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TODAY'S VERSE

Luke 10:19 I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.



FACES OF HAMILTON COUNTY

People who call our community their own.

What makes Molly Martin smile? "Anything," said the 26-year-old Noblesville resident. "I like to smile. I love nature. I like making other people smile. I love keeping Noblesville beautiful, help keeping it clean. I'm a person who just loves to smile." Wearing a T-shirt that reads "Hippie state of mind," she was found with her parents, Jack and Chris Martin, volunteering with Keep Noblesville Beautiful. "Keep Noblesville Beautiful is a nonprofit organization that will help beautify our city, and we also put up a sculpture at the Midland Trace Trailhead." This is a lookback at a previous Faces of Hamilton County. Molly was born and raised in Noblesville and graduated from Guerin Catholic High School in 2014. She works for her parents at Martin & Martin Insurance in downtown Noblesville. Her mom is vice chairperson and her dad is treasurer "I love Keep Noblesville Beautiful. I just love that we're able to bring awareness to our own city and to show off its beauty." She and her parents were also found in spring 2022 beautifying Logan Street with new plantings, readying for the Indiana Peony Festival, which each year since then happens in Seminary Park in downtown Noblesville. This week, on Thursday, the community may shop at the last Noblesville Flower Market of the season, presented by Indiana Peony Festival and sponsored by Keep Noblesville Beautiful, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the east alley of downtown Noblesville. Find a mix of local flower farmers and florists selling cut stems, bouquets and more.

And Another Few Things...

1. Visit Santa at the Sheridan Public Library

It's that merry time of year! Santa will be visiting the Sheridan Public Library from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, 103 W 1st St. Bring your list and enjoy some Christmas cheer! Santa will be handing out craft bags with wooden toys and books (available while supplies last). Thank you to Carmel Kiwanis for donation of these toys. We look forward to seeing you. Happy Holidays!

2. NPT Night Lights begins this Friday!

Head downtown as Fishers Parks lights up the night on the Nickel Plate Trail to celebrate the coming winter and holiday season! Through the month of December, enjoy NPT Night Lights, a light display along the downtown portion of the Nickel Plate Trail, presented by Centier Bank! Come out from 6 to 8 p.m. December 1, 2, or 3 as the trail gets activated with food, music, photo opps, and more! Plan a night downtown with friends or family to start your holiday festivities for free! Access to the Nickel Plate Trail is always free, and no registration or RSVP is required for NPT Night Lights. Lights will turn on dusk nightly through the end of December. Follow Fishers Parks on Facebook and Instagram for event updates.

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The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Noblesville First United Methodist Church Choir performs "Carol of the Bells" Saturday during Noblesville Chamber of Commerce's annual Lighting of the Square ceremony inside the Hamilton County Government & Judicial Center in downtown Noblesville.



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Noblesville High School senior Josie Flinchum plays the guitar and sings Carrie Underwood's "Let There Be Peace" during Noblesville Chamber of Commerce's annual Lighting of the Square ceremony inside the Hamilton County Government & Judicial Center in downtown Noblesville.

Tree Lighting Ceremony Is A Noblesville Tradition



BETSY REASON
From The Editor's Desk...

I remember when our daughter was little and we'd sit on a blanket on the floor watching the entertainment at Noblesville Chamber of Commerce's annual holiday tree lighting ceremony at the Hamilton County Government & Judicial Center.

This year, our Noblesville High School senior joined the entertainment lineup with fellow NHS Singers and sang her own solo, one of her favorites, The Carpenters' "Merry Christmas Darling."

Other NHS Singers in the lineup included Sarah Rolinson, singing "Silent Night"; Sean Wood singing "O Holy Night"; Tyler Cowan and Eleanor Wilson singing Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme's "That Holiday Feeling"; and Josie Flinchum playing guitar and singing Carrie Underwood's "Let There Be Peace."

Noblesville First United Methodist Church Choir sang "Carol of the Bells."

The Jay Jasper Trio -- featuring Noblesville High School

teacher Jay Jasper, NHS advanced orchestra bassist Anthony Orta and former Noblesville Music Center owner Tom Fowler -- performed smooth holiday favorites before and during the ceremony.

En Pointe Indiana Ballet co-owners Noblesville native Robert Moore and his wife, Pollyana Ribeiro, known worldwide for her expertise in ballet, brought their talented student dancers decked out in red. They danced to Pentatonix' "Carol of the Bells" and Stevie Wonder's "That's What Christmas Means to Me." The performance was a preview of their upcoming show, "An En Pointe Christmas" a mix of classical and contemporary ballet, jazz, tap and more, onstage at 2 p.m. Dec. 16 and 17 at NHS Auditorium, with tickets now available at www.enpointe.yapsody.com.

North Elementary music teacher Janene Krent brought her school's 11-member fourth-grade Hand Chime Choir, which performed "Good Christian Folk Rejoice" and "Jingle Bells." (We love to watch the hand-chime choir, a group that our daughter auditioned for and loved performing with during her own fourth-grade school year with Mrs. Krent.)

See BETSY Page A6

Health Department Provides Narcan Training To Hamilton County School Districts

Life-Saving Medication Is Saving Lives Across Hamilton County

The Hamilton County Health Department is taking proactive steps to combat the opioid crisis by training educators and staff in every school district on how to use Narcan, a life-saving medication that can reverse opioid overdoses.



JIM GINDER

"Unfortunately, an overdose can happen anywhere," says Jim Ginder, a Health Education Specialist at the Health Department. "Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of our community members, especially our youth. The opioid crisis has touched every corner of our county, and it's essential that we equip our school staff with the necessary tools to respond effectively in case of an emergency."

Opioids are a class of drugs that include prescription painkillers like oxycodone and hydrocodone, as well as illegal drugs such as heroin. When

See NARCAN Page A6

Stuff Your Stocking For Noblesville Youth

Noblesville Youth Assistance Program is excited to welcome families for a special stocking stuffing event on Friday, December 1 from 5pm to 8pm. Purchase stockings in advance online for \$15. Pick up your stocking at Church, Church, Hittle + Antrim on the night of the event, and then stroll around Downtown Noblesville while filling your stocking with toys and treats from participating businesses. Proceeds from this event support NYAP holiday assistance.

To purchase stockings for Stuff Your Stocking or learn more, visit one.bidpal.net/stuffyourstocking.

"The heart of Stuff Your Stocking lies our commitment to spreading joy and creating cherish moments for families in our community," said NYAP advocate Michelle Schmidt. "This event isn't just about stuffing stockings. It's about filling hearts with warm, creating holiday traditions, and making the holiday season bright for everyone."

Noblesville Youth Assistance serves as an early intervention advocate for youth ages 3-17 facing challenging life circumstances. We take a holistic approach to coordinate our community's vast array of talents, services and resources to help youth and empower parents and caregivers.

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 7:45 a.m.
SET: 5:25 p.m.



High/Low Temperatures
High: 29 °F
Low: 17 °F



Today is...

- Giving Tuesday
- National French Toast Day
- Red Planet Day



What Happened On This Day

- 1967 First pulsar observed. Graduate student Jocelyn Bell and her advisor Antony Hewish at Cambridge University were the first people to observe and discover pulsars. Pulsars are rapidly spinning neutron magnetized stars that emit radiation.
- 1964 NASA launches Mariner 4. The first spacecraft to make a flyby of Mars, the spacecraft was the first one to send images of a planet back to Earth.
- 1943 Tehran Conference begins. The Tehran Conference between the US, the UK and the Soviet Union began at the Soviet Embassy in Tehran. The conference dealt with the Axis powers in Europe and Asia and made plans to open up a second front against the Germans in France during WW II.



Births On This Day

- 1962 Jon Stewart American comedian, actor, television host
- 1820 Friedrich Engels German philosopher

Deaths On This Day

- 2010 Leslie Nielsen Canadian/American actor
- 1954 Enrico Fermi Italian physicist, Nobel Prize laureate

INSIDE TODAY

Service Directory.....A4
Casey Williams.....A3
Carrie Classon.....A5
Earth Talk.....A3

HONEST HOOSIER

One of the great things about Thanksgiving - I'm still munching on leftovers!



TODAY'S QUOTE

In celebration of our beginning our 20th year as a media company, we're sharing some famous quotations about newspapers this month. "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets." -Napoleon Bonaparte

TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Getting up at the same time every day is very important to getting good sleep. 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

None

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



WTHR 7 DAY FORECAST

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | SUN |
| 32 WINDY, GOLD | 17/29 WINDY, CHILL | 20/46 WINDY, SUNNY | 28/52 BREEZY, P.M. RAIN | 43/45 RAIN LIKELY | 32/46 SPRAZUAL CLEARING | 37/53 CHANCE OF RAIN SHOWERS |

Sheridan Public Library December Events

Babies + Toddlers:
December 5, 12, 19 at 11am Baby Time (0-18mos)
December 14 at 11am Discovery Time (18-36mos) ***

Preschool:
December 1, 8, 15 at 11am Story Time (ages 3-6)
December 6, 13, 20 at 11am Mindful Movements (ages 2-6) ***

Grades K-5:
December 5, 12, 19 at 3-5pm Lego Club ***

Grades 6-12:
December 14 at 4pm Bad Art Day ***

Adults:
December 1, 8, 15 at 11am Chair Yoga
December 6, 13, 20, 27 at 11am Needle Crafters
December 5 at 3pm Adult Bingo (Sponsored by Robert Owen)

December 18 at 6pm Pinners ***

All Ages:
December 1-16 All Day Silent Auction Open Bidding
December 2 at 9:30-11:30am Visit with Santa Claus
December 8 at 6pm Bingo Night, Free Event
December 13 at 6pm Family Science Night
***Registration required**
December 16 at 6-8pm Ugly Sweater Bash-Fundraising Event; Tickets available at front desk for \$10. Kids 5 and under Free ***

SPL will be closed at December 23, 25, 26, 30 and January 1 for the Holiday Season.
For more information on programming and services, please visit: <https://sheridan.lib.in.us>

Podiatrist Dr. Kenneth P. Stumpf Joins Westfield Foot and Ankle Board-certified Podiatrist Brings Over a Decade of Experience to the Position

Westfield Foot and Ankle, a leading provider of comprehensive foot and ankle care, is thrilled to announce the addition of Dr. Ken Stumpf to their esteemed team of associates. With his exceptional skills and over a decade of expertise, Dr. Stumpf will further enhance the practice's commitment to delivering top-quality foot and ankle care to patients in Westfield and the surrounding areas.

An Evansville native, Dr. Stumpf brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to Westfield Foot and Ankle. He earned his Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree at Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine and completed a rigor-

ous residency program specializing in foot and ankle surgery. With a passion for providing personalized care, Dr. Stumpf is dedicated to helping patients achieve optimal foot health and mobility.

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. Ken Stumpf to our team," said Dr. David Sullivan, founder of Westfield Foot and Ankle. "His expertise and commitment to patient-centered care align perfectly with our practice's mission. We are confident that his addition will further strengthen our ability to provide exceptional foot and ankle care to our patients."

Before joining Westfield Foot and Ankle,

Dr. Stumpf was a podiatrist with Community Health Network. Dr. Stumpf treats pediatric and adult patients, from primary podiatric care to more complex foot and ankle conditions. His areas of expertise include the diagnosis and treatment of various foot and ankle conditions, including sports injuries, reconstructive surgery, plantar fasciitis, bunions and more. He utilizes the latest advancements in podiatric medicine and surgical techniques to ensure the best possible outcomes for his patients.

Patients can now schedule appointments with Dr. Stumpf at Westfield Foot and Ankle's state-of-the-art facility

located at 16411 Southpark Drive, Suite B. Westfield, Ind. 46074.

The practice offers a comprehensive range of services, including preventive care, conservative treatments, laser therapy, advanced surgical interventions and onsite X-ray services, all delivered with compassion and a patient-centered approach.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Ken Stumpf, please visit the Westfield Foot and Ankle website at www.westfieldfoot.com or call 317-896-6655.



Dr. KENNETH P. STUMPF



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Photos courtesy of Lincoln

Lincoln Navigator Reserve Strives To Earn Its Lofty Six-Figure Window Sticker

I'm going to do something I've never done before – give you the price tag of our fly whip up front: \$107,390. That's for a regular length 2023 Lincoln Navigator with the Reserve package. That's pretty heady pricing against the Cadillac Escalade, Mercedes-Benz GLS, Jeep Grand Wagoneer, and Lexus LX, but is it worth it? Let's find out.

Brightly Styled

A walk around suggests a vehicle of high prestige and price. It starts with a large chrome mesh grille wearing a lighted ornament and flanked by curve-following LED projector headlamps. Keep walking to see 22" wheels swallowed by giant fenders and broad sheet-metal expanses. It's all quite sleek and elegant, if a bit large, preserved by power running boards and highlighted by narrow horizontal taillamps. You definitely won't miss its exuberant American style outside...or inside.

Although the Navigator goes without curved glass infotainment, it finds a welcoming mid-century vibe glittered with technology. Genuine wood trim, arm pads that echo classic Eames chairs, and front seats that heat, ventilate, massage, and adjust 24 ways are debonaire. Middle row chairs get their own temperature and massagers. Tri-zone automatic climate control and panoramic sunroof are also nice, but operating the latter with white icons on a plethora of beige buttons is frustrating – should have seen me fumbling for the shade retractor.

It may not be quite the art show, but I like the Navigator's flatscreen gauge cluster and large infotainment touchscreen that's super intuitive to operate audio, phones, and navigation. Skip the joywheel controllers – not needed here. Proper volume and tuning knobs plus redundant physical climate controls made me smile.

2023 Jeep Grand Cherokee L Six-passenger, AWD Crossover

Powertrain: 3.6-liter V6, 8-spd trans
Output: 293hp/260 lb.-ft. torque
Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind
Wheels f/r: 18"/18" alloy
Brakes f/r: disc/disc
Towing: 6,200 lbs.
Fuel economy: 18/25 mpg city/hwy
Assembly: Detroit, MI
Base/as-tested price: \$36,495/54,565

Connect devices through Bluetooth, Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, and wireless console charging. Pump tunes through the crisp saturating 28-speaker Revel audio system.

Beyond all that, drivers will appreciate the wide head-up display that projects speed, navigation, and safety systems above the hood. Going one better, our Navigator comes with

LIKES

- Upscale style
- Comfortable interior
- Intuitive touchscreen

the Lincoln Blue Cruise hands-off system that monitors your eyes for attention, but lets you relax on over 130,000 miles of highway. Safety is further enhanced by automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, and blind spot warning.

Twin-turbo Performance

Moving this largesse along is a 3.5-liter twin-turbo V6 delivering a robust 440 horsepower and 510 lb.-ft. of torque. That's enough to move three rows of passengers with ease or tow up to 8,300 lbs. of RV or speed yacht when properly equipped. It all routes to the electronic all-wheel-drive system through a nearly imperceptible 10-speed automatic transmission. Given its size

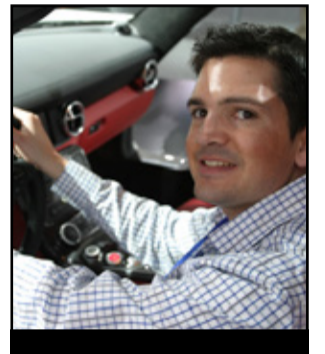
DISLIKES

- Cumbersome device connections
- Basic stereo
- Tight third-row

and power, fuel economy ratings of 16/22-MPG city/highway seem quite reasonable.

There's no denying the Navigator is a big truck, but it doesn't drive like one – at least not in regular length. Steering is tight and cameras plus sensors provide all-around vision for maneuvering. Out on the road, the adaptive suspension keeps the wagon from leaning excessively in corners while providing a mostly comfortable ride, though it seems to meet its match when trying to quell roughness from the 22" wheels over broken pavement or heaving bridge joints. That said, I'd gladly drive one a thousand miles without hesitation.

So, has the Navigator



CASEY WILLIAMS
Auto Reviews

Reserve earned its window sticker? Mostly, yeah. It's a half-step behind top competitors in technology and refinement, but if somebody dropped it in my driveway, I'd be delighted to own it. And, if you don't want to pay the aspirational \$107k, and I may not, there are less special Navigators available from \$82,765.

Storm Forward!

-Send comments to Casey at AutoCasey@aol.com; follow him on YouTube @AutoCasey.

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DCS Annual Staffing Report Nearly 100% Statewide But one county in southern Indiana met just 53% of the need

Staffing levels for family case managers meet 99% of the need statewide, according to the annual staffing and caseload report from the Department of Child Services (DCS), but some areas of the state face a greater need than others.

“Some of the most integral among the agency’s staff members are family case managers (FCMs). FCMs are the state’s front line against child abuse and neglect. Maintaining management caseloads for staff members is critical to ensuring the agency provides the best service possible to those in need,” DCS Director Eric Miller said in a report recently submitted to the Indiana State Budget Committee.

The agency compiles an annual report documenting its staffing needs following a series of scandals triggered by the resignation of Miller’s predecessor, Mary Bonaventura. In a scathing letter, Bonaventura claimed children would die following state funding cuts and subsequent, independent reviews found that DCS had a staffing crisis.

Legislative reform dictated that the agency “shall” meet certain goals when it came to FCMs, requiring more manageable caseloads and reducing

the number of children overseen by individual staff.

Staffing details

DCS, the state’s third-largest agency, has 4,100 staff members and a little more than half of those are FCMs. But of those 2,100 FCMs, just 1,637 employees have an active caseload with another 158 FCMs in training. The remaining FCM staff oversee hotlines and licensing services within the agency.

However, the agency needs 24 additional FCMs to meet the required Child Welfare League of America standards limiting staff to:

- No more than 12 cases (families) per month for caseworkers conducting child protection assessments
- No more than 17 family cases for caseworkers providing ongoing support to families involved in child protective services
- No more than 12 cases if caseworkers are conducting family-centered casework
- No more than 12 to 15 children in out-of-home care

The report calls FCMs “some of the most integral” to the agency’s mission, whose “dedication helps prevent future

maltreatment as families rebuild and learn to provide a safe environment for the loved ones in their care.”

Of the agency’s 19 regions, 10 meet staffing standards and an additional four have at least 90% of the staff they need. The statewide staffing level is 99%.

The report details staffing by region and county, with several areas in southern Indiana below the ideal range. Region 14, which covers Bartholomew, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson and Shelby counties had the biggest staffing shortage, with just 74% of FCM need met.

However, two counties in the area — Jackson and Jennings — were fully staffed. Bartholomew had just over half, 53%, while Johnson had 64% and Shelby had 70%.

With 12-weeks of training, replacing staff isn’t as easy as hiring a new person — especially since recent graduates don’t immediately handle a full caseload. And DCS, like other employers, has had difficulty retaining and recruiting employees in a tight labor market with a historically low unemployment rate.

In Fiscal Year 2023 — a period of time from July 1, 2022 to June 31, 2023,

which is the calendar for the state budget — DCS reported losing 739 FCMs and hiring another 890.

One factor the agency cited was low pay, something noted in the 2022 State Personnel Department compensation study. Prior to that initiative, pay started at \$35,776 and increased to \$40,092 after the 12-week training period. Following the study, pay started at \$47,320.

Increasing salaries helped with retention but “challenges remain(ed) due to the difficult nature of the work.”

The report details recruitment efforts such as increasing the number of job fairs from 15 to 25, visiting colleges and universities, and hosting interview events at offices with five or more openings.

The importance of FCMs, families

High FCM turnover, according to the report, “can” result in: longer foster care stays for children, delays in timely assessments of allegations of abuse and neglect, disruptions in child placements and increased rates of repeat maltreatment.

“Supporting family case managers is paramount to ensuring the best service

for the children in DCS’ care,” the report said.

The agency uses a six-month caseload average but “strives to hire 120% of its six-month average need of family case managers during October, November and December of each year to be prepared for one of the busiest times each year, which is March through May.”

Case numbers trended down in fiscal year 2023, with a total of 14,163 children interacting with DCS through informal adjustments, collaborative care or “child in need of services” (CHINS) compared to 15,838 the previous year — a decrease of over 10%.

Between months caseloads also fluctuated from a low of 6,797 in July 2022 to a high of 9,651 in September 2022.

The agency highlighted several areas where it said it succeeded, including: fewer families in need of formal intervention, fewer children in residential care, fewer children who experienced repeat maltreatment and improved ratio of supervisors to case managers.

One effort potentially having an impact and decreasing the number of children in DCS’ system: kinship care, or family members raising children when their biological

parents are unable to do so.

In the latest budget cycle, DCS pushed to add a \$300 monthly stipend for kinship caregivers, who are typically unlicensed and don’t qualify for foster care payments.

Additionally, calls to Indiana’s 24-hour Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline were down in the last year.

“While the hotline has historically seen an increase in reports year over year, there has been a recent plateau and reduction in the number of reports generated ...” the report said, listing calls per year. “From (fiscal year) 2016 to (fiscal year) 2019, the hotline received a 14% increase in reports. This is believed to be due in large part to increased awareness of the hotline.

“In (fiscal year) 2023, the hotline saw a 4% reduction in reports since the previous year.”

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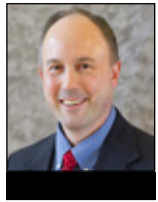
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Autoimmune Disease Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, Or Lupus



JOHN R. ROBERTS, M.D.
Montgomery
Medicine

Thanks to Jill who asked me to write about lupus. Lupus is the common name for Systemic Lupus Erythematosus. It is an autoimmune disease first described by the physician Rogerius in the 12th Century. The origin of the name is uncertain, but one of the most popular explanations is that many lupus sufferers have a rash on their faces resembling a wolf's face - lupus is Latin for wolf.

Autoimmune diseases are a group of illnesses caused by the immune system attacking a person's own cells. The clinical manifestations of lupus are caused by the immune system producing antibodies against proteins in the nuclei of cells, the part of the cell where DNA is located. Lupus sufferers likely have an underlying genetic predisposition to the disease. There is no single "lupus gene." Like most genetic diseases, it appears to involve problems with multiple genes as well as environmental factors.

These environmental factors such as ultraviolet light, stress, and some medications are felt to trigger damage to cells that exposes nuclear proteins to the immune system. Infections, likely by viruses, are also hypothesized to be a cause. Medication-induced lupus usually goes away when the offending drug is stopped.

It is estimated between 270,000 and 1.5 million people in the United States have lupus. It is ten times more likely to affect females, particularly young

women. It is usually diagnosed between the ages of 16 and 55 and is also more common in African, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American populations. Other risk factors include being related to someone with it (5 to 12 percent increased risk), smoking, sun sensitivity, and post-menopausal estrogen replacement therapy.

Lupus is known as the "great imitator" because it can present with signs and symptoms found in many other diseases. This is because the antibodies attack many different tissues of the body. This makes it difficult to diagnose, accounting for an average delay of five years between symptom onset and diagnosis. It is often characterized by flare-ups of activity followed by remissions.

The most common signs and symptoms of lupus include joint pain (especially the hands, wrists and knees), fever, rashes, muscle pain, fatigue, and weight loss. Some women report flares after ovulation and improvement with menstruation.

Since lupus involves an immune response, it can affect every organ system in the body. The most commonly affected include the heart, joints, skin, lungs, blood vessels, kidneys, and nervous system. Some people develop severe inflammation of the heart, kidneys or lungs. Joint involvement is present in about 90 percent of patients. The typical lupus rash is found on the cheeks and nose but can also present with scaling lesions elsewhere.

Diagnosing lupus can be very difficult. A patient has to have at least four of eleven symptom criteria either together, or over time. Each of the eleven criteria has varying specificity (if present the

disease is more likely) and sensitivity (if absent the disease is less likely) for diagnosing lupus.

There are also laboratory tests that can help confirm the diagnosis. The most common is the ANA or Antinuclear Antibody test to look for the antibodies that attack nuclear proteins. The likelihood of lupus is very low if the ANA is negative. If it is positive, additional confirmatory tests may be performed looking specifically for antibodies to proteins in the nucleus.

There is no cure for lupus, so the goal of treatment is to prevent flares and shorten the duration and severity of symptoms. There are many types of medications used to treat the disease. First line drugs are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen and Aleve. If those fail, or more severe symptoms develop, stronger medications can be used to suppress the immune system.

There are also lifestyle changes that can reduce symptoms or limit flares. Patients should avoid direct sunlight and wear a high SPF sunscreen. Smokers should quit and those who are obese should lose weight to reduce stress on their joints.

The prognosis for lupus patients has improved dramatically. In the 1950s almost all patients died within five years of diagnosis. Patients can now expect to live five years 95 percent of the time. Infections from damaged organs and immune suppression from medications are the most common causes of death for lupus sufferers.

- Dr. John Roberts is a retired member of the Franciscan Physician Network specializing in Family Medicine.

Just A Few More Words



CARRIE CLASSON
The Postscript

We had dinner with friends last night.

There is nothing unusual about that, except these were all people I did not

know; people my husband, Peter, had met while taking his daily hike in Mexico.

This was not the first gathering of Peter's friends we've had. My self-professed introvert of a husband has become something of a social butterfly outside of the U.S. He goes to the same botanical nature reserve to hike every day and he meets new people and forms new friendships. Peter still professes to be a shy person. He is not.

But last night was particularly special because these were not visiting Americans or Canadians or even Norwegians—all of whom Peter has met and introduced me to. These friends were the Mexican employees of the nature reserve.

We invited them over to our hotel, which usually serves only breakfast and lunch. But our kind host, Jorge, insisted they would love to serve dinner to us, and they put together a feast. The temperature was cool, but everyone brought a coat (they know the

climate, after all). There was a tasty appetizer and fish tacos and a chocolate mousse for dessert, and it was a perfect night—in spite of the fact that Peter really speaks no Spanish at all, I only speak a little, and three of our four guests spoke either very little English or none at all.

It helped that there was one truly bilingual person. Emiliano is only 18, but he speaks excellent English, and when conversation got completely gummed up, he would sort things out. But it was astonishing how few words we needed to have a good conversation.

I am all about words. Words are what I do, so I am used to thinking that having precisely the right word is important. And sometimes it is. But there are many ways to say the same thing, and a few hand gestures, a facial expression, maybe a moment of pantomime, and the missing word can be guessed, and the conversation can continue. Most of the time, Emiliano didn't have to bail us out at all.

What did we talk about for this two-hour dinner? We talked about our families, of course. We talked about what Emiliano was going to study at college (he still doesn't know).

We talked about this town and the celebrations that had just passed and the celebrations that were

about to begin. Peter asked if anyone had pets, and Marcela laughed and said she had 11 dogs.

"You have 11 dogs?" I asked Marcela in Spanish, sure I must have misunderstood.

She nodded and laughed again. "And three cats! All from the streets."

And all the while, I wished I had a few more words. I wished I could understand just a bit better. I no longer care if I use the wrong form of a verb, or forget a word, or say something embarrassing. It makes no difference at all. What I care about, more than ever, is being able to understand these people—my new friends.

We said goodnight. Marcela gave me a headband and a pair of fingerless gloves she knit herself. Peter said he would see them all the next morning at the nature reserve. Jorge was pleased that the dinner went well, and took some pictures of the beautiful meal to put on his website.

It was a wonderful night and, for a person who is always trying to find the best words, a reminder of how much can be said using very few words at all.

Till next time,
Carrie

- Carrie Classon is a freelance writer and author and lives in New Mexico. Her columns appear each week.

Giant Sequoias: How To Save The Last Of The Biggest Trees



Dear EarthTalk: What is the status of California's giant sequoias trees and what's being done to save them from extinction?

Giant sequoias, which can grow upwards of 300 feet tall with circumferences of 90+ feet around at ground level, are among the largest and longest living species on the planet today. Some are over 3,000 years old. But climate change, human activities and wildfires are threatening their very existence in their native habitat on the western slopes of California's Sierra Nevada mountains.

Biologists estimate there are about 80,000 naturally occurring giant sequoias left there and worry that another bad wildfire year—like 2015, 2017 or 2020, when National Park Service biologists clad the lower flanks of the biggest trees with tin foil to deter the flames—could decimate those remaining trees.

Giant sequoias have evolved to withstand moderate fires, but the recent infernos, exacerbated by climate change, have been catastrophic. Not only do these fires destroy the trees directly, they also hinder the natural reproduction process by killing young sequoias and preventing seeds from germinating.

While fire has been the

most immediate threat in recent years, climate change in general is altering the trees' environment—and may be the final nail in their coffin. Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts and erratic precipitation patterns have weakened the trees, making them more susceptible to pests and disease, and disrupting the natural fire regime that they have depended on for regeneration for millennia.

To mitigate the impacts of climate change, researchers and conservationists are studying how these trees respond to changing environmental conditions. They are also implementing measures like controlled burns to mimic natural fire cycles and create a more suitable habitat for the sequoias.

Human activities, such as logging, urban development and recreation further exacerbate the challenges faced by giant sequoias. Urbanization around these groves disrupts their ecosystems, and recreational activities can harm their shallow root systems. Efforts are also being made to limit human impacts in sequoia territory. Strict regulations on logging, urban expansion and recreational activities near these groves aim to preserve the natural ecosystem and minimize disturbances to the trees.

Moreover, collaborative initiatives between gov-

ernment agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities are crucial for the long-term protection of these ancient giants. Public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and eco-tourism practices that emphasize responsible visitation also play a vital role in ensuring the survival of these magnificent trees. Whether or not our grandchildren will get to visit these giant sequoias may well depend on our ability to rein in carbon emissions here and around the world in time to stave off cataclysmic climate change. Indeed, the fate of these giant trees, as well as thousands of other plants and animals, hangs in the balance.

-CONTACTS: Helping or hindering? US scientists debate how to save giant sequoias, <https://phys.org/news/2023-09-hindering-scientists-debate-giant-sequoias.html>; Save The Giant Sequoias, <https://www.savetheredwoods.org/redwoods/fire/save-the-giant-sequoias/>; The race to save 'awe-inspiring' giant sequoias, <https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2023/08/the-race-to-save-awe-inspiring-giant-sequoias/>.

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BETSY From Page A1

NHS Advanced Orchestra, led this evening by Noblesville East Middle School orchestra director Daniel Hedlund, performed a medley of holiday music.

White River Christian Church outreach pastor, former Noblesville Main Street director, Chris Owens, who attended with his wife, Maggie, and their kids, Wyatt and Caroline, provided the invocation.

Families of all ages filled the Judicial Center's three-story atrium, decorated for the holidays with a large Christmas tree. Kids gathered up close to watch the entertainment.

Noblesville Chamber of Commerce president and CEO Bob DuBois introduced the entertainment and kept the ceremony running smoothly for the event, which is now named The Lighting of the Square, and included the usual moving outside to the Square for a countdown to lighting of the Courthouse, Christmas Tree and Santa House, with Santa making an appearance. The NHS Singers also sang "It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas" at the Courthouse, and hot chocolate was served to those in attendance.

The event was made possible by the Chamber, in partnership with Hamilton County Commissioners. A special "thank you" goes out to Steve Wood and the county facilities team for lighting the square, bringing and setting up the Santa House and readying the Judicial Center for the holiday season.

Over the weekend, folks filled the shops on Small Business Saturday. And this coming weekend, the community can enjoy

Deck the Downtown and Midnight Madness 5-11:45 p.m. Friday during Noblesville Main Street's First Friday; Lights Over Seminary with a ceremony 5:30-7 p.m. Friday at Seminary Park; Holiday Market 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday; the new Noblesville Holiday in Lights Parade at 6:30 p.m. Saturday through downtown Noblesville; professional pet photos with Santa Paws NHS Band Director Eric Thornbury 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Saturday at Tractor Supply Co. with a \$20 donation to the band; Santa House on the Square is open 5-9 p.m. Friday, 2-5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 3 p.m. Sunday; and Hamilton County Community Band Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. Sunday at NHS Auditorium; Federal Hill Commons Ice Plaza is open through Dec. 22. Also, the Hamilton County Bicentennial Bash is 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Ivy Tech Hamilton County Campus in Noblesville. Plus, the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce holiday luncheon, featuring NHS choir students performing holiday favorites, and annual Noblesville State of the Schools by Supt. Daniel G. Hile at 11 a.m. Dec. 6 at Noblesville Schools Community Center. Also, Noblesville First UMC will have its annual Christmas Festival of Music & art at 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Dec. 10 at the church, featuring the Chancel Choir, Janus Choir, Orchestra and art for sale by Janus artists.

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



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

En Pointe Indiana Ballet danced to Pentatonix' "Carol of the Bells" and Stevie Wonder's "That's What Christmas Means to Me."



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

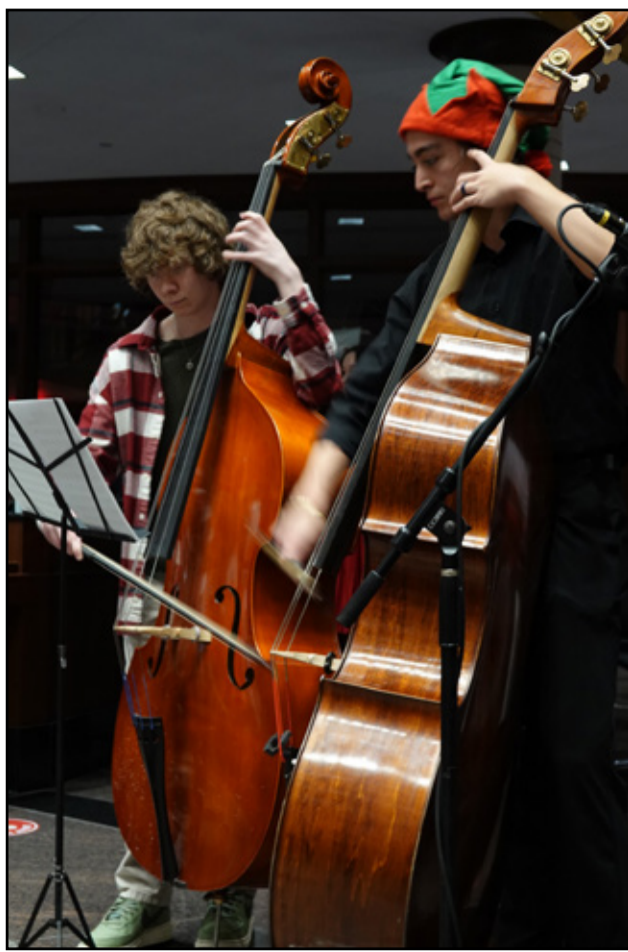
Noblesville High School Advanced Orchestra performs holiday music Saturday during The Lighting of the Square ceremony.



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Santa arrived Saturday night at the Santa House during The Lighting of the Square in downtown Noblesville.

TheTimes24-7.com



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Noblesville High School students Nate Baker and Anthony Orta play bass during the Noblesville High School Advanced Orchestra performance at The Lighting of the Square ceremony.



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

North Elementary music teacher Janene Krent brought her school's 11-member fourth-grade Hand Chime Choir.



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Noblesville Chamber of Commerce's Lighting of the Square culminated with the lighting of the Courthouse, Christmas Tree and Santa House.

NARCAN From Page A1

someone overdoses on opioids, their breathing can slow down or stop, which can be life-threatening. Narcan, also known by its generic name naloxone, is usually administered as a nasal spray and typically works within minutes by restoring normal breathing and consciousness to the individual who has overdosed.

"The opioid epidemic is a complex and ongoing public health crisis," Ginder explains. "We're committed to making sure all educators and staff in our county's school districts can identify the signs

of an overdose, administer Narcan, and provide critical support until emergency responders arrive."

Westfield Washington Schools is among those who recognize the importance of the program. "We are grateful to the Hamilton County Health Department for providing this essential training," says Dr. Paul Kaiser, the district's superintendent. "Our top priority is the safety of our students, staff, and visitors, and having our educators trained to respond to opioid emergencies is a crucial step towards achieving that goal."

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TUESDAY

Health and WELLNESS

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

A7

How Young Adults Can Build a Healthier Future

FAMILY FEATURES

Shaping the future of public health into an equitable one means ensuring all people and communities have access to the health care and resources they need to live well. The nation requires a strong, diverse public health workforce to accomplish that goal.

That's why AmeriCorps and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched Public Health AmeriCorps – to support the recruitment, training and development of early career public health workers who can serve their local communities.

Bridging national service and public health, the initiative supports a diverse group of early career professionals working to address today's public health challenges in a range of roles, including:

- Health education and training
- Community outreach and engagement
- System navigation, referrals and linkage to care
- Research, data collection, analysis and assessment

What Members are Saying

Everyone was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic – including Dionne Johnson, who lost a loved one to the virus.

"I had a family member die from COVID-19, and it really touched me," Johnson said. "That gave me the passion and lit the fire under me to actually pursue a career in public health."

Now, Johnson is realizing her dreams of transforming public health in her community. In her work, she wants to teach people in Black and brown communities how they can learn to be healthy and advocate for themselves.

Another member, Jaiden Singh, is the son of immigrants. Singh launched a promising career in public health so he can give back to the community where he grew up.



Dionne Johnson

"Being a part of the organization not only has really supplemented my education that I'm working toward in public health and policy, it has also given me the opportunity to do work that I am really passionate about in a community that I have known all my life and really do love," Singh said. "I would highly recommend being a part of this really valuable and inspiring community."

Action That Creates Impact

The diverse work of Public Health AmeriCorps benefits not only program members but also the communities they serve. As examples of the program at work, members have:

- Provided overdose rescue education, raised awareness about opioid use disorder and harm reduction strategies and distributed overdose rescue kits containing naloxone (an overdose-reversing nasal spray).
- Held back-to-school COVID-19 testing events, distributed early childhood health education and built community gardens in underserved communities.
- Participated in a community mental health crisis intervention system to assess, stabilize and

link people in crisis to follow-up care and services.

- Supported elementary schools as part of a dental hygiene program that sends out staff and volunteers to provide free teeth cleanings to students.

Learn More and Apply

If you want to start your career and make a difference in public health, consider member benefits such as:

- Education awards to apply to higher education or student loan forgiveness
- Student loan deferment and forbearance
- Living allowance
- Hands-on experience
- Training from experts

Visit AmeriCorps.gov/PublicHealth for a list of opportunities to serve and contact your desired opportunity by phone or email to learn more and apply. You can also subscribe to the newsletter to learn more about the initiative.

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TUESDAY

In The Kitchen

DAY

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

A8



Simplify Holiday Hosting *from Start to Finish*

FAMILY FEATURES

Hosting a major holiday event is no small effort. It requires close attention to detail from planning, cooking and cleaning to entertaining guests on the big day. Fortunately, just like any good recipe, approaching your hosting duties one step at a time can allow you to create a magnificent final product.

This Thanksgiving, the experts at Finish are helping hosts everywhere get organized, from the initial planning all the way through clean up, with the Ultimate Thanksgiving Timer. Created in partnership with Gaby Dalkin of “What’s Gaby Cooking,” it’s a personalized hosting timeline designed to help hosts stay on track up to and throughout the big day.

“I’ve been hosting holiday gatherings for years and know from firsthand experience that even capable hosts struggle to time everything just right,” Dalkin said. “From planning your menu and designing your tablescapes to accommodating dietary restrictions and even serving dessert, the Ultimate Thanksgiving Timer will support hosts every step of the way this year.”

Plan Your Guest List and Menu

Deciding how many guests you’ll be serving and what you plan to serve are two essential details that will guide the rest of your planning. When creating your guest list, be realistic about how many are likely to attend and plan your menu for a few extra people so you don’t run out of food. Your menu may also be influenced by how many guests you plan to host; a whole turkey is practical for a large group, but a turkey breast may be adequate for a more intimate gathering. Remember to send your invites at least three weeks ahead of the event so guests have plenty of time to respond and you can prepare your menu.

Start Grocery Shopping Early

The rush at the grocery store can be one of the most stressful parts of getting ready to host. Give yourself enough lead time by picking up pantry staples and beverages 1-2 weeks out so your kitchen is stocked for the big day. For perishables, get to the grocery store early in the day 1-2 days before hosting to beat the rush and avoid any last-minute grocery runs the morning of your gathering.

Maximize Prep Time

While it’s likely the majority of your work will come on the big day, you can work ahead to reduce some of the load. For example, you can wash and chop vegetables for stuffing and other side dishes and store them overnight to minimize prep time in the morning. You can also use the quiet of the night before to tackle tasks like setting the table and organizing your seating chart, restocking towels and replenishing other essentials in the guest bathroom.

Enlist Help with Cooking

The day of your event is the perfect time to pull extra hands into the kitchen. A simple but tasty recipe like this Ultimate Cheesy Herb Sourdough Stuffing from Dalkin is a sure crowd-pleaser to add to your table this year. Once you establish your cooking space and find your rhythm, you may even find sharing the preparations with a loved one is a great way to bond and create special memories.

Make Cleanup a Cinch

A few simple tricks can help you maintain a relatively clean workspace and keep up with all the dishes you need to prepare a lavish meal. First, be sure to clean up as you go. It may be tempting to throw all of your dirty utensils and empty mixing bowls in a pile in the sink to deal with later, but taking a few minutes to scrape dishes and load the dishwasher as you go can help prevent a messy mountain from forming. That also means you’ll be more likely to find a clean measuring cup or spoon when you move on to prepare the next dish.

Hosts have enough to worry about, so let your dishwasher do the hard work and pull in reinforcements to help clean up while you relax after a long day. Use a detergent that works in the toughest conditions, from burnt-on stains to old dishwashers and hard water, like Finish Ultimate. It’s the only dish detergent tab with CycleSync technology that releases the right ingredient at the right time to work with your dishwasher.

You can skip the rinse, even on tough stains like cranberry sauce and gravy, and save up to 20 gallons of water. Hosts are invited to put Finish Ultimate to the test and take the Ultimate Thanksgiving Challenge; if it can’t tackle your burnt-on stains, the meal is on Finish via a rebate of up to \$30.

For more hosting tips and tricks, visit UltimateThanksgivingExperience.com.



Ultimate Cheesy Herb Sourdough Stuffing

Recipe courtesy of “What’s Gaby Cooking” on behalf of Finish

- 1 loaf sourdough bread with crust, cut into 1-inch cubes (roughly 8 cups)
- 10 tablespoons butter
- 2 shallots, finely sliced
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
- 2 bunches green onions, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 3 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 large eggs
- 2 cups chicken broth, divided
- 6 ounces coarsely grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 375 F. On large, rimmed baking sheet, spread ripped or cubed bread. Bake until bread is dry, about 15 minutes. Cool. Leave oven on.

In heavy skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add shallots and celery; saute 5-6 minutes. Add green onions, parsley, oregano, sage, thyme, garlic, salt and pepper; saute until celery is tender, 6-8 minutes.

Generously grease large skillet or ceramic baking dish. Place bread cubes in large bowl. Add warm vegetable mixture; toss to combine.

In medium bowl, whisk eggs and 3/4 cup broth. Add egg mixture to stuffing and toss to coat. Mix in Parmesan.

Add 1/2-3/4 cup broth to stuffing if dry. Transfer to skillet or ceramic baking dish. Cover with buttered foil. Bake 30 minutes. Remove foil; bake until golden, about 30 minutes. Serve in baking vessel or transfer to serving platter.

