

■ **TODAY'S VERSE**

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

■ **HAMILTON HAPPENINGS**

There are few sights more stirring than the American flag waving proudly in the morning breeze. It reminds us of who we are, what we stand for and the generations who built this nation. This year, as our country celebrates 250 years of independence, the Kiwanis Club of Cicero is inviting residents to show their patriotism in a meaningful way by joining the Avenue of Flags program. The program is simple but powerful. On designated patriotic holidays (Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day and Veterans Day), Kiwanis volunteers place a beautiful American flag in front of subscribers' homes and return a week later to respectfully collect it. Visit the Kiwanis Club of Cicero online and sign up for your flag subscription today. Your flag will stand as a symbol of patriotism, and a promise to the next generation: www.cicerokiwanis.org/programs/flags



Can someone explain to me how we put men on the moon in the 1960s with computers that had less capacity than my cell phone and it's harder to do it today?

■ **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

"Sunshine and spring bring out the best in everyone."

Kenny Chesney

■ **JOKE OF THE DAY**

What vegetables are a sailor's enemies?

Leeks!

The TIMES



NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

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Happy St. Patrick's Day (almost) **BY THE NUMBERS**

By The Numbers, a look at what's in the news . . . by the numbers. These are just numbers, not suggestions that they mean more or less than what they are. We do not suggest that one number is connected to another. These are simply facts with no extraneous details, bias or slanted reporting. To borrow (and perhaps mangle a bit) a quote from legendary fictional detective Joe Friday, it's just the numbers, ma'am!

OK, so we're still a day away here but (depending on what time you are reading this) it could be St. Patrick's Day already on the other side of the world! So this seemed the perfect time to take a deep dive into St. Paddy's Day (oh, and if you ever wondered why it's St. Paddy's Day and not St. Patty's Day it's because the abbreviation is inked to the original Irish Gaelic spelling of Padraig). See, you're learning stuff already – and who said newspapers aren't educational! Faith and begorrah! Let us quit yammering on and get to St. Patrick's Day – by the numbers!

270

The approximate number of ounces of gold a typical Leprechaun's pot (about 10 inches by 9.75 inches) would hold. As we all know, these pots can be found at the end of the rainbow.



3 or 1

Legend has it if you catch a leprechaun he will be forced to reveal where he hid his pot of gold or else must grant you three wishes. One big hint though. If you do catch one, don't take your eyes off him! If you look away, not only does he vanish but so long as you keep looking he is bound by the laws of fairies to tell you the truth!



42 Speaking of rainbows, they have an angular radius of 42 degrees, so we see about an 84-degree arc in the sky. (And try hard to figure out where they end . . . but then how do you know if it's the end or the start?)

79

That's the percent of Americans who will wear green on the holiday!

\$7,000,000,000

OK, so whether we are talking Christmas, Halloween or St. Patrick's Day it would appear we clearly go overboard on holidays. According to our friends at the National Retail Federation, Americans have spent more than \$7 BILLION on St. Patrick's Day the last two years.



\$5.99

As we all are so painfully aware, the cost of . . . well, everything has gone up. Corned beef is no exception! The signature St. Patrick's Day dish was only \$3.50 a pound at the start of this decade. It's now nearly \$6!

6

According to AI, the biggest St. Paddy's Day celebrations in the U.S. take place in New York, Chicago, Savannah, Boston, Philly and New Orleans. In the Midwest, Cleveland and Kansas City have pretty big to-dos as well.

\$2,199 to \$4,000+

According to our friends at Collette Travel, a trip to Ireland will run a little over \$2,000 to more than \$4,000 per person, depending on the length of time and different itineraries.

■ **THREE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW**

1 Former Hoosier Governor Mitch Daniels, the 49th governor of Indiana and the 12th president of Purdue University, will present the keynote address to graduates from Trine University's Angola campus May 2. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. in the Keith E. Busse/Steel Dynamics Inc. Athletics and Recreation Center. "Mitch Daniels provided visionary leadership as governor of the state of Indiana and as president of Purdue University, guiding both the state and that university to new heights and implementing successful innovations that will continue to have positive impact for generations to come," said Earl D. Brooks II, Ph.D., Trine University president. The university will present Daniels with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the ceremony.

2 First Lady Maureen Braun hosted her second annual Indiana First Lady's Breakfast recently. This year's event, held at Gainbridge Fieldhouse, supported the First Lady's fundraising initiative for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Indiana, bringing together community leaders, sponsors and supporters committed to expanding early childhood literacy opportunities for Hoosier children. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Indiana provides free, high-quality books each month to children from birth to age five, helping families build strong reading habits early in life. During her keynote address, the First Lady thanked supporters for their commitment to improving literacy and announced that the fundraising effort launched in 2025 is now 90% of the way to its goal for funding cycle running from July 2025 through June 2027.

3 The U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana held the City of Loogootee in contempt recently for failing to comply with a prior court order barring enforcement of unconstitutional provisions in the city's special events ordinance. The challenged ordinance was part of the city's effort to prevent Loogootee PrideFest from taking place in the city's Public Square area. In August 2025, the Court ruled that several provisions of Loogootee's special events ordinance violated the Constitution and permanently enjoined the city from enforcing them. But in December 2025, the city enacted a new ordinance that included those same enjoined provisions. A January 2026 amendment to that ordinance removed only one of those unconstitutional provisions, leaving another in place. The Court has now given Loogootee 15 days to repeal or replace the ordinance, and it will be fined \$500 for each day it remains out of compliance. The city was also ordered to pay the attorneys' fees and costs the ACLU of Indiana incurred in seeking the contempt finding.

Fishers Invests \$3.6 Million in Athletics

Money to include City & District Athletic Director

The City of Fishers and Hamilton Southeastern Schools recently announced a significant public investment in local athletic facilities and youth sports programming through a new interlocal agreement designed to expand access, enhance facilities and strengthen alignment across school and community athletics.

"Sports are part of the fabric of our community," said Fishers Mayor Scott Fadness. "From youth leagues to high school athletics, these programs help make Fishers one of the best places in the country to live. This investment builds upon our longstanding collaboration with HSE Schools and ensures our facilities can keep up with the incredible growth and participation we're seeing in youth sports."

Fishers will invest approximately \$3.6 million in improvements to athletic fields at Fishers High School and Hamilton Southeastern High School to benefit student-athletes, youth sports organizations and the broader Fishers community. Improvements include:

Fishers High School

- One new artificial turf field with lighting
- Upgrades to four existing natural grass fields through aeration and top dressing
- Construction of a pedestrian crosswalk connecting Sand Creek Intermediate School to Fishers High School

Hamilton Southeastern High School

- One new artificial turf field with lighting
- Upgrades to existing plateau fields through aeration and top dressing

"Our partnership with the City of Fishers has always focused on finding ways to better serve students and the community, and we are thankful for the City's continued desire to partner with us," said interim superintendent Dr. Matt Kegley of Hamilton Southeastern Schools. "This initiative will help align school athletics, youth programs, and community resources while expanding opportunities for young athletes."

The improvements are designed to support increased participation, improved field conditions, and expanded opportunities for competitions and tournaments. These improvements are part of an overall reinvestment in athletic fields throughout Fishers, including those at park properties.

The interlocal agreement creates a new administration-level position at HSE Schools to implement a citywide strategy and manage all athletic fields. The City & District Athletic Director position will strengthen coordination between the city, the school district, and local sports organizations while helping maximize the use of athletic facilities throughout the com-

See **FISHERS** Page 4

The TIMES

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thetimes24-7.com

ADOPT A PET AUGGIE



Auggie is a fun-loving pup with lots of playful energy who enjoys making new friends - human and canine! This 2-year-old male Pit Bull Terrier has been available for adoption at the Humane Society for Hamilton County (HSHC) since 5/22/25. He's looking for a home where every car ride turns into a joyride, and a short walk becomes an adventure. He just wants to be someone's best adventure buddy. To meet Auggie, please fill out an adoption application at hamiltonhumane.com/adopt, then stop by HSHC anytime 12-5 PM daily (closed Wednesday).

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Tommy Lincoln's first grave marker, carved by Thomas Lincoln.



Photos courtesy Andy Chandler

Tommy Lincoln's marker from 1959, Redmon Cemetery.

Abraham Lincoln's Younger Brother



ANDY CHANDLER
Columnist

In 2012, NPR did a survey on Abraham Lincoln. How many books were written about him? The estimate came out to around 15,000. To read a few is to presume to know the man. His is an American story: ancestors moving from the east coast after the Revolutionary war to settle in the Midwest. Going from rags to riches, and going from multiple political election defeats to winning the highest office in the land. One theme that seems to stalk Abraham Lincoln is untimely death.

We know of the loss of his mother and sister in Indiana, but very little is known or has been written about losing his baby brother in Kentucky.

Yes, Lincoln had a baby brother. While the President never wrote about Thomas "Tommy" Lincoln, and only spoke of him once, we know from his first cousin Dennis Hanks, that in February of 1812, when Abe was 3, Thomas and Sarah Hanks Lincoln welcomed Tommy into the world. Tragically, three days later Tommy passed due to unknown causes. The only other source on this event was in the papers of Dr. Daniel Potter of LaRue County, KY who had a receipt from Thomas

Lincoln for \$1.46 dated February 1812.

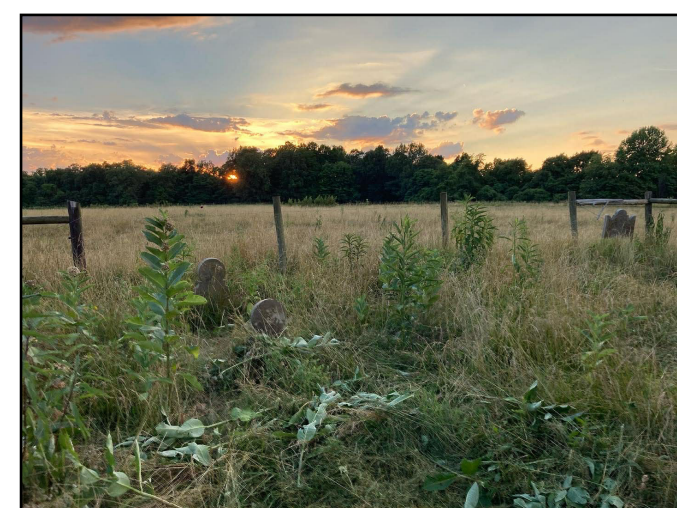
Today, a visitor to the Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site visitor center can find the original grave marker. A simple stone with the initials "TL" carved into them. After Tommy's death he was buried in nearby Redmon Cemetery about a quarter mile from the Lincoln's Knob Creek Cabin. Time pretty much erased the cemetery until 1933 when workers from the Works Progress Administration found the cemetery and the marker. In 1959, Scouts from Troop 15, Des Moines, IA., placed the current marker.

It's on private land, and I reached out to the owner of the property and asked him if we could visit the grave. He suggested we try in the summer and so my wife and I reached out again a few months later and we agreed to meet.

It was nearly dusk by the time we got there. I asked if we could just walk from the house to the cemetery. He looked at me like I was insane. "Son, there are heifers still nursing their calves, snakes and there is most likely a black bear in the woods."



Dennis Hanks was Abraham Lincoln's first cousin and bunkmate at the Indiana Cabin.



At the top of a small knoll is a fenced-in area and among that tall grass are the grave-stones.

We hopped onto his ATV and plowed through the knee-high grass. At the top of a small knoll was a fenced-in area and among that tall grass, were slightly taller stones. The farmer knew we were coming, so he and his grandson had courteously mowed a swath between the entrance and Tommy Lincoln's marker.

I stood there for a moment, just taking it all in. I'd done something that few Lincoln enthusiasts had done which was to visit the gravesite of Abraham Lincoln's brother. It's

hard to think that for that little 3-year-old boy who stood at that gravesite, this would be the start of immense heartbreak that would see him lose his mom, sister, the love of his life Ann Rutledge and his sons. Sadly, an untimely death would follow him as well.

Andy Chandler is a presidential historian and a museum archivist at Candles Holocaust Museum in Terre Haute and the Ernie Pyle WW II Museum in Dana Ind.

WHAT: Community Easter Egg Hunt
WHEN: March 23, 6:05, 6:10, 6:15 p.m.
WHERE: 4-H Fairgrounds
WHO: Purdue Extension
WHY: Because Easter Bunny Said So!



Annual Easter Egg Hunt Is March 23

Come join the fun at the annual Community Easter Egg Hunt on Monday, March 23!

The hunt will be held at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds, 2003 Pleasant St. in Noblesville.

Youth ages 8 and under are invited to hunt for eggs filled with candy and

prizes. But please be sure to bring your own basket. Egg hunt for little ones up to age 2 will begin at 6:05 p.m. Five minutes later, at 6:10 p.m., the hunt takes off for ages 3-5. And the oldest group, ages 6-8, begins at 6:15 p.m.

In addition to the Easter Egg hunt fun and festivities, the good folks from

Hamilton County 4-H Junior Leaders and Purdue Extension will also have farm animals available for petting and photos. For more information, please contact them at (317) 776-0854 or visit <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/hamilton/>

The Easter Egg Hunt is organized and sponsored

by the Hamilton County 4-H Junior Leaders. For more information about Junior Leaders or the 4-H Program in Hamilton County, contact Purdue Extension Hamilton County at (317) 776-0854 or visit them at <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/hamilton/>.

Westfield Teacher Finalist for FFA Honor

Chris Kaufman, Agri Science Teacher at Westfield High School, has been named a finalist for the FFA Indiana Golden Owl Award. He received the news during a class, presented by the students who nominated him, WHS administration, and representatives from the FFA and Nationwide.

Educators devote limitless time, and often their own resources, to helping students pursue their passions. To recognize the contributions of Indiana's leading agricultural teachers, the Indiana FFA and Nationwide are honoring 8 exceptional teachers as finalists for the Golden Owl Award.

From November 1st to December 31st, nominations were collected for the state's top agricultural teachers from local students, parents, fellow teachers and community members across Indiana.

Each finalist was presented with an individualized plaque in front of fellow teachers and students and

received a \$500 check to support future educational efforts. Next, they'll be entered into a final selection stage for the chance to be crowned as Indiana Ag Educator of the Year, earning an additional \$3,000 Nationwide-funded check and the coveted Golden Owl Award trophy.



2026 GMC ACADIA DENALI ELEVATES THREE-ROW STEALTH LUXURY WITH NEW ULTIMATE STYLE

One drive proves nobody needs ostentation for grace or pace with the entire family aboard



CASEY WILLIAMS
Columnist

GMC's Denali sub-brand has been described as "stealth luxury", vehicles for people who want comfort and style without ostentation. These upscale drivers can often afford the chrome badges of luxury makes, but prefer to stay below the radar of wealth. Flying ever so higher for 2026 is the three-row GMC Acadia Denali...Ultimate.

Putting numbers to it, Denali represents over 30-percent of GMC sales, skewing closer to 60-percent for models like the full-size Yukon. And, people are willing to spend as top models can reach over \$100,000. One should expect more than chrome and badges for premium pricing and the Acadia mostly delivers.

Much of its underpinnings are shared with the Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave, but it's uniquely styled with dark "Vader chrome" grille and angled driving lamps with animated lighting sequence to welcome you. Crisp lines break up tall bodysides under aluminum roof rails. Check the dark 22-inch wheels. Around back, quad exhaust outlets and wide valance with DENALI spelled across add intrigue.

Restrained exterior styling gives way to an exuberant cabin. Designers specified wide-stitched Woodland Mahogany leather seats with embossed topographical maps on their backs. Layers of stitched dash materials, real walnut veneers, and unique floor-mats should be relished. Slide under the dual-panel sunroof, crank up the 16-speaker Bose audio system, and caress the suede headliner. Don't forget to select heated, ventilated, and massaging front seats. Grip the heated steering wheel.

There's a den of technology including 11-inch flatscreen gauges and 15-inch infotainment screen.

Look over the hood at the reconfigurable head-up display. Devices connect wirelessly with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto – charge wirelessly too. The screen is intuitive, and you can swipe through radio channels, but I'd prefer redundant knobs. I'd also prefer to adjust headlamps without clicking a menu. Though, once set, they stay.

Moving rearward, middle row captain's chairs receive their own heaters, climate zone, USBs and power outlet. Seats slide forward for easier third-row entry, but it's mostly a kid zone back there. Space is tight under the power hatch with all three rows occupied, but rear rows power deploy for a cavern of space. A deep plastic underfloor well is perfect for storing dirty gear.

Hitting the road, tap the 2.5-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine connected to the all-wheel-drive system through an 8-speed automatic transmission. It wouldn't seem enough engine for a large three-row crossover, but moves quickly enough given 328 horsepower and 326 lb.-ft. of torque. That's also enough to tow 5,000 lbs. of weekend toys. Fuel economy is decent at 20/23-MPG city/highway.

I'd love an optional twin-turbo V6, but the turbo-four gets kids to school, parents to work, and performs light

off-roading to a campsite. It just wish it didn't sound so whiny when stomped. Six selectable drive modes configure the powertrain for varying conditions. For a crossover this size, it handles respectably on its sport-tuned suspension. Managing the large wheels over rough pavement can get a little clunky, but it remains composed.

Enduring any long trip, drivers will crave GM's Super Cruise. On approved roads - Interstates and highways - turn on cruise control, wait for a green arc on the steering wheel, confirm in the head-up display and lift hands off. After a few miles, the system feels safe and natural. Acadia comes with every imaginable crash avoidance system, but my favorite is the safety alert seat that vibrates in the direction of danger.

Even stealth luxury comes at a price. While the Acadia starts at a reasonable \$43,800, our primo mambo came to a healthier \$67,890. Still, compare that to an Acura MDX, Lexus TX, Lincoln Nautilus or Volvo XC90 and it'll wear very comfortably.

Storm Forward!

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

LIKES

- STEALTH LUXURY
- EFFICIENT POWERTRAIN
- SUPER CRUISE

DISLIKES

- TIGHT THIRD-ROW
- RADIO CONTROLS
- HEADLIGHT MENU

2026 GMC Acadia Denali Ultimate
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Output: 328hp/326 lb.-ft. torque
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Brakes f/r: disc/disc
Towing: 5,000 lbs.
Fuel economy: 20/23 mpg city/hwy
Assembly: Lansing, MI
Base/As-tested price: \$43,800/67,890

The Central Indiana Regional Development Authority (CIRDA) was established through bi-partisan legislation to create a more unified, strategically aligned, and developed region. Representing 32 distinct political subdivisions, CIRDA acts as a unified voice for the region, addressing key issues and driving initiatives that lead to sustained economic development and an enhanced quality of life for all residents. Recognizing the immense potential of Central Indiana and the need for a dedicated entity to drive regional initiatives, CIRDA promotes unprecedented cooperation among its diverse communities and the private and not-for-profit sectors.



Photo courtesy CIRDA

Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen moderated the group of municipal leaders, energy sector representatives and a land use expert.

Noblesville Mayor Leads Municipal Leaders on Strategic Discussion

On March 11, the Central Indiana Regional Development Authority hosted a panel discussion on data centers to examine their requirements, benefits, and any challenges they present. The panel, moderated by Noblesville Mayor Chris Jensen, consisted of the following municipal leaders, energy sector representatives, and a land use expert:

- Andrew Greenwood, Bargersville Town Council President
- Mike Dellinger, Morgan County Economic Development Corporation
- Patrick Maguire, AES
- Justin Forshey, CenterPoint Energy
- Ed Bukovac, Citizens Water
- Erin Schneider, Duke Energy
- Kelley Karn, Duke Energy
- Chad Sweeney, Ginovus

"Today was a very important step for Central Indiana – which represents 40 percent of the state's GDP – to have a



factual conversation about data centers, knowing that this technology is going to continue to grow," said Chris Jensen, Mayor of Noblesville and Vice-Chair of CIRDA.

The panel discussion served as a balanced conversation among experts, each answering questions as they pertained to their respective industry. This learning session served as a collaborative effort to build a foundational understanding of data centers as CIRDA works to develop a long-term economic development strategy to solidify Central Indiana as a globally competitive region.

"CIRDA is going to continue to be part of the discussion in Central Indiana, and we need to understand the facts around what type

of energy uses they have, what type of water uses they have, what kind of land they're looking for," said Jensen. "Then, that allows us – on the local level – to go back and inform our citizens and have an honest conversation about our future, how this may or may not fit into our communities, and how it could affect the region as a whole."

CIRDA will be meeting on the following dates:

- May 13, 2026
- July 15, 2026
- September 16, 2026

All meetings will be held at IU Indianapolis – Hine Hall (Kelley Room 137), located at 875 W. North Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Meetings are held from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM and are open to the public.

For more information about the Central Indiana Regional Development Authority, visit their website at www.centralindianarda.org.



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

The 2026 Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball Season begins **April 13, 2026** and ends on **June 17, 2026.**
(You do not need to be a Noblesville resident as we welcome ball players from surrounding communities).

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 13, 2026. A double-elimination tournament will be played June 7-17, 2026.
**Note: Dates subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.*

Registration Fee: 2026 Noblesville Babe Ruth Baseball registration fee is \$199 (plus processing fee applied at checkout) and includes team jersey and hat.

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 14, 2026 from 2 pm-4 pm at Noblesville High School. **More details to be provided at a later date.*

Register today at:
noblesvillebaberuthbaseball.sportsengine-prelive.com

Interested in supporting our young men and helping with continued upgrades to our facility? Sponsor opportunities are still available!
Email nbrbcommunications@gmail.com for more information.

Thank you for reading The Times!

We Had a Plane to Catch



DICK WOLFSIE
Columnist

When we returned from our vacation in Costa Rica, the travel company asked us to rate our guide who accompanied us during the week-long tour. Mary Ellen and I agreed he was “for the birds.” Guillermo knew everything about birds. He knew each bird’s phylum, order, genus, and species, and he could explain these details in four languages. As we walked through rainforests or cloud forests, he would point out a bird in a tree and give us full details about its lifestyle, diet, and mating habits. He was truly a bird-brain, although he’d probably prefer to be called an avian biologist. I never had that choice.

Another notable quality of Guillermo was that, given the United States’ partisan climate, he was careful to avoid any references to controversial issues. When he discussed certain birds making their yearly trip to a new climate, he always used the phrase “making their annual sojourn.” The word migration was avoided. But, with birds anyway, he was definitely an advocate.

Our bus driver’s name was Manuel. He was excellent at the wheel, handling every turn and maneuvering through tight spots. I asked Guillermo if he thought there would ever be a driverless coach. “No,” said Guillermo. “We

prefer manual driving.” Manuel didn’t get the joke because he didn’t speak much English. Just as well. I didn’t want Guillermo to have the best one-liner on the trip.

We also saw a magnificent squadron of pelicans, a term I learned from Guillermo. By the way, I love pelicans. And because of that, my favorite (clean) limerick is about pelicans, which is totally off topic, but I’ve been waiting 25 years to have an excuse to insert this into a column.

A wonderful bird is the pelican

His beak can hold more than his belican

He can take in his beak

Enough for a week

But I’m dammed if I know how the helican

(Allegedly written by Edward Lear, but authorship is disputed.)

But now, let’s return to our travels. We also took a catamaran into crocodile-infested waters. There was one sighting where we were within six feet of a 1,600-pound croc the locals called Captain Hook, a clear reference to J.M. Barrie’s story Peter Pan, where the crocodile bites off Captain Hook’s hand and develops a taste

for him. The creature is named The Tick-Tock Croc because it also swallowed a ticking clock that warns Hook of its presence. Could the monster we faced swallow a clock? Yes, even a grandfather clock. Although this giant did not actually swallow a clock, we knew exactly what time it was when he moved closer to us and opened his jaws. Time to get out of there.

On our last day, Guillermo accompanied us to the airport. I asked him how far we were from the U.S. coast. He said about 1500 miles, “as the crow flies.” Then he added, “Also 1500 miles for the Keel-billed Toucan, the Collared Aracari, the Scarlet Macaw, the Red-lored Parrot, the Crimson-fronted Parakeet, the Violet Sabrewing, the Golden-hooded Tanager, the Three-wattled Bell-bird, the Emerald Toucanet, the Slaty-Throated Redstart, the Ruddy Triune...”

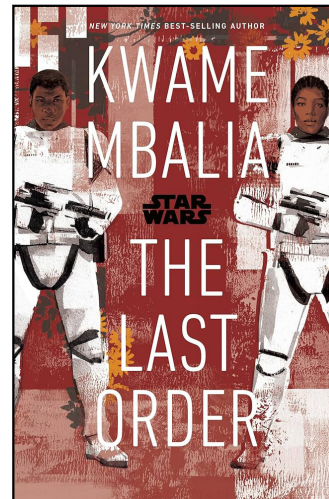
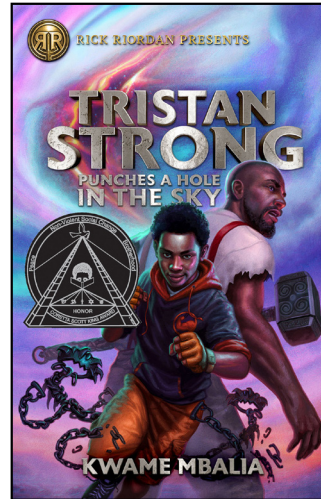
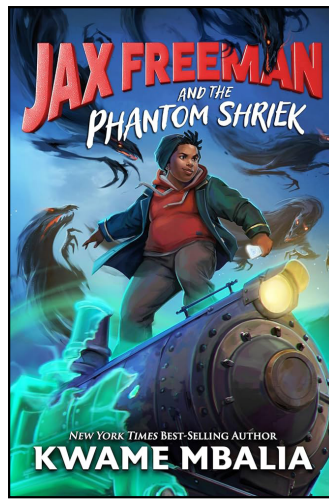
Guillermo never ran out of birds, but we ran out of time because we had a plane to catch.

We headed for the airport. I’m sure Guillermo watched us take off. He seldom misses anything in flight.

Thanks, Guillermo and Manuel, you were the best guides we’ve ever had.

I can’t wait to tweet about it.

Dick Wolfsie is a retired TV personality, author, speaker, teacher and all-around good guy. His award-winning column appears here weekly.



NYT Bestselling Author Kwame Mbalia At Library March 24

The Hamilton East Public Library is excited to welcome *New York Times* bestselling author Kwame Mbalia to the Fishers Library on Tuesday, March 24 at 6 p.m.



HAMILTON EAST
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mbalia is a husband, father, writer, publisher, and former pharmaceutical metrologist (in that order). He is the author of the bestselling *Tristan Strong* series, the first installment of which received a Coretta Scott King Author Honor. Mbalia is also the co-author of *Last Gate of the Emperor* with Prince Joel Makonnen, published by Scholastic, and the editor of the #1 *New York Times* bestselling anthology *Black Boy Joy*, published by Delacorte Press.

In addition to his writing, Mbalia serves as a publisher for Freedom Fire, his imprint created in collaboration with Disney Books. His newest middle grade adventure, *Jax Freeman and the Phantom Shriek*, a Freedom Fire title, was released in

October 2024. A graduate of Howard University and a Midwesterner now living in North Carolina, Mbalia says he survives on dad jokes and Cheez-Its.

“We are excited to host Kwame Mbalia at the Hamilton East Public Library,” says HEPL’s Systemwide Program Coordinator, Allison Kartman. “Kwame’s works mainly focus on middle grade readers, and his *Tristan Strong* and *Jax Freeman* series will please any *Percy Jackson* fan who enjoys tales of gods, legends, and mythical tales! Author visits are always a great way for kids and families to connect with the people behind their favorite stories and learn more about the process of writing and becoming a published author.”



Kwame Mbalia

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is not required but is highly encouraged to help staff prepare for attendance. Following the program, Mbalia will be available to sign books. LoudMouth Books will be onsite beginning at 5:30 p.m. with a selection of titles available for purchase.

For more information about Kwame Mbalia’s author visit, please visit hamiltoneastpl.org.

FISHERS

Continued from Page 1

munity. Longtime Hamilton Southeastern High School Athletic Director Jim Self was approved for appointment to this position during the meeting with the effective start date of May 1, 2026.

“I’m excited to evolve our approach to youth sports in Fishers, and with Jim Self

on board, I believe we have the right architect to ensure we lead the way when it comes to investing in our kids, our schools, and our community spaces,” Fadness added.

Improvements for Hamilton Southeastern High School and Fishers High School will begin this spring

and are anticipated to be completed by late summer.

The interlocal agreement was approved unanimously at a joint meeting for the Fishers City Council and the Hamilton Southeastern Board of Trustees held on March 11.

Sheridan Indoor Easter Egg Hunt March 21

The annual Indoor Easter Egg Hunt and Bunny Visit will return to the Sheridan Public Library on Saturday, March 21 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Hunts will begin every 15 minutes. This event is for ages 10 and under. Children are encouraged to bring baskets or bags

to carry eggs.

For more information on upcoming events, please visit sheridan.lib.in.us.

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About the Indiana Library Federation

The Indiana Library Federation represents public, school, academic and special libraries throughout Indiana and advocates for policies that ensure all Hoosiers have access to library services.

Library Foundation Raises Concern Over New Legislation

The Indiana Library Federation is deeply disappointed with the final legislative action taken during the 2026 session that will significantly affect Indiana’s public libraries.

Language affecting public libraries, which originated in Senate Bill 8 and Senate Bill 4, was ultimately added to House Bill 1406 through the conference committee process on the final day of the legislative session.

While library leaders engaged in advocacy and discussions with legislators throughout the session, no opportunity for public testimony was allowed during the second half of the legislative session. Additionally, key provisions included in the final bill were never introduced or publicly debated prior to the conference committee report.

“We appreciate the legislators who took time to meet with library leaders and consider our concerns throughout the session,” Vanessa Martin, ILF Advocacy Co-Chair stated “However, we are deeply dismayed that the final language affecting libraries was adopted without a full public process.”

ILF is concerned about the Maximum Levy Growth Quotient provision included in the final legislation. First introduced in Senate Bill 4 during an amend-and-vote-only committee action, the provision effectively limits library

budget growth to less than 50 percent of the growth permitted for other local governmental units. It also adds administrative deadlines and penalties that apply only to public libraries, creating new requirements that they must meet or face significant consequences. Public libraries that exceed the growth threshold or fail to meet these requirements risk being placed under binding review, which may force them to cut services and reduce hours, even when community needs justify additional resources.

“At a time when many Hoosiers are struggling with affordability, public libraries provide critical access to education, technology, and community resources that should not be artificially limited by punitive budget restrictions,” said Julie Wendorf, ILF Advocacy Co-Chair.

New provisions added in conference committee apply exclusively to public libraries and reduce their allowable budget growth by requiring libraries that seek 50 percent or more of the Maximum Levy Growth Quotient to submit proposed budgets and property tax levies to their fiscal bodies before September 2 each year, a requirement that does not apply to any other local governmental units. If a library under binding review fails to meet that deadline, its property tax levy would be calculated using 49 percent of the previous

year’s levy, rather than the 80 percent calculation currently used for other local government units. The legislation unfairly singles out public libraries for punitive measures, even though other public entities with appointed boards are not subject to the same restrictions.

Indiana libraries serve millions of residents annually by providing access to early childhood literacy activities, workforce development resources, high speed and reliable internet and wi-fi, lifelong learning opportunities, meeting spaces, and connections to community services. According to the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance, in 2024, Indiana public libraries represented 3.99 percent of the total levy of all local units and only 2.08 percent of the overall debt service levies. Indiana’s public libraries provide an enormous return on investment for the tax dollars entrusted to them.

ILF remains committed to working with policymakers to ensure fiscal accountability while protecting the ability of libraries to meet community needs. “We remain committed to constructive dialogue with state leaders. Our goal continues to be ensuring that Indiana’s libraries remain strong, sustainable institutions serving communities across the state.” stated Vanessa Martin, ILF Advocacy Co-Chair.

Secretary of State, Turning Point USA Launch Statewide Voter Registration Partnership

Indiana Secretary of State Diego Morales recently launched a statewide voter registration and poll worker recruitment initiative with Club America powered by Turning Point USA 501(c)(3). The effort is aimed at increasing voter registration and strengthening poll worker recruitment efforts across the state.

The Secretary of State’s Office will collaborate with Club America to host voter registration drives on high school campuses and provide students with accurate, up-to-date election information. Both will work to assist with on-site voter registration. The initiative will also highlight the “Hoosier Hall Pass” program, which allows eligible students to serve as poll workers. Since 2023 the Secretary of State has facilitated hundreds of non-partisan voter registration events at schools and colleges, fairs, festi-

vals, sporting events, and public gatherings.

“As Indiana’s Chief Election Officer, my priority is ensuring every eligible Hoosier has the opportunity to register to vote and participate in our elections. I’m excited to partner with Club America on this initiative allowing us to meet young voters where they are and empower them with the tools and resources they need to engage in the civic process. Young Hoosiers are the future of our state. By engaging students early and providing hands-on opportunities to participate and serve, we are building the next generation of informed voters and leaders,” said Diego Morales, Indiana Secretary of State.

“We believe the next generation of leaders are sitting in America’s classrooms. Through our Club America chapters and partnership

with Secretary Morales, we’re making it easier for Indiana students to register to vote, serve their communities, and use their voice. Engaging young Americans early ensures they understand both their rights and their responsibility to defend freedom—just like Charlie Kirk,” said Nick Cocca, Club America Enterprise Director.

In addition to voter registration, the efforts will promote poll worker recruitment opportunities, encouraging students to serve their communities on Election Day.

Indiana schools and Turning Point USA chapters interested in hosting a voter registration drive or learning more about poll worker opportunities are encouraged to contact the Indiana Secretary of State’s Office.

We Will Seek the Good



CARRIE CLASSON
The Postscript

There’s a reason I don’t write about current events.

The news flies at me faster than I can absorb. I cannot make sense of it all, and it feels as if I should always be doing something more, knowing more, helping more than I am.

The parable in the Bible that made the biggest impact on me as a child was the story Jesus told of how, when the master went away, he gave his servants talents to safeguard. Of course, in the literal sense, a talent was a large amount of money, but as a child, I took it to mean exactly as the parable implied—some kind of ability I might have.

I didn’t want to be that servant who stuck his talents in the ground and did nothing with them. Those talents didn’t do any good. They didn’t grow. They didn’t help anyone. I promised myself (at eight or nine years old) I wouldn’t make the mistake of that foolish servant. I’d make use of whatever I’d been given.

In the years since I was eight or nine, I’ve come to

realize this is not as easy as it sounds. Every single person has more talents than they know what to do with. The trick is deciding what to do with whatever we have and using it wisely in whatever time we are given.

Every day, I see a multitude of people who seem to be doing a lot more than I do. And this morning, again, I wondered if I was doing enough to make the world more livable, more kind, more loving. This morning, I had the very strong impression that I was not.

So I went to church. It was cold and gray, and I was grumpy. But I figured those were good reasons to go to church rather than stay at home. Once I got there, I was surrounded by folks who seemed busy doing the things they felt they needed to do—using their talents to the best of their abilities. I genuinely felt lost. I wondered if I was the only one who felt so confused. We got all the way to the benediction before I felt any clarity at all.

“We will seek the good,” the benediction said.

It said a few other things, but that phrase, “seek the good,” stuck with me because, for the first time in several days, I felt as if maybe there was something I could do.

I could seek the good—in every person I encounter, in every interaction I have, within the hearts and minds of the folks I might not agree with. I can seek the good.

It doesn’t sound like a lot. It seems like a pretty simple thing, actually, not a serious job assignment. It doesn’t sound entirely sensible, and it certainly doesn’t sound pragmatic. But I’m going to seek the good because this morning, it suddenly seemed to me that making a practice of seeking the good is a lot harder than it seems. And possibly, it’s more important than it sounds.

It is so easy to lose hope. It is so easy to become deeply cynical. It’s easy to explain what is wrong with others and what is wrong with ourselves, and there are a lot of people who do that well.

But right now, when there is no shortage of anger or fear or cynicism, I’m going to try to seek the good instead—the good I know is all around me—sometimes in plain sight, sometimes in places I forget to look.

Till next time,
Carrie

Westfield Schools Switching to Semesters

The Westfield Washington Schools Board of Trustees recently voted to approve a transition from a trimester academic calendar to a semester calendar for Westfield schools, beginning with the 2027–28 school year.

The 2026–2027 school year will remain on the trimester schedule, allowing time for planning, collaboration, and preparation ahead of the transition.

The move follows more than a year of research and discussion by the WHS Schedule Task Force, a group of educators who studied scheduling models, gathered feedback from stakeholders, and evaluated how scheduling impacts student learning, course opportunities, and district operations.

“One of the things I would want our stakeholders to know is just how thorough of a process we went through as a scheduling task force,” said Alexandra Mailloux, instructional coach at Westfield High School. “As a team, we had a wide variety of educators from across the building that brought different experiences, different backgrounds, and expertise so that we really could consider all of the

different variables that are impacted by a schedule.”

For many educators involved in the process, the research and analysis helped clarify the benefits a semester model could bring to students.

“At first I was not fully on board for the change because I love trimesters,” said Emily Wetzel, Westfield High School teacher. “But once we did some research and started digging in with the sizes of classes and the size of the building, it made more sense to have longer classes with longer passing periods.”

The new structure is also expected to strengthen opportunities for deeper learning in the classroom while improving alignment with outside partners.

“Going to semesters for Westfield High School would be a huge advantage for our teachers from the standpoint of having more time in the classroom to go a lot deeper,” said Eric Rauch, instructional coach at Westfield High School. “The extended time to get to know students and build relationships ultimately helps set our kids up for success.”

The change will also support Westfield Washing-

ton Schools’ commitment to preparing students for life beyond graduation.

“The new schedule will allow us to better align with local businesses, more job training, getting our students ready to be life ready,” said Natalie Messmore, Westfield High School teacher.

In addition to deeper instructional opportunities, the semester model will provide continuous learning in core subjects (no more trimester gaps between subjects like math and English) and better align Westfield schools with other local similarly-sized schools, career and technical education programs, and college-level course partnerships.

WHS and district leaders emphasize that the transition will be carefully planned over the next two school years, with continued collaboration among teachers, administrators, students, and families.

Westfield Washington Schools will share additional updates regarding bell schedules, course planning, and the finalized 2027–28 academic calendar with students, staff, and families as the transition process continues.

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Spring Busy Time at Fishers Event Center

The Fishers Event Center has established itself as a key player in the region's entertainment landscape following a milestone first year after its November 2024 opening. The 7,500 seat venue continues to host big name shows while maintaining an ongoing commitment to guest experience. New and ongoing features including inclusivity initiatives, refreshed menu highlights and fan-focused activations keep fans coming back for new and repeat experiences as the venue continues to also serve as a community hub for graduations, elevated private events, donation sites, local artists and more.

March is Disability Awareness Month: Fishers Event Center's Inclusivity Initiatives

Dedicated to ensuring a welcoming experience for all individuals, Fishers Event Center is proud to feature several inclusivity initiatives available to guests.

- Fishers Event Center is a KultureCity® Certified sensory inclusive venue. The certification process entailed the staff at Fishers Event Center to be trained by leading medical and neurodivergent professionals on how to recognize guests and fans with sensory needs and how to handle a sensory overload situation. KultureCity is the world's leading nonprofit on sensory accessibility and acceptance.
- For individuals with sensory sensitivities, KultureCity sensory bags are available at the Guest Services Center (Section 109). Each bag contains items to help calm, relax and manage sensory overload, and include comfortable noise-cancelling headphones, sunglasses, fidget tools, a visual feeling thermometer and a KultureCity VIP lanyard to help the staff easily identify a guest.
- A universal changing table, which accommodates individuals of all ages, sizes and levels of mobility, is available in the second level family restroom near Section 219. The adjustable height feature ensures comfort and convenience for everyone who needs it.
- Open to fans, guests, and cus-

tomers with sensory sensitivities, the Sensory Room Presented by DAM-AR® is located in the Guest Services Center at Section 109. The sensory room is open for all events at the Event Center from the time gates open through the end of the event. Guests may require a safe and calming environment to provide comfort and support to individuals who are overwhelmed. A space to decompress, self-regulate and regain confidence before returning to their activities. Sensory accessible and inclusive for adults and children who may benefit from a calming and supportive environment.

- The Mother's Room Presented by IKEA® provides privacy and convenience to support parents. Equipped with a TV, a baby changing table, a cozy nursing chair and books, this space offers a peaceful and private environment for nursing, changing, and bonding with children during events. Check in with the Guest Services Center located near Section 109 to access.
- Various other ADA accommodations including accessible parking and drop-off locations, wheelchair assistance, assistive listening and more.

For more information, visit Fishers Event Center Accessibility Guide.

New Food & Beverage Highlights

Fishers Event Center has partnered with three new local vendors, further building on its stellar list of food & beverage offerings with a wide variety of dining options and fresh ingredients.

- The Fishers Event Center is the first venue in Indiana to feature Pure Pour, a premium vending concept delivering non-alcoholic, functional, and wellness-driven drinks. As the market for zero proof beverages continues to grow, guests will have a variety of non-alcoholic options to choose from including the new Pure Pour vending machine, Ohana's Dirty Soda offerings and mocktails available at every bar.

- BeeFree uses real organic honey to sweeten their all-natural snacks instead of high fructose corn syrup or other artificial sweeteners. Through its non-profit arm, BeeFree Bakes, the company promotes a culture of successful employment and enriches the lives of adults with autism and other forms of neurodiversity. Every purchase of Warrior Snack Mix supports this mission, making each snack good for the body and good for the soul.
- Ben's Pretzels is dedicated to bringing change for the better through carefully crafted, premium pretzels matched with the same quality of customer service. Catch them in action as they hand-roll these pretzels upstairs on the concourse!

Elevate the Experience! Upcoming Theme Nights & Activations

Fishers Event Center is home to three professional sports teams: the Indy Fuel Hockey Club of the ECHL, Indy Ignite of the Major League Volleyball, and Fishers Freight of the Indoor Football League. Elevate your fan experience this spring during these exciting Theme Nights! For schedule & ticket information, visit FishersEventCenter.com.

Fishers Freight

- Sunday, April 5 - Freight Tackles Cancer
- Saturday, April 11 - Retro Gaming Night
- Saturday, May 2 - Star Wars Night
- Saturday, May 16 - Military Night

Indy Ignite

- Thursday, March 19 - Youth Volleyball Night
- Sunday, April 12 - Blue Out
- Sunday, April 19 - College Tailgate featuring a pre-match scrimmage between Division I powerhouses Purdue University vs. Vanderbilt University, starting at 3 p.m.
- Friday, May 1 - Horses & Horsepower
- Sunday, May 3 - Fan Appreciation Day - Score Your Pepper Bobblehead!

Indy Fuel

- Friday, March 20 - Faith & Family USAC Racing Night
- Saturday, March



Photo courtesy Fishers Event Center

All during March, the Center is observing Disability Awareness Month.

- 31 - Margaritaville Night
- Sunday, March 22 - Family Fun Day with Bluey featuring a Postgame Skate
- Sunday, March 29 - Family Fun/ Agriculture Day featuring a Postgame Skate
- Saturday, April 4 - Fan Appreciation Night featuring a free bobblehead giveaway

April 24-26: An immersive experience for Billy Strings fans!

Fishers Event Center has partnered with the City of Fishers and Hamilton County Tourism to create an immersive experience for Billy Strings fans throughout the community, including fan meet ups, pop up activities and more. Concert goers will enjoy a beer garden, food trucks and unique photo ops at Fishers Event Center on the FORUM Credit Union Plaza. More to be announced! For more information and unique places to check out over this exciting 3-day weekend, visit Everything You Need for a Billy Strings Weekend in Hamilton County, Indiana.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE VENUE: Situated on a sprawling 53-acre plot expanding upon the popular 18-acre lifestyle development Fishers District, the Fishers Event Center hosts everything from concerts, entertainment acts to basketball games while serving as a community-focused venue for

local athletes to compete, graduation ceremonies and more. The new arena features state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems, thoughtfully designed seating arrangements, cutting-edge technology, elevated food and beverage options, premier amenities, and a commitment to quality and innovation. Home to three professional sports teams (Indy Fuel Hockey Club of the ECHL; Indy Ignite of the Major League Volleyball; and Fishers Freight of the Indoor Football League), the Fishers Event Center also serves as the largest private event space in Hamilton County. Beyond its programming, the venue boasts extraordinary sightlines offering a great view from the front row to the back of the house. Designed with advanced technology and comfort in mind, the arena offers streamlined arrival, point of sale and departure experiences so you can spend more time enjoying events and less time in lines. For a full list of upcoming events and ticket information, visit FishersEventCenter.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The Fishers Event Center hosts a wide variety of community events and concerts spanning genres including theater, sports, comedy, family, country, rock and more in an intimate setting. Upcoming events include:

- Heart: Royal Flush Tour with special guest Lucinda

Williams (Sunday, March 15)

- Chase Rice with Clayton Anderson: The 17th annual Evening of Inspiration: Chasing A Cure, presented by the Bev Hartig Huntington's Disease Foundation (Saturday, April 18)
- Billy Strings - Three Nights! (Friday, April 24, Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26)
- THIRD DAY 30th Anniversary Tour with very special guest Zach Williams (Thursday, April 30)
- Koe Wetzel: The Night Champion World Tour (Friday, October 9)
- CeCe Winans: The COME WORSHIP! Tour (Wednesday, October 14)
- ...and much more! Visit FishersEventCenter.com for a full list of events.

BEFORE YOU GO: For a full list of upcoming events and ticket information, visit FishersEventCenter.com. Fans can sign up for the venue newsletter to stay informed of event announcements and presale options. Review the Know Before You Go information, including details on the venue's hassle-free free flow pre-pay parking, clear bag policy, cashless policy, local directions, suggested lodging and venue maps.



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Historian David Heighway Honored

At the March board meeting of the Hamilton County Historical Society, Indiana House Representative Alaina Shonkwiler of District 29 presented David Heighway, Hamilton County Historian Emeritus, with an Indiana House District 29 Declaration.

A House District 29 Declaration is a local recognition presented to individuals who have served their community with distinction and made a meaningful impact on the lives of others.

This honor was given in recognition of Heighway's contribution of 18 years as Hamilton County Historian. The county historian program, administered by the Indiana Histori-

cal Society and Indiana Historical Bureau, is a volunteer position where the appointed person is nominated by the county's historical societies and public libraries.

Text of the declaration:

In recognition of the vital role of history in our community identity, and in honor of those who preserve and interpret history, the legislature affirms the importance of acknowledging individuals whose service deepens our sense of heritage.

Acts of recognition remind us of what we value as a community. In this declaration, we recognize the values of scholarship, storytelling, and civic engagement, and today,

we proudly recognize Mr. David Heighway for 18 years of living those values as Hamilton County Historian.

Mr. Heighway's works are a seminal contribution to the preservation and interpretation of Hamilton County history. Through his book *Hidden History of Hamilton County, Indiana*, his historical essays, and public programs, he illuminated overlooked stories that otherwise would have been lost. His work spans local history including early settlement and treaties, transportation and canals, community celebrations, sports and recreation, notable individuals, economic life, and the everyday experiences that shaped the county.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, David Heighway was supported and inspired by the love of his brother Rob and his sister Anne. Their encouragement allowed him to devote countless hours to public service, and they share in his legacy.

Let it be affirmed that this declaration is not merely ceremonial, but a meaningful acknowledgment of public service. To honor David Heighway is to recognize the profound impact one historian can have in education, preserving memories, and setting a light local pride in Hamilton County.

Declared with gratitude on behalf of the people of this district, this recognition stands as a testament



to our values and to the importance of preserving history through the service of individuals like

David Heighway.

► FOR THE RECORD

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.

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NOBLESVILLE SCHOOLS BOARD MEETING

Noblesville Schools Educational Services Center
18025 River Road
Noblesville, Indiana
Tuesday, March 17, 2026
6:00 P.M.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – MOMENT OF SILENCE

II. RECOGNITIONS

- NHS ISSMA
- NHS Thespian Troupe #8118
- NHS Yearbook
- Hare Teacher Spotlight / Noblesville West Middle School

III. REPORTS

- Building Spotlight / Noblesville West Middle School
Ryan Haughey, Principal
- Strategic Planning Presentation / Compassionate Care and Support
Dr. Julie Thacker, Ex. Director of Student Services

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA TOPICS

The purpose of this comment period is to allow the public an opportunity to share input with the Board about current agenda topics, pursuant to Policy H225, Public Comments and Concerns.

V. CONSENT

By single motion, the board approves/adopts the following items or actions which reflect application of Board Policy and Indiana Code. Any items marked "Consent" may be moved from the list at the option of a board member or the superintendent and acted on separately.

- Claims
- Donations
- Minutes / February 2026
- Overnight Trips
- Personnel Listing

VI. ACTION

By individual motions, the board approves/adopts the following items or actions which reflect application of Board Policy and Indiana Code.

- Personnel Background Checks
- Bids / Summer 2026 Campus Paving

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA TOPICS

The purpose of this comment period is to allow the public an opportunity to share input with the Board about non-agenda topics, pursuant to Policy H225, Public Comments and Concerns.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REMARKS

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

X. ADJOURNMENT

The school board president asks for a motion to adjourn.



Photo courtesy Sheridan Schools

This annual evening in Sheridan brought families, educational games and laughter together.

Sheridan Brings Families Together With Annual Game Night

On March 5th, SES welcomed students and families for another exciting Family Game Night. This annual evening is focused on bringing together families for a night of fun learning within a relaxed atmosphere. The night brought educational games and laughter together.

All evening long, families rotated through the variety of game stations. These games encouraged teamwork and connected to the educational focus of PBL (Project-Based Learning). "Old-school" board games and other interactive "games" provided an opportunity to play together while reinforcing the academic skills that

SES drives home every day.

There was also a new feature: literacy-based games. These "games" highlighted the importance of reading at home! Another new feature was the free book giveaway. Students were able to choose books to take home and add to their home libraries. Activities like this help encourage reading beyond the classroom and help SES students build strong literacy habits.

SES Principal, Valerie Roberts, shared, "Our Family Game Nights are a wonderful opportunity for families to come into the school, spend time together, and see how learning

can happen through fun activities. Seeing our students excited about the games, reading, and working alongside their family makes these events all the more worth it."

This event, along with countless others, provides SES students, families, and staff a unique opportunity to spend quality time together in a fun, engaging, and collaborative way. With the continued success of events like Family Game Night, SES looks forward to hosting more opportunities that bring everyone together while supporting the education and growth of the students.



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Hannah Eggert New Assistant Principal

Westfield Washington Schools is pleased to announce that Hannah Eggert has been named the next Assistant Principal of Carey Ridge Elementary School.

Eggert currently serves as a 2nd grade teacher at Oak Trace Elementary School, where she has been an educator for the past nine years. Throughout her time in the classroom, she has been recognized for her commitment to student learning, collaboration with colleagues, and strong partnerships with families. She has also taken on leadership roles within the school community, including mentoring a student teacher and serving as a representative in the district's Professional Learning Community Academy.

In addition to her classroom leadership, Eggert has gained administrative experience as the Summer School Administrator for Westfield Washington Schools in summer 2025, where she coordinated programming, supported staff, communicated with families, and ensured students received targeted

academic support aligned with IREAD expectations. She also completed multiple semesters as a principal intern at Oak Trace Elementary and Westfield High School, supporting school leadership teams with professional development, student data analysis, safety planning, and student support initiatives.

Eggert earned her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership with Administrative Licensure from Purdue University and her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Indianapolis, where she was also a member and captain of the university's women's soccer team.

"I am so excited and honored to join the team at Carey Ridge. I look forward to partnering with our wonderful students, families, and staff to support all of our learners reach their full potential."

Outside the classroom, Eggert has been deeply involved in student activities and athletics. She served as the Westfield High School Girls Varsity Soccer Coach from 2018



Hannah Eggert

through winter 2025, building strong relationships with student-athletes and families while leading the program for seven seasons.

Carey Ridge Elementary Principal Scott Chambers expressed enthusiasm for Eggert joining the leadership team:

"I am honored to welcome Mrs. Hannah Eggert to her new role as Assistant Principal at CRES. I look forward to partnering with Hannah to continue to offer Carey Ridge the love and care we provide for our students and staff."

Westfield Washington Schools is excited to welcome Hannah Eggert to Carey Ridge Elementary and looks forward to the leadership, energy, and dedication she will bring to the school community.

Westfield Youth Council Applications Open

The City of Westfield has opened its application portal for the 2026-27 cohort of the Westfield Mayor's Youth Council. The Westfield Mayor's Youth Council is a leadership development program designed for local high school students eager to make a positive impact in their community.

"This year's Youth Council cohort set the bar for what our incredible students can achieve," said Mayor Scott Willis. "I'm excited to see how the next group of young leaders can continue to build upon the success of our inaugural group."

The 2025 - 2026 cohort is finalizing details on their civic project: solar-powered picnic tables at Grand Junction Plaza. Information about a public ribbon cutting ceremony planned by the students will be an-

nounced soon.

The Westfield Mayor's Youth Council gives high school students hands-on experience in local government, community engagement, and project management. To ensure each participant has a meaningful experience, space in the Council is limited, and selection will be based on the strength of each student's application and interview process.

The online application will open on Wednesday, March 11 at 3 p.m., and will remain open until Friday, April 17 at 3 p.m. To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a resident of Westfield (at least one parent or legal guardian residing in Westfield)
- Be a current or incoming high school student (public,

private, or home-schooled)

- Be self-motivated and committed to fulfilling their responsibilities
- Be able to dedicate approximately 5-10 hours per week to WMYC activities

All submissions will be reviewed by the Westfield Mayor's Youth Council advisor and two independent community members after the application deadline closes.

Students from all backgrounds and life experiences are strongly encouraged to apply—a student's GPA is not a determining factor in our selection process.

Students may learn more about the Westfield Mayor's Youth Council or apply by visiting westfieldin.gov/YouthCouncil.



Photo courtesy Indiana House Republican

From left, State Rep. Danny Lopez and Carmel High School graduate August Miller.

County Native Gains Experience in 2026 Session

Carmel High School graduate August Miller gained experience as an intern with State Rep. Danny Lopez (R-Carmel) and his fellow members of the Indiana House of Representatives during the 2026 legislative session.

Miller is the son of Jennifer and Jerid Miller. He recently graduated Indiana University Indianapolis with a major in political science.

"I love being able to help the people of Indiana by supporting policy," Miller said. "Connecting with

constituents also plays an important role in ensuring their state government is working for them."

As a legislative intern, Miller corresponds with constituents through phone calls, letters and emails while also staffing committee hearings and floor proceedings.

"August is a promising young leader from our community," Lopez said. "It's encouraging to see interns like him demonstrate a commitment and willingness to serve."

Each year, the Indiana House offers paid, full-time, spring semester internship opportunities to college students, recent graduates and students in graduate and law school during the legislative session.

Learn more about the House Republican internship program by visiting IndianaHouseRepublicans.com/internship.

Lopez represents House District 39, which includes a portion of Hamilton County.



Photos courtesy Sheridan Schools / Allison Waitt

Sheridan students collectively raised \$7,615 for Special Olympics of Indiana.



Despite chilly temps and really cold water, Sheridan students stepped up for Special Olympics.

SHS Raises more than \$7,600 for Special Olympics

On Friday, March 6, Sheridan High School students and staff were able to participate in an unforgettable experience. Each year, SHS staff members and students lead an initiative to raise money for Special Olympics by participating in a Polar Plunge. Plunging at Eagle Creek Park, students raise money all year to be able to participate in this exciting

event.

This year, SHS collectively raised \$7,615 for Special Olympics of Indiana. All year, students take time to fundraise and demonstrate their passion and support for every student. Many schools across the state of Indiana participate in this challenge and dive into the cold waters. This event not only allows them to share

in an exciting event with their peers but also allows them to make a positive impact on their community.

SHS students and their commitment to supporting those in need are a perfect example of the community and connection that make Sheridan Community Schools a great place to be!

THE TIMES

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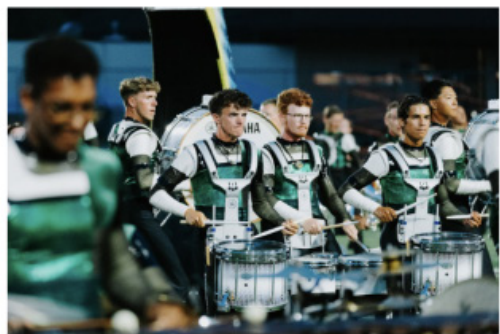
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Groundbreaking Immersive Musical Event Coming

The Fishers Event Center invites you to prepare for a sonic experience that defies expectations! Two of the most popular and celebrated ensembles in the marching arts, The Cavaliers and Carolina Crown Drum and Bugle Corps, are coming indoors for a first-of-its-kind joint venture titled Inside The Sound: An Immersive Musical Experience, presented by Paige's Music live at the Fishers Event Center on Saturday, June 27.

This event offers a departure from the traditional stadium setting of drum corps. Scheduled just days before both groups launch their competitive summer tours, "Inside The Sound" strips away the distance of a football field to provide an exclusive, up-close look at the raw power and technical mastery of these world-class performers.

Tickets for this premiere, one-of-a-kind event are on sale at FishersEventCenter.com.

For the Fishers commu-

nity and those new to the activity, this is far from a traditional indoor concert. "Inside The Sound" is a high-octane, professional-grade display of brass and percussion that vibrates through the floorboards and demands to be felt as much as heard. Each group features more than 80 brass performers and 35 percussionists, creating a massive, high-impact wall of sound specifically designed to fill the theater with incredible intensity. The acoustics of the Fishers Event Center will place the audience at the heart of an intense, precision-driven performance.

This event brings together two legendary organizations that represent the absolute pinnacle of their craft. The Cavaliers, based in Rosemont, Illinois, are one of the most recognizable names in the world with seven DCI World Championship titles to their credit. Joining them is Carolina Crown from Fort Mill, South Carolina, a fan-favorite powerhouse

that has achieved the remarkable feat of placing in the top five globally every year since 2008.

The performers of both groups are talented young adults showcasing elite athleticism and top-tier musicianship. Members of each corps undergo a rigorous winter audition process and a grueling training schedule, coming together once a month from December until May, and then moving in together to rehearse daily. 12+ hour rehearsal days in the summer allow these groups to achieve a level of synchronization and musicality that rivals professional orchestras and Broadway productions. "Inside The Sound" is the culmination of thousands of hours of preparation, brought into an intimate, high-energy indoor setting just before the groups begin their national travels.

For more information on the performing ensembles, visit cavaliers.org and carolinacrown.org.

Successor Chosen for Retiring Director

Westfield Washington Schools has announced that Caylie Dicken has been named the next Director of Early Learning Programs at the Virginia F. Wood Early Learning Center, continuing the district's commitment to providing exceptional care and early learning opportunities for young children and families. She will be taking over after Marci Derado, current Director, retires at the end of the 2025-26 school year.

Dicken has served at the ELC since the facility opened in 2022 and is currently in her fourth year with the district. During that time, she has played an integral role in launching and supporting the district's early learning initiatives.

"I am honored and excited to step into the role of Director of Early Learning Programs," said Dicken. "I am so proud of the work that we do at the ELC. I am grateful for the mentorship Marci has provided over the years and hope to continue the good work for years to come. As both a leader and a parent with my own toddler in our program, I feel especially connected to the work we do every day and the impact it has on families in our com-

munity. I'm excited to connect with families and staff involved with before and after care and to listen and learn about the needs of the program."

The Early Learning Center provides a range of services designed to support young children and families in the Westfield community. The program offers childcare for district staff members' children from infancy through age two, while three- and four-year-old programming is open to the broader community. The ELC also supports children with identified exceptionalities, helping them build the skills needed to successfully transition to kindergarten.

The ELC serves as a hub for several district early childhood services, including developmental preschool programs, evaluations, and transitions from Indiana's First Steps early intervention program into school-based services.

In addition to early childhood programs, the Director of Early Learning Programs also oversees the district's B.A.C. program, which currently operates in seven school buildings and will expand next year.



Caylie Dicken

Derado, who helped open the Early Learning Center in 2022, expressed confidence in Dicken's leadership.

"Making the decision to leave was hard for me, but I am comforted knowing that Caylie will be the one taking the lead because I have full faith in her to continue what we've already started," she said.

Dicken says maintaining the ELC's strong culture will remain a priority moving forward.

"Our goal is to maintain our current vision of exceptional care and high-quality learning experiences," Dicken said. "We have built a great reputation for supporting and retaining our staff, and we believe that hiring great people and treating them well is the recipe for success."

Tips for hiring a contractor

BBB recommends the following steps before hiring anyone to work on your home:

- Research and gather information. Search for a contractor's BBB Business Profile at BBB.org for free information on their complaint history and verified reviews.
- Request references. Ask the contractor for a list of recent local references you may contact to verify the services performed and their overall experience with the contractor and the quality of the work.
- Get multiple quotes. You should always shop around and get at least three quotes from different businesses. Make sure all bids consider the same set of criteria. Keep in mind, the lowest bid may not necessarily be the best bid; if one bid is significantly lower than the others, the contractor may be cutting corners or may not understand your work requirements.
- Put everything in writing. Get written estimates and only proceed with a signed, complete contract you fully understand. Take the necessary time to review all terms and never allow yourself to be pressured into a quick decision. The contract must include contact details, project dates, detailed work descriptions, material costs, payment terms, warranty, permit and cleanup responsibilities. Document all verbal promises and never sign contracts with blank spaces.
- Verify license and insurance. Ensure the company you decide to hire has the necessary licenses and insurance to work in your region. Your local BBB can help with this. Once you have your contractor's insurance information, call the carrier to confirm appropriate coverage for worker's compensation, property damage, and personal liability in case of accidents.
- Confirm building permits. Your contractor must have the correct permits before starting your project. They will usually obtain the permits, but you will probably pay for them which should be detailed in your contract. Request all final inspections be completed by the local building official prior to final payment.
- Inquire about a lien waiver. A lien waiver, in the United States, is a statement from your contractor that says all suppliers and subcontractors have been paid for their work.
- Think about future service issues. Make sure you are aware of your warranty coverage and how to deal with service issues.
- Arrange a payment schedule. Never pay in full upfront. Stagger your payments so your final payment is not due until the project is complete and you have fully inspected the work. Do not pay cash; make sure your check is written to a company, not an individual, or that you use a credit card. Paying with a credit card will provide some recourse should the job not be completed as stated in the contract.
- Get a receipt. Request a receipt marked "Paid in Full" when the job is completed, and your final payment made.
- Keep your contract. Hold on to your contract for future reference or if any questions arise after the work is complete.

BBB Gives Tips On Hiring Contractors

BBB Serving Central Indiana is warning consumers to exercise caution before doing business with Smarter Pools, LLC, a pool contractor headquartered in Greenwood. The company currently has an "F" rating, the lowest on the BBB scale, due to unanswered complaints and a pattern of collecting deposits, leaving projects incomplete, and failing to respond to consumers' concerns.

"They will take your money," said a local complainant.

He told BBB the business offered him what he described as a "good deal" in June 2025: a pool installed in six weeks. To secure the project, he paid a \$5,000 deposit, followed by \$46,000 a few days later. The company promptly cashed the \$51,000 but did not begin excavation until the second week of August—well beyond the promised timeline.

As work appeared to move forward, Smarter Pools requested another payment, totaling more than \$24,000. After receiving that third payment, the complainant said the company never returned.

Despite paying Smarter Pools more than \$75,000, he was left with an unfin-

ished pool. "No bonding, no coping, no cement, no equipment, and no idea when it's going to be completed," he said.

BBB followed up with additional complainants during winter 2025 and found similar concerns involving unfinished projects and lack of communication.

"I would not trust these people with my money," said Keri, an Indiana consumer who contracted with Smarter Pools in July 2025.

Several months into her \$82,000 project, Keri said she had seen little progress. When she attempted to reach her salesperson, she learned he had resigned and was advised to contact the owner, Justin Carter, directly. She described Justin as "hard to get ahold of" and said he eventually told her he was "not going to finish [her] pool."

They "only dug a hole in our yard," Keri complained.

The consumer reported paying two deposits totaling \$39,000 for what she described as an abandoned project.

A Fishers, Indiana consumer told BBB he contracted with Smarter Pools in April 2025 for a

\$95,000 pool. After paying his initial deposit, he reported not hearing from the company for a month. Following excavation, the site sat untouched for weeks. A crew later returned to install pool walls, but progress stalled again.

He said he tried to "give [the owner] some leeway," but the project was plagued by delays.

"Work kind of stopped," he told BBB. "Nothing but crickets."

He added that while construction remained stagnant, Carter continued to request payments. "I wrote him checks for approximately \$75,000," the consumer said. Ultimately, he hired another contractor to complete the project.

BBB has made several attempts to contact Smarter Pools, LLC, but has not received a response to consumer concerns. BBB has been unable to reach a complaint handler for the company, leaving five unanswered complaints and reported consumer losses totaling approximately \$413,000.

More information, including the company's complaint history, can be found on its BBB Business Profile at BBB.org

KENNY THOMPSON



With decades of experience as an award-winning sports writer and sports editor – most of it covering Purdue athletics – Kenny Thompson has a perspective and inside knowledge that few others have. Whether it's putting what's going on in the Big Ten in historical perspective or shooting straight from the hip on what's happening today, no one has a better take on Purdue and sports than Kenny!

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