open"
by Lyn Miller-Lachmann

"Kill Her Twice"
by Stacey Lee

"Rez Ball"
by Byron Graves

"Dead Girls Don't Say Sorry"
by Alex Ritany

Children:

"Roster Rebound"
by Jake Maddox

"What is a Solar Eclipse?"
by Dana Meachen Rau

"The Missing Sound"
by Nicole Johnson

"When You Have to Wait"
by Melanie Conklin

Needing another coat!

HUMOR

By Dick Wolfsie

My wife and I often engage in meaningful conversations. She will ask me things like:

Are we better off with stocks or bonds?

Should we have waited longer to take Social Security?

Should we stick with cable or try a streaming service?

She's asking these questions to make me feel smart. She already knows the answers. But here are the most common questions I ask Mary Ellen:

"Do you know where my coat is?"

"Did you hang up my coat last night when we got home?"

"Was I wearing a coat last night?"

Nippy temps will soon be over. This past cold season, I faced the winter chill without any substantial outerwear whenever possible. It's not that I'm particularly hardy; I'm simply looking at things realistically. I'm tired of losing my coat. I lost three during Covid and we never left the house.

I'm going to explain my problem, but you have to read this carefully, or you'll be lost — like my coat usually is. I never liked wearing winter coats, especially in the car. I don't want to be all bundled up and feel like the Pillsbury Doughboy at the wheel. I get too warm when the car heats up, but I can't undo my buttons or unzip because of the seat belts. Then when I exit the car, I'm soon in a warm place like a movie theater or Lucas Oil Stadium and have to immediately take off my heavy jacket and stuff it under my seat, which is a great way to add mustard stains and sticky pieces of popcorn to my apparel.

Since I seldom wear a coat, I am accustomed to leaving places without one.

And so, when I occasionally do take along a jacket, I often leave it behind because I'm not used to wearing it in the first place. Are you following me? If you are following me, please tap me on the shoulder and remind me that I just left my coat at Beef and Boards.

It's crazy for my wife to get bundled up in the winter because she asks me to warm up the car before we leave the house. Then she asks me to drop her off in front of the restaurant. Then I pick her up at the door when we leave. We drive home in a heated car and get out in our heated garage. Why does she even need a coat?

For many years, this was a typical phone conversation I'd have on any given morning after we went out and I made the mistake of bringing a coat.

"Hello, this is Dick Wolfsie. I was at your theater last night and left my brown winter coat there. Could you check your lost-and-found?"

"We have a pair of glasses, an iPhone, and a credit card."

"Yes, all that is mine. Not only did I forget that stuff, I forgot that I forgot it. But about the coat?"

"Here's a brown one. Didn't the bitter cold remind you of your coat?"

"I can't explain this. Read my column. I'll get the coat tomorrow. It looks like rain."

"Don't you have an umbrella?"

"I left it at Starbucks."



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.

Iowa State University announces fall semester 2023 dean's list

More than 10,800 Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2023 dean's list. Students named to the dean's list must earn a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work. Students from Greenwood include Emily Grace Andersen, a junior, business analytics, and Ashley Yovanoff, a senior, event management.

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Petunias that glow in the dark! Visiting the Islands of Hawaii

GARDENING

By John Chapin



The biology lab Light Bio has worked for decades to develop luminous plants that continuously glow in the dark. The first bioluminescent plants were demonstrated in labs more than 35 years ago, but a few kinks needed to be worked out. With advances in gene-editing, scientists have been able to splice genes from naturally bioluminescent mushrooms into petunias so that their leaves and flowers emit a soft, green glow in the dark. The effect is mesmerizingly impressive, accentuating the natural patterns in the plant.

The healthier the plant, the brighter the glow, which is somewhere around the level of moonlight. These petunias do not require any special food or treatment, but you can make them brighter by placing a ripe banana skin under the plants which emits an ethylene growth hormone to increase the plants' metabolism. Unlike fluorescence, a trait that has been bred into some tropical fish, and which requires special light bulbs to be seen, bioluminescence is self-generated by the plant.

The USDA approved the sale of 'Firefly' petunias last September, and the company is now taking pre-orders at Light Bio for spring delivery. The company chose petunias because they're popular as ornamental plants, are annuals, and are not considered invasive species, so the chances of the modified genes spreading into native plants and disrupting ecosystems should be minimal. If you're a science nut, or just want to grow an unusual plant that will certainly be a conversation piece in your garden, you might want to check this out. Happy gardening!



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

TRAVEL

By Amy Maharas

Have you always wanted to visit the Aloha State, but you're not sure where to start? Hawaii is one of my family's favorite vacation destinations, so we have visited five of the islands. Here is what we love about each:

Oahu: When you think of Hawaii, you likely picture surfers on Waikiki or the USS Arizona Memorial, both of which are located on the Island of Oahu. Oahu is a great starting point for your first trip to the islands. Visit the Polynesian Cultural Center, hike up Diamond Head, see turtles on the North Shore, and snorkel in Hanauma Bay. For a more relaxing stay, consider the lagoons on the west side of the island where Aulani-Disney Resort & Spa (my favorite resort anywhere) is located.

Hawaii, or the Big Island: If you want to visit coffee farms and see volcanoes, the Big Island is the island for you. Volcanoes National Park is worth a visit, and Kona coffee has a reputation for a reason! Be sure to visit the black sand and green sand beaches.

Maui: If a beautiful beach is your goal, the beaches of Ka'anapali on the north side of the island are pristine with a plethora of upscale hotels for lodging. Maui also offers amazing sunrise views at Haleakala National Park and great shopping.



Kauai: Probably my family's favorite, Kauai is quintessentially Hawaiian with lush green areas as well as gorgeous views from Waimea Canyon. Explore the Na Pali Coast by boat and enjoy the beaches of Poipu on the south shore or Hanalei Beach on the north shore.

Molokai: If you are a seasoned Hawaii visitor, it's time for a trip to Molokai. With only one hotel and a smattering of condos, this is not touristy Hawaii, but it will certainly open your eyes to life in Hawaii.



Amy Maharas is a travel planner with Hi Ho Vacations. Contact her at Amy@HiHoVacations.com

FAITH

What are you living for today?

DEVOTIONAL

By Pastor
 Chris Philbeck

Some years ago, a frozen pizza company was trying to figure out an advertising campaign to bring attention to their product. They designed a series of humorous commercials where an individual was about to lose his life in some dramatic fashion — in front of a firing squad, about to walk the plank, or a teenager who'd had a party while his parents were away for the weekend. In each case, they were asked, "What do you

want on your tombstone?" to which the answer was "pepperoni and cheese" or some other pizza topping. It was a risky ad, but the name of the frozen pizza company was Tombstone Pizza, and the ad was highly successful.

Just out of curiosity, I did a little research on funny epitaphs on tombstones. Here are some of my favorites. I told you I was sick. Go away — I'm asleep. I see dumb people. Destined to be a woman with too many cats.

But seriously, if you requested a stone to be placed over your grave, what would you want on your tombstone? I imagine for the Apostle Paul it would be the words of 2 Timothy 4:7. *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.*

I don't know if you're familiar with the story of William Borden, who was heir to the Borden Dairy estate. He graduated from high school in 1904 and took a trip around the world. As he traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for hurting people. Ultimately, he wrote home to say, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field."

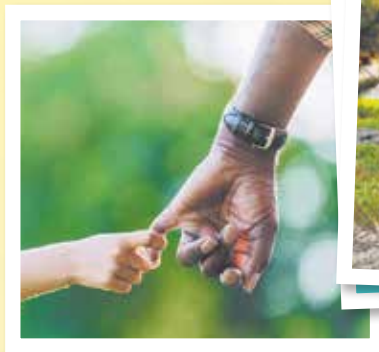
Tragically, Borden never made it to China, where he wanted to work with Muslims. He died from spinal meningitis in Egypt while learning Arabic. There's so much more to his life than I have room for in this devotion. But what stands out to me is the epitaph on his tombstone. "Apart from faith in

Christ; there can be no explanation for such a life." William Borden had everything the world could offer, but nothing was more important to him than his commitment to Christ. Upon his death, he had these words written in the back of his Bible: No Reserves. No Retreats. No Regrets.

What are you living for today? For William Borden, it was saying "yes" to Jesus and "no" to everything else.



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Our community. Our stories.

Every week, we aim to share the best of **Johnson County** sharing the stories of people who make a difference every day.

What **stories** in the community deserve to be told?

What community Icons deserve **recognition** for what they do for Johnson County residents and organizations?

**Forward your suggestions to
Nancy Hammerstrom at nancyh@icontimes.com**

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