

➔ TODAY'S VERSE

Matthew 24:34-35 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass the holy angels.



➔ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

People who call our community their own.

What makes Larry Montag smile? "My grandchildren, I have seven grandkids," said the 70-year-old Westfield resident, who was found working the box office in 2019 for a Carmel Community Players' production in Noblesville. Today's feature is a look back at one of The Times' previous Faces of Hamilton County. He is treasurer of CCP and was the playhouse's executive producer for three years. "I've been on stage twice, both of them as a bartender with no speaking; all I had to do was drink. One time, they told me I wasn't drinking enough, so I had to drink more." In community theater, actors use apple juice, cran apple juice or Vernors ginger ale in place of real alcohol, he said. Carmel Community Players's current show is "Musical Comedy Murders of 1940," on stage today through Sunday at The Ivy Tech Auditorium in Noblesville, with tickets available at <https://carmelplayers.org/>. He grew up in Detroit and retired from General Motors, his job being transferred to Indiana in 1980. He retired nine years ago. That's when he got involved with theater, as a CCP board member. He and wife, community theater actress Beth Montag, met in 10th grade and were married in 1972. "She asked me out on our first date." The Montags have three children and eight grandchildren. Hobbies? Theater, golf and fixing computers for a church that sends them to Africa. He has repaired about 1,600 computers for their project.

And Another Few Things...

1. First Lady

The First Lady is coming to the Hoosier State. Dr. Jill Biden will be in Valparaiso Monday. She and Labor Secretary Julie Su and U.S. Deputy Energy Secretary David Turk will tout the Biden Administration's commitment to strengthening the economy and building pathways to good-paying jobs through career-connected learning. They will be visiting Ivy Tech Community College there.

2. Women In Construction

A new study by the good folks at Today's Homeowner takes a look at women in the construction industry, including employment representation, pay, and geographic differences – and it wasn't great news for Indiana. Out of all 50 states, they found that Indiana ranks smack dab in the middle at No. 25 for the highest percentage of female construction trade workers. In addition, here are some of their other findings:

The percentage of women in the construction industry in Indiana is 2.7% which is #25 in the country.

The top 5 states with largest representation of women in construction is South Carolina, Georgia, Washington, Florida, and Arkansas.

Seven of the 10 states with the highest percentages of female construction trade workers are in the South.

Over the past five years, the pay gap has improved for construction managers by 2.5 percentage points, but worsened for construction trade workers by more than 17 points.

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper

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Boomer Bits



Ask Rusty – What's The Best Way To Start Receiving My Survivor Benefit?

Dear Rusty: When one becomes a widow/widower, what is the most efficient way to start receiving the deceased's monthly Social Security. Signed: *Still Grieving*

Dear Still Grieving: There is really only one way to start receiving surviving spouse benefits – you must contact Social Security directly to apply. You can call 1.800.772.1213 or call your local SS field office (find the number at www.ssa.gov/locator) to make an appointment to apply for your survivor benefits. These appointments are normally conducted over the phone, so a personal visit to the Social Security office isn't usually necessary.

The larger question to consider is when you should claim



ASK Rusty
Social Security Advisor

Social Security Matters

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the survivor benefit. Like most other Social Security benefits, your age when you claim determines how much your survivor benefit will be. And a survivor benefit isn't payable in all cases. Consider these points:

- If the surviving spouse is already receiving their own SS retirement benefit and that is more than the deceased spouse was receiving, the surviving spouse continues to receive only

their own higher benefit but will get a one-time lump sum death benefit of \$255.

- If the surviving spouse's own benefit is less than the deceased was receiving, the surviving spouse's benefit will be based on the higher amount.
- If the surviving spouse has reached their full retirement age (FRA), the survivor's benefit

➔ See RUSTY Page A4

Come On All You Seniors, Get Happy And Healthy!

By John Grimaldi

If you are a senior living in Massachusetts, Colorado or New Jersey you are likely to be physically active or, at least, searching the internet for fitness advice. New research by the online consumer price-tracking website, Pricelisto, has identified the citizens of those three states as having the highest average monthly search for fitness advice over the last 12 months.

That's a good thing, according to the Centers for Disease Control [CDC], which recommends that the older you get the more you need to exercise. "Adults aged 65 and older need at least 150 minutes a week (for example, 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week) of moderate intensity activity such as brisk walking. Or they need 75 minutes a week of

vigorous-intensity activity such as hiking, jogging, or running," says the CDC.

"So, get up and get active," says Rebecca Weber, CEO of the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC]. "Sure, you'll find some older folks who might prefer to sit out their senior years, but, for the most part, the elders among us — and there are a lot of them — choose 'not to go gently into that good night,' as poet Dylan Thomas put it." She's not suggesting that we run the "four minute mile;" rather, Weber says that moderate exercise will help you live a longer and more fulfilling life in your senior years. "Ask your doctor for exercise advice. You'll probably be surprised how easy it can be.

➔ See HAPPY Page A4

BBB Tip: Meta's New Subscription Service

On Sunday, Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg announced the company is introducing Meta Verified, a paid "blue verification badge" for Facebook and Instagram that will be available later this week. According to the news release, the monthly subscription service includes a verification badge, protection against impersonating accounts, increased visibility, priority customer service and other exclusive features. Previously, Twitter announced its blue checkmark program.

As with any new program, there can be initial confusion on what it all means, and scammers

➔ See BBB Page A4

Miller-Palooza Party To Benefit Our Schools



BETSY REASON
The Times Editor

Miller-Palooza will be the party not to miss. That's what I'm told.

And you don't even have to break out the formalwear.

In fact, guests to next Friday's benefit for Noblesville Schools Education Foundation (NSEF) are encouraged to wear their casual Miller spirit wear.

"We are hoping to see throwback letter jackets, vintage Ts and cords. I plan to wear my black varsity 'N' sweater," said Adriann Young, the district's executive director for NSEF.

"We are a proud partner of the Noblesville Bicentennial celebrations in 2023 and encourage vintage Noblesville Schools spirit wear," she said.

Miller-Palooza is NSEF's largest annual fundraiser that supports all 10 schools, includ-

ing seven elementary schools, two middle schools and Noblesville High School.

"The event has grown over time and has morphed into the school party of the year," Young said. "It is a night of great entertainment and celebrations for our beloved Noblesville Schools teachers and students."

Folks who haven't been there, done that, might want to know more about what to expect.

So, here's the skinny. Guests should expect three different food stations, and complimentary beer and wine provided by Bier Brewery, which has locations in Carmel and Indianapolis, and Repub-

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 7:11 a.m.
SET: 6:40 p.m.

High/Low
Temperatures
HIGH: 51 °F
LOW: 33 °F

Today is...

- International GM's Day
- March Forth
- Benjamin Harris Day

What Happened On This Day

- **1789** The U.S. Constitution is put into effect. The law is one of the world's oldest constitutions still in use. The oldest is the Constitution of San Marino, which was issued in 1600.
- **1918** The first documented cases of the Spanish flu herald a deadly worldwide pandemic. The disease quickly spread around the world, causing over 25 million deaths.
- **2007** The world's first national internet election is held. Estonia was the first country to allow its citizens to vote in a parliamentary election through the World Wide Web.

Births On This Day

- **1951** Chris Rea English singer-songwriter, guitarist
- **1968** Graham Westley English footballer, manager

Deaths On This Day

- **1852** Nikolai Gogol Ukrainian/Russian author, playwright
- **2008** Gary Gygax American game designer, writer, co-created Dungeons & Dragons

lic National Distributing Co. (RNDC).

Guests will be entertained by Felix & Fingers dueling pianos, magic with Josh Cecil, live cartoon illustrations with artist Lauren Barger, auction bidding galore and a program highlighting partners of Noblesville Schools, Young said.

Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen, a 2002 NHS grad, will emcee the event, and communi-

➔ See BETSY Page A5

➔ INSIDE TODAY

Capital Chronicle.....A3,A4,A5
Service Directory.....A3
In The Home.....A6
Travel.....A7

➔ HONEST HOOSIER

Girls start practicing softball Monday. Let's go, Ladies! Anyone else miss the days of Bob Knight, Gene Keady and Digger Phelps?



➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

When you read a food label, make sure you determine how many servings are in the package. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at www.thetimes24-7.com



➔ TODAY'S QUOTE

"One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the Spring."
-Aldo Leopold

➔ TODAY'S JOKE

Today is the only day where the date gives orders – March forth!

➔ OBITUARIES

None

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



Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation Suspends Plans For East Side Dog Park

Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR) will stop current planning efforts for a dog park on the east side of Carmel at River Road and Main Street on Carmel Clay School (CCS) property. "We have informed Carmel Clay Schools about this decision and appreciate the opportunity for continued partnerships with CCS to collaborate for the benefit of the Carmel Clay community," said Michael Klitzing, CCPR Director. CCPR presented a proposal and preliminary concept to the Carmel Clay School Board in January seeking consent to explore developing a dog park, community garden, and trails on school property located at the southwest corner of Main Street and River Road. Due to a significant portion of the CCS property being

located within a floodway, infrastructure placement was very limited. Public input received by CCPR, as well as constituent feedback relayed by multiple City Councilors, identified some concerns regarding the proposed placement of a dog park close to River Road. Considering both site limitations and initial community input, CCPR has decided to consider additional locations for a future dog park. In 2023, CCPR is developing its Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan for 2024-2028. As part of the master planning process, CCPR will gather community input regarding park and recreation needs and preferences to guide future planning efforts. Stay tuned for opportunities to provide feedback as part of the master plan process.

City Of Westfield Hosts Shamrock Drop

Join Westfield for their annual Shamrock Drop event. Purchase your shamrocks and you will be eligible to win amazing prizes from local Westfield businesses! This year's event will include attractions like live Irish music and dancing, St. Patrick's Day-themed carnival games with prizes, crafts, food and drinks, and more!

Want TO GO?
When: Friday, March 17th 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Where: Grand Junction Plaza

present at the event to win. All winners will be contacted after the event to claim their prizes.

What's Up For Grabs?

- EACH pot o' gold will contain:
- BIGGBY COFFEE: \$20 gift card
 - Classic Cleaners: \$25 gift certificate
 - Ella Pharmacy: Shirt and \$10 gift certificate
 - Field Brewing: \$15 gift card
 - Grand Junction Brewing Co.: \$20 gift card
 - Handel's: \$10 gift card
 - Jan's Village Pizza: \$20 gift card
 - Jazzercise Carmel/Westfield: Gift certificate for 2 free months for you + a friend
 - Prime Carwash: Complete detail, wash cards, and swag
 - Radiance Dance Company: 2 show tickets & free month student pass
 - The Wandering Peacock: \$20 gift card
 - Westfield Wrapper: \$20 gift certificate
 - Wood Wind Golf Course: Free round of golf + cart

Here's How It Works:

Purchase shamrocks (a.k.a. tickets) for \$5 each. Purchase as many shamrocks as you would like - there is no limit! For each shamrock purchased, your name will be written on an individual shamrock. On St. Patrick's Day (March 17), all shamrocks will be dropped in hopes of landing in a pot o' gold below. We will draw a shamrock from each pot o' gold, reveal the winner's name on the shamrock, and the winner will claim all of the prizes within that pot o' gold! Proceeds from shamrock sales will be donated to Westfield Washington Parent University so they are able to provide additional educational opportunities for our local Westfield Shamrock students and teachers! You do not have to be

American Pickers To Film In Indiana

The American Pickers are excited to return to Indiana! They plan to film episodes of The History Channel hit television series throughout your area in April 2023. AMERICAN PICKERS is a documentary series that explores the fascinating world of antique "picking" on The History Channel. The hit show follows skilled pickers in the business, as they hunt for America's most valuable antiques. They are always excited to find sizeable, unique collections and learn the interesting stories behind them. As they hit the back roads from coast to coast, the Pickers are on a mission to recycle and rescue forgotten relics. Along the way, they want to meet characters with remarkable and exceptional items. They hope to give historically significant objects a new lease on life while learning America's past along the way. The Pickers have seen a lot of rusty gold over the years and are always looking to discover something they've never seen before. They are ready to find extraordinary items and hear

fascinating tales about them. We at American Pickers continue to take the pandemic very seriously and will be following all guidelines and protocols for safe filming outlined by the state and CDC. Nevertheless, we are excited to continue reaching the many collectors in the area to discuss their years of picking and are eager to hear their memorable stories! The American Pickers TV Show is looking for leads and would love to explore your hidden treasure. If you or someone you know has a large, private collection or accumulation of antiques that the Pickers can spend the better part of the day looking through we would love to hear from you! Please note, the Pickers DO NOT pick stores, flea markets, malls, auction businesses, museums, or anything open to the public. If interested, please send us your name, phone number, location, and description of the collection with photos to: americanpickers@cinetflix.com or call (646) 493-2184 facebook: @GotAPick

Indiana National Guard, 38th ID Announce General Officer Selection

The Indiana National Guard and 38th Infantry Division announced a general officer selection yesterday. Col. Joseph E. Gardner II, most recently the Kentucky National Guard's chief of the joint staff, has been selected to become the 38th Infantry Division's deputy commanding general for sustainment. "I am grateful for the opportunity, honored to serve the soldiers of Indiana and 38th Infantry Division, and also the aligned states of Arkansas, Ohio, Michigan, Illi-

nois and Kentucky," said Gardner in a statement. "I have been associated with the Cyclone team on and off for the last 20 years, most recently as the 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade commander from 2018 to 2020." Gardner, a Georgetown, Kentucky resident, has served in the military for 30 years with nearly 28 as an officer, and he's deployed three times in support Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Noble Eagle. "The Cyclone Division welcomes Col. Gardner to

the team. He is a talented officer who brings a wealth of military and leadership experience," said Brig. Gen. Dan Degelow, 38th Infantry Division commanding general. "I have the utmost confidence that Joe will make a positive, measurable impact to our sustainment operations." Gardner graduated from Morehead State University in 1995, and he earned his commission from the university's ROTC program. Since then, Gardner has led at every level

from platoon to company to battalion to brigade. He's earned many awards throughout his career including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal three times, the Army Commendation Medal twice, the Global War on Terrorism Medal for his overseas deployments, and many others. Gardner, an avid hunter, fisher and runner, is married to his wife, Michelle, and they have a daughter, Grace, who's a junior at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky

Senate Passes Bipartisan Bill To Support Hoosier First Responders

Yesterday, bipartisan legislation sponsored by U.S. Senators Todd Young (R-Ind.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) to help police, fire, emergency medical and 911 personnel cope with the stresses of responding to crisis situations passed the Senate unanimously. The Fighting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Act of 2023 is bipartisan legislation that would establish mental health programs for America's first responders who often face long-term effects from providing life-saving services in moments of crisis. "Our first responders

put their lives on the line every day to ensure the safety and security of Hoosier families. The Fighting PTSD Act would increase the resources available to public safety officers dealing with job-related post-traumatic stress disorder," said Senator Young. "Increasing this support to our public safety officer community will lead to healthier and stronger communities across Indiana and our country. I'm glad the entire Senate unanimously agreed to advance this critical legislation and I call on the House to pass it quickly." Police officers, firefight-

ers, emergency medical technicians and 911 dispatchers routinely encounter high-stress situations, putting them at risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which increases the risk of suicide. The Fighting PTSD Act would require the Justice Department to establish evidence-based treatment programs for first responders across the country, similar to services available to military personnel who develop PTSD or acute stress disorders. The bill also requires the Justice Department to consult with stakeholders, including public safety officer orga-

nizations, in developing the program, which would be available to serve first responders in communities of all sizes across the country. In addition to Senators Young and Grassley, the bill is cosponsored by Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.), John Kennedy (R-La.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.). The legislation is supported by numerous Indiana public safety organizations.

Sen. Braun, Rep. Baird Demand Answers From EPA

Indiana Sen. Mike Braun and Congressman Jim Baird sent a letter to EPA Administrator Michael Regan demanding answers on why a shipment of hazardous materials from the East Palestine train derailment was halted on its way to an EPA-approved facility in Michigan, and why Indiana was instead chosen. On Feb. 24, the EPA started shipping contaminated soil and water to a landfill facility in Michigan licensed to deal with that type of material by the EPA. Michigan Congresswomen Debbie Dingell and Rashida Tlaib held a press conference that day saying they don't want the material in their state. "No one deserves this in their backyard," Tlaib said. Thirty minutes later, the EPA announced they had halted the cleanup and delivery of contaminated materials to the licensed hazardous waste facility in Michigan. Five truckloads of contaminated materials were returned to East Palestine. On Feb. 27, EPA announced two other facilities - one in Ohio, and

one in Roachdale - would begin to receive materials. EPA said they'd notify elected officials. Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb said in a statement Tuesday that he learned about the decision to ship the materials to Indiana "third-hand." The Indiana facility was the first facility outside of Ohio to receive contaminated materials after EPA exerted control over the cleanup. The Roachdale facility is further away from the East Palestine site than the Michigan facility. "We are concerned that, rather than a matter of safety, the decision to halt the Norfolk Southern cleanup was made in response to objections from elected officials in Michigan," Braun and Baird wrote in the letter to Regan. The letter requests answers to the many questions regarding EPA's decision-making, including: Exactly when did EPA decide to halt the Norfolk Southern cleanup? When EPA halted the Norfolk Southern cleanup, contaminated materials

that were en route to a disposal facility were returned to East Palestine. What specific criteria were used to make this decision? In its official statements on February 25 and 26, EPA explained that each of the sites chosen by Norfolk Southern were "up to the standards" and "EPA-approved" to dispose contaminated materials. If that is the case: Why did EPA halt the Norfolk Southern cleanup? Why did EPA recertify the Vickery, Ohio and East Liverpool, Ohio facilities, but not the Belleville, Michigan; Romulus, Michigan; or Deer Park, Texas facilities? What on-site testing procedures are in place in East Palestine to test contaminated materials for the types and levels of contamination before they are transported to a facility for disposal? Is EPA working to preemptively test and determine that facilities are certified to process the contaminants they are being asked to process? "I am opposed to the transfer of hazardous

materials from the East Palestine train derailment into Indiana," Braun said. "The Biden EPA and Transportation Department have mishandled this disaster from day one. Any material from this disaster being transferred to Indiana overseen by this Biden EPA is seriously concerning. Hoosiers' safety is my top priority." Baird agreed. "For over a week, this administration has failed to properly address the public safety crisis created by the train derailment in Ohio, and now they're blindsiding neighboring states by hastily relocating hazardous materials across state lines, jeopardizing countless Americans," said Congressman Baird. "There are very serious implications associated with the relocation of such serious carcinogens, and this administration has a responsibility to carefully weigh the safest options before making rash decisions. My responsibility is to keep my constituents safe, and I will continue to push for transparency and stand up for the safety and well-being of the Hoosiers I'm proud to represent."

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Two-Thirds Of Filed Senate Bills Dead: Immigrant Help And Marijuana Legalization Among Casualties

By Leslie Bonilla Muniz

Just one in three of the Indiana Senate's filed bills — about 160 of 489 total — survived do-or-die deadlines this week.

Among the casualties are some bills aimed at helping immigrants residing in Indiana without authorization, a collection of marijuana legalization proposals and even one on craft hemp, plus changes to Airbnbs and seat belts in court.

The weeks ahead will be crammed with headlines on what's moving forward, but just as significant are the proposed changes to state law that won't come to fruition — for now. Any bill the full Senate didn't approve by Tuesday is dead.

Meanwhile, just a quarter of House bills made that chamber's deadlines.

Lawmakers could resurrect fallen proposals by inserting the language into live bills, but the

majority are dead at least until next year.

Mixed results for Hoosiers without citizenship

A Senate bill expanding driving privileges to immigrants residing in the state without authorization made it further than it ever has this session, but will go no further after it died in a fiscal committee last month.

So did an attempt, also by Sen. Blake Doriot, R-Goshen, to make non-citizen college hopefuls eligible for cheaper in-state tuition rather than higher out-of-state rates.

Senate Bill 135 would have let people who attended a Hoosier high school for at least four years — and either graduated from one or earned a diploma equivalent — qualify for lower tuition.

Those without legal status would've had to file an affidavit with a public college or university that they have applied — or will — to legalize their

status. And they wouldn't have been able to apply for other government aid.

That bill died without a committee hearing, but another immigration-related bill progressed through the Senate and has been sent to the House.

Senate Bill 376 would expand Medicaid eligibility to people who do legally reside in the state, even if they're not yet citizens, and expanded federal children's health insurance program eligibility to minors with legal residence.

The bill would also tell agencies and local units of government that they don't have to verify citizenship or immigration status to decide someone's eligibility for programs like the special supplemental food program for women, infants and children.

Indiana holds out against marijuana legalization

To no one's surprise, Indiana will go at least another year — and likely more — without advancing a growing number of

marijuana legalization bills.

A House committee heard one such bill for the first time this session, drawing headlines, but it wasn't brought up for a vote.

In the Senate, lawmakers from both parties filed bills decriminalizing possession of an ounce or less of marijuana, creating a medical use program, and several more fully legalizing the substance, permitting-taxing structure and all. None were heard in committee and died earlier this session.

One bill would even have established a legal defense for people operating vehicles or boats with marijuana found in their blood, as long as they weren't intoxicated at the time. It didn't get a committee hearing either.

Even a bill establishing regulatory testing and packaging requirements for the distribution and sale of craft hemp flower products died earlier this month when it didn't get heard on

the Senate floor.

Short-term rental regulations and seat belts cut

A bill allowing local units of government to charge up to \$25 for an annual short-term rental inspection fee cleared its first committee last month, but died in a second one — prompting its author to ditch.

Several homeowners and even town council members bemoaned their inability to curb what they described as negligent, out-of-state owners who allow massive parties under unsafe living conditions.

Local short-term rental owners previously testified that abusive ones made them "look really bad."

Committee chair Travis Holdman, R-Markle, held the bill back citing a lack of committee consensus.

Upon hearing that his bill wouldn't advance from a Senate tax committee, Sen. Mike Young, R-Indianapolis, declined to present his bill and left the room.

And seat belt usage will remain inadmissible in court as part of a lawsuit after Senators narrowly killed a heavily debated bill in committee last month.

Senate Bill 163 would've changed that, opening the possibility that those responsible for causing a crash might pay less if the injured person wasn't wearing a safety restraint.

But lawmakers on the lawyer-heavy committee worried the measure would lay a heavy burden of proof on the victims of crashes, or take too much money from them. The bill failed on a 5-6 vote.

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Now Is The Time To Prep Your Lawn And Garden For Warm Weather

(StatePoint) It may feel like warm weather is still a way's off, but you should already be getting your lawn and garden spring-ready, according to experts.

"One thing I don't think people realize is that to get your grass, shrubs and other plants looking good in the spring...all that preparation starts right now," says Major League Fishing bass pro, Brian Latimer, or "Blat" as he is known by fans.

To help homeowners prep for spring, Latimer has partnered with lawn care equipment manufacturer, Exmark, to offer his four, go-to tips:

1. Pull Those Weeds. According to Latimer, the most important step in prepping your lawn and garden for spring is weeding. "I have a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to weeds," he says. "Watch those sneaky weeds growing in your shrubs and ground covers, because those are going to be the first ones that show their heads in the spring."

While weeding isn't the most fun you can have in your yard, it's

worth the effort. Latimer also recommends putting a pre-emergent out now while cool-season weeds germinate. This is especially important if you have warm-season grass. While you can use pre-emergent on your planting beds as well, he recommends hand-pulling them if you can.

2. Tidy up with Selective Pruning. Pruning will make your shrubs look nice and tidy, however Latimer recommends being careful in your efforts, avoiding plants that are budding. Pruning buds will keep your flowers from being as prolific in the springtime. You can check for buds by combing your hands through the foliage.

3. Get Rid of Pests. Certain spring pests should be treated for in the colder months. Latimer is especially wary of fire ants, as they're one of the most active lawn pests in spring. Treating them early will minimize their activity and mitigate potential problems they cause when the weather warms up. "I can promise you they are going to

be everywhere in warm weather, so treat them now," he says.

4. Get Those Leaves up. Latimer knows that leaf blowing or raking is time-consuming, but he says that getting fallen leaves off the ground is essential. Not only are leaves on your lawn an eyesore, but they can also keep a lot of excess moisture from winter rain, snow and ice stuck in your soil. This creates the potential for root rot, active pests and germinating weeds.

Latimer offers more insights in "4 Tips to Prep Your Backyard for Spring," a recent video from Exmark. To watch the video, visit Backyard Life, which is part of a unique multimedia destination with a focus on helping homeowners make the most of outdoor spaces. There you can also download additional tips and view other Exmark videos.

There's no time like the present to plan for the future. With these great tips in mind, it's time to brave the brisk weather and get your lawn and garden prepped for spring.

The Indiana Destination Development Corporation Releases 2021 Contribution Of Travel & Tourism To The Indiana Economy

A new study released by Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch with the Indiana Destination Development Corporation shows the Indiana tourism industry's rebound fueling is a stronger economy.

"Following the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic aftermath, we have seen Indiana's economy show great, especially when we look at it through the lens of tourism," said Lt. Gov. Crouch, Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "This research shows a promising future for Indiana's tourism industry after rebounding tremendously following the pandemic."

Here are some of the highlights of the report:

- Total Indiana visitor volume grew 16% in 2021 to 77.3 million person-trips;
- Overnight leisure travel grew by 36% over 2020;
- Visitor spending grew by 28.4% to \$13B;
- Spending per visitor

rose to \$170;

- Visitor spending added \$8.5B to the state's gross domestic product;
- Out of each dollar spent, \$0.65 stays in Indiana;
- Tourism generated \$1.4B in state and local taxes;
- Indiana tourism supported nearly 180,000 full-time jobs; and
- Hoosier households saved an average of \$526 in state and local taxes as a direct impact of tourism.

"The tourism industry in Indiana has continued to develop a very strong foundation for Hoosiers," said IDDC Secretary and CEO, Elaine Bedel. "Using this research, we can get a good idea of where we are heading in the years to come, and the future looks bright for Indiana tourism."

The study was commissioned by the Indiana Destination Development Corporation and conducted by Rockport Analytics, an independent market research and

consulting company specializing in economic impact and feasibility studies for the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. The methodology employed by this study is in accordance with industry best practices and aligns economic impact data at the state and local level with rigorous methodological standards that are recognized as the highest in the industry.

The study used data on Indiana visitor spending derived from multiple sources including Longwoods International, Reach Market Planning and the U.S. Commerce Department's National Travel & Tourism Office. It was then reconciled with Bureau of Labor Statistics reported employment data. Indiana Department of Revenue reported tax receipts and secondary sources such as Smith Travel Research.

A link to the report can be found at VisitIndiana.com.

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Take These 6 Steps to Manage Your Blood Pressure

(StatePoint) High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, affects nearly half of adults in the United States, and only about 1 in 4 with this condition have it under control, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hypertension can be dangerous and in many cases, fatal. In 2020, it was a primary or contributing cause of more than 670,000 deaths nationwide. Medical experts say that controlling your blood pressure is possible and it starts with having the right information.

“Nearly half of all American adults have high blood pressure, and many don’t even know it. High blood pressure is a ‘silent killer,’ often having no overt symptoms, but increases the likelihood of heart attack, stroke and other serious health risks. I urge you to know your numbers and make the simple lifestyle changes that can help you control your blood pressure and

live a long and healthy life,” says Jack Resneck Jr., M.D., president of the American Medical Association (AMA).

To get on the right track, consider these tips and insights from the AMA:

1. Know your numbers. Hypertension is diagnosed when your systolic blood pressure is greater than 130 mmHg or your average diastolic blood pressure is greater than 80 mmHg. Visit ManageYourBP.org to better understand your numbers.
2. Monitor blood pressure. Once you learn your blood pressure numbers, take and keep regular records using an at-home blood pressure monitor. For an accurate reading, the CDC says to sit with your back supported for 5 minutes before starting and wait at least 30 minutes after drinking or eating a meal. You should also avoid stimulants for at least 30 minutes beforehand, as the

CDC says that smoking and drinking alcohol or caffeine can elevate your blood pressure. If you take medication for hypertension, measure your blood pressure before your dose. Share your numbers with your health care provider.

3. Eat right. Reduce your intake of processed foods, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Eat less red meat and processed meats, and add more plant-based foods, such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and olive oil to your diet. Also, reduce your consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and drink more water instead. Drinking sugary beverages, even 100% fruit juices, is associated with a higher all-cause mortality risk, according to a study published in JAMA Network Open.

4. Drink alcohol only in moderation. If consuming alcohol, do so in moderation as defined by the U.S. Dietary

Guidelines for Americans -- up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men, and only by adults of legal drinking age.

5. Be more physically active. Do at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity. Be sure to include a mix of cardiovascular exercise, strength training and flexibility. Obtain guidance from your doctor if you aren’t sure if it is safe for you to exercise.

6. Maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, losing as little as 5 to 10 pounds may help lower your blood pressure. Consult your doctor about safe ways to maintain a healthy weight.

“Unmanaged hypertension can have life-altering consequences,” says Dr. Resneck. “The good news is that there are many ways you can take control of your blood pressure and your health.”

Health Care Bills Aim To Reform Insurance, Medicaid Reimbursement Rates

By Whitney Downard

A slew of health care bills moving through the legislature target high prices for Hoosiers by encouraging competition and restructuring how the state pays for services under Medicaid.

But critics say the bills don’t go far enough and more is needed to reform the system – especially for government insurance reimbursement rates.

Bills in the House

In the House Chamber, lawmakers sent two health care bills – both caucus priorities for Republicans – for consideration in the Senate.

The first bill attempts to navigate the complexity of health insurance while the second penalizes hospitals for high prices.

Under House Bill 1003, authored by Rep. Craig Snow, businesses with less than 50 employees would receive a \$400 tax credit per employee if owners adopt a health reimbursement arrangement (HRA).

The second of two health care bills advanced by the House, House Bill 1004, also includes a tax credit for (HRAs) as well as a credit to physician-owned health care facilities.

Snow, R-Warsaw, said that half a million small businesses in the state had 20 or fewer employees and thousands of employees couldn’t offer their employees insurance.

“The shift to HRAs is a decrease in costs for both parties,” Snow said about employers and employees.

HRAs are funded by employers, under which employees are reimbursed tax-free for qualified medical expenses up to a certain amount each year. The increasingly popular accounts are used in tandem with traditional health insurance, often in a high deductible plan, and operate similar to health savings accounts.

On the other hand, Rep. Donna Schaibley’s House Bill 1004 aims to create more competition among both insurance companies and health care providers while also penalizing some hospitals whose rates exceed the national average.

Rep. Matt Pierce,

D-Bloomington, voiced his support for the bill, saying that Indiana University Health, based in his district, had done much to discourage competition in his area while charging more for services.

“But what concerns me more – our quality of care is actually declining at the same time we’re paying more,” Pierce said. “I think this bill is a start but we need a comprehensive approach.”

But Pierce’s colleagues were split in their support for the two health care bills, saying the proposals didn’t go far enough.

“I didn’t see anything... that would meet the test for real progress,” Rep. Ed DeLaney, D-Indianapolis, said. DeLaney, who voted against both bills, said national – not state – officials needed to take action.

“I think we tend to mislead people to think we’re doing something substantive when we can’t.”

DeLaney and nine other Democrats voted against both proposals. House Minority Leader Phil GiaQuinta, D-Fort Wayne, also voted against Schaibley’s bill.

Senate bill draws attention to Medicaid reimbursement rates

Several other health care bills aimed at reducing costs have garnered much discussion in the Senate, specifically a wide-ranging bill from Sen. Liz Brown, R-Fort Wayne.

Brown’s bill creates a pilot program aimed at reducing barriers related to prior authorizations, provisional credentialing for health care providers and a license for associate physicians.

Other health care bills in the Senate

The Senate targeted several sectors of the health care industry in its priority bills, including ‘site of service,’ non-compete agreements for physicians and reducing drug costs.

All three have passed over objections from industry lobbyists – including those representing hospitals, pharmacy benefit managers and insurance agencies.

But Sen. Ed Charbonneau, the primary author of two measures and the co-author of another, said the bills still had much work ahead of them in the House. The final form of the bills are still unclear at this time.

Sen. Jeff Raatz, R-Richmond, praised the bill but emphasized the need to specifically tackle the state’s Medicaid reimbursement rates. He highlighted a specialized physical therapist working with children in his hometown whose efforts made a difference in his patient’s lives but could barely operate under the current payment structure.

“This organization can’t live financially under the matrix of which we live under today,” Raatz said. “We have to do a better job in our reimbursement rates in Medicaid.”

Action on Medicaid reimbursement rates, which are set by the state, is already underway in the state budget – partially due to federal pressure on managed care programs.

The federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) tried to incentivize states to adopt an expanded version of Medicaid that would provide health care coverage for those making too much for traditional government insurance programs.

But Indiana had a pre-existing program for this population: the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP). The state opted to combine the new federal match with the program to create HIP 2.0, which now covers an estimated 740,000 Hoosiers, nearly a third of the 2 million Hoosiers on Medicaid.

Across the government insurance programs, Medicare has the highest payments and other options are measured as a percentage of their payments compared to Medicare.

In Indiana, HIP reimburses at 100% of the Medicare rate, while traditional Medicaid is lower, around 75% of the Medicare rate. This benefits the state because Indiana pays a larger percentage of traditional Medicaid, 65%, than under HIP, where it pays 10% of the costs.

In November of 2020, one month after

the federal government approved HIP for a 10-year renewal, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services ruled that different rates among Medicaid programs was unfair. A year later, it declared Indiana to be out of compliance and clawed back \$500 million in payments.

Indiana appealed, promising to restructure its reimbursement rates by January 2024. The federal government accepted, partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“(A) disruptive loss of associated federal funds for all Medicaid managed care programs given a failure to comply... would substantially and detrimentally impair the state’s ability to provide critically needed care to Medicaid beneficiaries during the (Public Health Emergency),” CMS wrote to State Medicaid Director Allison Taylor last July.

The proposed compromise would lower HIP’s reimbursement and increase traditional Medicaid to 80-83% of payments under Medicare. The House budget, in its current form, goes beyond that for specialized services, such as dentists and home health services, investing additional dollars to increase that reimbursement rate to 90%.

Additionally, the budget stipulates that the state must study its Medicaid reimbursement rates. At the same time, the state is moving one of its last fee-for-service populations into a managed care program – elderly and disabled Hoosiers receiving long-term supports and services at home or in nursing homes.

The fiscal analysis attached to the budget doesn’t note any specific costs related to equalizing reimbursement rates.

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RUSTY From Page A1

will be 100% of the amount the deceased was receiving. If the widow(er) has not yet reached their FRA when they claim their survivor benefit, the amount will be reduced (by 4.75% for each full year earlier than FRA).

•A survivor benefit reaches maximum at the survivor’s FRA. If the surviving spouse hasn’t yet reached FRA, they have the option to delay claiming their survivor benefit until it reaches maximum at their FRA. There is one exception to this: if the surviving spouse was already receiving only a spousal benefit from the deceased (and not their own SS retirement benefit), the survivor benefit will be automatically awarded regardless of the survivor’s age.

•If the surviving spouse hasn’t yet claimed their own SS retirement benefit, they have the option to claim only their survivor benefit first and permit their personal SS retirement benefit to grow (up to age 70). That would be prudent if the survivor’s own SS retirement benefit at age 70 will be higher than their maximum survivor benefit at their full retirement age.

•If you haven’t yet

reached your full retirement age and are still working, Social Security has an earnings test which limits how much you can earn before some benefits are taken away. The limit for 2023 is \$21,240 and if that is exceeded, they will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. The earnings test goes away when you reach your FRA.

So, as you can see, there are several things to consider as you decide when to claim your Social Security benefits as a widow or widower. I hope the above information helps you make an informed choice.

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HAPPY From Page A1

Simple, brisk walks, for example, might be all you need to help you live a longer, healthier life.”

Physical Therapist Rachel Tavel and Sabrena Jo, Ph.D., senior director of science and research at the American Council on Exercise, penned a featured article, A Guide To The Best Exercises For Seniors, for Forbes Magazine recently. As they put it, “When it comes to determining the best exercises for seniors, variety is key. Adults of all ages—but especially people older than 65—should focus on a combination of strength and mobility exercises, as well as balance exercises and aerobic activity. However, the best exercises for seniors are the

ones they want to do and will do consistently.” They suggest things like taking a stroll, going for a bike ride, even dancing and taking a nature walk for two and a half to five hours a week.

And, by the way, getting out and about as you focus on exercises that make you physically healthier in your golden years has an important additional benefit. The National Institutes of Health tells us that “exercise improves mental health by reducing anxiety, depression, and negative mood and by improving self-esteem and cognitive function. Exercise has also been found to alleviate symptoms such as low self-esteem and social withdrawal.”

BBB From Page A1

are waiting in the wings to grab at any new opportunity. Be sure you have the facts and protect yourself against future scam artists. BBB is a trusted resource to help guide consumers and businesses to accurate information.

Here’s what you need to know:

•Regular Facebook and Instagram users do not have to pay. The subscription service is an option to help creators and businesses build their communities.

•The optional Meta subscription service will cost \$11.99 per month on the web and \$14.99 for the iOS and Android app. Twitter’s blue check is \$8 a month for web and \$11 for iOS and Android. Twitter also announced an upcharge for its new secure text messaging program.

•Meta Verified is only available in New Zealand and Australia starting on 2/21/23 but may expand globally soon and to business accounts eventually. Twitter Blue is available in many countries, including the U.S. and Canada.

•Users must meet the minimum requirements, be at least 18 years old, and submit a government ID that matches the name and photo on Facebook and Instagram to be eligible for a verification badge.

Be on the lookout for potential scams:

•Watch out for phishing emails, texts, and direct messages offering upgrades to your Facebook or Instagram accounts. Don’t send a photo of your government ID to a scammer!

•Go to BBB’s Spot a

Scam page to see what fake emails, texts and web pages may look like.

•Older adults may be more vulnerable to scams. Reassure your friends and loved ones that they don’t have to pay anything right now.

•Beware of impostors pretending to be from Meta, Facebook, or Instagram. In December, Twitter experienced a wave of fake verified accounts after introducing Twitter Blue.

•Always check links before clicking; go directly to the source.

•Fact-check all information. Go directly to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter help pages if you are unsure.

For more information Read BBB’s tip on phishing scams. Visit BBB’s Scam Tracker to report scams or fraud. Learn how to protect your verified social media account.

Check out BBB’s tip on how to spot a fake social media account. Report scams to BBB.org.

ABOUT BBB SERVING CENTRAL INDIANA: The Better Business Bureau has empowered people to find businesses, brands and charities they can trust for over 110 years. In 2021, people turned to BBB more than 200 million times for BBB Business Profiles on 6.3 million businesses and Charity Reports on 25,000 charities, free at BBB.org. Local, independent BBBs can be found across the United States, Canada, and Mexico, including BBB Serving Central Indiana, which was founded in 1916 and serves 46 counties.



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BETSY From Page A1



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Schools Education Foundation

Brittney Knapp (from left) and Ali (Beaver) Alvey and husband Stuart Alvey, sporting their Noblesville Miller gear, cheer during a previous Miller-Palooza fundraiser, which this year will be March 10 at the Embassy Suites in Noblesville



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Schools Education Foundation

Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen, a 2002 Noblesville High School graduate who emceeds at a previous Miller-Palooza, will again be this year's emcee for the fundraiser on March 10.



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Schools Education Foundation

A live auction is one of the many highlights of Miller-Palooza, a fundraiser for Noblesville Schools Education Foundation, and this year's event will be March 10 at the Embassy Suites in Noblesville.



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Schools Education Foundation

Noblesville Schools Education Foundation supporters Jennifer Jacobi (from left), Ali Alvey, Mary Collyer, Jill Patrick, Jennifer Beahrs, Laurie Dyer, Michelle Payne and NSEF executive director Adriann Young model their Noblesville varsity "N" sweaters during a previous Miller-Palooza fundraiser, which this year will be March 10 at the Embassy Suites in Noblesville

ty volunteer, 1990 NHS graduate Todd Thurston, will assist with the live auction.

What's on the menu? Food stations will be themed as Asian, Mexican and Mac & Cheese. Debbie's Daughters Bakery & Cafe on Conner Street will provide dessert.

How does the auction work?

"Anyone, even non-attendees, can participate in the silent auction," which went live on Friday and will include items and experiences from Noblesville and all over central Indiana, Young said. The auction will end at about 9 p.m. during the event. Anyone interested can view and bid on items at bidpal.net/millerpalooza23.

A live auction will feature higher-end packages and will go the highest bidder in the room at the event.

Highlights of items to bid on?

"Our volunteers have secured some very exciting

options for our auction this year," Young said.

Her idea of some of the coolest items?

"I'm excited about our Ruoff (Music Center) VIP package, IndyCar ride experience, downtown Noblesville items, Pacers VIP package and exclusive school experiences -- (such as) prom tickets, reserved graduation seats and press box seating at Beaver Stadium," she said.

So what can guests do when they're not dining or bidding?

"Guests can enjoy magic, live art, dueling piano music entertainment, historic school artifacts to tie into bicentennial celebrations and highlights of NSEF impact grants from the previous year," Young said.

What about these dueling pianists?

Entertainment from Felix & Fingers is "a very talented group out of Chicago," she said. Guests can make song requests with "tips" that go directly

to support NSEF.

Why should I spend \$125 for a ticket?

"Miller-Palooza is a community celebration that reminds us why it is so special living in Noblesville," Young said. "We have school history and a strong sense of community support that is second to none."

Young, who took her position as NSEF executive director at the start of the 2017-18 school year, loves cheering on and supporting the Millers. In fact, she and her husband, Aaron, a 2003 NHS grad, are raising their own Millers. They have two sons, Sammy, 3, who wants to be a cowboy when he grows up, and Bennett, 6, a kindergartner at White River Elementary School, one of seven elementaries benefiting from the fundraiser.

But next Friday will be an evening out without the kiddos. The event is for ages 21 and older who want to support our schools.

Want TO GO?

What: Miller-Palooza to benefit Noblesville Schools Education Foundation (NSEF).

When: 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. Friday, March 10.

Where: Embassy Suites by Hilton Conference Center, 13700 Conference Center Drive South, Noblesville.

How much: \$125 per person, must be age 21 or older to attend.

Good to know: NSEF promotes and invests in Noblesville Schools through grants, scholarships, strategic partnerships and volunteer support. Auction donations will be accepted through Wednesday; email NSEF executive director Adriann Young at adriann_young@nobl.k12.in.us.

Where to buy a ticket: bidpal.net/millerpalooza23.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and cannot be purchased at the door. Tickets will be available for purchase until noon on March 10. Anyone, even non-attendees, can bid now on silent auction items at the above live link. The auction will end at about 9 p.m. the night of the event.

Info: <https://www.noblesvilleschoolseducationfoundation.org/>

"If you love great food, live music, auction bidding and Noblesville Millers, then this is the event for you," Young said.

Miller-Palooza supports the NSEF with classroom grants, scholarships for

NHS seniors, mental health support for staff and students and other district-led initiatives, she said.

In 2022, Miller-Palooza "raised more than \$70,000 to support our impact," she said. "We're hoping to

raise that and more for this year's event."

Miller-Palooza sponsors that make this event possible: Premier \$5,000 sponsors are Blades Audio Video Security and Ed Martin Automotive. Table sponsors supporting at \$2,000 are Beaver Materials, Chris & Julie Jensen, CSO Architects, Don Smock Auctions, Duke Energy, First Merchants, Gaylor Electric, Hall-Rite Trucking, Dr. Joe Forgey DDS, LHD Benefit Advisors, Myers Construction Management Inc., Moisture Management, Nova 29, Stetnish Agency, T&T Sales and Promotions, and TMG Construction Management.

What does Young enjoy most about the evening?

She said, "I enjoy the school spirit and Noblesville pride that you feel when you leave at the end of the night."

-Contact Betsy Reason at betsy@thetimes24-7.com

Health Care Costs Are Out Of Control; At Least The General Assembly Is Trying To Help

I hadn't planned to write about health care today but as I sat at the keyboard, the strain of the last two weeks kicked in: the doctors, the tests, the waiting, the nurses, the hospital, the lack of sleep.

So, I hope you don't mind if I get a little personal. To start with, I am typing this while sitting in the emergency room with my Dad. He has been here a lot lately.

After a terrible fall in mid-February, he spent five days in the intensive care unit before finally coming home. In the past week he has steadily improved but recovery at age 76 takes time and patience — of which he doesn't

have. Everything was moving in the right direction and two routine checkups seemed positive until the bloodwork came back. Hence, a day-long trip to the ER, an EKG, an echocardiogram, an X-ray and a transfusion.

But at least they didn't keep him. That would have put us all over the top.

That's because he is worried, not only about his health, but about the medical bills that will soon start showing up in the mail.

"I think we are going to need a bigger mailbox for all the bills," he joked in the ER. But it's not a joke. It's a real fear.

You would think that with Medicare and a supplemental insurance plan, the financial burden would be eased. But that's not the health care system we have. He will likely still owe thousands — a retired man who worked hard his entire life to take care of his family and contribute to society.

The prices charged at hospitals, and what is and isn't covered by insurance, are eye-opening.

Which brings me back to the legislature. Republicans in the House and Senate are trying very hard to make an impact. Some might say they are throwing everything at the wall and seeing what sticks.

And it's not a bad analogy.

They range from big ideas to small ones, but if each change helps a little, maybe by the end, Hoosiers will see a difference.

Much of the focus so far has been on hospital costs, but they also need to address prescription drugs.

At the beginning of the year — with their deductible reset — my parents renewed two prescriptions — TWO — for \$1,070. And that's with insurance. This is unconscionable.

The House has two significant bills related to health care costs moving and the Senate has another three.

One House bill focuses on tax credits for em-

ployers who participate in increasingly popular health reimbursement agreements, while a separate House bill would actually fine hospitals whose rates exceed the national average.

The Senate has various approaches: one looking at the role that pharmacy benefit managers play and trying to reduce prescription costs; another limiting how hospitals can bill consumers when procedures happen off a hospital campus. A third tries to free doctors from non-compete agreements so they can serve Hoosiers elsewhere at reduced costs.

I don't know if any of these ideas will work, but

here's the thing: legislators are trying.

They recognize that these high costs are unsustainable and are hurting Hoosiers — financially but also physically, when they avoid care out of fear or don't take medication because they can't afford it.

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WEEKEND

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Pain Relief Found In The Garden



MELINDA MYERS
Columnist

Look to the garden, farmer's market, or refrigerator next time you are battling sore muscles, indigestion, and headaches. These five foods fresh from the garden contain powerful pain-relieving and anti-inflammatory properties.

Mint
Infuse mint into your tea or ice water to refresh and rejuvenate. It also helps relieve headaches and general aches and pain. Grow this vigorous perennial herb in a container so it won't overtake your other plants. And at the end of the season, root a few cuttings to start new plants to grow indoors. All you need are a sunny window, quality potting mix, and regular watering.

Hot Peppers
Capsaicin, the spicy element in chili, jalapeno, habanero, and cayenne peppers, is a great pain-fighting tool and is often used in topical creams to help treat backaches, arthritis, and muscle pain. Plant hot peppers after the soil and air warm, at the same time you are planting sweet peppers and tomatoes. They are ready to harvest when they are fully colored. Purchase extra hot peppers to dry and enjoy year-round.



Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

Sour cherries contain disease-fighting chemicals and antioxidants to help fight inflammation and relieve pain.

Cherries
Manage muscle pain and inflammation with sour cherries. They are loaded with disease-fighting chemicals and antioxidants and help fight inflammation and relieve pain. Purchase plenty of cherries to juice, dry, and preserve so you can enjoy their health benefits all year long. And consider planting a sour cherry tree in your backyard. Montmorency is the most popular sour cherry needing only 700 hours of air temperatures between 34 and 45 degrees to initiate flowering for fruit development. New hardier dwarf introductions from the University of Saskatchewan can be grown in colder regions including zone 2. Although it takes several years for cherry plants to start producing fruit, you'll enjoy watching your tree grow into maturity and bear its first crop. Just make sure to cover the plants with netting so the birds don't eat your harvest.

Ginger
Ginger helps reduce inflammation and combat migraines, muscle pain, arthritis, and post-workout or post-gardening soreness. All this plus it helps fight nausea. Although it's a tropical plant you can find plants or rhizomes (the part you eat) online. Or join other enthusiastic gardeners who have had success rooting the rhizomes they purchased at the grocery store to start new plants. Grow your ginger in a pot outdoors or sunny window alongside your other indoor plants.

Sage
Sage tea has long been used to soothe scratchy and irritated throats and showed positive results in a 2006 clinical trial. Harvest a few sage leaves, add hot water, and brew a bit of sore throat relief. Grow this herb in the garden or a container. It thrives in a sunny spot with well-drained soil. Harvest leaves as needed throughout the season.

Regular harvesting encourages more growth for future harvests. You can remove as much as one-third of the plant at one time for preservation. So next time you're feeling a bit of pain, pass by the medicine cabinet and look to the garden for a bit of relief. Even the simple act of tending your garden and harvesting produce can elevate your mood, lower your blood pressure, and start you on the road to feeling better.

*Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released **Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening**. She hosts **The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"** instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated **Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program**. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for **Birds & Blooms** magazine and her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.*

Women's Day: Flowers For Every Woman

International Women's Day will soon be upon us again. It's the perfect day to pay a floral tribute to all the amazing women around you. Radiant spring flowers like tulips, daffodils and hyacinths are perfect for showing your appreciation.

Women you value Mothers, wives, neighbors, colleagues, sports buddies or best friends: on International Women's Day, you can show that you appreciate all the important women around you. And what better way to do so than with a radiant bouquet of spring flowers.

Positive vibes
Fortunately, around 8 March – International Women's Day – there are plenty of spring flowers available, like hyacinths, daffodils and tulips. Tulips in particular naturally radiate femininity and power. They even continue to grow in the vase, thus representing growth and confidence in the future. Tulips are also a symbol of love, affection and positivity. Positive vibes all around!

Mix & match
A bouquet of tulips

is in itself a fabulous gift for Women's Day. Depending on the colors you choose, you can enhance either the femininity (think of pink and white-and-pink stripes) or, if you prefer, the power side (purple, orange and red). Mixing different colors is always a good idea, to really help the positive energy pop. Tulips also combine beautifully with other spring flowers, like hyacinths. They add a touch of spring fragrance to your bouquet. It doesn't get much more feminine than that! For more bouquet ideas, please visit www.ilsaysays.com.

Tip
Ask your florist for locally grown tulips and other spring flowers. These flowers will have come directly from the nursery, so they are freshly picked and of high quality.

Tulip fact
Did you know that tulips come in different flower shapes? How about a bouquet mixing single and double-flowered tulips, or tulips with fringed petals? Stunning, and very feminine to boot!

Welcome Spring Early With Pre-Forced Bulbs

If you are ready for spring but it hasn't arrived yet, why not put some pre-forced bulbs in your garden or on your balcony/terrace. In this way, you can start the gardening season early.

A new beginning
As soon as the first rays of sunlight come through, all we want to do is welcome spring back. It is the season when nature starts 'awake' and the garden slowly starts to awaken. Shrubs and perennials often need a little more time to get going. If you don't want to wait any longer for the smell and color of flowers, just get things going with pre-forced bulbs.

A spectacle of growth Pre-forced bulbs for the outdoors are at their best from February through April. They flourish in ornamental pots, but also in the open ground (remove

the grow pot first). They will brighten up any spot because you can experience the growth spectacle from the bulb to the first buds and then welcome the beautiful flowers. In other words: it would be silly not to brighten up your garden with these bulbs.

Craftsmanship
Did you know that growers use a trick when growing pre-forced bulbs? They give the bulbs a special treatment. Then the growers plant the bulbs in pots and trays with potting soil. Thanks to plenty of craftsmanship, care and love, they grow even before spring so that we can enjoy them. They come in all kinds of varieties. The most familiar ones are daffodils, hyacinths and tulips.

Do you want to find out more about pre-forced bulbs? Then go to www.ilsaysays.com.

Help Banish Winter Blues With These Home Improvement Fixes

(StatePoint) Preparing your home for cold weather can lower your energy bills; promote a more comfortable, healthier environment; and even help banish winter blues. Here's what to know:

- Call a professional: "Waiting until it gets really cold to run your heater is like not stretching before you run," says Mark Woodruff, senior product manager, Outdoor Products at Trane Residential, who advises running your heater early in the season for a good hour or so to ensure it's working. "Scheduling a service appointment now is a much better, and often cheaper option than trying to book an emergency appointment in extreme temperatures or well into winter," he says.
- Change air filters: For better indoor air quality (IAQ) and to extend the life of your HVAC system, change filters every 30-90 days. If you have pets or household members with asthma or allergies, change filters more often.
- Try zoned heating: Zoned HVAC systems let you keep a consistent temperature throughout your home, or heat one zone

for individualized comfort that helps you save energy and directs heat where it's desired.

- Consider an upgrade: Forty-five percent of Americans deal with "shockingly high" energy bills, according to a Trane Residential survey conducted by OnePoll. A heating equipment upgrade, however, can help you enjoy consistent warmth without wasted energy. Consider the XC95m furnace from Trane. Its AFUE rating of up to 97.3% means nearly all of the fuel it uses goes to warming the home. When paired with the energy-efficient XV20i Variable Speed Heat Pump, you can enjoy the reliability of a hybrid or dual fuel system. To learn more, visit: trane.com/residential.
- Set your thermostat: Newer technology can help maximize energy savings. With the Trane Home app, for example, you can program your smart thermostat and control your home's temperature from anywhere. Its geofencing capabilities regulate temperature based on your location.
- Monitor indoor air quality: In the same

Trane Residential survey, 57% of respondents said they suffer from indoor stuffiness and lack of fresh air. Improving IAQ can help alleviate allergy and asthma symptoms and reduce the spread of colds and flu.

First, determine what airborne particles may be negatively affecting the air. You can also contact an HVAC dealer who can test your IAQ and offer recommendations to improve it. They may recommend installing a whole-home air cleaner like the Trane CleanEffects, which is certified asthma and allergy friendly by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America and has been documented to remove 99.9% of the Influenza A (H1N1) virus. The Awaire Element is a great way to monitor your IAQ by measuring temperature, humidity, etc.

- Assess humidity: Maintaining a home humidity level between 35 and 60% is one key to improving IAQ and ensuring comfort in colder weather. Mold, dust mites and other air pollutants tend to thrive outside that range, and the body's natural immune system can be compromised in dry air.

"Monitor humidity with a reliable HVAC thermostat. Then, manage it with a whole-home humidifier or dehumidifier," advises Woodruff. "These units are installed professionally and tie into your HVAC ductwork system."

• Check insulation: Poor insulation is an often-overlooked escape route for heat that forces your heating system to work harder. Homes built in the 1970s or earlier should be checked by an expert, as insulation quality has come a long way since then. Also, foam insulation can settle after a year, so it's best to inspect insulation annually. Certain insulation jobs can be accomplished by a handy homeowner; however, you may prefer hiring a contractor. The average insulation upgrade costs \$2,400, according to the National Association of Realtors, but will save on utility costs in the years ahead.

"For many, wintertime is unpleasant indoors and outside. While we can't control the weather, there are many things we can do to improve conditions at home to feel cozier and more comfortable," says Woodruff.



WEEKEND *Travel or stay! and Play*

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Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Announces 2023-24 Season

The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra (ISO) is thrilled to announce the 2023-24 season featuring top names in classical music today, award-winning Pops artists, and innovative fusions—with the talented musicians of the ISO at the heart of it all. Subscriptions are available now.

One of the most celebrated artists of his era, Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell headlines the Opening Night Gala Sept. 23 presented by the Christel DeHaan Family Foundation as the ISO warmly welcomes back the Orchestra's fourth music director, John Nelson.

The IU Health Plans Classical Series features works and artists known in Indianapolis and around the world. ISO Artistic Advisor Jun Märkl, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Kevin John Edusei, Anthony McGill, Augustin Hadelich, Michelle Cann, and Kenny Broberg highlight a star-studded lineup. Popular musical highlights include Carl Orff's enduring Carmina Burana, Beethoven's immortal Fifth Symphony and Violin Concerto, two of Tchaikovsky's most popular concert works, and Mozart's masterful Symphony No. 40. Contemporary music lovers will be treated to a new Tuba Concerto written by jazz great Wynton Marsalis and performed by Anthony Kniffen, principal tuba; and a new work by Adolphus Hailstork that celebrates President John F. Kennedy's final speech.

Led by Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, the 2023-24 Printing Partners Pops Series includes Grammy and Tony Award-winner Heather Headley Sept. 15-16. Tony Award-nominated and Emmy Award-winning actress, singer, and recording artist Liz Callaway returns Nov. 10-11 to celebrate the best of the stage, screen, and pop hits of the 60s and 70s. Grammy nominee and American Idol finalist Cody Fry brings his

singer-songwriter talents and genre-blurring music to the ISO for a special concert with Principal Pops Conductor of the Nashville Symphony, Enrico Lopez-Yañez.

Maestro Jack Everly leads the 37th annual AES Indiana Yuletide Celebration Dec. 1-23, 2023, for a magical holiday production featuring tap-dancing Santas, dazzling choreography, and stunning costumes. 2023 host announcement to come this spring!

Conductor and composer Steve Hackman returns in 2023-24 to bring his visionary Uncharted Series to Hilbert Circle Theatre following sold-out performances this year. The Uncharted Series offers Indianapolis music fans new avenues into classical music, beginning Nov. 8 with Kendrick Lamar X. Stravinsky, which combines Stravinsky's Petrouchka with Kendrick Lamar's Pulitzer Prize-winning album DAMN. Female vocalists are highlighted in And I Love Her: Music of the Beatles April 17, 2024, continuing with From Beethoven to Beyoncé June 5, 2024, a fantastical trip through an imaginary music festival curated by those two artists, combining the greatest composers of all-time with the best popular artists of today.

IU Health Plans Classical Series highlights

- For ISO's Opening Night Gala Sept. 23, world-renowned violinist Joshua Bell performs Bruch's delightful Violin Concerto No. 1. The program also includes Mendelssohn's jubilant Symphony No. 4, "Italian."

- Sept. 28-29: Time for Three returns to Indianapolis to perform Contact, a dazzling concerto written for them by composer Kevin Puts, who received a Grammy Award for the composition in 2023. Conductor Kevin John Edusei makes his much-anticipated return with a program featuring Prokofiev's epic Fifth Symphony and Beethoven's dramatic overture to Goethe's

Egmont.

- Oct. 6-7: ISO concertmaster Kevin Lin shines in Saint-Saëns' Third Violin Concerto. Conductor Matthias Pintscher leads the ISO in Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony.

- Oct. 27-28: Soprano Janice Chandler-Eteme delivers the immortal words of President John F. Kennedy and poet Robert Frost in a newly co-commissioned work by Adolphus Hailstork titled JFK: The Last Speech.

- Jan. 19-20, 2024: Conductor Jeannette Sorrell, New York Philharmonic principal clarinetist Anthony McGill, and soprano Sonya Headlam perform music of Mozart and Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, a contemporary of Mozart's whose life was depicted in the 2022 film Chevalier.

- Feb. 8-10, 2024: 2006 IVCI Gold Medalist Augustin Hadelich returns to Indy to perform Beethoven's beloved Violin Concerto.

- April 4-6, 2024: Pianist Michelle Cann makes her ISO debut with some of the most popular melodies in Western music in Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1. ISO Assistant Conductor Su-Han Yang conducts Rachmaninoff's expressive Third Symphony.

Printing Partners Pops Series and Film Series presented by Bank of America highlights

- Cirque World of Dance is an all-new show created by Troupe Vertigo in collaboration with Maestro Jack Everly. The Oct. 13-14 program marks their seventh appearance with the ISO.

- Following multiple sold-out performances at the Kennedy Center, Grammy-nominated Cody Fry rings in 2024 at Hilbert Circle Theatre Jan. 12-13 with his signature pop sensibility accompanied by the ISO and led by guest conductor Enrico Lopez-Yañez.

- Other Pops highlights include a full symphonic tribute to the Beatles

Feb. 2-3, 2024, featuring never-before-seen photos displayed on-screen during the concert.

- Pops favorites Frankie Moreno and Tony Desare join forces March 15-16, 2024, for a night of rock, jazz, and pop hits featuring two dueling grand pianos on stage.

- South Pacific: In Concert offers highlights from the popular musical with the Indianapolis Men's Chorus May 10-11, 2024.

- The Film Series presented by Bank of America features a celebration of 100 years of Disney animation and music with Disney in Concert: The Sound of Magic Oct. 21, 2023. This experience includes favorite characters and soundtracks from Disney movies and theme parks accompanied by a live ISO performance conducted by Maestro Jack Everly.

- The Film Series presented by Bank of America also includes the beloved original Toy Story in January, followed by Star Wars: The Force Awakens April 19-20, 2024, to be performed for the first time at Hilbert Circle Theatre. The ISO is honored to welcome a host of new and returning guest artists and conductors, including:

- **Debut Conductors**
 - Kazem Abdullah
 - Yue Bao
 - Vladimir Kulenovic
 - Michael Sanderling
 - Jeannette Sorrell
 - Lidiya Yankovskaya
- **Returning Conductors**
 - David Danzmayr
 - Kevin John Edusei
 - Hans Graf
 - Jun Märkl
 - Matthias Pintscher
 - Alexander Shelley
 - Enrico Lopez-Yañez

- **Debut Artists**
 - Kenny Broberg, piano (APA winner 2021)
 - Michelle Cann, piano
 - Alexandra Dariescu, piano
 - Benjamin Grosvenor, piano
 - Anthony McGill, clarinet
 - Carolin Widmann,

violin

- Heather Headley
- Cody Fry

- **Returning Artists**

- Augustin Hadelich, violin
- Vadim Gluzman, violin
- Time for Three
- Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano
- Frankie Moreno
- Tony Desare
- Liz Callaway
- Troupe Vertigo

- **Unheard Voices**

Through the Unheard Voices initiative, the ISO continues to highlight the works of composers who have historically been overlooked in classical music. The 2023-24 season features works by Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969), Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979), Joseph Boulogne "Chevalier de Saint-George" (1745-1799), Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941), Augusta Holmès (1847-1903), Hannah Kendall (b. 1984), Wynton Marsalis (b. 1961) and many more.

Film Series presented by Bank of America at a glance Disney in Concert: The Sound of Magic (Oct. 21, 2023)

Toy Story in Concert (Jan. 6-7, 2024)

Star Wars: The Force Awakens (April 19-20, 2024)

Uncharted Series at a glance

Kendrick Lamar X Stravinsky (Nov. 8, 2023)

And I Love Her: Music of the Beatles (April 17, 2024)

From Beethoven to Beyoncé (June 5, 2024)

ISO Subscriptions—Best Value

Subscriptions are the best way to experience the ISO, offering the greatest value and the most benefits. For the IU Health Plans Classical Series, patrons who subscribe to the full 16-concert package can receive up to a 40% savings over the cost of purchasing a single ticket. For the Printing Partners Pops Series, patrons who subscribe to the eight-concert series receive the equivalent of a 25% savings over the cost of a single ticket

purchase.

ISO Subscriptions—on sale Feb. 21, 2023 Patrons may renew current subscriptions or become a new subscriber beginning Feb. 21 by visiting the ISO's website at IndianapolisSymphony.org, by phone at 317-639-4300, by mail, or in person at the Hilbert Circle Theatre Box Office. The deadline for subscription renewal is March 20, 2023.

Among many of the benefits of becoming an ISO subscriber is advance ticket buying opportunities for and discounts to special events such as Opening Night Gala and the annual holiday tradition, AES Indiana Yuletide Celebration, and Kroger Symphony on the Prairie. Subscriber benefits include discounted tickets to classical and pops concerts and an opportunity to purchase a pre-paid season parking pass to Express Park Garage, located at 20 N. Pennsylvania.

For more information about all Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra presentations, visit IndianapolisSymphony.org or call the Hilbert Circle Theatre Box Office at 317-639-4300.

About the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, at home and thriving in the heart of Indianapolis, offers an exceptional artistic and musical experience. The orchestra is open to all and dedicated to creating an inclusive and innovative experiential environment that is inspiring, educational, and welcoming. The ISO celebrates historically beloved performances while engaging audiences by introducing new voices through programming including the IU Health Plans Classical Series, the Printing Partners Pops Series, the holiday traditions of AES Indiana Yuletide Celebration, and the popular Film Series presented by Bank of America. For more information, visit www.indianapolisymphony.org.

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