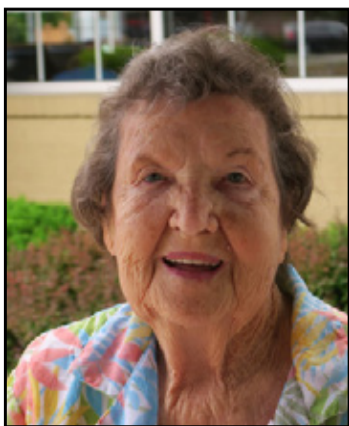


➔ TODAY'S VERSE  
John 11:35 Jesus wept.



➔ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY  
People who call our community their own.

What makes Joanne White smile? "My grandson and great-grandchildren," said the 92-year-old Noblesville woman. She has one son, the late Joe Wilson, and daughter-in-law, Vicki; two grandchildren, Craig Wilson and Angie McCauley; and five great-grandchildren. Andrew, Erin and Lindsay Wilson and Mason and Alexis McCauley. She has worked for The Noblesville Ledger and The Times. "Before that, I was the telephone operator before they went dial," she said. "We were at the corner of Maple and Ninth Street, and there was a long board where we'd plug the cords in for people to ask us for a number. Somebody was there 24-7 ... When Noblesville closed, we went to 40th and Central in Indianapolis, then from there, down to New York (Street) where the nature office was.... That didn't last very long, because in '64, I married Eddy White who had White Oldsmobile (on Logan Street in Noblesville)." She said, "It doesn't seem like it's been that long ago, but time really flies." The former Joanne Cook, she's related to Steve and Matt Cook and every August enjoys the Cook Reunion at Forest Park. She was an election poll worker for more than 12 years at the Hamilton County Government & Judicial Center and some of the precincts, but in 2020 was the first year she didn't work due to the pandemic. She and her twin brother, Joe Cook, graduated in 1948 from Noblesville High School. "I'm still on the Noblesville Alumni Board for the scholarship committee." The 2023 NHS Alumni Banquet is April 29 at Noblesville High School, where she will celebrate her 75th-year reunion. For more information on the banquet, email NHS Alumni president Peggy Baldwin Beaver at bvrhut@aol.com

And Another Thing...

1. Gov. Holcomb directs flags to be flown at half staff

Governor Eric J. Holcomb is directing flags to be flown at half-staff in honor and remembrance of the victims of the horrific tragedy in Nashville, Tenn.

Flags should be flown at half-staff immediately until sunset on Friday, March 31, 2023.

2. NEW MEMBER SENDS THEIR THANKS!!

As a thank you and introduction for Indy Eleven to the Noblesville Chamber, they'd like to invite all fellow members out to our Home Opener match on Saturday April 1 versus the Las Vegas Lights

3. 2023 fishing and hunting licenses

Indiana fishing and hunting licenses are now available for purchase for the upcoming seasons. They are valid April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

4. Frisky fingers

How long does it take you to complete a Rubik's Cube puzzle? Nine-year-old Yiheng Wang who hails from China can do it faster than anyone else on the planet, according to the Guinness Book of World Records. In a recent playoff in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia he set a new record averaging an awesome 4.69 seconds in five attempts at solving a 3x3x3 cube.

5. Congressional Art Competition

Rep. Victoria Spartz (R-IN) announced the 2023 Congressional Art Competition. Started in 1982 by the U.S. House of Representatives, this annual competition highlights high school students' artistic works from across the country.

The first-place winner's submission will be displayed in the Cannon Tunnel of the U.S. Capitol, along with other winners nationwide for one year.

# The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper



NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Photo courtesy of Hamilton Schools

Teaching arts in elementary grades helps children develop their creative and critical thinking skills. It also helps them learn to express themselves, to think outside the box, and to problem-solve.

## Art Education at Heights Fuels Imagination, Creativity, and Achievement

March is Youth Art Month and Hamilton Heights School Corporation has much to celebrate when it comes to art education. Hamilton Heights has long understood the many benefits of art education including academic achievement, social and emotional development, civic engagement, and equitable opportunity to name a few.

Like math, science, or history, the arts are a way of knowing and understanding the world and the complexity of human experience. Arts education builds an appreciation for the arts, and provides students

with an introduction to artistic disciplines, techniques, and major movements that serves as a foundation for lifelong engagement.

Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork. It offers invaluable lessons such as practice makes perfect, small differences can have large effects, collaboration leads to creativity, and there can be several paths to take when approaching problems and that all problems can have more than one solution. Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in

math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skill. Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork.

Art is an important part a well-rounded K-12 education experience and plays a pivotal role in cultivating the next generation of citizens and leaders. Heights' art educators, Taylor Myers (HHHS), Erin Goodman (HHMS), and Cheri Trachten (HHES), get this and have been instrumental in opening the door to the unlimited possibilities of

➔ See ARTS Page A5

## Sheridan Museum Gets Important Donation

By Steve Martin  
Sheridan Historical Society

Sometimes we forget about the small things in life, but we had a reminder of that at the Sheridan Museum today. We take a lot of pride in having Sheridan graduate class pictures from 1905 to present in our archive, minus just a very few early years.

This time around, though, we were fortunate enough to get a 1924 graduate picture from Boxley High School. Yes, believe it or not, little Boxley was important and large enough to warrant a high school. It lasted from 1900 to 1931 when it consolidated with Sheridan. The museum has a few of the Boxley class pictures but not all, and one of the years missing was the Class of 1924. We were very thankful to be able to add this

one to our collection.

The donation was via a former Sheridan community member, Evelyn Carlisle. Her mother-in-law, who graduated in 1924 from Boxley, passed not too long ago and the picture was hanging on the wall in her home. Evelyn told us that her mother-in-law always had memorable stories to tell about her classmates. That is one of the reasons these types of pictures are cherished. What a shame if it had been discarded.

So to make a long story a bit shorter, please don't throw away any of your old pictures that show historic things about Sheridan, including class pictures. We have a few holes to fill in our Sheridan class pictures, as well as a few more Boxley pictures that are missing. We would really like to



Photo Courtesy Sheridan Historical Society

Evelyn Carlisle is sitting in front of Museum docent Connie Mossburg who is holding Evelyn's mother-in-law's picture of the Boxley High School Class of 1924. Thank you, Evelyn, for your wonderful donation to the Museum's collections.

have a few shots of the Hippodrome theater, which is now the home of the museum. And the community is currently working to upgrade the building facades on Main Street so a few more

pictures of the old buildings would be a welcome addition to our collections.

If you have old pictures

➔ See STEVE Page A5

### ➔ INSIDE TODAY

- Service Directory.....A3
- Tim Timmons.....A4
- EarthTalk.....A5
- Capital Chronicle.....A
- Indiana Facts & Fun.....A7
- Indiana News.....A8

### ➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Ear wax is normal. If you must, clean out ear wax with an over-the-counter ear wax removal kit, not a cotton swab. 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 thetimes24-7.com



### ➔ TODAY'S QUOTE

"You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming."  
-Pablo Neruda

### ➔ HONEST HOOSIER

The old saying is not to discuss religion or politics in mixed company. With the state of both, maybe we ought to rethink that?



### ➔ TODAY'S JOKE

What do you get when you put a dozen Easter eggs on a hill?  
Spring rolls.

### ➔ OBITUARIES

None



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49/49 FALLING TEMPS SAT  
28/58 BURY AND MELT SUN  
46/71 WARMER MON  
56/70 SCATTERED TUE

## Nickel Plate Arts Celebrating 11th Annual Welcome To Fairyville Event

The 11th annual Welcome to Fairyville event, presented by Duke Energy, alights on the Nickel Plate Arts campus April 19-22, with crafts and activities for all ages and most events free.

"Welcome to Fairyville is our most joyous celebration of the year, a time when we celebrate the return of spring, the endless creativity of our community, and the youthful adventurer inside our own hearts," says Nickel Plate Arts Director Ailithir McGill. "The magic of Fairyville is that it brings out the kid in all of us and inspires wonder and curiosity that help us see beautiful downtown Noblesville in a whole new way."

The annual event is centered around Earth Day and places a heavy emphasis on outdoor, nature-themed activities. In addition to the scheduled events that are offered throughout downtown Noblesville, there will be options for walk-in and take-home projects through local arts partners. McGill describes the event as a fun celebration that promotes the mission of Earth Day while also supporting local businesses and artists.

"My team looks forward to Fairyville every year because it gives us an extra outlet for all sorts of creativity. From identifying the best ways to include dozens of different artists and merchants, to figuring out how to build a giant salamander puppet, this program is a wonderful challenge!" says McGill. "We, along with the more than two dozen businesses and organizations who team up to bring Fairyville to the community, look forward to welcoming everyone to the Fairyville Trail!"

Welcome to Fairyville Events  
Nickel Plate Arts, along with its partners and other local businesses, will host various events and activities for Welcome to Fairyville. These events are open to the public.

Wednesday, April 19 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - **QUEEN TITANIA'S FAIRY BALL:** Join the Queen of Fairyville at an enchanting ball for her beloved mortal friends at the Lacy Arts Building (by invitation only, \$100 per ticket).

Wednesday, April 19 through Saturday, April 22 - **FAIRY HOME SHOW:** The full collection of Fairy Houses made by local artists of all ages will be on display and open for voting on the Nickel Plate Arts campus on Wednesday, April 19 and Thursday, April 20 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. and will move to the Fairyville Trail for Fairy Friday and Sprite Saturday. Visitors are en-

couraged to get a map on campus before beginning their tour of the Fairy Home Show (free).

Friday, April 21 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - **FAIRY VENDORS:** Fairy-inspired wares will be sold on the Noblesville Courthouse Square (individual booth costs).

Friday, April 21 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. - **FAIRYVILLE AFTER DARK:** Join Nickel Plate Arts at various locations around downtown Noblesville for an adult-oriented experience presented by Martin & Martin Insurance that will include face and body effects painting, acrobatics and fire performing, Celtic music and dancing, and more. Adult-oriented activities are classified by the Fairyville After Dark crescent moon symbol on event listings (free).

Friday, April 21 from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - **FAIRYVILLE TRAIL:** Visit the Fairyville Trail during the day on Friday and Saturday to see the Fairy Home Show, meet the citizens of Fairyville, and take part in various magic shows, live musical performances, and Earth Day activities (free).

Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - **FAIRY CABOOSE RIDES:** The Nickel Plate Express Fairy Caboose will be picking up passengers every 30 minutes and taking them along the Fairyville Trail to find fairy homes, meet citizens of Fairyville, and more (\$17 per person).

Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - **FAMILY TEA PARTIES:** Join Sleeping Beauty and her fairy friends for a tea party full of tea, treats, art, and proper fairy tea etiquette at the HCAA Birdie Gallery (\$15 per person; children under 13 must be accompanied by a paying adult).

Friday, April 21 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, April 22 at 2 p.m. - **FAIRYVILLE PARADE:** The Fairyville Parade, presented by the Noblesville Trustee's Office, will follow the Fairyville Trail from Nickel Plate Arts to the Noblesville Courthouse Square and will include Fairyville's most prominent citizens (free).

Kids and adults can submit a fairy house (applications due April 15) to be featured in the Fairy Home Show and along the Fairyville Trail during Fairy Friday and Sprite Saturday.

The Fairyville Trail is free to attend; some special events have costs and requirements. Click here to purchase tickets and learn more about the Welcome to Fairyville event.



Photo courtesy of Hamilton Heights Schools

**Hamilton Heights senior Hannah Smallwood was recently awarded the 2022-23 Chapter All Star Award at the BPA Leadership Conference in Indianapolis. Courtesy photo**

## Smallwood Winner Of BPA Chapter All Star Award

Hannah Smallwood, a senior at Hamilton Heights High School in Arcadia, Indiana, is the recipient of the 2022-23 BPA State Chapter All Star Award. This award recognizes students for their hard work and dedication in their school's chapter. Smallwood, a six year member of Heights' Business Professionals of America (BPA) chapter, served as an officer for the past three years and is the current president of the chapter. She is also the manager of the Husky Fan Shop.

Smallwood, who is also credited as being the catalyst to insure

Heights' BPA achieved the THRIVE level recognition this year, plans to study business at the IU Kelly School of Business at IUPUI in the fall.

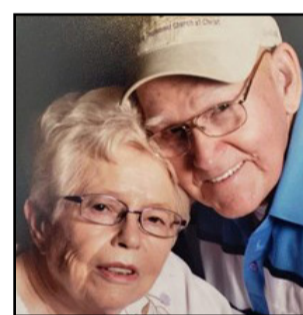
"Hannah has helped take the organization to the next level," said BPA Chapter Advisor, Kim Kaiser. "She represents everything BPA is about, and I am really proud of her."

The Mission of Business Professionals of America is to develop and empower student leaders to discover their passion and change the world by creating unmatched opportunities in learning, professional growth, and service.

## 70 Years And Still Going Strong

John and Joyce Waterman are celebrating a remarkable milestone on April 26th - their 70th wedding anniversary! They first met in 7th grade when John caught a glimpse of Joyce across the room and fell in love. John is one of eleven kids of Ralph and Lela Waterman, life-long residents of Noblesville. Joyce is one of three children of James and Golden Lipps, and moved to Noblesville from Pennington Gap, VA when she was very young.

John and Joyce lived in Noblesville, where John was a full-time dedicated farmer and Joyce worked alongside him caring for their six children (Rick, Kristi, Marcia, Kelly, Amy, Jamie). They had moved to New Castle some years later and are now both retired, and inseparable. Together,



JOHN and JOYCE WATERMAN

they have built a loving family that now includes 16 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. This anniversary is a testament to the enduring love and commitment that John and Joyce have for God, for each other, and for their family. Please join them in celebrating their many years together at an Open House on Sunday April 30, 2023 at New Testament Church of Christ, 752 West Main Street in Hagerstown, IN from 2-5 p.m.

## City Of Noblesville Establishes Advisory Council On Disabilities

Mayor Chris Jensen presented a resolution establishing the City of Noblesville Advisory Council on Disabilities at the common council meeting on March 14.

The advisory council's aim is to increase overall community awareness of challenges faced by persons with disabilities and opportunities for support by more effectively mobilizing persons and institutions who are involved with education, outreach, support, and advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities.

"When we look at census data for Noblesville, we see that we have around 8% of our residents that have one or more disabilities," Jensen said. "We saw a need to increase overall community awareness of challenges faced by persons with disabilities and opportunities for support."

An initial area of focus for the advisory council will be scheduling listening sessions with nonprofit organizations and area residents who are living with a disability or who support a person with a disability to learn more about what the community is doing well, where it can improve and identify resource gaps and considerations.

Jensen added, "By

creating a dedicated entity to mobilize the community around our mission, we envision a more inclusive, supportive and vibrant future in our city."

The advisory council will develop a website to provide resources, referral and community event information of relevance. The council will also highlight ongoing efforts and initiatives within the city through Janus Developmental Services, Same As U, Noble of Indiana, and other organizations, as well as accessibility in relation to community facilities and autism awareness training by first responders.

"The Noblesville Common Council is pleased to partner with the administration and community stakeholders to accommodate, lift up, and promote the engagement of persons with disabilities," Common Council President Aaron Smith said. "We are happy to be working together so that everyone in Noblesville has the opportunity to thrive."

Further, the advisory council will explore development of an Ally Toolkit using best practices and material implemented in other communities. The council will work to develop plans for longer term areas of focus and collaboration.

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## Moontown Pickle Stompers Takes Students Back In Musical Time



Photo courtesy of Hamilton Heights Schools

Third- and fourth-grade students at Hamilton Heights Elementary School were treated to the snappy sounds and song of the Moontown Pickle Stompers, a local band with a down home sound and style similar to the Hoosier Hot Shots. The Hoosier Hot Shots were an American quartet of musicians, founded in Indiana, who entertained on stage, screen, radio, and records from the mid-1930s into the 1970s. This engaging musical experience was a part of the third grade's unit on local history unit.

## Child Care Expansion Grants Applications Now Open To Early Education Providers

Indiana's Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning today announced that \$10 million in funding is available to child care and early education providers to expand access to high-quality early education for Hoosier families.

"This Child Care Expansion Grant provides a great opportunity for child care providers who are looking to grow their businesses and serve more children and families, particularly in underserved areas of Indiana, or to expand availability to priority age groups where care is often hardest to find," said Courtney Penn, director of FSSA's Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. "The first five years of a child's life are the most significant to build a strong foundation for future success. We welcome the opportunity to partner with providers to serve hard-working Hoosier families."

The funds for this program are made possible through Senate Enrolled Act 2 from the 2022 Indiana General Assembly special session, as well as funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

The grant will be competitive with funding

offered across two tracks:

- Existing program expansion: Up to \$200,000 per program to assist providers who accept child care assistance in updating existing facilities and operations with priority given to high-quality providers and those adding capacity or serving underserved age groups, such as infants and toddlers

- New program creation: Up to \$750,000 per program to assist providers in establishing new child care programs in underserved areas of the state.

An applicant must be the intended operator of the new program, provide data to demonstrate a need for new child care in the community and must contribute at least ten percent of the total project budget, either in cash, loan funding or through in-kind donations or contributions.

Applications are open now through May 12. An overview of the grant opportunity, including supporting resources and a link to the application, is available here.

This expansion grant helps to build upon FSSA's recent work to help stabilize and grow child care in Indiana

to support child care providers and build available child care capacity. This includes:

- Providing \$542 million in stabilization grants in 2021 and 2022 to more than 3,300 child care providers to help them rebuild after the instability caused by the pandemic.

- These investments directly strengthened the workforce, leading to a 29% decrease in vacant child care and early learning teaching positions from 2021 to 2022.

- Assembling a working group of child care professionals to review current licensing rules and regulations and make recommendations to remove barriers that make licensing more burdensome than necessary.

- Analyzing the data received during the stabilization grant process to help reevaluate reimbursement rates to providers, to make them more in-line with the actual cost of child care.

The Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning is a division of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. Child care providers may send questions to [oecosproviderinquiry@fssa.in.gov](mailto:oecosproviderinquiry@fssa.in.gov).

## ACLU Rips Lawmakers Over Transgender Bill

The Indiana Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union took issue with Indiana lawmakers this week.

The organization said that Senate Bill 480 ignores the warnings of parents, medical providers and transgender youth themselves and that the bill would ban gender-affirming health care for anyone under 18. The bill, passed by the Legislature, is now headed to the desk of Gov. Eric Holcomb.

"Indiana lawmakers seem hellbent on joining the growing roster of states determined to jeopardize the health and lives of transgender youth, in direct opposition to

the overwhelming body of scientific and medical evidence supporting this care as appropriate and necessary," said Katie Blair, advocacy and public policy director of the ACLU of Indiana. "The idea that these youth are being pushed into harmful medical care is an insult to their parents who are working very hard to get the best care for their children. Politicians harm us all when they ignore medical judgment and block access to standard care in favor of discriminatory fear-mongering. Transgender youth in Indiana deserve the support and care necessary to give them

the same chance to thrive as their peers. We urge Governor Holcomb to veto this harmful piece of legislation. If this bill is signed into law, the ACLU of Indiana will defend the rights of transgender youth in court."

The ACLU said that similar measures have been roundly condemned by leading pediatric and public health experts, including the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Similar laws passed in Arkansas and Alabama are currently enjoined by federal courts.

## State Steps On Bugs For VW Work

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita announced a lawsuit this week against defendants accused of failing to perform work after taking payments from customers seeking restoration of vintage Volkswagen vehicles.

Operating under the name JB Bugs, the company not only failed to do the work it promised but also gave false updates to consumers about work that was supposedly in progress, the lawsuit states.

"As a Volkswagen Thing and Bug enthusiast myself, I understand the love poured into these vehicles by their owners," Rokita said. "Unfortunately, scammers play on these kinds of passions to

defraud people of money, but we will keep working to protect Hoosiers and hold businesses accountable."

Defendants named in the lawsuit are JB Bugs Trick & Truck Shop LLC and Palm Principals LLC — both operating under the name JB Bugs — and owners John Bragg and Melanie Goode.

After customers paid JB Bugs significant sums of money for the restorations — and received assurances the work was in progress — they eventually learned the company's building was vacated and their vintage vehicles missing.

In total, the complaint alleges that 19 consumers paid JB Bugs \$227,000 without JB Bugs restoring the consumers'

vehicles or providing any refunds. The complaint alleges the defendants violated the Indiana Deceptive Consumer Sales Act's prohibition on deceptive and unfair business practices.

Rokita is seeking restitution for the affected consumers and civil penalties against the defendants.

Defendant John Bragg is also facing criminal charges in Indiana for his actions at JB Bugs. He was recently located and arrested in North Carolina.

Anyone who believes they have encountered wrongful business practices in Indiana is encouraged to file complaints with Attorney General Rokita's office at [www.in.gov/attorneygeneral](http://www.in.gov/attorneygeneral).

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# How Low Can We Go? Answers Are Evident



**TIM TIMMONS**  
Two Cents

Remember Harry Belafonte's version of the Limbo song. . . that rich baritone asking how low can you go?  
Harry is 96 today and I'm guessing might be surprised at the answer to that question. Why? Because today, in this country, we're proving over and over and over we can go pretty doggone low.  
And it doesn't feel like we're done yet.  
Consider:  
•Voting  
•Government assistance  
•Drug testing  
•School sports  
•Academic rankings  
•Sin  
•Journalism  
•Even tax day

Think not? Let's delve into each.  
**Voting:** Most of us grew up with the idea that we would vote on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November at a specific location. That law was passed by Congress in 1845 and even though early voting options (absentee) have been in use for quite a while, the vast majority of Americans who voted (more than 90 percent) tended to do so on Election Day. In the 1990s that began to change, and those changes have accelerated of late. Is that good, bad or indifferent? Fans will tell you that early voting brings out more voters. Critics will tell you it opens the door to fraud. All I know is that growing up we usually had results election night. Now, despite technological advances, results often take longer and the whole process went from simple to confusing. All in the name of lowering the bar for voting.  
**Government Assistance:** Remember when most people would rather dig ditches than accept government assistance? There was a matter of pride involved, and I would argue that despite the sinful connotation, that wasn't a bad thing. Today,

it is not uncommon for people to turn down jobs so they can stay at home on the government dime.  
**Drug testing:** I was at an event recently where a manufacturing plant exec told me they quit drug testing as a pre-condition of employment. Why? It's harder to find employees than ever before. They don't need an extra barrier.  
**School sports:** OK, so the IHSAA has been a favorite punching bag on the issue of class sports. So, let's leave that low-hanging fruit alone for a second. What about earning varsity letters? Last time I looked, letter sweaters weren't in vogue anymore. But letter jackets still are. Every school can have their own system of how a student gets one, but at some schools the bar is pretty low. As soon as a kid gets their first letter, they can go out and buy a letter jacket. It used to be a lot harder. A hundred or so years ago when I was in school you got half a point for making the freshman or JV team and one point for varsity. At three points, you earned your letter sweater and it took six points for a jacket. For most, that meant they got their jacket as a junior or senior - and I guarantee you it meant a lot! It also kept you going when things got tough because that was a big goal you were working toward.  
**Academic rankings:** Like most of the above, this is not a blanket statement. But some schools have done away with academic rankings and things like valedictorians. The idea being that such put undue pressure on kids and made some feel bad. And good gosh we don't want anyone feeling pressure or, even worse, feeling bad today.  
**Sin:** This is one of my favorites. Things we were taught were wrong back in Sunday School now aren't only OK, they are celebrated. Even more, if you still believe all the things you were taught in those classes, you are now the one in the wrong. In fact, you are now characterized as a right-wing Christian zealot.  
**Journalism:** This one is NOT my favorite, but sadly, it's a reality. One of the first newsrooms I worked in had a sign on the wall - If your mother tells you she loves you, get a second source. That

used to be the standard. Us rookie reporters might write something without attribution, but savvy editors would whip out the red grease pencil and wipe out any "facts" that weren't backed up. Today, take a look at a lot of stories and you won't be hard-pressed to find phrases like "falsely claimed." Are those statements backed up with sources and facts? Usually not. And most of the time they are aimed at the conservatives. This one is personal for me, but we've lowered the standard way too much.  
**Tax Day:** What, was having the same deadline every year too boring? Now, Tax Day is a movable feast (for the government) and the April 15 deadline is long gone. We lowered the bar to bring in more voters, but did we make it better?  
I know, I sound like the grumpy old man I am. The thing is, we used to live in a country that raised standards - that set high goals and worked hard to achieve them. Remember JFK's moon speech where he set a goal that we didn't even have the technology to pull off? But pull it off we did.  
In sports, good coaches raised expectations and standards. They never lowered them. And now let's get back to those wonderful class sports. How many schools did we have back when Milan won state in 1954, 750 or so? That tournament was never about the winner, not really. That tournament taught 749 schools that if you want to win, work harder. It taught the valuable lesson that sometimes in life you lose . . . and how to handle that.  
Not so much today. We don't want anyone to feel left bad or left out. We want the lowliest of jobs to pay good money, really good money. Forget the fact that some of us started out in low-paying jobs and worked our asses off to make a better life. Now, you get the better life handed to you without having to work so hard for it.  
What does all that teach us? Are we learning that if you want something, work for it? Or are we learning that if you want something whine about how unfair things are and wait for someone to give it to you? Before anyone gets

offended, this has nothing to do with discrimination of any sort - race, gender, creed, orientation . . . Discrimination, in whatever form it manifests itself, is wrong. Capital W.R.O.N.G. But we've taken the concept and blown it out of proportion. Now, if an unjust act occurs, and if it is the exception and not the rule, we rush to change the rules so we can crush it out of existence and never, ever let it happen again.  
Sure. We seem to forget the ugly fact that no matter how many guidelines, rules and laws we have, stupidity will never go completely away. One can argue that the process can actually make things worse.  
We lower standards with the idea that everyone will feel OK. But let me repeat - stupid will not go away.  
You want to make a real change? Teach people to pray for those who discriminate in any form . . . and then ignore them. Don't give them power. Don't make them martyrs. Walk away. Find another path. Do better.  
Truth to tell, life can be hard . . . and unforgetting. When we keep giving everyone easy answers we are not preparing them for when things get tough.  
Raising our standards, expecting the best from each other, that practice made us and our country better, tougher, more competitive. We survived and won a few wars because we were the toughest kid on the block. Keep on lowering the bar and see how tough we become . . . and see what happens when some other nation takes our lunch money and bloodies our nose.  
We have to toughen up, to not get our feelings hurt so easily. We have to get back to raising the bar, to getting what we work for and taking a little pride in that. If we don't, then we should not be surprised when, as my grandpa used to say, things go to hell in a handbasket.  
*-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.*

# Betterment Harvest's Orangeline Farms Celebrates First Pick

Land Betterment Corporation ("Land Betterment" or the "Company"), an environmental solutions company fostering positive impact through upcycling former coal mining and industrial sites to create sustainable community development and job creation, today announced that its subsidiary, Betterment Harvest, has successfully commenced picking its 2023 harvest from Orangeline Farms ("Orangeline"). The 2023 glass facility was planted in week 52, 2022 with the remaining plant-

ing taking place in weeks 1 and 2 of 2023, which is 1 week ahead of last year's cycle. The farm has secured record pricing for the 2023 season.  
Matt Tatomir, Co-President of Betterment Harvest and Founder of JC Fresh and Orangeline, commented, "Securing top pricing along with the implementation of further automation is a true testament to our team's operational capabilities. We are proud to produce the highest quality and best tasting snack-peppers on the market."

# Mitch Daniels Joins The Liberty Fund As Distinguished Scholar And Senior Advisor

The Liberty Fund announced today that Mitch Daniels will join the Liberty Fund as a Distinguished Scholar and Senior Advisor. Daniels joins the Liberty Fund after serving as President of Purdue University from 2013 - 2022.  
At Purdue, Daniels led transformative change and was recognized as one of the most innovative university presidents in America. During Daniels' tenure, Purdue froze tuition, reducing student borrowing by 32 percent.  
Daniels served as Governor of the State of Indiana from 2005 - 2013. After inheriting a nearly \$800 million deficit, Governor Daniels left Indiana with a budget in surplus, reserve funds equal to nearly 15 percent of annual spending, and its first AAA credit rating. Under Governor Daniels' leadership, Indiana moved near the top of every national ranking for business attractiveness. His emphasis on government efficiency and performance measurement led to many state agencies, including the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Department of Child Services, and the Department of Corrections winning national performance awards.  
Daniels' work with the Liberty Fund will focus on the creation of educational programs and partnerships that will strengthen Liberty Fund's existing educational programs. Daniels will begin his work with Liberty Fund on April 1, 2023.  
Daniels stated: "I have watched for decades as the Liberty Fund, with impeccable scholarship and fidelity to principle, has labored to keep lit the lamp of freedom, and

spread understanding of its historical and intellectual underpinnings. Now, with individual liberty under relentless threats foreign and domestic, I'm grateful for the Funds' invitation that I try to assist in its noble and essential mission."  
"Our Board couldn't be more excited to have Mitch join our organization, said Nathan Feltman, Liberty Fund's Chairman of the Board. "Mitch's long-standing commitment to the principles of individual liberty, as well as his work in the private and public sectors, made him the perfect choice for Liberty Fund's first ever Distinguished Scholar."  
The Liberty Fund was founded in 1960 by Pierre F. Goodrich, an Indianapolis businessman and lawyer. Liberty Fund conducts its own educational programs to encourage research and discussion on the values and institutions of a society of free and responsible individuals.  
These programs focus on the place individual liberty has in an intellectual heritage evident from ancient times and continuing through our own times. The programs are intended to enrich understanding and appreciation of the complex nature of a free society and to contribute to its preservation.  
As a tax-exempt, private operating foundation, Liberty Fund's purposes are educational. Liberty Fund fulfills its mission through its conference program, web properties and by publishing books pertaining to liberty.  
For more information about Liberty Fund, visit [www.libertyfund.org](http://www.libertyfund.org)

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# Joshua Trees Future Bleak But Treatable

## EARTHTALK

**Dear EarthTalk: Are the famous Joshua trees of the California desert really going extinct? What can we do to preserve them?**

The Joshua tree is an iconic species of the Mojave Desert that stretches across parts of southeastern California, Nevada, Arizona, and Utah. Known for its resilience in an unforgiving desert climate, the Joshua tree is unique in its unusual anatomy and adaptable ecology, but its future looks bleak in the face of increasing global warming. Indeed, increasing temperatures and decreasing precipitation thanks to climate change have shifted the suitable habitat for a variety of flora and fauna around the world, including the Joshua tree. Biologists fear that little of the Joshua tree's historical range will be suitable for it within a century. By 2100, climate models show that Joshua Tree National Park will lose the majority of its suitable habitat for its namesake species. The increasing severity and frequency of forest fires pose a threat to the future of the trees as well. Because Joshua trees did not evolve with fire, they are not adapted to its effects, making it difficult for the population to bounce back after such a

disturbance. As temperatures increase, biologists predict that the suitable range for Joshua trees will move northward. However, this northward range is not guaranteed to be viable, as the Yucca moth that pollinates Joshua trees does not live up there.

Given the threat to Joshua trees, several entities have embarked on campaigns to try to save the iconic tree. The National Park Service recently embarked on a campaign to protect the tree's remaining habitat in Joshua Tree National Park, Mojave National Preserve and Death Valley National Park. Meanwhile, researchers and conservationists launched the Joshua Tree Genome Project in 2020 to collect and monitor data from both professional and citizen scientists in an effort to map and monitor existing populations. Project organizers hope to use the data to inform conservation planning by identifying Joshua tree populations best situated to benefit from conservation protections. Yet another effort to help Joshua trees comes from the Mojave Desert Land Trust, which recently launched a planting program to restore lost habitat for the trees across the Mojave.

Public education about the importance of saving threatened species is also key to saving Joshua trees. To wit, the

non-profit Joshua Tree National Park Association is working to educate the public about the importance of Joshua trees and the threats they face through free educational programs and resources for visitors to Joshua Tree National Park.

Yet while Joshua trees were granted temporary protection under the state of California's endangered species laws, they are as yet unprotected at the federal level. As such, the non-profit Center for Biological Diversity has petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the Joshua tree under the Endangered Species Act.

**CONTACTS:** Joshua Tree Genome Project, [joshuatreegenome.org](http://joshuatreegenome.org); Saving Iconic Joshua Trees, [chicagobotanic.org/blog/plant-science-conservation/saving-iconic-joshua-trees](http://chicagobotanic.org/blog/plant-science-conservation/saving-iconic-joshua-trees); California Commission Deadlocks on Protecting Western Joshua Trees as Threatened Species, [biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/california-commission-deadlocks-on-protecting-western-joshua-trees-as-threatened-species-2022-06-16/](http://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/california-commission-deadlocks-on-protecting-western-joshua-trees-as-threatened-species-2022-06-16/).

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](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

## ARTS From Page A1



Photo courtesy of Hamilton Heights Schools

**While March is the month to celebrate all things art education, the work of Hamilton Heights art students can be seen throughout the school campus and the community all year long. Inspiration comes in all forms and colors. Courtesy photo.**

# Gas Appliances May Provide Poor Air Quality

## EARTHTALK

**Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that gas stoves are bad for indoor air quality, but what about gas furnaces and other gas-powered appliances typically found in homes?**

Natural gas is almost as ubiquitous an energy source in American households as electricity. Indeed, 48 percent of U.S. homes stay warm with gas-powered furnaces while 38 percent do their cooking with gas. But recent revelations about the negative effect cooking with gas can have on indoor air pollution has given rise to new concerns about other types of gas-powered appliances inside our homes as well.

Gas cooktops may be the biggest offender given how much pollution they throw off when we use them, but gas-powered ovens, water heaters, clothes dryers and fireplaces are also worthy of concern. Gas-powered appliances emit carbon monoxide (CO), a colorless, odorless gas that, when inhaled, can cause headaches, dizziness, nausea—even death in high concentrations. Modern furnaces and appliances have safety features to prevent dangerous levels from building up, but they can still emit small amounts of CO.

Another concern with gas-powered appliances is the emission of nitrogen dioxide (NO2). NO2 is a reddish-brown gas that can irritate the eyes, nose

and throat. It can also exacerbate respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis. Gas stoves are the primary source of indoor NO2, but gas furnaces and other gas-powered appliances can also produce it. Gas-powered appliances also emit particulate matter (PM), another type of indoor air pollution. PM is a mixture of tiny particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. Exposure to PM can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems, particularly in vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions.

To minimize the negative effects of gas-powered appliances on indoor air quality, it is important to properly maintain and ventilate them. Regular maintenance, such as cleaning and replacing filters, can help ensure that appliances are running efficiently and emitting fewer pollutants. Additionally, proper ventilation can help remove pollutants from the air. Ventilation can be achieved by opening windows or using exhaust fans that vent to the outside.

Another option for reducing indoor air pollution from gas-powered appliances is to switch to electric varieties instead. Electric stoves and furnaces do not produce CO or NO2, and they emit far less PM than gas appliances. While electric appliances may have higher upfront costs, they can be

more cost-effective over time due to lower operating costs and reduced maintenance needs.

If you are designing a new home from scratch, it's a no-brainer these days to choose appliances powered by electricity not gas. But most of us don't have that luxury, and it's not easy to decide if it's worth the expense and hassle of switching out an old gas-powered appliance with a shiny new electric one. The bottom line is "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" as swapping out an old one for a new one generates more pollution overall thanks to the lifecycle costs of manufacturing. But if your old appliance has reached the end of its useful life anyway, changing to an electric one may well be the best move.

**CONTACTS:** Gas stoves can generate unsafe levels of indoor air pollution, [vox.com/energy-and-environment/2020/5/7/21247602/gas-stove-cooking-indoor-air-pollution-health-risks](http://vox.com/energy-and-environment/2020/5/7/21247602/gas-stove-cooking-indoor-air-pollution-health-risks); Gas stoves pose health risks. Are gas furnaces and other appliances safe to use? [yaleclimateconnections.org/2023/03/gas-stoves-pose-health-risks-are-gas-furnaces-and-other-appliances-safe-to-use/](http://yaleclimateconnections.org/2023/03/gas-stoves-pose-health-risks-are-gas-furnaces-and-other-appliances-safe-to-use/).

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Photo courtesy of Hamilton Heights Schools

**Art classes are a popular draw (literally and figuratively) for students at Hamilton Heights High School. Studies show students with high levels of arts involvement had more positive outcomes in a variety of areas, from high school graduation rates to civic participation. Courtesy photo.**

creative expression for their students beginning at the elementary level.

Taylor Myers, Hamilton Heights High School Art Teacher, became an art educator to show students how to use their creativity and artistic skills in the real world. Cheri Trachtman, Hamilton Heights Elementary School Art Teacher became an art educator because she gets great

joy in creating herself and wanted to share that with her students. Erin Goodman, Hamilton Heights Middle School Art Teacher, became an art educator because she likes helping students to build skills and confidence through artistic experiences. All three are gifted educators who believe that art is essential for the full development of the student.

"The thing that makes Hamilton Heights' art education special is that our small, tight knit community allows the art teachers to know one another and to work on community opportunities together," they said. "We work together by creating community projects that increase understanding and interest in art. Engaging with art is essential to the human experience."

## STEVE From Page A1

you want to get rid of, don't just throw them away. Donate them to the museum because they may fill some gaps in our collections. Or if you want to keep them, bring them in and let us scan them. We are open on Tuesdays, Fridays, and the second

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# Property Owners Could 'Supersede' Indiana Health Officials Over Septic Systems, Under House Bill

By Casey Smith  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Republican state lawmakers are seeking to "overhaul" Indiana's septic system laws and make it easier for new residential sewage disposal mechanisms to be installed or replaced.

But environmental advocates say at least one of the proposals advancing through the Statehouse could lead to more failed septic systems and increased pollution across Indiana.

House Bill 1647 would grant Hoosier property owners the ability to override local health department decisions about new septic system installations and existing systems that have failed — as long as they have a paid consultant who agrees with them.

It also makes it easier for installers and engineers to get permits to provide sewage system services across multiple counties.

Do we want to leave regulatory decisions in the hands of people who have a financial stake in that septic system?

Critics say the bill breeds conflicts of interest and argue that decisions regarding septic systems should remain in the hands of public health professionals.

"Our local health departments have the objective of doing what's best for the community," said Indra Frank, environmental health and water policy director for the Hoosier Environmental Council, while speaking Monday before a Senate environment committee. "Do we want to leave regulatory decisions in the hands of people who

have a financial stake in that septic system?"

The House bill advanced 7-2 from the committee and is now under consideration in the Senate chamber.

Debate over that and other septic system bills comes amid increased scrutiny over a separate measure that originally detailed the storage of residential sewage but was amended last week to add controversial wetlands language.

Transferring control over septic system rules

Septic systems are designed to collect household wastewater from toilets, sinks, showers, and other drain flows into an underground tank. Solid waste settles on the bottom of the tank, while the remaining liquid flows into an absorption field before seeping into the surrounding soil.

There are nearly 1 million such systems in Indiana, according to the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH).

Many are found in rural areas of the state, but some also exist in urban areas, per a report by the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. Indianapolis, for example, recorded 17,000 systems as of 2019.

But the state health department estimates that approximately 200,000 of those disposal systems are inadequate, have failed or are in the process of failing — putting environmental and public health at risk.

Health officials warn that every failing septic system can discharge more than 76,000 gallons of untreated wastewater annually into the state's groundwaters and surface waters.

Contaminated water can breed E. Coli and harmful bacteria.

It's up to locals to keep records on septic systems. There is no statewide tracking of all the systems that exist or what condition they're in.

There are not any state requirements for inspections of septic systems — and only a few individual counties have related ordinances.

Now, House Bill 1402, authored by Rep. Jim Pressel, R-Rolling Prairie, intends to transfer authority over residential onsite sewage systems from IDOH to a Technical Review Panel, or TRP, made up of various state officials, scientists, academics and industry professionals.

That panel would then be "in total control of Indiana's septic code," Pressel said, making it responsible for amending the existing state requirements and authorizing new sewage system technology.

Further, local septic ordinances would be void as of July 1, according to the latest draft of the bill. Any new ordinances adopted by a city or county will need to be approved by the TRP or the ordinance can't be enforced.

"The goal is to have one statewide septic rule ... we want one level playing field throughout the state," Pressel said, noting that his bill seeks to require local septic ordinances be adopted like building codes.

Homeowners are still responsible for the overall operation, maintenance, and upkeep of the system, including repairs or replacement.

"This is safeguarding us

from unreasonable manufacturing ordinances," he continued. That could include local requirements limiting septic tanks to sizes for which necessary seals and pipes do not exist.

The bill advanced 9-0 from the Senate Environmental Affairs Committee and now heads to the Senate floor.

Paid consultants 'supersede' local health officials

While Pressel's bill would take on the system as a whole statewide, House Bill 1647, authored by Rep. Bob Morris, R-Fort Wayne, addresses septic system installers, specifically.

Currently, Indiana's local health departments are responsible for determining if a site is adequate for installing a residential septic system and ordering corrective measures if a system is failing. Even under Pressel's bill, local departments would still be charged with enforcement.

Indiana's local health departments issue more than 15,000 permits per year for new systems, and about 6,000 permits for repairs, according to IDOH.

Morris' bill would change that process, allowing property owners to overrule local health department decisions if a hired consultant declares the system operable.

"These local departments of health are taking it upon themselves to say, 'You can't build a home there because of the soils,' but this professional over here is saying you can build a home there — and I've talked to the installer and I've talked to the designer and you can build

a home," Morris said. "Being told that you cannot build a home on this ground that you worked hard for ... and then when you talk to these professionals and they say you can ... that's what we're getting at here."

Permits for new septic system installations would have to be issued within 30 days — far more expeditiously than in some counties, where such credentials can take months to get, Morris said.

Additionally, if a local health department determines that a residential septic system is in failure and orders corrective action, the owner or occupant of the property can hire an independent consultant for a second opinion. If the contractor deems the system not to be in failure, the local order must be withdrawn, or the municipal health department can conduct an investigation — within 60 days — to make a new determination.

Morris' bill also allows members of the Indiana Onsite Wastewater Professionals Association (IOWPA), which represents septic system installers, to provide services anywhere in Indiana as long as they're registered to do so in at least one county.

Although the Hoosier Environmental Council was originally neutral on the bill, Frank said the group is "now concerned."

The environmental council supported a provision in the introduced bill that would have required a septic system inspection to be completed before the transfer or sale of a property. That language was removed, however,

along with another section that would have created a licensing system for septic system installers.

"I think this bill goes beyond just appealing their decision and actually puts those paid consultants in the position of superseding the local health department," Frank said.

Adam Kallick, representing IOWPA, said the association supports and is "looking for licensure."

Morris said the House, "as a whole," isn't ready for a state licensure requirement, though.

"There's only one person that's required to be licensed through the State of Indiana when you build your home, and that is a plumber," Morris said. "We're going to move towards that with the septic installation, but we're not there yet."

Morris added that "there's nothing in state law" stopping a homebuyer from getting their own inspection of a septic system.

"If they want to know if this septic system is fully functioning, they can bear the cost of that," he said, echoing similar pushback from the Indiana Association of Realtors that mandated septic inspections at the point of sale would complicate closings.

*-Indiana Capital Chronicle is part of States Newsroom, a network of news bureaus supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity. Indiana Capital Chronicle maintains editorial independence. Follow Indiana Capital Chronicle on facebook.com/IndianaCapitalChronicle and twitter.com/INCapChronicle*

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# I n d i a n a

# F a c t s & F u n



## Number $\div$ Stumpers

1. How many people in the county do not live in Rochester?  
 $\geq$
2. How old is Fulton County?  
 $\leq$
3. What is the population density of the county?  
 $\geq$
4. How many total schools does the county have?  
 $\leq$

Answers: 1. 14,618 People 2. 183 Years  
3. Around 56/sq mi 4. 10 Schools

## Did You Know?

- Fulton County was founded in 1836 and named after Robert Fulton.
- Rochester, the county seat, has a total population of 6,218 residents.
- The county has 3 middle schools, 3 high schools, and 4 elementary schools.
- Rochester's motto is "The City of Friendship and Pride."
- The county is 371.26 square miles and has a population of 20,836 residents.

## Got Words?

Native Americans that previously lived in the county believed that a monster lived in Lake Manitou, so they never lived near the lake. After this many in the county called it the Devil's Lake. How do you think myths impact the way towns and events are viewed today?

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## Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. IIFENHRSPD
2. NFLUTO TNUCYO
3. MHYTS
4. RECESRTOH
5. DRPEI

Answers: 1. Friendship 2. Fulton County 3. Myths  
4. Rochester 5. Pride

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## Purdue Receives \$20 Million Commitment From Alum Sassola For New Pharmacy Leadership Academy



The Purdue University College of Pharmacy has received a \$20 million commitment from alumnus Marcel Sassola III to establish a new leadership academy that will expand the college's offerings and prepare a new pipeline of pharmacy graduates to innovate and lead in an ever-changing health care landscape.

The Marcel Sassola III Leaders and Entrepreneurs Advancing Pharmacy (LEAP) Academy will be modeled after the successful Larsen Leaders Academy in the university's Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. School of Business, and will focus on strengthening leadership and entrepreneurship among Purdue pharmacy students.

"I felt now was the time to give back and, ultimately, pay my suc-

cess forward by giving other people the same opportunities I had – or even better," Sassola (BS Pharm '83) said. "Purdue and education have both always been passions of mine. I wanted to make sure my gifts would have the biggest possible impact on the university, and this was the right moment."

The LEAP Academy will feature a LEAP Scholars program for undergraduate, PharmD and PhD students. Students selected as LEAP Scholars will be chosen based on student leadership activities, academic record and a rigorous selection process. Scholars are responsible for:

- Participating in the Pharmacy Leadership and Innovation Forum class.
- Completing the Purdue Entrepreneurship and Innovation Certificate Program.
- Executing special projects and challenges designed to contribute value to the College of Pharmacy's programs and services.
- Maintaining good standing in both academic performance and professional conduct.
- Attending two weekend events – including an off-campus leadership

and entrepreneurship retreat during the fall and an on-campus retreat during the spring – that will feature "Shark Tank"-like presentations.

The LEAP Scholars Academy will be coordinated by the LEAP Academy program director, which is a new position, and counseled by an alumni entrepreneurship advisory board.

"The College of Pharmacy has a proven legacy of transforming the practice and science of pharmacy to lead advances in human health and of developing graduates who display a broad range of expertise that extends to areas such as management, economics and public health," said Eric L. Barker, the Jeannie and Jim Chaney Dean of the College of Pharmacy and professor of medicinal chemistry and molecular pharmacy. "Through Marcel Sassola's generosity, we will be able to build on that rich tradition and provide our students with all the tools they need to succeed as leaders and pioneers in the industry."

Sassola is the former CEO of Santa Barbara Specialty Pharmacy, which services California and five nearby states,

and has more than 35 years of experience as a pharmacist and entrepreneur. He is a member of the Purdue Alumni Association and President's Council and also is active in the Santa Barbara and Los Angeles communities.

"Purdue helped me build a foundation of education and simultaneously provided me the ability to learn more about who I was and what I wanted to do with my life. Giving back now makes me feel like I've found a missing piece," Sassola said. "I look forward to meeting the first LEAP Scholars, serving as a steward for this exciting new program and witnessing the evolution of the College of Pharmacy."

Matt Folk, president and CEO of the Purdue for Life Foundation and vice president for university advancement and alumni engagement, said, "With all the giant leaps occurring right now at Purdue, this is a critical time for the university and its future. This gift from Marcel Sassola is a shining example of how our alumni continue to step up in support of Purdue, its mission and its direction moving forward."

## Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Deadline Is Quickly Approaching

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education encourages all high school seniors and returning college students to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 15, 2023. Students must file the FAFSA to receive funding and maintain their state scholarships, including the 21st Century Scholarship.

Completing the FAFSA unlocks numerous aid opportunities for students including federal, state and some merit-based scholarships. However, according to the National College Attainment Network (NCAN), Hoosiers left \$70 million in federal Pell Grants on the table in 2022 by not completing the FAFSA. The Commission recently announced a 60 percent FAFSA completion goal for high school seniors to improve the pathways to state, federal and institutional financial aid.

"The FAFSA continues to be the main way to open doors to financial aid funding for Hoosiers seeking higher learning," said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery. "The Commission and our college and community partners are available to assist families in the filing process leading up to the April 15 deadline. Students and families are encouraged to utilize the support systems in place to access the maximum available financial aid."

How to file the FAFSA: Students can file the FAFSA online at FAFSA.gov. The first step for students who have

not previously filed the FAFSA is to create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID. Then, each student will need:

- Social Security number
  - Alien Registration number (for non-U.S. citizens)
  - Federal income tax returns, W-2s and other records of money earned from 2021
  - Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable)
  - Records of untaxed income (if applicable)
- Assistance is available**
- The U.S. Department of Education provides email and live chat assistance for FAFSA filers as well as a helpline at 1-800-4-FED-AID.
  - Hoosier families can also access free FAFSA help through INvestEd at [investindiana.org](http://investindiana.org).
  - The Commission's eight outreach coordinators are available via phone or email.

### About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Created in 1971, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education plans, coordinates and defines Indiana's postsecondary education system to align higher learning with the needs of students and the state. The Commission also administers Indiana's financial aid programs, including the 21st Century Scholars early college promise scholarship, which celebrated 30 years in 2020. Learn more about the Commission's Reaching Higher in a State of Change strategic plan at [www.in.gov/che](http://www.in.gov/che).

## Connected Vehicles The Latest Tool To Give Engineers Real-Time Insight Into Highway Traffic Congestion Issues

Purdue University researchers have developed techniques to harness big data from connected vehicles to monitor congestion caused by crashes, weather and construction. As part of their work, they analyzed over 503 billion records in December 2022 to monitor the national impact of a large winter storm.

The team is led by Darcy Bullock, the Lyles Family Professor of Civil Engineering in Purdue's Lyles School of Civil Engineering, and focuses on developing scalable techniques for measuring and graphically visualizing traffic congestion.

For many years, the U.S. Department of Transportation, universities and private sector companies have published annual congestion reports and rankings of states and cities. However, Bullock believes the new frontier is to develop techniques

that use connected vehicle data to map out the time, location and severity of congestion in a uniform manner across all 50 states. This will provide a more robust systemwide characterization of interstate congestion to prioritize national infrastructure investments as well as monitor the resiliency of our network during large weather events such as winter storms or hurricanes.

"There are three key ingredients in this analysis: data, cloud platforms and graphic visualization methods. The combination enables decision makers to quickly understand how traffic is moving," said Howell Li, principal research analyst, who has worked with Wejo Data Services Inc. to analyze the data systematically in real time using Google's BigQuery. "On a typical Friday afternoon, Purdue

ingests approximately 600,000 records per minute on just Indiana roads. At a national level, there are over 25 million connected vehicle records generated every minute."

Transportation research engineers Jairaj Desai and Jijo Mathew and PhD candidate Rahul Sakhare have developed analytical techniques for processing that data in real time to create graphical maps showing week-at-a-glance charts depicting the time, location and severity of traffic congestion. These same techniques could also be used to show how usage of electric vehicles and hybrid electric vehicles varied by states and interstate routes.

"Privacy is very important for all of our public and private sector partners," Bullock said. "Our connected vehicle data provider employs consented, deidentified

and anonymized data that is consistent with both U.S. and EU general data protection regulations."

The Purdue team produced two major reports in 2022, one for August and the other for December. Although both reports used similar analysis techniques, the August report is a great tool to see the impact of construction work zones on mobility. The December report provides an example of the impact of a large winter storm moving across the U.S. and the subsequent state-by-state recovery.

"From a national perspective, this is really valuable," Bullock said. "Data like this can show us our overall interstate network resiliency as well as provide insights to support operational decisions and long-term national infrastructure investments."

## New State Nature Preserve Dedicated In Adams And Jay Counties

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) approved the dedication of Limberlost Swamp Nature Preserve, which is located across Adams and Jay counties during its regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting at Fort Harrison State Park today.

This 719.23-acre nature preserve includes a parking area and more than 3 miles of walking trails. A variety of birds can be found at the site, including short-eared owls, Northern harriers, waterfowl, migrating shorebirds, sandhill cranes, and bald eagles.

Indiana's nature preserves provide permanent protection for significant natural areas within the state. The action increases the number of state-designated sites protected by the Nature Preserves Act to 298, representing more than 53,000 acres of protected land.

The NRC is an autonomous board that addresses topics pertaining to the DNR. More details on this and other actions are available here.

The next regularly scheduled NRC meeting is May 16, also at Fort Harrison State Park.

NRC members include the DNR director, heads of three other state agencies (Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana Destination Development Corporation, and the Indiana Department of Transportation), six citizens appointed by the governor on a bipartisan basis, the chair of the DNR's advisory council, and the president of the Indiana Academy of Science. The Academy of Science president and the agency heads, other than the DNR director, may appoint proxies to serve the commission in their absences.



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