

**➔ TODAY'S VERSE**

Romans 8:38 – 39 "And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below – indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (NLT)



**➔ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY**

People who call our community their own.

*What makes Larry Jacobi smile? "These old airplanes; they make me smile. And we enjoy taking people on rides. These airplanes were built as trainers in World War II. I just love taking people up in them." The pilot was found recently giving an airplane ride to Promise Road Elementary Principal Christy Martino as a reward for students' fundraising. Jacobi has been flying airplanes for 53 years and was happy to do a flyover for the kids in his U.S. Army blue and yellow open-cockpit 1941 Stearman two-seater biplane PT-17, that was used for training in World War II. Jacobi, 78, Noblesville, a retired Noblesville High School math teacher has given hundreds of airplane rides in his Stearman over the years. He often donates a 30-minute ride in his Stearman for local charity events' auctions. He belongs to the Noblesville Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) which meets at Noblesville Airport the first Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m., with a pitch-in dinner at 6:30 p.m. and organizes a fly-in/pancake breakfast on a Saturday morning in mid-June and mid-August. Jacobi, co-owner of Noblesville Airport, taught the late Paul Estridge Jr., how to fly "many years ago" and called him a "model student." They flew together many times in recent years. Jacobi said, "I considered him a very good friend ... We will all miss him dearly." Read more about Estridge in today's Betsy Reason column and read the full obituary in Friday's edition of The Times.*

**And Another Thing...**

**1. Home Show Tickets**

Want free tickets to the 101st Indianapolis Home Show, running from Jan. 20-29 at the Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center? All you have to do to win tickets (valued at \$15 each) is send us a selfie of you and our front page (Print or Online Edition) to [timmons@thetimes24-7.com](mailto:timmons@thetimes24-7.com). Be sure to tell us who you are, where you are from, how many tickets you would like and a little bit about yourself so we can include it if your photo is selected to publish on our front page. Then all you have to do is wait and watch. If you see your smiling face on our front page – you win!

**2. Comet Coming!**

Want to see a comet with your naked eye? Well, you just might get your chance soon. Comet C/2022 E3 (ZTF) will be closest to our planet on Feb. 1 and Feb. 2. According to the good folks at [space.com](http://space.com), if the comet continues to get brighter, we just might be able to look up and see it. And even if it fades a bit, we should still be able to use binoculars or a telescope around then. Go to [space.com](http://space.com) for more information.

# The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper



NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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## Paul Estridge Jr. Loved Flying in the Clouds



**BETSY REASON**  
The Times Editor

Paul Estridge Jr. was many things to many people. A father, a husband, a businessman. A home builder, a philanthropist and a servant in our community. It was sad news this week as our community learned about the passing of the Westfield resident on Sunday, Jan. 8. Paul Estridge Jr. was 65. He enjoyed life to the fullest and always tried to make life better for others. My memory of Paul Estridge Jr. goes back to my years writing for The Noblesville Ledger, in which I wrote a newspaper column about him that appeared on the front page on June 10, 2005. He was a fascinating newspaper subject. Estridge told me about the best day in the world was when he jumped on his Harley-Davidson motorcycle with his then 9-year-old son, Josh, on the back, and they headed for the Noblesville Airport on Promise Road.

Once there, they would sip Cokes, jump in Estridge's 1944 Stearman biplane and take off from the grass runway lined with farm fields. They would fly in the clouds for a few hours and then motorcycle back home in time for dinner. That's how it often happened, Estridge shared with me. "It feels like you're part of history and really what living in Indiana is all about," Estridge, 47, said in my Ledger newspaper column.

"Noblesville Airport to me is like a little piece of heaven. It's one of my favorite places to go and hang out," said the member of Noblesville Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), which still meets at the airport and offers fly-in/pancake breakfasts twice a summer open to the community.

Estridge attended those fly-in breakfasts. The builder, developer and former president of The Estridge Companies and Estridge Homes in Carmel had kept his plane in a hangar at the Noblesville Airport, where he would fly out of and up to Elwood for breakfast or down to Columbus, Ind., "just for pure fun," he said in The Ledger article.

Estridge loved to give people rides in his Stearman, an open-cockpit tail dragger that some refer to as a Snoopy or Red Baron plane that World War II aviators learned to fly, he had said.

He shared a story with me of how at one of the fly-ins, he gave a ride to a man who had always wanted to fly in a Stearman. "Taking him up and seeing him in the front seat of



Paul Estridge, Jr.

the plane and letting him look over the edge and letting him fly it for a moment was great fun," Estridge had said in the article.

Estridge told me that he'd always wanted to fly an airplane but only learned how to fly after a friend bought him flying lessons for his 32nd birthday.

Noblesville Airport co-owner and pilot Larry Jacobi said that Estridge was a "model student."

Estridge thought being a pilot was "a real accomplishment," he had said to me. "I felt that I had conquered something complicated."

He had said that his hobby taught him to think through problems instead of reacting.

"You have to trust engineering and have faith in God, which is a big part of my personal belief," Estridge had said.

His wife, Judy, agreed to go up in her husband's plane on his 47th birthday in September 2004, but only after her mother-in-law, Carol Estridge, Paul Estridge Sr.'s wife went up on her 70th birthday in August 2004. Carol passed away in 2012 at age 77.

While Judy Estridge went up on the occasion, she told me she

➔ See BETSY Page A4

### The Daily Almanac

**Sunrise/Sunset**  
RISE: 8:05 a.m.  
SET: 5:39 p.m.

**High/Low Temperatures**  
HIGH: 45 °F  
LOW: 40 °F

**Today is....**

- International Kiss A Ginger Day
- National Pharmacist Day
- Curried Chicken Day

**What Happened On This Day**

- 1895 The National Trust is founded in the UK
- 1915 US House of Representatives rejects a proposal to require states to give women the right to vote
- 2010 An earthquake in Haiti occurs, killing between 220,000 and 300,000 people and destroying much of the capital Port-au-Prince

**Births On This Day**

- 1729 Edmund Burke Irish politician and philosopher
- 1916 P. W. Botha South African politician and 1st State President of South Africa

**Deaths On This Day**

- 1976 Agatha Christie English author
- 2003 Maurice Gibb English singer-songwriter bass player and producer



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Schools

New Noblesville Schools board member Misti Ray (left) and returning board member Joe Forgey (center) were officially sworn in to service Tuesday night. Read more about board member online at [tinyurl.com/39css3yv](http://tinyurl.com/39css3yv)

**➔ INSIDE TODAY**

- Tim Timmons.....A2
- Service Directory.....A3
- Capital Chronicle.....A3
- Classifieds.....A4

**➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP**

Kindness is contagious – surround yourself with giving people. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at [www.thetimes24-7.com](http://www.thetimes24-7.com).



**➔ TODAY'S QUOTE**

"When you give joy to other people, you get more joy in return. You should give a good thought to happiness that you can give out."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

**➔ HONEST HOOSIER**

Why is it other nations can hold elections, require people to show up and tally the votes all in one day – and we can't anymore? We used to. What's different?



**➔ TODAY'S JOKE**

The boss tried to catch the fog. He mist.

**➔ OBITUARIES**

None



The Times appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank **SALLY J. CAIRNS** for subscribing!



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| THU                             | FRI                            | SAT                         | SUN             | MON                          | TUE                     | WED                       |

# One More Look at the Ridiculous World of Politics



**TIM TIMMONS**  
Two Cents

The battle for Speaker of the House was irresistible to watch – irresistible in the same way a horrific car crash on the interstate is as you drive by.

And even though most of the mess happened a week ago, it behooves us to not let this fiasco slip past like the regular stream of waste we're so accustomed to from Washington. Why? Because this is a perfect example of not only what's wrong with politics, but what's wrong with how we accept it.

First, the general news about the 14 failed ballots to select a speaker of the house focused on the 20 or so disruptors. These lawmakers were the problem, we were told. And time and again, the other 200 or so representatives sent out tweets, e-mails and messages to their constituents explaining:

- a) Why this process takes time
- b) How it's not as bad as it looks
- c) And why these 20 or so are the problem

Not so fast my friends! Of course the process takes time, and time is exactly what Republican lawmakers had from the end of the election in November when it was apparent they were back in the majority. Why couldn't

the Grand Old Party come to some decision in the almost two months since then?

But you know what, let's give them that one. After all, we had the Christmas break and far be it from us peasants to expect our nation's elected elite to work over the holidays . . . Like! The! Rest! Of! Us!

That still leaves the pathetic points of it not being as bad as it looked, and why those who held up the coronation of Kevin McCarthy were the problem.

It absolutely was as bad as it looked! The problems with politics in general today, and specifically inside the beltway, are too numerous to detail. But here's a few:

- Everything is decided on what's best for one party or the other, not the country
- The fat in government is so outrageously overwhelming it's obscene
- Lawmakers live by their own set of rules while we're given another
- Lobbyists and money influence (i.e., determine) far too many decisions
- There are too many career politicians who have never worked a real job in their lives

That's just for starters. Let's be clear, those 20 were the heroes not the bad guys.

They were vilified, accused of being "far-right" and a bunch of other labels that have become watchwords in today's world. It used to be conservative and liberal weren't negative terms. When did that change? About the same time as when folks decided you were either on their team or you were the en-

emy. Forget the idea that two good people can hold opposing points of view and in the process find better outcomes. That's long gone. The 20 or so who said they wouldn't go along with Kevin McCarthy as the speaker cited valid objections. Maybe you agreed with them, maybe you didn't. But that's what a lot of them got elected for, to help – what's that term? – drain the swamp. For that, they got pummeled instead of respected.

Perhaps I'm overreacting here? Maybe I'm just on my soapbox – again. Maybe, but I don't think so. We, as in We The People, have become resigned to the outrageous things going on in our country. We accept this sort of absurd politics as normal, never stopping to think that this is the first time in 100 years the House failed to elect a speaker on the first vote. We take in stride – or apathy – a ton of other things that defy logic in today's world.

It's time, no, it's past time, for us to stand up and say enough is enough. There's an old saying – politics as usual. We have the power to give that a whole new definition. We'd be better off if we do exactly that.

*Two cents, which is about how much Timmons said his columns are worth, appears periodically on Thursdays in The Times. Timmons is the chief executive officer of Sagamore News Media, the company that owns The Noblesville Times. He is also a proud Noblesville High School graduate and can be contacted at timmons@thetimes24-7.com.*

## Songbook Foundation Partners with Story Cottage

To advance one of its signature community outreach programs, the Great American Songbook Foundation has begun a partnership with Story Cottage, a new memory-care housing option from Senior Home Companions.

The partnership supports Perfect Harmony, a music resource for older adults developed by the Songbook Foundation in consultation with a board-certified music therapist. Recognizing the power of music to enhance quality of life for seniors – particularly those living with dementia – Perfect Harmony helps caregivers identify generationally appropriate music and activities to engage their clients or loved ones in shared musical experiences.

For many older adults today, the music of choice comes from the Great American Songbook, the popular songs, jazz standards, and Broadway and Hollywood favorites of the 20th century that have stood the test of time. Each month, the Perfect Harmony program provides a themed online package of video resources and music activities suitable for individual and group settings, in the tradition of families and friends gathering around a piano and experiencing music together.

"A growing number of family caregivers and eldercare professionals are drawing on these resour-

ces as they see the unique power of music to connect us with our memories and with the people around us," said Christopher Lewis, Executive Director of the Songbook Foundation. "We're grateful to Story Cottage and Senior Home Companions for recognizing the value of the Perfect Harmony program."

Story Cottage, an innovative concept launched in 2019, provides a private, small-group residential setting for older adults living with memory loss. Constructed much like custom homes, the cottages in Carmel and Indianapolis offer premium safety features and a low patient-to-caregiver ratio.

Diane Kohan, Executive Director of Story Cottage, has seen firsthand the positive impact that music can have in memory-care settings.

"The Songbook provides us with enriching, timeless music for our residents to enjoy," Kohan said. "Music can inspire dance and movement in an individual with Alzheimer's, providing exercise while soothing agitation. Even in late stages of dementia they may be able to still tap to the beat of their favorite childhood song."

Kirstin Comment, Marketing Coordinator for Senior Home Companions, said the Songbook Foundation's broader mission – which includes maintaining a vast Library & Archives

dedicated to the music's creators and performers – added to the appeal of the relationship.

"We chose to partner with the Great American Songbook Foundation because we believe in the mission of preserving music and all of its history for generations to come," she said.

### About the Great American Songbook Foundation:

The mission of the Great American Songbook Foundation, founded in 2007 by five-time Grammy Award nominee Michael Feinstein, is to inspire and educate by celebrating the timeless standards of pop, jazz, Broadway and Hollywood.

Headquartered at the Center for the Performing Arts in Carmel, Indiana, the Foundation advances this rich legacy by curating physical artifacts of its creators, performers and publishers; operating a multimedia exhibit gallery; overseeing the Songbook Hall of Fame; offering programs for the public and research opportunities for scholars and artists; and providing educational opportunities for student musicians, including the annual Songbook Academy summer intensive. The Foundation is a Cultural Affiliate of the Los Angeles-based Grammy Museum.

More information is available at TheSongbook.org

## Smith Files for Re-Election for Noblesville Common Council

Aaron Smith, Noblesville businessman and common council president, formally filed for reelection to the Noblesville Common Council. Residents of the Third District first elected Smith in 2019.

"Over the past three years, I've worked consistently to deliver on the campaign promises I made to Noblesville residents. I wrote and passed legislation protecting downtown buildings from demolition. I supported our efforts to attract and retain businesses important to our City's economic engine, and I worked alongside our public safety officials to help make Noblesville safer."

Smith continued, "In this campaign, I recommit those promises to the residents of my district. Downtown Noblesville will always be my priority, we must take active and

difficult steps to address our city's aging infrastructure, strategically invest in our future, and in all conversations put taxpayers first."

Notable accomplishments include:

- Authoring protections for downtown buildings: The protections passed Plan Commission, Common Council, and were signed into law by the Mayor.

- Securing funding for Old Town infrastructure: Smith secured funding in the budget for sidewalk repairs in Old Town (\$250k in 2021 and \$300k in 2022) and much-needed brick rehabilitation on Logan & Clinton Streets.

- Maintaining a consistent property tax rate: The Council has held the City's property tax rate flat for the last four years at \$1.10 per \$100 of assessed value.

- Ensuring healthy rainy day fund reserves: While the State of Indiana recommends that cities target 12% of annual revenue for cash reserves, the Council and Administration have increased that to a minimum of 15% for the City of Noblesville.

Smith currently represents the Third District on the Noblesville City Council and serves as council president. He is also the Founder of MTCHBX, a strategic communication firm with offices downtown Noblesville. In his free time, Smith serves on the boards of Noblesville Main Street and the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Together with his wife Bronwen, they have two children, Declan (5) and Parker (1). Learn more online at aaronsmith.org



Photo courtesy of Megan Wiles

Megan Wiles (second from left) stands with her son Garrett (left), husband Greg (second from right) and daughter Grace after officially filing for re-election to the Noblesville Common Council

## Megan Wiles to Seek Re-Election for Noblesville Common Council

Megan Wiles was joined by her family to officially file paperwork to seek reelection to the Sixth District on the Noblesville Common Council.

"I am so pleased that my family could join me in this important step of asking residents of the Sixth District to give me another opportunity to serve them as well as all Noblesville residents," Wiles said.

She went on to say, "There are some very important projects that I am proud to have been a part of their initial stages and I want to continue to work alongside Mayor Jensen and his team to see the results of those efforts. As Noblesville continues to grow, we must do our best to be keeping up with infrastructure needs while also providing the safest community for all residents to live, work and play."

"I'm proud of my in-

volvement with the Downtown District Committee to preserve our authentic downtown for existing and future residents to enjoy all year long. I was happy to play a lead role working in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, the City and County Engineering Departments and Hamilton County Commissioners to help see the Bridge of Flowers project to completion. It will be exciting to see how the new area connecting the east side of downtown to the west side will be enhanced with the Bridge of Flowers," Wiles said.

Having grown up on the east side of Noblesville, Wiles understands the importance of responsible growth for both residential developments as well as new corporate projects.

"There is a lot of opportunity for growth as the city expands east into

Wayne Township, but it must be done in a fiscally responsible manner," she said.

During her time on Council, she has led in a number of ways, including serving as Council President and Vice-President twice and chaired a number of committees. She is currently co-chair for Noblesville's Bicentennial Committee, along with Bret Richardson.

"It will be great to celebrate Noblesville's and Hamilton County's Bicentennial this year and I hope all residents will join in the events and activities that our community partners have planned for this year," Wiles said.

To see a current listing of events, go to [cityofnoblesville.org/bicentennial](http://cityofnoblesville.org/bicentennial).

For more information about Wiles' campaign, go to [facebook.com/Wiles-4Noblesville/](https://facebook.com/Wiles-4Noblesville/)

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# HerMD Opens First Location in Indiana

HerMD, a female-founded, physician-led organization, focusing on gynecology, menopause, sexual health, and medical aesthetics, will celebrate their grand opening at Carmel City Center on Jan. 17 from 6-8 p.m. Guests will enjoy refreshments, special discounts on all aesthetic products and services and giveaways during the event. HerMD will begin welcoming patients in the new Carmel office on Jan. 19.

Located at 885 Monon Green Blvd, Suite 118 in the Hamilton West building, HerMD Carmel is the first Indiana location and fourth physical location in the US.

HerMD currently operates 3 locations in Cincinnati, OH, Crescent Springs, KY, and Nashville, TN. The company is on track to launch its fifth location in the late spring of 2023 in Milburn, NJ. The company also has a telehealth presence in 5 states.

"Patients have traveled from over 35 states and Canada to HerMD in the Cincinnati market because they have been unable to find this type of care closer to home," said Kathy McAleer, CEO, HerMD. "By opening an office in a neighboring state, we are thrilled to provide care to patients seeking a revolutionary healthcare experience closer to home."

HerMD has a unique model that sets it apart from other providers specializing in two areas of women's health that are often overlooked, underserved and stigmatized: menopause and sexual health. Providers allocate more time to each patient visit, including 60 minutes

for all new patient consultations. In addition to gynecological services, HerMD offers on-site ancillary services such as: in-office surgical procedures, minimally invasive treatment options, ultrasound imaging, and phlebotomy/lab testing as well as aesthetics.

HerMD was founded by Dr. Somi Javaid, a board-certified OBGYN and thought leader in women's sexual health and menopause.

"The fight to improve women's healthcare is ongoing and essential," said Javaid. "I founded HerMD because I could no longer stand by and watch women be dismissed by the healthcare system."

"We are excited for HerMD to begin seeing patients in their new Carmel City Center office," said Melissa Averitt, senior vice president at Pedcor Companies. "The HerMD office is in a great location in the growing Carmel City Center neighborhood and will provide valued women's health services in the community for years to come."

To learn more about the Indianapolis office located in Carmel City Center, please visit [hermd.com/locations/indianapolis-in](http://hermd.com/locations/indianapolis-in).

**About HerMD:** Physician-founded, patient-forward, and mission-driven, HerMD is revolutionizing the future of women's healthcare through an integrated, evidence-based model. By leading female-focused research and integrating cutting-edge technologies and treatment options into the care model, HerMD is leading the movement in transforming women's healthcare. For more information, visit [hermd.com](http://hermd.com)

# Veterans, Service Members Gather at Statehouse

By Whitney Downard

Indiana's veterans, active duty and reserve service members want two big things from the General Assembly: continued tax benefits and expanded treatment options — including mental health — in their communities.

The few hundred attendees of the Indiana Military & Veterans Legislative Day on Tuesday represented five of the armed forces branches, mostly from the Army, but also from the Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Marine Corps.

The newest branch, the Space Force created by former President Donald Trump, still has a limited presence with just a few hundreds members nationwide.

"When we leave here today, our battle is not done; it has just begun," said Pat O'Donnell, a Vietnam veteran who leads various northwest Indiana veterans groups. "We will continue to fight for these tax benefits until our dying breath because if we don't do it nobody will."

The veterans event, founded by Rep. John Bartlett, D-Indianapolis, allows for veterans and members of the military to meet with their elected representatives and share their priorities. Bartlett said that next year, the event's 10th anniversary, will be sponsored by House Speaker Todd Huston and hopefully draw more than the dozen or so legislators who attended Tuesday.

Previous legislative victories inspired by the event include waiving state taxes on veteran pensions, Bartlett said.

"This day makes those kinds of things happen," Bartlett said.

Expanding mental health services for veterans

Bills of particular interest in the forthcoming session include Senate Bill 1, which expands mental health services across the state.

Bill author Sen. Michael Crider, R-Greenfield, highlighted the importance of 988 — the nation's new suicide hotline — which dovetails with the veteran crisis line operated by the

Department of Defense.

"The reality is there are issues that transcend politics," Crider said. "We work across party lines on a regular basis to try to pass legislation (like this)."

In 2020, an estimated 343 veterans committed suicide, a decrease from 2019, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs, though some believe the true count is more than 200% that number. The America's Warrior Partnership estimates that between 40-44 veterans commit suicide each day.

Veterans are more than 1.5 times more likely to die by suicide, according to the American Psychological Association, likely due to higher rates of trauma or stress, easy access to firearms and difficulty reintegrating into civilian life.

Specific bills for veterans

Legislation introduced so far this year would allow disabled veteran renters to file an additional renter's deduction up to \$3,000 while another

would grant free state park admission to any current or former member of the military.

Rep. Mitch Gore's bill proposes establishing a "green alert" for missing, at-risk veterans with known physical or mental health conditions related to their service and Rep. David Abbott's bill would allow "critically injured veterans" four days to hunt for free within Indiana.

Rep. Randy Frye has also introduced a bill that would allow some former military members to become educators by granting a temporary license alongside another bill that would exempt military pay from the state income tax.

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## Buy. Sell. Rent. Lease.



## THE TIMES classifieds.

**BETSY** From Page A1



Photo courtesy of Main Street Productions

The nearly \$1 million Basile Westfield Playhouse, which opened in 2020, was made possible through individual donors including a major gift by the Estridge Family Foundation spearheaded by the late Paul Estridge Jr.

preferred staying on the ground with daughters, Mary Ellen, then 16, and Elyse, then 14. She had said the coolest thing was when her husband buzzed over their house, and she saw hands waving down at them.

She told me, "I think there's nothing that makes him happier than when he's flying."

Jacobi, who was saddened to hear of the death of Estridge, this week said he remembered teaching Estridge to fly "many years ago."

He said, "We have kept in touch, and we have flown together many times in recent years."

Jacobi said, "I considered him a very good friend ... We will all miss him dearly." Jacobi sold Estridge's airplane for him about six months ago, and



Larry Jacobi

it was purchased by a man who still keeps the plane on the field.

Paul Estridge Jr. was a 1976 Carmel High School graduate, where he played basketball and football and ran track. He went on to graduate in 1980 from University of Evansville, where he joined Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity,



Tom Smith

played football and earned a bachelor's degree in Real Estate, Planning and Architecture. In 1983, he became president of The Estridge Cos., a home-building company started in 1967 by his late father, Paul Estridge Sr., a 1951 Broad Ripple High School graduate who died in 2013 at age 79.

## Westfield Playhouse Exists Because of Paul Estridge Jr.

Paul Estridge Jr., who loved being a servant in the community, made a dream come true for Main Street Productions' Westfield Playhouse in 2020.

The nearly \$1 million Playhouse was made possible through individual donors including a major gift by the Estridge Family Foundation, which was established in 2007 by Paul Estridge and Paul Estridge Jr., with a gift of \$9 million to fulfill the Estridge family's charitable goals. (In addition, Westfield City Council committed \$300,000 and a land lease through the Westfield Economic Development Foundation (WEDF), Main Street Productions was awarded an additional \$100,000 grant from the Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation Inc. to construct the new theater facility. Then in January 2022, Frank and Katrina Basile's donation of \$100,000 was given to the theater, which, in turn, renamed its Westfield Playhouse to Basile Westfield Playhouse.)

The 110-by-55-foot brick-front building -- at 220 N. Union St., built on vacant City-provided land, in downtown Westfield just behind Westfield City Hall -- provides just more than 6,000 square feet of space and chair seating for up to 160 patrons.

Tom Smith, a member of the board of directors for the Playhouse, released the following statement to The Times on Tuesday from the playhouse board of directors, about the community's loss of Paul Estridge Jr.:

The Basile Westfield Playhouse Board of Directors recently learned of the passing of developer Paul Estridge of Estridge Homes, and we express our heartfelt sadness upon hearing of this event. Although it is not widely known, in 2017 our theater group had been presenting plays for 19 years at an old church that was not equipped with running water or bathrooms. By 2017, the condition of the building was dire and we approached Paul, seeking advice on how we should spend our limited funds moving forward regarding the building. Paul did not hesitate. He had been looking for a legacy project, and on that day we began our partnership and our partnership with the city that resulted in our opening our beautiful new facility in downtown Westfield in August 2020. Since then, the theater has flourished, presenting successful shows and bringing the arts to Westfield. None of this would have happened without Paul Estridge, who funded the majority of the project from his family's legacy foundation. We will always be in his debt. Rest in peace, friend.

Years earlier before this interview, I was fortunate to attend as a guest an Estridge employee Christmas party. I also wrote about Estridge Homes as a new-homes writer for The Ledger and Topics Newspapers' special publications. And years later, I was able to experience Paul Estridge and the Estridge Co.'s generosity and expertise when they teamed up with thousands of volunteers for the 2009 ABC "Extreme Home Makeover Edition" in In-

dianapolis' near-northeast side Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood, a story that I covered for The Indianapolis Star during the seven-day McFarland family house build.

And just less than three years ago, in 2020, I wrote about the Westfield Playhouse, now named Basile Westfield Playhouse, which came about thanks to Paul Estridge Jr.

"Paul was the reason that our new building exists," said Tom Smith, a Playhouse board mem-

ber. (Read more about Estridge's donation to the Playhouse in the adjacent breakout.)

Services will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at Northview Church, Westfield campus, with visitation 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday at Randall & Roberts Funeral Center on Westfield Road in Noblesville. Read the full obituary in Friday's edition of The Times.

Contact Betsy Reason at [betsy@thetimes24-7.com](mailto:betsy@thetimes24-7.com)

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# I ndiana Facts & Fun



14  
Daviss

## Number % Stumpers

1. What is the population density of the county?
2. What percentage of the county population is the Amish community?
3. What fraction of land does Washington possess?
4. How old is Daviss County?

Answers: 1. About 76/square mile 2. 14.6% 3. About 1/92 4. 200 years

## Did You Know?

- Founded in February in 1818, Daviss County is the 29th oldest county in the state.
- The county has an estimated population of 33,113 individuals.
- Washington, the county seat, is 4.77 square miles and has a population of 11,509 residents.
- The total amount of land in the county is 436.87 square miles.
- The Amish community in the county makes up 4,855 residents.

## Got Words?

Washington contains numerous architecturally historic buildings, such as the Helphenstine House. What significance do you believe historic buildings have in towns, and how do they compare to modern buildings?

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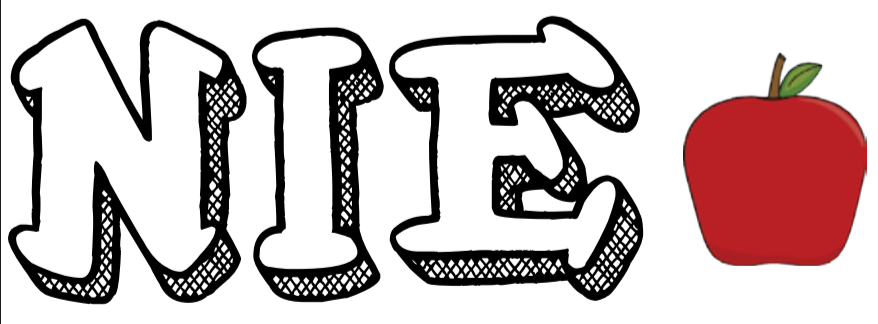
## Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. GIWOSTHANN
2. CRSIOITH
3. MAHIS
4. SDVEIAS NYCOUT
5. HIETENNSPHLE

Answers: 1. Washington 2. Historic 3. Amish 4. Daviss County 5. Helphenstine

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# THURSDAY

## Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023

A6

## NFPA Reminding Homeowners to Remove Their Christmas Trees

One-third (33 percent) of U.S. home fires involving Christmas trees occur in January. With this post-holiday fire hazard in mind, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) strongly encourages everyone to keep the festive memories and remove the hazards by disposing of Christmas trees promptly after the holiday season.

"As much as we all enjoy the look and feel of Christmas trees in our homes, they're large combustible items that have the potential to result in serious fires," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA. "The longer Christmas trees remain in homes, the longer they present a risk."

Carli notes that fresh Christmas trees, which continue to dry out and become more flammable over time, are involved in a much larger share of reported Christmas tree fires than artificial trees.

According to the latest

Christmas Tree Fires report from NFPA, 160 home structure fires began with Christmas trees, resulting in two civilian deaths, 11 civilian injuries, and \$12 million in direct property damage, on average each year between 2016 and 2020. Overall, fires that begin with Christmas trees represent a very small but notable part of the U.S. fire problem, considering that they are generally in use for a short time each year.

To safely dispose of a Christmas tree, NFPA recommends using the local community's recycling program, if possible; trees should not be put in the garage or left outside. NFPA also offers these tips for safely removing lighting and decorations to ensure that they remain in good condition:

- Use the gripping area on the plug when unplugging electrical decorations. Never pull the cord to unplug any device from an electrical outlet, as this can

harm the wire and insulation of the cord, increasing the risk for shock or electrical fire.

- As you pack up light strings, inspect each line for damage, throwing out any sets that have loose connections, broken sockets or cracked or bare wires.

- Wrap each set of lights and put them in individual plastic bags or wrap them around a piece of cardboard.

- Store electrical decorations in a dry place away from children and pets where they will not be damaged by water or dampness.

For more information on home fire safety all winter long, visit "Put a Freeze on Winter Fires," a winter safety campaign NFPA promotes annually with the U.S. Fire Administration.

About The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is a global

self-funded nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property, and economic loss due to fire, electrical, and related hazards. The association began its work to solve the fire problem in a young, industrialized nation in 1896 and has since become a global force known for advancing safety worldwide.

NFPA delivers information and knowledge through more than 325 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. In celebration of its 125th Anniversary, NFPA is hosting a Conference Series and other initiatives that reflect the association's steadfast commitment to advancing fire and life safety for the next 125 years and beyond.

For more information or to view NFPA codes and standards for free, visit [nfpa.org](http://nfpa.org)

## AG Rokita Working to Shield Hoosiers from Holiday Scams

Attorney General Todd Rokita warns Hoosiers to watch for scams while finishing their holiday shopping this year.

"As the new year approaches, many Hoosiers are taking advantage of the time they have off of work by last-minute shopping to get the best post-holiday deals," Rokita said. "Although there are great sales going on, everyone should keep their eyes open in order to expose these potential fraudsters."

Scammers are known to look for rushed, unsuspecting victims.

"In a pinch, it can be easy to overlook some of the common signs of a scam," Rokita said. "I encourage everyone to slow down and really look into the holiday deals in front of them. Some of them really might be too good to be true."

Rokita offered the following tips for avoiding falling victim to scams:

- When shopping online, stick to secure websites that have "https" in the address (or a lock icon) rather than just an unsecured "http" site.

- Pay by credit card when online shopping. Always review your monthly statements for charges you don't recognize. You can reverse charges or dispute a charge with your credit card company if necessary. It is more difficult to dispute charges on your debit card or obtain cash back.

- If you are purchasing gift cards, make sure you know the expiration date, as well as the terms that apply to the card. Keep receipts associated with gift cards in case they do not get properly activated to the amount you paid.

- Also, on the subject of gift cards: Remember that any solicitor who contacts you by phone or email and asks you to pay with a gift card is no doubt a scammer. Do not cooperate with anyone making such a pitch.

- When shopping at physical store locations, conceal your purchases in the trunk of your vehicle or under the seat rather than leaving them in plain sight through windows. Also keep a close watch on

purses and wallets when walking through shopping areas.

- Stave off "porch pirates" by making sure home exteriors stay well-lit. Follow a plan for the arrival of home deliveries, such as arranging for trusted neighbors to receive deliveries when you're gone. Homeowners also may consider such options as purchasing lockable drop-off boxes or security systems with cameras.

- If a deal seems too good to be true, then it probably is. Take your time to investigate and be skeptical of such deals. Ask questions. Be sure to read the fine print to make sure you are purchasing exactly what you want on the terms you expect.

- Closely read emails advertising holiday deals to make sure they come from the companies they claim to represent rather than imposters and fraudsters. Consider navigating to a company's official website through a trusted search engine rather than clicking on a link in an email.

- To protect your personal information, refrain from making online purchases while using public Wi-Fi.

- Never make hurried decisions. Scam artists want to pressure you into making a quick commitment to buy from them. Slow down and check out details for yourself.

- Research charities before donating — and follow the same online payment and security rules you would follow with online shopping. You can look up charities' reports and ratings on these websites: [GuideStar.org](http://GuideStar.org); [CharityWatch.org](http://CharityWatch.org); and [CharityNavigator.org](http://CharityNavigator.org).

As always, if you believe you have been subjected to a scam, file a complaint with the Indiana Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. Our office relies on Hoosiers filing complaints to know which companies to investigate. A consumer complaint can be filed at [indiana-consumer.com](http://indiana-consumer.com) — or you can contact the Office of the Attorney General at 1 (800) 382-5516.

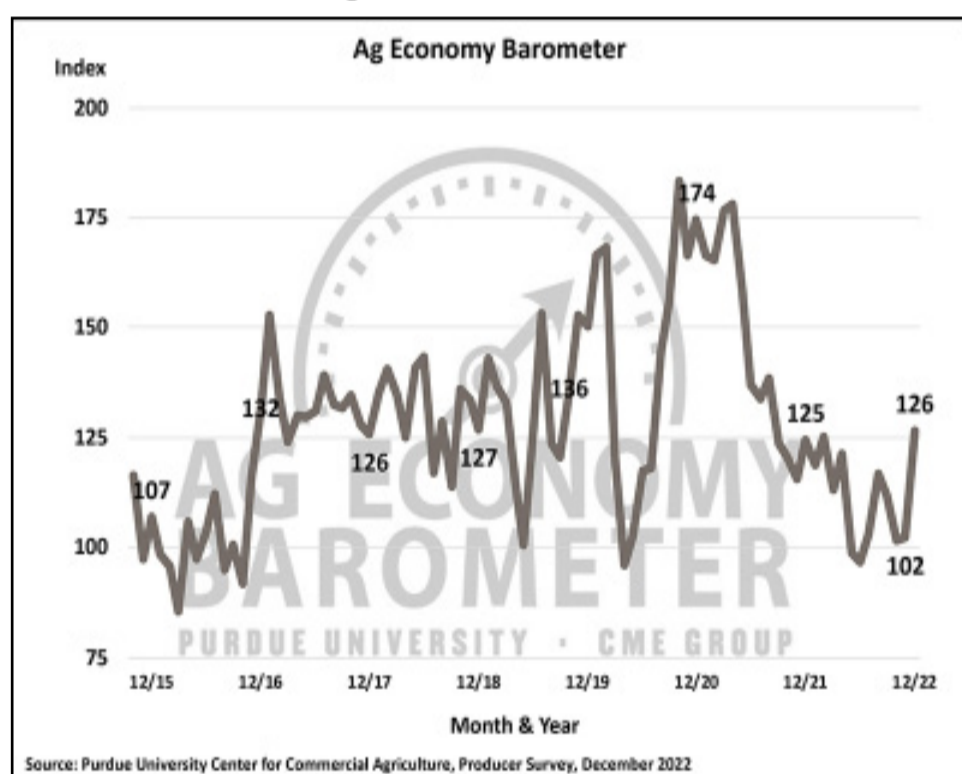
## Farmer Sentiment Rebounds at Year End on Stronger 2022 Income

Following a two-month decline and a year of weak sentiment, the Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer closed out the year on a more positive note, rallying 24 points in December to a reading of 126. U.S. farmers were more optimistic about both their current situation and expectations for the future. The Current Conditions Index jumped 37 points to a reading of 135, while the Future Expectations Index increased 18 points to a reading of 122. The Ag Economy Barometer is calculated each month from 400 U.S. agricultural producers' responses to a telephone survey. This month's survey was conducted Dec. 5-9.

"The improvement in current sentiment was motivated by producers' stronger perception of current financial conditions on their farms and could be attributed to producers taking time to estimate their farms' 2022 income following the completion of the fall harvest," said James Mintert, the barometer's principal investigator and director of Purdue University's Center for Commercial Agriculture.

The Farm Financial Performance Index climbed 18 points to a reading of 109 in December. Notably, this was the only time in 2022 that the index was above 100. The turnaround was driven by a sharp increase in the percentage of producers who expect better performance than last year, which jumped from 23% to 35% of respondents, and is consistent with USDA's forecast for strong net farm income in 2022.

The Farm Capital Investment Index climbed 9 points this month to 40, the highest reading for the



index since February; yet, it remains 9 points lower than a year earlier. Among the nearly three-quarters of respondents who said it was a bad time for large investments, the most commonly cited reason was high prices for farm machinery and new construction (41%), followed by rising interest rates (28%).

Despite the improvement in farmers' perceptions of their financial situations, both the short- and long-term farmland value indices continued to drift lower in December. The short-term index fell 5 points to 124, while the long-term index declined 4 points to 140. When examined over the course of the last year, it's clear that sentiment among producers about farmland values has shifted. For example, compared to a year ago, the percentage of respondents who expect to see farmland values decline in the upcoming year increased from 6% to 15%, while

the percentage expecting to see values rise declined from 59% to 39%. Among producers who expect farmland values to rise over the next 5 years, just over three-fourths of them said that a combination of nonfarm investor demand and inflation are the main reasons they expect to see values rise.

Looking to the year ahead, the December survey asked producers to compare their expectations for their farm's financial performance in 2023 to 2022. Producers indicated they expect lower financial performance in 2023 and cited rising costs and narrowing margins as key reasons. Concerns about costs continue to be top of mind for producers. Nearly half (47%) of crop producers said they expect farmland cash rental rates in 2023 to rise above the previous year. Other top concerns for 2023 include higher input costs (45% of respondents), rising interest rates (22% of re-

spondents) and lower crop or livestock prices (13% of respondents).

Read the full Ag Economy Barometer report online. The site also offers additional resources — such as past reports, charts and survey methodology — and a form to sign up for monthly barometer email updates and webinars.

Each month, the Purdue Center for Commercial Agriculture provides a short video analysis of the barometer results. For even more information, check out the Purdue Commercial AgCast podcast. It includes a detailed breakdown of each month's barometer, in addition to a discussion of recent agricultural news that affects farmers.

The Ag Economy Barometer, Index of Current Conditions and Index of Future Expectations are available on the Bloomberg Terminal under the following ticker symbols: AGECBARO, AGECCURC and AGECCFTEX.

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# THURSDAY

## Indiana the Strong

Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023

A7

## New Grant Money Helping IWU Fund English Language Learners Licensure for Teachers

Indiana Wesleyan University-National & Global is excited to partner with the Indiana Teachers of English Language Learners (I-TELL) Project to provide a pathway for English Language Learners Licensure in the state of Indiana. Through a grant from I-Tell, current teachers can use I-TELL scholarships to English Language Learners Licensure at IWU for free. This partnership will eliminate the financial burden of ELL Licensure for Indiana teachers and help respond to the high demand for ELL teachers across the state.

"We're excited to see how this partnership with I-TELL increases opportunities for classroom teachers who want to deepen their teaching abilities and work closely with English language learners," says IWU Director of Academic Operations Tony Hembrock. "This grant will help us enable teachers across the state to achieve an affordable pathway to ELL Licensure."

IWU's English as a New Language certificate program is designed for current teachers seeking licensure in the English Learners (EL) P-12 area. It can be completed 100% online in approximately 12 months. Candidates in the program will complete a 15-credit-hour program that is aligned to the TESOL Association's professional standards and the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's advanced-level program standards. They will engage in inquiry, research, dialogue, team learning, reflection, problem-based learning, collaboration and standards-based assessment from a comprehensive P-12 perspective.

Course instruction is designed to model best practices and procedures in the classroom, equipping teachers to help their students learn through culturally responsive teaching, ethics and faith and research and technology tools. Candidates

will participate in field experiences to apply their knowledge on a practical level, ensuring complete understanding of course material.

Although the English as a New Language certificate program is designed for currently licensed teachers looking to add EL certification, IWU is also working to establish a Transition-to-Teaching program that will allow candidates seeking initial teacher licensure to become licensed as an English Language Learner Teacher.

To learn more about the opportunities provided by the I-TELL grant, visit [indwes.edu/I-TELL](http://indwes.edu/I-TELL).

### About Indiana Wesleyan University:

Indiana Wesleyan University celebrates 100 years as a Christian, global, comprehensive university providing liberal arts and professional education to approximately 10,000 students worldwide. IWU is one of the largest faith-based univer-

sities in America with rich undergraduate, graduate, master's, and doctoral programs in such highly acclaimed academic units as the School of Nursing, School of Physical and Applied Sciences, College of Adult and Professional Studies, and School of Arts and Humanities. An early leader in adult and online education, IWU is known for excellence in innovation. Students live and learn on the beautiful 350-acre IWU-Marion traditional campus and study through IWU-National & Global programs offered online and at education centers in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

Indiana Wesleyan University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission ([hlcommission.org](http://hlcommission.org)), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. It is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

For more information, visit [indwes.edu](http://indwes.edu).

## Grant to Help Improve Quality, Access, Affordability of Early Childhood Care, Education

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Education Office of Kindergarten Readiness, has been awarded a \$42 million federal grant. These dollars will be used over three years to implement programmatic changes that will improve Indiana's capacity to recruit early educators, increase access to early learning opportunities for students in unserved areas and ultimately, support families as they make important decisions regarding their child's education.

"These funds come at a key time as Indiana has built the foundation for innovation through the collaborative partnership of FSSA, IDOE and the Early Learning Advisory Committee. Together we are uniquely prepared to best serve children and families across the state," said Maureen Weber, chairwoman of the Early Learning Advisory Committee.

The three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will award \$14 million annually to FSSA, which partnered with the Indiana Department of Education on the grant application.

Combined with FSSA's \$4.2 million annual investment as matching funds required by the grant, \$54.6 million will be leveraged in total to accelerate and build Indiana's capacity to implement long-lasting change, including:

- Building upon stakeholders' understanding of the needs, gaps and inequities in Indiana's birth-through-age-5 mixed

delivery system, especially as they relate to underserved populations

- Refreshing Indiana's birth-through-age-5 strategic plan to reflect the current environment and the existing opportunities to drive system-level change

- Amplifying the voices of families in decision-making and introducing new services and educational supports that empower them as their child's first and most important teacher

- Introducing new workforce recruitment and career pathways, building the operational capacity of early childhood care and education providers and enhancing workforce conditions and compensation

- Strengthening instructional practices, quality measures and birth-to-age 8 coordination efforts

- Investing in the expansion of high-quality programs in underserved geographies

The funding will build upon key work already underway to improve the early learning infrastructure in Indiana. New state legislation championed by Gov. Eric J. Holcomb restructured and expanded Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee, and Gov. Holcomb also launched a new Office of Kindergarten Readiness within IDOE to work in partnership with OECOSL to ensure the early learning experiences children receive are effectively readying them for school. In September 2022, new early learning policy goals were established by ELAC to ensure Hoosier children, especially those most underserved, have access to early learning opportunities that prepare them with the skills required to thrive in kindergarten.

## Consumer Alert: Products Recalled In December

Attorney General Todd Rokita is alerting Hoosiers of important consumer protection concerns for products recalled in December.

"Now that the holidays have come to an end, there is no better time to make sure your gifts weren't recalled," Rokita said. "Hoosiers deserve protection from products that, for whatever reason, are not reliable or may even cause injury. If you have one of the recalled products below, stop using it and pursue resolution from the manufacturer."

Rokita encourages consumers to take advantage of opportunities available for those who purchased the recalled items.

According to the Consumer Product Safety

Commission, the following consumer products were recalled in December:

- Gotway and Begode Unicycles from eWheels
- Cuisinart Compact Blender & Juice Extractor Combos from Conair
- Aduro Surge Protectors from JBR Solutions
- Cloud Island 4-Piece Plush Toy Sets from Target
- Viper Level PRO SD Climbing Treestands from Summit Treestands
- RZR Recreational Off-Road Vehicles from Polaris Recalls
- Discovery Cubes Animal Hide and Seek Activity Toys from HABA USA
- n2022 All-Terrain Vehicles from American Honda
- Utility Vehicles from Kubota



Attorney General Todd Rokita

- Laundry Detergent and Household Cleaning Products from The Laundress
- Cordless Window Shades Battery Packs from Ningbo Dooya Mechanic & Electronic Technology Co.
- Scotch Thermal Laminators from 3M
- Gas Fireplaces from Ortal

- Darkest Blue Women's Fleece Sweatshirts and Men's Fleece Shorts from The Life is Good Company

- Art of Green Laundry Detergent from AIEn USA
- E-Bikes from Gyroor
- Thornhill Baby Cribs from Crate And Barrel
- Good Matters Three-Wick Candles from Advantage Sales & Marketing

If you recently purchased a recalled product, stop using it and check its recall notice. Then follow the notice's instructions, including where to return the product or what steps must be taken to receive a replacement product.

To view recalls issued prior to December, visit the Consumer Protection Safety Commission website.

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