

➤ TODAY'S VERSE

Job 27:6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.



➤ FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

People who call our community their own.

Alicia Hollingsworth is an English teacher at Sheridan High School, as well as a former student. She is an avid coffee drinker and theater enthusiast. Ms. Hollingsworth said she enjoys connecting with her students while educating them. She lives with her fiancé, 3 dogs, 2 cats and turtle. The well-being of the people she loves is what she considers to be most important. Thanks for the smile, Ms. Hollingsworth!

And Another Thing...

1. Senator Braun Statement on Indictment of Former President Trump

"Our justice system is being abused as a political weapon to go after former President Trump and affect an election. This indictment is clearly a politically-motivated prosecution by a DA who ignores murders and carjackings but will contort the law to attack his political enemy."

2. FBI Director Wray Visits Indianapolis Field Office

On March 30, 2023, FBI Director Christopher Wray visited the FBI's Indianapolis Field Office and met with Special Agent in Charge Herbert J. Stapleton and other field office personnel. He also met with local law enforcement partners and members of the media to affirm the FBI's continued commitment to help stem violent crime in the area.

"I just finished meeting with a number of our key local law enforcement partners here in Indianapolis, as well as the U.S. Attorneys, and it was a great opportunity to talk about some of the most pressing challenges we're working to tackle together - the greatest, right now, being the rising epidemic of violent crime," FBI Director Christopher Wray said. "The violent crime threat we're facing will take all of us working together - with all our collective strengths, authorities, and expertise - to stay ahead of, to protect public safety - that's something I'm confident is happening here in Indianapolis across the board and more specifically on our task forces."

Director Wray also spoke about the Bureau's focus on prioritizing diversity, which also includes elements of equity, inclusion, and accessibility, particularly in the area of recruitment. Director Wray noted the Indianapolis field office will host a Diversity Agent Recruiting event in April.

Director Wray makes regular visits to the FBI's 56 field offices and Legal Attachés to meet with employees, get briefed on local issues and crime trends, as well as to collaborate with partners.

3. History Matters

April 1 to April 15
Jesse James was—arguably—the most notorious cowboy-outlaw of yesteryear. History.com writes, "For 16 years, [he] and his brother, Frank, committed robberies and murders throughout the Midwest. Detective magazines and pulp novels glamorized the James gang, turning them into mythical Robin Hoods who were driven to crime by unethical landowners and bankers. In reality, Jesse James was a ruthless killer who stole only for himself."
Then, on April 3, 1882, he was murdered—"camouflaged"—under the alias of "Tom Howard"—and killed by fellow fugitive Bob Ford, who wanted to collect the \$10,000 dead-or-alive bounty on James's life.
Later, Ford was immortalized in Van Morrison's Ballad of Jesse James as "that dirty little coward that shot Mr. Howard [and] laid Jesse James in his grave."

For more information, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends The Lost Cause: The Trials of Frank and Jesse James by James P. Muehlberger.

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper

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The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Noblesville's annual Community Easter Egg Hunt is Saturday morning at Forest Park in Noblesville, with a Noblesville Kiwanis Sunrisers breakfast at the Forest Park Inn.

Easter Egg Hunt, Train Ride, Live Music, Conner Prairie, More



BETSY REASON
Columnist

There are plenty of things to do this weekend and beyond. Here's our Times' list of 35 things to do.

1. Hamilton County Passion Play "Behold the Lamb" will be on stage today and Saturday at

Noblesville High School Auditorium. Sold out. Info at <https://www.beholdthelamb.com/>

2. Enjoy live music with Craig Thurston tonight at Primeval Brewing in downtown Noblesville.

3. Enjoy live music by the 78's at 7 p.m. today and April 6 at Boathouse Kitchen & Swan Dive in Cicero.

4. See work of artist Marc "Mozzy" Love's exhibit, "Welcome to the Boomtown," open noon to 5 p.m. today, closing today, in the Stephenson House. Bobbi K. Samples' work is currently on display in the Meyer Najem 2nd Floor Gallery.

5. Head to the 1836 Prairietown as the outdoor areas opened for the 2023 season on Thursday at Conner Prairie in Fishers.

6. Westfield Winter Farmers Market has its final market for the season at 9 a.m. to noon

Saturday at West Fork Westfield Event Center on East 191st Street.

7. Second Ward Vintage Market is Saturday in the Lacey Arts Building in downtown Noblesville.

8. Put on your running shoes and head for Forest Park for the return of the free Easter Egg Hunt activities that begin at 10 a.m. Saturday, with the hunt at 11 a.m., sponsored by Noblesville Parks and Recreation Department and Hare Chevrolet. Activities at Shelter 5 include bounce houses, a DJ, and vehicle tours from the Noblesville Fire Department and Noblesville Police Department. The Easter Bunny also will make a special appearance. The egg hunt includes three age groups for ages 3-10 (3-4, 5-6 and 7-10).

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Upcoming Events For Month Of April



Dr. ARROWOOD
Guest Columnist

Beginning April 1, the community can enjoy an up close and personal visit to 12 different historical sites in Jackson Township (Atlanta, Arcadia, and Cicero) through self-guided

video tours. These videos, created by a talented crew of HHSC educators and staff including, Jeff Beechler, Connor James, Lucia Garber (HHMS), and Melissa Martin and Julie Davis (HHSC), along with 20 middle school students, can be accessed here. Bonus! Many of these sites will be open to the public between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 15.

By the same token, on that same day and time, Saturday, April 15 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m., Hamilton Heights is hosting a community open house at our newly renovated Student Activity Center. The tour is in collaboration with the Hamilton County Bicentennial Committee's April spotlight on Jackson Township. Guests will be

given a personalized tour of the facility and meet and greet with Hamilton Heights' leadership team and school board members. The Student Activity Center is located at 420 W. North Street, Arcadia. Enter through door B and H.

Today, the Student Activity Center is home to the HHSC History Hall (history of all things Hamilton Heights), HHSC Board Room, HHSC Community Room, HHSC Husky Orange Room, Healthy Way Clinic, and Early Childhood Assessment Team. Additionally, the building and its athletic facilities are utilized by several student clubs and sports, including HHHS Robotics, HHMS Football, Wrestling, and Track & Field, Jr. Husky Basketball

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 7:28 a.m.
SET: 8:08 p.m.

High/Low
Temperatures
HIGH: 63 °F
LOW: 49 °F

Today is...

- Dance Marathon Day
- Eiffel Tower Day
- Cesar Chavez Day

What Happened On This Day

- 1999 The film The Matrix is released. The science fiction story about the adventures of computer programmer, Neo, was not only a commercial success but also left a lasting impression on action film-making through its creative use of slow-motion and spinning cameras.
- 1918 The United States switch to DST for the first time. Most areas in the U.S. change the clocks twice a year. Exceptions include Hawaii and most of Arizona. The first country to ever use DST was Germany in 1916
- 1889 The Eiffel Tower is opened. French engineer Alexandre Gustave Eiffel unfurled a French flag from the top of the tower, which has since become the most iconic landmark of Paris

Births On This Day

- 1948 Al Gore American politician, 45th Vice President of the United States, Nobel Prize laureate
- 1927 Cesar Chavez American activist

Deaths On This Day

- 2014 Charles Keating American lawyer, businessman
- 1621 Philip III of Spain

(K-5), HH Wrestling Club (elementary age kids), and many HHHS sports on and off season.

I've been involved with a Kiwanis club for over 23 years, the past 10 with the Cicero Kiwanis Club. I also had the pleasure of leading the organization as its president last year. I'm passionate about the work this group does for the children in our community including offering scholarships for graduating seniors. The members, who I consider friends, are the

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➤ INSIDE TODAY

- Dick Wolfie.....A5
- Ken Thompson.....A5
- Business.....A7
- Voices.....A8
- Holy LandB1, B2, B3

➤ HONEST HOOSIER

In like a lamb, out like a lion? Whatever. Just don't get fooled tomorrow!



➤ TODAY'S QUOTE

"I have great faith in fools; self-confidence my friends will call it."
-Edgar Allan Poe

➤ TODAY'S JOKE

Why's are we all so tired today?
Because we just finished a 31-day March!

➤ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Exercising at least five days a week can cut sick days in half. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at www.thetimes24-7.com.



➤ OBITUARIES

George Cortis

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



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FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU

OBITUARIES

George Cortis

September 26, 1945-March 22, 2023

George Cortis was born Sept. 26, 1945 in Langhorne, Pennsylvania and passed away March 22, 2023 in Noblesville, Indiana.

While attending Butler University, George was drafted into the army where he served his country faithfully for 2 years in the Vietnam War. When he returned, he went back to Butler where he met Susan, his wife of 48 years. Together they would raise two boys, Kyle and Kris who are now 44 and 40 years of age. George was a man of many talents. His culinary expertise was well known by his family and many friends. George interacted with his children, their friends, and the entire neighborhood. Known as "Pyro George" during the 4th of July, he would try to outdo himself every year. He always helped his kids with their science projects, or any other special school projects that they might need an adult helping hand with. As his sons grew older his true passion became coaching soccer. While knowing nothing of the game, he slowly learned by reading books, watching it as much as possible, and by helping his sons get better. As his coaching expertise grew, so did the success of his teams. He started coaching his older son Kyle at a young age. As Kyle got older, he started to coach Kris's teams. He became very close with this group, always referring to them as "his boys." They were one of and still are one of the most successful Rowdies teams to ever come from Noblesville, even winning the Bush International Tournament in St. Louis. He was a firm believer in playing every team member to help develop their confidence, give them experience and build team camaraderie. His credo was to always stay positive, critique in a positive way and always show respect to one another. That is why "his boys" often looked to him as a mentor and even a second father. To his last days, "his boys" always made time to come visit their coach, who is also their close friend. George's sense of humor was second to none. His one-liners were classic, and people still talk about them to this day. He always made time for his family, taking his two boys camping with their friends or taking his wife on a surprise vacation. We can truly say George was loved by all, and will be missed as much as any husband, father, friend, coach, amazing person will ever be missed.

George is survived by his wife, Susan; his children, Kyle and Kris (Abby); and his brother, Jim (Linda.)

There will be a calling on Thursday afternoon, April 6, 2023 from 2-4 p.m. at Randall and Roberts Funeral Center, 1685 Westfield Road in Noblesville.

In lieu of flowers please make contributions to the Hamilton County Humane Society, 10501 Hague Road, Fishers, IN 46038, www.hamiltonhumane.com or the Wounded Warrior Project, PO Box 758516, Topeka, KS 66675, https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org
Condolences: www.randallroberts.com



April 22 Carmel Symphony Orchestra Concert Welcomes Cellist Sterling Elliott, Features selection Composed By Ulndy Music Professor



STERLING ELLIOTT

Exciting young cellist Sterling Elliott joins Carmel Symphony Orchestra under Artistic Director Janna Hymes on Saturday, April 22 for CSO's Masterworks 5 performance with selections from Saint Saens and Tchaikovsky.

The concert begins at 7:30 pm at the Palladium at the Center for the Performing Arts, 1 Carter Green, Carmel. Tickets start at \$25 and are available at the Palladium's Fifth Third Bank Box Office, 317.843.3800 or online at thecenterpresents.org. Concert sponsor is United Fidelity Bank; media partner is WICR 88.7 FM.

Elliott, 23, recently was cited by UK's Classic FM net radio as among its worldwide Top 30 Rising Stars for 2023. The young musician - who learned to

play the cello at age three and made his concerto debut at seven - is currently a student at New York's Juilliard School of Music. Acclaimed for his stellar stage presence and joyous musicianship, Elliott already has appeared with major orchestras throughout the US, is in demand on the summer festival circuit, and made his European debut in Munich last spring.

"Sterling is a phenomenal musician with tremendous charisma," said Hymes. "We're so pleased that we've been able to include him as our guest artist in our season's final Masterworks presentation. I know our audience is going to fall in love with this young musician and his extraordinary abilities."

A special feature of this concert will be the CSO's performance of In Rowan Oak, a tribute to the great American writer William Faulkner, composed by University of Indianapolis Professor of Music Dr. John Berners.

"I'm always interested in featuring music by local composers, and a year or so ago CSO Executive Director Cara Pittenger

called my attention to an early version of In Rowan Oak on Dr. Berners' YouTube channel," Hymes related. "I was really intrigued by what I heard and contacted John.

"We talked about the piece, how it was originally written for chamber orchestra, and I asked if he could expand it for full symphony orchestra, which would include adding full brass and percussion sections. John has done that and more - he has essentially reorchestrated all of it, so what we'll be performing on April 22 truly can be considered a World Premiere, and we are thrilled to be a part of it!" she stated.

"Our final Masterworks program of this season is going to be an exciting presentation for multiple reasons, and we look forward to welcoming both current and brand new CSO fans to the Palladium as we celebrate with these incredible musical selections!" Hymes concluded.

Carmel Symphony Orchestra is a resident company of the Palladium at the Center for the Performing Arts located in Carmel's City Center district. An abundance of



DR. JOHN BERNERS

free parking - in garages, lots and curbside - is available within easy walking distance of the Palladium. There also are numerous restaurants in the area for pre- or post-concert dining.

One performance remains in the CSO's 2022-23 season following Masterworks 5 - CSO Pops: Respect - A Tribute to Aretha Franklin on Saturday, May 6, 7:30 pm at the Palladium. Tickets are available now for this rousing tribute to the immortal Queen of Soul at the Palladium's Fifth Third Bank Box Office, 317.843.3800 or online at thecenterpresents.com.

The 2022-23 Carmel Symphony Orchestra season is supported by the City of Carmel, the Center for the Performing Arts, the Palladium.



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Photo courtesy of Abrahm Hurt

Noblesville High School graduate Truman Angell (left) joins State Rep. Chuck Goodrich (R-Noblesville) (right) in the House Chamber at the Statehouse in Indianapolis. Angell is interning with the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Noblesville Graduate Gains Experience At The Statehouse

Noblesville High School graduate Truman Angell is gaining experience as an intern with State Rep. Chuck Goodrich (R-Noblesville) and his fellow members of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Angell, a resident of Noblesville, is the son of Dewey and Jarell Angell. He is currently attending Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, where he is majoring in sustainable management and policy.

"Interning with the House of Representatives has taught me so

many professional skills involving communication, writing and collaboration," Angell said. "Helping cover committee meetings and hearing about how different energy policies effect Hoosiers has been my favorite part."

As a legislative intern, Angell corresponds with constituents through phone calls, letters and emails while also staffing committee hearings and floor proceedings.

"Throughout the legislative session, students like Truman learn much-needed skills they will be able to use in their

next job," Goodrich said. "He's done a fantastic job, and we're always fortunate to have bright, young people from our local community interning with us."

Each year, the House of Representatives offers paid internship opportunities to college students, law-school students, graduate students and recent college graduates for the duration of each legislative session.

Visit IndianaHouseRepublicans.com/internship for more information about the House Republican internship program.



Photo courtesy of Abrahm Hurt

Westfield resident Matt Harrison (left) joins State Rep. Donna Schaibley (R-Carmel) (right) in the House Chamber at the Statehouse in Indianapolis. Harrison is interning with the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Westfield resident Works With Representative Schaibley

Westfield resident Matt Harrison is gaining experience as an intern with State Rep. Donna Schaibley (R-Carmel) and her fellow members of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Harrison is the son of Tricia Anderson of Westfield and Dave Harrison of Kokomo. He resides in Westfield with his mother and stepfather, Kip. He is currently attending Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, where he is majoring in geography.

"Interning at the Statehouse is a great work experience, where

I'm building friendships, connections and skills every day," Harrison said. "This opportunity is helping me grow as a professional, and driving my interest and understanding of how state government works."

As a legislative intern, Harrison corresponds with constituents through phone calls, letters and emails while also staffing committee hearings and floor proceedings.

"It's great to see Matt building his skills through this internship to help prepare for his career," Schaibley said. "All of our interns are a big help in communicating with constituents, keeping

legislators organized and assisting wherever they're needed. I'm excited to see where Matt's career will take him next, and grateful for the time he's spent with our team at the Statehouse."

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City Of Fishers Announces Recipients For 2023 Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant

The City of Fishers announced today the recipients of the 2023 Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant Program, a matching grant program that provides funding for creative and innovative ideas that make Fishers a more beautiful place to live.

The 2023 grant cycle featured 21 applicants for the program and \$87,519 in funds were awarded. This year also marks over \$1,044,081.20 in grant funds awarded to enhance the vibrancy of Fishers neighborhoods since the grant's inception in 2000.

Originally known as the Neighborhood Matching Grant, the program began in 2000 by awarding approximately \$16,000 to seven applicants. In 2012, the Tree Matching Grant was created and awarded approximately \$10,000 to 17 applicants. The grants were then combined in 2020 to become the Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant.

"We are thrilled that this year's Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant program marks over \$1 million in funds invested back into the beautification of the Fishers community," said Megan Vukusich, Director of Planning & Zoning for the City of Fishers. "Over the past 23 years, we have seen this program grow and offer neighborhoods the opportunity to add new, innovative, and sustainable projects where they live and play."

In addition to beautification, residents and homeowner associations are encouraged to pursue sustainable initiatives and projects that support the environment and natural habitats. All funded projects featuring landscaping will utilize

native species.

Recipients of the 2023 Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant Program include:

- Avalon (\$2,632.54) to install park benches along a walking trail.

- Berkley Grove (\$5,000) for conversion of lawn space into a community rain garden and outdoor art gallery.

- Britton Ridge (\$1,662.50) to enhance the appearance of wall signs at the entrance of the community.

- Brookston Place (\$4,028.52) to enhance the entrance landscaping.

- Charleston Crossing (\$5,000) to replace and upgrade two pond fountains.

- Cottonwood Creek at Gray Eagle (\$5,000) to repair neighborhood tennis courts and fill in cracks and tripping hazards.

- Covington Estates (\$3,444.19) to add trees along 96th Street for beauty and privacy.

- Cumberland Place (\$3,000) to convert a large piece of common area from turf grass to native grasses and plants.

- Eller Commons (\$5,000) to landscape in front of the neighborhood entrance and replace lighting with LEDs.

- Fox Hollow at Geist (\$5,000) to replace and repair custom street signs and stop signs.

- Geist Overlook (\$5,000) to construct an additional wall adjacent to the main entrance wall.

- Heritage Meadows (\$3,014) to add landscaping around neighborhood signage.

- Prescott (\$5,000) to extend the irrigation system to help keep the trees and grass watered.

- Ravinia (\$4,986.32) to add a flower bed and entrance sign to the rear entrance and place a park bench near the walking

path.

- Rolling Knoll (\$5,000) to remove and replace invasive Bradford pear street trees with native species.

- Sail Place (\$5,000) to replace the wood fence on the perimeter of the Sail Place property line.

- Sand Creek Woods (\$5,000) to improve walking paths within the neighborhood.

- Sutton Place (\$4,986) to remove willow trees around the pond and replace them with new, healthy trees.

- Sweet Briar (\$5,000) to improve walking paths within the neighborhood.

- Timberstone (\$3,210) to retrofit five streetlights to LED and replace five Acorn Globe fixtures that have discolored and make repairs on the entrance monuments.

- Timberstone Villas (\$5,000) to improve trails in the existing common area.

2024 Neighborhood Vibrancy Grant applications will open November 1. Residents can watch a pre-recorded webinar to learn more about the application process and find additional information at fishers.in.us/grants.

Along with this grant program, the City of Fishers accepts applications year-round for its Stormwater Grant Program. This grant incentivizes neighborhoods, non-profits, and homeowners within city limits to improve local water quality and/or drainage function. Applicants are eligible for up to a 50% match from the City.

To learn more about Fishers' grant programs and apply, visit fishers.in.us/grants.



Photo courtesy of Abrahm Hurt

Fishers resident Evan Woodruff (left) joins State Rep. Chris Jeter (R-Fishers) (right) in the House Chamber at the Statehouse in Indianapolis. Woodruff is interning with the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Fishers Resident Experiences Republican Internship Program

Fishers resident Evan Woodruff is gaining experience as an intern with State Rep. Chris Jeter (R-Fishers) and his fellow members of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Woodruff is the son of Troy and Melissa Woodruff. He recently graduated from Indiana Wesleyan University with a degree in political science pre-law.

"This internship has created a new perspective for me," Woodruff said. "I've been learning how

to apply lessons from college to a practical work setting at the Statehouse. The opportunities I have been given here will be extremely useful in propelling me into the next stage of my career."

As a legislative intern, Woodruff corresponds with constituents through phone calls, letters and emails while also staffing committee hearings and floor proceedings.

"Evan is doing a great job, and we're always fortunate to have some of the best and brightest young professionals here

at the Statehouse," Jeter said. "I encourage students from our community to look into this opportunity to broaden their network and build essential skills."

Each year, the House of Representatives offers paid internship opportunities to college students, law-school students, graduate students and recent college graduates for the duration of each legislative session.

Visit IndianaHouseRepublicans.com/internship for more information about the House Republican internship program.

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THE TIMES

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Photo courtesy of Ron Green

Lt. Gov. Crouch standing with the 2023 Hoosier Women Artists honorees.

Lt. Gov. Crouch, Indiana Arts Commission Celebrate 2023 Hoosier Women Artists Honorees

Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, along with the Indiana Arts Commission, announced the 2023 Hoosier Women Artists awardees at a celebration in the Indiana Statehouse.

"It is amazing to annually honor many of the state's outstanding female artists," said Lt. Gov. Crouch, Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "I am very proud to play a role in highlighting Hoosier Women Artists by showcasing their artwork in my own office year after year."

The Hoosier Women Artists program began in 2008 to celebrate the work of female artists from around the state. The program expands the opportunities for woman-made artwork to be displayed in Indiana communities.

"In each corner of our state, artists are playing a vital role in making Indiana a place where people want to live, work, play, study and stay," said Miah Michaelsen, executive director of the Indiana Arts Commission. "We are proud to partner with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to both spotlight the talented women artists in our state and to recognize the work that artists do to improve the lives of all Hoosiers."

Honored artists will have their pieces displayed in the Statehouse offices of Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Auditor of State Tera Klutz, Secretary of Education Dr. Katie Jenner and Chief Justice Loretta Rush.

"Pablo Picasso once said that 'Every child is an artist...the problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up,'" said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "Each year, I am blown away by the talented Hoosier women, of all ages and backgrounds, who have harnessed and nurtured their skills into the inspiring product we see today. Congratulations to each of this year's artists and thank you for sharing your work!"

Pieces of the 2023 exhibition are from many mediums and art styles including painting, photography, digital art, paper quilling and other multimedia styles.

"What a pleasure to experience this spectacular showcase of creativity, passion and dedication of this year's featured Hoosier Women Artists," said Indiana Auditor of State Tera Klutz, CPA. "We can all appreciate the storytelling these artists provide in their work, creating a bridge to connect us using a universal language that goes beyond culture, religion, ethnicity, or language."

Any artist living in Indiana who identifies as female is allowed to submit one piece of artwork annually.

"It is a privilege to recognize the creativity of Hoosier women artists," said Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush. "I am proud to be a part of the initiative and display their work in my chambers."

In addition to the art selected for the Statehouse, pieces will also be displayed by First Lady Janet Holcomb at the Governor's Residence.

"The Hoosier Women Artists Exhibition is a great opportunity to celebrate and meet talented and creative women who live right here in Indiana," said First Lady Janet Holcomb. "Each year, I look forward to selecting a few pieces to display in the Governor's Residence for all our visitors to enjoy. The artists generously

loan the pieces for one year, and I grow quite attached, making it difficult to let them go."

Of the 230 pieces that were submitted to the program this year, 29 were selected to be displayed in the Statehouse and at the Governor's Residence where they will be admired by the thousands of visitors for the next year.

"Every time someone visits my office, I get to share with them that the artwork displayed on the walls was created by talented women from across the state," said Crouch. "We are blessed to work in this stunning building every day, and the opportunity to display their art makes it somehow even more beautiful."

Honorees are from across the state and will be in the following offices:

Office of Indiana Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch

- Anna Afshar (Indianapolis) - "Indianapolis Then"
- Nichole Baker (Lafayette) - "Sonic Metal"
- Faith Belflower (Bloomington) - "Superman"
- Sarah Boutwell (Indianapolis) - "Calm After the Storm"
- Boxx the Artist (Indianapolis) - "Lady Blues"
- Pamela Clements (Crown Point) - "2020"
- Kenya Ferrand-Ott (West Lafayette) - "Silver Bison"
- Penny French-Deal (North Manchester) - "The Tall Ship"
- Cristianne Fritsch (Milan) - "The Joy of Pet Parenting"
- Mary Elizabeth Mindola (Indianapolis) - "Think Big, Dream Easy"
- Brandi Page (Monticello) - "Sunflowers at Sunset"
- Debbie Potis (Osceola)

Office of Indiana First Lady Janet Holcomb, Governor's Residence

- Kathryn Jo Houghton (Crawfordsville) - "Fancy Tulips and Pears"
- Sharon Kerner (Shelby) - "Keeping Watch"
- Corinne McAuley (Bunker Hill) - "Pink Peonies"

Office of Indiana Auditor of State Tera Klutz

- Christine Hubbell (Westville) - "Folly/Cerulean Warblers"
- Megan Marie Hughes (Lebanon) - "A Midwestern Spring"
- Anna Sowka (Bloomington) - "Nothing Is Ever Lost"

Office of Indiana Secretary of Education Dr. Katie Jenner

- Emily Bennett (Terre Haute) - "The Kitchen Sink"
- Jane S. Lohmeyer (Valparaiso) - "Missing Beach 2"

Office of Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Loretta Rush

- Susan Ardelean (Avon) - "Virgo's Groove"
- Madhuchhanda Mandal (Carmel) - "The Faceless Entertainer"
- Norene Slack (Greenwood) - "Reaching To The Sky"

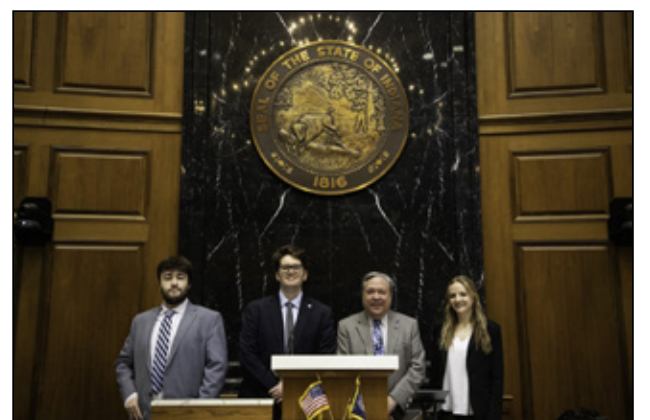


Photo courtesy of Abraham Hunt

Carmel High School graduates Edison Perry (far left), Marshall Boone (second from left) and Sophia Casati (far right) join State Rep. Jerry Torr (R-Carmel) (third from left) in the House Chamber at the Statehouse in Indianapolis. Perry, Boone and Casati are interning with the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Carmel Graduates Working Hand-In-Hand At House Of Representatives

Carmel High School graduates Marshall Boone, Sophia Casati and Edison Perry are gaining experience as interns with State Rep. Jerry Torr (R-Carmel) and his fellow members of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2023 legislative session.

Boone is the son of Chuck and Mariza Boone. He is currently attending Purdue University, and is majoring in accounting and finance.

"During my time here at the Statehouse, I've been making quality friendships, and building professional connections with legislators and staff," Boone said. "I've learned a ton, and really enjoyed spending my time serving constituents and helping our elected officials."

Perry is the son of John and Chris Perry. He is attending Xavier University, where he is majoring in history.

"This internship has allowed me to serve something bigger than myself," Perry said. "Having the opportunity to directly help constituents means a lot to me because so many people look to this institution for resources and assistance. I've also developed an ability to work within a professional and formal work environment, which is something you can't get by just being in a classroom."

As legislative interns, both Boone and Perry correspond with constituents through phone calls,

letters and emails while also staffing committee hearings and floor proceedings.

Casati is the daughter of Michael and Amy Casati. She recently graduated from Indiana University with a degree in journalism-public relations.

"Interning at the Statehouse has been a great creative outlet," Casati said. "Every day I've been improving my skills in communication, graphic design and writing. It's been incredible to meet and work directly with representatives on collaborative content."

As a communications intern, Casati helps write news releases, prepare handouts for legislators and create email newsletters for constituents.

"Marshall, Sophia and Edison are getting a good start to their careers, taking on responsibility and building skills that translate to any field," Torr said. "They're a great group of young professionals, and we're thrilled to have them. I'm looking forward to seeing where they go next."

Each year, the House of Representatives offers paid internship opportunities to college students, law-school students, graduate students and recent college graduates for the duration of each legislative session.

Visit IndianaHouseRepublicans.com/internship for more information about the House Republican internship program.

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Purdue Fans Growing Tired Of Wait For Next Year

As a Chicago Cubs fan, Matt Painter is well aware how many times “wait ‘til next year” was uttered by the Wrigley faithful between 1909 and 2015. Millions of Cubs fans went to their graves without seeing their team attain baseball’s version of the Promised Land, a World Series championship.

Today, Purdue basketball fans are wondering when “next year” is going to arrive for them.

Here’s a list of the programs that have reached the NCAA Final Four since Lee Rose and Joe Barry Carroll took the Boilermakers to Indianapolis in 1980.

Virginia (3), North Carolina (14), Indiana (4), LSU (3), Georgetown (4), Louisville (6), Houston (4), Georgia, North Carolina State, Kentucky (9), St. John’s;

Villanova (5), Memphis (2), Duke (13), Kansas (10), Syracuse (5), Providence, UNLV (3), Oklahoma (3), Arizona (4), Seton Hall;

Michigan (5), Illinois (2), Arkansas (3), Georgia Tech (2), Cincinnati, Florida (5), Oklahoma State, UCLA (5), Massachusetts, Mississippi State;

Minnesota, Utah, Stanford, Michigan State (8), Ohio State (3), Connecticut (6), Wisconsin (3), Maryland (2), Texas, Marquette;

Oklahoma State, George Mason, Butler (2), West Virginia, VCU, Wichita State, South Carolina,

Gonzaga (2), Oregon, Loyola Chicago;

Texas Tech, Auburn, Baylor, San Diego State, Florida Atlantic and Miami (Fla.).

That’s 56 schools, including the ninth seed in Purdue’s bracket this season (Florida Atlantic). Eight current Big Ten schools.

What about the other five Big Ten schools missing from this list?

1. Iowa has the same Final Four drought as Purdue, 43 years, and has not won a Big Ten title since 1979.

2. Northwestern has two NCAA tournament appearances in its not very illustrious history.

3. Rutgers has one fewer Final Four appearance than Purdue (1976).

4. Nebraska has the distinction of having never won an NCAA tournament game (0-7), the only power conference school that can make that claim.

5. Penn State made its only Final Four appearance in 1954.

It’s commendable that Purdue has won 10 Big Ten championships since 1980, especially earning one this season with two freshmen guards in the starting lineup. Yes, this was considered a rebuilding year back in October.

But expectations changed after the Boilermakers dominated West Virginia, Duke and Gonzaga in the Phil Knight Legacy. Those expectations grew when

Purdue became the fastest school in the history of the Associated Press rankings to go from unranked in the preseason to No. 1.

When 7-4 junior center Zach Edey went from good to great in one year, almost certain to become Purdue’s third national player of the year, expectations reached a peak not seen since Glenn Robinson’s player of the year season in 1994.

But the ending to the 2022-23 season was the same as 1988, 1994, 2019 and the other 27 NCAA tournament appearances since 1980.

Purdue escaped making history in 1996 when it held off No. 16 seed Western Carolina by two points. It wasn’t so lucky this time.

Will Purdue respond like the first No. 1 seed to lose to a No. 16, Virginia, did in 2019 by winning the national championship?

Any chance of that happening begins with Edey’s decision about his senior year. If this was 1990, the Canada native would take his player of the year trophies and be set financially for life in the NBA.

Mock NBA Drafts I’ve seen aren’t optimistic about his chances of being among the first 40 picks. So maybe Edey comes back and makes some Name Image Likeness (NIL) cash despite his student visa status prohibiting off-campus work.

Speaking of NIL, it has to be upsetting to Painter

that a player who could have made a difference in the NCAA tournament is going to the Final Four. Nijel Pack could have eased the burden carried by Westfield’s Braden Smith and fellow freshman Fletcher Loyer during the second half of the season.

But Miami booster John Ruiz made Pack an offer he couldn’t refuse: \$800,000 over two years and a car. Purdue settled for a nice role player in David Jenkins Jr. instead of a difference maker.

For too long, Purdue has played the “we do things the right way” card. Let’s see if the hard lesson of losing Pack wakes up the richest Boilermaker backers, and Purdue administration, to the reality that NIL also stands for “Now It’s Legal.”

If the best Purdue can do in the transfer portal this offseason is a newer model of Jenkins, then more March sadness is inevitable.

Edey adds to trophy case

Purdue junior center Zach Edey picked up a second National Player of the Year award on Tuesday, this one from the National Association of Basketball Coaches.

The coaches also named Edey the winner of the Pete Newell Big Man of the Year Award. JaJuan Johnson (2011) and Caleb Swanigan (2017) also have claimed this honor.

Edey averaged 22.3 points, 12.9 rebounds, 2.1

blocks and 1.5 assists this season. He finished second nationally in rebounding and sixth in scoring.

He is also one of four finalists for the Naismith Player of the Year, along with Indiana’s Trayce Jackson-Davis, Gonzaga’s Drew Timme and Kansas’ Jalen Wilson.

Edey’s 1,533 points in 99 games is the most for a player through his junior season at Purdue. If Edey returns for his senior season and can match his 2022-23 scoring (757 points), he would be 33 points shy of Rick Mount’s 53-year scoring record.

Reason for optimism Not all of the national media is critical of Matt Painter and Purdue following another NCAA tournament disappointment

Mike DeCourcy of The Sporting News and a Big Ten Network analyst has the Boilermakers fourth in his pre-transfer portal/NBA Draft decisions Top 25 for 2023-24. Connecticut, UCLA and Duke are ranked 1-2-3.

“You are weary of the Boilers compiling extraordinary regular seasons and then washing out against lower-seeded teams in the NCAA Tournament? Sorry. And lighten up. It’s been three years. Mike Krzyzewski lost to a No. 15 seed in 2012 and a No. 14 in 2014 and then went out in 2015 and won the NCAA championship. Matt Painter’s last NCAA trip before this run of



KENNY THOMPSON
Columnist

misery ended a single free throw short of the Final Four at the South Region final in 2019.

“So how about we stop pretending this circumstance is eternal?”

“This Boilers team will be more experienced, with more physical maturity and ideally more dynamism with freshman Myles Colvin arriving and potentially more shooting with redshirt freshman Camden Heide becoming active.

“All of this is dependent on the Sporting News Player of the Year Zach Edey returning for another season, but every indication is he will remain a Boiler in 2023-24.”

The only other Big Ten teams ranked by DeCourcy are Michigan State (11th) and Northwestern (23rd).

-Kenny Thompson is the former sports editor for the Lafayette Journal & Courier and an award-winning journalist. He has covered Purdue athletics for many years.

Bagels Are One Of America’s Dangerous Foods



DICK WOLFSIE
Funny Bone

That headline was the title of an article I read on an app called SmartNews. The story makes it clear that if you show up at an emergency room with a fishhook in your nose or your fingers super-glued together, there is a good chance you will be sitting in the waiting room next to a guy with a bagel injury.

The writer claims that more than 40,000 people in this country ended up in an ER last year with a BRI—a Bagel Related Injury. That’s about 10 dozen people a day (in bagel talk). I find this statistic absolutely astounding. It means that over 325 million people in the United States have avoided these doughy morning mishaps. What are they eating for breakfast? Pop Tarts?

As you have no doubt surmised, a BRI is an accident that occurs when cutting the bagel in half before popping it in the toaster. The result can be hand lacerations, gouges

or severed digits...all of which, especially the last one, can ruin a lovely Sunday brunch.

Several years ago, I was a victim of my own bagel boo-boo. The big mistake I made was using a dull knife to cut a frozen bagel while holding the bagel in the palm of my hand. Okay, I guess that’s three mistakes.

If these accidents continue, hospitals may have to assign specially trained triage nurses to assess the severity of the situation when bleeders arrive at the ER.

“What seems to be the problem, Sir?”

“I cut myself while I was slicing a bagel.”

“Were you cutting it horizontally or vertically?” the nurse might ask.

“I was vertical, of course. It’s not safe to slice a bagel while lying on the couch.”

“I see you are bleeding pretty badly. I also detect a white ooze in the cut.”

“That’s cream cheese. Can we move on with this? It really hurts.”

“Sir, I need to record all the data. It’s part of the new government program, O’Bagel Care. What kind of bagel was it?”

“It was an Everything Bagel.”

“Oh, I just love those. I can even see the little poppy seeds and specks of onion on your bloody napkin. That explains the

burning sensation in your gaping wound. By the way, can you recommend a place to get a good Everything Bagel?”

“Yes, there’s a cute neighborhood shop on 86th Street...wait a second, what are we doing here? I hate to be blunt about this, but can we get me in to see a doctor quickly? And can you confirm my accident is covered by my insurance?”

“You would need to have a bagel medical plan like Blue-Cross,

Blue-Berry, with a Sesame Seed supplement. Just kidding. Dr.

Cohen, the physician on duty, made up those jokes. It’s just a barrel of laughs working here in the ER.”

A sympathetic nurse may offer some advice while you wait. “You might want to invest in a contraption specifically designed to cut bagels, so we don’t see you here again. They’re sometimes called Bagel Guillotines. They protect your hands from sharp edges. Doesn’t that sound like a good idea?”

“No, but Pop Tarts are starting to.”

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BETSY

From Page A1



Photo courtesy of Sally Wolf

Noblesville High School 2021 graduate guitarist Santiago Baptista, who will be the opener at 7 p.m. Saturday for Legacy Keepers Music's new Classical Guitar Series, performs during a "sound check" of the Historic Courtroom in the Hamilton County Courthouse in downtown Noblesville.

Children ages 2 and younger are invited to stop by the Parks and Recreation tent, where toddler-related activity bags will be handed out to the first 50 kids. Noblesville Kiwanis Sunrisers will host a pancake breakfast in conjunction with the egg hunt at Forest Park Inn 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. April 1, featuring pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee and milk, for \$5 with proceeds to go to a local charity.

9. You get to ride a train for this Easter happening. Board the Nickel Plate Express for an Egg-citing Easter train ride with the Easter bunny on Saturday and Sunday and April 2 and 8, leaving Hobbs Station at Forest Park Depot in Noblesville.

10. If you're 21 and older, enjoy an Adults Only Easter Egg Hunt from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday at Urban Vines Winery in Westfield. A \$40 ticket includes a sandwich, Mimosa samples, live music with The Neighbors Band, find the Golden Eggs, then get your photo taken with the Urban Vines Bunnies.

11. Bring your precious pup to Egg-Paw-Looza!, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at Asa Bales Park in Westfield. For three dog egg hunts, professional pet portraits with the Easter Bunny, activities, pet vendors, food and beverage vendors. A portion of ticket sales will benefit the Indiana Canine Assistance Network (ICAN).

12. Enjoy a night of painting and see baby animals 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday at Kiln Creations in downtown Noblesville. Silly Safari will bring a menagerie of Easter bunnies and chicks to pet, then paint some Easter-themed pottery (which will be ready for pickup in a week after kiln drying) for your \$25 ticket. Painters under age 13 require supervision.

13. Legacy Keepers Music's new 2023 Classical Guitar series, a part of the Bicentennial Celebration, kicks off at 7 p.m. Saturday in the Historic Courtroom at the Hamilton County Courthouse in downtown Noblesville. NHS 2021 graduate, guitarist Santiago Baptista, will take the stand to give his own musical testimony before the featured artist, Joseph Jones, a 2020 Butler University Masters Guitar program graduate. The series continues May 6 with Brett Terrell and Friends, Nov. 4 with Nolan Winters and Dec. 2 with John Alvarado. Tickets are \$20 each or \$60 for season tickets for the four concerts, a savings of \$20.

14. Enjoy live music at Grindstone Public House in Noblesville, featuring Disagreeable on Saturday, Craig Thurston on April 6, John Gilmore on April

8. Experience the live music of Ciara Haskett at 7 p.m. Saturday, Brian Goins on April 8, Anneliese & Ali on April 14, Benjamin Watson on April 15, at Spencer Farm Winery in Noblesville.

16. Partake in the Wayne-Fall Lions Club's annual Palm Sunday Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday at the Club on East 191st Street at DeShane Avenue and Victory Chapel Road, in Noblesville, with a menu featuring pancakes, eggs, bacon and sausage for a freewill donation.

17. Hyperion Players is seeking actors to audition for more than two dozen roles in an original play, "Call Me Sister," set at Christmas 1550, at 7 p.m. Sunday and Monday at Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Noblesville, with actors asked to perform cold reads from the script. Performances June 8-11.

18. Noblesville Jim Dandy's annual Easter Kids' Night is 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 5, with face painting, egg coloring and a coloring contest and more.

19. Join a newly organized group of volunteers in making a community garden of fruits, vegetables and herbs near Southside Park in Noblesville, by attending the second of two call-out community meetings, 6:30-8 p.m. April 6 at Mill Top Banquet & Conference Center in Noblesville.

20. Calling all singers, dancers, magicians and other performers for April 7 First Friday in downtown Noblesville, with Noblesville Main Street's "Noblesville's Got Talent," with audition registration at www.noblesvillemainstreet.org

21. Enjoy an Easter breakfast buffet and visit with the Easter Bunny for a photo opportunity from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. April 8 at Conner Prairie in Fishers. Remember to bring your own camera to capture the memory. Assigned seating will be arranged in advance for registered guests.

22. The community is invited to an annual Easter Egg Hunt 9 a.m. to noon April 8 at the First Christian Church in Noblesville. Ages 5 and younger with parents at 9 a.m., ages 6-9 at 10 a.m. and ages 10-12 at 11 a.m.

23. Owners can bring their dogs and sniff out thousands of treat-filled Easter "Beggs" with treats, at 11 a.m. April 8 at Hamilton Town Center's Dog Park behind Express.

24. Families can celebrate Spring at the Hide and Peep Egg Hunt and more 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 8 at Village Green in front of Dick's Sporting Goods.

25. Join the 11th annual Adult Easter Egg Hunt

at noon April 8 at Blackhawk Winery & Vineyard in Sheridan, where the eggs you find will earn special prizes, and where your ticket includes a glass of wine and wine tumbler. For ages 21 and older. Grounds are open until 7 p.m. with music and food, with \$25 tickets at eventbrite.com.

26. Add a touch of jazz to your Easter Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 9 at Feinstein's at Hotel Carmichael in Carmel with special guest Tom Clark and sounds of Blair Clark, who has captivated audiences through Europe, Canada and all over the U.S.

28. Families can celebrate Spring at the Hide and Peep Egg Hunt and more 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 8 at Village Green in front of Dick's Sporting Goods.

29. Join the 11th annual Adult Easter Egg Hunt at noon April 8 at Blackhawk Winery & Vineyard in Sheridan, where the eggs you find will earn special prizes, and where your ticket includes a glass of wine and wine tumbler. For ages 21 and older. Grounds are open until 7 p.m. with music and food, with \$25 tickets at eventbrite.com.

30. Add a touch of jazz to your Easter Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 9 at Feinstein's at Hotel Carmichael in Carmel with special guest Tom Clark and sounds of Blair Clark, who has captivated audiences through Europe, Canada and all over the U.S.

31. Bring Fido and sniff out thousands of treat-filled Easter "Beggs" with treats, at 11 a.m. April 8 at Hamilton Town Center's Dog Park behind Express.

32. Celebrate Spring at the Hide and Peep Egg Hunt and more 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 8 at Village Green in front of Dick's Sporting Goods.

33. Main Street Productions and Basile Westfield Playhouse present "Spitfire Grill," directed by Noblesville's Brenna Whitaker April 13-27, with tickets at westfield-playhouse.org.

34. Ages 2-5 can partake 2 to 3 p.m. April 27 for "Wiggling Worms at Work," with dirt pudding, with fee and registration at noblesvilleparks.org or by calling 317-776-6350.

35. Hamilton County Theatre Guild's The Belfry Theatre presents "Crimes of the Heart," directed by Jen Otterman of Noblesville, April 28-May 7 at Arts for Lawrence's Theater at the Fort in Indianapolis, with tickets at 317-773-1085 and on sale soon at www.thebelfrytheatre.com.

-Betsy Reason writes about people, places and things in Hamilton County. Contact Betsy Reason at betsy@thetimes24-7.com.

ARROWOOD

From Page A1

backbone and driving force of this organization, now in its fourth decade of service. Those who join Kiwanis want to do more than contribute financially. They want to find fulfillment in volunteer activity, community involvement, and fellowship. Kiwanis gives them this and a lot more including a chance to shape their communities through hands-on activities and interaction with children. The ability to change the course of a child's life in our own community is a compelling reward. Mark

your calendar to join me to learn more about how you can be a part of this impactful group at 7:30 a.m., Saturday, April 29 at the Red Bridge Park Community Building. Kids Need Kiwanis. Kiwanis Needs You.

Registration is now open to new students planning to attend Hamilton Heights for the 2023-24 school year. Registration for returning students is also open. Click here for more details on registering your new Husky today.

Our much-anticipated spring break starts tomorrow. I would like to wish our students and staff a well-deserved break. Take the time to relax, rejuvenate, and enjoy the extra hour of daylight before we head into the home stretch of the final semester of the school year. See you back on campus on Monday, April 10. #WeAreHuskies

-Dr. Derek Arrowood is the Superintendent of the Hamilton Heights School Corporation.

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FRIDAY Business Notes and NEWS DAY

Friday, March 31, 2023

A7

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Battery Component Manufacturer Plans \$1.5B Investment In Indiana To Power Growing Domestic Electric Vehicle, Energy Storage Demand

ENTEK, the only U.S.-owned and U.S.-based producer of 'wet-process' lithium-ion battery separator materials, announced plans today to establish operations in Indiana, investing \$1.5 billion in a new Terre Haute production facility. The project, which marks the company's largest investment thus far, will create up to 642 new, high-wage jobs by the end of 2027 and support the growing electric vehicle (EV) industry in Indiana and across the United States.

"This is a great day for Terre Haute and for the state of Indiana," said Governor Eric J. Holcomb. "ENTEK's decision to locate a new, \$1.5 billion battery component manufacturing facility here will have a transformational impact on the West Central Indiana community and the Hoosier economy for generations to come. This decision cements Indiana's leadership in the electric vehicle supply chain sector, and we are thrilled to partner with ENTEK to speed the commercialization of U.S.-built EVs."

"Indiana is squarely focused on building an economy of the future, and this significant investment from ENTEK will continue the state's economic leadership," said Indiana Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers. "This new giga-scale facility is a testament to our competitive business climate, quality workforce and continued investments in quality of place. With this news, Indiana continues its momentum in EVs and industry supporting the global energy transition."

ENTEK, a global company headquartered in Lebanon, Oregon, will invest \$1.5 billion to establish operations on a 350-acre greenfield site in the Vigo County Industrial Park II in Terre Haute. The company plans to initially construct four buildings covering 1.4 million square feet – equipped with equipment built at current ENTEK manufacturing facilities in Oregon and Nevada and including specialty biaxial stretching equipment supplied by Brueckner Group USA – to manufacture battery separators for lithium-ion battery manufacturers across the United States.

ENTEK's site selection was focused on choosing both land

and community. Larry Keith, ENTEK's CEO, said, "We chose Terre Haute for many reasons including the excellent workforce opportunity, the incredible support provided by Steve Witt and the Economic Development Corporation, a nearly shovel ready construction site with available utilities located in an industrial park, excellent vocational education, and the business-friendly incentives from both the state and local governments."

The campus, which is fueled in part by a \$200 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as part of the recent Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will enable ENTEK to scale its U.S. production, capable of supplying approximately 1.4 to 1.6 million EVs annually by 2027. The new giga-scale lithium-ion battery separator operations will leverage ENTEK's pioneering sustainable, state-of-the-art solvent extraction and recovery systems and processing techniques, and the company will work to utilize available renewable energy with a focus on a reduced carbon footprint. The company plans to break ground on the campus as soon as engineering and permitting is completed and launch its Indiana operations between 2025-2027.

This project is the first phase of ENTEK's planned expansion to produce about 1.4 billion square meters of ceramic coated lithium separators across its operations. Phase 2 of the project will add up to an additional 1.8 billion square meters of battery separator produced annually for a total of 3.2 billion square meters which will provide enough separators for about 3.5 million electric vehicles.

ENTEK, which employs more than 1,000 associates globally, plans to create more than 640 new jobs in Terre Haute during this Phase 1 expansion with average wages well above the Vigo County average. The company expects to begin hiring for key leadership positions in 2024 to facilitate recruitment of numerous associates throughout the operation including production, maintenance, electricians, human resources, accounting, IT, safety, and environmental. Each of these associates will be crucial to ENTEK's growth

and the organization's role in securing our domestic supply chain for electric vehicles.

"It has been an incredible honor to work with Larry Keith, Kim Medford and the ENTEK team on this extraordinary opportunity for our community", said Steve Witt, President of the Terre Haute Economic Development Corporation. "At the local level, we will do our utmost to help make ENTEK's fabulous new project a success."

ENTEK, established in 1984, is the only US-owned and US-based producer of 'wet-process' lithium-ion battery separator materials and is committed to the transformational expansion of its US lithium-ion battery separator footprint at a scale and a pace to meet the US DOE imperative for a sustainable and resilient domestic lithium battery supply chain. In addition to its energy storage division, which includes production of battery separators for lithium-ion and lead-acid batteries, ENTEK also manufactures equipment for the plastics industry and creates high-performance materials for a broad range of energy storage and functional membrane applications. The company is focused on moving the world forward through product and manufacturing innovation in vehicles, devices, homes, and new markets.

Pending approval from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) board of directors, the IEDC, will commit an investment in ENTEK of up to \$8 million in the form of incentive-based tax credits and up to \$300,000 in training grants, based on the company's job creation plans. The IEDC also committed an investment of up to \$200,000 in innovation grants; up to \$200,000 in Manufacturing Readiness Grants, which help companies invest in smart manufacturing and new technologies; and up to \$5 million in conditional structured performance payments. These investments are performance-based, meaning the company is eligible to claim incentives once Hoosiers are hired. Vigo County is considering additional incentives to support the project; Duke Energy also offered additional incentives to offset a portion of the energy costs.

Hoosier Entrepreneur Locating New Fulfillment Firm In East Central Indiana

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb joined local officials and executives of Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions, a woman-owned, third-party logistics provider earlier this week to announce plans to establish operations in Union County, creating up to 50 new jobs by the end of 2026.

"Indiana's economic momentum continues to accelerate thanks to entrepreneurs and successful small businesses like Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions," said Holcomb. "As a state, we have a long history of entrepreneurship and innovation thanks to our strong Hoosier work ethic backed by forward looking leaders. It's clear our vision and entrepreneurial spirit will continue to drive both our local communities and economy forward for years to come."

"Indiana was recently named the number-one state to start a business by Forbes, and I'm thrilled to see entrepreneurs choose to locate and grow in communities like Liberty," said Indiana Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers. "Small businesses like Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions are critical to providing quality career opportunities and to advancing the success and vitality of our neighborhoods. This is the first economic development project to locate in Union County in nearly 30 years, and the impact this investment and this company will have on the community will be transformative."

Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions will invest \$7.3 million in the coming years to establish operations in Liberty, initially leasing and equipping an 23,000-square-foot space at 757 S. State Road 101. The company, which expects to start renovating the space in April, plans to add to the property within the next couple years, constructing additional buildings on the site to add warehouse space. The expansion will enable the company to continue to scale, providing both business-to-business and direct-to-consumer fulfillment services.

The company, which already employs three associates, plans to start hiring for bookkeeping, warehouse management, human resources, pickers and packers, and a shipping and receiving manager beginning May 1 to support its operations. New positions offering average salaries well above the Union County average. Interested applicants can send resume's to hr@fullthrottlefulfillment.com.

"Indiana offers a welcoming and supportive environment for businesses, as evidenced by the enthusiasm and willingness of local, regional and state officials to assist in our growth, advance the state's workforce through programs like Next Level Jobs, and provide entrepreneurial support at the community

level," said Angelia Snyder, founder and CEO of Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions. "My husband, Malcom Snyder, was raised in Liberty and has long, established roots here. By locating in Liberty, we hope to deepen these connections, build strong ties with the community, and contribute to the region's economic growth."

Snyder, an entrepreneur, also founded and owns Archer Full Throttle, an archery-focused e-commerce and fulfillment company based in Connersville. Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions, which will begin operating in May, provides fulfillment solutions for clients, helping businesses store and ship a variety of product orders to businesses and customers across the US. Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions provides a comprehensive range of services, including order fulfillment, warehousing, shipping and logistics management, and is equipped to handle a diverse range of shipments, including Amazon Seller Fulfilled Prime orders.

"I'm grateful that this businesswoman recognized the business opportunities available in Union County. I wish them nothing but success and look forward to their business prospering for years to come," said Tim Williams, president of the Union County Commissioners. "Anytime a small community such as ours can add jobs and create new opportunities for others to have local employment it's a good thing for the community. I hope that others will follow their example and look for ways to grow or start a new business in Union County."

Based on the company's job creation plans, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation committed an investment in Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions of up to \$600,000 in the form of incentive-based tax credits. These tax credits are performance-based, meaning the company is eligible to claim incentives once Hoosiers are hired. Union County will consider additional incentives to support the project.

About Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions is a dynamic and innovative fulfillment company founded and owned by Angelia Snyder, a successful woman entrepreneur with over 19 years of experience in the e-commerce industry. Full Throttle Fulfillment Solutions provides fulfillment services to meet the unique needs of businesses, leveraging cutting-edge technology, an experienced team and exceptional customer service. The company is dedicated to on-time delivery, utilizing cutting-edge technology and processes to ensure that orders are fulfilled accurately and efficiently.

Gov. Holcomb, DWD Host 2023 JAG Indiana Career Development Conference

Governor Eric J. Holcomb and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) held the 2023 State Career Development Conference Friday, March 17. An annual event for Hoosier high school students enrolled in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) to participate in competitive events that highlight the employability skills they have learned through the program.

As the gateway between industry and talent, DWD's JAG program builds a talent pipeline to Indiana employers by helping high school students achieve success through high school graduation.

"JAG is helping young Hoosiers define who they want to be and equipping them with the necessary skills to be successful after graduation," Gov. Holcomb said. "Through JAG, more Indiana students are earning their high school diploma, entering the workforce, enrolling in postsecondary education and

enlisting in the military."

JAG Indiana's 15th annual Career Development Conference was the culmination of regional competitions, which focused on disciplines critical to employment. More than 140 students from 57 Indiana high schools advanced to the state conference for an opportunity to earn monetary awards by showcasing skills learned through the program, such as finance, entrepreneurship and project management.

"JAG is all about building tomorrow's workforce, today," said DWD Commissioner David J. Adams. "By connecting talent --especially at an early age -- with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to access the market, and filling roles employers need immediately, we are moving Indiana forward together. Employers engaged with JAG students get the opportunity to see their future workforce and select their next employees, and students get introduced to real world

employers, jobs and careers."

Students competed in 14 categories, including the top Outstanding Senior award.

"JAG has been truly beneficial to me," said Milan High School senior Madison Cavins. "It has helped me grow into this person that I am now, today. JAG has taught me professional interview skills, financial literacy, public speaking skills, and it has also taught me where to go in life."

JAG is a state-based, national non-profit organization that assists students with barriers to success by helping them overcome academic challenges and achieve graduation. Students learn up to 88 competencies such as critical thinking, team leadership and effective communications skills to increase employability.

This year's conference took place at the Ivy Tech Community College Culinary and Conference Center in Indianapolis.

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Voice of our PEOPLE

Spring Sprung Surprise On Timmons

With the dawning of spring earlier this week, I couldn't wait to get outside and enjoy some fresh air. So I threw on the sweats, laced up the sneakers and hit the trail. Oh man it felt good!

Did I mention it was oh-dark-thirty? Like a lot of us my age, I don't sleep in anymore. And once the workday starts, it's too easy to get caught up in putting out fires. Next thing you know, you missed lunch and bing, bang, boom . . . it's getting dark outside.

After days like that, who has the energy left to go for a walk?

So before the sun comes up, I'm enjoying the fresh air, the quiet and solitude on the trail and a little exercise.

Except not on this day.

Just as I got to the darkest stretch of the trail, everything lit up like the giant spotlights car dealers used to use back in the '60s. I didn't hear anything unusual – but quickly realized James Taylor was singing Carolina on my Mind in my headphones. I yanked the earbuds out and heard or maybe felt a deep, deep bass that shook my whole body. Before I could take another step, a sort of fuzzy, sparkling beam of light



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

appeared on the trail. Slowly, an alien creature materialized in the beam.

I rubbed my eyes. Had I fallen and hit my head? Was I really on the trail, or still snug in my bed and dreaming the kind of weird dream caused by eating those leftover hot dogs (they weren't THAT old, were they?) last night?

No, the alien was standing there. It had long and spindly appendages and an oversized head with very large, dark eyes. If there was a mouth, it was hidden. When the alien spoke, I did not see his lips move, but rather "heard" it in my head.

"Do you want me to take you to our leader?" I asked.

"You must be joking," it said. "We've aren't experts on your world, but we've seen enough to know there's no point in wasting time."

Obviously, an advanced alien race.

"Uh, then what is it you want?" I asked – not sure whether to be excited or terrified.

"Not much, actually," it replied. "We were – what's your expression – just passing through and thought we'd use this opportunity to verify some of our data."

Relief. At least they weren't looking to collect specimens.

"Think of us like census takers. We just want to ask a few questions and then we'll be on our way."

"Sounds fine to me," I said. "How can I help?"

"Well, we have the basics covered," he said. "Your planet is made up of two sexes and-"

"Uh, hang on," I said.

"Yes?"

"There's some dispute on that," I said.

"Dispute? How can there be dispute? It's pretty basic biolo-

gy, isn't it?"

"Above my pay grade," I said.

He wrote something down.

"Fine. Well, your planet isn't much different from many others in that the female tends to be the smartest. We saw that you recently had a week devoted to women and one of them was named the International Woman of Courage. Can we talk to her?"

"Uh, I guess," I said. "But she's not really uh, well, a she."

The large eyes blinked. "She's a guy in a dress," I tried to explain . . . clumsily. The noise he made sounded an awful lot like the same sigh I hear from my wife when I'm trying to explain why I can't do some household chore.

"OK, then. Let's talk about the countries on your planet. Each country is a sovereign nation and protects its citizens from intruders that-"

"Hold on again," I said.

"What now?"

"Our country used to have a way to allow immigrants in, but now they just come in whenever they please."

"But how do you ensure you have enough resources for

everyone?"

"Uh, again, above-." "Yeah I know, above your pay grade."

These guys are really smart.

"OK, one last question then. As far as your family units – the maternal and paternal units are responsible in all aspects for the offspring and-"

"Uh . . ."

The alien looked unsettled. "What?"

"Well, there's some debate in the Legislature about whether the government or the parents should-"

"You know what, never mind," my new alien friend huffed. "You guys aren't evolving. You're squabbling like neporoids."

"Neporoids?" I asked.

"They're a world a few galaxies over who've decided they never want to grow up. All they do is argue. We'll come back and check on you later to see if you figured it out. A lot later."

Two cents, which is about how much Timmons said his columns are worth, appears periodically on Wednesdays in The Paper. Timmons is the publisher of The Paper and can be contacted at timmons@thepaper24-7.com.

Ask Rusty – Widow Stung By Social Security's "Claw Back" Rule

Dear Rusty: My husband of 48 years died on December 30th, and he received a Social Security direct deposit for December's benefits in early January, but Social Security demanded the bank return his December payment. I used part of his December benefits to pay for household expenses, so his bank account was overdrawn after his bank paid back his Social Security for the December benefit. My questions are:

1. Is it legal for Social Security to demand a return of his benefits because he died one day prior to 1/1/2023? That just seems so wrong to me!

2. Am I legally responsible for the over-

drawn amount his bank repaid to Social Security? I was not notified by Social Security or his bank before "the deed was done".

3. Aren't there Social Security spousal benefits available for the surviving spouse, and how do I apply for them? (Form #, please)

My husband medically retired early, and his Social Security benefits were always lower than mine, but I fear that my benefits may be affected by his death. Is that true? *Signed: Grieving Widow, Feeling Wronged*

Dear Grieving Widow: Please accept our sincere condolences on your husband's passing. Unfortunately, I don't have good news for you about



ASK RUSTY
Social Security Advisor

his December benefit payment. Social Security pays benefits in the month following the month they are earned, and the recipient must live the entire month to be eligible for that month's benefit. Even though your husband lived until almost the end of the month, Social Security's rule says that he must

Social Security Matters by AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor Russell Gloor

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live the entire month to be eligible for December benefits; thus, they took back (often referred to as "Clawed Back") the December benefits paid in January.

So, is all of this legal? Yes, I'm afraid it is. From what you've shared Social Security took back the money they are legally entitled to, so you

have no further obligation to Social Security. The bank had no choice but to return your husband's December Social Security payment – they were legally obligated to do so. Thus, your obligation to resolve your husband's overdrawn bank account resulting from the bank fulfilling its legal obligation to Social Security

still remains.

As for any spousal or survivor benefits you might be entitled to – you say your husband's Social Security payment was less than yours, which means you weren't getting a spousal benefit and cannot get a surviving spouse benefit as a widow (you can only get your benefit or his, whichever is higher). You will, however, be eligible for a one-time lump sum death benefit of \$255. I know it's not much, but you're entitled to it and should claim it. And, from what you've described - that your monthly Social Security amount is more than your husband's - your own benefit will not be negatively affected by any of this.



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Pilgrimage To The Holy Land

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sagamore News Media's own Tim Timmons traveled to the Holy Land on a personal pilgrimage of sorts. While there, he wrote a daily column. We have included those, along with some thoughts he put together both before and after the trip, along with some photos. Timmons is available to speak about this amazing trip to church and community groups. If you would like to talk to him about it, he can be reached at timmons@thepaper24-7.com. From all of us at Sagamore News Media, we hope you enjoy this compilation of stories.



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents from The Holy Land

The pilgrimage to the Holy Land begins . . .

Like a lot of you, I'm a mutt. My ancestors came from all over, but the majority came from the land of shamrocks and leprechauns, Ireland.

So it was that I've always wanted to travel there. Specifically, I yearned to go to County Kilkenny and County Wicklow and see if I can run into some cousins. I was determined, first chance I got, to head to Ireland.

Next week, we leave for Israel, the Holy Land.

What happened? Well, about a year or so ago things began to change. No, I don't like Ireland any less. I have not rebelled against my ancestors. For the regular eight or nine of you who read these scribbles, the change of heart took place well before the open heart surgery. I can't point to a specific event or time, but my faith started to take a more important role in my day to day life. My lovely wife of almost 40 years Linda and I now pray before meals. It's drawn a few looks – some good, some uncomfortable – in public. There are other things, too.

First, some background.

I was raised Catholic. My grandmother had a trace of an Irish accent and was devout in her faith. I remember she would sweep off the porch and offer it up to God. I went to Our Lady of Grace grade school back when it was on 11th St., not too far from Hayden's Drugstore. I became an altar boy when Fr. Graham was the priest there and I'm sure would've stayed in that school system if junior high and high school had been offered.

When I went to college, I attended mass, albeit less frequently over time. And when I got married, my wife and I were from different (but similar) religions. We tried several different things because it was important to us that our children be raised in a church. One child was baptized in the Catholic faith and the other as a Lutheran.

Over the years, little by little, faith became less important. I never really stopped believing. I just stopped believing in prioritizing it.

I very much wish I could now write an explanation of when or why that changed. I can't. Maybe it's just age. A lot of folks seem to get more interested in a relationship with God as they get older.

Anyone who knows me knows I love quotations. More than a year ago I ran across one that stuck out. What if you woke up today with only the things you thanked God for yesterday?

Age? A quote? Maybe it's that simple. I honestly don't know.

All I do know is that my faith, my humanity, are more important to me now. Maybe, and I'm by no means an expert on the Bible and its teachings, it's a bigger picture? Just look around the world today and you can see things are off kilter. I'm not condemning – not my intent. But I sincerely believe we are on a bad path. Maybe it's important some of us stand up and share what we believe?

Let's be clear though.

There's no attempt to convert anyone, or even to tell you that one way is right and another way is wrong.

That's way above my pay grade.

I've mentioned Pastor Allen Jackson in this space before and he said something that resonated with me. If you believe in God, then you know there is going to come a time when you will stand face to face with Him and be accountable for every sin you committed, every bad thought, word or deed.

It's a daunting – no, make that terrifying – prospect. And it's incredibly individualistic. So no dear friends, I am not at all about telling you what to believe or not. I am simply doing what my faith, my heart and my brain tell me is the right thing to do.

That's what led to the switch in travel plans, and we depart for Israel Saturday. It's the trip of a lifetime – and if it means I never get to Ireland now, so be it. Truth to tell, we probably shouldn't spend the money on this – there's a recession and a very unsure future. We're doing it anyways.

I've reached out to the Israeli consulate to ask if I can do some interviews and photography while there. I don't know what connectivity will be like, but I will try to send back some thoughts and pictures. If that doesn't work, I'll share when we return. And I'll try not to make it as bad as sitting through some of the relatives' vacation slide shows back in the 1960s.

I don't know much more than that. It's a pilgrimage and I guess by definition that means the outcome isn't known. I'll do my best to bring you along, if you like. It starts Saturday.

Lots of questions, but where are answers? We're leaving for the Holy Land and I'm wondering not only what we'll find there, but what are we leaving behind.

I have never been a gloom and doom kind of guy. Wouldn't say I'm a

glowing optimist either. I try to look at things and see the possibilities, good and bad, and adjust accordingly. I guess if you put a gun to my head and said I had to choose one way or the other, I probably lean more toward the rosier side of things.

That's getting tougher. Our world is in a funk. The very foundations of who we are and what we stand for are being chipped away. Take elections. It used to be that the debate stopped and started with an election. If your guy or gal got in, you win. If yours did not, you saluted the flag and moved on. Oh sure, there have been a few instances here and there where the outcome was disputed. Those usually ended up in recounts. But now? Now politicians routinely throw

the election outcome into doubt. Who knows if they honestly believe its rigged, or if they just have egos so large they can't fathom the idea they failed to convince enough people to vote for them. All we really know is that if we can't believe in our elections, we're in a world of trouble.

It doesn't stop there. The idea that children, those under the age of 18, can somehow know enough at a very young age to make life-altering changes in their bodies in the name of transgenderism . . . and that they have support from adults . . .

I don't have the words. It's hard to comprehend. And then the news this week that North Korea fired an ICBM that experts agree could carry a nuclear warhead to anywhere in the continental United States. On top of that, North Korea officials say that this is practice for a nuclear attack on the U.S.

Can we play that out for a second? Let's imagine you're sitting down for a cup of coffee and the warning sirens come on. They are on TV, the radio, your phone, everywhere. At first you think tornado. But hey, it's 30 degrees outside. Then a graven voice comes on and tells you an attack is immi-

nent and to seek shelter immediately. In the next few minutes, millions could die. Or, perhaps, our military heroes might shoot down the incoming threat. Either way, in that moment, life has forever changed.

First comes the question – if we knew a nation with nuclear weapons was practicing for this, why did we not stop them? Then the bigger questions – how did we get here? How did life, our country, our world, get so far off track?

Chances are, you and I don't have those answers. I know for sure they won't be found in the Republican Party, nor with the Democrats. The answers aren't American, or Korean, or Russian or in any other nation.

We'll arrive in Tel Aviv



Did Jesus walk these very streets in Nazareth? It's very likely.

soon. After that we will visit Masada, the Sea of Galilee, the river Jordan, the sites of the birth of Christ and his death. It seems the right places to start looking.

Holy Land Pilgrimage Off to Good Start

The biggest thing I'm being asked is what's our first impression of the Holy Land. Four words. Jet. Lag. Is. Real.

The time difference is seven hours, so when we arrived at 7 a.m. Hoosier time, it was already mid-afternoon in Tel Aviv. Got to say though, the folks at Delta treated us very well and other than some less-than-friendly TSA agents in Boston (for which I blame the New England Patriots), the service, flights and food were all good.

But that jet lag thing made Sunday kind of a lost day. None of us, my wife, sister-in-law and me, slept well. But by Monday morning we were ready to go.

And what a day Monday was. We began in Old Town Jaffa, believed to be the oldest port city in the world. The apostle Peter spent time here, as did Jonah, as in Jonah and the whale. We toured the Church of St. Peter and left not long after for Caesarea, the capital of Judea under the Romans.

We also learned that it was the first day of the World Cup – something we saw evinced multiple times with people celebrating in the streets here.

We also learned that during excavations in Caesarea, the names Pontius Pilate and Herod were found, historically documenting their time there.

From there we headed to Nazareth, Megiddo (the site for the final battle of Armageddon), Mt. Carmel and of course the Mediterranean.

Breathtaking doesn't begin to describe. At one point I was standing on an overlook, Megiddo straight in front of me and Jerusalem a little off to the side. To think about the coming battle that will take place at the end of days filled me with a sense of awe and wonder.

Above, this statue of Peter stands near the ruins of his house. Below, is the rock on which Jesus said he would build a church.

Actually, the whole day did. At Nazareth, we walked through the Church of the Annunciation, a shrine devoted to the Virgin Mary. As if that wasn't neat enough, underneath was an excavated area of Nazareth dating back to the time Jesus Christ walked the streets. He spent 25 years or so in Nazareth. It's not a stretch to think we could well have been looking at where the son of God walked.

The pilgrimage continues tomorrow with a trip to the Sea of Galilee, the Golan Heights and the place where Jesus said, "On this rock I will build my church."

On a Rock and Under a House – Day Three

Shalom from Hermon Mount, the site we know from Matthew where Jesus said, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

That was the highlight for me on this third day in Israel. We began and ended the day in Tiberias. In between we traveled around the Sea of Galilee – which isn't really a sea at all. It's actually a lake that's about 14 miles long by seven miles wide. It's been called a sea, according to our tour guide, because of a mistranslation.

We started day three at the site of the Sermon on the Mount of Beatitudes. I hate to be repetitive, but the feeling of walking where Jesus Christ walked is unlike anything I have ever experienced.

Next we stopped at Caesarea Philippi where Peter first declared that "this is the Christ."

And our day was just starting. As we drove from site to site, this reporter could not help but notice how every hillside and many flat areas were littered with rocks. Large boulders to small pebbles – and everything in between, they were everywhere. It brought to mind a scene from The Chosen where two of the apostles were clearing a field of rocks. Seeing how many there are in person put that in a whole different perspective.

You also notice how many thorny bushes and trees there are – prompting our guide to remark how easy it was for them to make the crown of thorns.

When you are standing at the bottom of Hermon Mount, the sheer size is almost overwhelming. You are at the bottom of a large rock face – and you understand that at one time this was said to be the gate to Hades, thus the reference from Matthew. Walking up the path to stand where the trail ends and the rock begins makes you wonder – is this the spot Jesus stood when he said those famous words?

We also spent a lot of time today in what you know as Capernaum – but here it is spelled Capharnaum – the city where Jesus chose five apostles – Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John (all fisherman) and the tax collector Matthew. Capernaum was also the site of Peter's home – the very site which is still there today. This is the place where the paralytic was lowered through Peter's roof so Jesus could heal him and the site where He healed Peter's mother-in-law. And we stood there.



The setting sun Monday over Megiddo, the site for Armageddon.



Above, this statue of Peter stands near the ruins of his house. Below, is the rock on which Jesus said he would build a church.



miles of the Syrian border and saw Lebanon just one hill away. We drove by old bunkers from the 1967 Six Day War and crossed the River Jordan several times. Turns out that it's not really a river either. It's just not that big.

Speaking of water, the day really did wrap around the sea that isn't a sea. We got into a wooden boat and went for a short ride – asking our guide if the place where Jesus walked on water was known (sadly, he said no) and we ate fish for lunch.



Timmons wasn't sure what to make of the fish

I stared at a complete fish, from head to tail, on my plate and noticed he was staring right back at me. But the Israeli owner of the restaurant said God bless the USA, so I respectfully said nothing and ate the fish, tried the dates and had the strongest coffee I ever tasted.

It went along with our theme this week – just roll with it.

Baptisms in Jordan and Decapolis – Day Four

Wednesday was more or less a travel day. We left Tiberias early in the morning with a scheduled stop at the “River” Jordan.

River is the key word, or actually, incorrect word here. As our guide explained, the Nile is a river. The Euphrates is a river. Jordan is just the Jordan.

May be, but it is forever famous in biblical and world history. John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ in the Jordan. Mark memorialized it:

“In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when He came up out of water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove, and a voice came from the heaven; Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased.”

Mark 1, 9-11

A minister from our group did the honors and a handful of fellow travelers donned swim wear with white robes (rented for \$20) and the group took stairs down to the water. Over the next 30 or so minutes, each was ceremoniously immersed in the water, confirming their faith.

A few others went down to the water and put hands and feet in – in their own personal and private way.



The amphitheater at Bet She'an held 6,000 Romans in the capital of the Decapolis.

From there we took a short jaunt to Bet She'an, a Roman city once known as the capital of the Decapolis. We saw the very well-preserved ruins of an ancient amphitheater that held 6,000 and was home to Roman theatrical productions. Overall, the city covered a large area and had things like an arena for chariot races and public and private bath houses.

Right after that was lunch, a delicious schnitzel – chicken in pita bread with cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers and sauce. It was so good my wife let me eat mine and part of hers!

I mentioned it was mostly a travel day. After the morning activities, we boarded the bus and

went from the Sea of Galilee in the north to the lowest place on earth, the Dead Sea. We basically went from the top of the country to the bottom – although you have to understand that Israel is only 260 or so miles from top to bottom.

We passed a few security checkpoints with armed members of the Israeli Defense Forces manning their posts. Our guide explained that as we entered the West Bank the area is also partly controlled by the Palestinians.

The time on the bus seemed long, but it also made you stop and think – Jesus and his Disciples walked much of what we were driving. What was minutes and hours to us was days and weeks to them.

Day Four Unlike Any Thanksgiving Before

Thursday marked the most untraditional of Thanksgivings. But what a day to be thankful for.

Our first stop after leaving the Dead Sea was Masada. If you don't know the story, you would be hard pressed to find one with more drama, courage and sacrifice. If you do know the story and have never been, it's this reporter's opinion it is worth adding to the bucket list.

Briefly, Masada was a fortress on top of a mountain in the Judean Desert of southern Israel. Herod, as in Herod the Great, built a royal citadel on it for his family. However, after he died, the Jews took back the mountain in a surprise attack and held on to it for years. But when Rome decided to retake the mountain, the almost 1,000 on top had a choice to make. It was clear they could hold on for a while, but at some point, Rome was going to win.

Elazar Ben Yair, according to multiple records, gave a stirring speech about the choice to live (and die) in freedom, or to live as slaves to the Romans. The Jewish people of Masada chose Freedom. So, 10 numbers were drawn and the 10 men chosen were tasked with taking the lives of their fellow citizens. When that was done, lots were cast again and one man killed the other nine and then took his own life. When the Roman soldiers arrived the next day, they found almost 1,000 bodies and the Jewish people had a story for the millennium. Some two thousand years later, our tour guide said, the Israeli military still says, “Masada, never again.”

From there it was a bus ride through the desert. We passed Bedouin encampments, a herd of perhaps 20 or 30 camels, multiple shepherds herding sheep and goats and even a small ibex – a relative of the deer family, from the looks of it.

We made a short stop

there, it would have been a great one. It didn't. Less than an hour later we went over a hill and there, in all its splendor, was the Holy City, Jerusalem – one of the oldest cities on the planet. We will spend the remainder of our trip here – and still not get to see everything. When you think about it, it's the site Abraham thought he was supposed to sacrifice his son Isaac. David took the city with his army around 3,000 years ago. Jesus came into the city in a celebration that we now know as Palm Sunday. Pontius Pilate sentenced Jesus to die there – and indeed it is the city where he was crucified. The Jews built their temple there. The Muslims took over.

The events. The history. The magnitude.

Even the day before we arrived an incident of terrorism took place as a bomb killed a young teen and wounded almost two dozen others.

So, with security heightened, we made our first stop the Western Wall – also known as the Wailing Wall. The base of the wall sees people – many Jews, yes, but people from all over – praying and leaving notes to God. And at the top lies at worst an enemy and at best an uneasy relationship with a neighbor, the Muslims. We were given time to pray if we wished – I did – and then went on



The tunnel at the base of the Western Wall is fascinating.



The Wailing Wall has two sections – one for men and the other for women.

a fascinating tour of the Western Wall Tunnels, a long and ancient tunnel that lies at the base of the Western Wall.

Hard to say if there are any non-believers in our tour group. But if there were, it'd be a bigger challenge to remain that way after everything we've seen. This visit takes events off the pages of the bible and makes them real. It's history, plain and simple.

We have a little over two days left. We'll visit Bethlehem where Jesus was born as well as explore further into the Old Town section of Jerusalem where Pilate's order to crucify Jesus was carried out. As our guide said, all these amazing things happened and came together right around the time Jesus was here – it has to mean something, doesn't it?

Day Five From The Manger In Bethlehem

As our trip reaches its penultimate day, we are finally getting to the major sites in the life of Jesus Christ.

Today began with a trip to the Mount of Olives – a place with so very many important historical events. It's from here that Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1). Right across the Kidron Valley is visible the Eastern Gate to Jerusalem where Jesus triumphantly rode a donkey on palm leaves in what we now know as Palm Sunday. We visited Dominus Flevit

where “the Lord wept” as he gazed over the Holy City. We continued on Palm Sunday Road to the Garden of Gethsemane that has some olive trees reported to date back to the time of Christ.

If only these trees could tell their tale. Did they witness Jesus praying before his arrest, asking if His Father could take this cup off his shoulders? Did they hear Jesus' frustration when he asked the sleeping disciples “Could you not watch with me one hour?” (Matthew 26)

This is the place where Peter fulfilled the prediction by denying he knew Jesus not once or twice, but three times – before the rooster's call brought him to shame.

It's a place just steps away from the Upper Room where the Last Supper was held. It's the spot where Judas betrayed Jesus and soldiers took him away.

One place, so much to take in. And it wasn't even the highlight of the day.

We headed to Bethlehem to visit the Church of the Nativity – the site where the Christ child was born. Our guide told us we were lucky because the line was short, very short. Of course, the pouring rain might have had something to do with it.

Didn't matter. This was one highlight of the trip everyone was looking forward to.



The sun silhouettes the steeple at the Church of the Nativity



Where did this path lead in the Garden of Gethsemane?



A rainbow seemed symbolic over the town of Bethlehem.

save the best for last?

On our final day of the Holy Land tour and personal pilgrimage, we began the morning at Ein Karen, the birthplace of John the Baptist, or John the Baptizer as some refer to him over here. We talked a lot about John this week, including his beheading by Herod Antipas.

In the Old City, we visited the Upper Room, the room where Jesus and His Apostles ate the Last Supper. To stand in that room, look around and realize the magnitude of what happened here is very hard to describe. For some in our group, it was just another stop.

cripple by a spring pool, telling the man to pick up his mat and walk. That was called the miracle at Bethesda and it was our next stop. The site, is also said to be the birthplace of the virgin Mary. A church stands there now commemorating the event – which is also under some dispute.

From there it was on to the Muslim Quarter and the Via Dolorosa – the hall where Pilate held Jesus on trial as well as the path Jesus carried his cross to his death. The stations of the cross are displayed along the way. There was one place just after the Fifth Station (where Simon



The arches surprised this reporter at the Upper Room, the site of the Last Supper.

For others, the historical and religious impact that came out of that one simple room could not be overlooked.

As for the room itself, it does not look like what you have seen in Leonard da Vinci's famous painting. Instead of rafters and right angles, the Upper Room has arches. Perhaps when da Vinci painted it in the late 1400s it was different?

Followers of The Chosen may recall a scene where Jesus cured a

the Cyrenian was tasked to help Jesus carry the heavy cross) that had an indentation in the rock. Our guide told us that it wasn't in the bible, but it is said that is where Jesus put his hand to catch his balance.

I placed my hand there as well. It was hard to see it through the tears.

Before we arrived at the site of the crucifixion, I can tell you that it was a long walk, most of it uphill. We were winded by the time we got there – understanding that we

Israel Trip Ends At The Site Of The Crucifixion And Tomb

What's the old saying,



It's not unusual for some people to carry smaller crosses along the path Jesus took.

weren't carrying a cross made of wood that may have weighed as much as 300 pounds.

I can't stress enough how surreal the entire experience was – standing, walking, touching the same places the Son of God did. To say it was a humbling experience would be a huge understatement – at least for some.

We entered the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and wound our way through the crowd to the site of the crucifixion. Yes, there is some dispute on the actual site (more on that later), but this seems to be the leading candidate.

few minutes later when we knelt by the slab where His body was laid after He was taken down from the cross and before He was taken to the Garden Tomb – a site we visited as well.

Like many sites we saw this week, there is some dispute on what was exactly where some 2,000 years ago. We were told that even scholars and archaeologists can't come to agreement. With that understanding, we visited the other place people claim as the location of the crucifixion, Golgotha. Our guide tried to explain that those who think this is the actual site have



This is the site where many believe the crucifixion took place. It's inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

It was an honor to be able to kneel, place my grandmother's rosary and my hand on the site and offer a quick prayer. I suppose for every person that means something different and I would never pretend to speak for anyone else. All I can say is that it was a moment this reporter will never forget.

That is equally true a

some strong evidence. First, it's near a street and the guide said Romans wanted executions to be very visible. Second, some accounts say the crucifixion took place near a garden. In fact, one was just yards away. Jesus' tomb is in that garden. As we all know, his body laid inside for three days until he rose from the dead in fulfillment of the scrip-



People touched and prayed over the slab where Christ's body was placed after his death.



Golgotha is translated into the skull. Is it where Christ was killed?

tures. A large rock that was rolled away from the small opening was nearby.

We were allowed to go inside – another unforgettable moment.

Our week-long pilgrimage ended as we left the tomb. We boarded the bus and returned to our hotel. A long flight home awaits and plenty of time for contemplation and reflection.

Like everyone, I have been on multiple vacations in my life. From the backseat of the family car with Mom and Dad to early trips with my new bride to Disneyland with our own kids and more. This was unlike any trip I've ever been on.

The questions I faced when this pilgrimage started weren't so much about my faith as they were about the priority it held in my life. After seeing not just the historical relevance of the life and death of Jesus Christ, but the daily sacrifices and conviction held by so many in this holy land I certainly feel a renewed commitment – perhaps a better understanding of what the Son of God and the Son of Man did for our world.

And like I said when this pilgrimage began, it's not my place to tell you what is right and wrong and what you should or should not believe. That is a personal choice we all must make. But I can tell you this, if the idea of seeing the Holy Land is on your list of things you might do, it's highly recommended.

Odds And Ends From Israel Trip

Let me repeat something I wrote earlier. Jet lag is real.

As of this writing, we have been home a little less than 24 hours. The clock and bright daylight tell me it's mid-afternoon, but my body tells me it's time for bed. In addition, my wife and I both feel like death eating a brick, a line I'm borrowing from an old friend. Don't know if it's that wonderful recirculated air we spent 14 hours breathing on Delta yesterday or what, but I'd have to start feeling a whole lot better before I could even say I feel worse.

Know what I mean? Anyways, this is my next-to-last scribbling on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And this one won't focus so much on any one aspect, but instead will offer a bunch of quick hits on a whole lot of tidbits. So without further ado, let's go.

ONE QUESTION we asked was why so many stories from the bible occurred inland? The Mediterranean is a beautiful area and we wondered why very few stories originated from there? The tour guide smiled and said things weren't a lot different back then. The rich lived on the coast and everyone else lived inland. Hmm, the more things change the more they stay the same!

IF YOU THINK we have a lot of roundabouts in Indiana . . . what's the old saying . . . you ain't seen nothing yet. There are roundabouts EVERYWHERE. And believe me when I tell you that drivers have no fear. If we drove that way over here road rage would be

worse. MUCH worse.

SPEAKING OF driving, tour bus drivers (of which there are many in the Holy Land) can park tour buses in spots a Smart car would have trouble with.

WE ALL know from bible school how Jesus and his disciples traveled from village to village, almost completely on foot. Now that I've seen the hills, the rocks, the mountains that they had to go through, over and around . . . well, "impressive" is an understatement.

WE SPENT very little time in Tel Aviv, but I was surprised by the lack of smokers there. Not sure why I expected more, but there was little to no evidence. However, when we went to the markets in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, it was hard to find someone not smoking.

ANOTHER SURPRISE was how small the Jordan was. Sugar Creek is bigger in some spots.

WHEN WE were up north in Tiberias on the banks of the Sea of Galilee, the tour guide told us that the sunrise over the sea and mountains would be spectacular. So the next morning, I waited on the deck watching . . . and watching . . . and in a little bit got a blanket because it was chilly. We were on the 8th floor of our hotel and I watched the street lights blink off as the sky began to lighten. The street sweeper looked small from that high up. The sky was a pale blue with hints of yellow and orange to the east. The smell from the eucalyptus trees was fresh and inviting. The closer the clock ticked to 6:15, the more the hills behind us began to take on definition. And then the big moment arrived, and the sun peeked over the horizon – **DIRECTLY BEHIND THE HOTEL** to our east.

FOOD? I found I like falafels – even after I found out what was in them. Basically, these are deep-fried balls (they look like hushpuppies) made from chickpeas and beans, all ground up. I also fell in love with schnitzel – a thinly sliced boneless chicken that's breaded. Yeah, I ate about as healthy there as I do here. Oh, and the stuffed tomato they served at breakfast . . . wow!

FOR HOLLYWOOD fans, we went by one of the cemeteries where the final scene from Schindler's List was filmed.

WHEN WE were walking through Jerusalem and went from sites of the Last Supper, the trial of Jesus, the crucifixion, the place where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son, the rising of Jesus on the third day and more, it begged the question: Is there one spot on earth that witnessed so many things of epic proportion in such close proximity?

JERUSALEM IS a city of just under 900,000. Just south of there is smaller Bethlehem with its population of around 75,000. These two cities used to be miles apart, but Jerusalem has grown to the south and Bethlehem has grown to the north

and now it's hard to tell when you leave one and go into the other?

NOT SURE about politics over there, but there was a definite anti-Russian sentiment in regard to the war on Ukraine. One bumper sticker read: Putin Khuylo. Being the intrepid journalist I am, I dove into learning what that meant (I googled it) and found out it has something to do with comparing the Russian leader to a body part.

ALONG THOSE lines, we asked our tour guide if missile strikes were of concern. He said they had not had any in a while and didn't think we needed to worry . . . unless Russia's aim is really off that day.

THE CHURCH of the Holy Sepulcher is maintained by six churches and represents nearly 2 billion people – almost a third of the world's people. The six are the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, the church in Egypt, Armenians, Ethiopian Christians and Syrian Orthodox.

AND WHILE we are talking about Ethiopia, our tour guide said he is of the belief that the Ark of the Covenant may well be in Ethiopia in a church.

THE WEATHER was wonderful. I wore shorts on all the days that modest wear was not required. Temps were mostly in the 60s and 70s.

WHILE EATING lunch at an outdoor market (we almost always ate lunch at outdoor markets) we heard a frantic woman screaming, and then another. The cause? A little boy had wandered away and his parents (I assume) could not find him. Suddenly, another woman came running up dragging what looked to be a 4- or 5-year-old by the hand. The boy, who looked scared to death, started crying as his mom rushed in and swooped him up. No interpreter was needed. Any parent watching could tell she was ready to hug him to death and then fan his little bottom.

Answering Questions From Readers

I'm 65 years old and started working for my high school newspaper when I was a sophomore in 1972. If I'm counting on fingers and toes correctly, that means I've been involved with the craft for right at 50 years. During that time I've been fortunate to have a fair amount of reader reaction. Some good, some not so much.

But I have never, not even close, had the kind of reaction that the trip to Israel created. And a good many of you have asked questions – so let me do two things here. First, I'll try to answer some of them today. Second, if any church or community group would like to hear first-hand the details of the trip, just e-mail me and I will be happy to visit with you and share. I'm trying to organize the photos now into some sort of organized manner that doesn't resemble Uncle Bob's vacation slide show from 1964. No promises though!

More importantly, let's get to your questions: Several of you asked if

I found any answers? At first I wasn't sure what you meant. But one reader from Sheridan mentioned a column I wrote as we were leaving that mentioned the world being in a funk and that the Holy Land might be the best place to start looking for answers.

The short answer is, I don't know. When we were in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and I was losing patience with another group that had cut in front of us, I realized my trials and tribulations were absolutely nothing compared to what Jesus of Nazareth went through. And after more reflection on that, maybe handling things with more grace is part of the answer . . . and, for me at least, the biggest challenge.

The most often asked question was, what was it like to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles? In a word, unreal. On the last day of the tour we were walking the path Christ followed when He was forced to carry His cross. Our guide pointed to a spot on a stone wall where Jesus reportedly leaned and placed His hand. We all did the same. And when it was my turn, the idea that I was physically doing the exact same thing the Son of God did, albeit in much different circumstances, physically impacted me. It made me think of how tired He must have been. I could not begin to imagine the pain He was in after the torture He endured. Nor could I wrap my head around carrying a wooden cross that weighed a few hundred pounds.

Humbling? Overwhelming? Thankful? I work with words for a living and even more than a week after the fact am still not sure how to describe it.

What was my favorite part of the trip? Many of you asked that. It's hard to pick out one thing. Hermon Mount, the place where Jesus told Peter he would build His church on that rock, was very big (no pun intended). Masada, the fortress on top of a mountain where a thousand Jews chose death rather than surrender to slavery under the Romans, was impactful. But the three sites – the birth, the death and the resurrection – would have to be at the top of my list.

Conversely, several asked if there were any disappointments?

Sure. I wish we would have had lots more time. But more than that, it was disappointing to learn that there is healthy disagreement on what happened where. Scholars and archaeologists are at odds on many of the locations – like the exact spot of the crucifixion. It's certainly understandable. Two thousand years have gone by and everything from the landscape to governments to cultures and even written records have changed.

Understandable, no doubt. But still disappointing.

Would we go back, was another question echoed from many? No doubt. However, I would want to do it differently if we did. The tour worked well for us as first-time visitors. It gives a very broad view of a lot of things. But if we were able to go back, I'd rather be able to spend more time with fewer places – especially the three favorites mentioned above.

The second-biggest question I got was how did this impact my faith?

I guess the easiest answer is that it made me realize how much work I have to do. I mentioned before we left that believing wasn't the problem, it was prioritizing time for that belief. I hope to do better in that regard. Perhaps more importantly, I understand why I should.

For those ready to move on to other topics, this is the final planned column on the Holy Land pilgrimage. Thank you from the very bottom of my heart for so many of you coming along with me on this trip.

God bless!