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TODAY'S VERSE

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Faces of Hamilton County

People who call our community their own

What makes Craig Thurston smile? "My family," said the 49-year-old Noblesville resident. His wife's name is Ashley and he has two stepkids, Dylan, 15, and Gwen, 9, and two sons, George, 5, and Colter, 4. He was born in Kokomo and moved to Noblesville after second grade in the summer to start third grade at Hinkle Creek Elementary School. He graduated in 1991 from Noblesville High School. He started playing guitar "late," at age 19, while attending Indiana University Kokomo. From there, he went to Indiana University Bloomington and studied music with Atanas Tzvetkov as his guitar instructor. Today's feature is a look back at one of The Times' previous Faces of Hamilton County. Craig plays ukulele, mandolin, bass, keys and harmonica. He performs regularly, on the first and third Thursday, at Grindstone Public House in downtown Noblesville. His next performance is tonight. He didn't start a family or get married until he was in his 40s. He said, "My greatest achievement is my family. I never thought I would be a part of a family like this, with kids. I feel so blessed to have them."

And Another Thing

Welcome to Winter! Today marks the winter solstice – or at least it will at 10:27 p.m. tonight – in the Northern Hemisphere. Typically, the winter solstice begins either on Dec. 21 or Dec. 22. For this particular season, it begins tonight and ends on March 19. So what exactly is the winter solstice? It marks the moment when our sun is the farthest south. That also means the sun will travel the shortest path through the sky. That means the least daylight and the longest night.

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper

NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Westfield Finds Grand Park Partners

The City of Westfield is pleased to announce a transformative long-term collaboration with multiple partners, including Indianapolis-based Keystone Group, Indy Sports & Entertainment, Indy Eleven, and Bullpen Ventures, solidifying a landmark public-private partnership. This strategic alliance marks the conclusion of an exhaustive 21-month selection process involving 17 competitive bids for the management and development of Grand Park, America's leading youth sports campus. After a thorough evaluation, a city-formed review committee selected the partnership to establish the newly formed entity, Grand Park Sports & Entertainment. Indy Sports & Entertainment and Bullpen Ventures will manage the facility around

youth sports while attracting large sporting and entertainment events and diversifying Grand Park's current sports offerings. Keystone Group, an Indianapolis-based leader in mixed-use development projects, including Eleven Park, the proposed 20,000-seat multi-purpose stadium in downtown Indianapolis, is the City of Westfield's development partner for Grand Park. Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2024, Grand Park reflects the visionary leadership of Westfield Mayor Andy Cook, who expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration. "Since its inception, my vision for Grand Park has been establishing a world-class venue for youth sports and a dynamic economic engine for Westfield. We've not only achieved but exceeded those initial goals by far. I

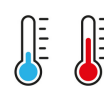
am confident that this strategic partnership will propel Grand Park to even greater heights in the years to come, significantly contributing to Westfield's ongoing economic development." Under the partnership, Grand Park is poised for an evolution that includes the creation of a dynamic sports and entertainment district. Plans call for a curated mix of restaurants, hotels, public spaces, a vibrant mixed-use complex encompassing residential, office, and retail spaces, and a state-of-the-art sports facility. "Keystone is excited about the opportunity to invest in Westfield and work with Mayor-Elect Scott Willis and the new city leadership to achieve their vision to

➔ See WESTFIELD Page A3

The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset

RISE: 8:06 am
SET: 5:25 pm



High/Low Temperatures

HIGH: 46°F
LOW: 38°F



Today is...

- The First Day of Winter
- Crossword Puzzle Day
- Don't Be A Scrooge Day



What Happened On This Day

- 1937 Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs released. The movie made by Walt Disney Productions was the world's first full-length animated feature film and it was based on a German fairy tale of the same name by the Brothers Grimm.
- 1872 Phileas Fogg wins his wager. The fictional character created by French writer Jules Verne for his book, Around the World in Eighty Days, finished circumnavigating the world and reached London to win the wager he had set with his friends. The date also coincides with the publication of the last of the series that ended up becoming the now popular science fiction novel.



Births On This Day

- 1982 Philip Humber - American baseball player
- 1966 Kiefer Sutherland English/Canadian actor, director, producer

Deaths On This Day

- 1945 George S. Patton - American general
- 1940 F. Scott Fitzgerald - American author

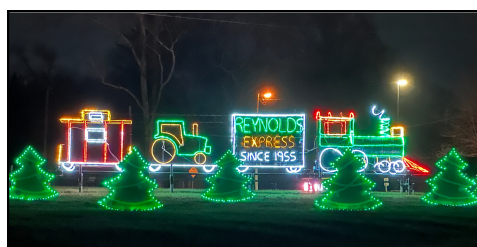
40+ Churches to Offer Christmas Eve services



BETSY REASON
Columnist



The Times photo by Betsy Reason
Noblesville First United Methodist Church Chancel Choir director Jeff Wright (left) directs the church's Chancel Choir, which will perform at 11 p.m. on Christmas Eve.



White River Christian Church in Noblesville offers a free musical light display 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily through Dec. 31 in the south lawn of the church. Visit wrcc.org.

When The Times received an inquiry on whether we would offer a Christmas Eve church directory, I decided to put together my own sampling list of Christmas Eve services in and around Noblesville and Hamilton County. So here goes. Celebrate!

with a kids church Christmas party and Carols and Christmas message and 7:30 p.m. homemade cookies and hot chocolate; and 8 p.m. Sunday at 8989 E. 266th St., Arcadia. Visit cometoabc.com

on Sunday at 26901 Ind. 19, Arcadia. Visit arcadiachristian.com.

3. Bethel Lutheran Church in Noblesville offers Christmas Eve services, at 5:30 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday at 20650 Cumberland Road, Noblesville. Visit bethelluthranchurch.com.

4. Bridgeway Church will have a Christmas Eve service at 5:30 p.m. at 12945 Parkside Drive, Fishers. Visit bridgeway.cc.com.

5. Carmel United Methodist Church will offer Christmas Eve services at 10:30 a.m.

➔ See BETSY Page A6

➔ **TODAY'S HEALTH TIP**

There are about ten teaspoons of sugar in one 12-ounce can of soda.

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



➔ **TODAY'S QUOTE**

"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand."
Dr. Seuss

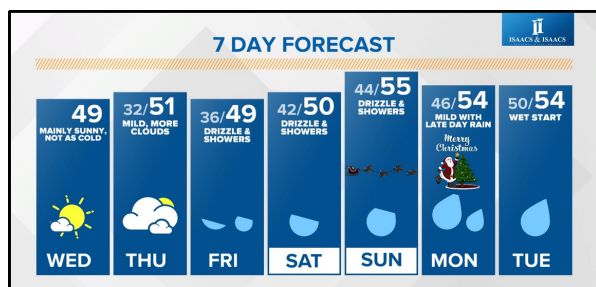
➔ **TODAY'S JOKE**

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Avery.
Avery who?
Avery Merry Christmas!

➔ **OBITUARIES**

None

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



Skipping Over the Rooftops . . . and Other Topics

Notes scribbled on the back of a Gene Autry album cover . . .

AS MY PAL Honest Hoosier might say, here's a tip of the seed corn cap to our little corner of God's country. Is there a better place to be? (OK, maybe I shouldn't ask that when the temperature is 28 as I write this.) But for those of us who grew up here, what a special place this is. And there really isn't anywhere in our county that looks like it did back then. Think that's normal? Take it from a guy who's lived from one coast to the other, it is not. Some places fight progress and growth tooth and nail. Some places digress. Here, we just keep growing and growing and growing. We're not that far away from tipping the scales at 400,000 people living inside our county borders. The Man Upstairs has truly been good to us!

THANK YOU all so much for your feedback and your reaction so far to our decision to publish three

days a week! We've already started making some changes – including adding a calendar and a bit of a redesign. And more are coming! It has been said in this space that The Times' readers are the smartest, most involved readers around – and you keep proving it over and over!



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

CHRISTMAS IS certainly a time for family . . . and a good friend told me a while back about a website called findagrave.com. If you want to know about your family history, it's a great resource. I was on there last week and found relatives I had lost track of up in Rensselaer!

A FEW of you have asked where John Hammer has been. The big guy has been kind of quiet lately, hasn't he?

ARE YOU going to watch A Charlie Brown Christmas?

Me, too. It and White Christmas with Bing Crosby are my most favorite Christmas shows. And I will have the Kleenex handy when Charlie Brown throws up his hands and yells, "Isn't there anyone . . . who knows what Christmas is all about." And here comes Linus to so simply explain the true meaning of Christmas. God bless Charles Schulz!

AS WE enter the final days before Christmas, please remember that there won't be a Times on Monday as all of our folks take some time to celebrate Christmas with families. And of course the new schedule will be in place so after Christmas, so we'll next see you on Wednesday.

A LOT OF you remember the Singing Cowboy, Gene Autry. When I was a little guy, I used to play his Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Christmas album over and over. You may not know this, but early in his life he worked as a telegraph operator in

Texas or Oklahoma somewhere. He would occupy his downtime with his guitar and singing songs. One guy who heard him was none other than Will Rogers – who encouraged Gene to take his show on the road. Good thing, too. Apparently the telegraph bosses didn't appreciate Gene doing anything other than work and canned him! Gene had some great Christmas songs – but my favorite was Here Comes Santa Claus. My Mom and Dad and I would sing it together. Isn't Christmas a great time to remember!

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.



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THE TIMES

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Guard Exempt From State Income Tax

INDIANAPOLIS - As tax season approaches, Hoosier National Guardsmen, which number approximately 12,000 troops, will no longer pay state income tax starting with their 2023 tax returns. In April, the Indiana legislature passed the military exemption bill, House Bill 1034, and on May 1, Gov. Eric Holcomb signed it into law. "By completely phasing out state taxes on military veteran retirement in 2022 and eliminating the state income tax for Hoosier Guardsmen in 2023, Indiana continues to demonstrate our state's enduring appreciation for the exemplary women and men who serve our local communities, state and nation in the Indiana National Guard," Holcomb said. The tax exemption applies to all Hoosier Guardsmen and members of the reserve component, which includes traditional members,

dual status military technicians and full-time National Guard soldiers and airmen. "I'm grateful for Gov. Holcomb's and the legislature's meaningful support for Hoosier Guardsmen through this exemption from state income tax," said Maj. Gen. Dale Lyles, Indiana's adjutant general. "Soldiers and airmen in our many uniquely rewarding careers will enjoy the additional benefit of keeping more of what they earn while serving our state and nation." According to the Indiana Department of Revenue, a member of the National Guard is allowed a deduction from adjusted gross income for wages earned as a result of the member's military service, including service for National Guard state active-duty missions and federalized overseas missions. The exemption also

➔ See **GUARD** Page A4

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Southeastern Star honored by Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame

Eighteen women, including an Indiana All-Star from Hamilton Southeastern, have been named to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame's 2024 Silver Anniversary Team, based on outstanding accomplishments as a senior basketball player 25 years ago. Erika (Roudebush) Mundt, a former Royal who led Southeastern to its first-ever basketball sectional title for boys or girls), set school scoring records for single game (41), season (669) and career (1,276) at HSE. She went on to star at Cleveland State and then as a standout high school teacher and coach. Overall, the Silver Anniversary team includes 11 members named to the 1999 Indiana All-Star squad. Seven other all-state players are included to recognize the top of Indiana's high school class of 1999. 1999 Indiana All-Stars include Miss Basketball April (McDivitt) Schilling, Emily Butler, Jill Hartman Early, Jeanette Gray, Jenna Hayes Alspaugh, Kourtney Mennen, Kennitra Johnson, Dorcas Lawson, Kristen Lowry Lanier, Heather (Cusick) Mygrant, and Amy Zercher. The remaining seven, named to various all-state teams are Jackie (Campbell) Clark, LaTrice (McMichel) Crawford, Tia Davis, Laurie "Kitts" Detweiler, Nok Duany Basse, Tiffany S. Kyser and Mundt. 2024 Women's Silver Anniversary Team members will be honored at the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame's 22nd Women's Awards Banquet on Saturday, April 27, 2024. A midday reception, free and open to the public, will be held at the Hall of Fame Museum in New Castle. The evening banquet will take place at the Primo Banquet Hall, which is located on the south side of Indianapolis. Banquet reservations will soon be available on the Hall of Fame's website or by calling (765) 529-1891. For more information, you may also email kayla@hoopshall.com.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

School records for single-game (41), season (669) and career points (1,276) as well as assists in a game (12 vs. Delta on Nov. 22, 1997), 3-pointers in a game (7) and 3-pointers in a season (61) at time of graduation; 1999 AP third-team All-State; 1999 Louisville Courier-Journal second-team All-State; 1999 North-South Indiana All-Star Classic; 1999 IndyStar Super Team; two-time IndyStar all-Metro North; three-time all-Hamilton County; two-time Hamilton County co-Player of the Year; led team to 1999 sectional championship, the first basketball sectional title (boys or girls) in school history; three-time team MVP; two-year team captain; career highs of 41 points (and 7 3-pointers) vs. Anderson Highland on Feb. 9, 1999; four letters each in cross country and track; track state qualifier in 4x100 as a senior.

COLLEGE NOTES

2002 and 2003 team MVP at Cleveland State; 2002 first-team all-Horizon League; 2003 second-team all-Horizon League; led Horizon League in scoring (18.2) and assists (3.4) as junior; led Horizon League in scoring (18.8) as senior; set school records for season 3-pointers (67) and career 3-pointers (190); also second in career 3-point percentage (.349), fourth in career scoring (1,458 points), sixth in career assists (301) and ninth in career steals (184); named to Ala Moana Hotel Paradise Classic all-tournament team as junior; HL Player of the Week twice as junior (Dec. 31 and Feb. 4); 40-of-44 FTs as sophomore, including 23 in a row at one point of season; career-high 36 points vs. Tennessee State on Dec. 17, 2001; also, 35 points vs. Wright State on Jan. 31, 2002; career-high 9 rebounds vs. Loyola on Jan. 10, 2002; career-high 8 assists vs. IUPUI (Dec. 8, 2001), Loyola (Feb. 21, 2002), Youngstown State (Jan. 8, 2003), Butler (Feb. 1, 2003) and UW-Milwaukee (Feb. 8, 2003); career-high 8 steals vs. IPFW on Jan. 28, 2002; member of CSU Student-Athlete Advisory Board; member of Horizon League Community Service Committee; 2000 CSU Athletic-Academic Excellence Award; CSU Dean's List; also played #3 doubles for CSU women's tennis team as junior.

POST-COLLEGE INFORMATION

Bachelor's degree in sports management from Cleveland State in 2003; master's degree in sports administration from Valparaiso University in 2005; master's degree in secondary education from Western Illinois University in 2009; coaching: women's basketball graduate assistant, Valparaiso University, 2003-05 (2004 Mid-Con Tournament champions and NCAA Tournament appearance); assistant swim coach, Western Illinois University, 2007-09; assistant coach, Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, 2009-10; assistant coach, Iowa City West High School girls' basketball, 2011 to present (2012 Class 4A Iowa state champions, 2018 Class 5A Iowa state champions; multiple staff Coach of the Year awards); also have coached high school tennis (multiple staff Coach of the Year awards) and high school track & field (coached one Drake Relays discus champion; one staff Coach of the Year award); professional awards: 2017 Iowa High School P.E. Teacher of the Year; 2018 SHAPE Central District P.E. Teacher of the Year; 2018 SHAPE American High School P.E. Teacher of the Year; current SHAPE American Teacher of the Year presenter (around the nation); 2023 IAHPERD State Teacher of the Year in Iowa.

ACLU Indiana Stands Up for Transgender Students

The ACLU of Indiana urged the Supreme Court of the United States to reject a petition from a Martinsville, Indiana school district targeting the rights of transgender students under Title IX. In an August 2023 opinion, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals found Vigo County School Corporation and the Metropolitan School District of Martinsville failed to provide several transgender students with access to bathrooms consistent with their gender in violation of their rights under Title IX, the law prohibiting sex discrimination in educational programs. This follows a 2020 Supreme Court ruling that discrimination against transgender workers by employers is a violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which prohibits sex discrimination in employment. In its brief in opposition to the school's request for Supreme Court review this week, the ACLU of Indiana argued that the Court does not have jurisdiction to take up the case and that the court of appeals correctly applied that 2020 precedent as it applies to transgender students under Title IX. Every family should be able to trust their child will be treated with the same rights and respect as every other student. But policies that discriminate against transgender students deny them the same chance to learn and thrive as their peers,

and cause them severe risk of both emotional and physical harm," said ACLU of Indiana legal director, Ken Falk. "Denying transgender youth equal access to school facilities does nothing to keep other students safe and instead puts transgender students themselves in danger." In a 2019 Harvard University analysis of data from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, one in three (36%) transgender adolescents with restricted bathroom or locker room access were sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, compared to one in four (26%) of transgender students broadly and 15% of non-transgender girls. In November 2023, a separate petition was filed to the Supreme Court on behalf of families and medical providers challenging Tennessee's ban on gender-affirming health care for transgender people under 18. That brief was filed by the ACLU, the ACLU of Tennessee, Lambda Legal, and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. The LGBT Project of Indiana Legal Services, a nonprofit law firm and largest provider of free civil legal assistance to low-income Hoosiers, served as co-counsel on the school restroom cases. The Project's focus is to provide legal advocacy and representation to LGBTQ+ community of Indiana.

WESTFIELD From Page A1

expand and enhance Grand Park into an even more elevated premier destination for sports and entertainment with added amenities and year-round activities," said Ersal Ozdemir, Chairman & CEO of Keystone Group. "As a leader in transformational neighborhood projects, our bold vision, combined with our experience on similar projects such as Eleven Park, will help create a vibrant live, work, play village around a world-class sports and entertainment epicenter that will not only engage residents but will entice visitors and keep all in the community wanting to return year after year." Grand Park and Indy Eleven have long-established relationships, with the multipurpose sports campus serving as the Indy Eleven's Official Training Center. Indy Sports & Entertainment intends to build a new world-class training facility at Grand Park that will become the official training home of the Indy Eleven and the new women's professional team that will play in the Super League. "Our bid from the outset was to show the City of Westfield that we had capabilities to provide best-in-class management and operational excellence of the Grand Park Sports Campus for long-term sustainability and growth. It has been a pleasure to be part of this process with the City of Westfield since

the outset, where we have worked diligently to demonstrate our capabilities," explained Greg StremLaw, President and CEO of Indy Sports & Entertainment and Indy Eleven. "With our major expansion in men's, women's, and youth soccer over the last couple of years especially, and with another world-class development in Eleven Park in downtown Indianapolis forthcoming, we feel there are unprecedented synergies and opportunities that will further benefit Grand Park and Westfield for many years to come."

Bullpen Ventures, owner of Pro X Athlete Development and all baseball operations at Grand Park through its Bullpen Tournaments, brings years of experience in delivering first-class sporting events at premier facilities across America with management and oversight of more than 120,000 baseball and softball games, serving more than 35,000 teams since 2017. The company oversees tournaments in over 20 states and manages over 50 diamonds. "Bullpen Ventures is thrilled to announce our role in the ongoing expansion of Grand Park in collaboration with two outstanding partners—Indy Sports and Entertainment, a leader in youth and professional soccer, and Keystone Group, the premier developer in the Midwest. Our collective passion for the park is unmatched,

and we are eager to contribute our operational expertise to enhance the entire Grand Park campus, which will undoubtedly elevate Grand Park and the City of Westfield to new heights. As proud members of the Westfield community, we are honored to be part of this exciting journey, shaping the future of one of the most exceptional sports and entertainment destinations in the world," stated Ken Kocher, Owner of Bullpen Ventures. As Mayor-elect Scott Willis prepares to assume office, the strategic development of Grand Park is a prominent part of his administration's agenda. "I am excited that Grand Park Sports and Entertainment will partner with us at Grand Park. With their extensive experience in park operations and global relationships in the sports industry, this partnership is a natural next step. This agreement will profoundly impact our residents, dramatically improving their experience at the park and bringing amenities and a more robust commercial tax base to our city. I am confident that we will take Grand Park to the next level and thrilled for what the future holds." The City of Westfield will retain ownership of Grand Park, with the terms of the partnership outlining Grand Park Sports & Entertainment's commitment to the development and management of the campus for up to forty

years, valued at 300 million dollars to the City of Westfield.

This collaboration symbolizes a strategic convergence between public and private entities, poised to propel Grand Park into a new era of excellence, growth, and community engagement.



Lawmakers Tells Gaming Commission Get House In Order

By Leslie Bonilla Muniz
Capital Chronicle

Key Republican lawmakers on Tuesday scolded the Indiana Gaming Commission (IGC) over how it levies fines and more — threatening to take legislative action if changes aren't made. The agency, meanwhile, said it has abided by its rules and statutes and listed accomplishments. "It appears that the ideology is because casinos are profitable in Indiana, we should be able to fine them more," said Sen. Chris Garten, R-Charlestown. That profitability, he added, "doesn't give you the right." Executive Director Greg Small responded the purpose behind the agency's regulatory scheme is to drive compliance "And, by the way, we also have a mandate in statute that economic performance of the casinos and their hiring is of the utmost importance, and we certainly respect that," he said. They spoke at a six-hour State Budget Committee meeting that included testimony on a \$1 billion Medicaid hole and an opaque quasi-public economic development agency. The blistering hour-long discussion came as the

the IGC attempted to obtain "safe harbor" for regulations otherwise threatened by year-end deadlines in a Garten-sponsored overhaul approved last session. The committee previously left the IGC off its November meeting agenda, prompting fears the agency would be unable to fulfill basic regulatory functions. **'Subjective' fines and fees?** Garten accused the agency of "just charging whatever the heck" they want to charge to casinos in the form of fines and fees. Indiana's gambling industry, like most others, is heavily regulated. Casinos sometimes fail to withhold winnings for delinquent child support, prevent underage gambling, prevent self-excluded former gamblers from getting back on the floor, and more — and are regularly fined for those violations. Garten noted that for the past five years,

➔ See GAMING Page A5

Hamilton County Council Makes 14 Board Appointments

The Hamilton County Council has appointed 14 citizens to various boards for 2024. The following appointments were made at the council meeting earlier this month:

- Hamilton County Redevelopment Commission
 - Mark Hall
- Economic Development Boards – Westfield
 - Joseph Plankis
- Economic Development Boards - Hamilton County
 - Jim Ginebaugh
- Economic Development Boards – Fishers
 - Jamie Nieves
- Economic Development Boards – Carmel
 - Nicki Felix
- Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission
 - Rachel Quade
 - Lisa Hanni
- Economic Development Boards – Noblesville
 - Chase Bruton

- Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals
 - William Sanders Jr
 - Bruce Freeman
- Alcoholic Beverage Board
 - Michael Colby
- Library Boards - Hamilton East
 - Kim Logan
- Hoosier Heritage Port Authority
 - Joshua Morris
- Library Boards - Hamilton North
 - Julie Davis

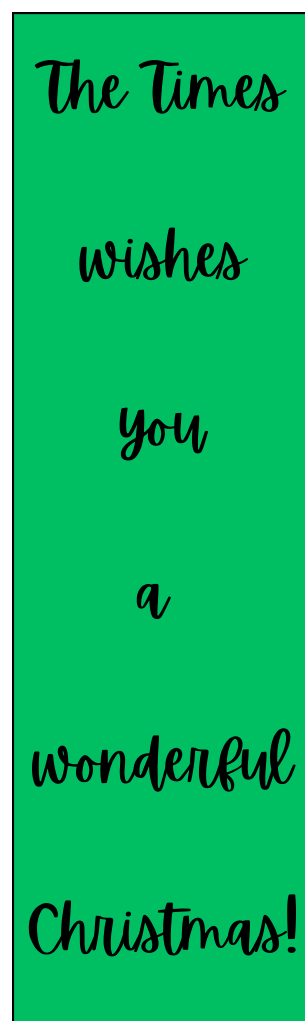


Amy Massillamany
Vice President Hamilton County Council

and looks forward to working collaboratively with the appointed individuals to further enhance the quality of life and economic opportunities in Hamilton County," says Amy Massillamany, Vice President of the County Council. "We are confident that these individuals will bring valuable perspectives and insights to their respective boards. Hamilton County is fortunate to have such a dedicated group of community leaders serving in these vital roles."

The Council selected the appointees from a pool of applicants on its online portal. It is still looking for someone interested in serving on Sheridan's Economic Development Board. Anyone interested in applying can do so at <https://www.hamiltoncounty.in.gov/1755/Interested-in->. The council hopes to approve that appointment at its next meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 3.

"The Council extends its gratitude to all applicants



Annual Waterfowl Workshop Jan. 24 Spartz Introduces Farm Bills

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includes wages earned as a dual-status military technician. A dual-status technician is one who works full-time for the National Guard and must serve in the National Guard for that employment. Exemptions do not apply for non dual-status technicians or independent military contractors. Exemptions also do not apply for wages earned from employment outside of military service. Military personnel are required to file an Indiana income tax

return if their gross income exceeds their exemptions. Income from all sources, both military and non-military, excluding military combat zone compensation, should be reported on the Indiana resident return, Form IT-40, even if the income is deducted in full for Indiana tax purposes. More information can be found online at <https://www.in.gov/dor/files/reference/ib27.pdf>. Learn more about the Indiana National Guard at NationalGuard.IN.gov.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources annual Waterfowl Workshop will be held Wednesday, Jan. 24, at Fort Harrison State Park in Indianapolis. Attendance will qualify contractors to conduct waterfowl control for hire in Indiana during 2024. All first-time waterfowl control operators (WCOs) are required to attend the workshop, which runs from noon to 3:30 p.m. Registration by Jan. 19 is required. To register, or for more information on becoming a WCO, contact Jessica Merkling, urban wildlife

biologist, jmerkling@dnr.IN.gov, 260-244-6805. Attendance is encouraged for all WCOs, but those who have attended the workshop in previous years may opt to test out. Those interested in taking the test should contact Debbie Walter, dwalter@dnr.IN.gov, 812-789-2724. The 2024 exam will be available Feb. 1. Employees of WCO contractors are welcome to attend the training, but only those individuals physically conducting waterfowl control for hire are required to attend.



Photo courtesy Rep. Victoria Spartz

Spartz said food security is a national security issue.

U.S. Congresswoman Victoria Spartz of Noblesville introduced a first set of bills this week for the 2024 Farm Bill reauthorization to improve the safety and cost of farm equipment: the Farm Freedom to Repair Act and the Farm Equipment Safety Act.

improve safety of farm equipment, which is critical for all farmers, but particularly significant for smaller enterprises."

The Farm Freedom to Repair Act would ensure that farmers have the right to repair digital agricultural equipment they own. "Big Ag" manufacturers have been abusing copyright law to deny farmers the right to repair their equipment.

The Farm Equipment Safety Act would exempt offroad farm equipment from burdensome emission regulations, which have led to unsafe, expensive, and inefficiently manufactured agricultural equipment. Military equipment is already exempt from such regulations for national security reasons.

"Food security is a national security issue," Spartz said "Ever-increasing government regulations have led to significant consolidation in agriculture and material increases in input costs. The Farm Bill should be a time to discuss how we can improve innovation and competition for value in agriculture. The two bills I introduced today will help to significantly reduce cost and



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COPAYS AND DEDUCTIBLES MAY APPLY

↓ GAMING From Page A2

Indiana’s casinos collectively paid more money in fines with each year — until 2023. The observation was based on seven years of settlement data the IGC included with its proposed fine schedules, obtained by the Capital Chronicle. Garten said he’d begun meeting with commission staff over his concerns about a year ago, and questioned why this year’s settlement amounts were lower. “It seems to me that we started meeting — started putting a little bit of scrutiny, started asking a few questions — and very subjectively, actions changed within the agency,” Garten asserted. But Small said “I don’t think anything specifically changed.” Small said the amount could grow because the 2023 data covers just half the year. And he said that, by June, the agency had instituted a fine schedule with changes to child support and licensing violations — based on feedback from casino executives — as part of its efforts to comply with the new law. “So the accountability factor is what caused you to reevaluate?” Garten pressed. Small said the agency had received little feedback prior. Garten told Small there were “major, major issues” within the IGC. He said the discussion “shows the subjectivity of an agency.” But he wasn’t finished. **Lawmakers allege ‘culture’ problem, regulator retaliation Garten also implied the IGC has a “culture issue.”** Small called his agency “professional, knowledgeable and fair.” He noted that the IGC has opened three casinos since 2017 and is working to manage the opening of another. He also highlighted regulators’ work in navigating the 2019 launch of sports wagering, investigators’ busts of illegal animal fighting rings and oversight of charitable gaming. “My folks, I hold them accountable,” he concluded. “... They know the subject matter because they have to. What we do is very complex; we cover a lot of different areas. We’ve got a lot of folks (that) I think do a great job.” Garten went on to read aloud anonymous complaints from casino operators. Those operators called Indiana “the most punitive state we operate in” and said they feared “retribution” from Deputy Director Jenny Reske, according to what Garten read. Earlier, Garten critiqued the agency over what he repeatedly termed “automatic fines.”

“Nothing on our schedule is an automatic fine,” General Counsel Dennis Mullen responded. Small and Mullen said that on-site gaming agents — which staff casinos 24/7 — investigate alleged incidents and write substantiated ones up in incident reports. The reports go to on-site supervisors, who can send them on to the agency’s enforcement assistant director. A compliance committee conducts further review and can make recommendations for disciplinary actions. It’s at that point, according to Small, that the agency enters the settlement process. It sends a notice of violation to the casino, which includes a draft settlement agreement with dollar amounts. But the licensee can dispute the claims and provide additional context or mitigating factors. The two parties finalize a settlement. That’s unless the casino declines the settlement. In that case, the agency can make an administrative complaint and have the Office of Administrative Law Judges take up the dispute, according to Mullen. Garten countered that judicial deference to the agency puts casinos at a disadvantage, and used finger quotes to argue that the agreements are not actually “voluntary.” The agency acknowledged that judges defer to its interpretation of its own rules — but not in making factual determinations. Garten additionally questioned the agency for specifying that it would default to the highest dollar amount penalties on its fine schedule. Mullen said the language assures licensees that “we’re not going to double dip on a fine that may technically violate one or two or more of the items on our schedule.” Instead, the agency will only pursue the single item with the highest fine. **Legislation forthcoming** Sen. Ryan Mishler, R-Mishawaka, also blasted the IGC for “sharing” a letter he and Garten wrote to the agency asking for clarifications. He spoke after the agency’s presentation on its proposed rules and before other committee members began their questioning. “I felt that we could work internally and find a solution. We had no intention of embarrassing the Gaming Commission, but later discovered they could do that on their own,” said Mishler, who chairs the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee.

“I can’t comprehend why someone in your agency would be so compelled to share a letter that basically confirms that you don’t know how your agency runs,” Mishler continued. “And so now, I guess I understand some of the concerns that Senator Garten’s had with the lack of leadership within” the agency. The Capital Chronicle ran portions of a letter it received last month. Mishler said “we” plan to offer legislation making “some changes in the agency until we have a compromise.” “I will suggest that you step up, get your house in order, and you circle back,” he said. When Small offered to meet, Mishler declined: “Until you step up, I don’t think there’s a reason to meet. There’s changes you need to make, and then you circle back with us.” Mishler was unavailable for interviews on his specific grievances. Other lawmakers questioned the need for such detailed discussion. “I don’t know why we got off the track and got into their personnel and their culture and all that,” said Rep. Ed DeLaney, D-Indianapolis. “We were here to vote on the fines, not intimidate them or threaten them or back them off. It’s beyond my comprehension what that was all about.”



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THE TIMES

Riverview a Great Place To Work

NOBLESVILLE, IN — Riverview Health, the only independent healthcare system in Hamilton County, has been Certified™ by Great Place To Work®. This distinction was awarded based on employee feedback regarding the level of organizational trust and the consistency of employee experience. Of the Riverview Health employees who provided feedback, 73% said that the health system was a great place to work in 2023 – compared to 57% of employees at a typical U.S. company. “We are honored and excited to receive the Great Place To Work Certification. Working in the high-pressure healthcare environment, a strong culture is not only important, it is a

Medicaid Mistake May Make State Dip Into Reserves

By Whitney Downard
Capital Chronicle

The state’s April Medicaid expenditure forecast missed the mark by roughly \$984 million because of a combination of state budget reversions and unexpected growth of services for aging and disabled Hoosiers, leaving a state agency scrambling for a solution as lawmakers consider how much to cover from the state’s reserve funds. Sen. Ryan Mishler, the key budget architect for the Senate Republicans, cautioned that Indiana’s finances won’t be immediately impacted. But the long-term spending plan for the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), which oversees Medicaid, may be. “I’m concerned about the long haul but, in the short haul ... we’ll work with FSSA on some solutions and we do have a pretty positive reserve,” said Mishler, R-Mishawaka. “Remember this forecast, this is long-term. Currently we’re in good shape. Fortunately, we have a year before the next budget to work on this.” Cris Johnston, director of the Office of Management and Budget, noted challenges with getting timely forecasting data for Medicaid claims. “It also happened to be the same time that increased utilization of services, as well as enrollment, was occurring with that expenditure base. All of that together prompted this challenge,” Johnston said. “I think part of the long term is changing those practices (and) looking at more timely information. Also ... challenging assumptions that are going into this forecast with what is really happening on the ground.” The state’s two-year budget, passed by lawmakers in April, relies heavily on forecasted expenses and revenues to make appropriations. However, lawmakers noted that the bill isn’t immediately due and flagged increasing Medicaid costs for future concerns, while FSSA committed to increasing scrutiny of ongoing claims for services to try to bring costs down. Budget reversions and

growing costs State Budget Director Zac Jackson said he’d learned about the calculation mistake roughly two weeks ago: that the rosy April 2023 forecast predicted a \$570 million surplus, prompting a \$525 million reversion to the general fund. “With this revised forecast, you can see we probably over-reverted,” Jackson said. Gov. Eric Holcomb said the Medicaid update reveals “there is work to be done. We have begun a deep dive to understand the factors driving the spending increases and what is causing the unanticipated growth. In the meantime, we will be able to mitigate the fiscal impact while continuing to deliver needed services thanks to a healthy reserve.” Jackson pointed to the use of data that was months old, saying the April forecast depended upon January Medicaid claims data rather than more current numbers. To correct the above, \$271 million will go back to Medicaid from the General Fund, Jackson said. But the single-biggest difference in forecasts came from an unanticipated demand for Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) and other Long-Term Supports and Services, which includes institutional care like nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Testimony from FSSA seemed to indicate a reliance on pre-pandemic use rates for such programs, even as demand surged during and after the COVID-19 pandemic even after federal funds expired, leaving the state to shoulder the unanticipated cost. “... The cost for nursing facilities are largely based on cost-based reimbursement and the rate of change and the costs are not known with certainty at the time of the forecast,” said Jeremy Palmer, an actuary with Milliman presenting on behalf of FSSA. “Additionally, for HCBSs we are continuing to observe cost increases to an unanticipated level.” Smaller factors include increased Medicaid rates for physicians and Applied Behavioral Analysis therapy as well as the

decrease of certain federal pandemic funds. In the past, the state aimed to have the equivalent of roughly 10%-12.5% of expenses in reserves but that funding will dip depending on the Medicaid need. “This reflects the wisdom of retaining 10%-12.5% ... We’ve been doing that (for) economic declines. Frankly, this was a forecasting error and thankfully we had sufficient reserves to absorb that \$984 million impact,” Jackson said. But Rep. Ed DeLaney, D-Indianapolis, decried the use of reserves for “accounting errors.” “I was not aware until today that the purpose of the surplus was to cover accounting errors,” he said. **Ongoing concerns** For at least one member, the unanticipated cost demonstrated ongoing concerns about growing Medicaid expenditures. Back in April, following the first forecast, Mishler was concerned about the 2% growth in Medicaid spending as education spending fell by 2%. “That 2% increase (from April) was short,” said Mishler. “We have to get a handle on this. If we don’t, it has the potential to blow up our budget ... This cannot happen again.” Mishler said that there were budget items he personally would have reconsidered had the April forecast reflected the additional millions needed. “There’s going to be some tough decisions ahead,” Johnston agreed. This comes as lawmakers continue to take aim at high health care costs, which some say are a result of the state’s low Medicaid reimbursement rates. “This is why we don’t want to open the budget in a non-budget year,” Mishler said, advising lawmakers against Medicaid expansion or other budgetary measures in 2024. “I prefer to keep the budget closed this year and not have any more spending until we see how things go.”

friendly pumpkin and holiday tree decorating competitions, volunteering in the Hamilton County community and regularly celebrating team member accomplishments. “Our people are a top priority every day, and we are thrilled to be a certified Great Place To Work,” said Chief Operating and Strategy Officer Elizabeth Walker. “We celebrate and thank every Riverview Health employee for all they do to earn this incredible recognition.” According to [Great Place To Work research](#), job seekers are 4.5 times more likely to find a great boss at a Certified great workplace. Additionally, employees at Certified workplaces are 93 percent more likely to look forward to coming to work and are twice as likely to be paid fairly, earn a fair share of the company’s profits, and

have a fair chance at promotion. “Great Place To Work Certification is a highly coveted achievement that requires consistent and intentional dedication to the overall employee experience,” says Sarah Lewis-Kulin, the Vice President of Global Recognition at Great Place To Work. She emphasizes that Certification is the sole official recognition earned by the real-time feedback of employees regarding their company culture. “By successfully earning this recognition, it is evident that Riverview Health stands out as one of the top companies to work for, providing a great workplace environment for its employees.” Riverview Health is currently hiring across a variety of clinical and non-clinical positions and locations. Want to grow your career at an organization that puts people first? Visit our [careers page](#) for more information.

Retiring Noblesville Council Members Recognized



The City of Noblesville's outgoing Common Council Members – Brian Ayer, Greg O'Connor and Dan Spartz – attended their final council meeting and were honored by their fellow councilors and Mayor Chris Jensen for their combined 38 years of service. Ayer is the longest-serving Noblesville Common Council member. During his 20 years of dedicated service, Ayer has served as council president twice and has been the chair of the council's roads, building & land acquisition, and wastewater committees. He also has been a member of the Noblesville Architecture Review Board. Since he

began serving on the Council, Noblesville's population has more than doubled. Ayer has been a prominent voice for preserving the hometown charm of the community while funding necessary infrastructure and public safety enhancements. His vision and hard work were instrumental in the development of the Hamilton Town Center, the Reimagine Pleasant Street east-west corridor, the expansion of the city's trail network, the Levinson mixed-used development, the construction of a new eastside fire station, and the partnership with the county for the 146th

Street corridor. "Noblesville is a better community today because of Brian Ayer's service," Jensen said. "He has been active in Noblesville as a businessman, councilor, and volunteer. His accomplishments over the past two decades will have an impact in our community for generations to come. I'm grateful to have served alongside him, and I wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement." O'Connor has served District 5 on the council for 16 years. O'Connor served as the council president in 2016, 2012 and 2009. He has been the chair of the council's finance & economic development committees and a member of the Noblesville Plan Commission. He has been instrumental in setting fiscal policy for the city and enhancing accounting and financial strategies in

coordination with the city controller to promote stewardship of taxpayer funds. O'Connor was instrumental in acquiring the Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations property between Division Street and Pleasant Street near downtown Noblesville, which the city acquired 14 years after the closure of the manufacturing plants. "I applaud Greg O'Connor on his 16-years of service to our community," said Jensen. "He has played an instrumental part in the growth of our city while being responsible with taxpayer dollars. Greg has been an important part of our community and council, and I wish him a happy and healthy retirement." Spartz joined the council in 2021 when he was elected via a caucus to fill former councilor Wil Hampton's remaining term on the Noblesville

Common Council. He chaired the council's Wastewater Committee and was a member of the Public Safety Committee. He has also served as the street department liaison. "Dan Spartz stepped up to serve our community on the Common Council and has been a part of transformational projects for our city," Jensen said. "During his time on the council, he has had an impact on the long-term growth opportunities in the City of Noblesville. I'm grateful he stepped in to serve and wish him a relaxing retirement." At the conclusion of their final council meeting, Mayor Jensen presented each outgoing member with the Distinguished Hoosier Award on behalf of Gov. Eric Holcomb. The Distinguished Hoosier Award is one of the highest tributes given out by the State of Indiana to its citizens.

"The City of Noblesville owes a debt of gratitude to Brian Ayer, Greg O'Connor, and Dan Spartz," said Council President Aaron Smith. "Over the last four years, this council funded the Pleasant Street extension, supported our public safety officials at record levels, and moved crucial economic development projects forward. I'm grateful for the support from all three of these councilors to ensure Noblesville continues to grow well." Beginning Jan. 1, 2024, the Noblesville Common Council will include Evan Elliott (At-Large); Darren Peterson (At-Large); Pete Schwartz (At-Large); Mike Davis (District 1); Todd Thurston (District 2); Aaron Smith (District 3); Mark Boice (District 4); Dave Johnson (District 5); and Megan Wiles (District 6). The elected officials were sworn into office on December 13 along with City Judge S. Matthew Cook, Mayor Jensen and Clerk Evelyn Lees.

↓ BETSY From Page A1

for children and family in the sanctuary; at 5 p.m. contemporary service in the family life center and 6:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. traditional services in the sanctuary at 621 S. Rangeline Road, Carmel. Visit carmelumc.org.

6. Chapel Church in Noblesville will have a Christmas Carol Sing at 7 p.m. today around the piano at 675 Walnut St., Noblesville. Visit chapelchurch.net.

7. Christ Lutheran Church will offer a Sunday morning worship on Christmas Eve, with 7 p.m. lessons and carols, with lessons and candlelight service at 11 p.m. and Christmas Day service at 10 a.m. at 10055 E. 186th St., Noblesville. Visit cic-in.org.

8. Cicero Christian Church has a Christmas Eve service at 6 p.m. Sunday. Visit cicerochristianchurch.org.

9. Clarksville Christian Church will offer worship at 9:30 a.m. and Sunday school at 11 a.m. Sunday and Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. at 16600 Lehr St., Noblesville. Visit clarksvillechristianchurch.org.

10. Crossroads Church at Westfield will offer a 7 p.m. Sunday Christmas Eve service with song, story and candlelight. Visit crchurch.org.

11. Emmanuel United Methodist Church will offer Christmas Eve services at 10 a.m., 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday at 16000 Cumberland Road, Noblesville. Visit emmanuelumc.org.

12. Faith Community Church in Noblesville will have a Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. Sunday at The Gathering House, 1372

Cherry St., Noblesville. Visit fccnoblesville.com.

13. First Christian Church of Noblesville will offer Christmas services with a Winter Solstice/Longest Night Prayer Vigil at 6 p.m. today; and Christmas Eve services at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday; and Christmas Eve Candlelight at 7 p.m. Sunday featuring the sacred story, "Being Present with Light," at 7 p.m. at 16600 Lehr St., Noblesville. Visit clarksvillechristianchurch.org.

14. First Presbyterian Church of Noblesville will offer worship at 10 a.m. Sunday followed by Christmas brunch in the fellowship hall; and Christ Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at 7 p.m. Sunday with traditional lessons and carols of Christmas and the Chancel Choir, concluding with "Silent Night, Holy Night" candlelight, at 1207 Conner St., Noblesville. Visit fpc-noblesville.org.

15. Freedom Church will offer Christmas Eve service at 10:10 a.m. on Sunday at 1361 Christian Ave., Noblesville. Visit myfreedomstory.org.

16. Fuel Church in Westfield will have a Christmas service at 6 p.m. Saturday with carols by candlelight at 18686 Eagletown Road, Westfield. Visit thefuelchurch.com.

17. Geist Christian Church has candlelight services at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

18. Genesis Church in Noblesville will offer Christmas service at 7 p.m. today at Noblesville campus and family Christmas Eve services at 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Sunday at

Noblesville campus, 1702 Pleasant St.; and Carmel campus, 13200 Old Meridian St., Carmel. Visit genesischurch.com.

19. Grace Community Church in Noblesville will offer Christmas services at 6 p.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday with ASL and Spanish interpreters; at 6 p.m. Sunday with Spanish interpretation only at 5504 E. 146th St., Noblesville. Visit gracechurch.us.

20. Harbour Shores Church in Cicero will offer Christmas Eve worship at 10:30 a.m. Sunday and Christmas Eve candlelight service at 6 p.m. Sunday at 8011 E. 216th St., Cicero. Visit harbourshores.org.

21. iTown Church has 10 Christmas Eve services starting Sunday morning at Fishers.

22. Holy Family Episcopal Church in Fishers will offer a Christmas Day Jammie Church at 10 a.m. Monday with kid-friendly activities, no music, holiday pajamas invited at 11445 Fishers Pointe Blvd., Fishers. Visit holyfamilyfishers.org.

23. Legacy Bible Church has a Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. at 13490 Howe Road, Fishers. Visit ibcfishers.org.

24. Life Church will offer Christmas services at 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. Sunday at the Fishers campus, 9820 East 141st St.; and 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday at the Noblesville campus, 2200 N. Sheridan Road, Noblesville. Young Adults' Christmas Celebration is 6 p.m. Dec. 26 at the Noblesville campus.

Visit lifechurchin.com

25. Noblesville Baptist Church will offer a Christmas Eve service at 5 p.m. Sunday with worshipful Christmas songs at 1338 Pleasant St., Noblesville. Visit noblesvillebaptist.com.

26. Noblesville First United Methodist Church will offer four services on Christmas Eve: traditional worship with Pastor Nicole Caldwell-Gross at 9 a.m. in the sanctuary; family worship at 5 p.m. in Celebration all with glow sticks, nativity story and carols; traditional candlelight worship at 9 p.m. in the sanctuary with carols and brass ensemble; traditional worship at 11 p.m. in the sanctuary with chancel choir, full orchestra and a livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 2051 Monument St., Noblesville. Visit noblesvillefirst.com.

27. Northview Church offers Christmas services at four Hamilton County locations: at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday at the Carmel campus, 129200 Hazel Dell Delivery, 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday at Fishers campus, 14842 E. 136th St., Fishers; 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday at Noblesville campus, 1448 Conner St., Noblesville; and 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday at Westfield campus, x1191 W. 186th St., Westfield; plus online at 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday. Visit northviewchurch.us.

28. Open Door Church will offer Christmas Eve services at 10:15

a.m. Sunday and at 6 p.m. Sunday at the church, 20645 Riverwood Ave., Noblesville. Visit opendoorchurch.com

29. Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Noblesville will offer these Christmas services: Advent Mass at 5:30 p.m. Saturday; Advent Mass at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Sunday, Christmas Mass at 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Sunday at 9900 E. 191st St., Noblesville. Midnight Mass at midnight Sunday; Christmas Mass in Church at 9 a.m. Monday. Services in Spanish at 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Visit ologn.org.

30. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church will have Christmas Eve Mass at 4 p.m., 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Sunday at 14598 Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. Visit olmc1.org.

31. Roots of Life Church Community Evangelical Lutheran Church of America will worship at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve at Forest Park Inn in Noblesville with pastor Teri Ditslear. Visit rolcommunity.com.

32. Sheridan First Christian Church will have Christmas Eve service at 11 p.m. Sunday, with the lighting of candles and welcoming of the Christ Child at midnight at 107 W. 3rd St., Sheridan. Visit sheridanfcc.org.

33. Sheridan United Methodist Church will offer Christmas caroling by car caravan at 6:30 p.m. today and Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. Sunday at 207 E. 2nd St Sheridan. Visit sheridanfirst.org.

34. St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church in Westfield will have

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Mass at 4 p.m. and midnight Sunday at 17102 Spring Mill Road, Westfield. Visit wmgonline.org.

35. The Mill Church of the Nazarene in Noblesville will offer a Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. Sunday at 1399 Greenfield Ave Noblesville. Visit millchurchnoblesville.org.

36. Thrive Christian Church in Westfield offers a Christmas Eve service at 3 p.m., 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. at 15091 Towne Road, Westfield. Visit atthrive.com.

37. Trinity Church service for its east Fishers campus, 111721 Olio Road, Fishers, is 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday.

38. Venture Christian Church in Carmel offers a service at 7 p.m. today, and candlelight service at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve Sunday at 14501 Hazel Dell Parkway in Carmel.

39. Waterline Church will have a Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. Sunday at 13300 Olio Road, Fishers.

40. White River Christian Church in Noblesville will have services at 5 p.m. Saturday and at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday, with ASL at 11 a.m.. at 1685 N. 10th St., Noblesville, with holiday music, Christmas message, milk and cookies, fun for kids, decorated photo spot; at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday at The Remnant, 101 W. Main St., Arcadia with Christmas message, hot drink, kids activities and photo spot. The church offers a free musical light display 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily through Dec. 31 in the south lawn of the church. Visit wrcc.org.

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

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I ndiana

Facts & Fun



45

Lake

Number $\%$ Stumpers

1. What percentage of people live in Crown Point? \geq
2. How old is Lake County? \leq
3. How many live in the county, but not in Crown Point? \geq
4. What is the population density of the county? \leq

Answers: 1. About 1 percent 2. 182 Years 3. 468,688 People 4. 994.1/sq. mi.

Did You Know?

- Lake county is part of Northwest Indiana and the Chicago metropolitan area, and contains a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas. It was founded in 1837.
- The population in 2010 was 496,005 with 27,317 residing in the county seat, Crown Point
- It is the home to a portion of the Indiana Dunes and to Marktown, Clayton Mark's planned worker community in East Chicago.
- According to the 2010 census, the county has a total area of 626.5 sq mi square miles

Got Words?

Located in the northernwest part of the state, Lake County is close by to one of the largest cities in the country, Chicago. How do you think this location might impact the people who live and work in Lake County?

Word Scrambler

Unscramble the words below!

1. KELA
2. CCHIGOA
3. WCRON TPOIN
4. NESDU
5. TWNOKRMA

Answers: 1. Lake 2. Chicago 3. Crown Point 4. Dunes 5. Marktown

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