

**➔ TODAY'S VERSE**

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

**➔ FACES OF MONTGOMERY**

People who call our community their own.



Zailey Bailey 1 and 1/2yrs old smiles brightly while having lunch with her grandfather. Thank you for your smile, Zailey!

**➔ THREE THINGS You Should Know:**

**1** The Indiana Department of Transportation announces the eastbound I-74 off-ramp onto U.S. 231 in Crawfordsville will close starting at 8 a.m. for five or six hours on Tuesday, June 7 for pavement patching. A previous version of this release had the incorrect date. Motorists needing to take this exit can exit I-74 early and travel on U.S. 136 to Crawfordsville. Drivers can also travel past the U.S. 231 interchange and exit at S.R. 32. The eastbound I-74 off-ramp will reopen later in the day on Tuesday.

**2** Join Franciscan Community Education Lafayette for its Be a Better Babysitter class. The class has two options to attend, either Tuesday, June 14, or Tuesday, June 21; both will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (EST). This course will teach the basics of babysitting. All participants will be certified in CPR and earn a two-year Heartsaver CPR AED certification from the American Heart Association upon completion of the course.

**3** "With the world's love for '90s fashion at an all-time high since the decade itself, it's no surprise that grunge has made a comeback," according to the Trend Spotter website. But says the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC], trendy can be costly. Take the newest offering from the luxury fashion house Balenciaga -- a pair sneakers that will make you the grungiest fashionista in your town if you've got dough to spare. The "Paris High Top" fully destroyed footwear is available on Balenciaga's online store for a luxuriously steep \$1,800 per pair. They look like they are falling apart but they bear the name, Balenciaga, seemingly printed with a marker and large enough to be noticed from afar. They're sure to impress your friends and family.

# The Paper

## OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County's oldest locally owned independent newspaper

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CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA

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**BTN** 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!

**13** The Navy has officially changed the status of 13 Sailors lost when the USS Indianapolis (CA 35) was sunk in 1945 from "unaccounted for" to "buried at sea," Navy Casualty announced May 27. The change in status is the result of extensive research between Naval History and Heritage Command, Navy Casualty Office, the USS Indianapolis Survivors Association, the USS Indianapolis Legacy Organization, and the Chief Rick Stone and Family Charitable Foundation. The announcement helps bring closure to the families of these Sailors who lost their lives at the end of a secret mission which helped end World War II.



**\$225,000** More than \$225,000 in financial assistance is still available to Duke Energy Indiana customers who may be struggling to pay their energy bills. The funding is made possible through Duke Energy's Share the Light Fund, which brings together customers and communities to help individuals and families struggling to pay their energy bills. Duke Energy works in partnership with the Indiana Community Action Association to distribute the company's assistance funds.

**\$57 million** The U.S. Department of Labor announced the award of more than \$57 million in grants to organizations that help veterans experiencing homelessness find meaningful employment and assist them in overcoming barriers to transition back successfully into the workforce.

**10** The American Red Cross and Cedar Fair theme parks are teaming to help maintain the blood supply this summer. Anyone who donates blood at select blood drives will receive a free Cedar Fair theme park ticket in thanks for helping save lives. The partnership with Cedar Fair includes 10 parks across the U.S. with a goal of increasing blood and platelet donations during the summer months when donations decrease but the need remains constant.

**\$700 million** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Department has provided \$700 million to help lower costs and support biofuel producers who faced unexpected market losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds are being made available through the Biofuel Producer Program, which was created as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The investments include more than \$486 million for 62 producers located in socially vulnerable communities.

**1,721,977** According to the Indiana State Department of Health on Friday, that's how many Hoosiers have been diagnosed with the virus.

**10,774** Number of COVID-19 cases found so far in Montgomery County, according to the State Health Department.

**83,080,655** According to the CDC, that's how many Americans have been diagnosed with the virus.

**22,734** How many Hoosiers have died because of this pandemic.

**162** How many people in Montgomery County who have lost their lives to the pandemic.

**999,254** How many Americans have lost their lives to the pandemic

**➔ HONEST HOOSIER**

Speaking of back in the day, our parents didn't call it some fancy name when we acted up. They called it being a brat . . . and there were consequences that didn't involve something easy.



**➔ TODAY'S HEALTH TIP**

Learn to read food labels and watch for ingredients that end in -ose, that means it's a form of sugar. Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Be sure to catch his column each week in The Paper and online at www.thepaper24-7.com.



**➔ INSIDE TODAY'S EDITION**

- Obituaries.....A2
- Gwynn Wills.....A2
- Carrie Classon.....A2
- Brian Howey.....A2
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- John Roberts.....A4

**➔ THE MONTGOMERY MINUTE**

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**➔ TODAY'S QUOTE**

"Never stop doing your best just because someone doesn't give you credit."  
Kamari aka Lyrikal

**➔ TODAY'S JOKE**

How do you make holy water?  
Boil the hell out of it!

**➔ OBITUARIES**  
NONE

The Paper appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank Jan DeJarnatt for subscribing!



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**The Paper**  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

**The Daily Almanac**

**Sunrise/Sunset**  
RISE: 6:19 a.m.  
SET: 9:14 p.m.



**High/Low Temperatures**  
High: 84 °F  
Low: 63 °F



**Today is...**

- National Churro Day
- D-Day
- Drive-in Movie Day



**What Happened On This Day**

- 1984 The video game Tetris is published
- 1946 The National Basketball Association (NBA) is founded
- 1930 Frozen food is sold in retail stores for the first time



**Births On This Day**

- 1963 Jason Isaacs English actor, producer
- 1901 Sukarno Indonesian politician, 1st President of Indonesia

**Deaths On This Day**

- 1968 Robert F. Kennedy American politician, 64th United States Attorney General
- 1832 Jeremy Bentham English jurist, philosopher

**WTHR 13 7 DAY FORECAST**

<b>80</b> SUNNY AND PLEASANT FRI	<b>54/80</b> SUNNY SAT	<b>57/83</b> SUNNY AND WARM SUN	<b>62/77</b> SCATTERED SHOWERS AND STORMS MON	<b>62/78</b> BREEZY, MAINLY DRY TUE	<b>60/79</b> RAIN LATE DAY WED	<b>58/78</b> STORM CHANCES THU
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# The Joy Of Messy Things

My adolescence was a disaster. I lived with an alcoholic grandfather and a grandmother whose addiction to pain pills caused her to fall asleep on the couch many nights waiting for my grandfather to stagger in after a binge at the American Legion. In addition, we lived in a run down inherited family home full of debris left over from its two year hiatus as a fraternity annex. From ages nine to twelve, my grandparents and I lived in a model home in Pleasant Meadows. (For those who remember the Monkees song, Another Pleasant Valley Sunday, you get the idea) Poor financial planning, overextension and/or the champagne taste-beer pocketbook mentality of my grandmother caught up with them and the pristine four story house was sold and we moved back to the old homestead.

I didn't mind going back to the old neighborhood; I had friends there. But I did mind the trash piled on the back porch and the Vienna sausage sized roaches that skittered under the basement door at night to feast on the Purina Dog Chow in my dog's bowl. I did mind the bathroom had only a subfloor and I had to bathe with Granddaddy Long Legs feeling their way around the porcelain sides of the tub. I minded that I was ashamed to bring friends over. I minded that make-out sessions were relegated to the front porch glider. I minded that I single-handedly moved furniture, boxes and a washer and dryer in an effort to have one neat clean space in the living room. I hung a curtain between the somewhat assembled part



**GWYNN WILLIS**  
A Better Word

of the house and the disarray of the rest. To this day, mess and clutter in my own home or any other space I enter into sends my anxiety level sky high.

I have friends and family whose homes are straight out of House Beautiful. I am pretty sure eating off their floors would not result in disease and the "no shoes in the house" rule seems like a good approach to keeping it that way. When I leave those clean, neat spaces, I am envious. My home today is not like the place where I grew up. I do clean and things have a place, but I still get antsy when a cardboard boxes from Amazon pile up in the entryway. Or notes and papers from lay scattered across our dining room table. Or six pairs of shoes are clustered around the back door. Or errant dog and cat hairs float in the sunbeam coming through a streaked picture window. My shoulders start to tighten and that old feeling of shame creeps in.....

Then, yesterday, I had an epiphany. As I filled the bird feeder out back and cringed at the gazillion broken sunflower hulls, I realized the mess before me was the product of a beauty I enjoyed nearly every day. Birds of all

shapes, sizes and colors landed in full view at eye level. I smile every time I see one of our cats perched on the table or their climber watching with tails swishing. I am thrilled at the sight of the rafter of five enormous turkeys stopping by to vacuum up the detritus dropped by songbirds onto our patio.

Then I start looking around at the fifty year old trees surrounding our house; the ones whose limbs and twigs litter our yard after every wind. The trees that drop their seed pods by the thousands in spring so they might proliferate and grow. The ones that release a compilation of colored leaves every fall that have to be raked over the hill. Those same trees offer shade and strong limbs to hold swings and rope tunnels for my grandchildren to play upon. One even whispered her name to me; Calliope - in a beautiful silent voice.

And then I thought about what my friend, Beth, used to call the chaos of toys, crayons, paints and little pieces of paper found during child's play; messy research. Curiosity and discovery are rarely satisfied in neat little compartments. In retrospect, I came to understand how my grandparents chose to live was a symptom of a much deeper problem than apathy. They lived with despair and depression caused by their own family legacy and their perceived failures. Even though my teen-age years may have been tougher than many of my friends, I did survive and figured out I needed to do better for myself. The messy life I lived was the gateway to discover

new patterns of behavior. I dropped out of high school but went to college and graduated summa cum laude. I married young but had three beautiful children who are amazing humans. I acquired jobs my degree didn't always support but I ended a forty year career in good standing with enduring friendships and enough memories to fill volumes. I learned moderation and patience. Exposure to the broken and not so beautiful opened my heart to love and accept others from all walks of life. The only people I have trouble accepting are the ones who are judgmental and exclusionary. I discovered I had a spiritual life at a very young age and begged to be taken to church to learn about Jesus. I remember "talking" to Jesus as a child and my heart swelling with affection for an entity unseen but understood.

So as I sit and write this, I realize my messy life has been ordered all along. When I chose to see the mess as a hopeless jumble of junk to clean up, depression and despair were front and center. However, when I look at the bigger picture, I understand the mess can be borne from beautiful things and result in a discovery that transitions into redemption. The choice on the view has been mine to make all along.

*Gwynn Willis is a former speech therapist, certified Amherst Writers and Artists workshop Affiliate and Leader and founder of The Calliope Writers Group. After growing up in Crawfordsville, her and her husband returned several years ago.*

# Verne Knows Me

Verne knows me too well.

For the first time in our lives, my husband, Peter, and I live in a building with a front desk. It's nice to have someone there when packages are delivered, or contractors show up, and this person is usually Verne.

Verne is a natural for the job. He knows everything going on in town. He knows when music is playing in the park and where the food trucks are parked and what time deliveries are made. But what interests Verne most is what goes on inside the building. Verne knows what we are all up, to and he is never short on advice.

"I wouldn't go there," Verne told me when I was contemplating a Mexican restaurant. "It's cute on the outside, but the food is ordinary." He suggested a different restaurant.

"Oh! I like your hair," a complete stranger said to me in the lobby one day.

"She's overdue to get it colored," Verne said. "Her roots are showing." "Verne!" the stranger said. "That's a terrible thing to say!"

"Oh, no," I told the stranger. "It's all part of the full suite of services Verne provides." (I colored my hair that week.)

One day I had to go to Home Depot twice for the same thing. "Two trips to Home Depot in one day is not a good day!" I told Verne. (Although to be fair, the folks at Home Depot were terrific.)

"Are you sure this is a problem?" Verne asked. "Or is this just your OCD talking?"

Verne had me. "It's my OCD talking and it's a problem!" I said as I got on the elevator with another resident.

"Verne knows me too well," I complained to the pink-haired young woman in the elevator. "Verne knows us all too well!" she said. "I know everything!"

Verne agreed, as the elevator doors shut.

But there is something very comforting about having Verne at the desk in the late afternoons.

"Where are you going tonight?" Verne will ask. He'll suggest things I should look for in the



**CARRIE CLASSON**  
The Postscript

neighborhood, and I'll come back and report to him. It's nice, knowing there is someone at the door to greet me, someone who is interested in where I've been and where I'm going.

Then, one day, we got some awful news. Verne was retiring.

"I'm turning 70!" Verne said. "I can't keep working five days a week."

"But what will we do without you, Verne?" I asked.

"Oh! You won't be without me." Verne said. "I'm just going to work the weekend shift instead. John is retiring."

John is also very nice, but he is nearly blind and requires a cane to get around. It was probably a good time for John to retire. So, there was a big retirement party for John, and Verne took over the weekends.

One Sunday afternoon, John came back to visit. Now, instead of a cane, he needed a walker to get around. But he had a big smile on his face. He had come to visit Verne.

"Pull up a chair!" Verne said. "Would you like a cup of coffee?"

"I would!" John said. "Would you like dessert to go with that?" I asked Verne.

"What kind of dessert?" he asked me.

"None of your business. Do you want some or not?"

"Of course!" Verne said.

I had some leftover pumpkin cake, and I brought down two pieces.

"Thank you for the cake," Verne said later on, after John had left.

"That was very nice." "Oh, it was nothing," I told Verne. "What would we do without you?"

Till next time, Carrie

*Follow me on Facebook at: CarrieClassonAuthor*

# Every Teacher You Know . . . .

"Every teacher you know has thought about it. Every teacher you know has a plan for an active shooter. Every teacher you know has weighed their point of fight or flight. Every teacher you know has walked their room looking for blind spots. Every teacher you know has passed their classroom to see what it looks like from the outside ...

"Every teacher you know has wondered how fast they can lock a door."

This was an internet posting by a teacher I know in the wake of the Uvalde, Texas, massacre that claimed the lives of 19 children and two teachers. And this is where we're at as a culture, with a massive slice of the electorate backing what President Biden heard last Sunday in Uvalde ("Do something!") while the fringes of the political spectrum dig in on their status quos that range from calling for reforms and assault weapon bans to hardening buildings, arming teachers and blaming a "mental health" dilemma.

First of all, is this a national crisis?

According to Education Week, there have been 27 school shootings this year, which is about halfway through the traditional school year. There have been 119 school shootings since 2018, when Education Week began tracking such incidents. The highest number of shootings, 34, occurred in 2021. There were 10 shootings in 2020, and 24 each in 2019 and 2018. In the 27 school shootings this year, 83 people have been killed or injured in a school shooting, while 56



**BRIAN HOWEY**  
Howey Political Report

people have been injured.

Is this a problem? A crisis? A culture that has lost its way, no longer willing to do what it takes to protect its children?

Gov. Eric Holcomb and a number of other Republicans have called for the "hardening" of schools, such as installing bullet proof windows and doors, employing armed school security, reducing entry points, and even arming teachers. Of all the teachers I know, none of them think that introducing arms to a classroom is a good idea. Some tell me that if it comes to this, they will leave the profession.

This begs these questions: How much have the U.S. and Indiana (be they local or state) governments and Hoosier taxpayers spent on "hardening" our schools? My property taxes have increased due to recent school referendums that included the building of new (hardened) schools.

How much have we spent on "school security" since the Columbine massacre in 1999? This would include physical plant costs, police costs (via school districts and local communities), and the various hardware/software security system accounts. I suspect that the cumulative cost if it

were added up would be astounding. Until we know, we are flying blind into one of the most relevant and urgent policy sequences surrounding our most precious resource, our children.

If you believe this is a problem or a crisis, for the sake of creating a dialogue on the reform front, how would you feel about these options:

- Reinstate the recently repealed annual state permit requirement for hand guns (Indiana State Police reported that 10,600 handgun permits had been rejected in 2021 due to prior felony convictions).
- Require background checks for all gun purchases including gun shows, family to family or family to friend transfers. Prohibit the transfer or sale of weapons to "friends" on the internet.
- Strengthen the "red flag" law that provides for the removal of weapons from those who issue threats or display mental instability. Prohibit individuals from purchasing guns until their legal proceedings have concluded and they are deemed as appropriate to own or possess weapons.
- Raise the age for purchasing and owning a gun from 18 to 21. Exempt active military members under the age of 21.
- Establish a minimum 7-day waiting period from application to sale.
- Ban the purchase of body armor to average citizens, reserving this equipment only for law enforcement and the military.
- Require gun purchasers to receive or show proof of training on the use and safe storage of the weapon.

- Subject gun owners who do not secure their weapon to criminal and civil liability if their gun is used to injure or kill.

- Require gun owners to report stolen or missing weapons to law enforcement.

- Destroy weapons used in crimes once they are no longer needed for law enforcement proceeding purposes.

- Prohibit gun manufacturer and gun stores from marketing to anyone under the age of 18, similar to the marketing ban on alcohol and cigarette products.

- Ban assault weapons. Ban firearm in existing owners.

- Ban "cop killer hard bullets" that pierce body armor or, in the alternative, limit the purchase of this high-powered ammunition.

Since Uvalde and the Tops Friendly Market massacre in Buffalo, N.Y. (where school and store security were clearly out-gunned by AR-15s with an officer dying in the latter and officers in the former were frozen into inaction as kids inside the doomed classrooms dialed 911 for help), we experienced as a nation a Memorial Day weekend with at least 12 mass shootings. A 13th occurred at a medical facility in Tulsa on Wednesday, claiming four more innocent lives.

Here's one final thought: "Every teacher you know has thought about how hard it would be to keep young people quiet."

*The columnist is publisher of Howey Politics Indiana at www.howeypolitics.com. Find Howey on Facebook and Twitter @hwypol.*

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Photos courtesy of Kia

# 2022 Kia Niro EV Doesn't Care About Gas Prices, Long Commutes

I have a pretty long commute – about 35 miles each way. And as I noticed while picking up soda at the gas station last weekend, 87 octane was \$4.65 per gallon. Premium and diesel were uncomfortably over \$5. I own a Smart car and have test cars most of the time, so gas prices don't usually affect my budget much, but good-ness that's expensive. I let it sink in, then realized I don't care because...I'm driving the 2022 Kia Niro EV.

Part of my mission this week was to see if I could live with an EV as my daily driver, because let me assure you, I'd be considering one if I had to buy a new car for myself. The Kia Niro finds the sweet spot between entry-level EVs like the Nissan Leaf or Chevy Bolt and high-end models from Tesla, Mercedes-Benz, and Cadillac.

It's clear the Niro EV is different with its flat panel front and charge port door on the fascia, but the rest looks like the Niro hybrid on which it's based. That's to say, it looks like a normal compact crossover dressed with turquoise accents, 17" wheels, low rolling resistance tires, and roof rails. Ours came in metallic white, which looked both elegant and high-tech. I wish it looked more futuristic, but many of you shopping EVs for the first time will no doubt appreciate its understated style and practical proportions.

Even compared to dedicated EV architectures dressed with flashier attire from competitors, the Niro EV makes a strong case for itself. The powertrain, with a 64 kWh battery pack, delivers 201 horsepower and 291-lb.-ft. of torque. Typical of EVs, it provides instant smooth

acceleration, running 0-60 mph in 7.8 seconds. You can hammer the left lane if you choose, but running posted speeds will net 239 miles range.

When I left for work fully charged, range showed 245 miles. Upon arriving, it showed 210 miles – or exactly the 35 miles I traveled. It's accurate, and impressive given 25 miles was spent running 70+ mph. I don't have a charger in my garage, so I plugged in the auxiliary cord to household current. It took 15 hours to recover 80 miles range. A Level 2 240v charger could fully replenish in 9.5 hours. Commercial DC fast chargers get you to 80% in an hour.

To help justify its lofty price, the Niro EX comes very well equipped for long commutes given Harman/Kardon audio, power sunroof, heated and ventilated front seats, and

### 2022 Kia Niro EV

**Five-passenger, fwd 5-door**  
**Powertrain: Li-ion batteries/motor**  
**Output: 201hp/291 lb.-ft.**  
**Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind**  
**Wheels f/r: 17"/17" alloy**  
**Brakes f/r: regen disc/disc**  
**Must-have features: Driving, Comfort**  
**Driving range: 239 miles**  
**0-60 mph: 7.8s**  
**Economy: 112 mpg-e**  
**Assembly: Hwasung, Korea**  
**Base/as-tested price: \$39,990/47,080**

a heated leather-wrapped steering wheel. Automatic climate control can be aimed at just the driver to conserve energy. An intuitive 10.5" touchscreen controls devices connected with Apple CarPlay or Android Auto and charged wirelessly. Safety is enhanced by automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, blind spot warning, and rear cross

path detection. Adaptive cruise makes those long commutes much easier.

Even without an electric powertrain, the Niro would make a strong case with a roomy interior, washable vegan leather upholstery, fold-down rear seats, and a control pod for gear selection in the center console. But, with tossable handling and quiet quick demeanor, it



**CASEY WILLIAMS**  
Auto Reviews

delights. Not worrying about the price of gas may be the biggest joy of it all.

A base price of \$39,000 rises to \$47,080 as-tested – reduced by a \$7,500 tax credit. It's a fair deal, but will soon get zapped by the Subaru Solterra, Toyota bZ4X, Nissan ARIYA, Chevy Bolt EUV, and Kia's own EV6.

Storm Forward!

Send comments to Casey at [AutoCasey@aol.com](mailto:AutoCasey@aol.com); follow him on YouTube @ AutoCasey

## FREE HEARING HEALTH CLINIC NOTICE

We are excited to announce Beltone's Annual Hearing Health Clinic for members of our community who have questions about their hearing. Our event will offer the following services to you or a loved one at no cost or obligation:

**FREE Hearing Screening** – Do you have hearing loss? Could it be excess ear wax or your sinuses? If your screening shows no hearing loss, you'll have peace-of-mind for you and your family.

**FREE Ear Check** – Our Otoscope allows us to see the inside of your ear canal. If wax is present, you will know right away and we will provide you with the options to manage it.

**FREE 10-Point Hearing Aid Performance Check-Up on Any Make or Model** – Do you already own hearing aids? Do they whistle? Do they work in noisy places? Have they weakened? Let us check and clean them for you.

This special is available now! Appointment times are limited. Call for your appointment today and take advantage of this opportunity. We are excited to serve your hearing care needs, and we look forward to seeing you there!

### Why Should I Get a Hearing Screening?

- Hearing loss can be an early warning sign or is linked to ailments including: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia and Alzheimer's.
- Hearing loss can also contribute to depression and social isolation.
- Everyone over age 50 should have a baseline hearing screening and should be checked regularly, similar to an eye exam.
- If your screening shows no loss, you will get peace of mind for you and your family.



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\$1000	00

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*Beltone Hearing Team*  
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### BROWNSBURG NEW LOCATION

(In the Main Street Shoppes, next to Sal's Pizzeria)  
1022 E Main Street  
(317) 939-5262

### GREENFIELD

(Across from Buffalo Wild Wings)  
1790 Melody Ln  
(317) 967-8579

### AVON

(In Avon Crossing next to Dr. Tavel)  
7900 E U.S. Hwy 36, Ste E  
(317) 742-6697

### INDY NORTHEAST

(Regency Center across from Community North Hospital)  
8202 Clearvista Pkwy, Ste 3A  
(317) 348-0109

### LEBANON

(Northfield Center)  
2214 N Lebanon St  
(765) 746-7130

### INDY NORTHWEST

(Across from St. Vincent Hospital)  
2250 W 86th St, Ste 160  
(317) 429-0009

### GREENWOOD

(Across from Indy Honda)  
1551 E Stop 12 Road, Suite F  
(317) 884-8729

### NOBLESVILLE

(Western Plaza across from Riverview Hospital)  
247 Sheridan Rd  
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# Lyme Disease And What You Should Know



**JOHN R. ROBERTS, M.D.**  
Montgomery Medicine

Warmer weather means we have to start thinking about ticks and Lyme Disease. Most people are aware of the association between tick bites and Lyme disease, but few know exactly what Lyme disease is or what causes it. The number of cases in Indiana has varied over the years, but generally has increased since around 2013. The most recent statistics from 2019 showed an incidence of 1.5 cases per 100,000 population in Indiana. The highest incidence state that year was 121 cases per 100,000. Lyme disease received

its name in the late 1970s when a number of children around Lyme, Connecticut developed arthritis. The actual disease has been described since the early 1900s. It is mostly found from Virginia up through Maine on the east coast as well as Wisconsin and Minnesota. When a case does occur in Indiana, the news spreads rapidly, sometimes inciting panic. Most infections (85 percent) are seen in the spring and summer with the remainder in the fall.

Ticks do not actually cause the disease, though they do carry the organism that does, the spirochete *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Spirochetes are bacteria that have a cork-screw shape. Another common misconception is that any tick can spread *B. burgdorferi* infection, when in fact only *Ixodes* (deer) ticks carry the organism. The accompanying photo shows a deer tick on a fingernail – they are very small.

The *B. burgdorferi* organism primarily in-

fects field mice and white tailed deer during its life cycle. Humans are innocent bystanders when we wander into deer habitat. The ticks lie in wait on the tips of grasses and shrubs and crawl onto us as we brush by. They then crawl about until they find a nice tender spot where they attach and begin to feed on the host's blood.

The risk of contracting *B. burgdorferi* is very small unless the tick has been attached and feeding for two to three days. Not everyone will develop clinically significant Lyme disease if they are infected.

Lyme Disease has three stages. The first two stages are termed "early infection" and the third is called "late infection." The signs and symptoms are quite different during each stage.

Stage 1 consists of signs near the point of attachment of the tick. A characteristic rash usually develops called erythema chronicum migrans (ECM). The rash is red

(erythema), lasts for a few weeks (chronicum) and tends to enlarge or migrate with time (migrans). Patients may also have fever, fatigue and headache.

Stage 2 involves more systemic signs and symptoms. This stage can involve virtually any tissue, but signs and symptoms are usually found in the joints, nervous system and heart. Two-thirds of people develop arthritis that can occur in various joints and may migrate from joint to joint. Weakness as well as numbness and tingling may occur in the nerves of the face and elsewhere. Infection of the heart can cause rhythm problems.

Step 3, or late infection, can present up to a year after the organism invades the body. Approximately ten percent of people develop chronic arthritis, usually of the knee. They can also develop infections of the brain and spinal cord and severe chronic malaise and fatigue can also occur.

Testing for Lyme is not always straightforward. Antibodies against the organism may be found in the bloodstream but can be falsely positive or negative. Therefore, it's important to not test persons who don't have signs or symptoms of Lyme Disease. The CDC recommends that anyone with a positive test have it confirmed with a more specific antibody test called a western blot. People with neurologic symptoms may require a spinal tap to look for infection.

Treatment for Lyme disease is fairly straightforward. Most people are prescribed the antibiotic doxycycline. The length of treatment varies based on the stage and extent of infection. Some people with severe involvement may require hospitalization. This is most common if a person develops heart problems.

Simple steps can be taken to reduce your risk of contracting Lyme disease. Even though Lyme disease is rare in Indiana

you should consider covering up when you're in the woods. This includes wearing a long shirt and pants as well as a hat.

You should do a full body check for ticks after you've been in the woods and apply insect repellent with at least 30 percent DEET when going outdoors. Always be on the lookout for the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease if you have found a tick attached to your body

Removal of ticks can be tricky. You need to get a fine pair of tweezers and grasp the tick's head as close to the skin surface as possible and pull slowly and gently upward until the tick lets go. You should then wash the skin with alcohol or soap and water. You should save the tick in alcohol in case it's needed for identification. If you can't remove the tick, call your health professional.

*Dr. John Roberts is a member of the Franciscan Physician Network specializing in Family Medicine.*

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