

The TIMES

Hamilton County's Own Daily Newspaper



NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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➔ TODAY'S VERSE

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (NIV)



Faces of Hamilton County

People who call our community their own


Betsy Reason is taking some well deserved time off and her column won't be in today. Betsy is consistently a Winner or Runner-Up in The Times' annual Readers' Choice contest -- so we all hate it when she's out. But then again, hard-working journalists deserve a little time off, don't they?

And Another Thing....

Now that we're in a New Year, some folks are looking ahead for planning purposes to see when the holidays are. Well, look no further. You friends at The Times did the homework for you already. Here's the different 2024 holidays, their day and date. Of course you already know about Monday, Jan. 1, New Year's Day. Now that that's over, here's what we have to look forward to - and remember, no Times on postal holidays. Monday, Jan. 15, Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday; Monday, Feb. 19, Presidents' Day; Monday, May 27, Memorial Day; Wednesday, June 19, Juneteenth National Independence Day; Thursday, July 4, Independence Day; Monday, Sept. 2, Labor Day; Monday, Oct. 14, Columbus Day; Monday, Nov. 11, Veterans Day; Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day; and finally, Wednesday, Dec. 25, Christmas. Should we go ahead and tell you how many shopping days until that last one? Nah, the retail stores will be doing it soon enough!

Boomer Bits

Ask Rusty - Will My Friend's Fiancée be Entitled to a Survivor Benefit?



Social Security Matters

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Dear Rusty: I have a very good friend who has cancer and will begin chemotherapy this week. He is 71 years old and is currently receiving Social Security benefits. He has been living with his fiancée for a little more than 2 years, but they have been a couple for about 15 years and will be married in the next few weeks. She is 60 years old. I am naturally concerned about his, and her, future so my questions are:

What, if anything, should he and his wife do to ensure that she gets his Social Security benefits?

What benefits will she be entitled to, and how soon will she be able to begin receiving them after his death?

Signed: A Friend with Questions

Dear Friend: You are kind to be concerned about your friend and his fiancée. Here's what you need to know:

Social Security goes by state rules when it comes to what is often referred

➔ See RUSTY Page A5

How Functional Fitness Can Help You Keep Up With Grandkids

North American
Precis Syndicate

One of the greatest joys—but potentially biggest challenges—for many grandparents is time spent with the grandkids. Whether

yours are toddlers or teens, keeping them entertained requires a level of fitness that might include everything from lifting a

➔ See FITNESS Page A3

The Feeding Team Feature - In the Season of Giving, enter the Grinch

The more trips around the sun I take, the more grace I need from other people. It's simple really, forgiveness for a mistake, forgiveness for a misunderstanding and sometimes even forgiveness for not listening with the intent of understanding. Not coincidentally, the more grace I need, the more I try to give it to other people. Asking for forgiveness creates a spirit more likely to forgive others, especially when they acknowledge what they have done is wrong, they apologize



MARK HALL
Guest Columnist

and ask for forgiveness. The Feedingteam.org food distribution model, "Take What You Need, Give What You Can", relies on the goodness, giving nature, and respect of our neighbors. Our mission is to always have a meal available for any neighbor in need. Our anonymous no questions asked approach respects the dignity of any pantry shopper. The model is susceptible to neighbors with bad intentions, those that operate out of fear and those that don't care about others. Feedingteam.org pantries are

➔ See MARK Page A5

Building a Stronger Retirement

With each generation's expected retirement time growing longer and longer, you may need to plan for 20 to 30 years of life after you stop working. And when it comes to ways to save for the future, many Americans think first of the 401(k), the most popular and well-known retirement savings option.

Saving for Your Health

Lesser known—and understood—is another way to save for your future: the Health Savings Account (HSA). With rising healthcare costs that can exceed \$10,000 annually during the retirement years, HSAs are gaining more recognition as a smart way to complement 401(k)s and other retirement savings options by helping you plan and save for healthcare costs encountered now and in the future.

The Foundation

Traditional 401(k) plans are popular retirement vehicles for several reasons:

- Tax advantages: 401(k) contributions are taken out of your paycheck before federal taxes are withheld, which lowers your taxable income. Contributions are also tax-deferred until you withdraw them.
- More control: You can contribute as much as you want to a 401(k) within your plan and IRS limits, and you can change your contribution at any time.
- Compound interest: The earlier you start investing in a 401(k), the more time your money has to grow.
- It moves with you: The money in your 401(k) belongs to you—even if you change jobs, you can keep your money invested and growing.
- Ease of use: 401(k)s are easy to contribute to, with many employers offering automatic payroll deductions.

Add More Stability and Strength with an HSA

➔ See RETIREMENT Page A3

➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Obesity in middle age can increase your risk of developing dementia.

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

"Celebrate what you want to see more of."
Tom Peters

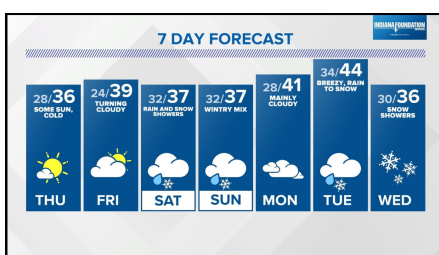
➔ OBITUARIES

Denis Charles Lee

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

➔ TODAY'S JOKE

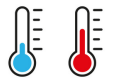
Here's a thought a few days into 2024 - may your troubles last as long as your resolutions.



The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset

RISE: 8:10 am
SET: 5:37 pm



High/Low Temperatures

HIGH: 38°F
LOW: 31°F



Today is...

- George Washington Carver Day
- National Bird Day



What Happened On This Day

- **2005** The solar system's largest known dwarf planet is discovered. The discovery of "Eris" ultimately lead to the International Astronomical Union (IAU) downgrading Pluto, which has roughly the same size, to a dwarf planet.
- **1933** Construction of the Golden Gate Bridge begins. The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco is one of the best-known symbols of the United States.



Births On This Day

- **1969** Marilyn Manson - American singer-songwriter, actor, director
- **1932** Umberto Eco-Italian philosopher, author

Deaths On This Day

- **1922** Ernest Shackleton - Irish explorer
- **1589** Catherine de' Medici -Italian/French wife of Henry II of France

➔ OBITUARY

Denis Charles Lee

Jan 8, 1939 – Dec 23, 2023

Denis Charles Lee, 84, passed away on Saturday, December 23, 2023 at IU Health Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, IN. He was born on January 8, 1939 to the late Donald and Tuberia (Ruchti) Lee in North Judson, IN. Professionally, he



worked at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota for 5 years before accepting a position at the University of Michigan working as Assistant Professor of Medical Illustration. Eventually, he became full professor and worked for the university for 30 years. Denis was also Professor of Art, Professor of Postgraduate Medicine and Assistant Professor of Plastic Surgery; as well as serving as Director of the Graduate Program in Medical and Biological Illustration while working at UoM. Denis is survived by his loving wife of 23 years, Frances Roland-Lee; sons, Garrick (wife: Michelle) Lee and Grant (wife: Erin) Lee; daughter, Hilary (husband: Wesley) Holton; stepsons, Brian (wife: Gigi) Roland and Marc (wife: Jamie) Roland; 10 grandchildren; and 4 great grandchildren. A tribute reception will be held from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM on Saturday, January 13, 2024 at Nickel Plate Art Gallery, 107 South 8th Street, Noblesville, Indiana 46060 to honors Denis' life. The Lee family invites you to peruse his paintings and his website, DenisLeeArt.com.

FOR THE RECORD

Nominating Committee of Carmel / Clay Board of Parks and Recreation

Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 5 p.m.

Conference Room of Administrative Offices of Carmel / Clay Parks and Recreation
1411 E. 116th St.
The purpose of the meeting is park business.

For The Record is a public service and regular feature in The Noblesville Times. It is designed to tell you what is scheduled to happen and what actually does happen in meetings paid for with your tax dollars. The Times encourages all citizens to take an active role in being involved in local government.

Fishers Company Partners With Pacers

The Indiana Pacers and Fishers-based Spokenote announced this week a first-of-its-kind partnership that makes the local technology startup the team's official jersey patch partner. The partnership breaks new ground in professional sports, as the Pacers become the first major professional franchise in the United States to sport a QR code-like jersey patch.

The Spokenote code on the front left shoulder of the Pacers' regular season and postseason jerseys unlocks special Pacers content for fans, including content not previously seen elsewhere. The Pacers will debut the jerseys tonight at home versus the Milwaukee Bucks.

"We are thrilled to have Spokenote as our jersey patch partner, and their innovative product will allow us to engage our fans in many new and different ways," said Todd Taylor, President and Chief Commercial Officer for Pacers Sports & Entertainment. "We are extremely proud to assist a local startup on its journey to becoming a widely known consumer brand." The partnership also brings together the Pacers iconic brand with one of Indiana's most exciting tech startups and one of its most recognized local entrepreneurs

Spokenote CEO and founder John Wechsler, a longtime entrepreneur and businessman who most recently founded Launch Fishers, the entrepreneurial accelerator home to dozens of tech startups, has been instrumental in helping turn Indiana into one of the Midwest's fastest-growing technology hubs.

"Spokenote is thrilled to join the Pacers, one of basketball's hottest and most exciting young teams, as their new jersey patch partner, and we look forward to working alongside them to identify new ways to engage fans at Gainbridge Fieldhouse and beyond," said Wechsler.

Spokenote technology allows users to pair videos with a unique Spokenote code. This QR code plus enables individuals to connect their digital memories and messages to a physical Spokenote sticker with its own unique digital landing page. Consumers nationwide have used Spokenote stickers to enhance thank you notes, greeting cards, home deliveries, and other personal interactions. Spokenote technology that has also been used by a wide range of organizations to engage their stakeholders and customers.



- The Indiana Pacers and Spokenote have announced an agreement to make the Fishers-based tech startup the team's official jersey patch partner.
- This first-of-its-kind partnership makes the Pacers the first major professional sports franchise in the United States to debut a QR code-like patch on their regular season and postseason jerseys, a Spokenote code that will give fans access to unique, never-seen-before Pacers' content.
- The deal brings together the iconic Pacers brand with one of Indiana's most exciting tech startups and provides the team with new, innovative ways to enhance the fan experience.

16698 Birdbrook Road Noblesville • \$589,900

PENDING



Stunning 5BR, 4.5BA in Essex of Noblesville. Custom designed with in-laws quarters on main level, kitchen with quartz, butler's pantry, premium lot w/pond view, walk-out basement, 3-car garage plus storage, a must see to appreciate all this home has to offer. BLC#21949379

11256 Winding Wood Ct. Indianapolis • \$239,900

SOLD!



This open concept condo is move-in ready, 2 BR, 2 BA. Family room with gas fireplace, eat-in kitchen with granite counters, breakfast bar, tile floor, pantry, appliances stay, main BR ensuite with walk-in tile shower, large 2-car garage, patio with retractable awning. BLC#21945183

18865 Wimbley Way Noblesville • \$289,900

PENDING



This 3 BR, 2 BA ranch is located in family friendly Fairfield Farms. Huge great room w/doors leading to covered patio & fenced backyard, kitchen w/pantry, dining area & all appliances stay, new windows, water softener & HVAC in 2020. Fence, roof & gutters 2021. BLC#21949582

10717 Upland Way Noblesville • \$349,900

SOLD!



Welcome to this lovely 4 BR, 2.5 BA home, kitchen with center island and newer SS appliances, spacious family room with gas fireplace, park-like backyard with maintenance free deck, auto-retractable awning, paver patio, basketball court and cute she shed. BLC#21949680

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Analyzing a Top-Ranked College Basketball Team

It was just a decade ago that Purdue men's basketball reached rock bottom in the Matt Painter era. Last place in the Big Ten Conference thanks in part to recruiting mistakes. Glenn Robinson III was not even recruited by his father's former teammate and ended up an All-Big Ten forward at Michigan. Gary Harris, the son of one of Purdue's greatest women's basketball players, became Big Ten Player of the Year . . . at Michigan State. Meanwhile, Purdue's roster was dotted with recruiting misses (Travis Carroll), bad fits (Ronnie Johnson) and two transfers (Sterling Carter, Errick Peck) who just weren't Big Ten material. Yes, Rapheal Davis and A.J. Hammons were promising freshmen but the combination added up to a 5-13 Big Ten record, 15-17 overall. Something had to change and it did. An adjustment in recruiting philosophy to bring in a good shooter every class and making sure recruits were a Purdue fit. Now, Purdue has become the first Big Ten school to have an Associated Press No. 1 ranking in three consecutive seasons. Bob Knight didn't do it at Indiana. Nor did the great Ohio State teams of the early 1960s. Here's the anatomy of a top-ranked college basketball team.



KENNY THOMPSON
Columnist

Starting five

Zach Edey, center: After missing out on Hunter Dickenson (No. 52 overall to Michigan) and Ryan Kalkbrenner (No. 107 overall to Creighton), Purdue fans fumed as Painter "settled" for a 7-4 Canadian ranked 440th in the 2020 recruiting class. Far from the project his recruiting ranking suggested, Edey began his Purdue career with 19 points in a victory against Liberty. Flash forward to his junior season, when Edey became Purdue's third national player of the winner. Entering Friday's game against Eastern Kentucky, Edey ranks ninth on Purdue's career scoring list (1,821 points) and is on pace to break All-American Joe Barry Carroll's career rebounding record. Depending on Purdue's success in the postseason, Edey could surpass Rick Mount's 53-year-old career scoring record of 2,323 points.

Braden Smith, guard: It's difficult to imagine 215 players being better than Westfield's Indiana Mr. Basketball in 2022. Smith has a chance to become Purdue's greatest point guard, no mean feat in a group that includes Billy Keller, Bruce Parkinson, Brian Walker and Everette Stephens. A starter from Day 1, Smith has blossomed into a scoring threat in his sophomore season. He put up 26 points against then-No. 1 Arizona and matched

his career high with 27 against Alabama. Smith has flirted with recording Purdue's second triple-double and is averaging 13.3 points, 6.7 assists and 5.5 rebounds a game.

Fletcher Loyer, guard: The designated shooter in Purdue's 2022 recruiting class, Loyer was underrated like Edey and Smith at No. 122 overall. Loyer has improved his 3-point shooting by six points from his 32 percent freshman year performance. He's had 27-point games this season against Arizona and Tennessee.

Lance Jones, guard: The Southern Illinois transfer may be the player who helps Purdue finally return to the Final Four. Jones has athletic ability and his willingness to attack opponents' pressing defenses has made the Boilermakers less turnover prone. Averaging nearly 11 points a game, Jones also gives Purdue a reliable fourth scoring option. Not bad for someone the recruiting services didn't rank coming out of Evanston (Ill.) Township in 2019. Last summer, the 24/7 composite ranked Jones the 328th best transfer available.

Trey Kaufman-Renn, forward: The redshirt sophomore is easily the highest-rated starter, coming in at No. 50 in the 2021 recruiting class. Only the late Caleb Swanigan and incoming recruit Kanon Catchings were higher-ranked by 247 Sports



Braden Smith



Zach Edey

composite. Kaufman-Renn's 7 points and 4.1 rebounds a game don't look that impressive but he's part of the reason why Purdue outrebounds opponents by an average of 10 per game.

Key reserves

Caleb Furst, forward/center: It's a luxury that Purdue can bring three former starters off the bench this season, including the 2021 Indiana Mr. Basketball. Furst gives Purdue a different offensive look when he's in the game for Edey. His mobility and 3-point shooting is a change of pace from the interior driven Boilermaker offense.

Mason Gillis, forward: With 63 career starts, there isn't much Gillis hasn't seen. Need a rebound, Gillis can get it. Three-point shooting? He can do that too, setting the Purdue single-game record in Mackey Arena

with nine against Penn State a year ago. He's shooting 50 percent from behind the 3-point arc this season in just 18 minutes a game.

Ethan Morton, guard: After starting 29 games as a junior, Morton adds a defensive element off the bench. The former Pennsylvania Mr. Basketball can shoot the 3-pointer and at 6-7 can play anywhere but center on the court.

Myles Colvin, guard: The only true freshman on the roster, Colvin has injected sudden offense at crucial times. Whether it's flashy dunks or 3-point shooting (nearly 44 percent), Colvin gives Purdue athletic ability that few of his teammates possess.

Camden Heide, forward: The redshirt freshman also has a spring to his step with several impressive dunks in just over 12 minutes a game. Heide looks promising but is

playing at Purdue's deepest position behind Kaufman-Renn, Furst and Gillis.

Bench

Brian Waddell, guard: The former Carmel standout is still making up for lost time when he suffered a serious knee injury during his freshman season.

Will Berg, center: The 7-2 native of Sweden is possibly the heir apparent to Edey, but will have to not only beat out Furst but incoming big men Daniel Jacobson and Raleigh Burgess.

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



RETIREMENT

From Page A1

If you save in your HSA as well as a 401(k), you can take advantage of three unique benefits:

1. Triple-tax advantage: No federal taxes on contributions, withdrawals for qualified medical expenses, or investment earnings
2. Build long-term healthcare and retirement savings: Especially with HSA Bank's self-directed investment options
3. No "use it or lose it": Investment balances carry over from year to year and grow tax-free (just like the HSA cash account)

Save for Expenses

Tax-free HSA fund withdrawals are limited to IRS-qualified medical expenses, but there's a lengthy list of future healthcare costs your HSA can pay for, so your 401(k) funds don't have to. These include everything from acupuncture to a wheelchair and many things in between.

Learn More
For further facts and tips on HSAs and planning your retirement, go to www.hsabank.com.

FITNESS From Page A1

child to chasing them at the playground to competing in a round of golf. For grandparents seeking an enriching and active experience with their grandkids, it's important to engage in everyday fitness routines that can help:

- maintain muscle mass,
- preserve cardiovascular health,
- fortify flexibility, and
- bolster balance.

Functional fitness training can help with these goals.

What is Functional Fitness?
"Functional fitness uses multiple muscle groups and movements to help train muscles, joints, limbs, and nerves to all work better together for everyday tasks, like lifting groceries from the car, or outmaneuvering the grandkids," says Jaynie Bjornaraa PhD, MPH, PT, who is vice president of rehabilitation services and fitness solutions at American Specialty Health Fitness. Examples of functional fitness exercises include lunges, squats, and planks. "Lunges help improve balance

and make the legs stronger," says Dr. Bjornaraa. "Squats help strengthen the muscles used in sitting, standing, or lifting heavy objects safely. Core training, like planks, helps strengthen the lower back, hips, and abdominal muscles. A strong core provides a stable base when lifting, standing, or performing the chores of everyday life." There are many ways to incorporate functional fitness into an everyday fitness routine. For example, online workout classes such as Pilates, yoga, or strength training can provide easy access to beginner, intermediate, or advanced exercise routines. Gyms offer in-person classes plus access to most any kind of fitness equipment you may need to practice functional fitness, from mats and free weights to fitness balls and exercise bands. If cost is a factor in joining a gym or fitness classes, programs such as the Silver&Fit® Healthy Aging and Exercise Program, which is available through certain Medicare Advantage

plans, offer no-cost or subsidized low-cost access to thousands of standard name-brand gyms and YMCAs, in addition to premium boutique studios around the country. These programs may also include online access to fitness video classes such as dance, cardio, tai chi, Pilates, strength training, yoga, and others that teach proper form and technique. Nearly five million participants use the Silver&Fit program to help them stay fit. "Functional fitness offers terrific health benefits for everyone, no matter your age or fitness level," added Dr. Bjornaraa. "I encourage my friends, family, and clients to engage in some kind of functional fitness exercise every day to maximize the benefits." If you're ready to try some functional fitness exercises but aren't sure where to begin, you may care to check out a functional fitness exercise video called "3 Functional Exercises Using Only Body Weight."

For information about the Silver&Fit program, visit www.silverandfit.com.

Fishers Farmers Market Open to Vendors

The Fishers Farmers Market's 2024 season will run from Saturday, May 4, through Saturday, Sept. 28. Each market will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays during this period at the Nickel Plate District Amphitheater.

- Important Dates
- Vendor applications will open Monday, January 8, and close Sunday, February 11.
 - Entertainment applications will open Tuesday, January 16, and close Monday, March 4.
 - Biz Kidz applications will open Monday, February 19, and close Monday, March 11.

The Fishers Farmers Market is operated by Fishers Parks and runs annually through the summer in Fishers, Indiana. Ranked 6th in the state by the American Farmland Trust: Farmers Market Coalition, the Fishers Farmers Market has become a growing success year after year. One of the only dog-friendly markets in North Indianapolis area, we cater to all visitors

young, old, and furry! On any visit you can find an array of local goods made, grown, baked, and harvested by farmers and local makers. The Fishers Farmers Market has is held at the Nickel Plate District Amphitheater in Downtown Fishers, running from 8 a.m. to noon every Saturday. Each morning kicks off with yoga or fitness operated by a local studio offered to visitors for free. Weekly, you can also listen to local tunes from musicians while you shop from more than 60 juried vendors in operation. If you've brought your kids, the Fishers Parks tent keeps them busy with a hands-on, interactive activities that change weekly. Throughout the season, the Fishers Farmers Market hosts specialty themed days like the Health & Wellness Expo, Nonprofit Day, Biz Kids Day, and more!



More Hoosiers Graduating from High School

The Indiana Department of Education recently released the 2023 state graduation rates, with data showing 88.98% of Indiana students in the Class of 2023 graduating, up from 86.52% in 2022.

“Earning a high school diploma is essential to unlocking a successful future,” said Gov. Holcomb. “In the years since the pandemic, educators across the state have worked hard to ensure our students -- our state's future leaders -- are more prepared than ever to emerge from high school and thrive. Through this work, Hoosier educators are helping students gain the knowledge and skills, as well as the confidence they need to determine their destiny.”

Overall, the 2023 statewide graduation increased by nearly 2.5 percentage points. A spreadsheet with statewide-, corporation- and school-level graduation data is available here. Below are some of the key areas of success from this year's graduation data:

- 2023 represents the second-highest graduation rate since Indiana began collecting data in 2012.
 - The state's highest graduation rate was in 2016 at 89.1%, which is 0.12 percentage points higher than the class of 2023.
- Statewide, graduation rates increased for:
 - Black students – from 77.52% in 2022 to 82.43% in 2023 (4.91 percentage point increase);
 - Hispanic students – from 83.86% in 2022 to 86.41% in 2023 (2.55 percentage point increase);
 - English learners – from 85.60% in 2022 to 87.72% in 2023 (2.12 percentage point increase);
 - Students in special education – from 76.39% in 2022 to 83.24% in 2023 (6.85 percentage point increase); and
 - Students receiving free and reduced price meals – from 83.74% in 2022 to 88.74% in 2023 (5 percentage point increase).
- The non-waiver graduation rate improved from 80.58% in 2022 to 84.92% in 2023, which is a 4.34 percentage point improvement. Per Indiana Code (IC 20-32-4-4.1), to qualify for a waiver, a student will have been unsuccessful in completing postsecondary-readiness competency requirements by the conclusion of his/her senior year. This includes:
 - A student who was in the process of completing a competency at one school that was not offered by the school to which the student transferred; and
 - A student who has attempted to achieve at least three separate postsecondary-readiness competencies.

“As a state, we have worked very hard to reduce our waiver rate and keep our focus on ensuring students graduate with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life and in their career,” said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. “Looking ahead, we will

continue to make improvements to ensure Indiana has a diploma that maintains rigor while also increasing seamless pathways for students as they pursue employment, enrollment or enlistment leading to service.”

Due to differences between federal and state accountability equations and standards, IDOE also released 2023 federal graduation rates. In 2023, Indiana's federal graduation rate was 87.52%.

	Federal Graduation Rate	State Graduation Rate	Honors Diploma (Academic, Technical, or IB)	Non-Waiver Rate
2023	87.52%	88.98%	31.13%	84.92%
2022	85.12%	86.61%	38.71%	80.58%
2021	85.75%	86.69%	39.6%	78.78%
2020	87.0%*	87.69%*	40.3%*	N/A**
2019	86.4%	87.29%	39.8%	76.73%

*Note: Graduation rates in 2020 reflect the State Board of Education's waiver of the Graduation Qualifying Exam requirement for the 2020 cohort, which could not be administered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this waiver, caution should be exercised when comparing graduation rates to rates in 2020.

**Note: Since the Graduation Qualifying Exam requirement was waived for students graduating in 2020, there is no non-waiver rate for that year.



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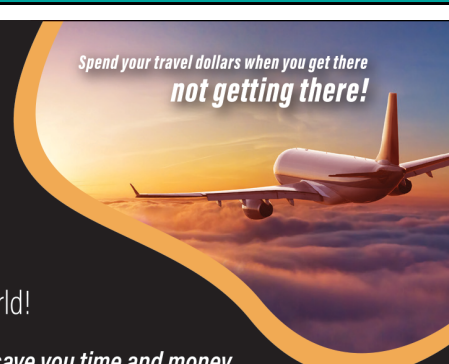
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MARK From Page A1

designed to provide a few meals for many people, not many meals for a few people. Enter the Grinch. Better stated in this case, several Grinch's. These are organized, headlamp wearing, group text thread managing, large bag carrying neighbors whose behavior reveals that they don't care about the needs of others. They game the system and let, "it's free", override any feelings about the other families whose children won't eat because of their selfishness. We first learned about this group of ladies this past Spring. They appeared on video at several pantry locations, generally between 2:00 AM and 4:00 AM, sporting headband headlights, carrying bags and grabbing as much food as they can in as little time as possible. We even have these ladies on video checking storage locks at the Feedingteam.org office. Truth be told if they asked for food, we'd give it to them and connect them with larger food sources designed to accommodate larger needs. Feeding people trumps bad behavior. We have learned over the years that for every individual that abuses the system, far greater numbers of people respect the model, benefit from it, use it the right way, and often, when they are able to do so, contribute to a pantry to help the next person in need. Recently, this latest group of grinch's slipped up. As they

were staging in a local BP gas station before running a route of their selected stocked pantries, a local supporter overheard their plans. This collection of neighbors leverages the power of a text message group to alert other members when a pantry is found to be well stocked. Thus, coordinating successive pickups to collect as much food as possible for the group. In some cases, they use the food personally. At other times it was paid forward to families in need and lastly, occasionally, they sold the food. You might think that we'd be mad, nope. Our position is that feeding people trumps bad behavior. We are disappointed that some select few people, abuse the privilege afforded them through the generosity of others. To address these challenges, we implemented more varied and unpredictable food deployment schedules that will combat this behavior in the future. We have incorporated higher food distribution in outlying pantry locations. We have made it difficult to abuse the concentration of pantries abused by this group of ladies. Also, many of our pantry hosts now ask people to knock on their door to receive a controlled amount of food. We remain undeterred in our mission. I tell you this experience so if one day, you happen across a grinch, abusing the charity of others, you

will give them some grace, offer them a kind word, and maybe even a hearty "Happy New Year". Remember, Grinch's are unhappy because their heart is two sizes too small. This holiday season, as we celebrate the blessings in our lives, as we make memories with family and friends, please take a moment, and remember our neighbors that are less fortunate and those that are in need. In the spirit of the season, consider a selfless act of kindness to our neighbors. Thank you. With over 47,000 food challenged neighbors in Hamilton County, www.Feedingteam.org is a registered 501C3 not for profit organization that provides outdoor 24x7x365 no questions asked, free food pantries throughout the county. The pantries exist, to meet the food insecurity needs of GAP families, neighbors that may not qualify for public assistance and could use a few meals before payday. The pantries serve as many food-challenged neighbors as possible, and our hearts are with those that, like my family, could not always make ends meet. Thank you for supporting the pantries. We love serving with so many neighbors across Hamilton County. In future columns we will share more stories about how your generosity served neighbors in times of need. The face of hunger in Hamilton

County is not what you may think. In practical terms this straightforward way to help neighbors is having a real impact on lives, families, and our communities. Thank you. A few meals can change the course of a person's life. A can of green beans means so much more when you have nothing to feed your kids. Would you like to get involved? Volunteer opportunities are available. We are evaluating new pantry locations. If you think you have a potential area location, please contact us. www.feedingteam.org facts - 57 pantries, over 10,000 meals in September 2023, over thirty volunteer families. Mark & Lisa Hall are the Founders of The Feeding Team. They may be reached at lisa@feedingteam.org and mark@feedingteam.org or 317-832-1123.

RUSTY From Page A1

to as "common law marriage." That means that whether your friend's fiancée will receive any benefits as a surviving spouse in a "common law" relationship depends on whether they live in a state which recognizes common law marriage. Most states do not, but state laws have changed over the years and many states which once recognized such unions as "marriage" no longer do. Although they may have "been a couple" for 15 years, if your friend and his fiancée have been living together for only two it is likely only the last two years will count for Social Security benefit purposes. So, whether your friend's fiancée will get anything when your friend dies depends on where they live - unless they get married, in which case the rules are different. In order for a married widow(er) to receive surviving spouse benefits, the couple must have been married for at least 9 months. If they marry and your friend lives longer than 9 months thereafter, then his wife will be entitled to a surviving spouse benefit from her husband. The amount of his wife's benefit will be based upon the amount your friend is receiving at his death, adjusted for her age when she claims her surviving spouse benefit. A surviving spouse can claim benefits from the deceased as early as age 60, but those benefits will be reduced for claiming before full retirement age (FRA). Taken at age 60, the wife's benefit would be 71.5% of your friend's SS benefit at his death. The wife need not claim the survivor benefit immediately; she could opt to delay claiming in

order to get a higher percentage of the husband's amount. Survivor benefits reach maximum - 100% of the deceased's benefit amount - at the recipient's FRA. So, if your friend and his fiancée now live in a state which currently recognizes common law marriage (CO, IA, KS, MT, NH, SC, TX, UT, RI, or in the District of Columbia), then your friend's partner will be considered his "wife" and entitled to survivor benefits as normal (the fiancée would need to prove they cohabitate in a marriage-like relationship to claim benefits). If they do not live in one of those states, but they get married and the marriage lasts for at least 9 months, then the wife will be entitled to normal benefits as a surviving spouse (as described above). But if the couple do not live in one of the above states which recognize "common law" relationships, or if their soon-to-occur marriage doesn't last at least 9 months, or if they do not get married, I'm afraid your friend's partner will not be entitled to any survivor benefits from your friend.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. Russell Gloor is the, National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/pr ograms/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.



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Indiana's Economy Reaches Historic Levels

Indiana Gov. Eric J. Holcomb and Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg today highlighted the 2023 economic successes in each focus area of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation's strategic vision, concluding the seventh consecutive record-breaking year for economic development in Indiana. In 2023, 208 companies committed to locate or expand in Indiana, investing more than \$28.7 billion (+29% from 2022) in their operations and creating 21,866 new jobs with an average wage of \$36.07/hour – or approximately \$75,025 annually (+3.9% from 2022 and +10.2% the national average wage). This marks the highest capital investment and annual record for average wages since the IEDC was established in 2005.

“Indiana is achieving unprecedented economic momentum that will catapult economic and community opportunities for Hoosiers for decades to come,” said Gov. Holcomb. “Our efforts to attract new investments and jobs, catalyze entrepreneurship and invest in quality of place are paying dividends – all while advancing high-tech industries to ensure that Indiana is at the center of tomorrow’s global economy.”

These economic development metrics are one component of the IEDC’s comprehensive, economic strategy designed to ensure all Hoosiers have greater opportunity to succeed. The strategic vision includes a focus on advancing economic development and industries of the future, growing entrepreneurship and innovation, investing in community development and rural areas and leaning into external engagement to share Indiana’s story and competitive advantages with the world.

“Indiana is thinking long-term and taking bold action to put Indiana at the forefront of critical innovations and to create a more prosperous future for Hoosiers,” said Sec. Rosenberg. “Our strategic, proactive approach is delivering tangible results, attracting new high-growth industries like semiconductors, electric vehicles and clean energy production to Indiana. Paired with unprecedented investments in entrepreneurship and quality of life, Hoosiers can look forward to more

supportive and vibrant communities, more in-demand career opportunities and more opportunities to create generational change.” Notable strategic successes in 2023 include:

Economic Development

- **ACCELERATING INDIANA'S COMPETITIVENESS:** In partnership with the Indiana General Assembly, Indiana made bold strides to expand its economic development budget and modernize the state’s toolkit, increasing its ability to attract new investment and advance community development and talent attraction and retention efforts. The adoption of House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1001, the governor’s agenda bill, increases Indiana’s investment in economic development by \$350 million from 2021 and 2022. Additionally, it enacted a number of priorities designed to make Indiana more competitive, such as creating a new \$500 million deal closing fund, providing additional resources for megadeals over \$5 billion, creating a new site acquisition fund for shovel-ready development, increasing funding for Manufacturing Readiness Grants and allocating another \$500 million to expand quality of place and quality of life investments through the Indiana Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI).
- **GROWING A GLOBAL ECONOMY:** The IEDC also supported another robust year for foreign direct investment, with 37 foreign-owned businesses based across 17 countries committing to locating or growing in Indiana. Together, these firms plan to invest more than \$20.6 billion (+184% from 2022) and create more than 8,509 new jobs (+34.8% from 2022) with average wages of \$39.98/hour (+36% from 2022). Of these commitments, 18 are international businesses locating in Indiana for the first time, accounting for \$5.3 billion in planned capital investment.

This includes notable announcements from companies such as Canadian Solar (Canada), Isotopia USA (Israel), Bastian Solutions (Japan), Bila Solar (Singapore), Endress+Hauser (Switzerland), and Arrow McLaren (UK).

- **MAKING INDIANA INVESTMENT-READY:** Indiana continues to prioritize site development efforts, ensuring the state is able to offer competitive sites and help companies invest and launch operations more quickly. Through the Strategic Sites Initiative, the IEDC is partnering with local communities to identify and prepare new sites; so far, the state has identified 417 new, nationally competitive sites ranging from 30-3,000 acres each.

Additionally, momentum continues to build at the LEAP Research and Innovation District in Lebanon. In April 2023, the state broke ground on the site’s first project – a \$3.7 billion investment from Eli Lilly and Company to establish two manufacturing operations that will create up to 700 new jobs. The IEDC has more than \$58 billion of potential investments in the pipeline for the site.

Entrepreneurship & Innovation

- **BUILDING A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ECOSYSTEM:** Indiana’s leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship continues to grow. Indiana was named the No. 1 state to start a business in 2023 by Forbes, and the state’s venture market surpassed \$1 billion for the second consecutive year in 2022, ranking No. 2 for deal activity in the Great Lakes and Midwestern regions. Additionally, Indiana was named the 2025 host for the Global Entrepreneurship Congress – only the second U.S. location to host the annual convention in the event’s history.
- **DRIVING US INNOVATION & MANUFACTURING:** Indiana secured three new federal tech hub designations – defying the odds despite a 0.01% chance of winning all three. These hubs will bring new opportunities

for investment, innovation, supply chain growth and job creation across technology, hydrogen energy and microelectronics, supporting critical U.S. initiatives to advance innovation, accelerate the energy transition and re-shore supply chains.

- **INVESTING IN ENTREPRENEURS & SMALL BUSINESSES:** The IEDC is leaning into entrepreneurship in unprecedented ways, assisting a record number – more than 10,000 – of entrepreneurs and small businesses in 2023 through various initiatives, investments and incentives. The IEDC launched a new \$1 billion capital access initiative to provide credit and equity to Hoosier entrepreneurs; committed another \$2 million to growing localized, no-cost support for small businesses; and celebrated the second edition of Entrepreneurship Indiana, an annual publication honoring the entrepreneurial journey and highlighting 100 Hoosier success stories.

The IEDC works to support entrepreneurs and small businesses through the Indiana Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Indiana APEX. While final data is still being compiled from all regional offices, the Indiana SBDC provided no-cost support to more than 6,396 entrepreneurs and small businesses in 2023, helping secure \$96,769,188 million in funding and helping launch 451 new businesses. Additionally, Indiana APEX served 180 new clients, with a majority (62%) qualifying as women-, minority- or,

veteran-owned business enterprises, helping businesses secure more than \$335 million in federal government contracts.

- **LAUNCHING & EXPANDING ENTREPRENEURIAL RESOURCES:** In July, the IEDC launched ConnectIND, a digital portal available in 11 languages to increase support for entrepreneurs and founders. The first-of-its-kind statewide listing of resources, programs and services for entrepreneurs is designed to connect current and aspiring entrepreneurs to the right resources at the right time, providing visitors with curated connections to Indiana’s robust network of support organizations, mentors, accelerators, capital opportunities and more. Since launching in June, ConnectIND has registered 1,000 users and garnered 22,000 unique site visitors, over 44,000 site views and over 30,000 sessions.

The IEDC also expanded accelerator support of early-stage startups with a record 7 gBETA accelerators supporting 40 entrepreneurs and continued support for Sports Tech HQ’s Techstars accelerator supporting 13 companies and sponsorship of HG Ventures HardTech Accelerator showcase.

- **FUELING VENTURE DEVELOPMENT:** As the #1 most active venture capital in the Great Lakes Region, the IEDC partners with Elevate Ventures to provide assistance to high-growth, high-potential startups

and innovators, making capital more accessible and attracting additional private co-investment. In 2023, Elevate Ventures committed to investing more than \$21.7 million in 112 Indiana companies through investment and grant programs utilizing the state’s 21st Century Research and Technology Fund. Since inception, and across all programs, Elevate Ventures has invested \$172.1 million in Hoosier businesses, attracting \$2.2 billion in capital from other sources (12.8-to-1 investment leverage ratio).

Community Development

- **INCREASING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** The IEDC marked a major READI milestone, awarding regions over \$487 million of the initiative’s original \$500 million. These funds will support 361 unique quality of place, quality of life, quality of opportunity and workforce projects and programs across all 17 Indiana READI regions. The state’s initial appropriation is being matched by additional public, private and nonprofit dollars, resulting in a combined \$12.6 billion (26:1 investment leverage ratio) invested in Indiana’s communities.

Additionally, the state is allocating another \$500 to the program through READI 2.0 to accelerate population growth and key quality of life indicators such as per capita income, career opportunities and educational attainment.

➡ See **ECONOMY** Page A7



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↓ ECONOMY From Page A6

- INVESTING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES:** The IEDC launched a Community Collaboration Fund in 2023 designed to grow the state's entrepreneurial network in rural communities; the Indiana SBDC supported the launch of 179 new businesses and supported 5,283 jobs in rural counties in 2022 and 2023; and the Manufacturing Readiness Grant program has awarded grants to 152 small- and medium-sized business in rural counties since its inception in 2020, resulting in \$312 million in capital improvements.
- ACCELERATING VIBRANCY, GROWTH IN INDIANA'S CAPITAL CITY:** The IEDC served as a thought partner and supporter in two major developments in 2023 that are poised to bring new life to Indianapolis. In June, Indiana University and Purdue University signed an historic agreement to separate IUPUI, creating two separate and independent campuses in Indianapolis led by each of the globally respected universities and research institutes. The change will allow both universities to implement their own visions and establish new aspirations unique to their own strengths in order to meet the needs of an increasingly interconnected global economy.

And, earlier this month, Circle Centre Mall development plans were announced that will revitalize the heart of downtown Indianapolis, with Hendricks Commercial Properties purchasing and leading a \$600 million mixed-use redevelopment featuring housing, offices, entertainment, modern retail space and open-air spaces.

External Engagement

- ENHANCING INDIANA'S GLOBAL REPUTATION:** Gov. Holcomb and the IEDC continued a commitment to advancing global engagement and international partnerships, building new partnerships and fostering relationships abroad on Governor- and IEDC-led trips to Japan, South Korea, Portugal, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, the

UAE and Australia. The state is also hosting the second iteration of its Indiana Global Economic Summit in May, building off the success of the inaugural event in 2022 that convened more than 800 registrants and 30 international delegations.

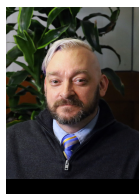
- TELLING INDIANA'S BOLD STORY:** In 2023, Indiana expanded and created new partnerships to better share its story nationally and globally as a bold state that is innovating and building the economy of the future. The IEDC shared the state's story at major events, including the Consumer Electronics Show in partnership with the Indy Autonomous Challenge, the InterBattery Conference in South Korea, and at Inc. 5000 in Austin, highlighting the state's economy and competitive advantages to key sectors.

In the fall, the IEDC rolled out a new brand – Indiana for the Bold – to reflect the state's economic success and elevate Indiana's identity and reputation across the world. Forthcoming campaigns will highlight Indiana's economic environment and strengths; a strong business outlook; advancements across infrastructure, industry and innovation; and a ready workforce, showcasing Indiana's true readiness for the future. In order to continue this momentum and advance economic development opportunities for years to come, the IEDC is committed to continuing executing its strategic vision focused on advancing innovation and entrepreneurship, ensuring a diverse economic environment, creating the jobs of tomorrow, and retaining and attracting top talent by investing in quality of place.

About IEDC
The Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) leads the state of Indiana's economic development efforts, helping businesses launch, grow and locate in the state. Governed by a 14-member board chaired by Governor Eric J. Holcomb, the IEDC manages many initiatives, including performance-based tax grants, innovation and entrepreneurship resources, public infrastructure assistance, and talent attraction and retention efforts. For more information about the IEDC, visit iedc.in.gov.

Libertarians Call For State Gas Tax Repeal

When Indiana motorists go to the gas pump, they feel the squeeze. Hoosiers pay the fourth-highest



EVAN MCMAHON
 Indiana Libertarian Party Chair

gasoline tax in the nation, in part because you pay three different taxes every time you fill up. The federal government takes 18.4 cents per gallon, and Indiana levies a 34 cents per gallon excise tax. But on top of that, a 7% sales tax is also levied. With gasoline prices exceeding \$2/gallon before taxes, that number often hovers between 15-20 cents per gallon. According to the Tax Foundation, Indiana's average state gas tax on July 1 was 54.4 cents per gallon - 72.8 cents once Uncle Sam's cut is factored in. The government makes a significant amount more profit per gallon of gasoline than any oil company ever will, but you - the motorist and taxpayer - get stuck with the bill. Only taxpayers in California, Illinois and Pennsylvania pay more in gasoline taxes. To make things worse, not only is Indiana one of six states that levy a sales tax on gasoline purchase above the per-gallon excise tax, the state legislature increases the per-gallon tax by a penny every July 1. The automatic increase was set to expire in 2024, but the General Assembly quietly extended the annual increase through 2027, when it will be 38 cents per gallon. It will likely attempt to do so again when the legislature

thinks we're not paying attention. As the General Assembly meets for the 2024 legislative session, the Libertarian Party of Indiana is urging the legislature to suspend one of the two taxes - either the excise tax earmarked for infrastructure projects, or the sales tax that adds a couple of dollars to the price of every fill-up. The additional tax on top of the original tax is akin to double-taxation for the same product. And while our state's leaders and elected officials brag about Indiana's low-tax climate, it is largely limited to low income taxes. Taxes are not reduced, they are simply shifted, which is the antithesis of a General Assembly that claims to be in favor of low taxes and limited government, while raising taxes and increasing the state government's size and scope. The sales tax is also regressive, hitting hardest those with the lowest incomes, as they will spend a larger portion of their paychecks on gasoline purchases. It also encourages people living in border counties - especially near Kentucky (whose gas tax is 24 cents per gallon lower) or Ohio (whose tax is 16 cents per gallon lower) to go out of state, denying Indiana any of the tax revenue it claims to need. Hoosiers have to tighten their belts and live within their means. It's time for government to do the same, and repeal the state sales tax on gasoline and the automatic increase in the excise tax.

Evan McMahon is the Libertarian Party of Indiana state chair.

Carmel's Feinstein's Busy in January

Feinstein's at The Hotel Carmichael in Carmel offers a bit of something for everyone during the month of January. Experience The Life and Loves of a Broadway Baby with Melissa Errico, a Tony Bennett tribute with Don Farrell and a Billy Joel tribute with Eric Baker. In addition, Paul Hughes shares his Jazz and Swing Music while CRUSH presents you with the sound of Bon Jovi.

It all starts tonight when Melissa Errico takes the stage with jazz pianist Tedd Firth for her new show THE LIFE AND LOVES OF A BROADWAY BABY. Errico sets her own life to the Broadway songs that she has sung and owned and offers both a sensational set of beloved standards and a series of witty and sometimes wicked stories about an ingenue's life passed on the Great White Way. A sexy, sublime study of American songs, ranging from Cole Porter to Harold Arlen, Lerner & Loewe to Taylor Swift, with a substantial peek at Errico's upcoming Sondheim album due February 16, 2024 with songs like "Everybody Says Don't," "Take Me to

the World" and "Being Alive." Hear why BroadwayWorld says, "The way Melissa Errico immerses herself in every moment, the technical brilliance of her vocal abilities, and the sheer star power that the lady exudes, makes her a take-no-prisoners performer, offering a leave-it-all-on-the-floor show." Also coming this month will be BECAUSE OF YOU: A Tribute to Tony Bennett. Don Farrell and the Terry Woods Jazz Quartet celebrate the last of the legends and a man dubbed "Best singer in the business" by the likes of Lady Gaga, Aretha Franklin and Frank Sinatra on Saturday, Jan. 13. On Friday, Jan. 19, Feinstein's presents Paul Hughes. Hughes has a passion for Jazz and Swing music where he channels the style and poise in the greats of the genre: Frank Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Dean Martin, and Nat King Cole.

CRUSH Bon Jovi Experience takes place Saturday, Jan. 20. Crush is led by front man and lead singer Doug Shepard, who strongly resembles Jon Bon Jovi and captures not only Jon's look but

Westfield Chamber Speaker Talks About Cyber Security

Learn how to combat fraud and identity theft with the Westfield Chamber of Commerce when Justin Van Zuiden speaks at the Chamber Coffee on Jan. 18. Van Zuiden is the Fraud Manager at Community First Bank of Indiana. He joined the bank's fraud department in 2021 and has a diverse background in the areas of customer service, quality assurance, and industrial inspection giving him a unique approach to problem solving and innovation within his role. He is always striving for excellence in customer service and continually developing resources and providing education on the current fraud landscape.

Learn how to combat fraud and identity theft with the Westfield Chamber of Commerce when Justin Van Zuiden speaks at the Chamber Coffee on Jan. 18. Van Zuiden is the Fraud Manager at Community First Bank of Indiana. He joined the bank's fraud department in 2021 and has a diverse background in the areas of customer service, quality assurance, and industrial inspection giving him a unique approach to problem solving and innovation within his role. He is always striving for excellence in customer service and continually developing resources and providing education on the current fraud landscape.

FOR THE RECORD

HAMILTON COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY MEETING NOTICE

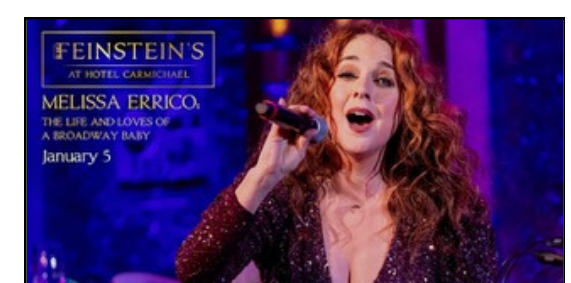
Pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-5 (a), the Hamilton County Airport Authority will meet in Executive Session on Friday, January 5, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting will be held virtually. The purpose of the meeting is to receive information about and interview a prospective consultant (5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(5)) concerning the implementation of a security system (5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(2)(C)) and any other airport business as needed.

For The Record is a public service and regular feature in The Noblesville Times. It is designed to tell you what is scheduled to happen and what actually does happen in meetings paid for with your tax dollars. The Times encourages all citizens to take an active role in being involved in local government.

also his energetic showmanship! On lead guitar, Andrew "Drew" Goodpaster plays all of the signature Richie Sambora riffs. The heart and backbeat of the group is Brian Barchman on drums. Completing the lineup, Robin Altmeyer on bass along with Chip McGurer on keys, and Anna Martinez Shepard on backing vocals, violin, and percussion, help to fill out the legendary sound of Bon Jovi! On Saturday, Jan. 27, Eric Baker & Friends Present: The Piano Man: A Billy Joel Tribute. A night of songs and stories highlighting hits and

deep tracks of the piano man, Billy Joel, this full band show will feature tunes you'll sing along to, and maybe even a few you haven't heard in years! In addition to these shows, Feinstein's presents its regular monthly events including DECEPTION: An Evening of Magic & Lies. This magic and mind reading show, hosted by magician David Ranalli, is Thursday, Jan. 25. On Sunday, January 21 is DRAG ME TO BRUNCH at 11 a.m. This QUEEN-tastic brunch is hosted by Pat Yo' Weave who will take the stage and strut her stuff along with her fellow Queens.



Friday, January 5 and Saturday, January 6, Melissa Errico takes the stage with jazz pianist Tedd Firth for her new show THE LIFE AND LOVES OF A BROADWAY BABY