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*Wishing you  
a very  
Merry  
Christmas!*

**TODAY'S VERSE**

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (NIV)



**FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY**

People who call our community their own.

What makes Melina Bartzis smile? "Being in groups like ballet and being with a group of friends in such a community. That makes me smile and have friendship," said the 17-year-old, a Noblesville High School junior. She was found performing in the Snow Court and the Party Scene in White River Ballet Co.'s production of "The Nutcracker" on Sunday at NHS Auditorium. On Saturday, she performed as the Snow Queen in the production. The daughter of Ioannis and Opal Bartzis, she has been studying ballet since age 2. Through the years, she has played various roles in "The Nutcracker," also including Flower Queen and Marzipan. Why ballet? "I love ballet because of the community that you gain with ballet and also the physical aspect of it. It's such a great physical activity for your body to keep healthy and in shape." At NHS, she sings in the New Dimension show choir and plays violin in the NHS orchestra. She will perform in the upcoming NHS All Choir Holiday Concerts at 7 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. Saturday (with reserved seating and tickets still available) and she will also perform in an upcoming NHS Orchestra Concert. What else? She has studied piano since age 3.

**And Another Thing...**

Double Match Day at the Noblesville Meijer Store will occur on Saturday, Dec. 11, 2021  
Simply Give - Nov. 1, 2021 - Dec. 31, 2021  
A \$10 donation at the checkout counter provides meals and helps a neighbor. HCHFB purchases needed food year round using your donations. You can also donate online to Hamilton County Harvest Food Bank at: [https://www.hchfoodbank.org/online-giving/?mc\\_cid=23e7df2710&mc\\_eid=8c9b760e70](https://www.hchfoodbank.org/online-giving/?mc_cid=23e7df2710&mc_eid=8c9b760e70)

# The TIMES

Hamilton County's Only Daily Newspaper

NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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## Mayor Jensen awarded Statesman Award

Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen was awarded the Global Statesman Award by the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition at its annual Tribute Celebration.

"I am greatly honored to be included in this list of mayors and thank the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition for this recognition," said Jensen. "Noblesville is home to many international companies and residents, and we will continue our work to make the city a safe, healthy and economically thriving community."

Noblesville is a universally-connected city maintaining a wide variety of global investments, which are important for our economic development efforts. Those efforts include foreign markets for businesses and farmers to sell or export goods to. The diverse citizenship in our community is enhanced by the international businesses and manufacturers that have chosen to locate and grow in Noblesville.



Photo courtesy of the City of Noblesville

Jensen was part of a bipartisan group of U.S. mayors who believe that America's global leadership starts at home and were honored with the Global Statesman Award.

See AWARD Page A5



Photo courtesy of Noblesville High School Choral Department

NHS Singers show choir perform in 2020 during the All Choir Holiday Concert finale of "Silent Night," a tradition during which alumni in the audience is invited to join the choir on stage for the final song.

## Come out, enjoy our NHS All Choir Holiday Concerts

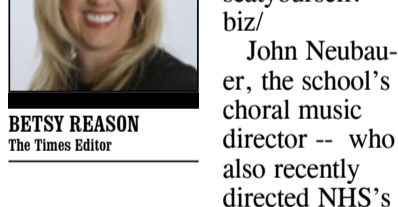
Chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Jack Frost nipping at your nose. Yuletide carols being sung by a choir.

These are the lyrics to one of my favorite Christmas songs, which is actually called "The Christmas Song," written by Robert Wells and Mel Tormé and first recorded 75 years ago by the Nat King Cole Trio.

During the holidays, hearing yuletide carols being sung by a choir is one of my favorite ways to spend an afternoon or evening, especially if the holiday concert features our own local high school students.

This season, the Noblesville High School's All Choir Holiday Concerts return with two concerts, at 7 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. Saturday at the NHS Auditorium. Reserved seating is \$10, \$15 for premium seating,

and tickets are still available at <https://nhscpo.seatyourself.biz/>



BETSY REASON  
The Times Editor

John Neubauser, the school's choral music director -- who also recently directed NHS's fall production, Disney's "High School Musical" -- said he is "excited for all the choirs to sing before a large audience. As the pandemic exists, getting to perform seems like a bigger deal and a privilege."

Each of the two concerts will feature all NHS choirs but will showcase different student acts chosen from submitted audition videos.

"This concert is fun because

See BETSY Page A5

## Stand up, salute, or whatever you want... but do something

I remember when I was a senior at Noblesville, the English department added a few different courses -- one of which was philosophy. I liked pondering the big questions -- like Bill Cosby's query, why is there air -- so I signed up. Jim Bray taught the class.

That experience led to some great arguments at home. You know, teenager wanting more freedom, mom and dad wanting to kill him (and before anyone loses their mind -- we used to be able to say stuff like that and no one took it literally, and since this is my stroll down memory lane . . . )

I would do my best to use Leibniz' theory of a perfect world. I'd begin making a point about why my curfew needed to be later by saying that in a perfect world . . . only to have mom interrupt with -- It isn't a perfect world.

Philosophy meets reality.

Teenager loses. Fast forward to today. In a perfect world, I would say everyone has a right to think and act any way they choose. So if sports teams want to kneel, turn their backs or play tidlywinks during the National Anthem, they'd have that right.

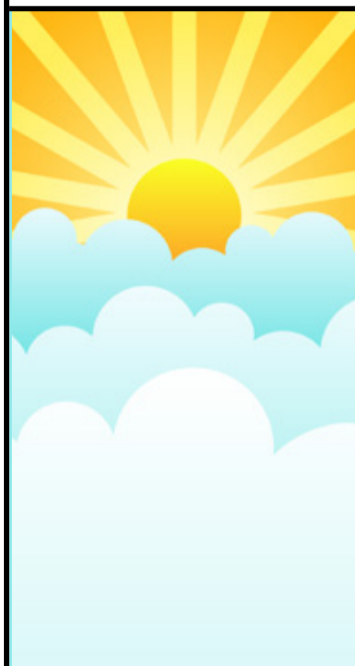
Say it with me now -- it ain't a perfect world.



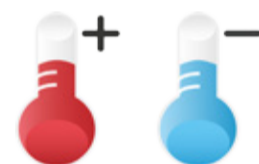
TIM TIMMONS  
Two Cents

See TIM Page A5

## The Daily Almanac



Sunrise/Sunset  
RISE: 7:58 a.m.  
SET: 5:22 p.m.



High/Low  
Temperatures  
High: 48 °F  
Low: 25 °F



Wacky Holiday Today  
• Christmas Card Day  
• National Llama Day



What Happened On This Day

- 1979 Smallpox declared eradicated
- 1965 Charlie Brown Christmas makes air for the first time on television



Births On This Day

- 1608 John Milton English poet
- 1934 Judi Dench English actress

Deaths On This Day

- 2012 Patrick Moore English astronomer
- 1998 Archie Moore American boxer

### INSIDE TODAY

Obituaries.....A2  
Classifieds.....A4  
Comics.....A4

### TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Take family walks -- it's good exercise and good for conversation. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at [www.thetimes24-7.com](http://www.thetimes24-7.com).



### TODAY'S QUOTE

"Christmas to me is as many people as possible happy."  
Tupac Shakur

### TODAY'S JOKE

What do reindeer hang on their Christmas trees?  
Horn-aments!

### HONEST HOOSIER

Christmas is two weeks and two days away. One of my favorite memories is looking forward to Christmas break in school. We didn't get that many breaks, so we really looked forward to the ones we did have.



### THREE-DEGREE GUARANTEE

Weatherby says the high today will be **32°**

If Weatherby is off by more than 3 degrees, e-mail us at [weatherby@thetimes24-7.com](mailto:weatherby@thetimes24-7.com) and let us know. Include your name and phone number. Each month those who called in and caught Weatherby will be entered into a drawing for a prize.



The Times appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank RON MCGILL of Noblesville for subscribing!

### OBITUARIES

Deborah Kay (Skaggs) Hahn  
Joseph A. Cook



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## OBITUARIES

### Deborah Kay (Skaggs) Hahn

July 27, 1951 - Dec. 6, 2021

Deborah Kay (Skaggs) Hahn, 70, Noblesville, passed away on Monday, Dec. 6, 2021 at her home.

She was born on July 27, 1951, to the late Arthur Skaggs and Jean Straub in Anderson, Ind.

Mrs. Hahn was a very strong and devout Christian woman who is now living with her Lord. She worked as a secretary/treasurer for Hamilton Southeastern Schools in Fishers. Mrs. Hahn was a member of White River Christian Church and enjoyed her small group as well as greeting her fellow members of the congregation.

She never met a stranger and was a friend to all. Mrs. Hahn had a big heart and always put others before herself. She exuded kindness in everything she did. She was an amazing cook. Above all, Mrs. Hahn was a dedicated mother, grandmother and wife.

Survivors include her husband of 50 years, David Hahn; sons, Brad (Michelle) Hahn and Bryant (Kayti) Hahn; grandchildren, Alex (Hannah) Hahn, Preston (Michaela) Dyce, Emili Dyce, Lauren Carter, Steven Hahn, Isaac Hahn and Desmond Hahn; great-granddaughter, Georgia; and her brother, Steve (Laura) Skaggs.

Visitation will be from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 11, 2021 at Randall & Roberts Funeral Center, 1685 Westfield Road, in Noblesville. Services will be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 12, 2021 at the funeral home, with Pastor Tim Brock officiating.

For memorial contributions may be made to the White River Food Pantry, 1685 North 10th Street, Noblesville, IN 46060.

Condolences online may be made at: [www.randallroberts.com](http://www.randallroberts.com)



### Joseph A. Cook

Nov. 27, 1928 - Dec. 4, 2021

Joseph A. Cook, 93, Carmel, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021 at Copper Trace Senior Living in Westfield.

He was born on Nov. 27, 1928 in Casper, Wyo. to Joseph A. Cook Sr. and Corda (Schilling) Blaschke.

Mr. Cook was a graduate of Tech High School and went on to proudly serve his country as Sargent in the United States Army/Air Force. He worked for Indiana Bell for 41 years, retiring in 1989 as a Mainframe Computer Supervisor. Mr. Cook was an avid sports fan, both as a participant and spectator. As a participant he loved to bowl and play golf. As a spectator he attended many auto races, both Indy Car and NASCAR, and until recently attended the Indy 500 each May dating back to the 1950's. He was also a season ticket holder for the Colts from the time they came to Indy.

Mr. Cook was a big boating enthusiast enjoying many lakes in Indiana. He was interested in all types of automobiles and owned many during his life, especially enjoying his antique truck and boat. He was a member of Millersville Masonic Lodge. Mr. Cook enjoyed traveling and spending the winter months in Naples, Fla. for the last 20 years, making many great friends there.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Ann Cook; sons, Michael (Brenda) Cook of Carmel and Steven (Michelle) Cook of Chapel Hill, N.C.; daughter, Sandra Cook of Bloomington; step-daughter, Laurie (Tom) Benson of Paoli, Ind.; grandchildren, Michelle (Nigel) Diveley, Samantha (Drew) Hall, Sienna Cook and Eric (Heather) Benson; and his great-grandchildren, Ben, Sam, Molly, Davey, Ruger and Emerson.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Joseph A. Cook Sr. and Corda (Schilling) Blaschke. A private graveside service will be held at Oaklawn Memorial Gardens at a later date.

Condolences online may be made at: [www.randallroberts.com](http://www.randallroberts.com)



## Excel Center honors grads at winter ceremony

### About Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health and employment. The organization serves 39 Indiana counties and operates more than 70 retail locations, as well as charter schools for adults and youth, a maternal-child health program, a child care center and more.

president and chief mission and education officer at Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. "They're graduating with new skills, a career plan and the desire to contribute to their communities, while changing the future for their children and themselves."

When Briahna Gray enrolled at The Excel Center in Noblesville, she was living at The O'Connor House, a home for pregnant women. Her child's father was no longer in the picture, and she was young and lacked other support.

She knew the first step to getting her life back on track was finishing her education.

In 2018, she graduated from The Excel Center and was honored with the Giver Award, which recognizes students who are determined and inspiring. She also spoke at the school's commencement ceremony.

"Just because we didn't finish when everyone thought we would or when we wanted, doesn't mean we change the goals we have set for ourselves,"

Gray said. "Sometimes we just have to change the timeline we have set. It's never about when you start but how you finish."

With expedited curriculum and flexible scheduling, students at The Excel Center can graduate quickly and prepare for a career and postsecondary education. The Excel Center also offers students on-site child care, transportation assistance, dual-credit courses and industry-recognized certification opportunities — all at no cost.

## Local students take top spots in Spartan Smash esports tourney

More than 100 high school students from 16 high schools took part in the 2021 Manchester University Spartan Smash invitational on Saturday, Nov. 20.

The Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournament for scholarships and bragging rights was on the North Manchester, Indiana, campus. The top eight players are eligible for a \$3,000 esports scholarship award to attend Manchester - that's in addition to any other financial aid for which the students would otherwise qualify.

They are:

1st Place - Brett Nuzzo, "Potato Brett," is a senior from Hobart High School. This is his second straight Spartan Smash title.

2nd Place - Landon Frank, "ScrubbedOut," is a junior from DeKalb High School.

3rd Place - Elliott Rudy, "Rudby," is a sophomore from Carmel High School.

4th Place - Blake Wehlage, "Blake645," is a junior from Carmel High School.

5th/6th Place tie - Michael Garcia, "MicMacky," is a junior from Mississinewa High School.

5th/6th Place tie - Clay Stults, "duck190," is a junior at Carmel High School.

7th/8th Place tie - Jack Sibbitt, 12, "Jaxib," is a senior at Carmel High School.

7th/8th Place tie - Christopher Cunningham, "Respect," is a freshman at



Photo courtesy of Manchester University

The top finishers starting on the right: Brett Nuzzo, Landon Frank, Elliott Rudy, Blake Wehlage, Michael Garcia, Clay Stults, Jack Sibbitt and Christopher Cunningham.



Photo courtesy of Manchester University

The graphic lists their handles, which is how their opponents know them.

Carmel High School.

Previous Smash tourney scholarship winners are not eligible for a second \$3,000 scholarship.

Follow Manchester Esports on Twitter at @MU\_esport. To learn more about the program, contact [esports@manchester.edu](mailto:esports@manchester.edu).

Scholarships are available at Manchester for League of Legends, Rocket League, Super Smash Bros., Fortnite, Overwatch

and Valorant. Esports scholarships may also be available for streaming, graphic design and managing social media.

With campuses in North Manchester and Fort Wayne, Ind., Manchester provides vibrant and transformative student experiences. Learn more at [www.manchester.edu/about-manchester](http://www.manchester.edu/about-manchester).

Our mission Manchester University

respects the infinite worth of every individual and graduates persons of ability and conviction who draw upon their education and faith to lead principled, productive, and compassionate lives that improve the human condition.

View Online: <http://manchester.meritpages.com/news/Carmel-students-take-five-top-spots-in-Spartan-Smash-esports-tourney/23654>

## Meeting Notes

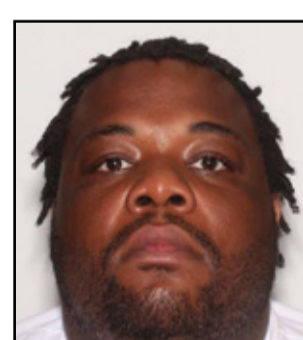
### Noblesville Tree Board's Urban Forestry Canopy Engagement Committee

Dec. 16, 2021  
5 p.m.  
Street Department Conference Room, 1575

Pleasant Street  
The Noblesville Tree Board's Urban Forestry Canopy Engagement Committee (UFCEC) meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021 has been changed to Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021 at 5 p.m. in the Street Department Conference Room, 1575 Pleasant Street.

## Info sought on suspect in Kokomo armored truck robbery

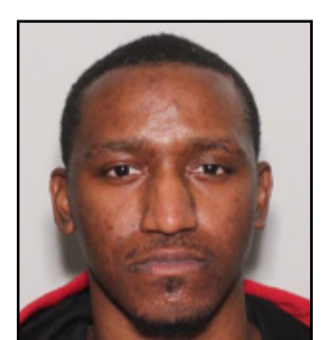
On Nov. 16, 2021, Officers from the Kokomo Police Department responded to a reported armed robbery at 2201 West Jefferson Street, Kokomo, Ind. An armored vehicle had arrived at the building to service the ATM. While one employee was inside servicing



James Alexander III



Keith Martin



Edwin Sims

the ATM, a black male wearing a camouflaged hood, black facemask and dark clothes entered the armored vehicle. The suspect held the driver at gun point and disarmed him. The suspect was then able to get an undetermined amount of cash and fled in a Maroon or red 2013-2018 Cadillac XTS that is pictured. The investigation continued with the assistance of the FBI Indianapolis Field Office.

As a result of the investigation, three arrest warrants were issued out of Howard Superior Court I for 41 year old Keith Martin of Indianapolis

for Aiding, Inducing or Causing Armed Robbery Level 3 Felony, 34 year old James Alexander III of Indianapolis for Aiding, Inducing or Causing Armed Robbery Level 3 Felony and 29 year old Edwin Sims of Indianapolis for Armed Robbery Level 3 Felony. Agents from the FBI arrested Martin and Alexander in Indianapolis and they are being held on the Howard County arrest warrants. Edwin Sims has yet to be located.

Investigators ask that anyone who may know of the whereabouts of Edwin Dewayne Sims call local

law enforcement or the Indianapolis FBI Office at 317.595.4000. Sims also has active arrest warrants out of Marion County and Hendricks County Indiana.

This is an active investigation and anyone who may have additional information is asked to contact Captain Bruce D. Rood #332 at (765) 456-7332 ([brood@cityofkokomo.org](mailto:brood@cityofkokomo.org)) or the Kokomo Police Department Hotline at (765) 456-7017. You may qualify for a cash reward by calling Central Indiana Crime Stoppers at 1-800-262-TIPS with your anonymous tip.

## ATTENTION

Looking for persons who were employed at Warner Commercial Auto Body in Noblesville in the time frame of 1954-69. Please contact Jim Lyons at (330) 670-7319 or by e-mail at [jlyons@hcplaw.net](mailto:jlyons@hcplaw.net).

Thanks for reading  
The Times!

**NOBLESVILLE BABE RUTH BASEBALL**

*Providing an affordable and positive baseball experience for all young men ages 13-18*

**REGISTRATION OPENS DECEMBER 1ST**

Though we are "Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball," we welcome and encourage players from other communities to participate with us!

**Registration:** December 1, 2021 thru March 2022

**Evaluations:** March 12, 2022, NHS Aux Gym (New players ages 13-15 only)

**Opening Day:** April 18, 2022 (13-15)  
April 30, 2022 (16-18)

[www.noblesvillebaberuthbaseball.com](http://www.noblesvillebaberuthbaseball.com)

# Center for the Performing Arts adds second show for Croce Plays Croce

Due to popular demand, the Center for the Performing Arts has added a second performance when Croce Plays Croce comes to the Tarkington on March 19.

The production features singer-songwriter A.J. Croce paying tribute to his late father, Jim Croce, a folk-pop singer who died in a 1973 plane crash while his star was still on the rise. Along with such hits as "Operator," "You Don't Mess Around with Jim" and "Time in a Bottle" (written for A.J. himself), the performances will include the younger Croce's original material and other classic songs that influenced both artists.

The 8 p.m. show at the 500-seat theater is sold out. The new 5 p.m. show is on sale now, with tickets at \$55 and \$65, a selection of student/youth tickets at \$15, and discounts for military personnel and first responders. Tickets are available at the Palladium Box Office, online at

TheCenterPresents.org and by phone at (317) 843-3800.

Croce Plays Croce is part of the Center's Katz, Sapper & Miller Pop/Rock Series and the 2021-2022 Center Presents Season sponsored by Allied Solutions.

For these performances, all patrons regardless of age must show proof of COVID vaccination or a negative test taken within 72 hours of the performance. The Center also requires masks or face coverings to be worn at all times in the venues, except when actively eating or drinking. The latest health and safety policies and protocols are available at TheCenterPresents.org/Health.

CALENDAR: CONCERTS

Croce Plays Croce Saturday, March 19, at 5 p.m. (8 p.m. sold out)

The Tarkington at the Center for the Performing Arts, 3 Carter Green, Carmel, IN 46032

Tickets: From \$55, on sale now; discounts available for students, military personnel and first responders

Purchase and information: TheCenterPresents.org (317) 843-3800 Tickets@TheCenterPresents.org

About the Center for the Performing Arts

The mission of the nonprofit Center for the Performing Arts is to engage and inspire the Central Indiana community through enriching arts experiences. Its campus in Carmel, Indiana, includes the 1,600-seat Palladium concert hall, the 500-seat Tarkington proscenium theater and the black-box Studio Theater. The Center presents and hosts hundreds of events each year, including the Center Presents performance series, featuring the best in classical, jazz, pop, rock, country, comedy and other genres. Educational and experiential programming



Photo courtesy of Center for the Performing Arts

**Croce Plays Croce is part of the Center's Katz, Sapper & Miller Pop/Rock Series and the 2021-2022 Center Presents Season sponsored by Allied Solutions.**

for all ages includes children's concerts and camps, book clubs, lectures, and classes in music and dance.

The Center is home to the affiliated Great American Songbook Foundation and provides space and support

services for six resident arts companies. More information is available at TheCenterPresents.org.

## Meeting Notes

### Hamilton County Plan Commission

One Hamilton County Square, Suite 306 Noblesville, Indiana 46060

DATE: Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Hamilton County Commissioners Courtroom / County Council Chambers, First

Floor, Hamilton County Government & Judicial Center, Noblesville, Indiana

AGENDA - revised

1. Roll Call
2. Declaration of Quorum

3. Communication/Reports:

4. Approval of Minutes - November 17, 2021

5. Public Comment:

6. Correspondence:

7. President's Report

8. Old Business: Nothing to present.

9. New Business:

A) P.C.-

ZOA-0004-12-2021 Ordinance Amendment Public hearing 7:00 p.m.

CONCERNING: An ordinance imposing a temporary moratorium on the issuance of permits for commercial solar energy systems.

LOCATION: All jurisdictional areas of the Hamilton County Plan Commission which includes portions of Adams, Noblesville, and Wayne Townships and all of White River Township, Hamilton County, Indiana

ZONING: Multiple

PROPERTY SIZE: Multiple

OWNER: Multiple

10. Director's Report:

11. Legal Counsel Report:

12. Next Plan Commission Meeting: Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022

13. Adjournment: ADA Notice: Hamilton

County, will upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so that they can participate equally in Hamilton County's public meetings.

For special accommodations for a meeting contact Steven Rushforth, the ADA Facilities Coordinator/Safety & Risk Manager, at (317-770-1976) or by email to: steven.rushforth@hamiltoncounty.in.gov at least two (2) business days prior to the scheduled meeting or event to request an accommodation.

## Triple-homicide investigation arrest made in Lebanon area

Chad Grimball, 40, Thorntown, has been charged with the murders of Larry Stogsdill Junior, Brannon Martin and Grace Bishop that took place on the evening of Sept. 8, 2021, located at 403 East Walnut Street.

Chad Grimball faces the following charges:

- 3 counts of Murder
- 1 count of carrying a handgun without a license, Level 5 Felony
- 1 count of carrying a

firearm without a license, Class A Misdemeanor

• 1 count of unlawful possession of a firearm by a domestic batterer, Class A Misdemeanor.

Lebanon Police filed charges with the Boone County Prosecutors Office on Dec. 7, 2021.

A judge issued a warrant on December 8th, 2021, and Chad Grimball was served with the warrant at the Boone County Jail where Grimball has been

incarcerated since Oct. 7, 2021, for charges relating to possession of a firearm by a felon.

The Lebanon Police Department would like to thank our community for your help and support. Lebanon Police Department Detectives and members of the Boone County Prosecutors Office will continue to work diligently until the conclusion of this case and all involved are held accountable.

## USDA to make up to \$800 million available to provide relief to biofuel producers and restore renewable fuel markets

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that USDA will make up to \$800 million available to support biofuel producers and infrastructure.

The announcement includes \$700 million to provide economic relief to biofuel producers and restore renewable fuel markets affected by the pandemic. The Department will make the funds available through the new Biofuel Producer Program authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Additionally, in the coming months, the Department will make \$100 million available to increase significantly the sales and use of higher blends of bioethanol and biodiesel by expanding the infrastructure for renewable fuels derived from U.S. agricultural products. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to further growth of the biofuels industry, and the House-passed Build Back Better Act commits additional funding that will provide better market access for farmers and more affordable and cleaner fuels for consumers.

"Under the leadership of President Biden and Vice President Harris, USDA is providing direct relief to the people of rural America who are still reeling from the economic impacts of the pandemic," Vilsack said. "As we continue to



rebuild the nation's economy, USDA is targeting resources and investments to improve the strength and resiliency of America's sustainable fuel markets. The relief we're announcing today will pave the way to economic recovery for America's biofuel producers, stimulate a critical market for U.S. farmers and ranchers and move the country closer to President Biden's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050."

Background on the Biofuel Producer Program

Through the Biofuel Producer Program, USDA will make up to \$700 million in direct payments available for biofuel producers who faced unexpected market losses due to the pandemic. USDA will announce the official application window for this program within the coming week.

By making payments to biofuels producers, the program will help agricultural producers maintain and create more viable markets for products that supply biofuel production, such as corn, soybeans, or biomass. Payments will be based on the producer's market loss volume in

2020, which is calculated by the amount of fuel produced in 2020 in comparison to 2019.

Background on Grants for Biofuels Infrastructure

USDA intends to make up to \$100 million available in new funds for grants for biofuels infrastructure, such as blender pumps which ensure biofuels have greater availability in the retail market. The funding will provide grants to refueling and distribution facilities for cost of installation, retrofitting or otherwise upgrading of infrastructure required at a location to ensure the environmentally safe availability of fuel containing bioethanol blends of E-15 and greater or fuel containing biodiesel blends B-20 and greater. USDA will announce the official application window for grants within the coming months.

This announcement comes on the heels of an announcement the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made today. EPA is proposing a package of actions setting biofuels volumes for years 2022, 2021, and 2020, and introducing regulatory changes intended to enhance the program's objectives. In addition, EPA is asking for public comment on a proposed decision to deny petitions to exempt small refineries from RFS program requirements. Read the full announcement at www.epa.gov/newsroom.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our GovDelivery subscriber page.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.



## State Fairgrounds gives back to the community during holidays

The holiday season brings a unique merriment that encourages spirited fun, giving back, and meaningful time spent with family and friends. Once again, despite the challenges of the last 18 months, holiday magic remains present at the Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center. The Fairgrounds gives back in several efforts that impact the community and bring joy to Hoosiers.

11th Annual Million Meal Movement - Million Meal Movement Tip-Off

Held on Oct. 14, this effort focused on feeding hungry Hoosiers, while teaching the power of volunteerism. The Tip-Off event, held at the Indiana Farmers Coliseum, was the first time that the Fairgrounds partnered with Pacers Sports Entertainment on this important project. At the end of the day, volunteers had assembled 110,000 packages of macaroni and cheese pasta.

WTHR's Coats for Kids

For more than 35 years, Coats for Kids has helped to make sure central Indiana kids stay warm. This year's event, held Oct. 16 at the Fairgrounds' Champions Pavilion, provided more than 3,000 children with coats. WTHR is The Times of Noblesville's news gathering partner.

Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center 25th Annual Safe Night Halloween

For the 25th year the Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center, along with several community partners, came together to host Safe Night Halloween Trunk or Treat event on October 31 on the northside of the Fairgrounds at Celebration Park (outdoors, trunk or treat-style). Offering kids and parents a free, safe place to spend Halloween, the Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center's Safe Night Halloween was open to children ages 12 and under who are accompanied by an adult.

This annual event began as a community service for State Fairgrounds-area neighborhood families and, thanks to generous sponsors and donors to the Indiana State Fair Foundation, the event has provided a free, fun and safe Halloween to more than 60,000 area children since 1996.

The Little Red Door's 13th Annual Face of Hope Breakfast

Held from 7 - 9:30 a.m. Nov. 18 at the Hoosier Lottery Expo Hall, this free breakfast helped the community learn more about the organization and how it's impacted the cancer community for more than six decades.

21st Annual YMCA Toy Distribution Event

From 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Dec. 18 at the State Fairgrounds' Champions Pavilion, kids in central Indiana ages newborn to 15 will receive toys from Santa. The Fairgrounds is proud to partner with the YMCA on this event and to help bring smiles to more than 3,500 children each year. Registration is now closed, as the program is full this year.

Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center Food & Fund Drive to Benefit Gleaners Food Bank

For the second year, Indiana State Fairgrounds' team members will have the opportunity to donate food or funds to benefit Gleaners Food Bank during the month of December. On a yearly basis, hundreds of thousands of hungry Hoosiers depend on food and other critical grocery products provided by Gleaners. The organization supplies items to hunger relief agencies and schools throughout 21 counties in central and southeastern Indiana.

About the Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center

The Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center is a modern public event facility that annually hosts more than 400 meetings, shows, sports and agricultural events, including the Indiana State Fair. The year-round management of the Fairgrounds is overseen by the Indiana State Fair Commission which is a quasi-governmental agency that was established in 1992, with the mission to preserve and enhance the Indiana State Fairgrounds and the annual Indiana State Fair for the benefit of all citizens of Indiana. The 2022 Indiana State Fair is scheduled for July 29-August 21, 2022. For more information, visit www.indianastatefair.com.





HONEST HOOSIER



Christmas in the Park is going on now in Clay County. You can see lighted displays in beautiful Forest Park!

# I Indiana

# Facts & Fun



## Number Stumpers

1. How many years has it been since Clay County established it's first courthouse?  $\geq$
2. What is the population density of Brazil?  $\leq$
3. How many more square miles of land is there in the county than water?  $\geq$
4. What percentage of land in the County is made up of Brazil?  $\leq$

Answers: 1. 190 Years 2. About 2,192 people/sq mi 3. 354.76 square miles 4. 1.03%

## Did You Know?

- Clay County occupies 2.78 square miles of water and 357.54 square miles of land.
- The county contains six towns, one city and 43 unincorporated communities.
- Brazil, the county seat, has an estimated population of 8,110 and 3.7 square miles of land.
- Clay County was found in 1825 and named in honor of Henry Clay.
- The county has had four different courthouses since 1828.

## Got Words?

Since 1828 Clay County has built four courthouses in two different locations. The last time the courthouse was built it was relocated to a more central area in the county. Why do you think it is important that courthouses are in the center of the town?

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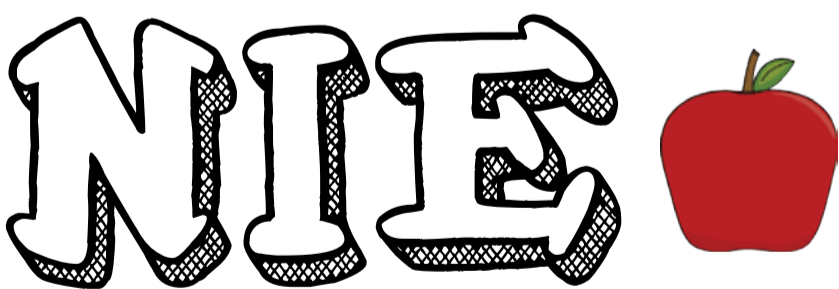
## Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. UOOURTHSCE
2. RABZLI
3. HEYRN YAQL
4. UCMTIEMNSO
5. ALCY CTUNOY

Answers: 1. Courthouse 2. Brazil 3. Henry Clay 4. Communities 5. Clay County

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# THURSDAY

## Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021

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### Farm conference returns to Hendricks County



Registration is open for the 2022 Indiana Small Farm Conference – Indiana’s premier annual event for the state’s small and diversified farming community – at [purdue.ag/sfc](http://purdue.ag/sfc).

The 10th annual conference and trade show will take place March 3-4 at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds in Danville. One of the featured keynote speakers is Malik Kenyatta Yakini, co-founder and executive director of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN).

Since 2013, the conference has featured comprehensive programming about diversified farming and local food systems, bringing together novice and experienced small-scale farmers. For more information and registration to gain full access to the fun, instructive and growing experience, visit [purdue.ag/sfc](http://purdue.ag/sfc).

“It has been my pleasure to serve on the organizing team for the Indiana Small Farm Conference,” says Mike Hoopengardner, owner of Redbud Farm and Caprini Creamery and ISFC committee member. “As a dairy farmer whose family built Caprini Creamery, our award-winning dairy/cheese-making operation in a cornfield, I bring a boot-on-the-ground per-

spective to organizing the conference. Our conference offers content for beginners to experienced small farmers.”

This year’s conference offers 12 tracks from which attendees can choose sessions that best align with their farming operations and goals:

- Value Added
- Livestock
- Pollination
- Soil Health
- Vegetable Production
- Integrating Technology
- Workshop
- Marketing
- Innovations in Response to Climate Change
- Regenerative Ag
- Urban Ag
- Perennial Crop Production
- Grant Writing Workshop

“The Indiana Small Farm Conference is a

great way to learn what’s new and what’s next in production, marketing and other areas to make the most of your efforts in 2022 and for years to come,” says Tamara Benjamin, assistant agriculture and natural resources program leader, diversified agriculture specialist for Purdue Extension and a conference organizer.

A detailed conference schedule will be available in early 2022, and currently scheduled sessions are subject to change. For more information, or to sign up, visit the Indiana Small Farm Conference website at [purdue.ag/sfc](http://purdue.ag/sfc).

Follow the conference on Twitter and Instagram at @SmallFarmPurdue or on Facebook at @PurdueExtensionSmallFarms, with the hashtag #PurdueSmallFarms.

### Ivy Tech won’t hold back student transcripts anymore

Ivy Tech Community College announced today that the College will make available the transcripts of all students regardless of whether the student owes a balance to the College. Withholding transcripts has been a common way for most higher education institutions to incentivize students to pay debts. However, the practice makes it difficult for students to transfer and continue their education.

“Our primary goal at Ivy Tech Community College is to prepare individuals to achieve their goals and contribute to their families and their communities through high-wage careers,” said Sue Ellspermann, President of the College. “We are working to remove barriers in the way of achieving that goal, and this is a step we can take to move our students toward a better financial future.”

The new policy does not forgive debt, but it does provide a way forward for students to continue their academic pursuits, which in turn sets them up for greater financial prosperity. The policy positively impacts as many as 82,000 students statewide.

In recent years, the College has explored a number of innovative ways to increase the graduation rate of its students. The new transcript policy, along with the Ivy+ tuition and books program and other initiatives encourage students to complete their degrees faster and with fewer barriers.



Nearly all (98 percent) of the 410 respondents to a 2016 survey from the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) indicated their higher education institutions hold transcripts as a debt collection tactic. Nationally, according to the study, Solving Stranded Credits: Assessing the Scope and Effects of Transcript Withholding on Students, States, and Institutions, approximately 6.6 million students have “stranded credits,” or academic credits they earned but cannot access due to unpaid balances.

Additionally, according to a survey from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), public institutions that enroll higher percentages of Pell-eligible students are more likely to withhold transcripts for an outstanding balance. This suggests that students who are most in need are disproportionately affected by transcript hold policies.

### FDA OKs pioneering drug for ovarian cancer surgery

Ovarian cancer patient Carol Giandonato admits to being apprehensive when her oncologist told her he wanted to make her cancer cells turn fluorescent green.

“Am I going to glow in the dark? Will I be green?” she asked him.

Her surgeon explained that when viewing the cancer site, the cancerous lesions would be illuminated with near-infrared light during surgery.

Using this approach, her surgeon was able to find a hidden tumor that would have otherwise gone undetected. Giandonato was one of the first patients for a new drug designed to help surgeons find ovarian cancer tumors and cells — that imaging agent was just approved Monday (November 29) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The drug will be released with the brand name Cytalux. It was invented at Purdue University and will be released by On Target Laboratories.

The imaging agent is delivered via an IV injection between one and nine hours before the surgery for ovarian cancer. The fluorescent imaging agent binds to the cancer cells, allowing surgeons to find additional tumors in 27% of the patients, which would have otherwise been left behind, according to results of the Phase 3 clinical trial.

The drug is the first tumor-targeted fluorescent agent for ovarian cancer to be approved by the FDA.

Philip Low (rhymes with “now”), Purdue University’s Presidential Scholar for Drug Discovery and the Ralph C. Corley Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, is an inventor of the drug. He said that when a surgeon turns on the near-infrared light used in surgery, “Those lesions light up like stars against a night sky.”

“In the pivotal ovarian cancer trials, surgeons

were able to find additional malignant tissue or improve the practice of surgery in 27% of all the patients,” he said. “It seems to me that future surgeries are going to very heavily rely on this technology.”

Giandonato, who lives in Runnemede, New Jersey, said that when she was diagnosed in 2012, her primary care physician told her, “Carol, it’s really serious. You’re filled with tumors. And it’s cancer.”

“My doctor explained to me that he would inject a fluorescent dye and would use a special light to look for other nodules that were not present on the CT scan,” she said. “And lo and behold, he found a hidden nodule and was delighted.”

The drug works by molecular jujitsu. Cancer cells divide rapidly, much faster than normal tissue. To do this, they need folate, a type of B vitamin — and the cancer cells are ravenous for it. Low’s innovation was to tag a folate compound with a fluorescent dye and administer it intravenously to a patient before the surgery.

“Cancer cells have an enormous appetite for this vitamin,” Low said, “and we exploited their greed for folic acid by attaching a fluorescent dye to it.”

Low says the fluorescent imaging agent can allow surgeons to be more precise.

“Cancer lesions are often removed very crudely by cutting large margins around that cancer tissue and resecting a lot of healthy tissue,” he said.

“That can often be damaging to the patient, especially when the healthy tissue is very valuable — and in most cases it is.”

Dr. Leslie Randall, professor of gynecologic oncology at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, was among those who tested the drug during the clinical trials.

“In the 21st century, there ought to be better ways to image tumors, to see a tumor,” she said. “I think any patient who’s facing a surgery would want their surgeon to have a way to see their tumor better and to be able to better know with certainty that the tumor is out.”

In an analysis of a subgroup of patients during the clinical trials with patients who underwent surgery following chemotherapy (which is called “interval debulking surgery”) use of the imaging agent allowed additional cancer to be found in 40% of patients. However, because of the small size of the group, a representative for On Target Laboratories said, “These results may be overstated and should be interpreted cautiously.”

Randall is optimistic about this use.

“We need this. We want this,” Randall said. “There might be applicability to robotic surgery in the future, which is where a lot of us are taking our interval debulking surgery. Especially in the interval debulking setting, where the tumor has been treated with chemotherapy and you’re not sure not sure what’s still a viable tumor. I think it can be really helpful in that situation.”

Chris Barys, CEO of On Target Laboratories, says the imaging agent is just the first of the fluorescent imaging drugs developed at Purdue undergoing testing.

“Dr. Low’s vision didn’t stop at just one molecule. We believe we have the opportunity to develop a portfolio of molecules,” he said. “We are currently evaluating an imaging agent for detecting lung cancer in a phase 3 trial.”

“Beyond that, we have an ongoing trial for prostate cancer, and we are also making strong progress in the research lab for colon cancer. When you think about these indications, they make up ap-

proximately three-fourths of all in-patient cancer cases here in the United States.”

Low says cancer surgery is moving quickly toward noninvasive precision techniques such as endoscopic and robotic surgeries, and the tumor-targeted fluorescent imaging agents will be essential for these procedures as the surgeon’s use of hands to palpate the tumor site is eliminated.

“I think the technology we’re pioneering is very clearly front and center in making this possible,” Low said.

A YouTube video featuring Low explaining how the drug works is available.

Low conducts his research as part of the Purdue University Center for Cancer Research. The center is one of only seven basic science laboratory cancer centers recognized by the National Cancer Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. The center brings together more than 110 researchers at Purdue who study cancer at the cellular level. ☐☐

Low disclosed his innovation to illuminate ovarian cancer tumors to the Purdue Research Foundation Office of Technology Commercialization. OTC applied for patent protection on the intellectual property and licensed it to On Target Laboratories, which is based in West Lafayette, Indiana. Low is the founder and chief science officer of On Target Laboratories.

According to a statement from On Target Laboratories, the most common side effects of Cytalux reported in clinical trials were nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, flushing, indigestion, chest discomfort, itching and allergic reaction during administration or infusion (see additional important safety information). The majority of side effects were mild to moderate.

### Indianapolis Zoo and CareSource begin three-year collaboration

The Indianapolis Zoo’s annual Christmas at the Zoo is underway for its 53rd year, this year joined by exclusive presenting sponsor CareSource, a nationally recognized nonprofit health plan. This year will mark the start of a three-year partnership as the organizations work together to make lasting memories for the event’s more than 100,000 annual visitors.

The beloved holiday tradition opened the 2021 season on Nov. 20 and will continue daily through Dec. 30, with closures only on Christmas

Eve and Christmas Day. The event uses 100% energy-efficient lights to illuminate its variety of guest experiences, including real reindeer housed in Santa’s Barn, a penguin photo-opportunity bench, warm beverages at Tinsel Tavern, fire pit areas, and much more.

“Meaningful collaboration is one of our values, and our partnership with the Indianapolis Zoo is one way to see that value come to life,” said Steve Smitherman, CareSource Indiana president. “Christmas at the Zoo has been a long-standing tradition

for many families in the Indianapolis community, and we’re excited to take part in it.”

A trailblazer in holiday light events, the Indianapolis Zoo was the first zoo in the nation to put on a “Zoo lights” in 1967 and has been nominated for USA Today’s 10Best Zoo Lights for seven consecutive years. Indianapolis Zoo fans near and far can cast their daily vote to show support of the Zoo.

“We are thrilled to have CareSource as our presenting partner for Christmas at the Zoo,” said Carla Knapp, In-

dianapolis Zoo public relations specialist. “For 53 years, we have been welcoming families from around Central Indiana to the Indianapolis Zoo for a magical holiday experience. Having CareSource’s support enables us to share our beloved tradition with new generations of Hoosiers and help them create lasting memories.”

Christmas at the Zoo is free for Zoo members and included with regular admission. Visit [www.indianapoliszoo.com](http://www.indianapoliszoo.com) for tickets and more information.

### Be Well Helpline provides mental health counseling

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration today announced that its Be Well Crisis Helpline has surpassed 25,000 calls, a milestone in its ongoing efforts to provide Hoosiers with free, confidential mental health counseling and resources.

The support line is available through Indiana 211 and enables Indiana residents to speak with trained, compassionate counselors 24/7. Approximately 59% of callers have received a referral for additional mental health or substance use services or requested additional crisis counseling. FSSA also announced that federal funding will allow the agency to operate the Be Well Crisis Helpline through at least March of 2023.

“FSSA is proud of the important and continuing role our crisis counselors have played to connect with Hoosiers and provide them with the resources they need to support their mental health,” said Dan Rusyniak, M.D., FSSA secretary. “We remain committed to providing free, confidential and easy access to this resource for Hoosiers in any time of need.”

FSSA’s Division of Mental Health and Addiction initially launched the Be Well Crisis Helpline in July 2020 in response to the increased stress, anxiety and isolation Hoosiers were experiencing because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the helpline’s inception, counselors have invested more than 5,823 hours helping Hoosiers manage their mental

health. Individuals who call the crisis helpline seek support for several distress reactions including anxiety or fearfulness, issues with sleep, isolation, intrusive thoughts, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, fatigue and sadness.

There continues to be a growing need for the Be Well Crisis Helpline as the number of calls received reached an all-time high of 2,228 in October 2021. Counselors have reported that not only is the call volume increasing, so is the critical nature of the calls. The most prevalent issues Hoosiers are experiencing recently include depression, anxiety, feelings of being overwhelmed, and loneliness.

“As Hoosiers continue to cope with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with other stressors brought on by everyday life, it’s clear that resources such as the Be Well Crisis Helpline are still needed to support the overall well-being of individuals statewide,” said Kelsi Linville, DMHA’s director of crisis services.

Indiana residents can speak with a trained mental health counselor by dialing 2-1-1 or the toll-free number, 866-211-9966, entering their ZIP code and selecting the option for the Be Well Crisis Helpline. In addition, Be Well Indiana’s website contains supplemental resources including blog posts and videos offering tips for maintaining mental health as well as self-screening tools. For more information, please visit [BeWellIndiana.org](http://BeWellIndiana.org).

# THURSDAY

## Indiana *the* Strong

Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021

A8

### Holcomb accepting applications for fellowships

Gov. Eric Holcomb is accepting applications through Jan. 28, for the 2022-2023 Governor's Fellowship. The Governor's Fellowship is highly selective and provides a unique experience in Indiana state government by placing fellows in various state agencies on a rotating basis throughout the year. "Our Governor's Fellows are such a valuable piece to our team," Gov.

Holcomb said. "The wide range of assistance they provide over the course of their fellowship is key to serving Hoosiers in a timely and thorough manner."

The program is open to college graduates who either received their bachelor's degree beginning in summer or fall of 2021 or in spring of 2022. Fellows are paid, full-time employees who participate in the

day-to-day activities of state government.

Many Governor's Fellow participants have gone on to successful careers in both the public and private sectors—with some serving at the highest levels of local, state and federal government.

The application and submission guidelines can be found here. To be eligible for consideration, the application and all

supporting materials must be postmarked or submitted via email by Jan. 28, 2022.

Applicants should know if they have been selected for an interview no later than Feb. 14, 2022. The fellowship will begin July 1, 2022.

If you have questions about the fellowship, contact Emily Clancy at the Governor's Office at eclancy@gov.in.gov.



Photo courtesy of Purdue University

**Dan Goldwasser, associate professor of computer science at Purdue University, uses his expertise in machine learning to connect natural language with real-world scenarios and to guide natural language understanding.**

### Braun and Hassan's Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act signed into law

The Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021 was signed into law by President Joe Biden this week. This bipartisan legislation was first introduced by U.S. Senators Mike Braun (R-IN) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).

The Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021 directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to create a program that will help actively recruit medical personnel, who are within one year of completing their military service, to remain in federal health care in departments like Veterans Affairs.

Representatives Robert E. Latta (OH-05) and Kathleen M. Rice (NY-04) introduced companion legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"The men and women who serve our nation deserve access to the best resources that will help them succeed as they tran-

sition to civilian life. I was proud to lead this bipartisan effort with Senator Hassan that will create a program to actively hire veterans and transitioning service members who have the skills critically needed in federal health care departments. Now that this legislation has been signed into law, we are one step closer to fulfilling our obligation to those who have served to get them the best health services possible."

– Senator Braun

"We promise our veterans that we will be there for them, and today, here at the White House, we took a small step forward in helping keep that promise. I was proud to work with Senator Braun on this important legislation because we must always ensure that veterans have the support and resources that they need to succeed, and a critical way to do that is by expanding employment

opportunities for our nation's heroes and strengthening their health care," said Senator Hassan. "Our veterans continue to serve even after they transition to civilian life and I am pleased to help service members find meaningful employment that allows them to continue their mission to support the safety and health of their fellow Americans."

BACKGROUND

In November 2019, the VA Inspector General stated that staff shortages are a root cause of many of the problems in veterans' care.

The Department of Defense has robust medical departments in the Army, Navy, and Air Force totaling 111,462 Active Duty and 67,951 Reserve personnel in 2020. All or part of the medical education and training has been paid for by the Federal govern-

ment.

Their Military Occupation Specialties (MOSS) span the full spectrum of the medical professions from primary care physicians, to neurosurgeons, nurse practitioners, health care administrators, physical therapists, pharmacists, radiology technicians, medical logistician, biomedical maintenance, etc.

All of these medical specialties can be utilized in the VHA, and their knowledge of the new electronic health record will also be invaluable.

Currently, an average of 13,000 active duty medical department members separate from the military each year at the end of enlistments/contracts or through retirement.

There is no formal program in place to actively recruit them to remain in federal health care in departments like Veterans Affairs (VA).

### Training computers to tease out the subtext behind text

It is hard enough for humans to interpret the deeper meaning and context of social media and news articles. Asking computers to do it is a nearly impossible task. Even C-3PO, fluent in over 6 million forms of communication, misses the subtext much of the time.

Natural language processing, the subfield of artificial intelligence connecting computers with human languages, uses statistical methods to analyze language, often without incorporating the real-world context needed for understanding the shifts and currents of human society. To do that, you have to translate online communication, and the context from which it emerges, into something the computers can parse and reason over.

Dan Goldwasser, associate professor of computer science at Purdue University, and other members of his team strive to address that by developing new ways to model human language and allow computers to better understand us.

"The motivation of our work is to get a better understanding of public discourse, how different issues are discussed, the arguments made and the perspectives underlying these arguments," Goldwasser said. "We would like to represent the points of view expressed by the thousands, or even more, of people describing their experiences online. Understanding the language used to discuss issues can help shed light on the different considerations behind decision-making processes, including both individual health and well-being choices and broader policy decisions."

Goldwasser emphasizes that part of the challenge is that so much of online

communication relies on readers already knowing the context – whether it's shorthand on Twitter or the basis of understanding a meme. To analyze the communication, the context is a vital part of the message.

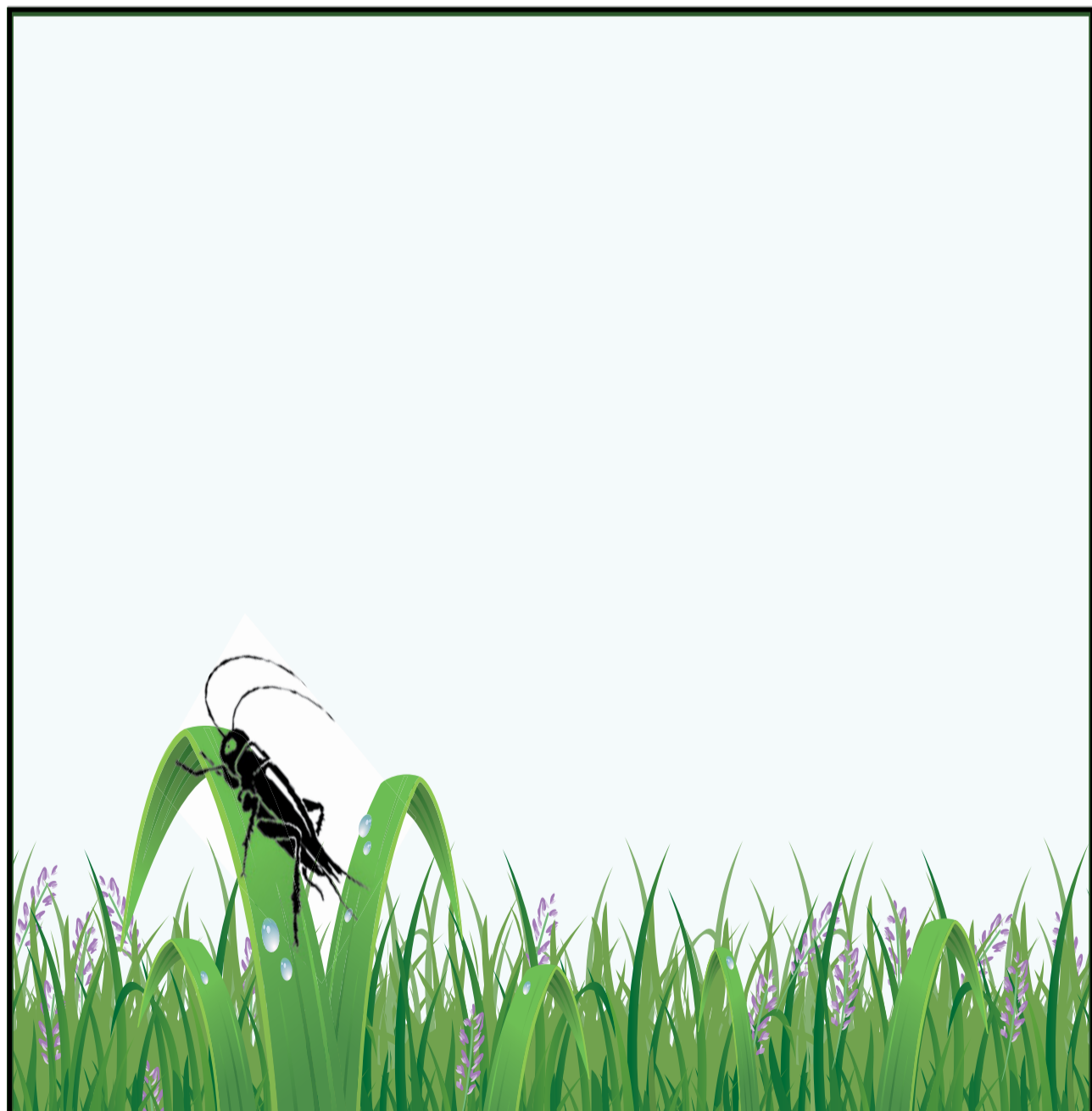
"In many of the scenarios we study, progress relies on finding new ways to conceptualize language understanding, by grounding it in a real-world context," he said. "Operationalizing it requires developing new technical solutions."

Goldwasser and his students use techniques distilled from the combined wisdom of computer science, artificial intelligence and computational social science.

Goldwasser's lab studies the language used on social media, traditional media stories and in legislative texts to understand the context and assumptions of the speakers and writers. In a world where the written word is flourishing and every person with an internet connection can act as a journalist, being able to study and analyze that writing in an unbiased manner is crucial to human understanding of our own society.

Goldwasser is an expert in using machine learning to analyze natural language and can comment on:

- \* The context of politics in social media and news media.
- \* How the framing of messages and issues in laws, news stories, and online affect real-world behavior.
- \* Modeling human mental states and analyzing Twitter user's lifestyle choices.
- \* Social media usage by U.S. politicians on two politically divisive issues: gun control and immigration.



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