

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper



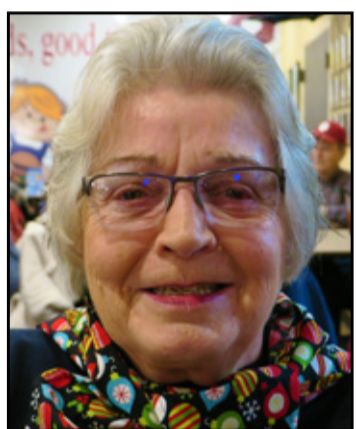
NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Brought to you by:

Have a very Merry Christmas!

TODAY'S VERSE
Psalm 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (KJV)



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

What makes Betty Jo Christy smile? "Family and getting to be with friends," said the now 84-year-old Noblesville resident, who was found during a previous year at Noblesville Jim Dandy singing with the Hamilton County Extension Homemakers' choral club, the Silvernotes. She has four children. She has been singing with the Silvernotes for 52 years and is one of the longest-participating members in the group. Betty Jo said singing helps her deal with her disabling disease of the nervous system of 37 years. "That's why I started," she said. "I have multiple sclerosis, and my neurologist told me, whatever I do, don't give up my music." She enjoyed a 65-year friendship with the late Sharon Piper, one of the Silvernotes who passed away within the past month. Christy joined because her mother was in the Silvernotes. It just needed to be natural. The low-alto singer who grew up in Sheridan and graduated in 1957, said a lot of mothers, daughters and sisters belong to the Silvernotes. Stop by and see this year's Silvernotes holiday choral concert at 5 p.m. today at the Jim Dandy Restaurant in Noblesville. To learn more about the Silvernotes and today's free concert, read the Betsy Reason column in today's edition of The Times.

And Another Thing...

1. Immediate Opening!

The Times has an immediate opening for someone who is good with computers and creative to help build our daily pages. The job pays between \$12 and \$15 an hour, depending on experience. If interested, please send resume to timmons@thetimes24-7.com.

2. It's no glass ring

The Glass family of Chino Hills, CA spent more than a year seeking to recover Jana Glass' wedding ring. Somehow their 5-year-old son had accidentally flushed it down the toilet. They sought help from plumbers to no avail. Fourteen months later a public works crew working in the sewer near their home stopped in their tracks when they came across the sparkling diamond ring. They remembered that Mrs. Glass had lost her ring in the sewer, cleaned it up and, to her grateful surprise, returned it to her.



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Hamilton County's Choral Club, the Silvernotes, dressed in matching holiday scarves, performs a holiday concert during a previous year at Noblesville Jim Dandy, where this year's concert will take place today at 5 p.m.

The Silvernotes Jingle Tonight At Jim Dandy



BETSY REASON
From The Editor's Desk...

Driving by the Noblesville Jim Dandy last Thursday, I noticed that the marquee was promoting the Silvernotes coming to sing as they do every year in December..

But I didn't catch the time. So I drove around the block, came back and saw that the Hamilton County Extension Homemakers' choral club, the Silvernotes, would actually be performing a week later.

Well, tonight's the concert. And if you love live choral holiday music, then I suggest you come in and get a good seat for this wonderful show, which

You Talked, We Listened, Changes Coming



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

What's that old saying, don't ask a question if you don't want to know the answer? Truth to tell, I was more than pleasantly surprised at the volume of

responses. A lot of you took the time to share your thoughts and ideas to two questions we asked: How often do you want your edition of Hamilton County's favorite and are you willing to pay a bit more for it.

Heck, some of you even wrote back more than once with ideas.

Thank you so much! Like I've said in this space before, this paper has the smartest, kindest and best readers anywhere!

The results weren't exactly what I was hoping for.

Although the answers ranged from every day to once a week, the majority came in at two or three times a week.

And on the price, almost ev-

Want TO GO?

What: The Silvernotes, Hamilton County's Choral Club, holiday concert.

When: 5-6:30 p.m. today Thursday, Dec. 14).

Where: Jim Dandy, XXXX, Noblesville.

How much: Free. Table service and food available for purchase.

Membership: email singsing2u@gmail.com

starts at 5 p.m.

The concert is the Silvernotes' annual gift to the community, filled with 90 minutes of holiday music, minus a brief intermission.

This year, I remember one of the Silvernotes, lifelong Cice-

➔ See BETSY Page A5

everyone said a higher price would be OK.

So beginning at the end of this month, we are going to come out three days a week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On the price, we are not going to change the \$42 annual subscription, however, that is a price increase since we'll have fewer editions. We will continue to bill on a pro-rated basis so that all of our subscriptions expire Dec. 31.

And we are not making any changes to our Print Edition schedule. It will still come out on Wednesdays, although we are going to bump up that price from \$79 a year to \$89.

For me, a newspaper guy, not putting out The Times every day has a lot of mixed emotions. On one hand – the biggest hand – a wonderful boss decades ago taught me to listen to the customer. She said they may not always be right, but they should always be listened to and respected. And on that same hand, The Times was a weekly newspaper for almost 100 years

➔ See TIM Page A5



Photo courtesy of En Pointe Indiana Ballet

En Pointe Indiana Ballet will present "An En Pointe Christmas" at 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at Noblesville High School Auditorium. Tickets are still available.

En Pointe Christmas A Holiday Tradition

Spark the spirit of the season with a Hamilton County Indiana holiday tradition – An En Pointe Christmas -- at 2 p.m. this Saturday and Sunday at Noblesville High School -- presented by En Pointe Indiana Ballet in Noblesville.

The dazzling full-fledged holiday performance, with more than 100 dancers and 25 dance numbers, has become a holiday tradition for many Central Indiana families. With its mix of classical and contemporary ballet, jazz, tap, hip hop, modern and a nine-minute finale with a playful rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas," the performance will have audience members dancing in the aisles and full of cheer.

"Act I is full of elegance and the greatest classics from Bach, Handel and Tchaikovsky, and Act II charms with traditional Christmas favorites set to Louis Armstrong, Elvis Presley, Bing Crosby and more," said En Pointe's co-artistic director Robert Moore.

"My wife and I have given the last 30 years of our life to this art form, and we can't wait to share the wonder and magic of this year's An En Pointe Christmas with you."

Dancers began rehearsing in September with 10-15 hours per week in rehearsals in addition to regular classes. The performance features dancers at all levels, from 3 to 22-years-old, as well as, pre-professional students who train six days a week. Additionally, En Pointe has brought in several elite guest instructors, choreographers and

Want TO GO?

What: An En Pointe Christmas.

When: 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Where: Noblesville High School Auditorium, 18111 Cumberland Road, Noblesville.

How much: \$15-22.

Tickets: enpointe.yapsody.com

➔ See POINTE Page A5

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 8:00 a.m.
SET: 5:24 p.m.



High/Low Temperatures
High: 48 °F
Low: 25 °F



Today is...

- Free Shipping Day
- Monkey Day
- National Screwdriver Day



What Happened On This Day

- **2012** Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. Adam Lanza shot and killed 20 children and 6 adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.
- **1958** Soviets Reach the Southern Pole of Inaccessibility. A Pole of Inaccessibility is a location on Earth that is extremely difficult to access.
- **1911** Roald Amundsen reaches South Pole. Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and his team reached the South Pole, becoming the first men in recorded history to set foot on the most southern point on Earth.



Births On This Day

- **1966** Fabrizio Giovanardi
- Italian race car driver
- **1503** Nostradamus
- French astrologer

Deaths On This Day

- **2013** Peter O'Toole
- Irish actor
- **1799** George Washington
- American general, politician, 1st President of the United States

INSIDE TODAY

- Service Directory.....A4
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TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Twenty percent of kids between the ages of two and five are overweight – get them out of the strollers and turn off the TV! Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Times and online at thetimes24-7.com



TODAY'S QUOTE

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year"
-Charles Dickens

TODAY'S JOKE

How do sheep in Mexico say Merry Christmas?
Fleece Navidad!

OBITUARIES

Larry Eugene Kinkead
John Houston Bays



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



13 WTHR 7 DAY FORECAST

28/46 SUNNY, NOT AS COOL	25/42 PARTLY SUNNY	22/46 SUNNY	26/51 MOSTLY SUNNY	28/51 ABOVE AVERAGE	30/55 BALMY FOR DECEMBER	31/46 SUNNY, COOLER
TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON

2023 Westfield Ornament Results From The December 10 Elks Hoop Shoot!

Introducing the Special Edition 2023 Westfield, Indiana Ornament – a timeless keepsake capturing the essence of this vibrant community. This limited-edition ornament is a celebration of Westfield's unique charm and is the perfect addition to your festive decor.



Photo courtesy of the city of Westfield

Priced at just \$20, this exclusive ornament is a must-have for residents and visitors alike. With a limited supply, act fast to secure yours before they disappear. Don't miss the chance to gift a piece of Westfield's spirit – a thoughtful and elegant present that will be cherished for years to come. Order now using the link above and make this holiday season truly special with the Special Edition 2023 Westfield, Indiana Ornament.

You can also find this ornament at some local Westfield retail locations including Collective Beauty Salon & Med Spa, Rivet Coffee Bar & Roastery, Something Splendid, West Fork Whiskey, and Westfield Wine Vault.

Hamilton County Parks Director Recognized By Peers

Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Director, Chris Stice, was presented the Outstanding Advocate of the Year Award at the Indiana Park & Recreation Association (IPRA) Annual Conference recently held in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The statewide association bestows awards on individuals and agencies that have contributed to the parks and recreation field in a manner worthy of recognition by the professional organization and its members. During the ceremony, IPRA leadership conveyed to their members and guests that "Chris's passion, leadership, and tireless advocacy have truly set a standard of excellence for us all."

Stice, who began his career with Hamilton County Parks twenty-eight years ago, has served as the department's director since 2020. He states, "I was humbled by the recognition I received from my fellow parks professionals and will

continue to passionately advocate for the advancement of parks and the responsible stewardship of our county's parklands and green spaces." The parks director added, "Of the number of projects with which I am currently involved, I am especially excited about Project AWARE Goes to the Parks, a program that provides opportunities for parks departments to receive staff training on mental health and/or create youth programming in outdoor spaces that positively impact mental health and physical activity."

To learn more about Hamilton County Parks and the department's mission, visit MyHamiltonCountyParks.com, follow the park department on Facebook or call 317-770-4400. Information regarding Indiana Park & Recreation Association is available online at inpra.org. Additional Project AWARE details can be found at projectawarein.org

The 52nd Elks Hoops Shoot local contest took place Sunday morning at the Boys & Girls Club of Noblesville. Six winners were decided from some outstanding shooters.

In the girls' divisions, Riley Suarez tied Bayleigh Eisele by knocking down 23 of their 25 free throw attempts. Riley earned the victory by making all five of her free throws in the first tiebreaker to win the 12-13 age group. Stella Dell hit 13 free throws to win the 11-12 group. The 8-9 yr. old winner was Cora Dell, who made 6 shots.

The boys' competition was just as competitive. Hudson Wade won the 12-13 group by making 21 free throws. In the 10-11 yr. old group Russell Lewis sank 14 free throws to win. And in the 8-9 age group Luke



Photo courtesy of Noblesville Elks Lodge

Awards were presented to 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place contestants at Sunday's Elks Hoop Shoot contest. They were: Front Row (Left to Right): Russell Lewis, Luke Glassley, Rory Collett, Gavin Glasser, Addison Coonfield, Cora Dell, Caitlin Horton, Dylan Sloneker, & Emmitt Bradshaw. Back Row: Hudson Wade, Blake Glassley, Addison Blum, Riley Suarez, Bayleigh Eisele, Stella Dell, Yvonne Wilson, Max Everson, and Director Pete Smith.

Glassley drilled 23 out of his 25 attempts.

Yesterday's champions

now advance to compete in the 2024 West Central District competition at

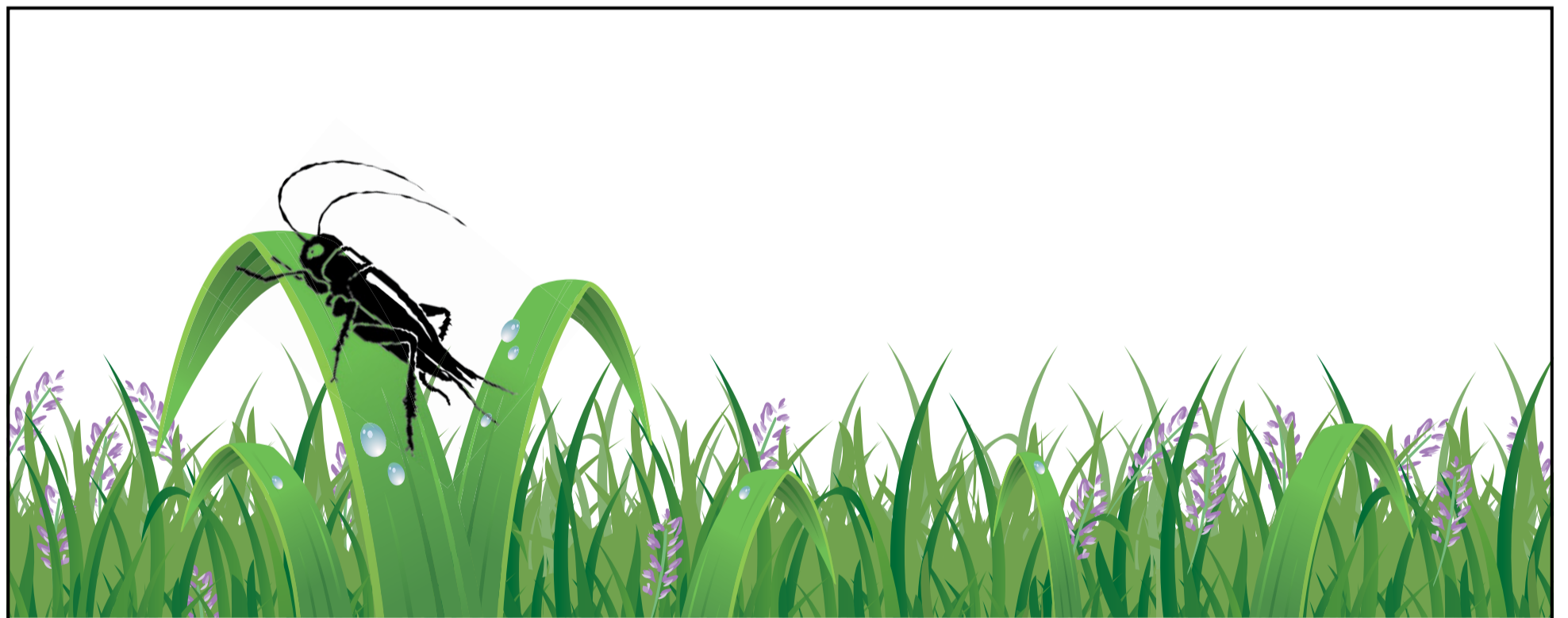
Greencastle's McAnally Center on January 13, 2024.

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New Survey: Most Indiana Private Schools Teach Cursive, Compared To Roughly Half Of Publics

The IDOE survey results provide the state's first cursive writing census and prompted one lawmaker call for more instruction.

By Casey Smith
Indiana Capital Chronicle

A new statewide survey shows that although most Hoosier kids attending private schools are continuing to learn cursive, far fewer Indiana public schools currently teach the writing style to younger students.

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) surveyed 1,770 schools across Indiana this fall. Of the 1,386 respondents, 91% of state-accredited non-public schools are teaching cursive writing, but only 52% of public schools reported teaching it.

The survey was part of an ongoing, yearslong push to bring cursive writing back to Hoosier schools, spearheaded by Republican Sen. Jean Leising. She said the new survey data indicates that many Hoosier students attending public schools are at a "clear disadvantage," and vowed to renew her legislative efforts to require cursive instruction.

"I have been an unwavering proponent of cursive writing in the Indiana General Assembly for more than a decade. My concerns originally centered around making sure our children could sign their names on legal documents and read historical texts, but it is now much

larger than that," Leising said in a statement Monday. "They need to have the necessary motor skills and strong cognitive ability to succeed academically and professionally, and learning cursive writing can only further support their development."

"Opponents of cursive writing say schools should focus more on teaching typewriting skills in an evolving age of technology and online work," she continued. "I argue, cursive is equally important, and we risk limiting development of student's learning abilities by moving away from essential handwriting curriculum."

Writing on the walls? The "Cursive Writing Survey" was sent out in August and September to all schools and corporations teaching grades K-6. Local administrators had until Oct. 1 to submit their responses.

About 78% of all schools participated in the IDOE survey. Of the 1,386 schools that reported, 80.4% were traditional public schools, 16.7% were state accredited non-public schools, and 2.9% were charter schools.

Of those schools that responded to the survey, 58.4% — equal to 809 schools — reported that cursive writing instruc-

tion is taking place in their classrooms. In the majority of schools where cursive is taught, instruction is primarily administered to students in grades two through four. A majority of the instruction takes place in grade three, according to the IDOE analysis.

Cursive is more commonly taught in private schools, though.

Of the 230 non-public schools that responded to the survey, 210 reported that cursive writing instruction is taking place. To compare, 580 out of the 1,110 traditional public schools that responded to the survey reported current cursive instruction.

Still, the survey is not totally conclusive, given that 384 K-6 schools across Indiana did not respond. The public report also doesn't indicate which schools participate — leaving it unclear how many students are represented in the study.

Leising wants cursive back

Cursive writing hasn't been required in Indiana's public schools since 2010 — something Leising, R-Oldenburg, has been working to change for years.

During the 2023 legislative session, her

Senate Bill 72 originally required traditional public and charter elementary schools to include some form of cursive writing curriculum for the state's younger students.

Leising — who has filed similar bills in the last decade to no avail — pared down the final version of the measure to instead require schools to report to the state education department about whether cursive writing is part of the curriculum there. The IDOE was tasked with creating a report with that information.

Leising maintained during the session that many private schools in Indiana are teaching the writing style, but the majority of public schools are not.

This week, the senator again pointed to research showing that writing in cursive heightens activity in certain parts of the brain tied to memory and encoding new information, which she reiterated "is integral to early childhood learning." Other studies cited by Leising show children who wrote in cursive had better reading and writing skills compared to those who didn't.

"While lawmakers look to tackle literacy during the 2024 legislative session, I plan to

join this initiative by also advocating for cursive writing curriculum, since various studies show knowing how to write in cursive helps improve information retention and comprehension abilities — supporting the successful development of reading and writing skills," Leising said. "It is clear our students need support — now more than ever — to build foundational reading, comprehension and writing skills for their future success."

Critics of mandatory cursive instruction say students already have too many subjects to master and that they're better off focusing on typing and coding.

Teaching cursive in public schools waned after the Common Core standards, which most states adopted, didn't include cursive in the recommended curriculum. Supporters have recently had some success in bringing it back, pointing to studies that show a link between cursive and cognitive abilities, including helping with reading and writing disabilities such as dyslexia and dysgraphia.

Indiana isn't the only state seeking to bring back cursive writing, however.

At least 22 states currently require cursive to

be taught as part of the public school curriculum, according to the National Education Association. And the list is growing.

In October, the California legislature unanimously passed — and Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed — a law requiring the teaching of cursive or "joined italics" handwriting in grades one through six.

Earlier this year, New Hampshire Republican Gov. Chris Sununu additionally signed a bill requiring schools to teach cursive and multiplication tables.

Indiana lawmakers return to the Statehouse next month for a non-budget session. Legislative leaders have not included cursive instruction in their 2024 priorities, but literacy-focused initiatives — especially those affecting grade three — are expected to top education policy efforts.

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BBB Tip: 6 Steps To Avoid Package Theft

The rise of online marketplaces and expedited delivery services is convenient for many consumers nationwide, allowing shoppers to search for the perfect gift for friends and family. Unfortunately, purchasing and having the item delivered to the proper address does not guarantee you will receive it. According to a Security.org study, approximately 79% of consumers experienced package theft in 2022.

Package thieves, also known as “porch pirates,” often take advantage of an opportunity and may frequent a neighborhood or community multiple times before moving on to another. They will often target houses that provide a quick in-and-out route, especially if the porch or area where packages are delivered is within 25 feet of the street and is easily visible.

As a crime of opportunity, preventing or discouraging package theft can be accomplished in several ways, depending on the location of your residence, type, and community. For instance, preventing package theft at an apartment complex in the middle of the city differs from a suburban residential community. However, consumers can use specific strategies to discourage the act no matter where they live.

BBB provides the following tips to prevent package thieves from affecting your plans:

Check with neighbors. Sometimes, your package may not be stolen simply at the wrong address. Before filing a report or contacting the

sender, check with your neighbors and see if the delivery service may have dropped off your package at the wrong address. Many delivery companies will take pictures of your package in the designated location – be sure to check for the photo and verify it is at the right spot.

Don't leave unattended packages. When possible, do not leave delivered packages unattended for long periods. If you are expecting a package, attempt to schedule its delivery when you know you will be home. Ask your neighbors if they mind holding on to packages delivered if you plan to be gone for an extended time.

Ship to store. If purchasing an item from a retailer with a physical location near your home, consider shipping it there instead. Retailers will require proof of purchase or identification before releasing packages they have received, and this is a sure way to avoid porch pirates.

Use a security camera. Installing a home security system with cameras or a camera-enabled doorbell is a great way to deter package theft, especially when highly visible. Consider including a sign that specifically states that the residence is under surveillance. Even if a package is stolen from your porch, the video evidence will help law enforcement track down the thieves (but be wary of the risk of internet-connected devices and research before you purchase).

Require a signature. Many delivery compa-

nies include the option to require a signature before leaving a package, letting you take physical possession of the item as soon as it is delivered. While this option works well for those often at home, especially for expensive items, it may create difficulties in receiving packages if your schedule and the delivery service differ. Be sure to check with the delivery company on their policy for packages that are not signed for; they may return it to the sender after a certain number of attempts.

Consider a package receiving service. Some major retailers, such as Amazon, offer secure package-receiving locations away from your home that you can access with a key or code. Some independent businesses also specialize in this service, allowing you to designate a different delivery location for your packages and the ability to pick them up on your way home.

If you fear your package being stolen, file a report with your local police department and the delivery company. Depending on your delivery service, they may offer insurance or other policies to reimburse you for your losses.

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](https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker) and the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov). Your story can help protect consumers from similar scams.

Indiana Commission For Higher Education Partners With The Indiana Latino Institute

This taskforce will focus on addressing educational barriers for Hispanic or Latino students

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education (Commission) and the Indiana Latino Institute (ILI) will host the first convening of Esperanza – a task force dedicated to improving higher education access, success, and outcomes for Hispanic or Latino Hoosiers. The task force will focus on sharing ideas and best practices, as well as assist in implementing proven strategies on a statewide level to help improve the lives of Indiana communities through access to higher education.

The most recent data from the 2023 Indiana College Readiness dashboard, published this fall, has reported Hispanic or Latino students to be least likely to enroll in college after high school graduation at a rate of 43 percent. This rate is well below the state average of 53 percent. Additionally, the 2023 Indiana College Completion dashboard shows Hispanic

or Latino students are less likely to graduate on time than their peers across all campus types at a rate of 37 percent compared to the statewide average of 47 percent.

“The Commission recognizes there are gaps in college attainment among specific student groups, including Hispanic or Latino students,” said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery. “There are barriers we need to address, and government cannot do this work alone. I admire the great work the Indiana Latino Institute has done in strengthening the education-to-workforce pipeline for Hispanic or Latino students, and I look forward to the outcomes and solutions brought forth by this partnership.”

“The Indiana Latino Institute is ready to lead the charge in advancing Latino student success alongside the Indiana Commission

for Higher Education through the Esperanza task force. Our commitment is unwavering, focusing on tangible advancements in improving access, success, and outcomes for our Latino community,” said Marlene Dotson, president and CEO of the Indiana Latino Institute. “We approach this responsibility with enthusiasm, prepared to work towards ensuring a bright future for Latino students in our state.”

After the conclusion of the task force in March 2024, members will recommend best practices and solutions to the Commission leadership at the May Commission Meeting and will present at the 2024 ILI Higher Education Consortium. Additional resources will be published to aid higher education institutions in their endeavors to improve support for Hispanic or Latino students in enrollment, completion, and graduate retention.

Enhanced Geothermal Power: The Clean Green Way Of The Future?

EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: Why are ecologists so bullish on “enhanced geothermal” power plants, and how do they differ from regular geothermal?

Geothermal energy is energy derived from the natural heat beneath the Earth’s surface. The word geothermal comes from the Greek “geo” (for earth) and “therme” (heat).

Humans have been harnessing the heat from the center of the Earth for eons in one form or another, but it wasn’t until the 20th century that we started utilizing it as a renewable power source. By drilling below the Earth’s surface and cycling water or other liquids down there, the heat is brought up to use directly as a heat source or indirectly to create steam that turns turbines that generate electricity. When ambient temperatures are colder than the ground, a geothermal heat pump removes heat from the collector’s fluids, concentrates it, and transfers it to the building. When ambient temperatures are warmer than the ground, the heat pump removes heat from the building and deposits it underground.

The world’s first commercial geothermal power plant opened in Italy in 1911, but the U.S. didn’t see its first utility-grade

geothermal plant until 1960 when the Geysers Geothermal Field opened for business in Northern California. Cut to the present and the U.S. leads the world in geothermal energy production with some 6,500 megawatts of power online from 93 different plants from coast to coast. Geothermal systems, which provide so-called “baseload” supplies of power—that is, available 24/7—are a good complement to other renewables which are only available on an intermittent basis (solar when the sun shines, wind when the wind blows).

And in November 2023, Texas-based Fervo Energy, with backing from Google, opened a new generation of geothermal plants in Nevada. This so-called “enhanced geothermal system” (EGS) facility supercharges the geothermal production process by using advanced drilling techniques to access deeper and harder-to-reach resources. EGS also involves using high-pressure water to break up the subterranean rocks so as to enable the extraction of larger loads of heat much more quickly. As the water circulates through these fractures, it absorbs heat from the surrounding rocks before being brought back to the surface to generate electricity. (Conventional geothermal plants tap into hot springs and geysers much closer

to the Earth’s surface.) And deeper drilling means enhanced geothermal can be implemented just about anywhere on the planet.

Despite the invention of the EGS concept in the early 1970s, Americans are a little late to the party with regard to developing it for large-scale commercial. The first commercial-scale EGS plants opened in France and Germany in the early 2000s, and these days dozens of others can be found across the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan.

Industry analysts think U.S. producers will soon catch up with other leading EGS countries given that it’s such a reliable and inexpensive energy generation system to maintain—although up front development costs are still high given that the technology is relatively new.

-CONTACTS: Geothermal explained, <https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/geothermal/>; America’s first ‘enhanced’ geothermal plant just got up and running, <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/geothermal/americas-first-enhanced-geothermal-plant-just-got-up-and-running/>; Fervo Energy, <https://fervoenergy.com/>.

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BETSY From Page A1



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Hamilton County's Choral Club, the Silvernotes, fill an area of the Noblesville Jim Dandy restaurant during a previous year's holiday concert. This year's holiday show is at 5 p.m. today.

ro resident Sharon Piper, who recently passed away, less than four weeks ago, on Nov. 20, at age 84.

"There was always music in her heart and a smile on her face," her obituary read. And that was so true.

I met Piper more than five years ago and I wrote about her in The Times four years ago. She loved music ever since she could remember. As a child, she would tag along with her mom, Lucille Beechler, who sang in the Silvernotes.

"I apparently enjoyed the music," Piper told me. She took along toys to play with while her mom rehearsed with other women in the unisex choir. She knew that she wanted to sing in the chorus someday because she watched her mother singing and having fun.

But it wasn't until 30 years later that Piper joined the Silvernotes, after her own daughter went off to kindergarten.

"I always knew I wanted to sing, and I had the time," Piper, who was the Silvernotes' president, told me. She joined the Silvernotes in 1975, at age 36, and was singing ever since.

Piper turned 84 this year, on April 4. And she still loved singing with the Silvernotes.

As a kid, she loved music. The former Sharon Beechler, a native of Indianapolis whose family moved to Cicero when she was 5, started private oboe lessons in third grade and then played in the band and sang in the choir at Jackson Central High School. The 1957 graduate, who also played flute, saxophone and bass drum because she couldn't march with the oboe, also taught herself the piano and played into her 80s for her own enjoyment. She also sang in the Cicero Christian Church choir.

"I've always loved music. It's always a part of my life," Piper told me. She was among 30 Silvernotes, whose members hail from Carmel, Cicero, Fishers, Noblesville, Sheridan and Westfield.

The Silvernotes have been singing all styles of music in soprano and alto harmony since 1936, just three years before Piper was born.

The choral club is part of the Cooperative Extension Service, an informal, educational outreach program of Purdue University, Indiana's land grant university. Founded nationally in 1914, the Extension Service has served Hamilton County for more than a century, since 1918. The choral groups started more than 80 years ago in Indiana. Silvernotes is one of 25 county choruses that make up the state chorus called Melody Makers of Indiana. History began at Purdue University in 1934, when glee club director Al Stewart created the choirs at a time when women didn't have so many diversions. As Melody Makers, they were invited to the White House by Eleanor Roosevelt to perform for President Franklin Delano

Roos-evelt and traveled to various states, including Hawaii. While Piper's mom didn't sing for Roosevelt, she did perform in Washington, D.C., California and Canada. And for Piper, traveling to new places, like Branson, Mo., was a bonus of singing with the choir.

The Silvernotes are always looking for new members in the chorus, which ranges in age from teens to octogenarians. They practice Mondays at the 4-H Fairgrounds in Noblesville and perform several times per year at various locations.

Each July, Piper was a cashier at the Silvernotes' elephant ear stand at the Hamilton County 4-H Fair. The Silvernotes' largest fundraiser, the chorus uses the elephant ear stand proceeds to buy Silvernotes' costumes and music and to pay 20-year choral director Diana Stanton, 64, of Fishers, and the piano accompanist.

Each of the choral groups around the state receive the same music from Purdue, so they can sing with each others' groups. Each summer, the Silvernotes learn 10 new songs to add to their repertoire. I remember Piper telling me how much she loved the music. "We sing, eat, and we're very good friends," she told me. "Anybody is always welcome. We have a lot of fun. We enjoy each other's company. It's just a great joy to me."

Singing in the Silvernotes brings a great deal of happiness to a lot of women, including one of Piper's dear friends, Betty Jo Christy, 84, of Sheridan, who enjoyed a 65-year friendship with Piper. She has had multiple sclerosis for 43 years. Christy, one of the longest-participating members in the group, told me in 2017 at Jim Dandy, "My neurologist told me, whatever I do, don't give up my music."

Christy joined, too, because her mother was in the Silvernotes. It just seemed natural. The low-alto singer, who grew up in Sheridan and graduated in 1957, said a lot of mothers, daughters and sisters belong to the Silvernotes.

Silvernotes director Diana Stanton told me during this past summer at the 4-H Fair's elephant ear booth that her own granddaughter, Gracelynn Wilhelm, 15, who helped her at the booth, and other young women would eventually take over the elephant ear booth as the older members retire. It's Gracelynn's first year singing in the Silvernotes.

Come watch and experience the Silvernotes holiday choir concert at 5 p.m. today at Noblesville Jim Dandy.

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

More than anything, we want to make The Paper



SHARON PIPER

TIM From Page A1

before it was converted to a daily in 2002. In a way, this move is homage to roots that go deep into Noblesville's history.

On the other hand though, I'm a guy who still struggles with not having a printed edition every day. I liked the ones that when you opened them up felt as wide as a '57 Buick. I miss the Page 1 layouts that had a couple dozen stories with one giant headline across the top of the page.

That said, even I get most of my news now on an electronic screen.

Progress? Yeah, I guess. So what can you expect with the new schedule?

Well, some old and some new. On the new side, we are already working on adding more local content. I'll hold off on what exactly that means right now, but we think (and hope) you'll like the new stuff and find value in it.

More than anything, we want to make The Paper

an even more important part of your lives. We want to give you "news you can use" so that you don't ever want to miss a day.

And lastly, we – and I'm at the top of this list – hope that you will continue to share your thoughts, ideas and reactions. Please do tell me if you like what you see with our new schedule – or not. We love the idea that we are a business that does not make decisions in a vacuum and that you were kind enough to help us. You talk and we'll keep listening.

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

POINTE From Page A1

world-famous artists during the 2022-2023 session to help students refine their technique.

This year is packed with even more holiday spirit, plus the trademark En Pointe surprises and fresh elements that audiences have come to expect from the premier classical ballet school... Plus, a very special guest – Fox 59's Sherman Burdette – is joining the performances for a fun cameo. Burdette is the producer, reporter and host of

"Where is Sherman?" on FOX59 Morning News.

"One of the most-loved parts of the performance is our nine-minute finale," said Moore. "It includes every single person in the cast and is spectacular to see. Definitely, a grand finale to an amazing evening."

An En Pointe Christmas premieres at 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at Noblesville High School Auditorium. Tickets are available at enpointe.yapsody.com



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Facts Fun



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Clinton

Number Stumpers

- Clinton County was founded in 1830 by DeWitt Clinton.
- The county seat, Frankfort, contains an estimated 15,951 people and is 7.43 square miles.
- The 405.25 square mile county is inhabited by an estimated 33,224 individuals.
- Frankfort is home to the Frankfort Municipal Airport and is a junction for several rail lines.
- The county contains Frankfort Community Schools and Ivy Tech.

1. How many educational institutes are located in the county?
≥
2. What is the population density of the County?
≤
3. How old is Clinton County?
≥
4. What percentage of land in the county is made up of Frankfort?
≤

Answers: 2 Institutes 2, 81 people per square mile
3. 188 Years 4. About 1.8%

Got Words?

The junction railway and municipal airport in Frankfort allow the county to connect to many different cities in the United States. What do you think are the benefits and drawbacks of transportation methods such as trains and planes?

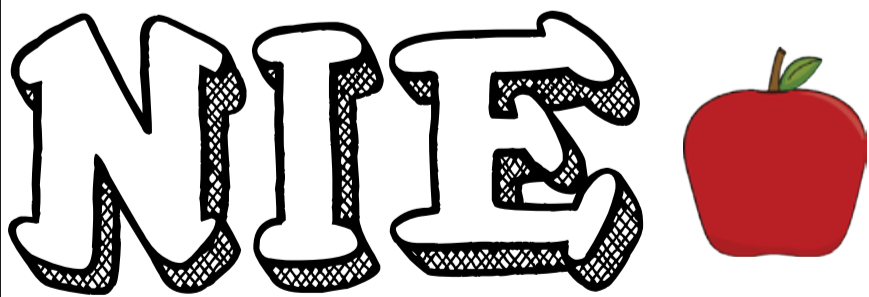
Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. FROFARNKT
2. ROITAPR
3. LNCOTIN CYONUT
4. IALR LESIN
5. OARSNATIPNROT

Answers: 1. Frankfort 2. Airport 3. A Clinton County
4. Rail lines 5 Transportation

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