

TODAY'S VERSE 2-Timothy-2-7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.



FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

What makes Chris Nobbe smile? "I love playing basketball and hanging out with my family," said the then 14-year-old Noblesville resident, a then freshman at Hamilton Heights High School in Arcadia. "I play for an AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) team, and I play for the freshman team at Hamilton Heights." He was named the 2022 Boys & Girls Club of Noblesville All Star Teen Basketball Contest Champion on President's Day in 2022 at the Club's Community Center. He won a really cool trophy and a \$100 gift card, plus two basketballs (one for winning a knock-out contest and one for winning a three-point contest) plus a \$50 gift card for each of the two contests. He is the son of Jered and Shelley Nobbe and is the oldest of four siblings. Why basketball? "I like basketball because I can play with my family and hang out with my friends while having fun." Last year's season? "We all played good together. We did good at the end of the season with a 20-point win against a JV team. I had eight points." Favorite school subject? "Math. I'm in Algebra II as a freshman, and I like doing math. So I think that'll help me when I get a job," he said in February 2022. He has also participated in a Noblesville Youth Baseball team at the Field of the Dreams and was looking forward to playing football at school. What else? "Thank you to my mom and dad for helping me prepare for everything in life." This year's Boys & Girls Club All Star Basketball Contest is 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday (Feb. 20) at the Club's Community Center and is open to Hamilton County teens. For more information about sports programs, spring break camp and more at the Boys & Girls Club, visit https://bgcni.org/

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Chris Hacker is Living His Dream '18 NHS grad, 1 Hand On the Wheel, to Race Daytona Truck Series Friday Night Before 500



BETSY REASON The Times Editor

I remember the afternoon that I met young race car driver Chris Hacker 10 years ago at Anderson Speedway. The 13-year-old, an eighth-grader at Noblesville Middle School, was putting on his helmet, sliding into his race-car and taking a few practice laps around the oval track at speeds of up to 130 mph. It was the summer of 2013, and I could see that he was going somewhere fast. This weekend, Chris, now 23, will live his dream, to race at Daytona. And for the first time, he's starting his year with a multi-

race deal, kicking it off on Friday night. Yvonne Hacker contacted me last weekend to let me know that her son would be racing. He is expected to drive the No. 30 Truck in the Daytona NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series at 7:30 p.m. Friday for OnPoint Motorsports.

His mom is encouraging folks to share and like Chris Hacker's social media posts on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, to help share the awesome news.

The 2018 Noblesville High School graduate will run five NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Races with his sponsor, Morgan & Morgan law firm which helps kids with Brachial Plexus injuries.

"So we're super happy to have them partner with Chris," she said of the firm at www.forthepople.com. "This sponsorship is relevant to the Hackers because Chris suffered a brachial plexus injury to his left arm at birth that caused nerve damage. But since he began racing, at age 8, five years before this journalist met him, he never let his age or his arm become an obstacle.

All of the driving work is done by Chris' right hand. "I



Photo provided by Yvonne Hacker

Chris Hacker, 23, Noblesville, a 2018 Noblesville High School graduate, is expected to drive the No. 30 Truck in the Daytona NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series at 7:30 p.m. Friday for OnPoint Motorsports with major sponsor Morgan & Morgan law firm.

don't think it's a disadvantage. I think it's something unique about me," Chris Hacker told me during my 2013 interview with him for The Indianapolis Star. He joked that his mostly disabled left arm was "just along for the ride."

At the time, he stood 5 feet tall and weighed 80 pounds and was nicknamed "Smalls" after a character in the 1993 comedy, "The Sandlot." (Today, he stands just over 6 feet tall and weighs about 110 pounds. He donned curly locks up until recently when he got his hair cut short for this race, his mom

See BETSY Page A6

Goodrich's Bill for Robotics Funding Advances in House

The Indiana House of Representatives on Tuesday voted unanimously to advance State Rep. Chuck Goodrich's (R-Noblesville) bill to expand opportunities for Hoosier students to learn about the growing field of robotics.

Goodrich, a member of the House Education Committee, said House Bill 1382 would create a grant program for Hoosier schools to establish their own robotics teams.

"Robotics programs are instrumental to the future of STEM education, and can create hands-on, real-world learning experiences," Goodrich said. "Creating this grant opportunity would allow students in schools large and small to explore the innovative and creative world of robotics."

Goodrich said his legislation would create a grant fund managed by the Indiana Department of Education for K-12 schools to create and develop competitive robotics programs. Grant dollars could be used to pay for a team mentor, supplies, to participate in competitions, and to establish



Representative Chuck Goodrich

or maintain the team.

Goodrich said these grants would ensure programs provide hands-on learning experiences, foster community partnerships and highlight career opportunities through the use of adult mentors. These mentors will prioritize a connection to manufacturing and machinery skills.

According to Goodrich, Indiana currently has about 3,000 students from 30% of school

See BILL Page A6

Bicentennial Commission Now Selling Merchandise



The Hamilton County Bicentennial Commission has several items available for sale online to celebrate the county's 200th anniversary. Alongside local partner Marketpro, Inc, the Bicentennial is selling apparel, drinkware, and other items. Some of the swag includes t-shirts, quarter-zip sweatshirts, water bottles, and coffee mugs, all featuring the Bicentennial Logo.

Some items are more unique, such as the athletic-style shirt with local historic photos printed on all sides, and pennant flags that declare that the Bicentennial

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The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset RISE: 7:35 a.m. SET: 6:20 p.m.

High/Low Temperatures HIGH: 64 °F LOW: 45 °F

Today is...

- Fat Thursday
Kyoto Protocol Day
Tim Tam Day

What Happened On This Day

- 1900 The Southern Cross expedition led by Carsten Borchgrevink achieved a new Farthest South of 78° 50'S, making the first landing at the Great Ice Barrier
1945 The Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945, the first anti-discrimination law in the United States, was signed into law
2005 The NHL cancels the entire 2004-05 regular season and playoffs

Births On This Day

- 1831 Nikolai Leskov Russian author, playwright and journalist
1941 Kim Jong-il North Korean politician and 2nd Supreme Leader of North Korea

Deaths On This Day

- 1957 Josef Hofmann Polish/American pianist and composer
2013 Tony Sheridan English singer-songwriter and guitarist

And Another Thing...

1. Chilly in Chile

Chilean swimmer, Bárbara Hernández, has broken the Guinness World Record for swimming a distance of 1.55 miles in the frigid waters of Antarctica, reports the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC]. And she did it wearing nothing more than a simple one-piece swimsuit in the 2.2 degrees Celsius waters off the coast of Greenwich Island. She had a purpose in mind when she decided to take a dip in some of the coldest waters on the planet. As she put it, "Swimming in Antarctica has been a dream I've had for years, and part of my longtime ambition to swim in parts of all seven of the world's oceans. Physically it has been incredibly tough, but all worth it if the message on the need for urgent action to protect these amazing waters reaches decision-makers."

2. Woodpeckers

Exterminators were called in when the owners of a home in Sonoma County, CA started seeing maggots and mealworms coming out of a bedroom wall. At first the pest control technician assumed that a small animal may have found its way into the wall. But he discovered that woodpeckers had been poking holes in the home's chimney stack to stash acorns, according to the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC]. So, he went back inside and cut a hole in the wall and, sure enough, out came a lot of acorns-- an estimated 700 pounds of acorns. He figured the pesky woodpeckers had been at it for several years.

3. A Funny Story

Diana Shulman, also known as D'yan Forest, is a multi-talented performer; she sings and plays several musical instruments. But, says the Association of Mature American Citizens, the Guinness Book of Records picked her for being the world's oldest professional comedienne. At the age of 88, she's been at it for more than 20 years. When is she going to retire? As she put it in a recent TV appearance, "it ain't over until the fat lady is dead."

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OBITUARIES

Carol Louise Albright
James H. Parks



TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

If you work the night shift, put on your sunglasses before going out into the sun until you get home and go to bed. 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 atthetimes24-7.com



HONEST HOOSIER

It was just about six years ago when North Korea fired a ballistic missile across the Sea of Japan. Today, they're firing missiles they say can reach us. And we're still letting them do it. Maybe Congress ought to quit wasting time on a bunch of stupid stuff and take a look at this before it's too late!



The Times appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank ROY CONNER for subscribing!

TODAY'S QUOTE

"Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side. My greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right." Abraham Lincoln

TODAY'S JOKE

What can you get at the barbershop in the middle of winter? Cold cuts!

Weather forecast for WTHR 13, showing 7-day forecast with temperatures and conditions for Thursday through Wednesday.

⇒ OBITUARIES

Carol Louise Albright

November 26, 1961-February 11, 2023

Carol Louise Albright, 61 of Indianapolis, formerly of Carmel, slipped away peacefully at home Feb. 11, 2023 after persevering against cancer for nearly eight years. She was born Nov. 26, 1961, in South Bend to the late Marilyn Sands Albright and Richard O. Albright who survives. The family moved to the Carmel area in 1963.



Carol was a proud Purdue graduate, and initially worked in human resources, then started her own successful recruiting business. She developed an affinity for supporting differently abled individuals, which led her to volunteer for several organizations and eventually worked for Easter Seals and Hamilton South-eastern Schools.

Carol amazed and inspired her many friends with her sense of adventure and unpredictability. She found some of the most obscure things imaginable and turned them into appropriate gifts. In return, wonderful friends supported her in her journey, including many long road trips to Ohio State and the Mayo Clinic for treatment; they undoubtedly extended her life.

Carol loved horses and could relate to their healing and comforting qualities; this led her to volunteer with Agape Therapeutic Riding. She found many of the same qualities in dogs and adopted many that others could no longer care for. She wasn't defined by her work; although she did love it, she was most certainly characterized by her way of connecting people, her offbeat sense of humor, her devotion to others who were differently defined, and her love of her dogs and horse.

Survivors include her father; Richard Albright; sister, Susie Highley (Jerry); nephew, Brett Highley; niece, Margaret Highley Connors (Kevin); uncle, Bob Boggus, and several beloved cousins.

Family and friends will gather Friday, Feb. 17, 2023 from 4-7 p.m., and 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 18, with the Funeral Service beginning at 1 p.m., all in Orchard Park Presbyterian Church, 1605 E. 106th, Indianapolis. Carol's request was that those in attendance wear Purdue attire.

Following the service, burial will take place in Carmel Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in memory of Carol, may be made to K9s for Warriors (Ponte Vedra, FL), Leader Dogs for the Blind (Rochester, MI), the Central Plateau Scholarship Program (Haiti) of Powell, TN, or a donor's favorite charity. Envelopes will be available at the service.

Bussell Family Funerals is privileged to assist the family in arrangements.

James H. Parks

July 28, 1930-February 12, 2023

James H. Parks, 92, of Carmel, IN, passed away peacefully on Feb. 12, 2023. He was born in Holt County, NE on July 28, 1930. After graduating from Page High School, he joined the Air Force in 1950. While stationed in Spokane, WA, he met Theresa Manning. They married in 1955. After retiring from the Air Force in 1972, he moved his family to Carmel, graduated from Butler University, and became a Certified Public Accountant. He was an avid walker on the Monon Trail where he befriended many dogs and their owners.



In addition to his parents, James was preceded in death by his wife of more than 48 years, Theresa; his sons, James B. (Janice) and, Michael.

Survivors include his daughter Suzanne Andres (Patrick); 2 sons Alan (Beverly) and Terry (Cindy); siblings Dona Trowbridge (Richard), Virgil (Pauline), Marilyn Kucera (Ken), and Ted (Dorothy); sister-in-law Loretta Manning Burbach; 7 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Family and friends are invited to pay respects on Monday, Feb. 20, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, where the Mass of Christian Burial will be conducted at 11a.m.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to your favorite charity.

Bussell Family Funerals is privileged to assist the family in arrangements.

2 Trips to This, That, 'Tuther



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

Notes scribbled on the back of a non-burnt 1970 draft card . . .

YES, TIDBITS TWO weeks in a row. A good friend reminded me that sputtering on forever on single topics can get old. Sometimes it's just enjoyable to hop around a bit. Thanks, KP! I appreciate the heads up!

DID YOU hear that Rep. Jim Jordan from Ohio got pummeled on social media (where else?) for having the audacity to say . . . get this . . . "Only Americans should vote in American elections." What is wrong with us?

ALONG THOSE lines, I may have mentioned in the past that my great-grandparents on my Mom's side came from Ireland. They came from County Wicklow and County Kilkenny and are buried in Rensselaer. Just for grins and giggles, I decided to check to see what it would take for me to live in Ireland. The requirements are extremely

restrictive. So I checked a few other countries. Ditto. Nowhere I checked said I couldn't move there, just that I had to meet specific requirements to do so. What's wrong with that? Seems pretty smart - and fair - to me.

SPEAKING OF social media, have you heard the uproar over the Super Bowl ads about Jesus? The campaign "He Gets Us" basically shares how Jesus gets everyone. However, the woke crowd is coming out of the woodwork, insinuating that there is some dark force behind the campaign. It's astounding that we live in a world where people believe there are more than two sexes and that there is something negative about Jesus.

WHILE WE are on the subject, I was listening to Pastor Allen Jackson (www.allenjackson.com) talk about the concept of male and female. He made two pretty compelling points. First, he grew up the son of a veterinarian and was around animals a lot. Pretty sure only male and females lived in the barn, he said. He went on to suggest that if you are buying a puppy and the answer you get when you ask if it's a boy or girl is that it's confusing, buy that puppy somewhere else.

EVER WONDER how we got to a place where so many of the basic beliefs held by so many turned

upside down? And, that if you say anything about it, you are the one who's wrong? We seem to have lost the ability to agree to disagree on a civil basis. Look, I get the fact that just because a lot of people believe something doesn't make it right. Our history is full of that. But we're not talking about things that hurt others. Why are people so quick to be mean and attack?

LAST WEEK, I mentioned that columnist and long-time friend John Marlowe is fighting prostate cancer. The amount of people who have said something since then is, well, not surprising. John has always been one of our most popular reads - not to mention that he has won first place in the entire state for column writing. Being named the best columnist in the state is kind of like winning the IHSAA state basketball tournament. John's won enough times that if this were basketball, he'd be a Hall of Famer! And if there's a Hall of Fame for nice guys, he'd be front and center.

A QUICK thank you to the Kiwanians. They invited this old vagabond journalist to speak with them about the Israel trip. Thanks kindly and I'm looking forward to it. If your community group would like to hear and see about the trip, let me know. You can reach me at

ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com. The feedback from those who have sat through it so far is that it really isn't as bad as Uncle Bob's vacation slide show.

AND FINALLY, we briefly mentioned the Chinese balloon last week. Since then, a few more have been spotted (and shot down - good on you President Biden and Canadian PM Justin Trudeau). Are they all from China? What's the purpose? Are they a threat? At this point, there are more questions than answers. Still, it's a little concerning when one U.S. official says that there's no increase in flights, just that we are doing better on our surveillance. Really? We have missed slow-moving objects the size of cars and buses in the past?

OK, SORRY, one more note. It just dawned on me that I wrote a sentence I never thought I'd write: Good on you President Biden and Canadian PM Justin Trudeau. Hey, got to call it like I see it, right?

Two cents, which is about how much Timmons said his columns are worth, appears periodically 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 ttimmons@thetimes24-7.com.

Indiana Humanities Highlight Completed Preserving Women's Legacy Grant Projects

Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and Indiana Humanities today released a video on the completed Preserving Women's Legacy Grant program and projects. Three more videos will be released throughout March on Peru, Angola and Michigan City's PWLG projects. Grants were awarded to these three Main Street communities in 2020 in an effort to highlight and preserve women's history.

"It has been an honor to participate in this initiative and learn more about these influential Hoosier women," said Lt. Gov. Crouch, who serves as chair of the Indiana Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. "Even if you aren't able to travel to see these public art pieces, I hope everyone takes a moment to watch these videos and cele-

brate the work and lives of Sojourner, Naomi and Marie."

Preserving Women's Legacy Grant projects support historic preservation work, public art and other projects that commemorate Indiana women's history and promote visits to Main Street communities.

The first of the four videos to be released discusses how the program began and the process that followed. Click here to view the video.

"Angola, Peru and Michigan City took this program and ran with it, creating moving sculptures in their communities to celebrate women in Indiana history," said OCRA Executive Director Denny Spinner. "Now, more Hoosiers are able to see the impact of these projects on their communities and Indiana through these videos."



The following three videos to be released over the next month will cover each individual PWLG project and highlight the effect on the community and Hoosier women.

"We are proud of this collaborative work to celebrate women's history and Main Street communities through the Preserving Women's Legacy Grants program with Lt. Governor Crouch and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs," said Keira Amstutz, president and CEO of Indiana Humanities. "These projects will continue to

share stories of Indiana's suffrage movement with Hoosiers across our state for years to come."

The Downtown Angola Coalition used the PWLG grant to create a life size sculpture of abolitionist Sojourner Truth. Michigan City Mainstreet Association used their grant funding to create a series of sculptures in honor of Naomi Bowman Talbert Anderson, a suffragist, civil rights activist, writer and poet. Rediscover Downtown Peru used the funding to create a life-size statue of Marie Stuart Edwards as a young teen standing by her bike on the grounds of the Peru Public Library.

For more information on the Preserving Women's Legacy Grants, visit indianasuffrage100.org/pwlg. To view the Preserving Women's Legacy Grants video, visit youtu.be/LwIBPpCM14

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Opening Day: April 17, 2023 (13-15)
April 21, 2023 (16-18)

www.noblesvillebaberuthbaseball.com

Dear EarthTalk: Is It Unhealthy for You to Live Near an Airport?

EARTHTALK

Living near an airport can have negative effects on health and quality of life due to noise pollution and air pollution from aircrafts. The noise from airplanes can disrupt sleep, increase stress levels and lead to hearing loss. Air pollution from aircrafts can have negative impacts on respiratory and cardiovascular health. However, the degree to which these negative effects occur can vary depending on factors such as the proximity to the airport, the number of flights, and the type of aircraft.

A study supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with the University of California and Columbia University found that people who lived within six miles of 12 of California's largest airports exhibited higher levels of asthma and heart-related problems. Admissions for respiratory issues like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) at nearby hospitals were 17 percent higher than the baseline average. Heart issues also saw an increase—by as much as nine percent.

In another study led by Rima Habre, an associate professor of clinical population and public health sciences, it was found that the culprit may be something known as ultra-fine particulate matter (UFP), a form of pollution emitted by aircraft, especially in the vicinity

of airports. In her study, she hoped to observe the effects of acute exposure by asking participants to take walks in a park that was near a Los Angeles airport, as well as a park that was further away. She discovered that the inhalation of UFPs led to an increased inflammatory response in not only the lungs, but the entire circulatory system of the participants with asthma shortly after exposure. As Habre further elaborates, UFPs are not regulated, and many individuals who live in the vicinity of high-traffic airports are assuredly at risk.

Lead exposure is another issue that many aren't aware of. A study published earlier this month in PNAS Nexus discovered elevated blood-lead levels in children who lived near the Reid-Hillview Airport in Santa Clara County, California. The source of the lead pollution was found to be piston-engine aircrafts—small single or two-propeller aircraft commonly used for training or trailing advertisement banners.

Unfortunately, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), older adults, those with heart or lung-related conditions, and children (especially at schools), are also vulnerable to UFP pollution. In fact, researchers from the University of Washington's Department of Environmental &

Occupational Health Sciences (DEOHS) have stated that air quality inside a classroom can be worse than the air quality outside. Thankfully, the researchers are working on a solution that involves portable air purifiers, as well as upgrades to heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

Their research, known as the Healthy Air, Healthy Schools Project, is in part being conducted at 20 schools near SeaTac Airport, and will involve the use of purifiers with and without filters, along with an analysis of academic performance. Hopes are that the findings will inform future endeavors related to the improvement of air quality not only in schools, but in other buildings used by the public on a daily basis.

CONTACTS: A review of health effects associated with exposure to jet engine emissions in and around airports, ejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-020-00690-y; Airport pollution linked to acute health effects among people with asthma in Los Angeles, paph.usc.edu/airport-pollution-linked-to-acute-health-effects-among-people-with-asthma-in-los-angeles/.

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Education Advocates Reignite Fight Against Latest Anti-CRT Bill

By Casey Smith

The bill, filed by the Senate Education Committee chairman, has since been removed from Wednesday's schedule

Indiana teachers and education advocates admonished state lawmakers Tuesday for reviving multiple divisive “culture war” bills — including one that seeks to ban “critical race theory” from being taught in classrooms.

Other contentious proposals moving through the GOP-dominated General Assembly would prohibit sexually-explicit content in school library books and force schools to tell parents about students' pronouns and gender identities.

The Indiana Educational Equity Coalition rallied against those measures at the Indiana Statehouse Tuesday. The Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA), the Indianapolis Urban League and NAACP, the Indiana Latino Institute, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana, and other groups are part of the coalition.

The group specifically took aim at a bill authored by Richmond Republican Sen. Jeff Raatz that would limit classroom discussions about race. The proposal targets teaching about race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and other factors.

Dr. Russell J. Skiba, a professor emeritus at Indiana University, called Raatz's bill a “racial gag order” that amounts to “censorship” in the classroom.

“This bill will make some children free from hearing uncomfortable truths about our nation's history, but leave students of color wondering why their history and their heritage have been wiped out of their classroom,” Skiba said. “That is oppression.”

Teachers could not “compel, promote or indoctrinate” the belief that one race is superior or inferior to another, according to the proposal.

Similar legislation was filed last year but failed after drawing protests and heated debate at the Statehouse, however.

“Unfortunately, instead of focusing efforts and time on meaningful and positive solutions for Hoosier students related to learning or policies that would fix the teacher shortage, some legislators have made it a priority to spend their time promoting discriminatory legislation that would harm kids,” said Keith Gambill, president of ISTA, the state's largest teachers union.

Mounting opposition against Raatz's latest bill also centers around a proposed amendment that would only prohibit teaching of concepts that

are related to “race or color.”

“This amendment now definitely clarifies chairman Raatz's true concerns,” said Mark Russell, director of advocacy for the Indianapolis Urban League. “This legislation is a solution in search of a problem.”

The bill was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee Wednesday but was pulled from the agenda late Tuesday night.

Raatz, who chairs the committee, said in a written statement to the Indiana Capital Chronicle earlier Tuesday that his priority “is to ensure our students are receiving the best possible education.” “I want our classrooms to be a place where all children can learn and thrive, and we will continue having conversations about the best way to achieve that,” Raatz said.

Advocates rally to thwart latest anti-CRT efforts

Last year's unsuccessful anti-“critical race theory” (CRT) legislation stalled and died in what appeared to be an ideological split in the Republican supermajority.

Provisions in that bill would have prohibited classroom instruction about “divisive topics” that might cause “discomfort” in some students. It also included a ban on the teaching of racist concepts or ideas that some people may find “unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive.”

Such language is not included in the latest proposal, however.

Gambill maintained that parents, students, educators and community allies will return to the Statehouse again this year to unite against Raatz's bill — and others — that promote “dangerous ideas in classrooms.”

“We can, again, successfully stop these attacks if we all do our part in pushing back on these discriminatory ideologies,” he said.

Gambill said lawmakers should instead focus their efforts around proposals like House Bill 1637, which would increase certain scholarship amounts in an effort to attract more students into teaching — particularly black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).

“Across our races, backgrounds and genders, we all want the same thing — great public schools for every student. We want students to have the freedom to be themselves and pursue their dreams,” he said. “But today, some politicians are pushing laws that restrict our freedoms. They fuel division among parents by pushing laws that erase our history — from Selma to Stonewall — and target and punish educators for

doing their job.”

Ivan Douglas Hicks, senior minister at First Baptist Church North Indianapolis, said Raatz's bill is “ignorant” and emphasized the need for Hoosier students to be educated about all aspects of history — not just some.

“It is ignorant to think that a society is going to be better when you whitewash history and teach children that nothing ever happened that has led them to be in the circumstance they are in today,” Hicks said. “We will not stand for it.”

Other ‘troubling’ bills on the move

Numerous bills filed this session additionally target transgender students and attempt to legislate around gender identity issues.

Buried in a separate school accreditation bill authored by Raatz is a provision that mandates teachers and school employees to report to the school if a student indicates that they want to change their “name, attire, pronoun, title, or word to identify the student in a manner that is inconsistent with the student's biological sex at birth.”

School employees would also have to report if a student expresses having “conflicted feelings about ... or difficulty handling or coping with” their gender identity or gender expression.

The student's parents must be notified with that information within five days, according to the bill.

The bill has yet to come up for a hearing and must pass out of committee before the deadline next week. Raatz has not indicated if he plans to move forward with the proposal.

Another measure up for debate Wednesday would make librarians criminally liable for distributing material deemed “harmful to minors.”

Language in the bill, authored by Sen. Jim Tomes, R-Wadesville, would remove “educational purposes” as a reason that public schools and libraries could claim legal protection for sharing “harmful material” with minors. That includes books and other materials deemed to be obscene, pornographic or violent.

A similar bill failed in the 2022 session after K-12 librarians and educators argued they would be unfairly criminalized.

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House Passes Gun Training for Teachers

By Leslie Bonilla Muñiz

The Indiana House on Tuesday passed a bill providing state funding to train teachers who carry guns in classrooms after an emotional debate.

School districts can already authorize the arming of teachers, but there isn't a specific training curriculum — or much money — to go with it.

“This is just a standardized [training] format that the state will pay for,” author Rep. Jim Lucas, R-Seymour, said on the floor. He's said the bill is a response to deadly mass shootings at schools across the country.

But Rep. Tonya Pfaff, D-Terre Haute — who has taught math for nearly three decades — said she worries the guns could be stolen or used in small disagreements.

“School protection officers have jobs to protect the school, and I appreciate that,” she said on the floor. “They protect, I teach algebra. There's no reason to switch.”

School corporations can

get one matching grant annually from the Indiana Secured School Fund for their security programs. House Bill 1177 would allow an additional grant for specialized firearms instruction.

The measure also would authorize state dollars for counseling services for students, teachers, school staff and employees in the event of a school shooting.

Lucas emphasized that participation would be voluntary for both school districts and individual staff members, and that districts could go above and beyond the proposed state program — as long as they paid for it.

The program would involve 40 hours of training for firearm safety and use, based on the training law enforcement officials currently use.

Democrats pushed back, arguing that by encouraging participation in such programs, the bill would increase the number of guns in schools and the potential for violence.

Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn, D-Fishers, said she thought a better

solution was to “properly fund” school resource officers, rather than “arm teachers.”

Discussion from both parties went on for about 25 minutes. But Lucas maintained that the bill would ensure teachers who want to take up arms are properly trained.

“This is not a guarantee. I can't predict the future,” Lucas said. “The purpose of this bill is to provide those that want it [with] a tool to be able to make a last-ditch effort” to protect themselves and students.

House members passed the bill 71-24. All the no votes came from Democrats. The measure now goes to the Senate for consideration.

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Higher Speed Limits for Trucks Clears First Hurdle

By Casey Smith

The state's largest motor truck association remains opposed to the proposal, however.

A bill that would raise the speed limit for trucks on certain Indiana roadways advanced to the full Senate Tuesday despite opposition from the state's largest truck drivers group.

Republican Sen. Jim Tomes, of Wadesville, authored the proposal that seeks to increase speed limits for large vehicles, like semi trucks, to 70 mph on highways and interstates outside urban areas.

Currently, those vehicles must not go above 65 mph.

Those in support of the increased speed limit for large trucks maintain that the current split speed creates congestion for surrounding traffic. They further argue that averting trucks can be hazardous — especially on rural roads that are often reduced to two lanes.

"If everybody's flowing at the same speed, the traffic moves better, and you don't have people stacking up on each other," Tomes said. "I'm thinking that it makes sense that these trucks run even speed with cars and pickup trucks."

Tomes also argued that transportation companies could still limit the top speeds on their trucks if they choose to do so. Many companies already do so.

Similar legislation has been filed in the Indiana Legislature in years prior without success.

Pushback from the Indiana Motor Truck Association (IMTA) is largely what kept those proposals from gaining traction. The group returned to the Statehouse Tuesday, urging lawmakers to instead focus on the "proximity of vehicles" traveling on Hoosier roadways "and not just the throughput of speed."

"Simply put, faster trucks do not equal lesser trucks on the roadway," said IMTA chairman Robert Haag. "We agree that the increased speed differentials are a problem. But the argument is not that trucks are going

too slow and they need to go faster. The reality is cars are going too fast and should be slowed down."

But GOP lawmakers on the Senate transportation committee maintained Tuesday that the speed limit change would make Hoosier roads safer by decreasing the interactions between large trucks and passenger vehicles. They approved Tomes' bill 7-2.

Higher speeds, fewer accidents?

Under current Indiana law, passenger vehicles are allowed to travel at 70 mph while commercial vehicles (other than buses) weighing more than 26,000 pounds are subject to the reduced speed limit.

There are about 124,000 vehicles that meet this weight criteria registered in Indiana, according to a legislative fiscal report. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) reported in 2018 that more than 414 million tons of truck freight travels through Indiana each year, making it the fifth busiest state for commercial freight traffic.

"Right now, I think if you drive the interstates, you'll find that a lot of these trucks are already driving 70 mph," Tomes said. "If you've tried to overtake one, you'll find you're usually having to get up about 80 miles."

INDOT legislative director Andrea Zimmerman did not say explicitly whether the state agency supports the bill, but she pointed to a joint research study by INDOT and Purdue University that suggests an increased speed limit for trucks would reduce crash frequencies in Indiana by approximately 20%.

That would result in a \$479.3 million annual net benefit to the state, Zimmerman said.

Indiana is one of eight states that requires a lower speed limit for semi trucks on rural interstates and highways, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

IMTA remains opposed

But increasing the speed limit for trucks would "invite aggressive driving habits" on Indiana's roadways "at a time where we have less law enforce-

ment," said Haag, who also serves as president of Indianapolis-based Perfect Transportation, LLC.

"Oftentimes, cars do not like to travel around trucks. And so the idea is that you want to get away from a truck — you want to pass the truck. You want to be in front of the truck and not necessarily behind the truck," Haag said. "Cars are going to have to increase their speed to then overtake that truck and get past that truck. And so it is leading to a race to a higher speed, if you will."

Haag added that while all of Perfect Transportation's trucks already have advanced safety technology to make it safe for drivers to travel at 70 mph, not all companies have the equipment.

He noted, too, that as older and more experienced drivers retire, "less experience and more speed are not always a recipe for long term success."

"The best productivity is derived from thoughtful trip planning and thorough coordination of pickup and delivery times," Haag said. "Driving faster does not have any significant impact on transit times or service levels with an increase or decrease of 5 mph."

In 2020, there were 153 people killed in crashes involving large trucks in Indiana, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. At least 26 fatal semi-involved crashes in the state involved speeding.

An Indiana Public Policy Institute report also notes that occupants in large trucks were almost five times as likely to be injured in crashes when speeding, compared to the same vehicle type not speeding.

The bill now heads to the full Senate for further consideration.

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More Fire Departments Encouraged to Register

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) announced the collection of more than 30,000 gallons of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) firefighting foam from Indiana fire departments. Since April 2022, this free program, provided by IDEM, Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), and Indiana Finance Authority (IFA), has collected and safely disposed of foam from more than 220 Hoosier fire departments across the state.

"When we first began collection, we set a lofty goal to collect 30,000 gallons of PFAS foam," said IDEM Commissioner Brian Rockensuss. "We have exceeded that goal in less than a year's time and are still scheduling more pick-ups. This is a major accomplishment in protecting the environment and the health of our bravest Hoosiers."



PFAS foam is used to suppress or extinguish Class-B (toxic chemical) fires. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse health outcomes in humans. PFAS foam has been linked to four of the top eight leading causes of cancer in firefighters: testicular, prostate, mesothelioma, and non-Hodgkin's

lymphoma.

In 2020, the Indiana General Assembly passed House Enrolled Act 1189, prohibiting the use of firefighting foam containing PFAS for training purposes.

Indiana is one of only a handful of states in the country to create a PFAS foam collection and disposal program. This program allows the state to offer a free pick-up and environmentally safe disposal service, which saves fire departments thousands of dollars in disposal costs while protecting Hoosiers and the Indiana environment.

Fire departments across the state can voluntarily register for this free program by visiting the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) website at dhs.IN.gov. Real time collection data can be viewed via the PFAS Collection Status Map on the IDHS website.

Dear Earthtalk: Did the Tiger King Documentary Have Any Impact on the Business of Illegal Wildlife Trafficking?

EARTHTALK

Netflix's Tiger King special was as informative as it was sensational, showcasing not only the wild nature of its main star, the Tiger King himself, Joe Exotic (Joseph Maldonado-Passage), but also the harm caused to big cats trapped within the exotic animal industry. On more than one occasion, the outlandish documentary highlights how terribly these animals were treated, all in the name of fame and fortune.

Thankfully, the special brought more to the table than just views, notoriety and cash. Since Tiger King first aired on March 20, 2020, a number of justices have been served.

First and foremost, Joe Exotic's GW Zoo has been shut down, he has been charged and convicted on 17 counts of animal abuse, including the killing of five healthy tigers (as well as attempted murder for hire). As a result of his crimes, he will be serving 22 years in prison. Not only that, all the tigers that were kept in his captivity were eventually removed, and are now safely kept in a sanctuary in Colorado.

Secondly, President Joe Biden has gotten involved in the fight for big cats, a fight that was arguably championed by none other than Carol Baskin (an early supporter of the bill), the infamous star of the

Tiger King special, and a rival of Joe Exotic. On December 20 of last year, Biden signed into law HR.263, otherwise known as the "Big Cat Public Safety Act." According to the new law, private citizens may no longer breed, purchase or transport big cats; if they already own any, they must have them registered. The bill also restricts public contact with lions, tigers, cougars, leopards, snow leopards and jaguars, effectively ending the private ownership and exploitation of big cats in the US.

Thirdly, as much as the show focused on Joe Exotic, there was another character, Doc Antle, who was arguably guilty of many similar exploitations of big cats. In fact, during June of 2022, Antle, among others, was charged with both wildlife trafficking and money laundering, and will be facing a maximum of five years in prison for the wildlife charges, and 20 years for the money laundering charges.

Another, less obvious positive consequence of the Tiger King special is that the illegal wildlife industry is now under increased public scrutiny. The special itself was viewed by some 64 million households after a month and a half, drawing 5.3 billion minutes of view-time within the first

week of its release. With these kinds of numbers, the exploitation of wild animals will be taken more seriously in the future.

If you're looking to help big cats yourself, there are a number of conservation initiatives that focus on rehabilitating big-cat locales. For example, Save the Tiger Fund and Panthera are collaborating to increase tiger populations in specific locations by 50 percent over a 10-year period. They are looking for donations from those who are interested in helping out.

CONTACTS: Tiger King, <https://www.netflix.com/title/81115994>; Tiger King takeaway: It's time to end big cat breeding and trafficking, blog.humanesociety.org/2022/01/tiger-king-takeaway-its-time-to-end-big-cat-breeding-and-trafficking.html?credit=blog_post_011122_id12684; 10 Key Facts About Tigers and How You Can Help Them Right Now, [netflix.com/tudum/articles/tiger-king-facts-and-how-to-save-wild-tigers-from-extinction](https://tudum/articles/tiger-king-facts-and-how-to-save-wild-tigers-from-extinction).

EarthTalk is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to question@earthtalk.org.

Funding Available to Reclaim Long Abandoned Mining Land

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Recently approved federal funding of up to \$385 million over the next 15 years will allow Indiana to reclaim more former coal mines to their pre-mining status. Hoosiers who own such property are encouraged to report it to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) — even if you don't want the work done right away.

Reclamation is the process by which adverse safety, health, and environmental effects of formerly unregulated surface mining are minimized and mined lands are returned to a beneficial end use. In Indiana, more than 2,000 reclamation projects have been completed since 1982 on both public and private lands.

Because reclamation funding is distributed based on need, the DNR Division of Reclamation's Abandoned Mine Land program (AML) is cataloging future projects. Indiana's eligibility for these federal grants depends upon the state's inventory of abandoned mine land. To qualify for funding, the mining land must have been abandoned prior to 1977.

Owners of such land should call 1-800-772-MINE (6463) or the Reclamation office number, 812-665-2207, or email their information directly to the AML program at abandonedmineres-toration@dnr.IN.gov.

Once reported, an AML project manager and the landowner will review the site to determine if the impact on the property was caused by mining. They will talk with the landowner to determine what needs to be done and discuss accommodating other requests in the

reclamation design. The project manager will work closely with the landowner during the design process to ensure the property's needs are met. If the landowner approves the design, the project is put up for bid through the state public works process.

The contractor who wins the bid then completes the work under the supervision of the AML program. When the project is complete, AML conducts a meeting to assess the work and make sure all requirements and agreements have been met. Most reclamation projects can be completed within a year.

"We can't bring every eligible property to construction right away, but we need Hoosiers to report their problem areas to us as soon as possible," said Kit Turpin, who leads the AML program for DNR. "We must have a complete inventory to ensure funding is available in the future."

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Traditional Poverty Calculation Doesn't Capture All Struggling Hoosier Families

By Whitney Downard

A new report finds that poverty, or inadequate income to meet a household's basic needs, is much higher and more extensive in Indiana than official counts would suggest — particularly among working, single mothers of color.

The Overlooked and Undercounted report commissioned by the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute analyzed how wages failed to keep pace even as expenses to families increased — namely food, shelter, health care, transportation and child care costs.

However, federal and state governments continue to use a measure that defines poverty based on one cost alone — food — and doesn't account for increases in other categories.

Researchers with the Center for Women's Welfare, part of the University of Washington School of Social Work, used the Self-Sufficiency Standard to identify 479,913 households who lack the income to meet their basic needs, far more than the 190,313 counted under the federal standard. The vast majority of families, 85%, had at least one worker whose wages didn't meet the needs of their households. "Using the official poverty thresholds results in more than 60% of these Indiana households being overlooked and undercounted, not officially poor yet without enough resources to cover their basic needs," the report concluded.

The economic uncertainty of COVID-19 exacerbated many of these problems, though the expansion of certain programs like the Child Tax Credit likely mitigated some of that distress.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard vs. the official poverty level

The report used the Self-Sufficiency Standard, rather than the official poverty level, because the former accounts for geographical location and family composition — which researchers argued made it a more accurate measure of poverty.

The official poverty measure (OPM) is the U.S. Census Bureau's method of measuring poverty and differs from the federal poverty levels determined by Health and Human Services, which measures eligibility for anti-poverty programs.

The Institute for Research on Poverty at the

University of Wisconsin-Madison notes that the official poverty level relies on minimum food costs from 1963, adjusted for inflation, when food purchases made up one-third of an average household's budget. The number is the same across the country and counts all children equally — even though costs for children under 6 are significantly higher than older children.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard doesn't set food — over any other budget line item — as a set percentage and adjusts different categories based on current expenses.

Researchers drew from the data obtained from the American Community Survey between 2016 and 2020, excluding Hoosiers over the age of 65 and those with work-limiting disabilities even if they were part of another household.

Just over one in ten, 11%, of working-age households in Indiana fall under the official poverty measure while 27% are considered to have an income below the self-sufficiency standard.

"We find that Indiana families struggling to make ends meet are neither a small nor a marginal group, but rather represent a substantial proportion of households in the state," the report said. "With more than one in four Indiana households lacking enough income to meet their basic needs, the problem of economic insecurity even before the pandemic is extensive..."

The gap between the number of households counted under the self-sufficiency standard and the official poverty level constituted a group that was "overlooked and undercounted" when it came to analyzing poverty rates and its impacts. These Hoosiers were the most likely to be left behind and left out of any anti-poverty programming.

Hoosiers of color most likely to be impoverished

"Not only do governmental poverty statistics underestimate the number of households struggling to make ends meet, but the underestimation creates broadly held misunderstandings about who is in need," the report said. "These misapprehensions harm our ability to respond to the changing realities facing low-income families."

Nearly one-third of Hoosier households whose income didn't match their needs came from just five counties: Vigo, Tippeca-

noe, Marion, Monroe and Delaware.

The report noted that those five counties all housed the state's largest colleges. Removing college-attending households made the insufficiency rate drop by 7% on average — with just a 1% impact in Marion County and a 11%-12% impact on Tippecanoe and Monroe.

Regardless of whether they resided in an urban or a rural county, single mothers struggled to pay their bills more than their male counterparts. Over half of single women living with children were more likely to have an inadequate income, up to 72% of mothers in some parts of the state.

Hoosiers of color were disproportionately more likely to struggle with economic insecurity as well as foreign-born residents. Nearly half of Black households, 48%, and Latin/Hispanic households, 45%, didn't make enough money compared to just 22% of white households.

Poverty rates for American Indian households, 39%, and Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander households, 32%, were also higher than white Hoosiers.

Over half, 51%, of all residents who aren't citizens fall under the defined poverty guidelines. Only 3% of Hoosier households are led by a non-citizen but those households account for 8% of all households below the sufficiency standard.

Education didn't make a difference when it came to race, with Black women-led households falling behind those led by white men, with "women of color in Indiana... more than twice as likely to have inadequate income compared to White men with the same education levels."

Generally, households with higher education attainment were less likely to have a budget deficit, with over half, 54%, of those without a high school diploma having inadequate income.

Impact of children, employment

Households with children ranked 16 percentage points higher in terms of income inadequacy than households without children. Over one-third of families with children, 36%, fell into this category and the number increased to 47% when the children were under the age of 6.

"While households with children only account for 41% of all households

in Indiana, over 55% of households with incomes below the Standard have children present," the report said.

Any combination of these factors — race or ethnicity, citizenship, women-led households or children under the age of 6 — made those households even less likely to have sufficient income.

"Single mother of color led households were about nine times more likely to be struggling to make ends meet than White married-couple households without children, increasing to nearly ten times more likely if the children were young," the report said. "With child care closures, remote learning and disruptions in the labor market, the COVID-19 pandemic placed new pressures on already struggling single mothers, especially single mothers of color."

Not even full-time employment was enough to keep some families afloat. Hoosier families of color were still more likely to have insufficient income when with two full-time workers in the house when compared to white Hoosiers, 28% and 13%, respectively. Researchers attributed this to the "racial wage gap," with households of color making just 80% of the median earnings of white households, or \$16.03 versus \$20.00 per hour.

In Indiana, the median hourly wage for women is \$16.83 compared to \$21.63 for men.

The most frequent occupation for those living below the sufficiency standard was a cashier, accounting for 4% of all workers heading households. Other common occupations included: restaurant employees, nursing assistants, retail, personal care aides, construction workers, housekeepers, receptionists and postsecondary teachers.

"This data highlights that workers in Indiana will not benefit from returning to just any job," the report concluded. "This post-pandemic labor market needs improved opportunities in positions that provide a family sustaining wage."

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Realtors Releases Latest Set of Central Indiana Housing Data

New housing data issued by the MIBOR REALTOR Association (MIBOR) for January 2023 shows an increase in median sales price and active inventory compared to January 2022.

The median sales price rose 11 percent in January compared to January 2022, and decreased 2.9 percent compared to December 2022. New listings decreased 20.5 percent in year over year comparison. Active inventory increased 92.5 percent in year over year comparison and decreased 8.7 percent compared to last month.

Pending sales decreased 10.4 percent in year over year comparison. Closed sales decreased 31.3 percent compared to last year.

"The New Year started with the median sales price of a single-family home in central Indiana sitting at \$272,000, down slightly from last month but up 11% over last January. Prices in central Indiana show strong year-over-year growth, unlike other markets nationally where we are beginning to see year-over-year price declines," said MIBOR CEO, Shelley Specchio. "Though active listings declined slightly from last month, they are nearly double last year's numbers at 3,388. Month's supply of inventory has reached 2.2 months, almost tripling from the 0.8 months available last January and marking the first time this number has been above 2 months since January 2020. While inventory levels are moving toward a more balanced market and have improved significantly from the low levels experienced over the last several years, they are still relatively low from a historical perspective."

Dr. Elliott Eisenberg, an internationally acclaimed economist and public speaker says, "In the national housing market, we are seeing a bit of a recovery thanks to slightly lower mortgage interest rates. Still, we continue to face a meaningful shortage of active listings, and that is not likely to improve rapidly as many potential sellers remain "locked-in" to their existing low-rate mortgages. Generally, the market is in a holding pattern waiting for rates to decline, and there is little indication from the Fed that pivot will happen anytime soon."

Additional central Indiana year-over-year comparisons (January 2022 vs. January 2023)

- Pending sales decreased 10.4 percent to 2,399
- Current median sales price: \$272,000
- Months supply of inventory: 2.2 months
- Total active listings increased 92.5 percent

The attached MIBOR REALTOR Association (MIBOR) Market Insights Report provides a market analysis of the 16 central Indiana counties within the MIBOR service area by creating a single, timely, reliable source of data. The report analyzes both month-over-month and year-over-year to give a view of the trends occurring in the central Indiana market. Consumers will also have access to specific county information for the 16 counties included in MIBOR's Broker Listing Cooperative (BLC) listing service area: Bartholomew, Boone, Brown, Decatur, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan, Putnam, and Shelby counties.

To coincide with the new MIBOR Market Insights Report, MIBOR has added a consumer tool to allow members of the public to view a number of market metrics such as number of units sold, median sales price, number of new listings and more. The metrics are shown graphically to show the trends in the marketplace. To view the new Market Insights, visit www.mibor.com/marketinsights.

This information has been provided by MIBOR REALTOR Association (formerly named the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of REALTORS), the professional association representing central Indiana's REALTORS. MIBOR serves the needs of over 10,000 members in Boone, Brown, Decatur, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan, and Shelby counties. MIBOR also supplies the BLC service to REALTORS in Bartholomew, Jackson, Jennings, and Putnam counties. MIBOR's archive of housing data can be found at www.mibor.com/marketinsights.

Informational Webinar on SOE Final Rule Now Scheduled for Feb. 21



Tuesday, February 21, 1 p.m.

The USDA National Organic Program (NOP) published the Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) final rule in the Federal Register on January 19, 2023. NOP will hold an informational webinar to provide an overview of the rule's changes and how they will affect organic farms and businesses.

What the webinar covers

Organic is a vital part of the U.S. food system, and the SOE final rule makes significant updates to the organic regulations. SOE is a significant part of our continuous improvement of the standards to meet the growing complexity of organic supply chains. The final rule includes several new changes that support strong organic control systems, improve

farm to market traceability, increase import oversight authority and provide robust enforcement of the organic regulations. This webinar will provide an overview of the rule to help the industry understand how they are affected and what steps they need to take to comply within its 14-month implementation timeline.

Who SOE affects

The rule may affect USDA-accredited certifying agents; organic inspectors; certified organic operations; operations considering organic certification; businesses that import or trade organic products; and retailers that sell organic products. USDA encourages those who may be affected by the rule to attend the webinar and to review the full rule. Access the final rule and related resources on the AMS website.

Young Honors Lincoln's Birthday, Hoosier Roots

To commemorate the 214th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's birth, Senator Todd Young (R-Ind.) spoke on the Senate floor about how Lincoln's Hoosier roots forged his character.

Senator Young's full remarks, as prepared for delivery:

"During the Civil War, Walt Whitman took stock of Abraham Lincoln's appearance. The President had a face, the poet wrote, like a 'Hoosier Michelangelo."

"But Whitman sensed that underneath the lines and crags were wells of wisdom and tact...perfectly suited to the present, hard-earned long ago."

"Abraham Lincoln is widely regarded as one of our country's greatest Presidents, a visionary and inspiring leader who appealed to the highest of American ideals and moved our nation toward a more perfect Union."

"Sunday marked the 214th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, and even today, historians still wrestle with the question — how was a man of such character forged?"

"The answer can be found in southern Indiana, near the Ohio River."

"In 1860, when asked for details of his youth by a biographer, Abraham Lincoln was uncooperative."

"It could all, he said, be condensed into a single sentence...the short and simple annals of the poor."

"That's all you or anyone can make of it," Lincoln insisted.

"Mr. President, if you

will pardon me, I would like to make a little more of it. Now my colleagues from Kentucky will point out that Lincoln's birth occurred in their commonwealth. And, as my colleagues from Illinois will likely remind you, when Abraham Lincoln departed for the White House, it was from their state."

"I'll give them this: Lincoln was born in Kentucky, and he made his name in Illinois."

"But Abraham Lincoln was a Hoosier."

"It was there I grew up," he recalled of southern Indiana."

"It was there, in Spencer County, 'I grew to my present enormous height' he once joked."

"True, there's little left that Lincoln would recognize in our state today."

"Just reminders of a once unbroken forest among the low hills...the soil, in it the graves of loved ones...and a great river, separating north from south."

"In what does remain though, we can still see where his character was formed, what prepared him for the trials to come."

"The Lincolns arrived the same year Indiana became a state. It was still the frontier line, the woods full of bears and the night air alive with the roar of mountain lions."

"It was a hard and heartbreaking life, uncertain and often short."

"Those years of Abraham Lincoln's life were characterized by loss, first his mother Nancy and later

his sister Sarah...and by constant labor which he grew to so dislike."

"Schooling was scarce, opportunities for improvement were few. By his own account, he had no more than a year of formal education."

"Decades later, when he recalled life in Indiana, Lincoln wrote 'my childhood home I see again, and sadden with the view...'"

"But he also wrote that among the memories, there was 'pleasure in it too.'"

"There were happy days in the Little Pigeon Creek Community, captivating friends with his homespun stories, and there was the love of a step-mother who nurtured his curiosity."

"The sparse schooling he had taught him to write and to read."

"He pored over what few books he could find — the Bible, a tattered biography of George Washington borrowed from a neighbor, and, later, a collection of Indiana laws containing the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution."

"And there was the Ohio River, a gateway of possibilities and point of departure to the outside world."

"He earned his first half-dollar ferrying passengers on it; he first saw the horror of slavery travelling down it."

"By the time he and his family left the Little Pigeon Creek Community in 1830, Lincoln had spent a quarter of his life in Indiana."

"He crossed the Wabash River into Illinois a grown

man whose heart, touched by grief, was kind, generous and strong...who could spin a yarn like no other...whose intellect far outpaced his meager education..."

"...and of course he carried with him a great reverence for our Founding's promise of freedom and a burning desire to rise in life."

"Though he was loath to speak of it as he grew older, those 14 years in Spencer County — the sad and joyous — shaped Abraham Lincoln."

"The qualities that saved the Union in its time of greatest peril, they were forged in the Indiana wilderness."

"In March 1865, only weeks before his death, Lincoln addressed the 140th Indiana Regiment."

"The soldiers had recently captured a Confederate flag in North Carolina, which the president gave to Indiana Governor Oliver Morton."

"Lincoln reminded these Hoosiers that he was raised in their state and praised their valor...but he was ever mindful of the Union."

"I would not wish to compliment Indiana above other states," he said."

"For whatever it is worth, I do."

"He belongs to all Americans, but Hoosiers can claim a special connection with Abraham Lincoln."

"On the occasion of his birth we celebrate the life and legacy of this remarkable Hoosier. He represents the best of us; he was one of us."

Obituary deadline
The Times publishes obituaries daily at www.thetimes24-7.com, and in its print product every day with the exception of Sundays and Tuesdays. All obituaries must come from a funeral home. A photo may be included and should be sent as a high-resolution JPEG.
Daily obituary deadline is 4 p.m. for the following day's print publication.
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BETSY From Page A1



Photo courtesy of Yvonne Hacker

In 2013, Chris Hacker, at 13, raced at Anderson Speedway and won his first Champion Racing Association Late Model Sportsman race in his No. 24 2007 Chevy Monte Carlo.

said.)

During our interview a decade ago, Chris struck a Popeye-style pose for me, "comparing his thinner, weaker left arm, which has scars from surgeries, with his larger, more muscular right arm." (My newspaper article, entitled, "Only one hand on the wheel," published July 25, 2013.)

Chris had three major surgeries before he was 13 involving nerve grafting and tendon transfers. Since then, his mom said, "He has had some issues over the recent years of his left shoulder dislocating spontaneously due to the weak muscles around his shoulder." He tries to exercise to strengthen those muscles.

Yvonne Hacker said, "Since Chris was born with his birth injury to his arm, they (Morgan & Morgan attorneys) are working to help bring awareness to families across the nation that have these types of injuries and to be a resource for them and for families to know that there is help out there to possibly get compensation for them." In 2022,

Chris Hacker became a spokesperson for Morgan & Morgan and has been talking with parents who have children with a birth injury, his mom said.

When I interviewed Chris 10 years ago, he told me why he raced: "The adrenaline and being able to go fast." Chris Hacker won his first Champion Racing Association (CRA) Late Model Sportsman race in July 2013 at Anderson Speedway. He was the youngest driver in the racing series and the youngest driver in the series to win a CRA Late Model Sportsman event.

He also won the CRA's Charger Award for working his way up through the field from ninth place to the winner's circle. I wrote in my Indy Star article. Earlier that month, his No. 24 Chevrolet was in a "horrific" crash during a race at Anderson Speedway, when a car in front of Hacker hit the wall before landing on top of Hacker's car. He was ready to race again a week later, just as soon as his car was torn down and rebuilt, according to my



Photo courtesy of Yvonne Hacker

Noblesville's Chris Hacker, at 13, celebrates winning his first Champion Racing Association (CRA) Late Model Sportsman race in July 2013 at Anderson Speedway. He was the youngest driver in the racing series and the youngest driver in the series to win a CRA Late Model Sportsman event.

article.

On that summer day in 2013, when I visited at Anderson Speedway, he hoisted himself, using his right arm, into his No. 24 car -- a 2007 Chevy Monte Carlo with a four-barrel carburetor and 604 Crate engine and 420 horsepower -- which had seat modifications that his dad, Michael Hacker, mechanic and former race car driver, built into his son's car. The ignition switch was moved from the left side to the right side, the power steering was adjusted so that it was easier for Hacker to steer, and the seat and steering wheel aligned more with Hacker's right arm. The car's pedals were also adjusted closer and there was a riser to sit on.

Chris told me that his dream was to someday race in NASCAR. It was obvious from his car No. 24 that his racing idol was NASCAR legend and four-time NASCAR Cup Series Champion Jeff Gordon. (Chris got to meet his idol that 2013 summer just before the

12th annual Jeff Gordon Bowling Event that benefits Riley Hospital for Children at IU Health.)

Chris has been racing part time in the NASCAR Truck series since 2021 and has raced at nine different NASCAR tracks across the nation. Prior to the Truck series, he raced in the NASCAR ARCA Menards Series for two races.

If you have followed the Hacker family, then you know that racing runs in the family. Michael Hacker raced street stock cars growing up and drove Late Models at Anderson Speedway and at Mount Lawn Speedway (nearly my hometown) before Chris was born. Chris' grandpa, Michael's dad, the late Don Hacker Sr., raced Outlaws at Indianapolis Speedrome and Modifieds at Lucas Oil Raceway Park and drag raced at Bunker Hill, according to my 2013 newspaper article.

While Chris has had numerous wins over the years, he had to stop racing at the age of 16 for

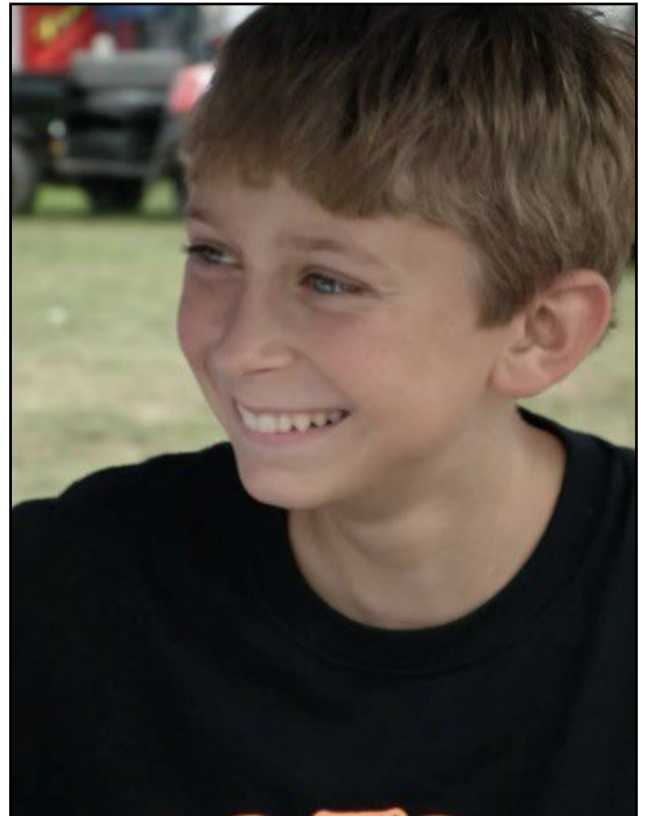


Photo courtesy of Yvonne Hacker

In 2013, Chris Hacker, at 13, was a Noblesville East Middle School eighth-grader racing at Anderson Speedway.

almost four years due to lack of funds. In 2022, Chris was able to secure enough corporate sponsorship to race in a handful of Truck Series races. This season, he partnered with Florida-based Morgan & Morgan, which also has offices in Indianapolis, for the multi-race deal in the Truck series.

When I interviewed Chris Hacker 10 years ago, his goal, his dream was NASCAR. Well, he made his NASCAR debut in 2020 in the ARCA Menards Series at Phoenix International Raceway where he brought home 15th place. His second ARCA Menards series started in May 2021 and he accomplished his first top 10. He made his NASCAR Camping World Truck series debut in August 2021.

While his dream was always making it to NASCAR, his ultimate goal is to race in the NASCAR Cup Series, which is NASCAR's highest-level race.

And Friday night, after qualifying on Friday afternoon, Chris will celebrate another dream -- his first Daytona race -- which fans can watch live on Fox Sports 1 television.

Chris said on Wednesday, "I have dreamed of racing at Daytona since I was 8 years old. I'm so thankful for my parents' love and support. And I can't thank Morgan & Morgan enough and all of my other partners without whom I wouldn't be here."

Contact Betsy Reason at betsy@thetimes24-7.com

GOODRICH From Page A1

corporations in after-school robotics programs. He said this bill could help grow participation to 18,000 students representing 60% of school corporations around the state. He said his legislation was modeled after a similar

program in Michigan that saw a 400% increase in student participation.

House Bill 1382 now heads to the Indiana Senate for further consideration. For more information about this legislation, visit iga.in.gov.

BICENTENNIAL From Page A1

is "200 Years in the Making!"

Other festive items include three different types of hats, two different types of socks, and bumper stickers that will remind people that Hamilton County is the "Home of the Great Squirrel Stampede!"

All merchandise is available online through the Bicentennial's website at www.hamcoturns200.com/swag-merch.

Users will be directed to a third party site that will showcase all the items. Every item has been ordered in limited quantities, so

once they're gone they're gone forever!

About the Hamilton County Bicentennial Commission:

The Hamilton County Bicentennial Commission was established by the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners as the of-

ficial oversight agency for the 200th anniversary of the county in 2023. It will do so in partnership with the Hamilton County Historical Society, Hamilton County Tourism, Inc, and lead sponsor Duke Energy. For more information, visit hamcoturns200.com.

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Number \div % Stumpers

1. How many residents of the county do not live in Jasper?
 \geq
2. What is the population density of Dubois County?
 \leq
3. What percentage of individuals in the county reside in Jasper?
 \geq
4. How old is Dubois County?
 \leq

Answers: 1. About 26,851 2. 92.4 per square mile
3. 35% 4. 201 Years

Did You Know?

- The county was founded in 1818 and was named after Toussaint Dubois.
- Jasper, the county seat, has a population of 15,038 and a land area of 13.35 square miles.
- Jasper is nicknamed “The Nation’s Wood Capital” because it is home to numerous furniture companies.
- The land area of the county is 453.33 square miles and the population is 41,889.
- Patoka Lake, which hosts several national tournaments, is located at the county’s eastern

Got Words?

Jasper is the only city in the state of Indiana to have an Arts Council. The council has won numerous awards for their commitment to the community, including the Governor’s Art Award in 1987 and 2007. How do you think having an Art Council benefits Jasper and how could it improve

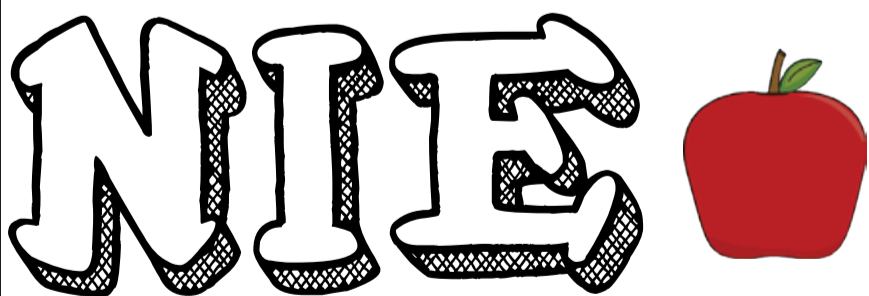
Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. RAST NLCOIUC
2. ARSJPE
3. OAKPAT LEKA
4. OWOD
5. SIOUBD TYCUNO

Answers: 1. Arts Council 2. Jasper 3. Patoka Lake
4. Wood 5. Dubois County

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Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023

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Book About the 1965 Palm Sunday Tornadoes Now Available

A new book covering Indiana's worst natural disaster — The 1965 Palm Sunday Tornadoes in Indiana — is now available from national publisher The History Press. The book was written and compiled by Tipton-based author Janis Thornton.

The tornadoes that devastated much of Indiana were part of a collective rampage that ripped through six Midwestern states. The day started as the nicest of the year, with the kind of weather that encouraged Hoosiers to enjoy an afternoon outdoors, fire up the barbecue grill, hit the golf course, or take a leisurely drive through the country. That evening, however, the skies over northern and central

Indiana turned an ominous black and storms moved in, quickly manifesting as the worst tornado outbreak in Indiana history. Within three hours, twisters, some a half-mile wide, swept through seventeen counties, destroying communities and leaving death and destruction in their wake.

When the tornadoes were finished with Indiana, 137 people were dead, hundreds were injured, and thousands more were forever changed.

Thornton's book is the first encompassing all three lines of tornadoes that tore through northern and central Indiana on April 11, 1965. The book features dozens of photographs and more than 100 stories shared by people

who experienced the tornadoes' wrath first hand. The stories tell of heroism, terror and heartbreaking loss, many told for the first time.

"When people ask what drew me to this project," said Thornton, "my answer is simple: I love people, I love history, and I love telling powerful stories. Recording one of Indiana's most tragic natural events through the experiences of people who lived it makes for powerful storytelling, and I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to document how so many lives were touched that long-ago Palm Sunday night."

The 1965 Palm Sunday Tornadoes in Indiana is Thornton's sixth non-fiction work.

Her previous works include true crimes books, No Place Like Murder and Too Good a Girl; pictorial histories covering Tipton County, Frankfort and Elwood, Indiana; as well as three mystery novels. She is a member of The Authors Guild, the national and Indianapolis chapter of Sisters in Crime, Women Fiction Writers Association, the Indianapolis Writers Center, and the Tipton County (Indiana) Historical Society.

The book is available for purchase at major bookstores and online booksellers, as well as Thornton's website, www.janis-thornton.com. For more information, please contact Thornton via her website.



Federal Grant Funds Available for Specialty Crop Industry

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), beginning Feb. 15, will seek project proposals from Indiana's specialty crop sector for funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

"Specialty crops are big business in Indiana," said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "This unique sector is quite large in Indiana, after all 80% of our state is farmland and forests. We are excited to use this federal funding to bolster our large specialty crop sector and research initiatives."

The USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program offers federal funding annually to state departments of agriculture to support their specialty crop industries. This year, Indiana's allocation is \$484,966.

Eligible projects must enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Indiana, defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, horticulture and nursery crops.

Funding will not be awarded to projects that benefit a particular commercial product, or provide a profit to a single organization,

institution or individual. Each project must identify at least one of the new USDA performance measures that specifically demonstrate the project's impact on enhancing the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.

ISDA is seeking projects that have objectives such as: increasing consumption and consumer purchasing, increasing access and distribution, increasing food safety knowledge and processing, developing new seed varieties and improving environmental sustainability, among other things. Click here or visit ams.usda.gov to see the full list of performance measures.

ISDA and USDA encourage applications that benefit smaller farms, new and beginning farmers, underserved producers, veteran producers and underserved communities.

Applications open on Feb. 15, 2023 and are due by 12 p.m. ET on March 10, 2023. Proposals must be submitted online through the Indiana State Department of Agriculture's Grants Management System. Indiana Specialty Crop Block Grant application resources are located on ISDA's Grants and Funding Opportunities website.

Improvement in Farmer Sentiment Carries Over into 2023

Following a sharp increase to close out 2022, the Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer had only a modest increase in January, up 4 points to a reading of 130. The rise in sentiment was primarily attributable to better expectations for the future, as the Future Expectations Index improved by 5 points to 127. The Index of Current Conditions rose only 1 point to a reading of 136. 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 from January 16-20.

"Although producers were a bit more optimistic about the future this month, they again reported expectations for tighter margins in 2023 than in 2022," said James Mintert, the barometer's principal investigator and director of Purdue University's Center for Commercial Agriculture.

The Farm Capital Investment Index was up 2 points this month to 42; however, it remained 7% lower than a year earlier. Just over 7 out of 10 survey respondents said they think now is a bad time to make large investments in their farm operation. Among respondents who felt now is a bad time, 39% said high prices for machinery and new construction, 25% said rising interest rates, and 12%

said uncertainty about farm profitability was the primary reason. Interest rates are becoming a bigger concern for farmers. As recently as November, just 19% percent of farmers in the monthly barometer survey chose rising interest rates as a key factor impacting their perspective on investments.

Each January, starting in 2020, the survey has included a question asking respondents if they expect to have a larger operating loan compared to the previous year and, if so, the reason for the larger loan. In January, 22% of respondents said they expect to have a larger 2023 farm operating loan compared to 2022, down from 27% last year. Among respondents who expect to have a larger operating loan, 80% indicated it was due to increased input costs, while only 5% said it was due to carrying over unpaid operating debt, which according to Mintert is important to note. The percentage of respondents who attribute their need for a larger loan to unpaid operating debt has fallen sharply since the question was first posed in January 2020. At that time, just over one-third of producers who anticipated needing a larger loan said it was because of unpaid operating debt. That percentage fell to 20% in 2021 and to 13% in 2022 before declining again to just 5% in 2023.

"The sharp decline in the percentage of produc-

ers expecting to carry over unpaid operating debt is important," said Mintert. "It supports the idea that the vast majority of producers are entering 2023 in a strong financial position despite the rise in production costs."

Producers' expectations for short-term and long-term farmland values were mixed in January. The Short-Term Farmland Index fell 4 points to 120, down 15% when compared to one year earlier, as more producers said they expect values to hold steady over the coming year instead of increasing. The Long-Term Farmland Values Index rose slightly to 142 from 140 in December. Over the last year, the long-term index has declined just 2%, as producers continue to retain a more optimistic long-term than short-term view of farmland values. Among producers who expect to see farmland values rise over the next five years, the top reasons for their optimism continue to be non-farm investor demand (63%) and inflation (23%).

This month's survey also included questions about leasing farmland for carbon sequestration, and U.S. farmers continue to express interest in carbon contracts. During the first quarter of 2021, approximately 7% of survey respondents said they had engaged in discussions with companies about being paid to capture carbon on their farms. When we

repeated the question about carbon payments in August 2022 and again in January 2023, the percentage of producers who said they had discussed a carbon contract with a company rose modestly to 9% of respondents. However, relatively few farm operators have chosen to sign a carbon contract, with just 1% of January's survey respondents indicating they had signed a contract.

Read the full Ag Economy Barometer report at <https://purdue.agbarometer>. 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, available at <https://purdue.agbarometervideo>. For more information, check out the Purdue Commercial AgCast podcast available at <https://purdue.agbarometer>, which includes a detailed breakdown of each month's barometer and 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: AGECCURC and AGECCURC and AGECCURC.

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Speaking Stones: Analyzing Antarctica's Rocks to Explore Earth's Past, Possible Futures

The standard image of Antarctica is vast, featureless sheets of ice and blowing blizzards. But soaring rocky mountains with deep valleys cut like a knife into the continent of Antarctica, evoking the lavish landscapes of the American Southwest's Monument Valley. Here, ancient rocks reach for the cold blue sky, and here is where Marissa Tremblay, assistant professor of earth, atmospheric, and planetary sciences in Purdue University's College of Science, led her team of science experts – all of whom happen to be women.

Their goal in traveling to what is essentially the ends of the Earth was to look far into the past of Antarctica's climate history. Researchers have long examined ice cores to understand the climate history of Antarctica, but that research can go only as far back as the oldest ice they can access.

To dig deeper into the past – to learn more about some of Earth's warm periods, when Antarctica lost much of its ice – scientists need to look to the rocks.

Tremblay is a noble gas geochemist who has pioneered a new way of looking at rocks and analyzing what temperatures they have experienced using tiny amounts of noble gas inside the rock. She has already used this technique to study climate history in the European Alps and other places, and she hopes that Antarctic rocks will tell an even older story, taking a deeper dive into ancient history.

"One of the most



Photo courtesy of Marissa Tremblay, Purdue University

Marissa Tremblay, assistant professor of earth, atmospheric, and planetary sciences at Purdue University and an expert in geochronology, led an all-woman team of researchers into the wilds of Antarctica to research the climate history of the continent – and the planet.

exciting things about this trip – other than the trip itself – is the possibility of revealing how warm the Antarctic continent was before our oldest ice core records," Tremblay said. "Understanding what Antarctica, and the Earth, looked like in the past can help us peer into and predict potential futures."

Tremblay and her team trekked into Antarctica's remote McMurdo Dry Valleys to sample rocks and record the weather, temperature and atmospheric conditions at a number of sites. The rocks here, at one of the driest and most remote places on Earth, are devoid of ice. They have been exposed to the atmosphere, and almost nothing else, for millions of years.

The team included Tremblay's doctoral student Emily Apel, who is focusing on this research as part of her dissertation; geologist Jennifer Lamp of Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, who oversaw the weather and temperature instruments; and geochemist Marie Bergelin of the Berkeley Geochronology Center, who sampled rocks and helped install the instruments.

The rock samples they collected are being sent in cold storage on a ship to Tremblay's lab at Purdue. Once they arrive, she will use her unique expertise to analyze the samples and conduct more detailed research alongside Darryl Granger, Purdue geologist and professor of earth,

atmospheric, and planetary sciences.

"Three to 3.3 million years ago, carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere were similar to today, and sea levels were 50 feet or more higher – about the height of a five-story building!" Tremblay said. "This required the entire Greenland ice sheet to have melted, as well as a significant portion of the Antarctic ice sheets. Today, ice sheets cover most of Antarctica, but they are vulnerable to climate change. But just how vulnerable are they, and how much will they contribute to sea level rise as our planet continues to warm? Those are the questions we're hoping to answer with this new research."

IMS Becomes First Sport Venue to Receive Silver Responsible Sport Certification

Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS), home to the largest single-day sporting event in the world, the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge, is the first sport facility to achieve organizational certification through the Council for Responsible Sport (Council).

Organizational certification became available for the first time in August 2021. The new standard is based on the recognition of the following core principles: power of sport, resolution of climate change, enablement of social justice and business of sport. IMS was the first to commit to the new framework, implementing year-round tracking of environmental and social impacts for the more than 300 events hosted at IMS annually.

Previously, in 2021, the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge was certified a responsible event.

The Council provides a structured approach for event hosts and organizers to measure, implement, validate and improve

the social and environmental sustainability of their events and venues. Certification is earned by taking action spanning five categories: planning and communications, procurement, resource management, access and equity and community legacy. IMS ultimately accomplished 210 credits across these categories, earning silver level distinction as a Certified Organization.

"IMS' commitment to embrace social and environmental realities and to implement a systematic approach to setting goals, adapting operations and measuring progress is outstanding," said Rico Tesio, Council for Responsible Sport board chair. "Achieving Responsible Sport certification at an organizational level is not only a real milestone in the venue's own storied history but also demonstrates leadership in motorsport and beyond and should be celebrated as vigorously as any checkered flag waved on the famous Yard of Bricks."

Key partnerships and

the implementation of new tracking technology helped IMS achieve this landmark goal. With the addition of the new organizational certification, the Council implemented ReScore, a system designed to help venues track their progress. WM Sustainability Services was critical in IMS' sustainability journey, providing support by documenting a variety of resource management credits relating to emissions calculations, waste diversion and energy consumption.

"This is a monumental and impactful achievement for the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, earned through a comprehensive commitment to innovation and hard work that safeguards our community and leads the way in our sport," IMS President J. Douglas Boles said. "We learned a lot in 2021 when we received our event certification for the Indy 500. That process helped us get to this moment, where we are now tracking the impact of our events throughout the year and implementing sys-

temic programs that yield results.

"We remain committed to becoming the most sustainable motorsport venue in the world, and we are grateful for the support and enthusiasm shown by our fans as we continue to identify new opportunities to encourage their participation in this journey."

As part of the new certification, IMS implemented new standards and procedures. This includes the development of a diversity, equity and inclusion plan, along with a public commitment to the measurement and mitigation of environmental impacts. IMS expanded waste diversion efforts beyond the Indianapolis 500 to include events hosted at IMS year-round. Additionally, IMS adopted new procurement policies and protocols, eliminating single-use plastic and Styrofoam in office spaces, in addition to prioritizing purchases from women- and minority-owned businesses and businesses with sustainability related certifications.

Food Survey Queries Consumers on New Year's Resolutions and Risk Tolerance

Eating more fruits and vegetables and less sugar ranked highly as potential changes to eating behaviors related to New Year's resolutions, according to the January Consumer Food Insights Report. This month's report also summarizes and discusses the state of the survey indicators after one full year of data collection.

The survey-based report out of Purdue University's Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability assesses food spending, consumer satisfaction and values, support of agricultural and food policies, and trust in information sources. Purdue experts conducted and evaluated the survey, which included 1,200 consumers across the U.S.

"People are generally knowledgeable about the actions needed to improve health and want to pursue them – such as increasing fruits and vegetables and exercising more," said Jayson Lusk, the department head and Distinguished Professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue who leads the center. "However, they don't necessarily want to give up on taste and indulgences. For example, eating less meat or drinking less alcohol is low on the list of priorities of most Americans."

As the Consumer Food Insights Report has noted previously, food spending is up significantly – 19% – from a year ago. Grocery spending, however, has remained effectively flat for the past six months.

"It appears that people have already cut back and found deals to help stop their food spending from continually rising," Lusk said. "If food inflation does not come down significantly this year, consumers might not have much room to maneuver their budgets further."

Those surveyed estimated that current inflation is up more than 1 percentage point from last month. But the survey results show that people seem to remain optimistic about inflation declining dramatically over the next year.

Additional key results include:

Food insecurity is unchanged from January 2022, but a decline in households visiting food pantries raises further questions.

Americans report being neither risk averse nor risk loving but are slightly more cautious with regards to their health.

Trust in the USDA and US Department of Health and Human Services' Di-

etary Guidelines for Americans is at an all-time high as its advisory committee prepares to discuss 2025 guidelines.

A large majority of people want to increase funding and technical support to agricultural producers.

Despite price increases, the rate of national food insecurity again shows surprising consistency from last January, said Sam Polzin, a food and agriculture survey scientist for the center and co-author of the report.

"In fact, we have even seen a continued decline in the share of households who say they have received free food from a pantry this month," Polzin said. "Given the current high-price environment, it is hard to believe that fewer people need help from the charitable food system. We might ask if there are fewer charitable food resources available now or if people are having a harder time accessing them."

Overall, the sustainable food purchasing index continues to show consistency. But as the "taste" and "economic" aspects of the index remain strong, the ongoing weakness of the environment and social indicators is discouraging from the sustainability perspective, Polzin noted.

Behaviors like "choosing plant-based proteins over animal proteins" are rare. Similarly, beliefs like "agriculture is a significant contributor to climate change" are held by a minority.

"We might say that food system sustainability does not concern consumers as much as some advocates might want it. We saw little change on this front in our survey over the course of 2022," Polzin said.

As for risk-taking, Americans generally consider themselves to be middle-of-the road in daily life, scoring 5.4 on a 0 to 10 (risk averse to risk loving) scale. They rated their risk tolerance regarding their health generally about one point lower, 4.3. But when it comes to food consumption, their risk tolerance is 5.2 for "food consumed at home," and 5.1 for "away from home."

Lusk further discusses the report in his blog.

The Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability is part of Purdue's Next Moves in agriculture and food systems and uses innovative data analysis shared through user-friendly platforms to improve the food system. In addition to the Consumer Food Insights Report, the center offers a portfolio of online dashboards.

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