

TODAY'S VERSE

Proverbs 1:7 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

FACES OF MONTGOMERY

People who call our community their own.



Aaron Melvin was all smiles with our roving photographer. Thanks for the smile, Aaron!

THREE THINGS You Should Know:

1 Governor Eric J. Holcomb is directing flags to be flown at half-staff in honor and remembrance of the victims of the tragedy in Monterey Park, California. Flags should be flown at half-staff at the Indiana Statehouse until sunset on Thursday, Jan. 26, 2023. Gov. Holcomb also asks businesses and residents to lower their flags to half-staff.

2 Donna Bevan made a double take when she pulled up into a drive-thru lane of a MacDonald's in New South Wales, Australia recently. There sitting in the back seat of a car in the next lane was a horse, says the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC]. Donna wasted no time saving the encounter on video-- including a brief conversation with a passenger in the car who explained that the horse was excited because he knew he was going to have his ice cream.

3 Want free tickets to the 101st Indianapolis Home Show, running from Jan. 20-29 at the Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center? All you have to do to win tickets (valued at \$15 each) is send us a selfie of you and our front page (Print or Online Edition) to timmons@thepaper24-7.com. Be sure to tell us who you are, where you are from, how many tickets you would like and a little bit about yourself so we can include it if your photo is selected to publish on our front page. Then all you have to do is wait and watch. If you see your smiling face on our front page - you win!

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Connect The Dots On Lost Education Dollars

Nothing about the guest speaker suggested power or prestige. She was the quintessential teacher, comfortable and ready to engage in a crushed velvet smock, black leggings, and comfortable shoes. She'd pulled her long hair up into a ponytail. Yet Dr. Jennifer McCormick was the last elected Superintendent of Education in Indiana, and she knew her stuff.

"Who are the students in here? Raise your hand," she began. "So as a mother of someone close to your age, make sure you're doing your studies and are here to educate yourselves. Hopefully a little extra credit?" Heads nodded no. "You can tell you're at Wabash, by golly," she joked, "you gotta

learn." With 25 years in education as a teacher, principal, superintendent, and then IDOE's elected leader from 2017 to 2021, McCormick spoke as one well acquainted with the good, the bad and the reality about taxpayer dollars and fiscal responsibility. The state of Indiana funds almost \$8.5 billion dollars of education annually, according to the Education Data Initiative and receives very little from the federal government. Yet millions of dollars are flowing out of that funding via the voucher program and McCormick said no one is accountable. With a new bill introduced in the state legislature this session, she wanted to educate the community on how this happens.

"Connect the dots," said Dr. McCormick. Dot One: In 2011, the narrative in the legislature was "We have a ton of black and brown students who are undeserved (in their traditional public schools) and by golly we are going to get them out

See LWV Page A6

Try This With Your Credit Card Company ...



TIM TIMMONS
Two Cents

Last week we, as in We The People, hit a financial landmark. We maxed out our credit card. Oh, the uppity ups in the government didn't call it that. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen explained that the U.S. reached its debt limit, a plain and simple way of saying, well, we maxed out the credit card. Except we didn't. Not really. But first, let's take a look at the nuts and bolts. The debt limit - how much money the government can borrow - is almost \$32 trillion. That's trillion with a capital

T and that rhymes with C and that stands for . . . Congress. To quote the good Professor Harold Hill, aka Robert Preston in the Music Man, we surely got trouble. But don't you worry your pretty little head about it. The hired help in Washington are working to fix the trouble so that by this summer everything will be all swell again. How? Why don't you know? The answer to the crisis is just as plain as the dollar in your pocket. They're going to increase the limit on how much we can borrow! Yup, just like they and their predecessors have done since, oh, let's see . . . 1837. Really? The last time our beloved country was debt free was when the man who's face graces our \$20 bills was president - Andrew Jackson. That's right. The seventh president of the U.S. said that the country couldn't really be free unless that included freedom from debt.

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Photo courtesy of CDPL

1,000 Books Read Before Kindergarten

Jorson Leaming, age 5, has completed the Crawfordsville District Public Library program "1000 Books Before Kindergarten". He is the son of Jordan and Michaela Leaming. Jorson's favorite book is Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb by Al Perkins. Mom said, "Jorson is the fourth kid in his family to finish reading 1000 books. That means he's had 3 big sisters to help him finish this goal. Our family loves to read thanks to our librarians!"

Athens Arts Presents: A Poetry Workshop - Write From The Heart

For beginners and seasoned wordsmiths alike, come and learn about the different poetry structures and how to express yourself in the universal language of love. We will dive into the written word as an art form and each participant will come away with several original poems. Preview sessions are on Monday, Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. or Tuesday, Feb. 7 at 6 - 8 p.m. Workshop sessions are offered both during a morning or evening time. Morning sessions: Monday's at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.: Feb. 13, Feb. 20, Feb. 27 and March 6. Evening sessions: Tuesday's at 6 - 8 p.m.: Feb. 14, Feb. 21, Feb. 28 and March 7.

Cost for the preview session and four workshop sessions: \$75.00. Class size will be limited. Some Scholarships available, contact Athens Arts. Preview and Workshop sessions will be led by Gwynn Wills, Certified Amherst Writers and Artists Affiliate Workshop Leader and Founder of Calliope Writers Group. To register contact: Athens Arts at 765-362-7455- if no one answers please leave a message and someone will call you to complete the registration. "To me, art begets art. Painting feeds the eye just as poetry feed the ear, which is to say, that both feed the soul." Susan Vreeland. Come be a pART of it!

HONEST HOOSIER

For those of us at a certain age, we remember when the "board" of education had holes drilled in it and was used to put wandering students back on the right path - and it sure seemed to work. A shame our world has changed so much.



INSIDE TODAY'S EDITION

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THE MONTGOMERY MINUTE

For Your Information Due to the upcoming winter weather, the program featuring Dr. Joyce Burnette, Adam Burtner, and Dr. Caroline Rouse, at the Crawfordsville District Public Library today has been postponed. The Paper will update readers when a new date has been posted.

TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Kindness is contagious - surround yourself with giving people. 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.



OBITUARIES

Richard "Dick" Haffner

The Paper appreciates all our customers. Today, we'd like to personally thank NUCOR STEEL - INDIANA for subscribing!



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TODAY'S QUOTE

"Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm." - Publilius Syrus

TODAY'S JOKE

What do you call a snowman with a six-pack? The Abdominal Snowman!

7 DAY FORECAST

32/34 WINTER STORM 5"-7" FOR MOST	27/32 SNOW SHOWERS	20/33 BREEZY, P.M. WINTY MIX	25/38 MOSTLY CLOUDY	32/35 RAIN & WINTY MIX TO SNOW	20/29 A.M. SNOW	22/32 CHANCE OF SNOW
WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE

OBITUARIES

Richard "Dick" Haffner
 Jan. 15, 1938 - Jan. 23, 2023

Richard "Dick" Haffner, 85, of Noblesville, passed away on Monday, Jan. 23, 2023 at St. Vincent Carmel Hospital surrounded by his family.



He was born on Jan. 15, 1938 to the late Donald and Crystal (Moffitt) Haffner in Crawfordsville, Ind.

He was the oldest of seven kids, graduating from New Ross High School where he played basketball for Glenn Harper. He then graduated from Butler University where he played basketball and baseball for Tony Hinkle. He was inducted into both the Montgomery County Hall of Fame and the Southmont Hall of Fame. He proudly served his country in the Indiana National Guard. For 40 years, he owned Haffner X-Ray Company in Noblesville. His joy in life was spending time with his grandchildren and watching their sports and activities. He was a believer in Jesus Christ and is now home with his Savior.

Survivors include his daughter, Kelly (Rob) Louks; sons, Scott (Laura) Haffner and Cory (Mandi) Haffner; wife, Marilou Haffner; sister, Christine Myers; sister, Carol Stull; brother, Phil Haffner; twin sisters, Karon Cox and Sharon Cruser; brother, Ron Haffner; 11 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023 at Randall & Roberts Funeral Center, 1685 Westfield Road, in Noblesville. Services will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 30, 2023 at the funeral home. Burial will be at Crownland Cemetery in Noblesville.

Memorial contributions may be made to Boys & Girls Club of Noblesville, 1700 Conner Street, Noblesville, IN 46060 (<https://bgcni.org>).

Condolences: www.randallroberts.com

Benedictine College Announces Honor Rolls

Benedictine College has recognized those students who have distinguished themselves academically during the last semester. Elias Washer of Crawfordsville was recently named to the Dean's List for the fall semester, which ended Dec. 12, 2022.

Any full-time student carrying a minimum of 12 hours and a perfect

4.0 grade point average through the spring term is named to the President's list. Full time students with 12 hours and a grade point average of 3.5 are named to the Dean's List. Of the 2,135 students on campus for 2022-2023 academic year, 171 made the President's List and 794 made the Dean's List.

Learn Hands-Only CPR During American Heart Month To Save Lives Of Loved Ones

During February – American Heart Month – the American Heart Association, the leading voluntary health organization devoted to a world of longer, healthier lives for all, is urging at least one person in every household to commit to learning Hands-Only CPR. Cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of the death in the United States. This year's American Heart Month activities are designed to help motivate people to "Be the Beat" needed to keep someone alive by learning the two simple steps it takes to save a life – call 911 and push hard and fast in the center of the chest.

According to American Heart Association data, more than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States each year. CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival – which is key since about 90% of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests die. And, because about 70% of cardiac arrests happen at home, odds are the person who needs CPR will be a family member or friend[1]. Hands-Only CPR is quick and simple to learn



American Heart Association.

and can be performed by any family member or bystanders.

"If you are called on to give CPR in an emergency, you will most likely be trying to save the life of a loved one: a spouse, a parent, grandparent, child or a friend," said Beth Keyser, President of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana.

"We are excited to support the American Heart Association's Hands-Only CPR campaign and bring awareness to the importance of knowing CPR this Heart Month. We encourage people to be prepared for a cardiac emergency by learning Hands-Only CPR to help save lives."

Hands-Only CPR involves two simple steps and anyone can learn it from a 60-second video available at heart.org/handsonlycpr.

Step 1: If a teen or adult in your home sud-

denly collapses, call 911 immediately.

Step 2: Place one hand on top of the other as shown in the video and push hard and fast on the victim's chest.

Take advantage of our CPR training kiosks as you travel. At Indianapolis International Airport and eight other locations throughout the country, Hands-Only CPR training kiosks are produced by the American Heart Association and supported by the Elevance Health Foundation. Each kiosk has a touch screen with a short video that provides an overview of Hands-Only CPR, followed by a practice session and a 30-second test.

"The public can get trained in Hands-Only CPR in about five minutes while they are traveling," said Dr. Michelle A. Albert, president of the American Heart

Association. "The kiosk has a practice manikin and provides feedback about the depth and rate of compression, as well as proper hand placement – factors that influence the effectiveness of CPR."

According to the American Heart Association, people feel more confident performing Hands-Only CPR and are more likely to remember the correct rate when trained to the beat of a familiar song. All songs in our 'Don't Drop the Beat' playlist are between 100 - 120 beats per minute, the same rate at which rescuers should perform compressions when administering CPR. The beat of any of several songs including "Stayin' Alive," by the Bee Gees, "Crazy in Love," by Beyoncé featuring Jay-Z, "Hips Don't Lie," by Shakira" or "Walk the Line," by Johnny Cash can "Be the Beat" to save a life.

Visit heart.org/handsonlycpr to watch and share a Hands-Only CPR instructional video. Be the beat and help save a life!

The American Heart Association's Hands-Only CPR campaign is nationally supported by the Elevance Health Foundation.

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THE PAPER OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
 (USPS 022-679)

January 25, 2023 Volume 20 Number 4

Published Wednesdays
 (except for holidays)
 Subscription price:
 \$44/6 mos.; \$79/1 year.

Periodicals Postage Paid at
 Crawfordsville, Ind.
 POSTMASTER: Send address
 changes to The Paper
 of Montgomery County,
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The Doomsday Clock Set At 90 Seconds To Midnight

The Doomsday Clock was set at 90 seconds to midnight, due largely but not exclusively to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the increased risk of nuclear escalation. The new Clock time was also influenced by continuing threats posed by the climate crisis and the breakdown of global norms and institutions needed to mitigate risks associated with advancing technologies and biological threats such as COVID-19.

Rachel Bronson, PhD, president and CEO, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, said: "We are living in a time of unprecedented danger, and the Doomsday Clock time reflects that reality. 90 seconds to midnight is the closest the Clock has ever been set to midnight, and it's a decision our experts do not take lightly. The US government, its NATO allies and Ukraine have a multitude of channels for dialogue; we urge leaders to explore all of them to their fullest ability to turn back the Clock."

The Doomsday Clock's time is set by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Science and Security Board with the support of the Bulletin's Board of Sponsors, which includes 10 Nobel Laureates. Previously, the Doomsday Clock had been set at 100 seconds to midnight since 2020.

The Doomsday Clock statement explains that "Russia's war on Ukraine has raised profound questions about how states interact, eroding norms of international conduct that underpin successful responses to a variety of global risks. And worst of all, Russia's thinly veiled threats to use nuclear weapons remind the world that escalation of the conflict—by accident, intention, or miscalculation—is a terrible risk. The possibility that the conflict could spin out of anyone's control remains high . . . Russia has also brought its war to the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia nuclear reactor sites, violating international protocols and risking widespread release of radioactive materials. Efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency to secure these plants so far have been rebuffed." The statement has been translated into Ukrainian and Russian.

Mary Robinson, Chair of The Elders and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said: "The Doomsday Clock is sounding an alarm for the whole of humanity. We are on the brink of a precipice. But our leaders are not acting at sufficient speed or scale to secure a peaceful and

liveable planet. From cutting carbon emissions to strengthening arms control treaties and investing in pandemic preparedness, we know what needs to be done. The science is clear, but the political will is lacking. This must change in 2023 if we are to avert catastrophe. We are facing multiple, existential crises. Leaders need a crisis mindset."

Ban Ki-moon, Deputy Chair of The Elders and former Secretary-General of the United Nations, said:

"Three years ago, I helped unveil the Doomsday Clock when its hands were last moved. Today they are even closer to midnight, showing how much more perilous our world has become in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, extreme weather events and Russia's outrageous war on Ukraine. Leaders did not heed the Doomsday Clock's warnings in 2020. We all continue to pay the price. In 2023 it is vital for all our sakes that they act."

Elbegdorj Tsakhia, former President of Mongolia and member of The Elders, added: "As a former President of a country landlocked between two large powers, I know how important international diplomacy is when it comes to tackling existential threats. Today our world faces multiple crises. A common thread runs through them all: failure of leadership. We need a collective response rooted in the spirit and values of the UN Charter that can put us back on a pathway to peaceful co-existence and sustainable development."

Sivan Kartha, PhD, senior scientist, Stockholm Environmental Institute, lead author for the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, and member, Science and Security Board (SASB), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, said: "Dealing with the crisis of climate change requires faith in institutions of multilateral governance and cooperation. The geopolitical fissure opened by the invasion of Ukraine has weakened trust among countries and the global will to cooperate."

Suzet McKinney, DrPH, Principal and Director of Life Sciences, Sterling Bay, and member, Science and Security Board (SASB), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, said: "Devastating events like the COVID-19 pandemic can no longer be considered rare, once-a-century occurrences. However, disease-induced disaster can be avoided if countries around the world cooperate on global health strategies."

Steve Fetter, PhD, dean of the graduate school and professor of public policy, University of Maryland, fellow, American Physical Society, member, National Academy of Sciences Committee on International Security and Arms Control, and member, Science and Security Board (SASB), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, said: "Even if nuclear use is avoided in Ukraine, the war has challenged the nuclear order—the system of agreements and understandings that have been constructed over six decades to limit the dangers of nuclear weapons."

The 2023 Doomsday Clock statement details other threats and threat multipliers beyond the most immediate risks related to the Russia-Ukraine War:

- Nuclear Weapons
- The last remaining nuclear weapons treaty between Russia and the United States, New START, stands in jeopardy. Unless the two parties resume negotiations and find a basis for further reductions, the treaty will expire in February 2026. This would eliminate mutual inspections, deepen mistrust, spur a nuclear arms race, and heighten the possibility of a nuclear exchange.
- China's considerable expansion of its nuclear capabilities is particularly troubling, given its consistent refusal to consider measures to enhance transparency and predictability. The US Defense Department claims Beijing may increase its arsenal fivefold by 2035 and could soon rival the nuclear capabilities of the United States and Russia, with unpredictable consequences for stability.
- North Korea has greatly stepped up its intermediate and longer-range missile testing. In late March, North Korea successfully launched an intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time since 2017. In the following months, it also launched numerous other ballistic missiles, most of short range. Perhaps most concerning, on October 4, North Korea launched an intermediate-range ballistic missile over Japan. Meanwhile, US officials contend that North Korea is preparing to conduct its seventh nuclear weapon test.
- Iran continues to increase its uranium enrichment capacity, albeit under international safeguards outside the confines of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that once restrained it. This positions Iran closer to a nuclear weapons capability,

should it decide to cross that threshold. Returning to the nuclear deal would reduce risks and provide a path forward, and the United States, Europe, and other countries have made reasonable efforts to revive the deal. But instability in Iran and Tehran's support for Russia's war against Ukraine will complicate successful negotiations to keep Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

- India continues to modernize its nuclear arsenal of some 160 warheads, with new delivery systems now under development to complement or replace existing nuclear-capable aircraft, land-based delivery systems, and sea-based systems. Pakistan has an arsenal of similar size and continues to expand its warheads, delivery systems, and fissile material production.

- The United States, Russia, and China are now pursuing full-fledged nuclear weapons modernization programs, setting the table for a dangerous new "third nuclear age" of competition. Long-standing concerns about arms racing in South Asia and missile arms races in Northeast Asia complete a dismal picture that needs to be addressed.

- Climate Crisis
- The Russia-Ukraine War's effects are not limited to an increase in nuclear danger; they also undermine global efforts to combat climate change. Countries dependent on Russian oil and gas have sought to diversify their supplies and suppliers, leading to expanded investment in natural gas exactly when such investment should have been shrinking.

- Global carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels, after having rebounded from the COVID economic decline to an all-time high in 2021, continued to rise in 2022 and hit another record high. A decline in Chinese emissions was overshadowed by a rise in the US, India, and elsewhere.

- Not only did weather extremes continue to plague diverse parts of the globe, but they were more evidently attributable to climate change. Countries of West Africa experienced floods that were among the most lethal in their histories, owing to a rainfall event that was assessed to be 80 times more likely because of climate change. Extreme temperatures in Central Europe, North America, China, and other regions of the Northern Hemisphere this past summer led to water shortages and soil drought conditions that led in turn to poor

harvests, further undermining food security at a time when the Ukraine conflict has already driven food price increases. Pakistan faced intense floods due to a "monsoon on steroids" that inundated one-third of the country, affecting 33 million people directly and unleashing cascading effects, including a major crop failure, an epidemic of water-borne diseases, and the destruction of infrastructure, homes, livestock, and livelihoods.

- Bio-Threats
- Devastating events like the COVID-19 pandemic can no longer be considered rare, once-a-century occurrences. The total number and diversity of infectious disease outbreaks has increased significantly since 1980, with more than half caused by zoonotic diseases (that is, disease originating in animals and transmitted to humans). As such, zoonoses put the human population at significant risk for pandemics. There is immense, uncharacterized diversity within the 26 virus families and the many phyla of bacteria and other microbes known to infect humans. The world's ability to predict which of these viruses and microbes are most likely to cause human disease is woefully inadequate.

- Laboratory accidents continue to occur frequently. Opportunities for human error, limited understanding of novel disease characteristics, lack of local government knowledge about the types of research occurring in labs in their jurisdictions, and confusion about lab safety requirements all challenge current laboratory biosafety and biosecurity programs. It is also easier now than ever to obtain and modify pathogens, increasing the chances of pandemics caused by laboratory accidents.

- Recent events—including especially the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its continuing disinformation efforts in regard to biological weapons—have changed the landscape of biological threats. The risk that Russia will engage in biological warfare increases as conditions in Ukraine become more chaotic, weakening norms of warfare. Escalation of the war in Ukraine poses many potentially existential threats to humanity; one of them is biological.

- Disinformation and Disruptive Technology
- On the disinformation front, there was some good news: For the most part, the American electorate rejected

election deniers in 2022, and in France, President Emmanuel Macron overcame a historic challenge from his country's far-right candidate Marine Le Pen. Meanwhile, the Biden administration continued its efforts to increase the role of scientists in informing public policy.

- On the other hand, cyber-enabled disinformation continues unabated. In the United States, political opposition to a "Disinformation Governance Board" proposed by the Department of Homeland Security was grounded in willful misrepresentation and the politics of personal destruction. But non-substantive and misleading as its messages were, the opposition succeeded in causing the department to withdraw its proposal. These types of attacks are hardly new but are emblematic of corruption in the information environment.

- Inside Russia, meanwhile, government control of the information ecosystem has blocked the wide dissemination of truthful information about the Ukraine war. Chinese use of surveillance technology has continued apace in Xinjiang. As we stated last year, the extensive use of surveillance technologies has disturbing implications for human rights and poses a distinct threat to civil society.

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has also shredded norms of behavior in space, publicly threatening to use an anti-satellite weapon against US Starlink satellites, arguing that they are not merely a commercial system but a military one as well. Ukraine has made use of Starlink in its conflict with Russia.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945 by Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Eugene Rabinowitch and University of Chicago scientists who helped develop the first atomic weapons in the Manhattan Project. The scientists felt that they "could not remain aloof to the consequences of their work" and worked to inform the public and policymakers about man-made threats to human existence.

The Doomsday Clock was created in 1947 by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to convey how close humanity is to destroying itself. Designed by painter Marty Langsdorf, the Clock has become an international symbol of the world's vulnerability to catastrophe from nuclear weapons, climate change and disruptive technologies.

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USDA Announces Additional Assistance For Dairy Farmers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the details of additional assistance for dairy producers, including a second round of payments through the Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program (PMVAP) and a new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP).

The update to PMVAP and the new ODMAP will enable USDA to better support small- and medium-sized dairy operations who weathered the pandemic and now face other challenges.

"The Biden-Harris administration continues to fulfill its commitments to fill gaps in pandemic assistance for producers. USDA is announcing a second set of payments of nearly \$100 million to close-out the

\$350 million commitment under PMVAP through partnerships with dairy handlers and cooperatives to deliver the payments.," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt.

"USDA is also announcing new assistance targeted to small to medium size organic dairy farmers to help with anticipated marketing costs as they face a variety of challenges from weather to supply-chain challenges."

Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program

PMVAP assists producers who received a lower value due to market abnormalities caused by the pandemic and ensuing Federal policies. As a result of the production cap increase, USDA's Agri-

cultural Marketing Service (AMS) will make PMVAP payments to eligible dairy farmers for fluid milk sales between 5 million and 9 million pounds from July through December 2020.

This level of production was not eligible for payment under the first round of the PMVAP. Payment rates will be identical to the first round of payments, 80 percent of the revenue different per month, on fluid milk sales from 5 million to 9 million pounds from July through December 2020.

USDA will again distribute monies through agreements with independent handlers and cooperatives, with reimbursement to handlers for allowed administrative costs. USDA will contact handlers with eligible producers to notify them of the opportunity to

participate.

As part of the first round, PMVAP paid eligible dairy farmers on up to 5 million pounds of fluid milk sales from July through December 2020. The first round of payments distributed over \$250 million in payments to over 25,000 eligible dairy farmers. These dairy farmers received the full allowable reimbursement on fluid milk sales up to 5 million pounds.

More information about the PMVAP production cap increase is available at ams.usda.gov/pmvap.

Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program

The new ODMAP, to be administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), is intended to help smaller organic dairy farms that have faced a unique set

of challenges and higher costs over the past several years that have been compounded by the ongoing pandemic and drought conditions across the country.

Many small organic dairy operations are now struggling to stay in business and FSA plans to provide payments to cover a portion of their estimated marketing costs for 2023. Final spending will depend on enrollment and each producer's projected production, but ODMAP has been allocated up to \$100 million.

The assistance provided by ODMAP will be provided through unused Commodity Credit Corporation funds remaining from earlier pandemic assistance programs. The assistance will help eligible organic dairy producers with up to

75 percent of their future projected marketing costs in 2023, based on national estimates of marketing costs.

This assistance will be provided through a streamlined application process based on a national per hundredweight payment. The payments will be capped at the first five million pounds of anticipated production, in alignment with preexisting dairy programs that target assistance to those smaller dairies that are most vulnerable to marketing challenges. This program is still in development.

Details about the Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program will be available and updated at farmers.gov as more details are released in a Notice of Funds Availability later this year.

Postal Service On-Time Performance Similar In Rural, Urban Areas, Report Finds

By Adam Goldstein

Challenges with the cash-strapped United States Postal Service sent many Americans to their wit's end during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in communities reliant on the mail for essential goods.

Yet despite concerns from members of Congress that recent service changes hit rural communities more than urban centers, a new report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office found few significant differences in on-time USPS delivery rates between these locales.

"The report validates expectations that there are few differences in service performance for urban and rural areas," said Angela Curtis, the USPS vice president of delivery operations, in a written response to the report from the GAO, a government watchdog.

The Postal Service's financial viability has been on the GAO's High Risk List since 2009. The GAO said that in response, the Postal Service has recently "made changes to its operations designed to restore financial self-sufficiency."

New Hampshire senator's request

Sen. Maggie Hassan, D-N.H., a member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, has consistently highlighted the importance of mail service to rural communities since before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Hassan asked the GAO to examine performance differences between rural and urban areas.

"I am concerned that USPS's efforts to address financial and operational challenges in the past several years have disproportionately affected rural communities," Hassan said in her January 2020 request letter to the GAO.

"I regularly hear from our constituents about various mail delivery issues — from transit time that seems to be longer than USPS reports, to mail that is not delivered at all."

GAO auditors analyzed on-time delivery performance for the four largest USPS mail types by volume from October 2020 to December 2021.

The team specifically examined data from first-class mail, marketing mail, periodical and package deliveries. These categories collectively comprise more than 90% of USPS mail volume and more than half of USPS revenue, according to the GAO report, which was published Jan. 12.

At the national and regional levels, the auditors found no differences of 5% or greater in on-time delivery rate between urban and rural areas for any of the mail products studied.

At the postal district level, they found no difference of 5% or greater in on-time delivery rates for packages between urban and rural areas.

The GAO did cite that eight of 50 postal districts nationwide had a 5% or greater difference in on-time mail delivery rate of periodicals, which varied between favoring urban and rural areas.

The districts in which on-time USPS periodical deliveries occurred 5% or more frequently in rural areas than urban areas included Louisiana, Georgia, south Florida, northern Illinois, eastern Pennsylvania plus Delaware, and Maryland.

In Hawaii and the district comprising Massachusetts and Rhode Island, on-time periodical deliveries occurred 5% or more frequently in urban areas than rural areas.

The USPS justified this disparity to the GAO by noting "periodicals arrive at the facility multiple times per day, which can create staffing conflict between package and periodical delivery." The USPS reported that it plans to move up the time in which periodicals enter the mail system in order to minimize these delays.

The GAO also found that Hawaii was the only state with a 5% or greater split in on-time delivery rate of first-class and marketing mail between urban and rural areas, favoring urban areas.

The authors said USPS attributed this difference to the fact that Hawaii brings in mail via boat and plane. These modes of mail transport can lead to problems in rural service due to limited cargo space, according to USPS officials cited in

the report.

A lack of demographic monitoring

In the same report, the GAO determined that after the USPS makes service and operational changes, administrators do not have a system for collecting data on impacts to demographic groups.

In 2021, USPS implemented two nationwide adjustments to service standards, extending the time carriers could take to deliver first-class mail and periodicals, along with first-class packages. The auditors found the USPS modeled the effects that this change would have on rural areas before consulting the Postal Regulatory Commission for an advisory opinion, as required by federal law.

However, the GAO also found that after these service changes were implemented, the USPS used its existing software to monitor impacts, which does not account for urban and rural differences in delivery performance.

The authors of the report also looked at three major USPS operational changes affecting rural communities in 2021. These changes included consolidating facilities, optimizing delivery routes, and reducing mail carrier trips by merging priority and regular runs. Operational changes within the USPS do not require postal regulators' approval.

The GAO found that while the USPS consulted agency stakeholders on impacts to rural service prior to making these changes, once again they did not monitor for effects on delivery performance after the changes were executed. USPS officials told the GAO that given no effect on rural deliveries was expected from these changes, the agency did not monitor for impacts to these communities.

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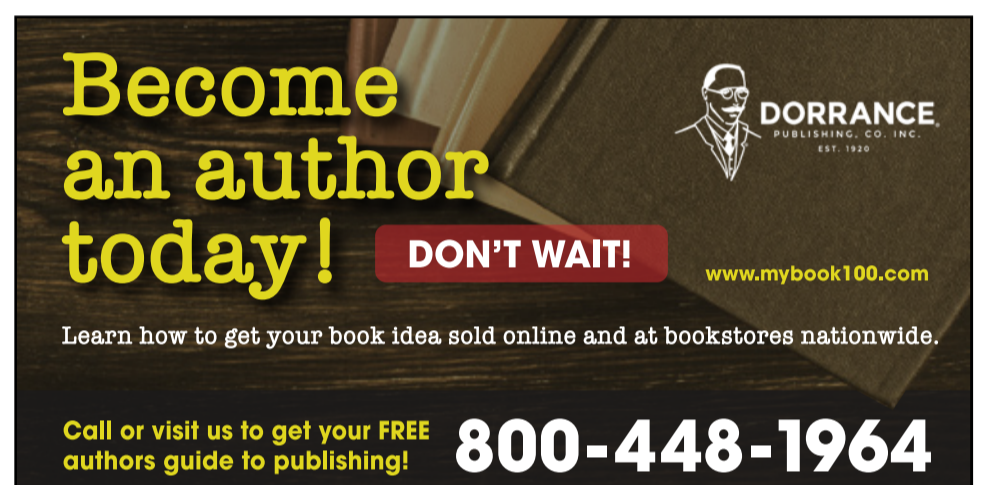


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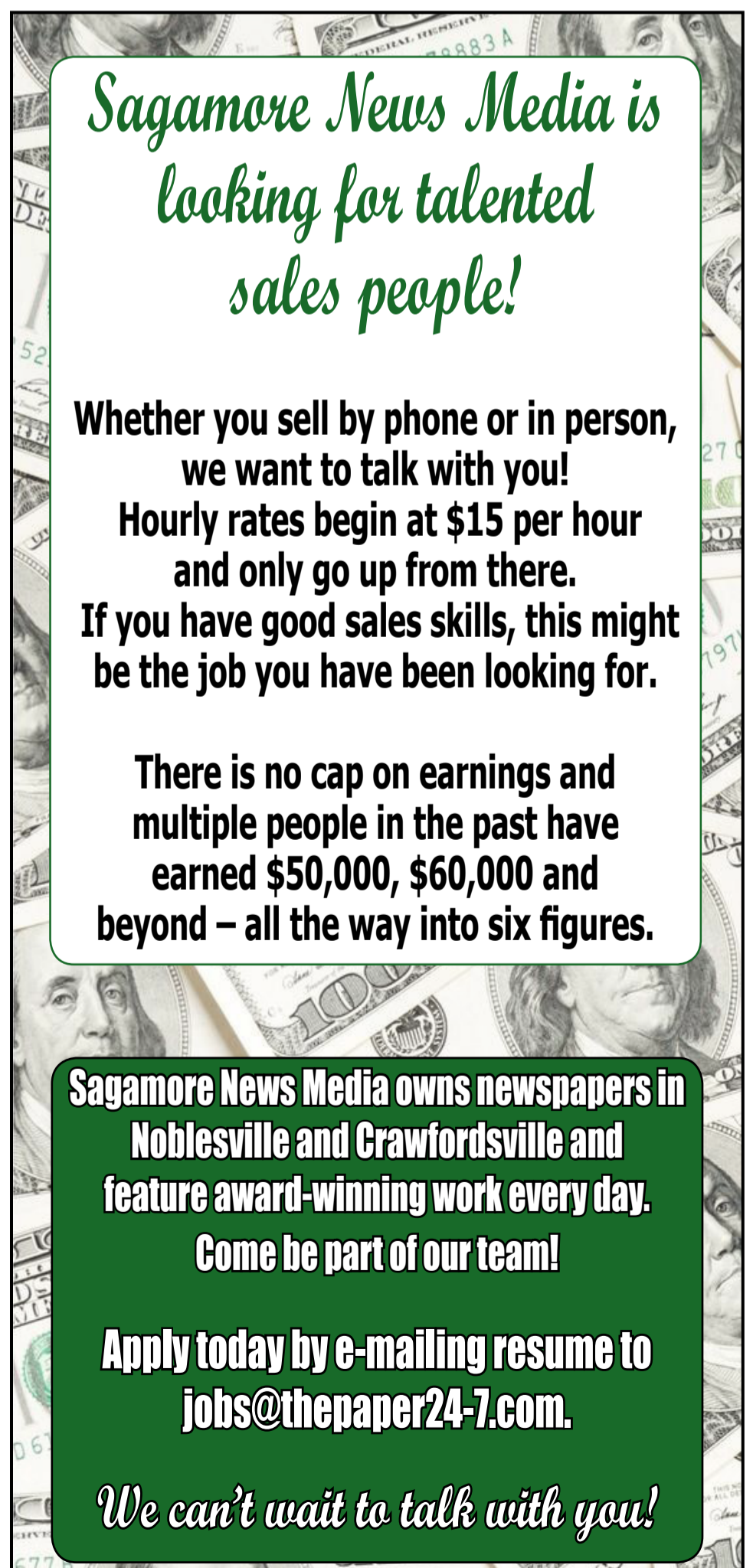
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LWV From Page A1

of there.” Charter schools had lost their shiny promise starting with some high-profile cases of financial mismanagement. Exacerbating the problem were mid-year closures by some charters which, when they failed to thrive, left students and families in a lurch. Furthermore, the data suggested that charters do not improve educational outcomes in comparison to traditional public schools.

For context, Indiana has long supported school options, but schools that are public (including traditional public schools and charter schools) are required to provide services for neurodivergent, special needs, or ESL populations. Private schools, traditionally associated with religious organizations, have been able to cherry-pick which students they can best educate and turn away students for a host of reasons, including religious differences and lack of services. In Indiana, homeschools have a designation as unaccredited freeway schools that educate a granular population and do not receive public dollars.

So, in 2011, politicians turned to vouchers as the next big “solution” for those black and brown kids. After passing the voucher program into law, politicians and pundits told national donors that Indiana had the cutting-edge voucher program in the nation.

“That was bringing in money,” McCormick said, not for parents and students but for politicians in the form of campaign support, and it won the politicians the attention they crave from big names like the Walton family, the DeVos Foundation, and Purple for Parents. Their goals often align around the privatization of education.

The voucher program sent dollars to private schools, McCormick noted, which resulted in further religious segregation and division, more racial identity politics and denial of (dis)ability rights.

“None of those politicians were surprised or unhappy at the divisions created,” said McCormick, nor did it trouble them that the vast majority of voucher dollars were not being used by black and brown students.

Another trend emerged. In 2011, Indiana had 241 private

schools. Fast forward to 2023, Indiana now has 324 private schools.

“Many people define private schools as something you’re familiar with. Usually, it is religiously associated,” McCormick said. “Not in Indiana. The definition of private school is loosely, loosely defined.” Private schools may be accredited by third-party organizations, 10 of which are recognized by the Indiana Department of Education. Without accreditation, parents do not have certainty that their students will receive a quality education. Accreditation is optional.

Dot Two: “So when I was in the Department of Education, we would get calls and they would say, hey, there’s a school that started,” McCormick said. “You need to check on the wellness of the kids because it is in the back of a taco stand. It’s a private school, and you need to go check on it.”

As McCormick spoke she gestured and shook her head as if it was impossible that anyone would try these schemes.

“So we’d send a team out. Sure. Now we had a school that was doing nothing with your money, in the back of a taco stand,” she went on. “There’s no books, there’s no teacher, but they’re pulling in voucher money because it is a very, very expensive program with no guardrails.”

In other words, the definition and accreditation expectations remain intentionally loose. In part, freeway (homeschools) and private schools can benefit from this lack of regulation. As McCormick noted, there are some very good homeschools and private schools, just as there are some good charter schools and some poor-performing traditional public schools. Her concern was not in promoting one school option as the only one.

To be clear, McCormick said, her issue with the voucher program is about millions of dollars flowing out of the state because these schools act like false fronts, setting up and claiming the voucher funds until after Indiana’s “count day.” Count day occurs once per semester ordinarily, and schools must report who is on the rolls and came to school that day, showing that the school can claim funds to educate that student. Once that day passes, these front schools send

the students back to their traditional public school with a “sorry.” The operators leave the state for the rest of the semester, taking money with them. Frustrated by the fiscal damage to the state and to taxpayer investments, McCormick’s team reported these schools to the Attorney General’s office, to legislators, to anyone who could hold these schools accountable. No one acted, she said.

This year, Indiana’s legislature is considering a new bill that will expand funding to cover materials, not just for traditional schools and charter schools, but also private schools. The voucher program, which was worth more than \$241.4 million in the 2021-22 school year – a 44 percent increase from the previous year – will expand and the definition of materials is arguably as loose as the definition of an accredited private school. McCormick notes that materials could be “a TV because maybe your kids are watching Sesame Street, a trip to Disney because maybe that’s educational or the tires for a car because maybe you need to get them somewhere.”

Dot Three: What’s the why? Simon Sinek says that humans connect emotionally around the “why” question. Why? Because major donors prefer privatization and stratification, or segregation by religion, race and socio-economic status.

“You can’t unlearn what you’re learning in that room,” said McCormick of the conventions that groups paid for her to attend. She gathered data to follow the money, to see who was benefiting, who was cheating and how it affected local public schools. She’s been frustrated by the lack of action.

“When I’m the most fiscally conservative person in that state house, there is a problem,” she said. “If I wasted money like that I should have been fired in three minutes. But the waste that this is producing is unbelievable.”

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, multi-issue political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government. For information about the League, visit the website www.lwvmoncoin.org; or, visit the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, Indiana Facebook page.

TIM From Page A1

What a concept, huh?

To be fair, Jackson had his problems. He killed a man in a duel, had a lot of other fights, owned slaves and more. As a human being, he had issues. When he took office in 1828, the country was still trying to pay off the debt from wars – our fight for independence and the War of 1812.

Nationally, we owed just a tick under \$60 million – about \$1.5 billion in today’s money. Jackson, a Democrat, called it the “national curse.” Over his first six years as president he cut government spending – another novel concept – and sold off a bunch of federal land out west and eliminated the debt. To this day, it remains the only time our country was debt free.

Let’s think about that for a second.

Have you paid off a significant debt? A house? Car? Maybe a big credit card? Remember how good it felt?

Isn’t it amazing that in the history of this great country we’ve only done that once in the last almost 200 years?

Fast forward to today. President Joe Biden and the Democrats are playing chicken with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and the Republicans. Over the next few months we’re going to hear all sorts of posturing, accusations, proposals and noise. When the

dust settles, what we’re going to see is an agreement between Dems and Repubs to increase the debt limit.

Can we go back to the idea that hitting the limit is like maxing out the credit card please? Imagine with me, if you will, that phone call between you and the credit card company. You are well past the friendly voice on the other end asking how they can help. The person you are dealing with now – after maxing out the card time and again – has a hard edge to their voice. There’s no warm and fuzzy anymore. There’s talk about being turned over to collections. The dark and ominous cloud looming on the horizon means your life is about to change. If you can’t pay your bills, you could lose your car – which could mean losing your job . . . which could mean . . . OH WAIT! It’s OK you tell the unfriendly voice. You are borrowing a page from your elected representatives and you have an answer: Increase your card’s limit!

How’s that going to go over?

But that’s exactly what’s going to happen in June. The \$32,000,000,000,000 – yes, that’s 12 zeroes – will be increased. And

just like that, the folks inside the beltway will shake hands, congratulate themselves on averting the crisis – the national media will heave a huge sigh of relief – and the federal spending – which is something around \$10,000 every three seconds – will roll on. (How long have you been reading this, a minute, two? Guess what? The debt is a couple hundred thousand bucks more than what it was when you started.)

And we aren’t doing a damn thing about it.

The insanity will continue so long as we keep electing the same people over and over. Isn’t it time for the grownups in the room – and politicians have proven that’s not them – to say enough is enough. Indiana has 11 members in Congress – Reps. Victoria Spartz, Greg Pence, Andre Carson, Larry Bucshon, Erin Houchin, Frank Mrvan, Rudy Yakym, Jim Banks and Jim Baird and Sens. Mike Braun and Todd Young. You want them to do something different? Let ‘em know.

Two cents, which is about how much Timmons said his columns are worth, appears periodically on Wednesdays in The Paper. Timmons is the publisher of The Paper and can be contacted at ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com.

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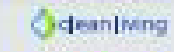
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Suet Plus Mesh Bowl With Stainless Steel Roof Feeder
1000501 REG. 13.99



SAVE \$2.00
12.99
21 Oz. Mealworms Poultry Feed
High-energy snack for wild birds and poultry. 1000589 REG. 14.99



\$10 OFF THE REG. PRICE
1 Gal. Motor Treatment & Cleaner
10000555

\$1 OFF THE REG. PRICE
16 Oz. Motor Treatment & Cleaner
10000500



SAVE \$2.00
14.99
40 Lb. Deluxe Blend Wild Bird Seed
Attracts Cardinals, Chickadees, Finches, Grosbeaks, Blue Jays and more! 006782 REG. 16.99



SAVE 50%
99¢
Your Choice
11 Oz. Wild Bird Suet Cakes Assorted flavors. REG. 1.69



SAVE \$8.00
41.99
5 Gal. Vintage Tractor Hydraulic Fluid
Specifically engineered for older farm tractors and mobile equipment. 10005006 REG. 49.99



\$1 OFF THE REG. PRICE
All 14 Oz. Mystik Grease Tubes & Sprays Assorted. REG. 3.49-5.99



\$5 OFF THE REG. PRICE
All Harvest King Standard & Heavy Duty Grease Guns Assorted. REG. 15.99-19.99



SAVE \$3.00
9.99
Your Choice
Select 2" x 27' Flat Or J Hook Ratchet Straps
Rubber padded grip handles, 10,000 lb. Breaking strength, 3,333 Working load limit. 10000122, 10000121 REG. 12.99

PRICES LISTED ARE VALID JANUARY 25-31, 2023 WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. INVENTORY VARIES BY LOCATION.



- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| <p>ILLINOIS
Gibson City
633 E. First St.
217-764-4825</p> <p>Homer Glen
15850 S. Bell Rd.
708-645-0800</p> <p>Moniteau
2655 Sycamore Dr.
915-942-2152</p> <p>Pekin
3315 Court St.
309-623-8370</p> | <p>Pontiac
1027 W. Reynolds
815-844-7000</p> <p>Rochelle
1240 N. 7th St.
815-961-6622</p> <p>Streator
11 Northpoint Dr.
815-510-9751</p> <p>Ytzen
1625 S. Georgetown Rd.
217-646-0800</p> | <p>Washington
70 Cherry Tree
Shipping Center
309-481-5009</p> <p>Waukeba
1200 E. Walnut St.
815-432-4504</p> | <p>INDIANA
Crawfordsville
1601 US Highway 231
765-363-0800</p> <p>Elkhart
2501 S. Main St.
574-323-3997</p> <p>Marion
1481 West 26th St.
765-679-9888</p> <p>Michigan City
4201 S. Franklin St.
219-879-8217</p> | <p>North Elkhart
3101 Northview Dr.
574-264-8191</p> <p>Rehoboth
2100 Peace Tree Village
574-365-6888</p> <p>Wabash
1550 N. Cass St.
260-569-8700</p> <p>Warsaw
3660 Commerce Dr.
574-269-9203</p> | <p>OHIO
Lima
975 N. Cable Rd.
419-223-0113</p> <p>Findlay
1800 Tiffin Ave.
419-425-9843</p> | <p>WISCONSIN
Burlington
1058 Milwaukee Ave.
262-767-1290</p> <p>Portage
2325 New Pinery Rd.
608-696-7988</p> |
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