

TODAY'S VERSE

John 10:10 *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

Hamilton Happenings

The friendly Chamber folks in Hamilton County – Westfield, OneZone and Noblesville – are presenting Eggs and Issues tomorrow at the Bridgewater Club from 8 to 9:30 a.m. This is a great chance to hear from your local state legislators, and even better, breakfast and coffee will be served. But hurry, you don't have to be a chamber member to attend, but space is limited. The cost is \$30 for members and \$40 for non-members. Go to any of the Chamber websites for more info and to register.

Three Things You Should Know

- 1** Purdue Federal Credit Union made a lot of animals (and humans) happy recently. The financial institution donated \$2,225 to a Tippecanoe County animal shelter (Loving Heart). The money was raised from a promotion where members had the option of skipping a credit card, auto loan or personal loan payment for a fee. A portion of the fee went to the donation.
- 2** New for this year's Indiana Individual income tax return is a deduction for military pay earned by Hoosiers who are active or reserve members of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard. Retired military service members, or their surviving spouse, may also be eligible for this deduction. This deduction is equal to the actual amount of military income received (i.e., military pay, retirement pay, and/or survivor's benefits) or \$5,000, whichever is less. Find more information in Information Bulletin #27.
- 3** Hoosiers ranked 11th in the U.S. in search interest for weight loss drugs such as Wegovy and Zepbound. The latest generation of weight loss medications have gained significant attention for their reported effectiveness in aiding weight loss. The top ten states by their search interest scores: Delaware, North Dakota, West Virginia, Mississippi, Rhode Island, Arkansas, Alabama, Missouri and Michigan. Kind of makes you proud to be a Hoosier, huh!

The **TIMES**

NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Boomer Bits

Ask Rusty – About Medicare's Dreaded "IRMAA" Provision



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: My wife is on Medicare and receiving Social Security benefits each month. We built a house and used money from our investments to pay for it. We knew we would pay taxes on that withdrawal, but my wife got a letter from Social Security saying that because the money we withdrew was listed as income, her 2024 Medicare premium went up over \$500. And since Medicare is taken out of her Social Security, that results in a \$6,000 loss to our budget. Is there anything that can be done about this situation? We sent a letter to Social Security, but they responded that unless her situation was one of only a few categories (loss of

house, divorce, etc.) nothing could be done for the year. The money was used strictly on another investment - our new house. It wasn't like we took it out and spent it wildly. Can you please advise?

Signed: Frustrated Homeowner

Dear Frustrated: Unfortunately, it sounds like your wife is a victim of the Medicare provision known as "IRMAA" – the "Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount." Each person's Medicare Part B premium (coverage for outpatient healthcare) is determined yearly from their income from all

➔ See RUSTY Page A6

Help Slam the Scam on March 7



National Slam the Scam Day is March 7. On National Slam the Scam Day and throughout the year, the Social Security Administration gives you the tools to recognize Social Security-related scams and stop scammers from stealing your money and personal information.

➔ See SCAM Page A6

Hoosiers Ditching Coffins for Human Composting

Since time immemorial, contemplating one's own funeral has been an inherently awkward yet unavoidable aspect of life. Traditionally, the decision

➔ See COFFIN Page A6

Chicken 'n' Noodles, Brick Room Comedy, Winter Blast, More Ways to Enjoy Free Time



BETSY REASON
Columnist

Looking for a fun activity this weekend? Take in Brick Room Comedy Club's Katherine Hepburn show, enjoy all-you-can-eat chicken and noodles at Wayne-Fall Lions Club, watch live music, enjoy the theater, experience Winter on the Prairie in Fishers, attend a musical at The Cat in Carmel or shop at Westfield Winter Market. This journalist offers The Times' list of 25 things to do this weekend and beyond:

1. Clerical Error Productions presents "Call Me Kate," based on Katherine Hepburn's tell-all interview, at 7:30 p.m. today and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday at The Brick Room Comedy Club on Maple Avenue and Ninth Street in downtown Noblesville. "Call Me Kate, Katharine Hepburn Tells It Like It Is,"



Photo courtesy of Epilogue Players

Noblesville's Barb Weaver and Susan Hill are featured in Epilogue Players' "Foolish Fish Girls and the Pearl," directed by Fishers resident Kelly Keller, at 7:30 p.m. today and Friday and 2 p.m. Sunday, with tickets at epilogueplayers.com

written by and featuring Kate Duffy. Visit thebrickroom.cc for tickets.

2. Enjoy Wayne-Fall Lions Club's Chicken & Noodle Dinner from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday at Wayne-Fall Lions Club's house at Deshane and Victory Chapel, Noblesville. Freewill donations go to

Hamilton Southeastern/Fishers FFA. The FFA members will serve the dinner. Menu features chicken and noodles, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, desserts and drinks, with chili dogs also available.

➔ See BETSY Page A3

TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

In addition to keeping track of what you eat, also determine how and why you eat to try and find ways to cut back.

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

"Make Friday a day to celebrate work well done that you can be proud of knowing that you just didn't put in time to the next paycheck."
Byron Pulsifer

TODAY'S JOKE

At the interview the boss said the starting salary was \$30,000 but later on could go up to \$50,000. The interviewee smiled and said, "Great! I'll start later on!"

OBITUARIES

None

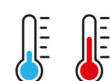
The Times appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank **BRENDA CARSON** for subscribing!



The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset

RISE: 7:27 am
SET: 6:29 pm



High/Low Temperatures

HIGH: 45°F
LOW: 21°F



Today is...

- Curling is Cool Day
- National Banana Bread Day



What Happened On This Day

- 1941 Glenn T. Seaborg and his team chemically identify Plutonium. The radioactive element plays an important role as nuclear fuel or in nuclear weapons.
- 1455 The Gutenberg Bible is published. Johannes Gutenberg's Bible edition was the first book ever printed in movable type, heralding the age of the printed book in the West.

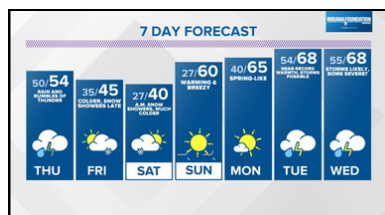


Births On This Day

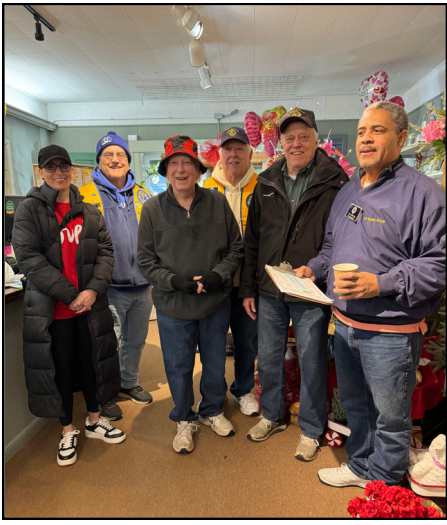
- 1868 W. E. B. Du Bois - American sociologist, historian, activist
- 1685 George Frideric Handel - German/English composer

Deaths On This Day

- 1848 John Quincy Adams - American politician, 6th President of the United States
- 1821 John Keats - English poet



Busy Week for Noblesville Lions



Photos Courtesy Noblesville Lions

Valentine's Week was a busy one for the Noblesville Lions Club. On Valentine's Day, Wednesday, Feb. 14, the Lions delivered flowers for Adrienne's Flowers and got a big "thank you" stipend from Adrienne's for the help on this day. Pictured in the photo are, from left, Lions Kryz Keller, Gary Hipes, Steve Craig, Steve Shaw, Steve Morgan and Terry Lee Dawson

Then on Thursday, the Noblesville and Carmel Lions assisted Gleaners in serving more than 120 families with food from the mobile pantry. The Carmel Lions and Noblesville Lions are proud to assist Gleaners with this important monthly project in Hamilton County. Pictured in no particular order at Noblesville Lions Mark Bachar, Ron Williamson, Jeff Kozicki, Joe Arrowood, Ed Shea, Terry Dawson, Steve Shaw and Joe Connerley. Carmel Lions included Bill Ryan and Bob Yunker.

Simon Moon Park Expansion to begin Soon



Diagram courtesy of City of Westfield

Plans for the Simon Park Moon Expansion

Simon Moon Park is set to undergo a transformative expansion project that expands the current park and facilities for the community. Expansion plans including a much-needed parking lot expansion, outdoor education classroom, fishing piers, boardwalks, updated playground, and a reengineered sledding hill. Bids were recently opened at a public meeting and will be awarded to Norcon, Inc. with offices in Indianapolis, for approximately \$6.8 million which was significantly under the \$8.2 million engineering estimate. The expansion project will be paid for by park impact fees, which are fees imposed upon developers when residential projects

are built. There will be no taxpayer funds or bonds used for this project. "We are thrilled to expand Simon Moon Park and provide our community with even more opportunities for outdoor recreation and social engagement," said Westfield Mayor Scott Willis. "This project is a testament to our commitment to creating vibrant and inclusive spaces that fosters a sense of community and well-being." Construction is anticipated to begin in early April 2024. Keep an eye on City of Westfield social media channels for updates regarding park access during construction.

Hamilton Heights School Corporation Updates



DR. ARROWOOD
 Guest Columnist

Tomorrow is School Bus Driver Appreciation Day. I want to give a shout to our

incredible team of school bus drivers. These unsung heroes are good stewards and advocates who consistently demonstrate their immense value beyond driving the school buses. They serve as a crucial link in the education chain who ensure the safe and reliable transportation of our students. They are a special breed of professionals who positively impact our students and families in far-reaching and amazing ways. Thank you! We appreciate you!

Monday kicks off Public Schools Week. It's a week designated to recognize and celebrate the invaluable role of our nation's public schools. Strong public schools are the foundation of success for young people, the growth of our communities, and instrumental to our country's future. Hamilton Heights, and its community predecessor schools, have been helping to prepare students to go out into the world and make a powerful difference for well over a century. Thanks in part to the caliber of teachers, administrators, staff, involved families, and strong community partners, Heights continues to be a

destination of choice for K-12 education. We invite you to celebrate the many opportunities afforded through our local public schools and engage in activities that will strengthen the business-school connection throughout the year. We welcome and encourage our families and community to be actively engaged in all things Hamilton Heights and stay connected in every way possible including via our website, Facebook, YouTube, and X where you will always find 'Great Kids Doing Great Things!'

Speaking of being involved, the community is invited to join us at our next Superintendent Advisory Group meeting on Wednesday, February 28 at the HHMS Cafeteria beginning at 6 p.m. These quarterly meetings offer the community an opportunity to meet school personnel and learn about different programs and services that are instrumental in operating a successful public school district. Our featured speaker is our new Food Service Director Kylie Dhonau. She will share an overview of her role and function, how we feed over 2,000 students daily, and some exciting new initiatives that will make our outstanding food service program even better! We look forward to seeing you then. Bring a friend!

Hamilton Heights FFA Chapter wraps up

National FFA Week with a community breakfast this Friday, February 23 from 6 to 8 a.m. at the high school (enter through Door N). The breakfast is free and open to the public. Donations welcome. Hamilton Heights' highly respected agriculture program and involvement in FFA continues to help students develop their potential for leadership, explore their interests, and take advantage of a broad range of career pathways in agricultural. Emilie Carson, Agriculture Educator and FFA Chapter Advisor, has been at the helm of the program growing it in size and scope since 2016.

On a side note, we have four Flex Days built into our calendar to make up for weather-related school closures this

year. We have used two and the remaining two are the first two days of our Spring Break (March 25 and 26). While I am hopeful that the worst of the winter weather is behind us, sometimes Mother Nature has a mind of her own. Should we have a weather-related school closure that could require the use of a Flex Day, our plan right now is to instead utilize a Synchronous E-Learning Day since these have proven to be a successful option here. Stay tuned and in the meantime, hope for sunny skies!

Thank you for your commitment to all that is public education and belief in the future of our students.
 #PublicSchoolProud
 #WeAreHuskies

The Times



Providing an affordable and positive baseball experience for all young men ages 13-18

The 2024 Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball Season begins April 8, 2024 and ends on June 18, 2024.

There will be two Leagues: 13-15 year old Competitive League and 16-18 year old Competitive League.

Both 13-15 League and 16-18 League will begin play on April 8, 2024. A double-elimination tournament will be played June 10-18, 2024.

* Note: Dates subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

Registration Fee: 2024 Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball registration fee is \$199 and includes team jersey, hat, and 2 tickets to the Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball League Pancake Breakfast/Picture Day scheduled for April 20, 2024 from 8am-11am at the Forest Park Inn.

Team/Player photos will be taken at the Pancake Breakfast - more information will be sent closer to the event date. Additional tickets for the League Pancake Breakfast will be available at the door for \$5 each.

Player Evaluations: 13-15 year old players new to Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball - or 13-15 year old players wishing to re-enter the team draft - need to attend the player evaluation session scheduled for March 9, 2024 from 2pm-4pm at Noblesville High School.

Register today at:
 noblesvillebaberuthbaseball.sportsengine-prelive.com

Sponsorships are still available, please reach out to nrbcommunications@gmail.com for more info

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↓ BETSY

From Page A1



The Times photo by Betsy Reason

Wayne-Fall Lions Club members -- Rick Larrison (from left), John Davidson, Victor Barker, Richard Barker and club president Bill Daniels invite the community to the club's Chicken and Noodle Dinner 5-8 p.m. Saturday at the Club on East 191st Street at DeShane Avenue and Victory Chapel Road, in Noblesville.

Council's "Derailed," at 7 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Playhouse in downtown Westfield.

12. Travel to the countryside to hear live music with Bomar and Ritter 7-9 p.m. Saturday at Spencer Farm Winery in Noblesville, Nora Reese on March 2, Third Space on March 9, David and Pamela Ackerman on March 16, Booze Hounds Bluegrass on March 23, and Steve Fulton on March 30. Visit spencerfarmwinery.com

13. Experience "From the Heart" Fine Art Exhibit all of February at Noblesville Creates.

14. All of February, enjoy Valentine's Day for All Take-Home Craft Kits available at Noblesville Creates.

15. Experience live music with Jai Baker 3 at 9 p.m. today at Joe's Grille in Westfield and at 8 p.m. Feb. 29 at Syd's Bar and Grill in downtown Noblesville.

16. Heads up to Bingo players for Charity Bingo Nights put on by Love of Labs Inc., at 5 p.m. Sunday; and by Sketchy Mutts and Underdogs, at 5 p.m. March 22 at the Noblesville Moose Lodge.

17. Sheridan's Phi Beta Psi Sorority will serve up sloppy joes, mac and cheese, chips and chip, veggies, desserts and drinks during a Euchre Night open to the community at 6:30 p.m., with game starting at 7 p.m. Saturday at The Studio on South Main Street in downtown Sheridan. Tickets are \$20, including game and food, and participants can sign up to play euchre by calling 317-418-5232.

18. Shop at March



Experience live music with Kris Huntley at 7 p.m. today at Primeval Brewing in downtown Noblesville.

Merchant Madness Sip N' Shop 4 to 8 p.m. March 1 in downtown Noblesville.

19. Dare to stroll the Nefarious Noblesville Ghost Walk 7 to 8:45 p.m. March 2 in downtown Noblesville, with reservations at fareharbor.com

20. Brides-to-be are invited to attend the Engaged Noblesville Wedding Expo, by Atomic Events, at 1 p.m. March 3 at Hamilton Town Center in Noblesville, with free admission with a limited number of \$20 VIP tickets for early access for up to four guests.

21. Join Serve Noblesville for Munch & Learn Lunch noon to 1 p.m. the first Wednesday of every month, the next lunch March 6 at 1372 E. Cherry St., Noblesville.

22. Shop at Arcadia Market on Main Spring Fling at 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 9 at The Coffee Shop in Arcadi.

23. Save the date for the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce Taste of Business 4-7:30 p.m. March 14 at the Embassy Suites in Noblesville, with booth space currently available. Also, attend the Chamber's Eggs & Issues Joint Chamber Legislative Update 8-9:30 a.m. Feb. 23, the Chamber's Meet the Candidates February Member Luncheon 11

a.m.-1 p.m. Feb. 28 at Purgatory Golf Club in Noblesville and the Chamber's State of Workforce 11 a.m.-1 p.m. March 10 at The Bridgewater Club in Westfield

24. Mark your calendar for the Conner Prairie Total Solar Eclipse 2024 event all day April 8 at Conner Prairie in Fishers and all day at Grand Park in Westfield.

Conner Prairie tickets are \$30 for members, \$45 for nonmembers, and \$150 for VIP guests who receive reserved parking, a shuttle, eclipse viewing glasses, unobstructed viewing area, private coffee and spirits bar, lunch buffet from City BBQ and an after party. Festival grounds will turn into a haven of wonder while guests will take in performances from musical acts, dance companies and renowned experts who will shed light on the science behind the event. Grand Park tickets are \$100 for standard vehicles and \$400 for campers and recreational vehicles and include food trucks, concert with the 1985 Band, inflatables, attractions, Moon Pie eating contest by Westfield's Joey Chestnut, viewing telescopes onsite, special guest Dr. Mark SubbaRao, director of NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio.

25. Save the date for Hamilton County Master Gardeners' 25th annual Plant Sale from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 18 at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds in Noblesville.

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

Carmel Man Sentenced for International Identity Theft Scheme

Tuong Quoc Ho, a/k/a Robert Parker, 36, a resident of Carmel, has been sentenced to 102 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to twenty counts of wire fraud, two counts of aggravated identity theft, one count of possession of multiple unauthorized access devices, one count of unlawful possession of identification, and two counts of money laundering.

According to court documents, beginning in 2013 and lasting through February of 2020, Ho devised and led a complex, international scheme to defraud multiple victims throughout the United States and abroad of approximately \$2 million. To carry out the scheme, Ho and his co-conspirators unlawfully obtained personally identifiable information ("PII") including names, addresses, dates of birth, phone numbers, social security numbers, and credit card numbers of hundreds of victims throughout the United States and worldwide. They used that PII to create fraudulent PayPal and eBay accounts in the victims' names. Ho then placed expensive items, such as Vera Bradley handbags, American Girl dolls, PlayStations, and blood pressure monitoring devices for sale on eBay. Ho did not have the majority, if any, of the items on hand at the time of the sale, but instead purchased the items after they were sold through online retailers using stolen credit card information that he unlawfully obtained, and had those items directly shipped from the retailer to the buyer. Ho and his co-conspirators sold many of the items at prices lower than market value, but still profited off those items because they were purchased with stolen credit cards. Ho linked his personal bank information to the fake PayPal and eBay accounts and collected the money. Ho's personal bank accounts were linked to over 500 hundred fraudulent PayPal accounts. When PayPal suspected suspicious activity on the account, it restricted the accounts and required additional documentation to re-establish access. Ho modified and used PII of identity theft victims to create fraudulent driver's licenses, passports, utility bills, and bank statements to make them appear to belong to the account

holder. In total, Ho stole over \$2 million and wired \$1.2 million to family and other individuals in Vietnam. Ho also laundered the money, using over \$300,000 to purchase his home in Carmel, Indiana. On October 24, 2018, Carmel Police Department officers executed search warrants at Ho's residence and other buildings owned by Ho and arrested him on state charges. CPD recovered over 400 packages of merchandise addressed to Ho's alias, "Robert Parker." At least \$78,000 worth of that merchandise was purchased with stolen credit cards. Ho continued to operate his scheme after his home was searched by law enforcement until his arrest by federal authorities in 2020. "Over seven years, the Defendant stole hundreds of identities and millions of dollars, exploiting eCommerce and financial platforms in a complex international scheme," said Zachary A. Myers, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana. "Making the public safer from these pernicious identity theft schemes is a critical priority for our office, in partnership with outstanding investigators like the FBI and Carmel Police Department. The serious federal prison sentence imposed today should serve as a warning to fraudsters that we are dedicated to finding you and holding you accountable for the harm you cause." "This case shows the significant value of partnership in the law enforcement community," said FBI Indianapolis Special Agent in Charge Herbert J. Stapleton. "The Carmel Police Department, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the FBI combined our efforts in a complicated and intricate case to put a long-time criminal behind bars for many years to come." The FBI and Carmel Police Department investigated this case. The sentence was imposed by U.S. District Court Judge James R. Sweeney. Judge Sweeney also ordered that Ho be supervised by the U.S. Probation Office for 3 years following his release from federal prison and pay \$217,147.87 in restitution. U.S. Attorney Myers thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys MaryAnn T. Mindrum and James M. Warden, who prosecuted this case.

3. Enjoy Winter on the Prairie 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily through March 26, except Mondays at Conner Prairie in Fishers. Program highlights the beauty of winter. Also, warm up by the hearth while taking in smells of the food on the fire, play parlor games and more. Visit www.connerprairie.org.

4. Fishers resident Kelly Keller is directing "Foolish Fish Girls and the Pearl" by Epilogue Players at 7:30 p.m. today and Friday and 2 p.m. Sunday and features local actors Barb Weaver and Susan Hill of Noblesville. For tickets, visit epilogueplayers.com

5. Experience live music with Kris Huntley at 7 p.m. today at Primeval Brewing in downtown Noblesville.

6. Embrace the chilly temperatures of winter at Clay Terrace's Winter Blast, a free family event, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at Clay Terrace in Carmel.

7. Enjoy live theater with Duck Creek Players' comedy, "Blithe Spirit," directed by Bill Smith, at 7 p.m. today and Saturday at the historic Elwood Opera House, a 30-minute drive north of Noblesville, with tickets at duckcreekcenter.com

8. Westfield Winter Market is open 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays through March 9 in downtown Westfield.

9. Enjoy live music featuring Jason & Robin at 7 p.m. Saturday at Grindstone Public House in Noblesville.

10. Kiln Creations, which has eight pottery wheels and has opened up its program for semiprivate classes, will offer Saturday Pottery Wheel classes 2:30-4:30 p.m. on Saturday at its shop in downtown Noblesville, with \$45 per class, with reservations at kilncreations.net. Also, enjoy a Starry Night stoneware lesson at 6 p.m. today, Lisa Frank Night at 6 p.m Saturday, Taylor Swift Trivia and Paint night at 6 p.m. March 2.

11. Experience Basile Westfield Playhouse Youth Advisory

16698 Birdbrook Road Noblesville • \$589,900
SOLD!

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

Call Peggy 317.439.3258 or Jennifer 317.695.6032

Your house could be here! Give us a call.

18865 Wimbley Way Noblesville • \$289,900
SOLD!

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

The end of winter means its time to get ready for the Spring selling season!

Speak to Deak!

THE Deak Team
REALTORS®

Jennifer
Peggy

Speak to Deak.com
317.439.3258 Peggy or 317.695.6032 Jennifer

Talk to Tucker REALTORS
F.C. TUCKER COMPANY

Three From County Graduate Leadership Program



Photo courtesy of Hamilton County Surveyor's Office

From left, CJ Taylor, Kathy Ransford and Brian Rayl graduated from the 12-week program.

Recent graduates of the National Association of Counties (NACo) Professional Development Academy included three Hamilton County staff. Director of the Planning Commission CJ Taylor, Kathy Ransford of the Juvenile Division of the Probation Department and Brian Rayl, Survey Manager for the Surveyors Office graduated from the High Performance Leadership program.

The program, created in partnership with General Colin Powell, is a 12-week, 4-course mentorship based program with content provided by industry leading executives. This program provides best practices in leadership, organizational development and change management, negotiation and collaboration, effective business communication, and delivering value within

high performance management. NACo serves nearly 40,000 elected county officials and 3.6 million county employees. Founded in 1935 for the betterment of county government, NACo serves its members through lobbying at the Federal level, providing educational opportunities, publications, research assistance and offering cost saving programs.

4-H Sets Spring Break Fun Camps



No plans for Spring Break this year? We have you covered. Check out these AMAZING CAMPS being offered to youth in 3rd - 7th grade during Spring Break at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds, 2003 Pleasant St. in Noblesville.

Monday/Tuesday mornings from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. is Crafting Curiosities to discover your creativity with canvas painting, paper crafts, string art, and a charcuterie board. Wednesday's Clover Gaming Connection will explore engineering, design, logic, technology, math, and story concepts behind the Science of Games from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Lunch is not provided so bring your own.

The cost is \$30 per camp. Dates are April 1, 2, and 3. Participants may attend one or both camps. 4-H membership is not required. Registration deadline is March 22, 2024. Space is limited so don't delay.

To register, visit: <https://in.4honline.com> or call Purdue Extension Hamilton County at 317-776-0854.

Noblesville Schools Named a Top Employer

Noblesville Schools have been named one of America's Best Midsize Employers by Forbes Magazine. The district was rated 18th in the national ranking, the highest of any organization in Indiana. "Our staff is exceptional and we're proud to be recognized for our unique culture of caring, innovation and excellence," Dr. Dan Hile, superintendent of Noblesville Schools, said. "We place a high value on employee recognitions, professional development, community service, staff

celebrations, competitive compensation and benefits, mentor networks, and safety and mental well-being. Noblesville Schools is a great place to be and we appreciate this prestigious honor." The annual ranking is conducted by Forbes in partnership with market research firm Statista and is based on a survey of more than 170,000 U.S.-based workers at American companies. Organizations with 1,000 to 5,000 employees were deemed midsize employers and survey

respondents were asked to rate their employer, and if they would recommend their employer to others. Companies pay no fee to be considered. Noblesville Schools is the largest employer in Noblesville with approximately 1,800 employees. In addition to educators, the district depends on many other types of employees to serve students including facility personnel, social workers, technology staff, food services, bus drivers, secretaries, human resources, finance professionals and more.

Arby's Pays Off School Lunch Debt in Westfield

The Arby's Foundation recently donated \$1 million to pay off the school lunch debt for more than 47,000 students at 762 schools across the country. With more than \$19 million in unpaid meal debt (School Nutrition Association) and 30 million students who cannot afford their meals (Education Data Initiative), the donations aim to address the dramatic increase in student school lunch debt in the United States. In Westfield, Arby's proudly donated \$59,702.00 to the Westfield Washington Schools to completely pay off lunch debt for 1,770 students.

"Childhood hunger is something that no one should ever have to face, and school lunch should be a time that kids look forward to without worrying if they'll have a meal that day," said Stuart Brown, Executive Director, Arby's

Foundation. "We're honored to have partnered with so many local school districts to help those students enjoy lunchtime with their classmates, and ease the burden on parents."

The Arby's Foundation believes reliable access to meals is ground zero for a child's success. Since 2011, the Foundation has given more than \$30 million to organizations dedicated to finding systemic solutions to childhood hunger with the hope of allowing kids to focus on building, expanding and pursuing their dreams rather than worrying about their next meal.

To learn more about the school lunch debt payoff program, guests can visit foundation.arbys.com/unchdebt. To learn more about the Arby's Foundation, visit foundation.arbys.com.

County Health Department Has Children's Dental Health Webinar



Cindy Love

The Hamilton County Health Department, along with Trinity Free Clinic, will host a Children's Dental Health webinar on Wednesday, February 28 at 6:00 p.m. The webinar will discuss the dental health of children from infants through teens. In addition to discussing topics such as when to schedule your child's first dental appointment and tips for eliminating pacifiers and thumbsucking, the webinar will also address dental concerns for tweens and teens. "There's more to it than brushing and flossing every day," says Kaylen Underhill, Health Educator at the Hamilton County Health Department.



Kaylen Underhill

"We'll talk about the dangers of sports drinks and vaping, and the importance of mouthguards." Cindy Love, a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner at Trinity Free Clinic, will also speak about the importance of preventive care. "Fluoride is instrumental in preventing tooth decay by strengthening tooth enamel. Parents can ensure their children receive an adequate amount of fluoride through fluoridated water, fluoride toothpaste, and professional fluoride treatments during dental visits." Anyone interested in attending the free webinar can register at <http://tinyurl.com/childrens-health-webinars>.

County gets \$10K Grant From Duke Energy

Hamilton County EMA is the beneficiary of a \$10,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation. They were included with first responders from all across Indiana, including local police, fire and emergency management agencies, who are benefitting from more than \$200,000 in grants. The funding will help public safety agencies increase their response capabilities during severe weather and other emergencies through advanced preparation, planning, equipment and training. The money for Hamilton County will be used to enhance community outreach and preparedness education. "When severe weather strikes, we rely on strong partnerships with local emergency management and law enforcement agencies to effectively respond and restore power in affected communities," said Stan Pinegar, president of Duke Energy Indiana. "These

grants will help give first responders the tools and training they need to respond to any emergency." During major emergencies and natural disasters, local emergency management agencies play a critical role in providing information, resources and support that Duke Energy relies on to speed power restoration for its customers. "Successful preparedness, response and recovery requires a community approach," said Sean Stoops, chief of the Avon Police Department. "We envisioned equipping all of our patrol vehicles with automated external defibrillators (AEDs). With the support of Duke Energy and other community partners, we were able to bring that goal to fruition, purchasing 35 AEDs that our officers can use to deliver life-saving measures to a person in cardiac arrest."

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Impressive Winning Percentage? That's Mackey Arena



KENNY THOMPSON
Columnist

A couple of years ago, a CBS Sports survey asked college basketball coaches, protected by anonymity, which arenas have the best environments. Purdue's Mackey Arena finished in the top five. "When Mackey Arena is rocking, I think it is the best atmosphere in the country," coach No. 1 said. "One of the loudest gyms in the country. It's intimidating," coach No. 2 adds. No wonder then that Purdue celebrated its 700th men's basketball victory, 99-67 against Michigan, a month ago. Adding on home victories since then against Northwestern, Indiana and Minnesota, the Boilermakers are 703-147 in Mackey Arena. That's a winning percentage of 82.7 percent. In just Big Ten games, Purdue is 382-110 (.776) in Mackey. Matt Painter, the fifth man to coach the Boilermakers in Mackey, owns a 265-44 record (.857). Mackey Arena, which began its existence as Purdue Arena on Dec. 2, 1967 with a 73-71 loss to top-ranked UCLA, has seen many memorable moments in its seven decades. Let's take a look at the milestone victories.

Victory No. 1 – Ohio University 78-66 on Dec. 11, 1967
The Boilermakers led by just one point at halftime before a 12-0 run allowed Purdue to pull away. "We finally got to

running a few times in the last half and that helped us out quite a bit," Purdue coach George King said. Rick Mount led Purdue with 18 points, Billy Keller had 17. Purdue also received 14 points apiece from Herm Gilliam and Tyrone Bedford. Notably this game was among the first to feature three officials as part of an NCAA experiment. Regular use of three officials in college basketball didn't begin, though, until 1975. Interestingly, a young Army head coach named Bob Knight was quoted as opposed to having three officials in an Associated Press story on Page 28 on the Dec. 12 edition of the Lafayette Journal and Courier. "At my urging, our athletic director has offered to play our home games without any officials to get the other side of it," Knight said.

Victory No. 100 – Indiana 86-78 on Feb. 20, 1977
Using what junior guard Eugene Parker called "a full-court press that got us rocking and rolling," Purdue turned a one-point halftime deficit into a 43-38 lead just 53 seconds gone in the second half of a nationally televised game. That press allowed Purdue to outscore IU 30-14 in the first 10 minutes of the second half. In that span the Boilermakers were 12 of 17 shooting from the field. The hot shooting never cooled off with Purdue shooting 20 of 29, 69 percent.

Jim Wisman's career-high 25 points kept it close for the Hoosiers. Parker led six players in double figures for Purdue with 18 points. Walter Jordan added 15 points one day after turning 21. Centers Joe Barry Carroll and Tom Scheffler put up 12 apiece. Gerald Thomas came off the bench to score 11 and Bruce Parkinson had 10.

Victory No. 200 – Northwestern 76-57 Feb. 16, 1985
Shooting nearly 65 percent from the field, Purdue dominated the last-place Wildcats. Jim Bullock had 20 points on 9 of 11 shooting. Freshman forward Todd Mitchell scored a career-high 16 points in 19 minutes.

Victory No. 300 – Austin Peay 81-64 on Dec. 9, 1994
A 15-0 start left little doubt about the outcome of this Boilermaker Invitational semifinal. These Boilermakers were still adjusting to life without Glenn Robinson, who left a year early to become the No. 1 overall draft pick of the Milwaukee Bucks. Purdue carried a three-game losing streak into this game. Roy Hairston, the No. 1-rated junior college transfer, just missed a double-double with 20 points and nine rebounds for Purdue. Cuonzo Martin had 12 points and freshman guard Chad Austin had nine points in his first collegiate start.

Victory No. 400 – William & Mary 75-58 on

Nov. 30, 2001
Purdue's 17th consecutive victory in the Boilermaker Invitational was sparked by Rodney Smith's 17 points and nine rebounds. The Boilermakers enjoyed a major advantage at the free throw line, making 22 of 32 attempts. William & Mary was 2 of 7. Purdue center John Allison added 12 points, and guard Darmetreis Kilgore scored 11.

Victory No. 500 – Southern Illinois-Edwardsville 90-63 on Dec. 22, 2009
A 29-11 run in the first half ensured the fourth-ranked Boilermakers would improve to 11-0. JaJuan Johnson led a balanced scoring effort with 16 points to go along with six rebounds and four blocked shots. E'Twaun Moore had 15 points, Keaton Grant 13, Robbie Hummel 12 and freshman Patrick Bade had 10.

Victory No. 600 – Iowa 89-67 on Dec. 28, 2016
Carsen Edwards introduced himself to Big Ten basketball fans, outscoring Iowa 8-0 in the first two minutes. Two 3-pointers sandwiching a steal and a left-handed slam dunk led to Iowa coach Fran McCaffery calling timeout. "I told him he's a bad man," forward Vincent Edwards said. "It was impressive. That's a great start, to come out and be fearless and be ready to go." Carsen Edwards' outburst helped No. 15 Purdue sprint to a 28-8 lead, an advantage that

would grow to 31 in the second half. Carsen Edwards finished with 19 points and five assists. Vincent Edwards and Dakota Mathias put up 17 apiece to help Purdue build a 24-point halftime lead. Caleb Swanigan posted a double-double of 11 points and 10 rebounds. Isaac Haas, limited to four minutes in the first half due to foul trouble, asserted himself in the second half to finish with 16 points and seven rebounds.

What might have been?
Hall of Fame basketball coach Charles "Lefty" Driesell died at the age of 92 on Feb. 17. Alan Karpick, publisher of GoldandBlack.com, recalled in a brief tribute that Driesell was a candidate to replace Ray Eddy at Purdue in the spring of 1965. Driesell was coaching at Davidson and regarded as one of the nation's hottest coaching prospects when Journal and Courier sports editor Gordon Graham speculated about potential replacements. The other names on Graham's list were Vic Bubas of Duke and Roy Skinner of Vanderbilt. At the time, Driesell had coached Davidson to two consecutive Southern Conference titles but was denied an NCAA tournament berth both seasons after losses in the conference tournament. As it turned out, Purdue hired West Virginia's George King. King brought the Boilermakers out of their post-Piggy Lambert doldrums by recruiting Rick Mount, Billy Keller

and Herm Gilliam. That trio was the core of the 1969 Big Ten championship squad that reached the NCAA title game against Lew Alcindor (now Kareem Abdul-Jabbar) and UCLA.

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.

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↓ RUSTY

From Page A1

sources as reported to the IRS two years prior. IRMAA sets income thresholds, depending on your IRS filing status, and if those thresholds are exceeded you must pay a higher Medicare Part B premium (and also a higher Part D premium if you have prescription drug coverage). Assuming you file your taxes as "married/jointly," if your combined 2022 income as a couple was between \$206,000 and \$258,000 your wife's 2024 Part B premium is \$244.60 (instead of the standard \$174.70); if your combined 2022 income was between \$258,000 and \$322,000 then your wife's Part B premium for 2024 is \$349.40; if your combined in 2022 was between \$322,000 and \$386,000, her Part B premium is \$454.20; if your combined 2022 income as a married couple was between \$386,000 to \$750,000 then your wife's 2024 Part B premium is \$559; and if your 2022 income as a married couple was over \$750,000 your wife's Part B premium is \$594. If your wife also has private Part D prescription drug coverage, IRMAA also increases those premiums. Note that the IRMAA thresholds are different for other income tax filing statuses. As the Social Security office has already explained, you could appeal your wife's IRMAA premium increase if she had a "life changing event,"

but the list of acceptable life changing events is quite small (see form SSA-44). The only good news is that your wife's Medicare premium will be calculated anew for next year, so her Medicare premium for 2025 will – if your 2023 joint income is less than the first IRMAA threshold - revert to the standard 2025 premium. FYI, it doesn't matter what you used the money for. Your withdrawal was reported to the IRS as taxable income, which is what caused IRMAA to apply to your wife's Medicare premium for 2024. Many people don't realize that Medicare premiums are higher for those with a higher income, but since your withdrawal was a one-time event, your wife's Medicare Part B premium next year should be much less and her Social Security benefit correspondingly higher.

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/p/rograms/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

↓ SCAM

From Page A1

Help protect your loved ones and people in your community this Slam the Scam Day by:

- Educating them about government imposter scams. Let them know they shouldn't be embarrassed to report if they shared personal information or suffered a financial loss. It is important to report the scam as quickly as possible.
- Sharing the Scam Alert fact sheet and helping educate others about how to protect themselves.

Report Social Security-related scams to the Social Security Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

Visit www.ssa.gov/scam for more information and follow SSA OIG on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to stay up to date on the latest scam

Plan for the future, manage the present!

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tactics. Repost #SlamtheScam information on social media to keep your friends and family safe.

Staff Honored for Service



Photo courtesy Hamilton County Surveyor's Office

From left, Steve Fesmire, Scott Dykes, Bob King, Kenton Ward, Suzanne Mills, Reuben Arvin and Val Swift.

Hamilton County recently awarded service recognition for 2023 to seven members of the County Surveyors staff. Those recognized for five years of service included Section Corner Technician Scott Dykes and Engineering Technician/CAD Reuben Arvin. Recognized for 10 years of service was Section

Corner Party Chief Bob King. Those serving 30 years were GIS Specialist Suzanne Mills, GIS Administrator Val Swift and Survey Party Chief Steve Fesmire. Serving 50 years was County Surveyor Kenton Ward. Collectively these seven represent 160 years of experience to the citizens of Hamilton County.

Guerin Graduate Gains Experience at Statehouse

Nathan Davis is serving as an intern for the Indiana Senate Majority Caucus during the 2024 legislative session, said State Sen. Scott Baldwin (R-Noblesville). Davis, a resident of Noblesville, is the son of Paul and Jill Davis. Davis graduated from St. Theodore Guerin Catholic High School and is a senior at Purdue University studying public health. "I'm extremely proud to have Nathan representing Senate District 20 this session," Baldwin said. "Gaining work experience in a

professional environment will serve him well, and I am eager to see how he uses this knowledge in the future." As a legislative intern, Davis tracks and analyzes bill data, provides constituent services, staffs Senate committee hearings and meetings, and conducts legislative policy research. "I am happy to be doing any work I can to better serve my district and Hoosiers alike," Davis said. "I look forward to growing professionally and getting the chance



Nathan Davis and Sen. Baldwin

to network with those who share professional interests." Senate Majority interns work through the

duration of the legislative session, which is scheduled to end by March 14.

↓ COFFIN

From Page A1

- **Human Composting involves placing the body in a special vessel with organic materials like wood chips and straw.**
- **Other popular choices include Mushroom Suits and Space Burials.**

seemed straightforward: burial or cremation. But as our society's values shift, so too do the ways we consider for our post-mortem journey. The trend toward environmentally conscious funeral options is on the rise as awareness spreads. In response to this shift, Choice Mutual conducted a survey among 6,000 people to gauge preferences for non-traditional burial methods. The findings were quite revealing, highlighting a growing interest in eco-friendly funeral alternatives.

#1 Human Composting
In first place came Natural Organic

Reduction (Human Composting). This method involves placing the body in a special vessel with organic materials like wood chips and straw. Over several weeks, the body decomposes naturally, turning into nutrient-rich soil.

#2 Green Burials
The 2nd most popular option among Hoosiers was Green Burials. This method skips the embalming process and uses biodegradable caskets or shrouds. The aim is to allow the body to decompose naturally and return to the earth without harming the environment.

#3 Tree Pod Burials

A surprising choice emerged as the 3rd most popular for Hoosier State residents: Tree Pod Burials. The body is placed in a biodegradable pod that is then buried in the ground. A tree is planted above the pod, and as the body decomposes, it nourishes the tree.

#4 Memorial Reefs
Memorial Reefs was the 4th most popular pick. This involves creating artificial coral reefs using remains mixed into an environmentally safe cement. These reefs provide habitats for marine life and help restore endangered coral ecosystems. An alternative approach is to create a reef ball from the cremated remains.

#5 Mushroom Suits
Rounding up the top 7 among Indiana residents was Mushroom Suits. This involves a biodegradable burial

suit or shroud embedded with mushroom spores. The mushrooms decompose the body and neutralize toxins that are released during decomposition.

#6 Space Burials
Space Burials, which came in 6th place, is an avant-garde choice that involves sending ashes into orbit, didn't place as the top pick, likely due to environmental concerns about space debris.

#7 Aquamation
Aquamation (Alkaline Hydrolysis) was the 7th most sought after method. Also known as water cremation, this process uses water and lye to break down the body. It's more eco-friendly than traditional cremation since it uses less energy and releases fewer emissions.

Choice Mutual decided to delve deeper into people's options about alternative burial methods.

With personal debt in America soaring, 45% cite the high costs associated with traditional funerals – typically between \$7,000 and \$12,000 – as the major concern. These expenses often cover a range of services, including casket purchase, service fees, burial vault, and costs for the

gravesite and its preparation, not to mention headstones and funeral ceremonies. Environmental impact is another significant concern, with 12% of those surveyed prioritizing it, closely followed by the issue of cemetery space, which concerns 11% of respondents. Hoosiers were queried about their likelihood of choosing a cost-saving alternative burial method over traditional ones, with many indicating a propensity to switch to reduce expenses. Discussions about funeral plans, especially with elder family members, remain a sensitive subject, with 39% feeling uneasy about it. Yet, a striking 72% would back a relative's decision to choose an alternative method, although 9% might dissuade them and 19% would remain neutral.

Regarding funeral funding, life insurance is expected to cover the costs for 39% of respondents. Personal savings are the anticipated source for 29%, while 11% may rely on family contributions. A small fraction, 3%, even consider crowdfunding as an option. In a notable reflection of celebrity influence, nearly one-third of

Hoosiers polled concede that endorsement by a celebrity could sway their decision towards an alternative burial, underscoring the power of social media promotion, a tactic more commonly seen in industries far removed from funeral services. "We're observing a significant shift in end-of-life preferences as people seek to leave a lasting, positive impact on the planet", says Anthony Martin from [Choice Mutual](#). "It's about connecting with the earth and fulfilling a legacy that honors both environmental values and personal beliefs. These eco-friendly options offer a way to say farewell that aligns with the principles people lived by, ensuring that their final footprint is as green and meaningful as the life they led."

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