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Wishing you
a very
Merry
Christmas!



➔ TODAY'S VERSE

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.



➔ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

People who call our community their own.

What makes U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Rigel smile? "Noblesville football," said the 37-year-old Noblesville resident. He is a recruiter for the Noblesville U.S. Army recruiting station and was found with other Army recruiters attending the final Noblesville Millers home varsity football game at Beaver Materials Field. Today's feature is a look back at one of The Times' previous Faces of Hamilton County. He recruits for the active Army and the Army Reserve. "We decided to sponsor the football game tonight. So we wanted to come out and show our support for Noblesville, both the high school and the football team and for the community itself." The Army recruiters' presence at the game is to "remind the community that we're here and we're here to help and do more than just recruit." The Noblesville Army recruiting station and Army Career Center is at 17033 Mercantile Blvd., next to Papa John's Pizza. Sgt. Rigel was born and raised in Bismarck, Mo., and "graduated high school there with 18 people." He then joined the Army, with boot camp in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and then went to Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia, then Fort Campbell, Ky., with a Special Forces group, then to Fort Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska, and taught at the officer academy for two years, then to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colo. "I very specifically wanted to go and see things," said the chemical biological radiological and nuclear specialist for the Army. Best part about being in the Army? "The camaraderie, you're never on your own, the benefits are awesome, health insurance ... the pay is great. They paid for my degree In four years, I'll earn a pension ... and your brothers and sisters have your back all of the time." He celebrated 16 years in the Army on Oct. 15. When he became a recruiter, he was asked where he wanted to be stationed and was given a list of choices. He had read that Hamilton County was one of the fastest growing and nicest places to live in the United States. He and his family -- wife, Brittny, and kids, Adalaide, 7, and Ameliah, 5 -- have lived in Noblesville for two-and-one-half years. He retires in about four years.

And Another Thing...

the visionary, Indiana-based film company behind feature films The Good Catholic, Ms. White Light, and many other movies is now accepting entries for short screenplays written by Indiana high school students. For more information and to submit for the competition, visit www.projectpigasus.org

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Boomer Bits

Ask Rusty - I Have VA Coverage; Should I Get Medicare Part B?

Dear Rusty: I am a 74 year old veteran enrolled with the VA. I have never had Medicare Part B. Should I? My only source of income is Social Security.

Signed: Retired Veteran

Dear Retired Veteran: First, thank you for your service to our country. Like you, I use the VA for certain healthcare needs but, unlike you, I am also enrolled in Medicare Part B. The decision on whether to have both is a personal choice only you can make, but I'll give you some things to consider:

If you are 100 percent satisfied with your VA coverage, and if that coverage is conveniently available to you, and if the VA provides all the health care you will ever need wherever you happen to be, then enrolling in Medicare Part B may not be



ASK Rusty
Social Security Advisor

Social Security Matters

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org.

needed in your personal situation. For me, the nearest full service VA facility is about 40 miles away, while just about every imaginable private healthcare service is nearby. Thus, for convenience reasons, I am enrolled in Part B so I can use any doctor or medical service provider I want within just a few miles of my home. I also travel a fair amount, and I like the convenience and flexibility of using any healthcare provider I happen to be near, without worrying about finding a VA facility or

VA-affiliated private provider. So, for me, it all comes down to convenience and flexibility to use any healthcare provider I want. I use my VA coverage when it's convenient for me, but otherwise use non-VA providers. But your needs may be different.

Your choice may especially be different since your only source of income is Social Security. There is a premium associated with Medicare Part B (\$170.10

➔ See RUSTY Page A5

The graying of American hair

by John Grimaldi
Editorial contributor for the Association of Mature American Citizens

We're seeing more and more people with gray hair these days. But it's not only because the population is growing old at a fast pace as 10,000 boomer babies turn 65 each and every day and because the population will continue aging at that rate for some time to come. It's all about the stresses of the 21st century, not the least of which is the COVID crisis. As a result, more and more of us -- including those as young as 20 years old -- are being subjected to extreme pressures, which can also turn your hair gray, so say the scientists.

The Association of Mature American Citizens tracked down the science of the "graying of America" and the good news is that it is not irreversible, at least for the youngsters. "All you have to do is calm down," says AMAC CEO Rebecca Weber, "and chances are you won't have to make a trip to the barber or a beauty salon for a dye job."

A recent study led by Dr. Martin Picard, Ph.D. at New

➔ See HAIR Page A5

Virtual Reality technology is arriving in senior communities

MyndVR, the leading provider of virtual reality solutions for older adults in the United States, announced today a new partnership with American Senior Communities to bring MyndVR's virtual reality program to their residents. MyndVR's immersive VR platform allows seniors to engage in an array of fields including learning, travel, art, music and nature.

The new partnership is also reflective of MyndVR's continued growth into new markets and highlights the strength behind the growing VR/AR industry.

"We are so excited to be partnering with American Senior Communities to bring our headsets to their residents," said Chris Brickler, CEO of MyndVR. "Their team has been incredible to work with and we can't wait to see how the community responds to the technology."

ASC is an Indiana owned and operated senior community

About MyndVR

MyndVR is the leading provider of Virtual Reality solutions for senior living communities, home health care agencies, State and Federal Veteran homes and individual adults aging in their own homes. The company has licensed a vast library of VR content and created MyndVR Studios to produce therapeutic experiences that positively impact the lives of seniors, Veterans, and other groups. The company's technology enables older adults to interact with the outside world in truly innovative ways that foster engagement, cognitive wellness and above all, joy and happiness. MyndVR is committed to conducting extensive research in order to measure the therapeutic effect of VR. These studies will continue to measure the health care outcomes, including cognitive, visual, emotional and physical effects on older adults.

that takes pride in incorporating Hoosier hospitality in all of their services. ASC has created an Integrated Care Network with a full range of lifestyle and care options to bring innovative ways to serve their residents. Their latest partnership with

➔ See VIRTUAL Page A5

Red Stocking donors are in the giving spirit

A lot of things in our daily lives have changed this year.

But one thing that hasn't changed is the generosity of folks in Noblesville who give to Tri Kappa sorority's annual Noblesville Red Stocking Fund.

Every year in November, Tri Kappa asks us at The Times newspaper to partner up in the promotion of the Beta Epsilon chapter's annual Red Stocking Fund drive.

Tri Kappa distributes 100 percent of the money donated to the school children of Noblesville through Noblesville Schools and Noblesville Township Trustee Office, which distributes the funds throughout the year to the school children of Noblesville.



BETSY REASON
The Times Editor

➔ See BETSY Page A5

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 8:05 a.m.
SET: 5:25 p.m.

High/Low
Temperatures
High: 41 °F
Low: 38 °F

Wacky Holiday Today

- Bake Cookies Day
- National Twin Day

What Happened On This Day

- 1966 Saturn's Moon, Epimetheus, discovered
- 1892 The Nutcracker makes its first debut

Births On This Day

- 1963 Brad Pitt American actor
- 1946 Steven Spielberg American director

Deaths On This Day

- 2006 Joseph Barbera American animator
- 2008 Mark Felt American FBI agent

HONEST HOOSIER

Christmas is a week away. One of my favorite memories is believing the very best -- that Santa Claus would be there Christmas Eve, that if we prayed hard enough we'd achieve peace on earth and that there was much more good in the world than bad.



TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Not receiving enough sleep can lead to increased appetite and obesity. 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.



OBITUARIES

Lester James Cochran
Shirley May Kay
Tuan Nguyen

INSIDE TODAY

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TODAY'S QUOTE

"At Christmas, all roads lead home."
Marjorie Holmes

TODAY'S JOKE

What does Santa do with out of shape elves?
Sends them to an elf Farm.

THREE-DEGREE GUARANTEE

Weatherby says the high today will be 47°

If Weatherby is off by more than 3 degrees, e-mail us at 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 Shirley Ward of Noblesville for subscribing!



National Twins Day: Heirbrandt's celebrate family



Photo courtesy of Heirbrandt family

Dec. 18, National Twins Day, is a big deal in the Heirbrandt household. In addition to Commissioner Mark Heirbrandt being an identical twin, he has twins of his own, and his twin brother has triplets. "It's so fun to get all of us together! People are always so surprised to hear that our family has two sets of twins, and a set of triplets... all that happened naturally," said Commissioner Heirbrandt.

OBITUARIES

Lester James Cochran

Feb. 4, 1956 - Dec. 15, 2021

Lester James Cochran, 65, Sheridan, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021 at his home.

He was born on Feb. 4, 1956 to Lester and Geneva (Wethington) Cochran in Liberty, Ky.

Mr. Cochran owned a company that built mini barns and storage sheds before retiring. He collected pocket knives and guns. Mr. Cochran enjoyed working on mini bikes with his grandson and target shooting. He and Carol frequently visited Friendship, Indiana and other places with festivals.

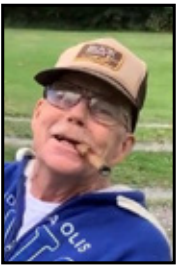
Survivors include his wife of 44 years, Carol Cochran; aunt, Betty Rodger; daughter, Crystal Miller; and grandson, Leo Miller.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

The Cochran Family has entrusted Randall & Roberts Funeral Home with Lester's care.

Memorial contributions may be made to American Cancer Society, PO Box 681405, Indianapolis, IN 46268-1405 www.cancer.org.

Condolences online at: www.randallroberts.com



Shirley May Kay

Dec. 16, 1932 - Dec. 14, 2021

Shirley May Kay, 88, passed away at her home in Sheridan, Indiana on Tuesday evening, Dec. 14, 2021.

Born Dec. 16, 1932 in Tipton County, Ind., she was the daughter of the late Robert Frank and Myrtle Edna (Lewis) Biddle.

Mrs. Kay loved taking care of children. In addition to raising her own family, she took on the responsibility of caring for many of the children in the community. For her, it was a labor of love. When her own family was grown and began having families of their own, Mrs. Kay was there, ready to watch over a brand new generation of children. Grandma was the role she had trained for her entire life, and she was ready to let the spoiling begin. She loved following every activity they were involved in. Sometimes it could be a rigorous schedule to keep up with, but she never backed down from the challenge. She and her husband, James, were married on Aug. 18, 1961. When the opportunity would arise, Mrs. Kay always enjoyed getting to do some traveling with her family. When she had some time to herself, Mrs. Kay loved to slow things down just a little bit. She enjoyed sewing, and knitting, as well as crocheting afghans and throws. She also looked forward to the days where she could get lost for hours in the pages of a good book, or spend some time fussing over her roses.

Survivors include her loving husband, James Joseph Kay; three daughters, Emily C. Delp, Kathryn M. Kincaid and Linda Gail Minnicus, all of Sheridan; six grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; eight great-great-grandchildren; brother, Wilbur Biddle of Florida; sisters, Effa (Don) Greeno and Rena Biddle, both of Pickard; sister in law, Suzanne Biddle; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her son, Mark Anthony McGuire; her daughter, Donna Wilson; and sons in law, Brian Kincaid and Joe Wilson.

Services will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 20, 2021, at Kercheval Funeral Home, 306 E. 10th Street, Sheridan, Indiana, with visitation from 10 a.m. until the time of service. Burial will follow at Crown View Cemetery in Sheridan. Pastor George Cooper will be officiating.

The family requests that memorial contributions be presented to the Riley Hospital for Children.

Tuan Nguyen

April 11, 1977 - Dec. 11, 2021

Tuan Nguyen, 44, Westfield, passed away on Dec. 11, 2021 in Indianapolis.

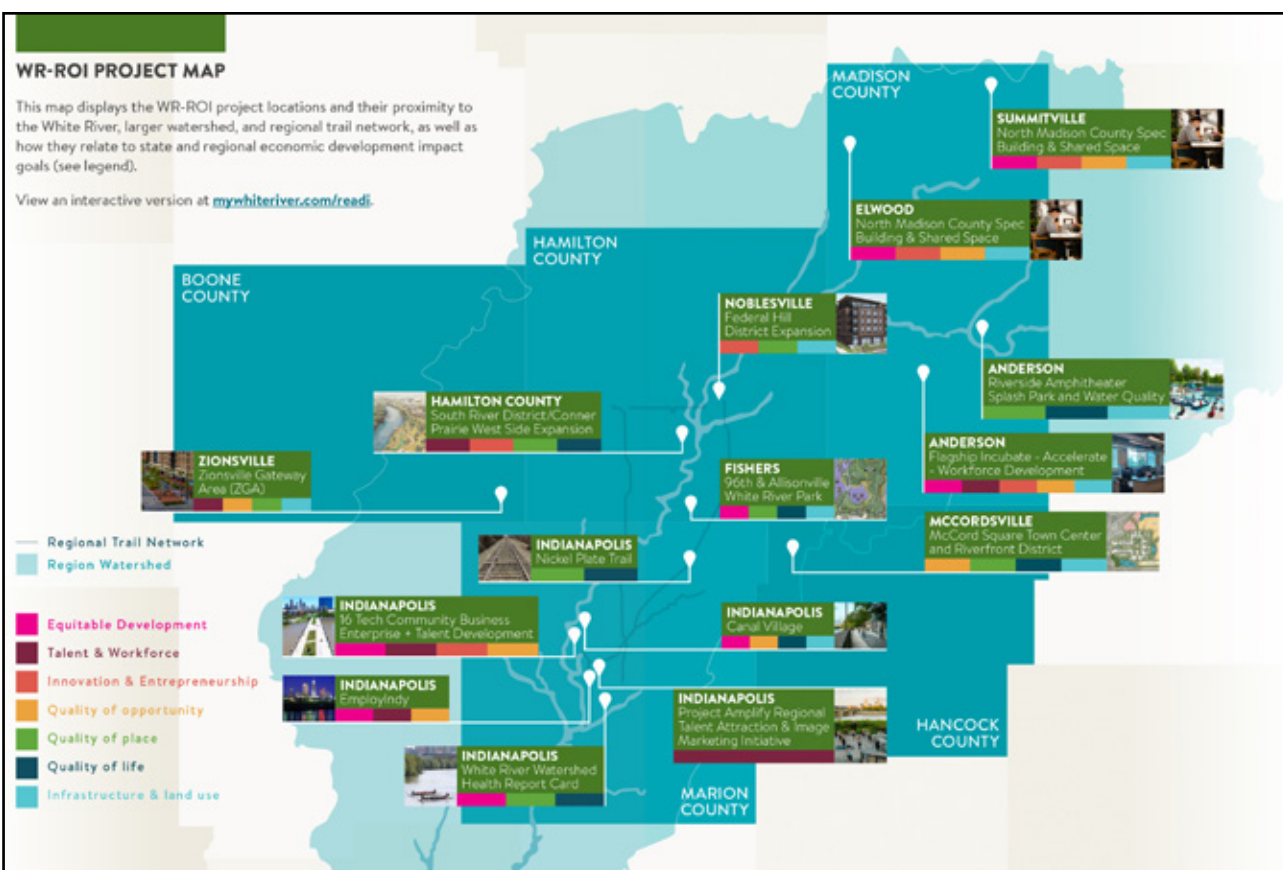
He was born on April 11, 1977 in Ba Ria, Vietnam to parents, Diep Nguyen and Dung Le.

Mr. Nguyen worked as a manicurist for over 15 years. He had a very straightforward, sometimes stubborn, personality. People always knew where they stood with Mr. Nguyen.

Survivors include his mother, Dung Le; wife, Kim Q Le; son, An Thien Nguyen; daughter, Ivy Nguyen; step-daughter, Nhi Le Thai; sisters, Lan Dien Nguyen, Bich Nguyen, Huong Nguyen and Duong Nguyen; and brothers, Doan Nguyen, Vinh Nguyen and Chung Le.

Funeral Services will be held on Sunday, Dec. 19, 2021, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Randall & Roberts Funeral Center, 1685 Westfield Rd. in Noblesville.

Condolences online at: www.randallroberts.com



Graphic provided

White River Regional Opportunity Initiative receives READI grant

The White River Regional Opportunity Initiative (WR-ROI) was recently awarded \$20 million from Governor Eric J. Holcomb and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation as part of the Indiana Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI).

The WR-ROI region is made up of three Central Indiana counties – Hamilton, Madison, and Marion – as well as Zionsville in Boone County, and McCordsville in Hancock County. The proposal detailed a cohesive regional vision, goals, and projects or programs related to economic development within the White River Region.

"The READI program helps invest in quality of life initiatives and train our workforce to move toward a stronger central Indiana region," said Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen. "We are grateful to the IEDC and Governor Holcomb on making these regional investments a priority. These efforts help us tell Indiana's success story to the nation and beyond."

The total investment of the WR-ROI totaled \$591 million and included \$148 million in local public match from local governments, parks and tourism agencies, planning entities, bonds, and TIF allocations; and \$313 million in private match from developers and private equity, corporate sponsors, and philanthropies.

The WR-ROI received \$20 million of its \$49.9 million request. Mayors,



city leaders and major stakeholders will meet in early 2022 to discuss projects and allocate READI Grant funding for the region.

The WR-ROI communities came together to seize this opportunity to invest in this vital Central Indiana region. The WR-ROI serves as a job center and economic hub for the state. The Regional Development Plan for the White River Regional Opportunity Initiative represents a transformational opportunity to further accelerate population growth, talent attraction and retention, and smart economic development in the region.

"The Central Indiana community works best when we work together," said Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett. "This funding will provide another valuable opportunity to achieve our shared vision for continued growth and development and can ultimately transform our region."

Home to almost 1.5 million people, the WR-ROI Region has grown significantly over the past 10 years, gaining 10% population from 2010 to 2020 (compared to Indiana's 4.2%). The WR-ROI seeks to continue that trend, while making appropriate investments in physical and social infrastructure to ensure residents have what they need to thrive, and developing the White

River into a world-class attraction that serves Hoosiers and tourists alike for generations to come. This includes enhancing quality of place, quality of life and wellbeing, environmental health, and sustainability; boosting support for business, entrepreneurship, and innovation activity; training and education initiatives to prepare the workforce for future economic trends; and equitable development projects that ensure the WR-ROI Region is an attractive place where all residents benefit from growing economic opportunity in the coming decades.

"This plan was a true representation of what can happen when we see ourselves as one region and bring our collective assets to the table," remarked Fishers Mayor Scott Fadness. "The White River is one of our best, but underutilized, assets of our metro. I'm encouraged that the selection committee saw the value the Indianapolis Region brings to our state and the impact we can make on the state's economic, talent, and quality of life efforts."

The IEDC awarded \$500 million to support regional development plans across 17 regions representing all 92 counties. The competitive process requests tripled the allocated \$500 million READI budget, as submissions amounted to

more than \$1.5 billion and detailed nearly 800 projects and programs with a potential investment of \$15.2 billion. The regional redevelopment plans included housing, trails, broadband, childcare and wellness initiatives, workforce development programs, and telling Indiana's story to the world. The plans enumerated a nearly 10:1 capitalization leverage ratio from private and public sources as compared to state investment.

"This is government at its best – bringing communities together with the common goal of advancing our state. I am excited about the outcomes here in Zionsville and the forward momentum with the Zionsville Gateway Plan," Zionsville Mayor Emily Styron said.

For more information on the WR-ROI READI Grant, visit <https://mywhiteriver.com/readi/>.

About the White River ROI: The White River Regional Opportunity Initiative (WR-ROI) Partnership consists of representatives from three counties – Hamilton, Madison, and Marion – and eight communities: Anderson, Carmel, Fishers, Indianapolis, McCordsville, Noblesville, Westfield, and Zionsville within a total of five counties (Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Madison, and Marion). The White River ROI shares cohesive regional vision, goals, projects and programs related to economic development within the White River Region.

Sheridan Public Library to read with Adult Reading Program

Sheridan Public Library will "Read for a Better World" with our Adult Winter Reading Program! The program will run from Jan. 1 to Feb. 28th. Once again, this program will be online. Register now at sheridan.beanstack.org, or

on the Beanstack app. Patrons that have participated in a recent program (Hal-Read or Grateful Read), have already created an account and will only need to register. For those that are new to Beanstack, simply begin by creating an ac-

count. Visit the front desk for help or with questions regarding the online program. Participants will need to read 8 books to complete this challenge. Weekly gift card drawings will be held for those that have logged for the week. A grand prize

will be awarded at the end of the program. SPL thanks Friends of the Sheridan Public Library and Texas Roadhouse for sponsoring the prizes for this year's program! Visit our website for more information: <http://sheridan.lib.in.us/>

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.

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Chairman Hupfer with (hair on fire) columnist

From my “lamestream media” perch things sure do look dicey and dangerous. There’s that 36-page coup d’etat Powerpoint titled “Election Fraud, Foreign Interference & Options for 6 Jan” that President Trump’s Chief of Staff Mark Meadows gave to the House Jan. 6 Committee.

The Atlantic’s Barton Gellman writes that “Trump’s next coup has already begun.” According to Gellman, “If the plot succeeds, the ballots cast by American voters will not decide the presidency in 2024. Thousands of votes will be thrown away, or millions, to produce the required effect. The winner will be declared the loser. The loser will be certified president-elect.”

Veteran GOP operative Steve Schmidt describes “the obvious edge of the abyss into which we are staring. A great crisis isn’t just at hand, it is underway. We are living through its early days.”

NBC’s Meet The



BRIAN HOWEY
HOWEY POLITICS

Press Daily observes: “Today prominent GOP candidates are running campaigns based on waving the bloody shirt of a stolen election. Sixty percent of the party’s voters believe the blood is real when it’s actually fake. Republicans in several states are trying their best to make sure those local officials who protected the election from false fraud claims won’t be there next time.”

And CNN’s Chris Cillizza was alarmed when commentator Hugh Hewitt told Trump, “You know, Mr. President, you and I disagree about the election, but we agree on so much.”

Cillizza went on: “Talk about an ‘other-than-that-how-was-the-

play-Mrs. Lincoln?’ moment! That Hewitt uttered that line without irony is a telling window into how conservatives have found ways to rationalize Trump and his fundamentally anti-democratic attempts to undermine the faith of the American public in the 2020 election results.”

So when I sat down with Indiana Republican Chairman Kyle Hupfer at Biscuits in Broad Ripple Monday morning, I made sure the waitress supplied enough coffee and ice water in case my hair spontaneously became ablaze.

I asked Hupfer about that 60% of Republicans who believe in Donald Trump’s “Big Lie” about the purloined 2020 election.

“I don’t see it persisting,” Hupfer calmly said. “It may be persisting on the edges out there, but the vast majority of Republicans have moved past that concept. They are looking to 2022 and they know how critical it is. We have to win back the House and Senate. That’s all I hear

at RNC meetings and out across the country.”

Hupfer said that “2020 is in the rearview mirror,” adding, “The focus is on 2022. We’ve got to win back and House and Senate.”

What about the House Jan. 6 committee, Hupfer said, “I’m not following it,” Hupfer said of the Bennie Thompson Show starring Republican Reps. Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger. “I know they’re having some meetings and hearings,” Hupfer said. “I try to have as little of contact with what’s going on in Washington, D.C., as possible. It’s all being politicized at this point. It’s all about the latest hot take, the latest hot tweet.

The chairman is focused on pocketbook issues. “Inflation was up 6.8% in November,” Hupfer said. “It’s going to be the issue. You have an administration and Congress who are tone deaf about that. They’re still talking about the Build Back Better plan which would be another couple of trillions of

dollars infused in. The federal government cannot buy or spend their way out of whatever these perceived issues are right now.”

As for Mike Pence running for president in 2024, Hupfer explained, “I don’t know whether the premise is whether Trump runs or doesn’t run impacts his decision. I’ll let the vice president answer those questions.”

“As you look around the country and the work he’s doing, Republicans like himself are not focused on 2024, they are focused on 2022,” Hupfer said. “He’s out raising money for candidates in 2022.”

Hupfer noted recent internal GOP polling in Indiana that had Gov. Eric Holcomb’s job approval at 65%, and on the COVID pandemic, 66%. That polling showed President Biden’s Indiana approval at an anemic 41%.

As for 2024, Hupfer says it’s still too early for him and Gov. Holcomb to reveal their political plans. Speculation is rampant that

the chairman is eyeing a gubernatorial run; Holcomb rekindling his U.S. Senate ambitions. “There’s the right time to make a decision on that,” Hupfer told me. “It will probably come in the not-too-distant future. The governor gets these same questions a lot and the answer we both tend to give is we’re not taking anything off the table. The governor certainly is not. Just in the short history, sometimes planning on these things is a fool’s errand, right? There was a lot of planning going on in 2016 only to be thrown into the wind when Mike Pence was chosen to be the vice presidential candidate with Donald Trump. There’s a lot of changing moods and politics, and when it’s the right time, I’ll make that decision.”

Our conversation ended. There was no smoke wafting in the air; just the steam rising off our cups of Folgers.

The columnist is publisher of Howey Politics Indiana at www.howeypolitics.com

Buck announces campaign for Senate re-election

Republican State Senator Jim Buck has announced he is seeking re-election to the Indiana State Senate representing District 21, which is currently composed of all of Howard and Tipton counties and portions of Clinton, Grant, and Hamilton counties. After this year’s redistricting, which takes effect next November, District 21 will be composed of all of Tipton County and portions of Hamilton and Howard counties.

“Jim Buck is a deeply respected and very valued

member of our caucus,” said Senate President Pro Tem Rod Bray. “My senate colleagues and I are grateful for his leadership and wise counsel, and I sincerely hope the voters in District 21 will send him back to the Statehouse for another term.”

Buck, first elected to the Senate in 2008, currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Local Government and is also a member of the Senate committees on Environmental Affairs and the Judiciary. He previously served in

the Indiana House of Representatives from 1994-2008.

“It has been a distinct honor and privilege to serve Hoosiers in Senate District 21 for the past 13 years, and I sincerely hope the voters will hire me to represent them for another term,” Buck said. “I am proud of the important work I have accomplished on behalf of all Hoosiers: lower taxes, balanced state budgets, more money for education, and the automatic taxpayer refund which will be distributed next year.”

He is retired from Delphi Electronics where he worked as a tool and die mold maker and is also a former real estate broker. Buck holds a bachelor’s degree and Master of Business Administration from Indiana Wesleyan University. He is also very active in the community, serving as vice president of the We Care Board. In addition, he is a member of the Rotary Club and Masonic Lodge No. 93.

Buck and his wife Judy live in Kokomo and have five daughters.

Grand Junction Plaza opens with dedication ceremony

The City of Westfield has announced the opening of the highly-anticipated Grand Junction Plaza. A dedication ceremony was held to mark the opening of the plaza and to recognize the many city officials and community volunteers who were instrumental in its development.

The Grand Junction Task Group, comprised of volunteer Westfield citizens, was responsible for the conceptual vision for the unique six-acre park and the cutting-edge design was completed by renowned landscape architecture firm, David Rubin Land Collective. Features of the plaza include public greenspace, trails, children’s play area, an amphitheater and an ice-skating rink.

“The future is bright for downtown Westfield,” said Mayor Andy Cook. “With the opening of Grand Junction Plaza, our city now has a center, a heart, where people can connect.”

The project, in development for more than ten years, has already been a catalyst for economic growth in the city’s downtown. New and future developments attributed to the city’s investment in Grand Junction Plaza include the Park West luxury townhomes by Estridge and Union Square, a mixed-use development by Old Town Companies.

While the park is now open to the public, additional elements of the project will open in stages. Visitors will be able to enjoy ice skating next winter and over the next several years the stage will evolve into a covered bandshell amphitheater.

A public opening celebration will take place in early 2022 with other events to follow throughout the year. For more information about the Grand Junction Plaza and future events, please visit grandjunctionplaza.org.

Local students perform 2021 ‘Christmas at Belmont’

Belmont University congratulates students who performed in this year’s production of “Christmas at Belmont.”

“Christmas at Belmont” premieres Monday, Dec. 20, at 8 p.m. on NPT and PBS stations across the country, with encore broadcasts on NPT Christmas night (Saturday, Dec. 25) at 9:30 p.m. Check local

listings for additional broadcast times. This year’s performance of “Christmas at Belmont,” featuring nearly 650 student musicians and School of Music faculty, promises an array of traditional carols, classical masterworks and seasonal favorites.

Produced by Nashville Public Television (NPT), “Christmas at Belmont”

was taped live for the first time in the newly opened Fisher Center for the Performing Arts on the University’s campus. The performance will be broadcast nationally for the 19th consecutive year on PBS. “Christmas at Belmont” is underwritten in part by presenting sponsor Tyson Foods.

Ross DeLong of Fishers (46038)

Leah Spurlock of Noblesville (46062) Morgan Koontz of Carmel (46074)

Located two miles from downtown Nashville, Tennessee, Belmont University consists of nearly 8,800 students who come from every state and 33 countries. For more information about Belmont University, visit www.belmont.edu.

USDA assists farmers, ranchers, and communities affected by recent tornadoes

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced that assistance is available for communities and agricultural producers affected by the tornadoes that tore through Kentucky and five other states over the weekend.

“The devastation these tornadoes brought to our heartland, the lives they took, and the communities and livelihoods impacted are hard to measure,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “As recovery efforts continue, I want everyone affected to know that USDA is there to help, and we will deploy all resources at our disposal to help families, communities and agricultural producers rebuild their operations – for as long as it takes.”

Food safety guidance: USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is helping affected residents take steps to reduce their risk of foodborne illness as they return to their homes after severe weather.

- Drink only bottled water that has not been in contact with contaminated water. Screw caps are not waterproof, so discard any bottled water that may have come in contact with contaminated water. If you don’t have bottled water, learn how to safely boil or disinfect water at FSIS Consumer’s Guide to Food Safety: Severe Storms and Hurricanes webpage.

- Discard any food or

beverage that is not in a waterproof container if there is any chance it may have been in contact with contaminated water. Containers with screw caps, snap lids, pull tops and crimped caps are not waterproof.

- Do not consume food from dented cans. Undamaged, commercially prepared foods in all-metal cans and retort pouches such as flexible, shelf-stable juice or seafood pouches, can be saved by following the steps at the FSIS Consumer’s Guide to Food Safety: Severe Storms and Hurricanes webpage.

- Thoroughly wash all metal pans, utensils and ceramic dishes that came in contact with contaminated water with hot soapy water. Rinse, then sanitize, by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of one of tablespoon unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of drinking water.

- Discard wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers that may have come in contact with contaminated water – they cannot be saved.

Risk management and disaster assistance for agricultural operations:

USDA offers several risk management and disaster assistance options to help producers recover after disasters like tornadoes.

Even before disasters strike, USDA provides tools for producers to manage their risk through the Federal Crop Insurance Program, a public-private partnership between USDA’s Risk Management Agency and private companies and agents. For crops that do not have crop insurance available, the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is available through the local Farm Service Agency. This risk protection includes crop production loss and tree loss for certain crop insurance products. Producers should reach out to their crop insurance agent or local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office for more information.

Producers who suffer losses and are signed up for Federal Crop Insurance or NAP are asked to report crop damage to their crop insurance agent or local FSA office, respectively, within 72 hours of discovering damage and follow up in writing within 15 days.

Livestock and perennial crop producers often have more limited risk management options available, so there are several disaster programs for them. Key programs offered by FSA include:

- The Livestock Indemnity Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program

reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that were killed or severely injured by a natural disaster or loss of feed and grazing acres.

- The Tree Assistance Program provides cost share assistance to rehabilitate or replant orchards and vineyards when storms kill or damage the trees, vines or bushes. NAP or Federal Crop Insurance often only covers the crop and not the plant.

- The Emergency Conservation Program and Emergency Forest Restoration Program can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

It is also critical that producers keep accurate records to document damage or loss and to report losses to their local USDA Service Center as soon as possible.

Additionally, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can provide financial resources through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. NRCS can also assist local government sponsors with the cost of recovery efforts like debris removal and streambank

stabilization to address natural resource concerns and hazards through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program.

On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet (PDF, 1.5 MB) and Farm Loan Discovery Tool can help producers and landowners determine program or loan options. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their crop insurance agent. For FSA and NRCS programs, they should contact their local USDA Service Center.

Helping with the long-term recovery of rural communities:

USDA Rural Development has more than 50 programs available to rural and tribal communities for the repair and modernization of rural infrastructure including drinking and waste water systems, solid waste management, electric infrastructure, and essential community facilities such as public safety stations, health care centers and hospitals, and educational facilities. Visit the USDA Rural Development Disaster Assistance page for more information.

Through USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture investments, additional disaster preparedness and recovery education

materials are available from the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) or your local Cooperative Extension Service office.

Emergency nutrition assistance:

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is also standing by to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as requesting states and local authorities, to provide emergency nutrition assistance and other nutrition program flexibilities to assist people in need.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In 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.

Indiana Landmarks awards more than \$140,000 to save meaningful places

In 2021, Indiana Landmarks awarded more than \$140,000 to help nonprofits and cities around Indiana save meaningful places. Drawing from a variety of funds, these grants support efforts ranging from architectural assessments and repairs at historic houses of worship to digital walking tours and workshops, videos and summer programs for youth.

“Indiana Landmarks offers grants to help spark community revitalization and bolster preservation projects around the state,” says Marsh Davis, president of Indiana Landmarks. “We’re extremely grateful that with the support of many generous donors we’re able to offer this critical support to local preservation groups.”

African American Heritage Grants
Indiana Landmarks’ African American Landmarks Committee awards grants to help preserve and raise awareness of historic African American places in Indiana. In 2021, the committee made four grants:

Ball State University, Muncie: \$1,000 to co-sponsor a virtual lecture by Brent Leggs, senior vice president and executive director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund of The National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Fox Lake Preservation Foundation, Angola: \$2,500 for a state historical marker at the African American resort community.

Freeman Army Airfield Museum, Seymour: \$2,000 for a state historical marker recognizing the 1945 uprising by African American soldiers against a segregated White officers club.

Madam Walker Legacy Center, Indianapolis: \$2,000 for general support at the 1927 Madam Walker building.

Efroymson Family Endangered Places Grants

Efroymson Family Endangered Places grants aid architectural and structural assessments, rehab cost analysis, reuse studies, and fundraising planning. In 2021, Indiana Landmarks made 14 grants totaling \$36,100. The fund honors the Efroymson family for



its significant support for our endangered places programs.

Baugo Community Schools, Elkhart: \$2,500 to study the feasibility of rehabbing the 1929 Jimtown Gymnasium as a community center.

City of Muncie: \$2,500 for a conditions assessment that will help Big Four Rail Park, Inc., prioritize rehabilitation needs at the 1920 Big Four Freight House.

City of Muncie: \$2,500 for a feasibility study that will help Old West End Neighborhood Economic Redevelopment determine whether the c.1910 house at 719 W. Charles St. can be rehabbed as affordable housing.

City of Union City: \$2,500 for a feasibility study and restoration plan at the 1869 Governor Isaac Gray House.

Daviess County Historical Society, Washington: \$2,500 for a feasibility study at the Daviess County Museum, located in the 1868/1888 Masonic Temple.

Destination Georgetown, Georgetown: \$2,500 for a feasibility study and conditions assessment at the endangered 1835 Wolfe Hotel.

Fountain County Landmarks, Inc., Attica: \$3,500 for a structural analysis at the 1854 Cades Mill Covered Bridge near Veedersburg, Indiana’s oldest covered bridge on its original site.

Greene County: \$2,500 for a structural analysis at the 1883 Richmond-Plummer Creek Covered Bridge, which suffered damage from an arson fire.

Henry Henley Public Library, Carthage: \$1,600 for a feasibility study at the 1902 Carthage Public Library.

Indiana Manufactured Housing and Recreation Vehicle Legacy Foundation,

Seymour: \$2,500 for a feasibility study at the 1940 Shields Memorial Gymnasium, an entry on Indiana Landmarks’ 2021 10 Most Endangered List.

Richmond Neighborhood Restoration: \$3,500 to study the feasibility of rehabbing the c.1890 building at 720-724 East Main Street as a mixed-use development.

Town of Oolitic: \$2,500 to update a 2007 structural assessment of the 1919/1936 Oolitic High School.

Town of Milltown: \$2,500 for a feasibility study at the 1905 First National Bank, which houses town hall.

Zoar United Methodist Church, Dubois County: \$2,500 for a feasibility study of a one-room school built in 1897.

Historic Preservation Education Grants

Indiana Landmarks and Indiana Humanities jointly award grants to nonprofits for programs and materials educating the public about historic places. In 2021, the organizations awarded \$33,285 to fund 14 projects:

Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site, Indianapolis: \$2,500 to update the Historic Delaware Street Walking Tour brochure highlighting the history and architectural styles of still-standing and demolished buildings along Delaware Street between 12th and 16th streets.

Beverly Shores Depot Museum and Art Gallery, Beverly Shores: \$2,360 to develop a heritage trail with markers at significant historic sites, with QR codes providing information about each site’s history and importance.

City of LaPorte Historic Preservation Commission, LaPorte: \$2,250 to produce a coloring and activity book featuring historic sites in LaPorte for distribution among area schools.

City of Madison: \$2,500



Photo courtesy of Indiana Landmarks

Cades Mill Covered Bridge in Fountain County

to create QR codes and a brochure providing history and photos of 11 historic sites throughout the community.

Downtown Angola Coalition, Angola: \$2,500 to install plaques and produce a walking tour brochure sharing the history of downtown buildings.

Fox Lake Preservation Foundation, Angola: \$925 to develop a brochure sharing the historic African American resort community’s history, highlighting its historic buildings, and sharing information about the foundation.

The History Museum, South Bend: \$2,500 to develop programming to educate the public on electrical upgrades completed at the historic Oliver Mansion in 2019.

The Heart of Lebanon, Lebanon: \$2,500 to create a self-guided digital tour highlighting historic properties on the town’s courthouse square.

Indianapolis Museum of Art/Newfields, Indianapolis: \$2,500 for development of a self-guided digital tour of the museum’s historic Lilly House.

Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library, Indianapolis: \$2,500 for a public event celebrating the unveiling of the museum as a literary landmark, with free tours of the museum’s building to share its history and the significance of the surrounding Indiana Avenue neighborhood where it is located.

Landmark Columbus Foundation, Columbus: \$2,500 to help create a website and event to raise awareness of the design history and preservation needs

at the 1942 First Christian Church.

Marian University, Indianapolis: \$2,500 to create an online repository about landscape architect Jens Jensen’s work at Riverdale, the Allison family estate on the college campus, as well as the architect’s other Indiana landscapes.

Michigan Road Historical Association, Plymouth: \$2,500 to develop a traveling exhibition telling the story of the historic byway.

The Quilters Hall of Fame, Marion: \$2,500 to create a virtual tour of the museum, located in the historic home of twentieth-century quilt designer Marie Webster, educating visitors about her work and home.

Marion County Historic Preservation Fund

Indiana Landmarks and the Central Indiana Community Foundation jointly manage a fund created by contributions from each organization and private donors to award grants supporting preservation of landmarks in Marion County.

Aspire Higher Foundation, Indianapolis: \$5,000 for a preservation plan for the 1897 former Indianapolis Fire Station #9.

Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis: \$5,000 for commercial real estate appraisals for vacant parcels of land in the 700 block of Indiana Avenue.

Great Towns, Inc., Indianapolis: \$5,000 to support a demonstration project by the Great Towns Preservation Corps, a program introducing historic preservation to students.

Indiana Landmarks: \$9,000 to assist with interi-

or rehabilitation at the 1922 Willis and Beulah Kinnear House in Indianapolis.

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, Indianapolis: \$5,000 grant to assist with restoration of the 1898 Deitch Gate—decorative iron entry gates to the southside Jewish cemetery.

Irvington Historical Society, Indianapolis: \$4,000 to replace the front doors at the 1903 Bona Thompson Memorial Center with alternates that more closely match the original bronze doors long missing from the historic building, originally Butler University’s library.

Sacred Places Indiana Grants

Last year, Indiana Landmarks’ Sacred Places program provided \$32,500 to congregations for architectural studies, repairs, and rehabilitation at historic houses of worship:

Brazil First United Methodist Church, Brazil: \$25,000 for repairs at the 1900 church.

Saint Rita’s Catholic Church, Indianapolis: \$7,500 for a feasibility study at the 1959 church.

Indiana Landmarks revitalizes communities, reconnects us to our heritage, and saves meaningful places.

With nine offices located throughout the state, Indiana Landmarks helps people rescue endangered landmarks and restore historic neighborhoods and downtowns. People who join Indiana Landmarks receive its bimonthly magazine, Indiana Preservation. For more information on the not-for-profit organization, call 317-639-4534, 800-450-4534, or visit www.indianalandmarks.org.

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Governor Holcomb announces Indianapolis Air Show, featuring Blue Angels

At the 26th Annual Governor's Luncheon for Scouting, Governor Eric Holcomb announced the Crossroads of America Council of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) will host the Crossroads Air Show, featuring the Blue Angels, October 28-29, 2023, at the Indianapolis Regional Airport (formally known as Mount Comfort Airport). The air show will benefit Crossroads BSA, Riley Children's Foundation and Catch the Stars Foundation.

The luncheon, which raised more than \$1 million for Scouting programs in Central Indiana, was co-chaired by Steve Campbell, vice president of communications for the Indianapolis Colts; Mark Miles, president and CEO of the Penske Entertain-



ment Corp.; and Deana Haworth, COO of Hiron.

The funds raised from the air show will provide character development programs, camps, training and more to over 26,000 young people involved in Scouting in Central Indiana. "Today was the perfect day to announce the Crossroads Air Show," said Joe Wiltrout, president and CEO of the Crossroads of America Council. "We are surrounded by members of the community already

dedicated to giving back to Scouting, so it only felt right that this group should know first about this exciting event, which will bring a unique experience for families of all ages to our state."

The Crossroads Air Show will feature the Blue Angels, a U.S. Navy flight demonstration squadron that showcases the teamwork and professionalism of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. Through their flight demonstrations and

community outreach, they hope to inspire a culture of excellence and service to the country and communities they visit.

Crossroads is working with the Indianapolis Airport Authority (IAA) to bring the air show to the Indianapolis Regional Airport. "The Indianapolis Airport Authority is dedicated to enhancing the community through thoughtful airport programming. Our airports exist for our communities," said Mario Rodriguez, Executive Director of the Indianapolis Airport Authority. "We are thrilled to host this spectacular show for the Central Indiana community and the mission behind the Blue Angels is especially inspiring."

An estimated 11 million

spectators view Blue Angels air shows each year across the country, where pilots can reach speeds up to 700 mph during the performance.

Proceeds from Crossroads Air Show ticket sales will benefit Scouting character development programs through Crossroads, life-changing care at Riley Children's Hospital and mentoring programs through Catch the Stars Foundation. "Riley Children's Foundation is honored to be selected as a beneficiary of the Crossroads Air Show," said Liz Elkas, president and CEO of Riley Children's Foundation. "It's in keeping with the Hoosier spirit that this event - which will bring people from all parts of our state together for a day of mesmerizing

entertainment - will also do tremendous good for Indiana children and families through its support of Riley."

Tamika Catchings, founder of the Catch the Stars Foundation, has seen firsthand how these fundraisers can benefit the state's youth and families. "We are blessed and excited to be beneficiaries of Boy Scouts of America's Crossroads Air Show. This partnership aligns perfectly with our mission of serving local youth through Fitness, Literacy and Character development programs," said Catchings. "We're proud to be part of this incredible air show!"

For more information on Crossroads Air Show, please visit CrossroadsAirShow.com.

BETSY From Page A1

Money raised will ensure the children of Noblesville have shoes, clothing, school supplies, and shelter as well as medicines and other necessities. In 2020, more than 100 students and their families were assisted.

We here at The Times are always glad to help with this fundraiser, which kicked off its 16th annual Red Stocking Fund in the Nov. 10 edition, both in print and in the online edition that arrived in subscribers' email inboxes.

Each donor completes a donation form that's published in The Times and mails with the form a personal check payable to Noblesville Red Stocking Fund. With each donation, donors are invited to submit a greeting or message that is published in The Times along with the donor's name. The amount donated is not published.

Tri Kappa's goal is to raise \$10,000 by Christmas.

And did I mention the generosity of our community? The sorority has already reached its goal with two more weeks to go.

The published list of donors has already had 84 contributors who donated a whopping \$10,590.

Although the amount donated is never published, that total is an average donation of just more than \$125 per donor.

Wow! What a good first, second, third and fourth! "Absolutely," agreed Mary Jane Polsgrove who with Anita Beck returned

this year to their duties of the drive's annual coordinators.

"Noblesville cares," Polsgrove said.

That list of 84 donors (many of whose names I recognized) are published in each Wednesday's print edition along with their special messages to the community.

Bob Minton donated in honor of his great-grandkids. John Kraft donated in honor of Navy Lt. Cmdr. Marshall Kraft and a second time for his grandsons, Axel Von Bivens and Gage Jagger Bivens. Jennifer Johnson donated in memory of Hazel Miller. Jo and Gary Rhodes donated in honor of Kinsey, Jacob and Aiden Moran. Don and Suzanne McMahon donated in memory of Robert Chadwell and Bette McMahon. Jake and Sandy Waterman donated in memory of Grandson Isaac Beeson. Ronda and Steve Hurst donated in loving memory of Carole Hurst and Dick Goodspeed. Carolyn Fitzgerald donated in memory of husband, Bill Fitzgerald, and son, Gary Fitzgerald.

Nancy A. Massey donated in memory of her husband, David, and in honor of their grandchildren, Charlotte, Virginia and Gideon. Steve and Marilyn Anderson donated in memory of their parents. Jeff Zeckel donated in memory of Ben and Belle Zeckel and Wayne and Pat Donaldson. Bob and Stephanie Daugherty donated in memory of their dear friend, Jean-

nie Ecker. Margaret A. Roberts donated in honor of my grandchildren. Sally Crow donated to those who are missed, Linda, Phyllis, Cathie and Carol. Chuck and Sally Crow donated in honor and remembrance of Sam and Jean Campbell, Maurice and Thelma Crow, Marsha Fisher, Linda Crow and Mary Anne Campbell. Lynn and Pam Lehman wished "Merry Christmas to all the children of Noblesville." Don and Pam Orr, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Jones, Ron and Linda Williamson, Steve Snyder, John and Regina Staffsmith, all wish everyone a "Merry Christmas."

"One-hundred percent of your contributions go to a worthy cause," Township Trustee Tom Kenley has said. He has served in the position since 2015 and whose first task is helping the needy in Noblesville Township.

"We really appreciate the Red Stocking Fund. It allows us to help needy Noblesville students in many ways that we could not otherwise," he has said.



Mary Jane Polsgrove



Anita Beck



Tom Kenley

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Tri Kappa doesn't control how the Township distributes the funds.

"Occasionally, families have a need that cannot be covered with taxpayer dollars. The Red Stocking Fund allows us to help," Kenley said.

Some examples? "Possibly a month's rent, electric bill, school supplies or clothing, plus other necessities," he said.

Every year since the fund drive's beginning, Tri Kappa has met or surpassed its \$10,000 fundraising goal.

During its first year, in 2006, the Red Stocking Fund had 157 donors, raising \$11,778.

Last holiday season, more than \$17,500 was raised and then used throughout the year for the students of the Noblesville community who are less fortunate. Since its inception, the Red Stocking Fund has brought in more than \$191,500 to support this community fundraiser.

"Thank you to the community of Noblesville and beyond for the generous donations to the 2018 Red Stocking Fund," she said.

"I asked to be on this committee as it helps those in need," Polsgrove has said. "Giving and sharing are a passion of mine. It comes from my parents and grandparents. My grandparents had an independent grocery store and, during World War II, my grandfather made sure none of his customers went hungry."

Pam Lehman, a retired athletic secretary for Noblesville Schools for 23 years, is the former longtime co-chairperson who with her husband Lynn Lehman, moved to Noblesville in 1984 and supported the fund since its beginning in 2006. She was involved 2011-17. I remember what Pam Lehman once told me: "I think when you work in a school setting all your career, you care about the paths the students travel. You see the hardships some of them face every day."

The original founder of the Red Stocking Fund, Vicki Smith, is a former member of Tri Kappa.

Beck, a former preschool teacher of 15 years for the Noblesville First

United Methodist Church, loves to volunteer and took the reins from Smith when she stepped down.

Polsgrove said, "Much of the success of this project is owed to The Times. We are so grateful to have a local newspaper that supports our local organization and promotes their projects which, in turn, support this community."

Beck said it is fun to read all of the donor names and each of the greetings as the donations come in.

The Beta Epsilon chapter of Tri Kappa, celebrating its 106th year, is busy year-round raising funds and helping the community. The chapter annually in March sells handmade chocolate and peanut butter Easter eggs. And the sorority has recently been selling nuts and cheese balls for Christmas. And for many years, the chapter's annual Breakfast with Santa was a most enjoyable and well-attended family event.

Through the years, the Noblesville chapter has awarded more than \$200,000 in scholarships to deserving Noblesville students.

For all of these reasons, The Times newspaper is glad to help Tri Kappa reach its goals.

-Contact Betsy Reason at betsy@thetimes24-7.com. If you don't have a donation form, checks may be made payable to Red Stocking Fund and mailed to Noblesville Red Stocking Fund, P.O. Box 162, Noblesville, IN 46061.

RUSTY From Page A1

per month for 2022) which would be taken from your Social Security payment, thus reducing it. That may create a financial issue for you, which is obviously an important consideration when deciding if you should also enroll in Part B to supplement your VA coverage. But there's yet

another concern if you enroll in Part B now.

Since you're 74 and have relied solely on the VA for your healthcare needs since turning 65, you'll be subject to a Late Enrollment Penalty if you enroll in Part B now, and that penalty may make Part B even more unaffordable for

you. Your VA health care coverage isn't considered a "creditable" alternative to Part B, which means that a Late Enrollment Penalty of 10% additional premium will be assessed for each full year you went without Part B coverage. For example, instead of the standard Part B premium

of \$170.10, your premium with the late enrollment penalty could be about \$323 per month. And, unfortunately, that penalty lasts for as long as you are enrolled in Part B and will increase along with any increases to the Part B premium as time passes.

For your awareness,

if Social Security is your only source of income, you may be eligible for your state's Medicare Savings Program which can assist you with paying Medicare premiums and copayments. If your income falls below the required thresholds you may be eligible for the Medicare Savings Program

as described at this website: www.benefits.gov/benefit/4396.

Finally, the AMAC Foundation has a repository of helpful information for America's veterans, which you can browse at this link: www.amacfoundation.org/veteran-resources/.

HAIR From Page A1

York's Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, discovered you may prevent and even reverse the graying process by adopting a kinder, gentler and tranquil attitude. "That's the good news for those in the 20 to 30 age range but, sadly, not for senior citizens," quipped Weber, "with apologies to AMAC's 50-plus member-

ship."

The 14 volunteers who participated in Picard's study kept diaries tracking their levels of stress and found that some of the gray hair of those who reported periods of reduced stress actually saw those gray hairs disappear. For example, the doctor cited one volunteer who, while on vacation, saw gray hairs return to their

original color.

"Based on our mathematical modeling, we think hair needs to reach a threshold before it turns gray. In middle age, when the hair is near that threshold because of biological age and other factors, stress will push it over the threshold, and it transitions to gray. But" says Dr. Picard, "we don't think that reducing stress in a

70-year-old who's been gray for years will darken their hair or increasing stress in a 10-year-old will be enough to tip their hair over the gray threshold ... Our data add to a growing body of evidence demonstrating that human aging is not a linear, fixed biological process but may, at least in part, be halted or even temporarily reversed."

According to Scientific American magazine Picard's focus on gray hair began during a conversation with a fellow clinician some time ago. Picard told his colleague "if one could find a hair that was only partially gray—and then calculate how fast that hair was growing—it might be possible to pinpoint the period in which the hair began aging and thus ask

the question of what happened in the individual's life to trigger this change. 'I was thinking about this almost as a fictive idea,' Picard recalls. Unexpectedly, however, his partner turned to him and said she had seen such two-colored hairs on her head. 'She went to the bathroom and actually plucked a couple—that's when this project started'."

VIRTUAL From Page A1

MyndVR is one of the ways their team is honoring this commitment.

"ASC is intentional in choosing partnerships that allow us to leverage cutting edge technology to enrich the lives of the residents that we are honored to serve," said David

Sturdy, Chief Operating Officer at ASC. "We are truly excited to partner with MyndVR to bring these innovative virtual reality experiences to our residents as part of our mission to serve each customer with quality care and excellence."

About American Senior Communities

American Senior Communities offers a variety of senior lifestyle and care options throughout Indiana and Louisville. To learn more visit ASCCare.com. For more information about MyndVR, please contact James Lambert, Account Director at [heraldpr.com](mailto:j.lambert@heraldpr.com) or at 504-256-0925. For more information about American Senior Communities, please visit ASCCare.com.

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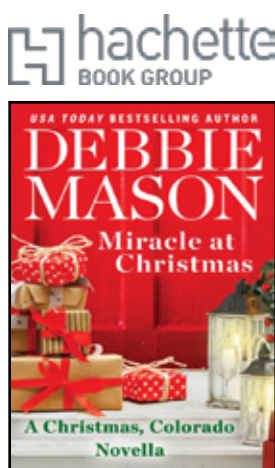
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NEW & RECENT RELEASES

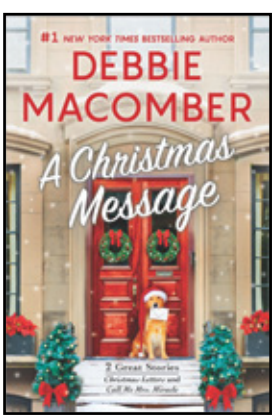


Quick READ
Title: Miracle at Christmas
Author: Debbie Mason
Genre: Novella
For Sale: Now
Price: \$1.99
Page Count: 60
ISBN: 9781538746318

Celebrate the holidays with USA Today bestselling author Debbie Mason's heartwarming novella about a town called Christmas.

Charlotte Bailey needs a miracle. She came to this sleepy little Colorado town to keep the local hospital afloat, but now her scrooge of a boss is demanding she close it down. Charlotte is going to need all the help she can get, even from Dr. McSexy-er, Dr. Matt Trainer—if she's to save Christmas before, well, Christmas!

All Matt wants for Christmas is for Charlotte to give it—and him—half a chance. But with the town looking to him to save the hospital and Charlotte itching to get back to New York in time to see the city decked out in lights, Matt doesn't have much time to make things right. But he's got faith—after all, miracles happen every day in Christmas.

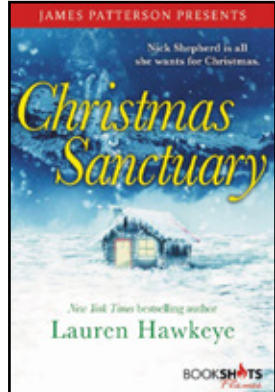


Quick READ
Title: A Christmas Message
Author: Debbie Macomber
Genre: Holiday
On Sale: Now
Price: \$9.99
Page Count: 384
ISBN: 9780778388227

This season, discover the magic of two classic heartwarming stories and the message of love and giving at Christmas!

Christmas Letters
Katherine O'Connor spends her days at a cozy café writing Christmas letters for other people. She's good at making their everyday lives sound more interesting. But for renowned child psychologist Dr. Wynn Jeffries, who also frequents the café, Christmas means deception. Katherine argues with Wynn about his theories while he argues that her letters are nothing but lies. They disagree about practically everything—but as the days move closer to Christmas, Katherine and Wynn may find that love means accepting your differences while discovering what you share.

Call Me Mrs. Miracle
For Jake Finley, owner of Finley's Department Store in New York City, Christmas means only one thing to him: profit. The holiday was destroyed for him by a tragedy years before. But now he needs a Christmas miracle to keep the business afloat. Holly Larson needs a miracle, too. Her nephew's father won't be home for Christmas, but at least she can get him the one gift he desperately wants. If she can figure out how to pay for it... Fortunately, it's Mrs. Miracle to the rescue. Next to making children happy, she likes nothing better than helping others—and that includes a bit of matchmaking!



Quick READ
Title: Christmas Sanctuary
Author: Lauren Hawkeye, with James Patterson
Genre: Holiday
On Sale: Now
Price: \$2.99
Page Count: 144
ISBN: 9780316473583

Emma Kelly needs a Christmas miracle. Nick Shepherd loves his life in Salt Spring Island, where he sculpts in a studio with the grizzled and talented artist Mike Nagorski. Mike's estranged daughter, Emma Kelly, arrives in their quiet haven, and though Nick is immediately drawn to her, he tries to resist his feelings. There may be Christmas magic in the air, but Nick knows it can't last forever...

BookShots Flames Original romances presented by James Patterson Novels you can devour in a few hours Impossible to stop reading.



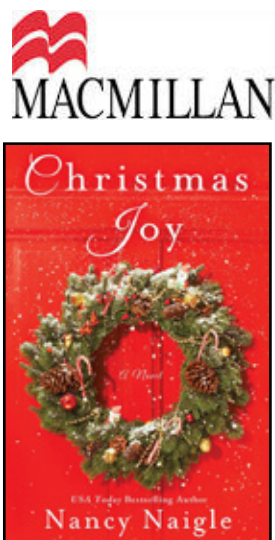
Quick READ
Title: Christmas at Little Beach Street Bakery
Author: Jenny Colgan
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$9.99
Page Count: 320
ISBN: 9780063036154

In the Cornish coastal village of Mount Poilbeare, the Christmas season has arrived. It's a joyous time for family, friends, and feasting, as decorations sparkle along the town's winding streets and shop windows glow with festive displays. And in Polly's Little Beach Street Bakery, the aroma of gingerbread cookies and other treats tempts people in from the cold.

Though Polly is busy keeping up with the demands of the season, she still makes time for her beekeeper boyfriend, Huckle. She's especially happy to be celebrating the holiday this year with him, and can't wait to cuddle up in front of the fireplace with a cup of eggnog on Christmas Eve.

But holiday bliss soon gives way to panic when a storm cuts the village off from the mainland. Now it will take all of the villagers to work together in order to ensure everyone has a happy holiday.

Full of heart and humor, Jenny Colgan's latest novel is an instant Christmastime classic.



Quick READ
Title: Christmas Joy
Author: Nancy Naigle
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$15.99
Page Count: 352
ISBN: 9781250106070

NOW A HALLMARK ORIGINAL MOVIE STAR-RING DANIELLE PANABAKER AND MATT LONG!

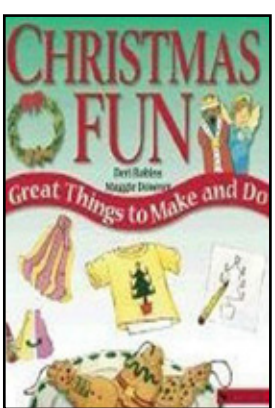
From USA Today bestselling author Nancy Naigle, Christmas Joy is a heartwarming Christmas story about family, friendship and finding love in unexpected places.

Joy Holbrook might be all work and no play, but that changes when her Aunt Ruby takes a fall that lands her in a rehabilitation center before the holidays. Joy takes a leave of absence from her job as a market researcher to run the family farm, even though the timing may hinder her chance at garnering the promotion of her dreams.

Ben Andrews isn't your average accountant. He also happens to be the handiest man in Crystal Falls. He's helped his elderly neighbor, Ruby Johnson, decorate for the annual Christmas Home Tour—and win—the last several years. He's not about to let some drop-in niece break their winning streak.

Ruby seems overly concerned about Joy being able to handle Molly. Under the impression she's referring Molly the bunny that is one of the menagerie of animals, Joy's not worried at all until the next morning when a little girl named Molly shows up. For the sake of her aunt, Joy is forced to partner with Ben while Ruby is on the mend to help with preparation for the Christmas tour and, in the process finds her career-focused heart dreaming of a family.

Will the magic of Christmas help her to open her heart and find her everlasting joy?



Quick READ
Title: Christmas Fun
Author: Dari Robins
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$4.95
Page Count: Paperback
ISBN: 9780753456828

Deri Robins has created a book to go along with her other activity books for children that include The Kids' Around the World Cookbook, Christmas Fun, Halloween Fun, Birthday Fun, The Great Pirate Activity Book and the Step-by-Step books: Making Prints and Papier Mache.



Quick READ
Title: Simply Christmas
Author: Tama Fortner
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$14.95
Page Count: 128
ISBN: 9780593233382

Thirty-one encouraging devotions to help busy moms pause and ponder the true miracles of the Christmas season—the wonder of a Savior who would leave heaven to save us and the love of those who share our home.

Between holiday baking, hunting for the perfect tree, decorating, preparing for visiting relatives, and making sure everyone gets the ideal gift, Christmas can be anything but peaceful for a busy mom. Too often, the stress and busyness of the season make it difficult to find time to just sit and reflect on the wonder of the Savior's birth.

If this sounds familiar, allow Simply Christmas to be your personal invitation to slow down and savor the beauty of the manger this year. These thirty-one devotions are not dated, so you're welcome to begin reading anytime—whether that's on December 1, Christmas Eve, the day after Thanksgiving, or the middle of July—without even a smidgen of guilt or shame.

Accompanied by seasonally inspired full-color photographs, this thirty-one-day devotional brings a bit of calm to each day through a short reflection and Scripture, together with points to ponder and fun ideas for simplifying your Christmas traditions.

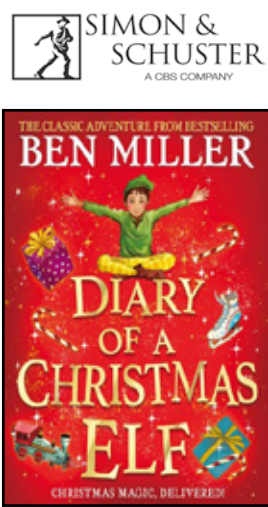


Quick READ
Title: Christmas Shopaholic
Author: Sophie Kinsella
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$18
Page Count: 464
ISBN: 9780593132838

'Tis the season for change and Becky Brandon (née Bloomwood) is embracing it, returning from the States to live in the charming village of Letherby and working with her best friend, Suze, in the gift shop of Suze's stately home. Life is good, especially now that Becky takes time every day for mindfulness—even if that only means listening to a meditation tape while hunting down online bargains.

But Becky still addresses the traditions of Christmas: Her parents hosting, carols playing on repeat, her mother pretending she made the Christmas pudding, and the neighbors coming 'round for sherry in their terrible holiday sweaters. Things are looking cheerier than ever, until Becky's parents announce they're moving to ultra-trendy Shoreditch—unable to resist the draw of craft beer and smashed avocados—and ask Becky if she'll host this year. What could possibly go wrong?

Becky's sister demands a vegan turkey, her husband insists that he just wants aftershave (again), and little Minnie needs a very specific picnic hamper: Surely Becky can manage all this, as well as the surprise appearance of an old boyfriend-turned-rock star and his pushy new girlfriend, whose motives are far from clear. But as the countdown to Christmas begins and her bighearted turns take an unexpected path toward disaster, Becky wonders if chaos will ensue, or if she'll manage.



Quick READ
Title: Diary of a Christmas Elf
Author: Ben Miller
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$10.99
Page Count: 128
ISBN: 9781398501843

Christmas magic, delivered! The top-ten bestseller and must-have festive gift, discover the joy of gift-giving in this hilarious Christmas caper from bestselling author, Ben Miller.

All Tog wants to do is work in Santa's workshop and one wonderful day, the letter from Santa arrives: Tog has been selected as an apprentice elf! Making toys is a lot more technical and a lot less fun than Tog had imagined, and even though his new friend Holly tries to help him, he's quickly relegated to cleaning out the reindeer stables. But someone has been stealing the presents from the workshop and a case of mistaken identity finds Tog accused of being the culprit! Can Tog use his special Christmas magic to discover the real thief and save all the presents before Christmas Eve is over?

A funny and heartwarming story from the King of Christmas, Ben Miller - the perfectly sized stocking filler for all the family!

Praise for BookTrust pick The Night I Met Father Christmas:

"A gorgeous tale brimming with the magic of Christmas. A sheer delight for all kids both big AND small" Ruth Jones

"Bubbles with warmth and mischievous humour ... irresistible" Alexander Armstrong

"A fire-side gem of a story" Abi Elphinstone, bestselling author of Sky Song and Everdark

"Enchanting, funny and intriguing in equal measure" Philip Ardagh



Quick READ
Title: Stories for Christmas
Author: Bernadette Watts
Genre: Holidays
On Sale: Now
Price: \$25
Page Count: 248
ISBN: 9780735844674

Eight heartwarming classic tales for the Christmas season—illustrated by Bernadette Watts—in one beautiful volume.

A beautiful Christmas collection that includes The Smallest Snowflake, The Little Drummer Boy, Shoemaker Martin, The Star Child, The Snow Queen, The Little Donkey, The Christmas Story, and Varenka, this collection of stories will get you in the Christmas spirit.

"Watts' watercolors overlaid with crayon-like texture are appealing and rustic."—School Library Journal

Praise for Little Red Riding Hood (illustrated by Bernadette Watts) "My what big talent she has! The old is new again here, and this is a welcome addition to the fairy-tale shelf."—Kirkus Reviews

"A master in choosing a palette to fit each story!"—Eric Carle

WEEKEND

In The Home

A7

Weekend, Dec. 18-19, 2021

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Bring a bit of spring color indoors

Pot them up, give them a chill and enjoy spring flowering bulbs indoors or outside on a patio, deck or porch. This is a great way to enjoy any bulbs that didn't make it into the ground this season or take advantage of late season discounts on bulbs.

Larger flowering bulbs like tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and alliums put on quite a display in your home or in a window box or container. Add some smaller bulbs like crocus, squills, and grape hyacinths to the mix for added beauty.

All you need is a container with drainage holes, potting mix, and a few bulbs. Shorter varieties work well or give taller varieties a bit of support with twigs or decorative stakes when displaying indoors.

Cover the bottom of the container with soil. Set several bulbs, pointed side up, on top of the potting mix. Set the tallest bulbs in the center surrounded by shorter varieties when creating a mixed garden. Place tulips with the flat

side of the bulb facing out for a better display. Cover the bulbs and fill the container with potting mix.

Enjoy weeks of colorful flowers by selecting a variety of bulbs that bloom from early through late spring. Layer the bulbs to maximize your planting space. Place larger bulbs on top of the soil layer at the bottom of the container. The tallest of these will go in the center skirted by shorter varieties to maximize the display.

Cover this first layer of bulbs with potting mix, leaving just the tip of the bulbs exposed. Add smaller bulbs like squills, crocus and grape hyacinth bulbs to the next level. Plant them close together between the tips of the larger bulbs. Cover this layer with soil, leaving enough space for watering.

Water the freshly planted container thoroughly, then move it to a cool location, about 35 to 45 degrees for at least 12 to 15 weeks. This cold period is needed to initiate

flowering in these bulbs. A spare refrigerator or in colder regions, an unheated garage works well. Or if the ground hasn't frozen, sink the pot into a vacant space in the garden. This works for those gardening in areas where winter temperatures are cold enough to provide the needed chill. Mulch the soil once the ground starts to freeze with evergreen boughs. This will make it easier to remove the pot in early spring.

Eliminate this step by purchasing pre-chilled bulbs. These have received the needed cold treatment and are ready to pot up and grow indoors or outdoors in warmer regions.

Check stored bulbs regularly for early sprouting and move to a colder location if needed. Water the bulbs in storage whenever the soil is thawed and dry.

Once the cold treatment is complete, you can move the forced bulbs to their final location where you can enjoy the spring flowers. Place the container in a cool location with bright

indirect light indoors. Water thoroughly as needed and watch for flowers to appear in about four weeks. Remove one pot a week from cold storage to extend your enjoyment.

Monitor spring growing conditions before moving forced bulbs into outdoor planters. Once the weather is suitable for bulbs to sprout and grow outdoors, it is safe to move forced bulbs into the landscape.

When they are done flowering, you can compost the bulbs or for those suited to your growing conditions add them to the garden. Remove the faded flowers and water the plants like your houseplants or other container gardens. Fertilize with a dilute solution of flowering plant fertilizer or apply a low nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer. This helps replenish the nutrients used in flowering.

Move indoor forced bulbs outdoors as soon as the danger of frost has passed. Those in containers outdoors can remain in the pots until the foliage fades or the garden is



Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

A container with drainage holes, potting mix, and a few spring flowering bulbs planted pointed side up is all you need to create a colorful indoor garden.

ready for planting. Or store the bulbs in a cool dark place for summer and plant in fall with other hardy bulbs. Then be patient as it can take two years for these to flower.

Forcing spring flowering bulbs is a great way to add beauty to your indoor décor, patio, balcony, or deck. They also make a great gift for gardeners of all experience levels.

Melinda Myers is the author of more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Gardener's Supply for her expertise to write this article. Her web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Backyarding trends in 2022: Americans continue to live outdoors

"Backyarding" – the trend to move indoor activities outdoors that was made popular during the pandemic – is here to stay and will continue to expand in 2022, according to the TurfMutt Foundation, an environmental education and stewardship program that encourages outdoor living and caring for green spaces.

"Backyarding is a way of life now," says Kris Kiser, president and CEO of the TurfMutt Foundation and its parent organization the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). "Homeowners spent lots of time, money and effort over the last eighteen months improving their backyards to make them an extension of their homes so they could work, cook, exercise and even vacation outdoors. We believe people will continue to 'backyard more' in the coming year and beyond."

The TurfMutt Foundation predicts the following backyarding trends for 2022:

Lines between the indoors and the outdoors will continue to blur. Doors and windows will be opened to the great outdoors and more people will enjoy breakfast or a nightcap on the deck.

Decorating choices will marry the outside and the inside, with colors and tones that provide more visual connection between indoor areas and the backyard, for a seamless transition.

Offices will turn to the outdoors. There will be no need to turn to technology to create a virtual backdrop for video calls. The natural setting created by the yard's living landscape – trees, flowers, bushes and other plants – is the best video call background, bar none. Privacy screens, electrical outlets and wifi extenders could become more common backyard amenities.

Balconies, porches, window boxes and patios will be maximized. Think tuning up the volume on these additional outdoor spaces and you've got the idea. Seating, flowers, potted plants, curtains and more make these areas sparkle as places for retreat and socialization.

Kids (and adults) will spend more time outside learning. The backyard or park become an even bigger living laboratory for learning. Kids will likely take online classes or do homework under the shade of a tree, in an outdoor classroom at school, or at a patio or picnic table. They brush

up on STEM concepts (see TurfMutt's free lesson plans for help!) by planting and studying flowers, bugs, and weather. Gardens for vegetables educate families on where food comes from and nesting boxes or bat boxes for wildlife showcase the nature around them.

Al fresco dining will become the norm. Grills, pizza ovens and overhead lighting with seating make many homes outdoor eateries for families and neighbors. Interest in outdoor kitchens, pergolas, shade sails and landscaping will define and enhance outdoor dining.

Business deals get cooked up in backyards. While socializing around fire pits and watching the kids play soccer on the lawn, adults will have the informal conversations that used to happen in other venues. Games of croquet and cornhole could turn easily into business networking opportunities.

The backyard will be the first place people turn to for relaxation and stress relief. Yoga, hammocks, reading nooks, calming water features and garden elements, and more add spa-like features to the backyard. More people will plant with peace of mind at heart, adding colors that make



Photo courtesy of TurfMutt.com

Offices will turn to the outdoors. There will be no need to turn to technology to create a virtual backdrop for video calls. The natural setting created by the yard's living landscape – trees, flowers, bushes and other plants – is the best video call background,

them feel good, while aiming for sensory or emotional connections.

Outdoor entertainment will evolve. Movie projectors with sound systems and outdoor screens turn the yard into a theater under the stars. Expect to see more fire pits, outdoor games and more that enhance outdoor recreation.

Homeowners will plant with wildlife in mind. Knowing the backyard is a habitat for pollinators, insects, birds, and other

wildlife, homeowners likely will choose plants, trees and shrubs that nurture and support wildlife – delighting in discovering them.

Pampering pets will only increase. Fencing, sandpiles for digging, dog houses, and even agility courses for pets to enjoy are going to become more common.

More people will discover their backyarding personality types – and design a yard that matches their outdoor lifestyles.

They will map out their yards, take an inventory of tools and equipment available to create and maintain their dream, and then work hard to create a defined backyard that meets their needs over the coming year.

For more, sign up for Mutt Mail, a monthly e-newsletter with backyarding tips and all the news from the TurfMutt Foundation. To learn more about creating the yard of your dreams, visit TurfMutt.com.



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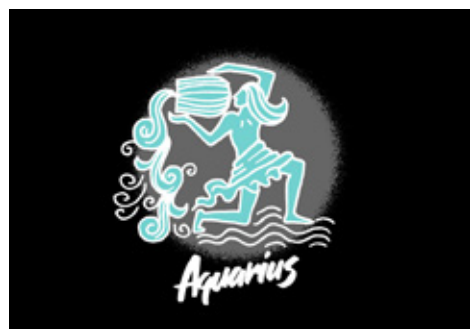
WEEKEND

Sillyscopes and More

Weekend, Dec. 18-19, 2021

A8

Sillyscopes is intended for entertainment purposes only for readers of The Times. It is not intended to be used for practical advice (like anyone really would!).



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20 – Feb. 19

With just days and hours to go before Christmas you have to assume Santa is fine-tuning his famous naughty and nice list. So the challenge for you Aquarius is, do you acquiesce and be super good for a week or rebel and blow it all! Decisions, decisions!



PISCES

Feb. 20 – March 20

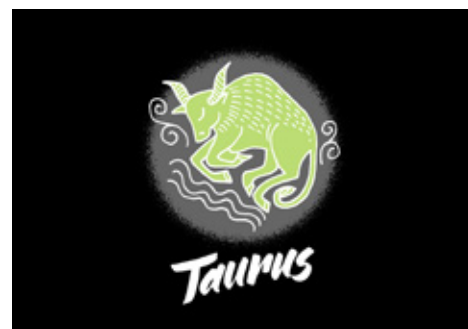
This is your favorite week of the year, isn't it Pisces? After all, you are certainly a dreamer and what better time to dream than right before a rather large man slides down a very small chimney and visits almost 2 billion children in 24 hours. Yup, dream on!



ARIES

March 21 – April 20

Sometimes you are more nervous than the proverbial long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs. That's OK Aries, the week before Christmas is a good time to be nervous. But psst. We'll let you in on a secret. Santa thinks you have been really good this year, so relax a little!



TAURUS

April 21 – May 21

Don't be too jealous the week of Christmas, Taurus. This is the time of year when it's goodwill to all, peace on earth and all that sort of stuff. Besides, it just doesn't look right when someone who is well into adulthood throws a tantrum because the line to see Santa is too long.



GEMINI

May 22 – June 22

You are sweet as sugar and spice and everything nice Gemini. Which is exactly why you are in better shape than most as Christmas approaches! Good job on all the good deeds and being a good Samaritan this year. You will be rewarded well come Christmas morning!



CANCER

June 23 – July 23

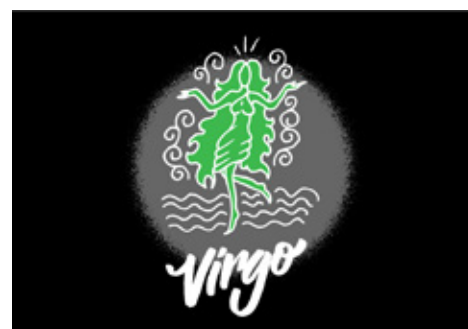
Defensive and moody may be two traits commonly associated with Cancers, but they are also traits that land you on the naughty list! Oh well, you've got about a week to get back in Santa's good graces so start looking for good deeds to do!



LEO

July 24 – Aug. 23

You truly enjoy giving Leo so what a great time of year it is for you! While most everyone is getting ready to tear into those packages and rip the shiny paper to shreds, you sit back, watch and enjoy. Just be sure to stay in your living room. When you do it through windows it's creepy.



VIRGO

Aug. 24 – Sept. 23

There are times of the year when being analytical and organized serve you well Virgo. For example, you watch, observe and calculate exactly the right time to go to the salad bar so that you avoid the crowds and get there right after they refill everything. But this is Christmas! Throw caution and wrapping paper to the wind. Let go!



LIBRA

Sept. 24 – Oct. 23

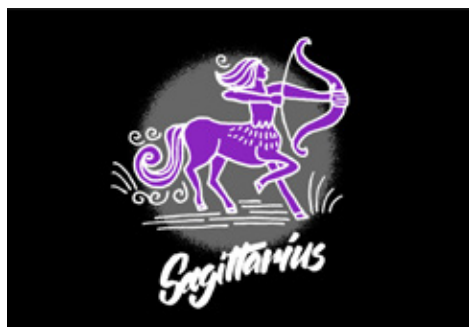
Remember that romance from last week? And remember how you love to debate? Well, Libra, those two traits – while they define who you are – don't always go together very well. So bite that lip a little and try to get along. It's Christmas.



SCORPIO

Oct. 24 – Nov. 22

You are nothing if not resilient Scorpio – which is really good just in case Santa messes up and doesn't do as well as he should with your presents this year. That resiliency allows you to take it in stride because the after-Christmas sales are going to be awesome!



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 23 – Dec. 22

You have that optimistic streak, yet you tend to look at things philosophically Sagittarius. That means that you will believe whole-heartedly in Santa Claus while being wise enough to look the other way when that certain someone sneaks your gift under the tree.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 23 – Jan. 19

Tradition is important to you Capricorn and what a great time of year to observe and celebrate traditions. From the beautiful church service to elegant decorations to caroling around the neighborhood and more . . . but we could do without that ugly Christmas sweater. Just saying.

CROSSWORD

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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: MOVIE QUOTES

- ACROSS**
- THESE
 - General Services Administration
 - Ex-Miami Heat player Dwyane
 - Pomegranate seed
 - Actor Chris O'
 - Pacific Crest Trail walker
 - Country dance formation
 - Wished undone
 - Popeye's sweetie
 - "Sudden Impact": "Go ahead, _____"
 - Arm part
 - Gold unit
 - Parabola, e.g.
 - San Joaquin Valley city
 - Hangs out with
 - Unit of electrical resistance
 - "Star Wars": "Stay in formation"
 - Mr. Jinx's (of "Meet the Parents") cry
 - Clay and silt deposit
 - Camel debris
 - Japanese sword fighting
 - Was aware of
 - Come into sight
 - "Independence Day": "I belong in the _____"
 - "The Dark Knight": "Why so _____?"
 - Common allergen
 - Cup alternative
 - Bird-made fertilizer
 - Sketch
 - "On the Waterfront": "I coulda been a _____"
 - El Dorado-related
 - Tabernacle Choir's home state
 - Contributed
 - Star Wars attacker
 - Unidentified aircraft
 - Prep for publication
 - Ladder step
 - Tropical American cuckoo
 - Part to play
- DOWN**
- Precedes storm?
 - Soprano's song, e.g.
 - "Mean Girls": "On Wednesdays, we wear _____"
 - Makes smooth, as in hair
 - Dutch cheese
 - "Darkest Hour": "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and _____"
 - Walker, American Girl doll
 - "Field of Dreams": "If you build it, he _____"
 - Related
 - Deity, in Sanskrit
 - "... _____ he drove out of sight"
 - Fungus damage (2 words)
 - Meryl Streep's "The _____"
 - Supernatural life force, pl.
 - Query
 - "Who Framed Roger Rabbit": "That's all, _____!"
 - Côtes du _____, wine region
 - Mideast V.I.P.
 - Soreness
 - Kidney-related
 - "Princess Bride": "You killed my father. Prepare _____"
 - Bound by oath
 - "Lights out" tune
 - Nile reptile
 - "Finding Nemo": "Just keep _____"
 - Danish money
 - Two before Oct
 - Lack of enthusiasm
 - 1/16th of a pound
 - Not two years but three, e.g.
 - Coped (2 words)
 - Freshwater eel, in Japan
 - Comics character Little
 - Fe
 - Caribbean island country
 - Carpenter's joint
 - Like a fairytale stepmother?
 - Network of nerves
 - Acronym, abbr.

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WEEKEND

Travel *or stay!* and Play

Weekend, Dec. 18-19, 2021

A9

TIM TIMMONS, Publisher @ Betsy Reason, Editor @ Melissa Meme, Account Executive @ Beth Hedge, Business Manager

What you can come to expect when you travel in 2022

(Family Features) After a couple abnormal years, many families are eager and ready to travel together again, and there are indications some pandemic-influenced travel behaviors will persist in 2022.

For example, remote work and virtual school allowed families to travel and combine work and vacation time into "flexcation" getaways, a trend that will continue, according to the 2022 Vrbo Trend Report.

In addition to the 44% of families that said they're more likely to work remotely from a place that's not their home, extended stays are also on the rise. The vacation home site and app has seen a 68% increase in demand for 3-4-week stays over the past year.

Consider these 2022 trends spotted by the travel experts at Vrbo:

Up-and-Coming Destinations

Spots in Ohio, New York and Alaska saw double vacation rental demand over the past year. Within driving distance of major Midwest metros like Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville, Cincinnati was the year's top emerging destination.

Other up-and-comers

include Niagara Falls, a popular choice for those who wanted to experience life at the border. Yorktown, Virginia, the location of the last Revolutionary War battle, allows history buffs to witness a battle reenactment. Adventurous travelers trekked to Matanuska-Susitna, Alaska, to enjoy the wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve, breathtaking glaciers and surrounding mountains.

Chalet All Day

You may have heard of Cabincore and Cottagecore, but chalets are a trending aesthetic that inspires family travel. Chalets saw a nearly 85% increase in demand year over year. Located on lakefronts or nestled in the woods, these charming and idyllic properties are desirable lodging options for many families.

Kids Call the Shots

After being cooped up at home, it may be no surprise parents are letting their kids have a bigger say in vacation planning. Compared to pre-pandemic times, half of the families surveyed said they're more likely to let their kids decide where they vacation and 43% of parents are more likely to let their kids skip school



Photo courtesy of Pixabay

Adventurous travelers trekked to Matanuska-Susitna, Alaska, to enjoy the wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve, breathtaking glaciers and surrounding mountains.

for vacation.

Traveling with the Pack

Many families adopted pandemic pets because they had more time at home to spend with their furry friends. Now more people are bringing Fido and Fluffy along on vacation; 68% of pet parents have traveled,

plan to travel or would like to travel with their pets. What's more, there has been a 40% increase in demand year-over-year for pet-friendly vacation homes.

Early Bird Bookers

If 2021 was any indication, families will continue booking their va-

cations further in advance. Booking activity occurred an average of 2-3 months earlier than usual for several major travel seasons. Families booked summer travel in February, holiday trips in July and snowbirds got a head start on booking warm weather stays for 2022.

In fact, 60% of survey respondents said they plan to book their vacations earlier than they did in pre-pandemic times with nearly half making plans 3-5 months in advance.

Find more ideas for planning your next vacation, along with the full report, at Vrbo.com.



Photo courtesy of Pixabay

Though it can be tempting not to, especially when you're in a rush, you should always fully scrape your vehicle's windows and remove snow from its surface before driving.

Driving in a winter wonderland: 5 safety tips

(StatePoint) Though the winter season has its joys, it also brings unique challenges – especially when venturing out in hazardous weather.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, 24% of all weather-related vehicle crashes happen on snowy, slushy and icy pavement, while 15% occur during snowfall or sleet. Here are five tips to protect yourself, your loved ones and your vehicle this season.

1. Invest in winter tires. Snow and ice can turn roads into a slippery nightmare, posing a real threat for drivers. Winter tires, also known as snow tires, are uniquely designed to increase traction in these conditions and can help avoid accidents.

2. Clear snow and ice before hitting the road. Though it can be tempting not to, especially when you're in a rush, you should always fully scrape your vehicle's windows and remove snow from its surface before driving. Leaving ice and snow to melt is more dangerous

than you might think. It can slide down the windshield and block your view of the road, or even fly into nearby traffic, causing damage or obstructing the vision of other drivers.

3. Keep your distance. Ever heard of the "three-second rule"? Experts recommend leaving three seconds of distance between your vehicle and those ahead of you. To do this, watch the car ahead of you pass a landmark, then count to three. It should be at least three seconds before your car reaches the landmark. When the roads are slick or icy, be sure to widen the gap. Should you need to stop suddenly, the extra space will lower your chances of a collision.

4. Slow down! A recent national survey by Erie Insurance found that one in 10 drivers admitted to driving at extreme speeds (20 mph or more over the speed limit) during the early months of the pandemic, and many respondents say drivers are still going way faster than normal. Speeding is always danger-

ous and can be even more hazardous when roads are icy, making it harder to control the vehicle and avoid skidding. If your vehicle begins to skid, turn the steering wheel towards the direction you need to go.

5. Monitor and improve driving behaviors. Identify bad habits and become a safer driver year-round with a smartphone app like YourTurn from Erie Insurance. YourTurn analyzes behaviors such as hard braking, speeding and phone use, and offers incentives for safe driving through rewards that can be redeemed for gift cards or donated to charity.

"It's especially important to be mindful of your driving behavior in the winter time," says Jon Bloom, vice president of personal auto at Erie Insurance. "By incentivizing safe driving habits, we hope to make the roads safer for everyone."

For safer driving experiences, be sure you and your car are prepared to handle road conditions, this season and beyond.

Learning to love cold camping and trekking

(StatePoint) Do you identify as an outdoor enthusiast -- but only during three seasons of the year? Here are some tips and recommendations for learning to love cold-weather camping, trekking and more:

- Take up a new sport: Whether it's ice climbing, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, there are certain sports that can only be enjoyed in cold conditions. Challenge yourself to take up a new athletic endeavor this winter. The thrill of trying something for the first time may prove sufficiently distracting from the chill, plus you may discover a new passion in the process.

- Let durable tech support you: Your wearable tech should be as tough and intrepid as you are.

So if your current outdoor watch doesn't support high-level performance or stand up to the toughest of conditions, it's time for an update. Consider Casio's line of Pro Trek and G-SHOCK watches, which have built-in technology to ensure your fun doesn't turn to frustration. For example, those in G-SHOCK's Mudmaster

series feature a digital compass, barometer, altimeter, thermometer and step tracker to help you reach your goals, even when challenges seem insurmountable. The Base model is the MUDMASTER GGB100, which uses carbon material that delivers a new level of shock-, water-, dust- and mud-resistance. The watches in the Pro Trek series are also equipped with quad sensor technology, and in some cases, Smartphone connectivity. Using Bluetooth and Casio's Smartphone Link functionality, wearers can connect to a designated app for access to additional useful data for your outdoor adventures, such as route log, calories burned, location indicator, altitude, longitude, latitude and more.

- Embrace a mind over matter attitude: Hate the cold? Consider the approach of extreme, cold-weather athlete Wim Hof, whose famous outdoor feats of endurance in subzero temperatures (and in little clothing) have earned him the apt nickname, "The Iceman." You don't need to forgo shoes and a shirt like he does to take a page from

his cold weather playbook, which involves controlled breathing. Dip a toe into the icy waters of his technique by checking out the Wim Hof Method Mobile app.

- Get prepped for nighttime: While you may prefer to spend the night in a cabin or other shelter in winter, and that's totally respectable, if you do plan a more rustic adventure, be sure that your tent and sleeping bag are specifically engineered for winter use. A sleeping pad placed beneath your sleeping bag can provide a valuable layer between you and the cold ground. Most importantly stay healthy and safe. Change your plans if there are unsafe conditions in the forecast and know the signs of hypothermia and frostbite. If you are a novice, you may also consider bringing along a friend who is well-versed in cold weather outdoor adventures until you get the hang of it.

If you go all out during summer, spring and fall, but shy away from outdoor adventures in winter, let new gear and a new mindset help you embrace the cold.

relax & enjoy

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