

**➔ TODAY'S VERSE**  
Isaiah 43:18-19 *Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. (NIV)*



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

**What makes Lisa Fritz smile?**  
"Being able to see my kids when I introduce them to a new artist, when they are able to make connections," said the art teacher at North Elementary School. "I just introduced them to an artist named Roberto Lugo (not related to North Elementary Principal Robert Lugo). That was kind of fun ... It was the coolest thing." The artist talked about how he was very poor and on Food stamps and some of her students could relate to him. "It was incredible the conversation that we had that the kids shared making those connections." She was found at North Elementary PTO Fun Run on Oct. 6. She was born in Dayton, Ohio, and grew up in Carmel and graduated in 1989 from Carmel High School. She went on to graduate from Ball State University and earned a master's degree at Walden University in Minneapolis. Fritz is a National Art Education Association-Crayola Creativity Ambassador, one of 75 in the nation. She's worked at Noblesville Schools since 1996 and taught fourth grade for 20 years, and this is her 11th year teaching art. She has two kids, Corbin and Maggie. When she's not at school? Last summer, I converted my basement to an art studio ... Favorite part about teaching art? "Kids who have trouble focusing and doing what they're supposed to be doing in the general ed classroom, they're kind of in their element in the Art Room."

**And Another Thing...**

**1. Art-Inspired Words open to community**  
Carmel Creative Writers Inc. will present various genres of writing based on works by Indiana artists at Art-Inspired Words, 5-7 p.m. TODAY in Community Room A of the Carmel Clay Public Library, 425 E Main St. In its second year, it's the first year the evening will be open to the public. Admission is free, with required tickets at Eventbrite. More details at <https://indianaartisan.org/art-inspired-words/>

**2. CCP brings comedy by regional playwright**  
Carmel Community Players presents the fast-paced comedy, "aMUSEd," by Megan Ann Jacobs and directed by Kelly Keller of Fishers, Oct. 13-22 at The Switch Theatre, 10029 E. 126th St., Suite D, Fishers. Tickets are \$13-\$18, available at <https://carmelplayers.org/> or by calling 317-815-9387. Read more in Thursday's edition of The Times.

# The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper



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Graphic courtesy of Hamilton County

## Overnight Closure Set For 146th Street Next Week

Construction Crews Will Set New Beams on Westbound Bridge

The Hamilton County Highway Department will close 146th Street from 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 25 through 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 26 to set four beams on the westbound lane of the 146th Street Bridge. The bridge is being widened on both sides to better accommodate the intersection reconstruction at 146th Street and Allisonville Road.

"We appreciate the community's cooperation and understanding and apologize for the inconvenience," says Matt Lee, the department's Bridge Program

Engineer. "The full closure of 146th Street will allow crews to complete the beam setting faster and with less disruption. It also ensures the safety of all road users and construction crews."

The following restrictions are scheduled to take place:

- October 25 at 11 a.m. - A single lane restriction for the westbound right lane of 146th Street will be implemented for material staging.
- October 25 at 9 p.m. - Both directions of 146th Street between Allisonville Road and River Road will be temporarily closed to allow

for the installation of four bridge beams. A detour route using River Road, State Route 32 (SR-32), and Allisonville Road is attached.

- October 26 at 6 a.m. - Both directions of 146th Street will be fully reopened to all traffic.

Motorists are urged to exercise extreme caution while driving through the area. Law enforcement officers will be on site to ensure the safety of construction crews and the public. Motorists can get the very latest on this project, as well as sign up for an e-newsletter, at [www.streamline146.com](http://www.streamline146.com)



Photo courtesy of Hamilton County Parks

**On the first Saturday in October, Hamilton County Parks' Potter's Bridge Festival set a new attendance record, "mostly attributed to the clear skies, crisp fall temperatures and the event's diverse offering" – 130 vendors, not including activities and entertainment, including The Rock Bottom Boys of Madison County bluegrass band (above) – contributing to its growing popularity, according to parks spokesperson Don Nicholls.**

## Lots to Do On Our Fall Break

**BETSY REASON From The Editor's Desk...**

It's the second week of Noblesville Schools' fall break. And while I've seen tons of photos on friends' Facebook pages of their fabulous travels, we've been having so much fun that we haven't even traveled out of the area.

Our break kicked off with Noblesville Main Street's First Friday Fall Festival, watching kids trick-or-treat at the many

downtown merchants, who graciously kept open their doors past 5 p.m., and watching Noblesville Lions and other groups prepare and sell food, and eateries offer tastes of their soups in the soup cook-off.

We spent the rest of the evening at Conner Prairie's Headless Horseman Halloween program, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Our really 17-year-old daughter, Addie, a Conner Prairie youth volunteer, puts on her 1836 costume to sing in the Brom Bones Chorus, which features a musical skit featuring actors/interpreters who

➔ See BETSY Page A5

## 17th Annual Tinsel & Tails Holiday Petacular

The event is scheduled to be held on Thursday, November 16th at 502 East Event Centre in Carmel from 6p.m. to 9 p.m. \*\*\*

**Dress code is cocktail attire**  
If you haven't attended the event of the season, now is your chance! At this annual event, the Humane Society for Hamilton County celebrates the year's most remarkable stories of rescue and redemption. Throughout the night, you will witness the power of healing and hope that pets bring into our lives. If that doesn't make you tear up, just wait until you meet our featured runway guests after hearing their triumphant stories!

As Our Guest, Expect To Enjoy...

- A petacular silent auction with unique items & experiences
- A delicious seated dinner with vegan & gluten free options
- A complimentary glass of wine for each age appropriate guest
- Golden Ticket Raffle package of gift cards and scratch-off lottery tickets
- Adorable pets who will strut their stuff on the runway
- Reserve your seat now before the Tinsel & Tails Holiday Petacular sells out!

Don't Miss These Exclusive Silent Auction Items!  
Would you like your cat or dog to be 2024 Tinsel & Tails

➔ See TAILS Page A5

## The Daily Almanac

**Sunrise/Sunset**  
RISE: 8:01 a.m.  
SET: 7:04 p.m.

**High/Low Temperatures**  
High: 64 °F  
Low: 52 °F

**Today is...**

- Rainforest Day
- New Friends Day
- International Gin and Tonic Day

**What Happened On This Day**

- 2005 Trial of Saddam Hussein Begins. The Iraqi Special Tribunal started the trial of deposed President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, and 7 other defendants for crimes against humanity. Hussein, who was the fifth President of Iraq was found guilty and was executed by hanging a year later on December 30, 2006.
- 1950 Battle of Chamdo (Qamdo) Ends. Also known as the Liberation of Tibet in China, the war between China and Tibet began on October 6, when Chinese military forces under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping entered the country from Sichuan.
- 1914 First Battle of Ypres. Part of the Battle of Flanders during the First World War, the First Battle of Ypres was fought in the Belgian city of Ypres. It was fought between German forces on one side and the Belgian, French and British troops on the other.

**Births On This Day**

- 1962 Evander Holyfield American boxer
- 1946 Philip Pullman English author

**Deaths On This Day**

- 1745 Jonathan Swift Irish author
- 1682 Thomas Browne English author

**➔ INSIDE TODAY**

Service Directory.....A4  
EarthTalk.....A4  
Tim Timmons .....A4  
Indiana Facts & Fun.....A7

**➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP**

If you work the night shift, put on your sunglasses before going out into the sun until you get home and go to bed. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at [thetimes24-7.com](http://thetimes24-7.com)

**➔ TODAY'S QUOTE**

"I sometimes feel that I'm impersonating the dark unconscious of the whole human race. I know this sounds sick, but I love it."  
-Vincent Price

**➔ HONEST HOOSIER**

This from a reader: I'm going to let God fix it. Because if I fix it's I'm probably going to jail.

**➔ TODAY'S JOKE**

What kind of car does Frankenstein drive on Halloween night?  
A monster truck.

**➔ OBITUARIES**  
None



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

**13 WTHR 7 DAY FORECAST**

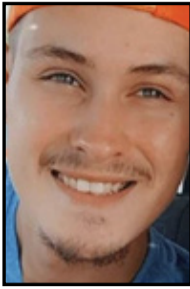
70 BREEZY WITH SCATTERED CLOUDS	52/64 SCATTERED SHOWERS	51/61 SPOTTY SHOWERS	44/62 WINDY RAIN	39/58 BUNNY COOL	38/60 FROST POSSIBLE	47/68 BREEZY AND WINDY
WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE

## ➔ OBITUARIES

### Travis Blackledge

December 24, 1996, Friday, October 13, 2023

Travis Blackledge 26, of Lebanon formerly of Sheridan Indiana; passed away unexpectedly on October 13, 2023. He was born on December 24, 1996, to Dewayne and Regina (Woten) Blackledge in Noblesville, Indiana. Travis's father Dewayne preceded him in death. Travis worked for Aurora Parts and Service Network as a heavy machine operator.



He was quite a musician playing the guitar and drums, and he loved being outdoors, he was an avid fisherman and looked forward to camping especially sitting around the campfire. Family was important to Travis, he looked forward to attending family cook outs, and the outdoor games they would all play together.

Travis met and fell in love with Baylee (Moffitt) Blackledge, and they were married on February 1, 2021, in Westfield, Indiana.

He will be greatly missed by his loving family his wife Baylee, his son Austin Blackledge and stepson Emmett Barker, his beloved mother Regina Blackledge, his devoted sister Kaylee Blackledge, his loving grandmother Virginia Woten, his mother-in-law Brooke (Joshua) Moffitt, his father-in-law Sam (Cindy) Moffitt. His sister-in-law Shaylie (Richard) Haley, his brother-in-law Rylan Faucett, and sister-in-law Kalan (Josh) Merritt, along with his uncles and aunts, He also leaves behind several nieces and nephews.

Travis was preceded in death by his grandparents Harry and Virginia Blackledge, his grandfather Loyd Woten, and his uncle Danny Woten.

Services for Travis will be planned for a later date. Everyone is invited to sign the online guestbook, leave a condolence, or share a memory at fisherfunerals.com.

Fisher Family Funeral Services is honored to serve the Blackledge, Moffitt, and Woten Families.

## Noblesville Lions Make Trash Pickup Fun



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Lions

On Saturday, Oct 14th, the Noblesville Lions made the dreary day a "Fun" day picking up trash. Targeted streets were Field Drive from 16th to Cumberland Road, and Cumberland Road from Monument to SR 32. Although wet and chilly, the day had a warming purpose! On the left, Lions Julia Kozicki, District 25D Governor; Walt Scheid, President; Ron Williamson, Jeff Kozicki, Vp; and Gene Beck. To the right, Dreary day with Happy Faces are Lions Gene Beck, Steve Shaw, Walt Scheid, and Ron Williamson.

## Fishers City Council Awards \$250,000 In Grants To 9 Nonprofits

The Fishers City Council, upon recommendation from the Fishers Nonprofit Committee, approved a resolution granting \$250,000 to nonprofits that serve the Fishers community.

"This year's nonprofit grant reflects the City's commitment to fostering collaboration and positive change within our com-

munity. These grants will empower organizations to make a tangible and meaningful impact on the lives of our residents," said Mayor Scott Fadness.

The following organizations were awarded grants following an application and review process by the Nonprofit Grant Committee:

- Cherish: \$20,000

- Conner Prairie: \$80,000

- Janus Developmental Services: \$10,000

- Outside the Box: \$15,000

- Prevail: \$15,000

- Recovery Café Hamilton County: \$10,000

- Shepherd's Center of Hamilton County: \$10,000

- Youth Mentoring Initiative: \$50,000

Additionally, Fishers Youth Assistance Program received \$40,000 as part of the City's interlocal agreement with Hamilton County. Nonprofits must submit a grant report upon completion of the project or initiative for which they received the grant funds.

For more information, visit fishers.in.us/Nonpro

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## Conservative Max Engling Launches Campaign For Congress

Committed conservative Max Engling, announced his campaign for Indiana's 5th congressional district following the announcement from Victoria Spartz that she is not seeking reelection. A native of central Indiana and a graduate of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Engling announced he is running for Congress to help restore our country and fight for conservative Christian values that are being neglected in the nation's capital.

"This country is on the wrong track; we need an unabashed fighter who can stop the Democrats and help restore our country," stated Engling. "I refuse to watch us fall apart - I am committed to working relentlessly for you and our shared values."

Engling grew up in a supportive family as the second oldest of eight children, learning early what it meant to work hard. He baled hay, detasseled corn, maintained a campground, and ran

the quality control lab as the youngest hire at an industry leading fabrication business. Here in central Indiana, he earned a bachelor's degree at IUPUI while working full-time in construction and waiting tables. After graduating, he worked for a local HVAC business, but was soon drawn to public service.

With Indiana recovering from the recession, the federal government was expanding into seemingly all areas of life - Washington was more focused on telling you what to do than protecting your freedoms. To fight back, Max worked hard as a volunteer with the Republican Party and on campaigns in Indiana, making the case for limited government and fiscal responsibility.

After helping Republicans secure a majority in Congress, he eagerly answered the call to serve, and started as an intern on Capitol Hill, eventually rising through the ranks to become the Director of Member Services for the Speaker

of the House. In that role, he was the Speaker's delegate with the entire Republican Conference and worked directly with every Republican Representative to guide them and their staff on how to best listen, communicate, and work effectively for their constituents.

"I'm not a career politician, but I've been to Washington, and I have seen the good and the bad inside the swamp. I am committed to defending the constitution, protecting the unborn, putting parents first, ending overspending and Biden's dangerous policies, and securing the border. This isn't about the next job, this is about my family, your family, and our home."

Max met his wife, Kelcey, in Muncie, Indiana and they were married in Cicero, Indiana - together they have four beautiful children. He earned his master's degree in defense and strategic studies from the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

## Thousands Of Additional Donations Are Needed To Replenish Red Cross Blood Supply

Gift cards, chance at \$5K for those who come to give

Since announcing a national blood and platelet shortage a month ago, thousands of donors across the country have rolled up a sleeve to help rebuild the American Red Cross blood and platelet supply. As that generosity continues, the Red Cross is working around-the-clock to ensure patients have access to lifesaving transfusions and must collect 10,000 additional blood and platelet donations - over and above expectations - each week over the next month to sufficiently meet hospital needs. Donors of all blood types are urged to book a time to give now, especially those with type O blood or those giving platelets. Don't wait - patients are counting on critical care.

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### Haven's Story

This is something that an Indiana mother, Laura knows firsthand. In 2021, her four-year-old daughter, Haven was diagnosed with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Throughout her treatment, she required multiple blood and platelet transfusions,

"There are so many different reasons someone needs a blood transfusion, and it's always about somebody else until one day it's a shocking wake-up call and it's you." Haven has been in remission since June of this year.

To request an Interview with Laura, contact: Matthew Kline at (317) 766-4806.

To make an appointment, use the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

To encourage more blood and platelet donations, the Red Cross is offering new incentives to donors over the next month. All who come to give Oct. 21-Nov. 9 will receive a \$10 gift card by email to a restaurant merchant of their choice to enjoy lunch on the Red Cross. They'll also be automatically entered to win a \$5,000 gift card. There will be three lucky winners - one chosen at random each week. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/Lunch.

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**Flu and COVID-19 vaccines don't affect**

### donor eligibility

As cold and flu season quickly approaches, the Red Cross is reminding donors that they can still give blood or platelets after receiving a flu vaccine, so long as they are feeling healthy and well on the day of their donation. Likewise, there is no deferral or wait time for those receiving the updated COVID-19 vaccine.

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### Hamilton

Carmel  
11/1/2023: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., TVF, Inc, 401 W. Carmel Drive  
11/2/2023: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., Harvest Church, 14550 River Road

\*\*\*

### How to donate blood

A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

## Mayor Scott Fadness Announces \$3.7 Million 96th Street Revitalization Investment

The investment comes on the heels of more than \$350 million in major public and private investments along the corridor.

Mayor Scott Fadness unveiled plans to invest \$3.7 million in infrastructure upgrades to the 96th Street corridor, just east of the I-69 interchange. Investments include additional streetlights, median and landscape construction along North by Northwest Boulevard, and façade improvement grants for commercial properties along the north side of 96th Street.

"My vision is to continue to bring

vibrancy to every square mile of Fishers and as a major gateway to our city, the 96th Street corridor will get the reinvestment it deserves," said Fadness. "There is so much momentum along 96th Street with private and public investment creating a dynamic commercial center that prioritizes safety, walkability, and aesthetics."

Since 2021, private investments along 96th Street include CRG Residential's \$135 million River Place mixed-use development at the northwest corner of Allisonville Road; Patch Development's

\$27 million flex office building at Masters Road; Andretti Global's \$200 million headquarters and museum at Hague Road. Public investments include the City's acquisition of nearly 100 acres of parkland along the White River and the completion of the Nickel Plate Trail to 96th Street with a pedestrian bridge planned for 2025 to the Indianapolis segment of the trail.

Residents along the corridor will be invited to a town hall in November to hear more about the investments being made and have the opportunity to provide feedback.

## BBB Tip: Celebrate Halloween On A Budget

Consumers are gearing up to celebrate Halloween. The National Retail Federation expects people will spend \$10.6 billion, up from \$10.1 billion in 2022. Among Halloween celebrants, 67 percent plan to buy candy, 51 percent plan to purchase decorations, and 47 percent will get costumes.

Those numbers can seem daunting for a single day, especially when watching the family budget. However, there are ways to keep the fun stylish and on budget. Better Business Bureau recommends the following tips this Halloween:

**Look around your home.** Check your closet. There are probably hidden surprises to help you throw together a killer costume! Getting creative will not only help save money but will save space, too.

**Rent a costume.** If the idea of spending money on buying a costume isn't quite appealing because you will only wear it once, consider renting. Renting a costume leaves room in the budget. Research rental companies on BBB.org, check the store policy regarding trying on costumes, inspect the condition of the outfit, and read the rental agreement carefully before signing anything.

**Buy in bulk.** It may seem counter-intuitive, but buying more can save you money! Buying in bulk lessens the cost per item. Budgeting can be especially handy on a night like Halloween,

especially considering that there might be more trick-or-treaters this year. Factory-wrapped candy will last a long time, even if you have leftovers. And let's be honest, leftovers are pretty tasty, even after Halloween.

**Always check the return policy.** Seasonal shops carry unique items for a short period in a temporary location or online. When shopping a seasonal vendor, understand the store's return policy before making a purchase. Remember: Buying a bunch of stuff with the intent of simply returning it after October 31 is considered fraud.

**Shop smart online.** When shopping from an online website, the first step is ensuring the URL starts with "HTTPS" and includes a lock symbol. The S in "HTTPS" stands for secure. Look up the website's privacy policy and contact information. If it is not clearly listed, or they only have an email as the point of contact, take that as a big red flag and shop elsewhere.

Also, be sure to use your credit card instead of your debit card, as credit cards not only provide additional protection but it's also easier to dispute a fraudulent charge.

**Seasonal stores.** If you decide to shop from a seasonal store, ask whether or not they will be open after the holiday, how long they plan to stay open, and if they will accept returns after Halloween is over. If they plan to close up shop on November 1

or refuse returns after, either consider shopping elsewhere or take more time to be sure that item is exactly what you want before making the purchase.

**More tips for seasonal "pop-up" stores:** 1) Ask the owner if there is a website in case you have to contact them later. 2) Save every receipt. 3) Use a credit card to dispute problem charges with the card's issuer. 4) Make sure you are clear on what items are FINAL SALE.

**Attending a special event or visiting a haunted house.** Before purchasing tickets, research the group offering the experience and make sure that there are no complaints about the company hosting the event. 1) Check out the company at BBB.org. Read what previous customers have to say, and see how the business responds to complaints. 2) Check BBB Scam Tracker and see if other consumers have filed a report about the event host. 3) Search the business online by adding the word "Complaint," "Reviews" or "Scam" after their name for different search results.

For more information and to learn how to protect yourself, Google "BBB 10 Steps to Avoid Scams". If you spot a scam, whether you have lost money or not, report it to BBB's Scam Tracker at BBB.org/ScamTracker and the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov. Your story can help protect consumers from similar scams.

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# Statehouse Spotlights To Support Israel 'Moving On'

By Whitney Downard  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A dozen spotlights illuminating the night sky around downtown Indianapolis in the colors of the Israel flag will 'move on' from the Statehouse, a rare and possibly first-of-its-kind display that appeared Monday morning.

Gov. Eric Holcomb said on X, formerly known as Twitter, that the spotlights and the Israeli flag over the Governor's Residence in Indianapolis "symbolize our state solidarity ... with our friends and allies in Israel."

On Tuesday, he said the symbols also paid tribute

to the Israeli victims of the Hamas invasion earlier this month and the spotlights "are moving on to a different location."

"We'll look for other ways to assist but that was a good couple of days (of) paying tribute," Holcomb said.

A spokesperson for Holcomb's office said the display would be dismantled Tuesday evening and said they "didn't have an anticipated cost."

The office didn't immediately respond to an email asking if the lights were donated or paid through another entity.

Holcomb said a number of people had called

for the show of support, including Attorney General Todd Rokita, but his actions also included discussions with Israeli leaders and other state executives.

"I just had six governors in the State of Indiana over the last couple of days and, of course, we talked about this war," Holcomb said. "... we'll work with folks who are advocating in a number of ways to pay tribute to victims."

Other governors, from Maryland and South Carolina, have similarly lit up their state buildings or residences in blue and white.

Rokita sent a letter to the governor's office last

week noting that the Israeli Embassy has asked states to illuminate their Capitol buildings in blue and white.

"Lighting the Indiana State Capitol would not only be a meaningful gesture to our Jewish community in Indiana, but it would send a powerful message of unwavering support to our friends in the Middle East," he wrote in a letter posted on X.

Holcomb didn't expound upon the precedent for the spotlights, which hasn't occurred in recent history during other global conflicts or major events.

"It won't be a precedent until I decide to do it

again," Holcomb said.

Shortly after the attacks, Holcomb recognized the death of Israeli mayor Ofir Libstein of Sha'ar HaNegev regional council, who visited Holcomb in August. According to the post, Libstein died while exchanging gunfire with infiltrators.

Hamas, a terrorist organization, led a three-pronged attack on Oct. 7 by air, land and sea, kidnapping at least 150 civilians in an assault that killed more than 1,400 people, according to the Associated Press.

An Israeli retaliation has killed more than 2,700 Palestinians, many of

whom were trapped in Gaza after Israel cut off water, power and fuel. The Rafah crossing from Gaza to Egypt, the only escape route for many trapped civilians, remains closed as Israeli bombings continue, blocking humanitarian aid.

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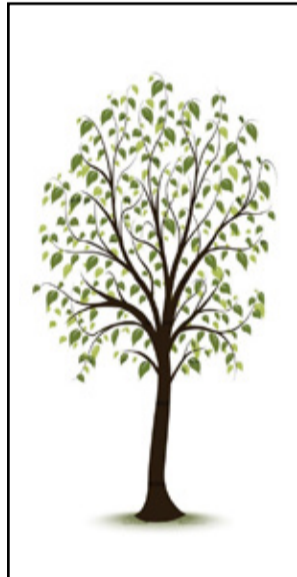
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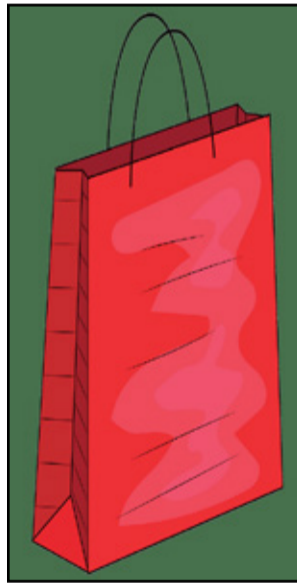
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# Israel Response Will Be Watched



**TIM TIMMONS**  
Two Cents

Don't know about you, but it's been a while since I've been to a concert. Been even longer since I was at one of those

events held out in the open with acts coming and going over an extended period of time.

The last time was in another state and what felt like a lifetime or three ago. I do remember having more than a few cold beverages – and not sure how reliable the memory is after that.

Still, the day brings back a good memory. Good weather, good friends, good music.

Perhaps you have a similar memory?

If so, imagine that in the middle of this pleasant experience you hear what sounds like a gunshot. Then another. And another. Soon, guys with guns are everywhere. People are being shot. Shot!

Imagine running for your life.

To no avail. Happiness turns to panic. Happiness to horror.

That's exactly what hundreds of mostly young adults in Israel went through during the opening moments of the invasion by Hamas.

To be clear, I am no expert on Israel. My wife and I were fortunate enough to be visitors there for a short period. If you are a believer, a religious person, you know Israel is a special place. Even if you are not, the idea that all your neighbors want you dead should resonate deeply.

As of this writing, the world is waiting for the Israeli Defense Force to go into Gaza and begin rooting out the evil that is Hamas. I am sure that the media will report on story after story of how Israel is now in the wrong. There will be innocent people who die. Cameras will be there to record the horrific events of war – and Israel will be blamed.

I believe we will hear a

great deal about “proportional responses” and how Israel has gone overboard. Poppycock.

Did anyone talk about a proportional response after terrorists flew airliners into U.S. buildings a couple of decades ago? Would we have cared?

We made retribution for that dastardly act a mission that carried over into two presidential administrations – one Republican and one Democrat. What George W. Bush started, Barack Obama finished when Navy SEALs hunted down and killed Osama bin Laden.

God bless them. How can there be a proportional response for people who indiscriminately kill families, who kill babies?

Have you seen the videos?

A terrorist swings a shovel repeatedly onto the neck of a dead Israeli soldier in an effort to decapitate. Another shows a terrorist walking up to a wounded civilian lying helplessly on the ground and simply pointing their weapon at them and pulling the trigger. In Kfar Aza 40 babies were found murdered. Early reports indicated they were beheaded. That was later disputed. Does it matter? Forty babies were killed.

It's evil. Evil like the world has only seen a few times.

For those who are calling for a rapid and peaceful solution – well, from your lips to God's ears. But I fear that God isn't the only supernatural force in play here. People who kill families, who murder babies, don't understand God. And they certainly don't understand proportional responses.

Astoundingly, there are multiple pundits who claim that such atrocities are fake news. Forget the fact that there are videos. Forget the fact that soldiers, journalists and people who live there have said they have seen the bodies first-hand. Some are denying it. The only explanation I can come up with is that it doesn't fit their narrative.

The truth and painful reality is that Israel is a nation of 9 million people surrounded by enemies who want them dead. Surrounded. By. Enemies.

And what some folks – those calling for Israel to back down, to ease up with military actions – will never understand is that there are times when you have to fight. There are times when turning the other cheek doesn't work. We would like to say, to believe with all of our hearts, that reason will prevail. We want to think that we can bring everyone to the negotiating table and find some sort of peaceful solution.

But how do you find peace when one side only wants to squash you out of existence?

There's a lesson for us here in the U.S., too. We have enemies who want what we have. We also have an open border where millions have come into our country unchecked for a few years. Could what happen in Israel happen here?

And if it did, what would we do today? More than two decades ago, 9-11 galvanized us, brought all sides together. Would we unite again? Answer this. Where is the outrage over the 29 Americans who were killed by Hamas? Where is someone like Bush or Obama telling Hamas that no matter what Israel does, we will hunt down those who killed our citizens and make them pay?

Where is our national will?

Again, as of this writing the world is watching and waiting to see what Israel does. Here's wishing them the very best in their mission.

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

# AI And Robotics Revolutionizing Recycling



**Dear EarthTalk: How are AI and robotics combining to revolutionize recycling?**

A survey conducted by the Carton Council of North America in 2018 showed that 94 percent of Americans support recycling. That same year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported that the recycling rate was only 32.1 percent. Why is this the case?

Local governments are responsible for creating recycling programs. Cities that have invested in recycling infrastructure, education and incentive programs, like San Francisco and Los Angeles, claim recycling rates of over 70 percent. Contrarily, cities with smaller budgets and staff and contamination issues have eliminated curbside recycling altogether. (Chesapeake, VA and Pembroke Pines, FL are two examples.)

The adoption of single-stream recycling, where various recyclables are placed in a single container, has significantly increased household participation. But it has also contributed to a 25 percent contamination rate of recycled material. Contamination occurs when non-recyclable items are mixed with recyclables, making it challenging or impossible to sort and safely process these materials. Common contaminants include non-recyclable plastics

(bubble wrap, trash bags, cling wrap, etc.) and food residue.

Contamination is more than a mere inconvenience. In 2016, China received over 16 million tons of plastic, paper and metals from the U.S., 30 percent of which was contaminated and later dumped in the Chinese countryside and waterways. In 2017, China passed the National Sword Policy, banning the importation of materials that sent in for recycling. As a result, U.S. recycling facilities have had to make substantial improvements in the quality of their recyclables.

How does AI play a role in improving recycling? The 1990s saw the introduction of optical sensing and computational intelligence to distinguish between various types of plastic and paper. These systems typically achieved 80 to 95 percent purity, with human workers tasked to manually remove contaminants. Enter artificial intelligence! Recycling requires rapid identification of objects with diverse shapes, sizes and orientations on conveyor belts. AI-driven systems demonstrate near-100-percent accuracy by relying on image analysis of attributes, including color, opacity and form. A vast dataset of recyclable material images, collected globally and meticulously annotated, are regularly updated to improve reliability.

One company, AMP Robotics, has pioneered in the AI-recycling industry since 2014. Equipped with a powerful network, their 1,800 pound ‘pick-and-place’ robots are twice as efficient as human employees, identifying and sorting 80 items per minute. Now recycling facilities equipped with artificial intelligence robots are able to sort greater quantities of trash while reducing operating costs.

Perhaps we can even stop contamination at the point of disposal, right at home. CleanRobotics has created a receptacle named TrashBot that uses imaging, AI algorithms, and robotics to detect and sort waste as it is being thrown away. This prevents contamination and makes the sorting process easier down the line.

*-CONTACTS: TrashBot uses AI to sort recyclables, <https://techcrunch.com/2022/08/12/trashbot-uses-ai-to-sort-recyclables/>; Rise of the Recycling Robots, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrickcai/2020/11/12/rise-of-the-recycling-robots/?sh=6d1f70d565f9>; Why the Current U.S. Recycling Programs Are Inefficient, <https://gwhronicle.com/1783/opinion/why-the-current-u-s-recycling-programs-are-inefficient/>.*

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

## BETSY

From Page A1

warn guests in the hayride cue to “hold onto their heads” when they're going on the hayride to catch a glimpse of the Headless Horseman. We watched a magic act and our favorite Stephens Puppets show with the very entertaining Dan Raynor and experienced a quick-thinking fortune teller who I bet would be really good at improv comedy The Conner “Scarrie” expanded midway is always crazy busy, even without the Scarie-Okie the last couple of years. A family band, Sweet Tunes, is a welcome addition to the Conner Prairie Headless Horseman and plays two sets every night in the Bayt Pavilion next door to the Conner Prairie Auxiliary's Apple Store, which is open nightly until 9 p.m. The band plays just about every Halloween-related song I've ever heard.

On the first Saturday in October, we braved the crowds and attended Hamilton County Parks' Potter's Bridge Festival, where it's the crazy busiest that I've ever experienced as we parked out in a 25-acre field owned by Indiana American Water Co. Inc.

After the festival, we headed for the Ralph Lehr VFW Post 6246 to hear Battle4Betty's Battle of the Bands, a fundraiser supporting breast cancer patients and survivors and live music.

On the first Sunday in October, we headed to Lucas Raceway Park to watch my significant other enjoy a Rusty Wallace Racing Experience, a 2022 Father's Day gift that got rained out and rescheduled for the first Sunday in October. The experience included 10 laps around

the track driving a NA-SCAR-style race car.

Columbus Day, the first Monday of fall break, we trekked up to Wilson Farm Market on U.S. 31, where the market was busy with shoppers ordering their lunch (they were out of liver both times I went there over fall break) at the deli and their desserts at the pastry counter, and heading out to the picnic tables on adjoining property, where there was also a selection of pumpkins in all sizes and straw weaved into the shape of horses. Shoppers filled their grocery carts with all kinds of goodies, from lemon cream almonds and chocolate stars to cinnamon rolls, peanut butter fudge, and fresh fruits and vegetables and fresh baked bread.

The first Tuesday of fall break, we drove downtown Indianapolis to eat dinner at the Old Spaghetti Factory, then headed to Gainbridge Fieldhouse to see the Eagles farewell concert tour, featuring opener 80-year-old Steve Miller, who at the last minute filled in for opener Steely Dan due to an illness that hospitalized Donald Fagen. The Eagles concert was one of the best concerts I've ever seen, with the sound better than most I've ever heard. Fans' average age was above 60, as is the band's average age, with Don Henley, 76, Joe Walsh, 75, Vince Gill, 66, Timothy B. Schmit, 75, and Glenn Fry's son, Deacon Fry, 30. So obviously, it wasn't a standing concert but a “sit back and relax concert” with all of the Eagles hits and more for two solid hours.

Then the Wednesday

and Thursday, Addie met with fellow NHS students to be in a film for another student's film club project. Then last Friday, we made our second trip to Wilson Farm Market and lunched on the picnic tables on the warm fall day spending the day with the grandparents, and then a family night.

Saturday morning, we went to the final Noblesville Farmers Market on the cold and rainy day, then on to Uptown Cafe for lunch and spent what was left of the afternoon putting up Halloween decorations. Addie volunteered at Conner Prairie Headless Horseman nights and also a daytime youth ag captain shift at the Golden Eagle Inn there. This week, the second week of our fall break, she's co-music director for a kids fall break theater camp, attended by 26 elementary-age kids, sponsored by Noblesville First United Methodist Church and EnPointe Indiana Ballet, and led by local play director Nancy Lafferty.

So far, it's been a busy break just staying around Noblesville.

And with only two days left, we're trying to make the most of it. With a college visit day coming up this weekend, we'll be busy until the moment school starts again on Monday.

Looking for something to do this weekend near home? Read my column each Friday for things to do in and around Noblesville.

*-Betsy Reason writes about people, places and things in Hamilton County. Contact The Times Editor Betsy Reason at [betsy@thetimes24-7.com](mailto:betsy@thetimes24-7.com).*

## TAILS

From Page A1

Holiday Petacular featured pet? As the face of one of our largest fundraisers, your pet would be featured on select marketing materials!

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HONEST HOOSIER



Blackford County is a strong farming community. Here's a tip of the seed corn cap to that!

# I ndiana

# Facts & Fun



## 05 Blackford

### Number $\div$ Stumpers

1. What is the population of the county per square mile?  $\geq$
2. How old is Blackford County?  $\leq$
3. How many square miles of the county are covered in corn and soybean fields?  $\geq$
4. If the total population in Hartford City, the county seat, is 6,220, then what percentage of the entire county is made up of Hartford residents?  $\leq$

Answers: 1. 77 per square mile 2. 180 years 3. Around 19.22 square miles 4. Around 48.7%  $\div$

## Did You Know?

- Founded in 1838, Blackford County is the site of multiple unincorporated communities and ghost towns.
- The county has the 8th smallest population in Indiana with only 12,766 individuals.
- For a brief amount of time in the 1800s the town was the site of an Indian reservation for the Miami Tribe.
- 72 percent of Blackford County is covered with corn and soybean fields.
- The county is the 4th smallest in size in Indiana being only 165.58 square miles.

## Got Words?

Blackford county is divided into two incorporated cities and one incorporated town. Throughout the rest of the county visitors may find numerous uninhabited ghost towns. What do you think might have been some of the causes for the ghost towns in Blackford County?

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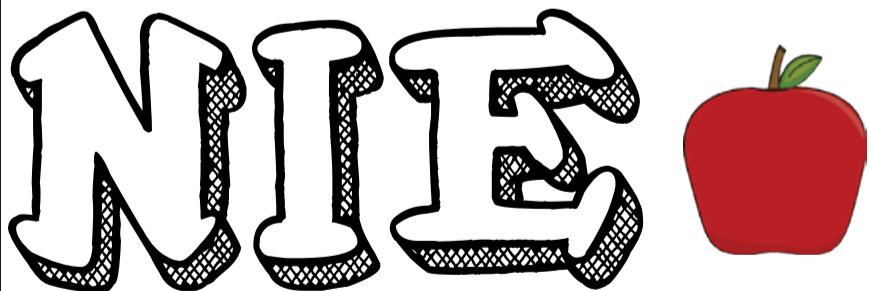
## Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. BLODKACFR YOTUNC
2. IAMMI BRTEI
3. CONR
4. OHGST OSTNW
5. OYNASBE FISDEL

Answers: 1. Blackford County 2. Miami Tribe 3. Corn 4. Ghost Town 5. Soybean Fields

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# THURSDAY

## Indiana the Strong

Thursday, October 19, 2023

A7

## Indiana Task Force Debates Floodplain Mapping

By Casey Smith  
Indiana Capital Chronicle

Multiple lawmakers on the Indiana Drainage Task Force expressed concerns on Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023, about the accuracy of the state's floodplain maps and said they now support a more robust system that ensures property owners know if they are in a flood zone. (U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service/Flicker)

Are enough Hoosiers up to date on statewide floodplain mapping? How are landowners being notified about changes to those maps? And should property owners have more say, overall, in what areas are designated as flood zones?

Those questions were at the heart of the Indiana Drainage Task Force's Wednesday meeting, where lawmakers, state officials and industry experts gathered to discuss the ability of landowners to seek changes in flood hazard map designations after the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) "best available mapping data" is adopted by the federal government.

Talks also centered around the possible effects of the DNR's "best available mapping data" on mortgage lending, as well as the need for — and availability of — flood insurance.

Hoosier property owners continue to complain that the newest floodplain maps adopted by the DNR are more restrictive than those from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Many contend that they were never notified of the floodplain map changes that went into effect in 2022 and are now faced with costly requirements for building projects on their property.

Multiple lawmakers expressed concerns on Wednesday about the accuracy of the DNR maps and said they now support a more robust system that ensures property owners know if they are in a flood zone, whether it be within the state or federal maps.

They emphasized, too, that a process should exist for Hoosiers to challenge the mapping in a timely manner — without exorbitant costs.

"I think these (DNR) maps aren't ready," said Republican Rep. David Abbott, of Rome City. "I think we need to take a step back — a big step back — take a look at these maps as a whole, and take them off the table. I think these maps need to be avoided temporarily until they can go in and do a more detailed modeling ... of the whole state. And that's going to be very, very expensive."

Environmental groups, meanwhile, point to increases in extreme rain events that lead to greater flooding. They maintain that state lawmakers should focus more on ways to introduce green infrastructure — like planting trees and restoring and protecting wetlands.

The interim committee, created in 2022, is tasked with reviewing state drain-

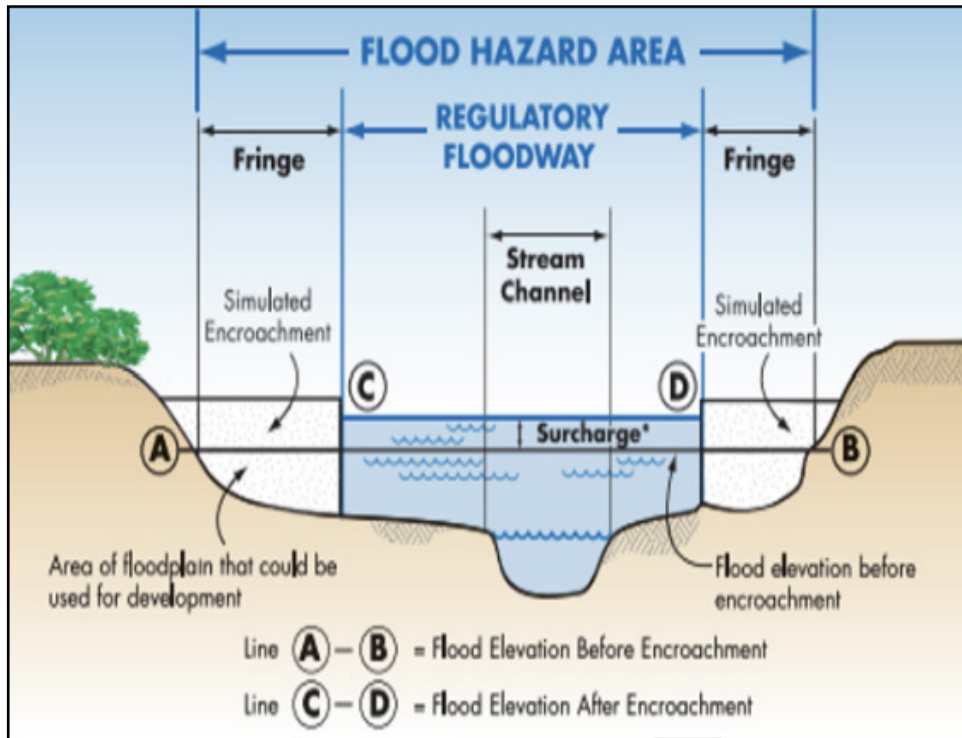


Photo courtesy of Indiana DNR

**Indiana's website explains the history of floodplain issues in the state and allows you to use mapping to check areas around the state. Surcharge is the difference between the flood elevation before and after encroachment. Surcharge must be less than 0.15 ft.**

age laws and making recommendations concerning drainage and regulatory matters — including at the legislative level. Wednesday's meeting was the second of three to be held this fall.

### Concerns over proper notification

A floodplain is the area next to a stream or river that is at risk for flooding at least once per 100 years or more.

Resulting floodplain maps are often made by calculating rainfall, topography, and hydraulic analysis, which evaluates the capacity of a stream or other water body.

FEMA has published maps for many of Indiana's floodplains, but not for all of them.

To cover the rest of the state, the DNR maintains floodplain maps for an additional 18,500 miles of Indiana streams. The state agency combined its maps with those created by FEMA to produce the Best Available Flood Hazard Area map.

Environmental advocates maintain that the DNR map is the best resource for identifying flood-prone areas. Currently, local floodplain administrators are charged with using it to reduce construction in the floodplain so rivers and streams can spread out, as needed. That keeps flood waters from flowing as fast or rising as high, which also reduces erosion.

Indiana's website explains the history of floodplain issues in the state and allows you to use mapping to check areas around the state. Surcharge is the difference between the flood elevation before and after encroachment. Surcharge must be less than 0.15 ft. (Photo from Indiana DNR)

But several on the Drainage Task Force took issue with the lack of notification given to property owners about changes to the DNR floodplain maps. Updates to the state maps meant some parcels of land were no longer determined to be in flood zones, while others are now located in newly-designated floodplains.

DNR water division director David Knipe maintained that the agency's new maps have been available online since

2018. It has been up to Hoosiers to access that data on their own.

Now, however, FEMA is in the process of updating federal maps, beginning with Wells County. New map adoptions are expected in other Indiana counties in the coming years.

As a part of that process, a public hearing is held when maps change. If property owners don't like the maps proposed, they can hire a surveyor or engineer to refute them, although industry representatives said Wednesday that appeal could cost Hoosiers upwards of \$20,000.

Knipe said about 2,000 fliers were sent out about the informational meeting to Wells County property owners affected by floodplain designation changes, but that only 50 people showed up.

Abbott said the fliers amounted to "mumbo jumbo" for many who received them. "They're not going to understand that their designation has now changed."

"Maybe we need to extend the time period where these people have a chance to respond and have their properties checked," he added. "Whether we disregard the maps or we delay the maps, I don't think FEMA should be coming in adopting them yet."

Sen Jeff Raatz, R-Richmond, said property owners should be informed about the latest changes and have a chance to refute the maps before DNR sends them to the federal government.

"I'm protecting the property owner. I shouldn't have to pay to go to the federal government after the fact and ... defend my supposition that I'm not in the flood zone," he said, maintaining that while "maybe 90% to 95%" of DNR's maps are "absolutely accurate," some are still in contention and deserve to be refuted. "I don't think it's the role of government to just all of a sudden say, from the top down, that you're now in the floodplain without having any conversation with people who rightfully own that property."

Task force co-chair Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, agreed that the DNR

fliers didn't do enough to properly notify affected Hoosiers in Wells County. She said she's concerned that, unless changes are made, thousands of Hoosiers will remain under-informed.

"I think the flier obviously wasn't as effective as it needed to be because otherwise more than 50 people would have come if they would have understood the ramifications of what it might mean to their property values and for their ability to build," she said at Wednesday's meeting. "I think it's wrong that we have taken away people's property rights without any of them knowing it."

### Insurance matters and implications

Knipe said there are more than 2.5 million households in Indiana, but only 17,390 flood insurance policies in effect. Most, but not all, are actually located within a floodplain.

Any property owner in a community that participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), no matter what floodplain they are in, can purchase flood insurance. Not every Hoosier community takes part in the program, but the majority do, he said.

Ross Teare with the Indiana Bankers Association said his industry "relies solely on FEMA floodplain maps, rather than DNR mapping," because that's all that is required by federal law when determining whether flood insurance is needed.

He said FEMA maps enable banks to establish whether a property falls within a designated flood zone. When it does, federal regulation mandates that the property owner maintain flood insurance. Banks are responsible for ensuring that borrowers adhere to the requirements when they provide loans.

A lender is required to notify property owners at least 10 days ahead of closing, but many banks alert clients as soon as the purchasing process begins, Teare said.

If maps are updated, like in Wells County, banks are required by federal law to notify property owners that they are now in a floodplain zone and are required to have floodplain

insurance, Teare added. "We just want the most accurate maps available because our interests need to be protected when it comes to mortgages, and we need to know where the floodplains are," he said before the task force.

Wayne Capek, president and CEO of Brownburg-based Floodplain Consultants, which represents about 60% of the banks in Indiana, said nearly all lenders use services like his to track floodplain map changes.

Floodplain Consultants is already keeping tabs on 1.2 million properties. If a FEMA map change goes into effect, Capek said his company will notify lenders within 30 to 60 days in a special flood hazard area and flood insurance is required.

Capek said flood insurance costs a Hoosier property owner, on average, anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 annually through the federal insurance program, but varies depending on the property.

Michael Niland with the Insurance Institute of Indiana further said there is a private market for homeowners seeking flood insurance, but that can be even more expensive.

### Other task force issues

Raatz recommended that any future changes to floodplains in Indiana would require meetings at the county level, with all affected individuals, "to make sure there are no errors."

"The issue for me is not that things are either in the floodplain, it's the process ... and how we notify property owners," he said.

Knipe said the DNR is "not adverse" to a beefed up notification process about future changes to the best available floodplain maps, but he cautioned that more requirements can become "quite a burden" for agency staff.

"I mean, do we knock on people's doors and tell them they're in a floodplain?" he asked.

Rep. John L. Bartlett, D-Indianapolis, additionally echoed others who suggested that information about floodplain mapping should be sent out with property tax bills.

Jeff Healey, a supervisor for the Hendricks County Soil and Water Conservation District and member of the task force, said DNR mapping should be "ground truth" to make sure that the previous surveying has accurately reflected the ground surfaces. Doing so would require boots on the ground, which Knipe said the agency "certainly doesn't have enough staff for."

Nearly two dozen other recommendations have also been submitted by task force members, so far. That includes proposals related to permitting, ditch mapping, updates to the state's drainage handbook and jurisdictional responsibility changes for the DNR and Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

The task force must make final recommendations by the end of the month.

Ahead of the 2024

legislative session, the committee was tasked with reviewing the responsibilities of landowners and state and local authorities under newly enacted Indiana legislation and recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

Members are also seeking to determine:

- whether authority over drainage matters is shifting from county drainage boards to state authorities
- the extent to which the state's drainage laws align with conservation and pollution control objectives
- whether the delays and costs associated with regulatory requirements applying to farm conservation projects are too great
- whether floodway permit requirements should apply to the installation of fences and the removal of embedded tree limbs and stumps on farmland located in floodways

- whether the balance between state authority and local authority over drainage of agricultural land favors state authority more in Indiana than in neighboring states

The committee consists of 19 members, including six members of the Indiana Senate, six members of the Indiana House of Representatives and seven governor-appointed individuals.

During the task force's last meeting, in September, members largely focused on breaking down Senate Enrolled Act 242, which passed during the 2023 session and changed how Indiana's floodplains are mapped.

The legislation mixed a provision in state law that required floodplain administrators to use the "best floodplain mapping data available" when reviewing an application for a construction permit in or near a floodplain.

It also allows a property owner to request a review by the DNR of the mapping data that applies to their property. Agency officials said the agency will complete the review and data analysis in 120 days at no cost to the requestor.

SEA 242 further requires the floodplain administrator of a county or municipality to complete certain training by June 30, 2025. There are currently 310 administrators throughout the state, according to DNR officials. The agency has already contacted those individuals via email and mailed letters about the new requirement.

Sellers are additionally required to disclose whether a property is located within the FEMA floodplain maps.

*A lifelong Hoosier, Casey Smith previously reported on the Indiana Legislature for The Associated Press. She has reported on water quality across South America. She holds a master's degree in investigative reporting and narrative science writing from the University of California/Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. She previously earned degrees in journalism, anthropology and Spanish from Ball State University, where she now serves as an instructor of journalism.*