

The Paper

OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County's oldest locally owned independent newspaper

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CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA

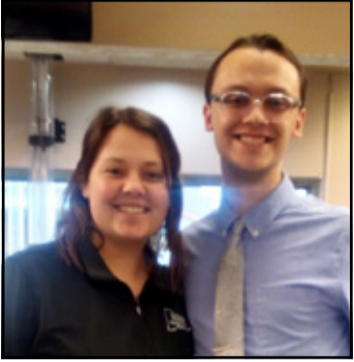
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TODAY'S VERSE

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy might.

FACES OF MONTGOMERY

People who call our community their own.



Kirstin Dillion and Aidan Knee smile brightly from HHSB on a beautiful Monday morning. Thank you for your smiles!

THINGS You Should Know:

1 The Indiana Department of Transportation recently announced a portion of State Road 32, east of U.S. 41 in Fountain County, will close on or after April 17 for culvert work. The closure is expected to last through mid-May. Motorists are asked to detour around the closure using U.S. 41, U.S. 136 and State Road 341. 9th Street in Tippecanoe County INDOT has rescheduled the closure of 9th Street between Burnetts and Prophets Rock roads in Tippecanoe County. The closure is now expected to begin on or after April 10 and last through early July.

2 Many young Hoosiers enter the workforce or go to college with little to no financial education. Young people often face questions, like how do I open a bank account? Should I apply for loans or credit cards? What insurance policies do I need? These questions sometimes go unanswered and can even lead to poor financial decisions that can have long-term impacts. Currently, Indiana high schools can offer financial literacy courses as an elective, meaning some schools offer it and some schools do not. However, as your state senator, I supported legislation that would require public and charter high school students to pass a financial literacy course before graduation, putting our young adults in a better position to succeed post graduation. Requiring high school students to pass a course on financial literacy would give our Hoosier students the skills to effectively manage their money and make strides in building on our already strong economy and workforce.

3 Indiana fishing and hunting licenses are now available for purchase for the upcoming seasons. They are valid April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

4 Taxes are due Tuesday, April 18. Visit the Department of Revenue's website for more information on this tax season. Click here for some additional resources for Hoosiers, those on social security and business owners.

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!

18

The 18th annual Strawberry Festival Queen Program along with the 16th annual Junior Royalty Contest will take place Saturday at Crawfordsville High School.

The Strawberry Festival Queen Program has been a longstanding tradition in Crawfordsville as the program focuses on empowering contestants to reach their best self while enhancing interview, leadership, and overall professional development skills.



120,000

A bill I sponsored that would support workforce transportation and expand local road funding opportunities passed the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Transportation this week. House Bill 1046 would allow a public transportation corporation in one county to cross into another county to transport individuals as long as an interlocal agreement between the two counties is in place. This would allow a resident of a rural county to use public transportation to travel to a more urban neighboring county for work. The workforce in the Greater Lafayette area has about 100,000 Hoosiers, and there are approximately 120,000 jobs in Tippecanoe County.

INDIANA LANDMARKS
\$20,000

Indiana Landmarks' Black Heritage Preservation Program is launching a college scholarship program for Indiana residents who identify as black or African American and who are attending or planning to attend an accredited college or university. One \$20,000 scholarship to cover education-related expenses at an accredited college or university will be awarded for the 2023-24 school year. Applicants must be a graduating high school senior, undergraduate, graduate student, or post-graduate. Preference will be given to the following majors: history, public history, African/African American studies, archaeology/anthropology, preservation, conservation, city planning, landscape architecture, and journalism. The deadline to apply is May 12, 2023.

AGC
THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

9,000

The construction sector shed 9,000 jobs in March, the first decrease since January 2022, even as the sector's unemployment rate fell and total number of job openings in the sector hit a near-record high, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of new government data. Association officials said the industry was struggling to replace aging workers and pushed for new construction training and education support, as well as immigration reform measures to encourage more people into the industry.

\$475 million

In 2022, the Office of the Attorney General recovered more than \$475 million on behalf of Hoosier taxpayers — including the Unclaimed Property Division's return of \$62 million in assets to rightful owners.

"In 2022, we continued a pattern of accomplishment on behalf of Indiana citizens and taxpayers," Attorney General Rokita said. "We kept up our work protecting liberty, upholding the rule of law and keeping Hoosier families safe and secure at an all-time low cost to the state."



HONEST HOOSIER

It's the 100th day of the year — and a fine day to be celebrating art teacher birthdays!



INSIDE TODAY'S EDITION

- Carrie Classon.....A2
- Casey Williams.....A3
- Classifieds.....A4
- John Roberts.....A4
- Capital Chronicle..A5

TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

Keep your fingers away from your eyes if you want to minimize your chances of getting "pink eye." Today's health tip was brought to you by Dr. John Roberts. Catch his column each week in The Paper and online at www.thepaper24-7.com.



OBITUARIES

NONE

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



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THE MONTGOMERY MINUTE

Show Us Those Smiles!

Are you a proud parent or grandparent? Got a great photo of your loved one? E-mail it to news@thepaper24-7.com along with the pertinent info (and your contact information so we can reach you if we have questions). C'mon, let's show off as many bright and smiling faces as we can and make clear exactly why Montgomery County is such a great place to raise a family!

TODAY'S QUOTE

"If I could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint."
-Edward Hopper

TODAY'S JOKE

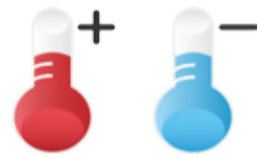
Why did the art thief's getaway van run out of gas?
Because the thief had no Monet to buy Degas to make the Van Gogh!

7 DAY FORECAST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
38/66 SUNNY	39/68 SOME P.M. CLOUDS	43/72 MAINLY SUNNY	51/75 SUNNY	51/78 SUNNY	53/80 SUNNY	56/81 PARTLY CLOUDY



Sunrise/Sunset
RISE: 7:15 a.m.
SET: 8:22 p.m.



High/Low Temperatures
High: 68 °F
Low: 39 °F



- Today is...**
- Golfer's Day
 - Sibling's Day

What Happened On This Day

- **2001** Mercy killings become legal in the Netherlands. In a controversial decision the Dutch senate approved a bill legalizing euthanasia for patients with unbearable, terminal illness.
- **1998** Negotiators in Northern Ireland reach an historic peace deal. The Good Friday Agreement ended 30 years of violent conflict about Northern Ireland's constitutional status ("The Troubles").



Births On This Day

- **1847** Joseph Pulitzer Hungarian/American politician, journalist, publisher, founded Pulitzer, Inc.
- **1951** David Helvarg American journalist, activist

Deaths On This Day

- **1965** Linda Darnell American actress
- **1966** Evelyn Waugh English author, journalist

Making Dog Friends Lincoln School For Colored Children Northside Recreation Center



CARRIE CLASSON
The Postscript

My husband, Peter, is trying to impress a local collie. Peter knows better than this. He had a collie for many years. Collies are not easily impressed. They have their own priorities and their own agenda and if it happens to coincide with yours, you can pretend they did something on your behalf—but you'd be lying to yourself.

But Peter still loves collies. The current object of Peter's affection is named Lasso and lives on a road Peter takes every day on his hike.

Peter met the collie one day when the dog was sticking his head through the curtains. Peter learned his name from the collie's owner, and went on to assume he and the collie would be fast friends. Every day, as Peter walked by, he called out, "Lasso!" and the collie ignored him. So Peter decided he would start bringing treats.

Peter brought a cookie and put it on the windowsill. The collie did not come. On the way home, Peter checked the windowsill. The cookie was gone. Peter did this for several days running.

"Maybe Lasso's owner is finding the cookies," I said. "Maybe he is throwing them away!" Peter was not convinced. Then one day, Lasso was at the window. Peter gave him a cookie. Lasso ignored it. Peter put it down on the sill. Lasso poked it with his nose. He eventually ate it, but did not seem excited.

"I don't think Lasso likes cookies," Peter concluded. The next day, he went out and bought corn chips. "If he didn't like cookies, he's not going to like corn chips!" I told Peter. "He's waiting for organic sun-dried beef chips." Peter looked as if he was considering this.

"I could take chicken," he said. "You can't take chicken on your hike!" I figured there wasn't much Peter wouldn't do to capture this dog's affection. Then Peter had an idea. "Popcorn! Dogs love popcorn even more than beef!" Peter packaged up some popcorn and put it in his backpack. "Lasso!" he called. The dog did not answer. Peter left popcorn on the windowsill. On his way down, he checked. The popcorn was still there, but one piece had been moved. It was now in tiny, wet pieces. Apparently, Lasso did not like popcorn either.

Some dogs will do anything for affection. Some dogs will give you affection once they figure you've earned it. And some dogs are always going to play hard to get. I had a feeling that Lasso might not be in the market for more friends, but I didn't want to break this to Peter.

And even though it sounds funny, it's still a little sad. I've been ignored and ghosted by folks I thought were my friends. I realized—a little too late—they were not actually my friends. They already had friends, and I wasn't one of them. It doesn't matter if it's a dog or a person. The realization still hurts.

"You have lots of dog friends," I reminded Peter. And he does. There is Reacher, who he calls the "Reacher Creature," a giant dog who jumps up in delight when he sees Peter. There is Bucky, who has very short legs and lies down on the sidewalk when Peter talks too long with Bucky's owner.

There are several tiny dogs who walk on his route every day and bark in excitement every time Peter goes by. And somewhere, just behind the curtains of his home, is Lasso, ignoring Peter every day.

"Lasso doesn't know what he is missing," I told Peter. And he doesn't. Till next time, Carrie Check out CarrieClassonAuthor on Facebook or visit CarrieClasson.com.

-Carrie Classon is a freelance writer and author and lives in New Mexico. Her columns appear each week.

Around 1890, dedicated persons from the Center Presbyterian Church, initially at the northwest corner of Washington and Pike Streets, felt a missionary movement was needed for youngsters living in the Northend of Crawfordsville. The program began in the county courthouse under the direction of Miss Hortense Holden and volunteers from Wabash College. The Center Church congregation noticed the number of children coming to the program continued to increase and outgrew the current building. Mr. A C Jennison donated the lot on North Grant, and the structure known as the Neighborhood Chapel (often the Neighborhood Mission) was built for \$1800. The ladies of the church gave \$200 for a furnace and furnishings. The formal dedication of the chapel was on Sunday, 16 December 1900. Speakers from Center Church and the First Presbyterian Church addressed the crowd and would later merge to become Wabash Presbyterian Church.

Many young people in the church and Wabash College students taught Sunday School classes and led recreation activities. Dora Harding Fullenwider served as its first superintendent. The children assisted in fundraising by staging an annual program presented in the Strand Theatre on Green Street. The mission assisted families in distress caused by poverty, joblessness, and alcoholism. The mission

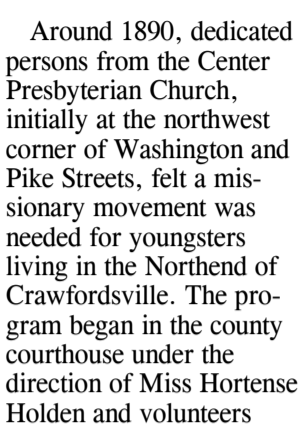
spoke loudly about its views on Temperance, often holding rallies to convince the city to abolish local saloons. Eventually, the mission house closed, but the building was used by the Free Methodists and then by the Church of the Nazarene.

When the city acquired the 12,000-square-foot building, it operated as the Northside Recreation Center. In the Parks and Recreation reports, the building was located at 308 North Grant Avenue and was officially the property of the Wabash Avenue Presbyterian Church. The department paid no rent but was responsible for all maintenance and repair, including the playground equipment. Activities for elementary students included singing, crafts, games, storytelling hour, basketball, tumbling, billiards, trampolines, and cooking classes. Junior and senior high activities centered more around informal programming, including basketball, billiards, table tennis, tumbling, jukebox record playing, crafts, and dancing. Adult activities were usually held in the

evening. Offerings included card playing, table tennis, billiards, and socializing time. Senior citizens had even more choices: Euchre Club, pitch-in dinners, the Friendship Club, exercise class, and a choral group called the Sunshine Singers. A transportation program for those over 60 who needed rides to doctors, the Social Security Office, and grocery shopping. Later, a nutrition program was established for persons over 60 that met at noon with socializing and activities while eating a hot lunch. Volunteers provided weekly income and insurance claim assistance.

Eventually, the building was razed, and the city created a pocket park with a shelter building and playground equipment named in honor of Frances Wooden, long-time director of the Northside Center. Frances was a pioneer and trailblazer for children and senior citizens. She taught the Northside children to be proud of their area and to keep it clean. When she retired 30 December 1982, she had worked with children more than

35 years. She ensured youngsters who were too poor to buy supplies never went without. In September 2022, the city of Crawfordsville announced the Frances Wooden Northside Park would receive a complete update to the facility, with construction tentatively starting in the spring of 2023. An anonymous donor funded the project through the Montgomery County Community Foundation (MCCF) and the city of Crawfordsville. Because the Frances Wooden Northside Park is located by the historic Bethel AME Church in Crawfordsville and has ties to the Underground Railroad, it will showcase all aspects of this historical area. The park will feature historical snapshots of the site incorporated into five commemorative benches and the significance of Sugar Creek. New playground equipment will feature separate areas of playground equipment for younger and older children, and green spaces. In October 2023, a public input meeting was held at Bethel AME Church to allow community members time to view park plans, hear from community leaders on the project scope and provide their input. This article concludes the series on staff, building caretakers, and alums of Lincoln School for Colored Children. If you have any information or questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with Shannon Hudson at lsfc@gmail.com.



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Photos courtesy of Subaru

All-New 2024 Subaru Impreza Is The Sports Car For Everyday Life

Spring has finally come to California wine country and I'm clipping through tight two-lane roads through vineyards and wineries around Paso Robles. Greenery and mountains are simply magical, yet the roads and this car demand attention. As invigorating is the drive, this little hatchback could just as easily take Miles and Maisey to cello lessons. I'm driving the completely redesigned 2024 Subaru Impreza RS.

From the hotel carpark, it didn't look dramatically different from the outgoing model. The grille is wider and narrower, fenders have more form, and aero panels have been added underside to enhance fuel economy. Base and Sport models look handsome, but the RS is my favorite with 18" dark alloy wheels, black trim, vivid Oasis Blue Pearl paint, and RS logos that incorporate horizontally opposed piston heads in reference to its Boxer engine.

Likes:

- Multi-talented chassis
- Tech-laden interior
- Standard AWD

Sedans have been eliminated, leaving just hatchbacks because customers made clear they wanted a sporty car that could accommodate their active lifestyles. Hiking, Running, and spending time with pets are favorite activities. A wide rear threshold and mounting points for a roof rack allow easy loading of kayaks and bicycles too. Lift the hatch, fold rear seats, and toss gear into a cavernous crossover space. A bicycle – or cello – should fit.

Up front, there's a new tablet-sized infotainment touchscreen with auxiliary buttons/knobs for key climate functions, volume and tuning. Wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto,

Dislikes:

- Tame exterior design
- No manual RS
- Marginal power

and console charging easily connect phones. Seats heat faster, Harman Kardon audio sounds sweeter, and the power sunroof makes the interior brighter. Step up to the RS for red seat accents and alloy pedals. Safety, a Subaru hallmark, is enhanced with a new three-camera EyeSight system to better employ automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, and newly added crash-avoidance steering.

Putting the sport into utility are two available powertrains: Base models with a 152-horsepower 2.0-liter four-cylinder or the RS with a 2.5-liter four-cylinder developing 182-horsepower. Both connect to continuously variable automatic trans-

2024 Subaru Impreza RS

Five-passenger, AWD Hatchback
Powertrain: 2.5-liter I4, CVT
Output: 182hp/178 lb.-ft. torque
Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind
Wheels f/r: 18"/18" alloy
Brakes f/r: disc/disc
Fuel economy: 26/33 mpg city/hwy
Assembly: Gunma, Japan
Base/As-tested price: \$22,995/\$27,885

missions. The 2.5 only gives up 1-MPG (rated 26/33-MPG city/hwy) and gains 30-horsepower. Pretty easy choice. Paddle-shift eight pre-set ratios to better connect car with humans.

The suspension firmly grabs corners by the scruff, but is more compliant during daily commutes and long trips. Tip the car into a corner and you notice how the horizontally-opposed engine keeps weight balanced low in the chassis, torque-shifting all-wheel-drive solidly connects to

road, and the steering provides precise feedback. This car can do very sports car things very competently without any penalty during regular use.

Back at the hotel, sipping wine, the Impreza came into focus. It's practical with the utility of a crossover, able to cover long distances comfortably, but with impressive dance moves. The 2.5-liter engine could use more power, but this car is more about finesse than straight-line acceleration. Besides, if you want a turbo, Subaru



CASEY WILLIAMS
Auto Reviews

will happily sell you a WRX.

So, what does the overhauled Impreza cost? Base models start at just \$22,995. Step up to the Sport for \$24,995 or the resurrected RS for \$27,885. All offer incredible value, utility, and driving enjoyment without penalties of a true sports car.

Storm Forward!

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

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Don't Believe Everything You Hear!



JOHN R. ROBERTS, M.D.
Montgomery Medicine

We are definitely living in a post-truth world. It's not just in the political sphere that we have to be careful of facts and "alternative facts," it also extends to the scientific and medical realms as well. The public is being constantly bombarded with scientific information via mainstream media, social media, and other internet sources. How is a non-scientist supposed to filter through all this information and figure out what to believe? I want to give you some tips to use when evaluating what you see or hear.

The most important thing to look for when reading about a scientific or medical topic is whether the author or source is credible. Does the author have the proper credentials and experience? Is the person addressing a subject of which he or she

has extensive training and knowledge? A layperson doing research on the internet is NOT equivalent to someone who has the education, knowledge, and skills to assess a given topic.

Does the author have a degree from a well-recognized and accredited institution or is he or she simply a member of an organization that has little or no credibility in the scientific community?

There are a number of other things to watch for in scientific articles. The first, that should raise a huge red flag, is if the article is trying to sell or promote something. It is exceedingly rare for genuine scientific sources to disseminate information for the primary purpose of selling a product or service directly to the public (i.e. over the internet). Credible scientific sources usually have dedicated their lives to scientific inquiry for the betterment of mankind. Unfortunately, like all humans, some fall into the trap of promoting treatments or procedures that benefit them financially.

There are some logical fallacies you need to watch out for when reading scientific articles. The "argument from authority" is frequently used when trying to peddle a bogus product or treatment. This

flawed logic follows the thinking that since the author has a particular pedigree what he or she says must be true. This may or may not be true. Just because someone has an advanced degree it does not mean he or she has the expertise to comment on the subject at hand – it may be completely out of his or her area of study.

Authors may also use the argument from authority to reference another professional as having done research or said something that supports the author's position. The problem occurs when the supporting professional's findings or quotes are taken completely out of context and have absolutely no relevance whatsoever to the content of the article.

When someone reads that a Nobel Laureate in Medicine made a statement at some point in time that has some similar language to the point the author is trying to make, they assume the Nobel Prize winner must support the author's point as well. Don't fall for this slight of hand.

Another common tactic to watch out for is an author who fails to provide a citation to the study supporting his or her claim. The study may be named or alluded to by using only vague references. This

would not stand up in a peer-reviewed scientific publication.

If an author is going to use a study to support his or her position, the citation should include, at a minimum, the author(s) and where it was published. This allows the reader to go to the original primary source to see if the findings do indeed lend support and that the author did not make an improper association.

Two final things to look out for are anecdotes and testimonials. If an author is making a scientific conclusion about something, it must be based on rigorous scientific methodology and peer review, not word of mouth support. If the author refuses to produce the scientific evidence to back his or her position that should raise immediate concern that you should take any conclusions with a huge grain of salt.

I highly recommend *The Skeptics' Guide to the Universe: How to Know What's Really Real in a World Increasingly Full of Fake*, by Dr. Steven Novella, as a source to help you navigate our post-truth world

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

Senator Deery Gives Update On Legislation



STATE SENATOR DEERY

A bill I authored that would limit scenarios in which public Indiana colleges may refuse transcript distribution to current and former students will now head to the governor's desk.

Senate Enrolled Act 404 would prohibit universities from withholding a transcript if a student paid at least \$100 to \$300 toward their debt within the last year, depending on the amount owed.

This bill was drafted to help increase college completion rates throughout Indiana so Hoosiers are ready for the 21st century workforce.

Other states have worked on this problem, but Indiana is the first to address this issue with a balanced approach. I believe we have provided a model for other states to follow.

Supporting workforce transportation

House Bill 1046, which I sponsored, would allow a public transportation corporation in one county to cross into another county

to transport individuals as long as an interlocal agreement between the two counties is in place.

This would allow a resident of a rural county to use public transportation to travel to a more urban neighboring county for work.

The bill unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Appropriations Thursday and will now head to the full Senate for further consideration.

The language in the bill to allow 'The Rise' in Vermillion County to compete for state road grants was removed in that committee, but I am still working on some ways to get the language into law.

Water Contaminants Can Impact Child Health. Here's How To Remove Them

(StatePoint) Clean, safe drinking water is essential for human health, especially for children, who are particularly vulnerable to certain contaminants. Local, state and federal policy has had some success in helping clean up drinking water supplies, but there are new reports of emerging contaminants linked to child development. Here's what to know about some of the most common water contaminants linked to child health, along with information about how to filter them:

•**PFAS:** According to Environmental Working Group scientists, the presence of Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in American drinking water is much wider spread than previously thought. Contamination of drinking water or ground water has been detected at almost 1,400 sites in 49 states. This large class of chemicals -- which

includes perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) -- is added to a range of products and packaging. They are collectively referred to as "forever chemicals" because they don't break down easily and can last thousands of years. They can also build up in the human body. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the blood of nearly all Americans is contaminated with PFAS. A new medical research study recently reported PFAS is altering hormonal and metabolic pathways needed for child growth and development.

•**Lead:** The effects of lead contamination in water have become more well known since the crisis in Flint, Mich. became widely reported on in 2016. However, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that there are between 6 to 10 million lead service lines still use in the

country. When pipes that contain lead corrode, lead can enter drinking water. Harmful to everyone, even minimal exposure can have a significant impact on children, and has been linked to nervous system damage, impaired hearing, learning disabilities and impaired blood cell function.

•**Microplastics:** Microplastics are fragments of plastic pollution, which are harmful to water ecosystems and unhealthy to consume. Microplastics are found in both tap and bottled water and in a 2022 study, were noted to be found in human blood. While the health effects of microplastics are still largely unknown, they are emerging as a common drinking water contaminant to be aware of.

Some Solutions
To learn about the contaminants found in your drinking water, you can access the Environmental

Working Group's Tap Water Database. No matter what you learn, it's a good idea to filter your water.

Many home water filters only filter certain contaminants. It's important to look for a water filter that removes chemicals including PFAS, heavy metals including lead, and that provides broader protection against emerging contaminants such as microplastics. One option is the pitcher filters and dispenser filters offered by LifeStraw, which remove not only lead, PFAS and microplastics, but also bacteria, parasites and a variety of emerging contaminants, including pharmaceuticals.

When it comes to child health, PFAS and lead contamination in drinking water is a concerning problem at the local and national level. Fortunately, household solutions exist to make water safer for individuals and families.

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Holcomb Signs Transgender Medical Care Ban, ACLU Files Suit

By Whitney Downard
Indiana Capital Chronicle

The signing of a controversial medical care ban for transgender minors on Wednesday prompted a near-immediate lawsuit after Gov. Eric Holcomb approved the bill over the protests of families, medical professionals and transgender children.

Within hours, the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana (ACLU) filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of four transgender minors, whose health care would abruptly cease if the bill went into effect on July 1.

Attorney General Todd Rokita said his office is prepared to defend the ban in court.

Holcomb, author comments

Holcomb, in a statement, seemed to agree with the bill's legislative supporters who said such medical interventions should only occur in adulthood – though several other states have now introduced bans on adult gender-affirming health care after passing similar laws barring the treatment for minors.

“Permanent gender-changing surgeries

with lifelong impacts and medically prescribed preparation for such a transition should occur as an adult, not as a minor. There has and will continue to be debate within the medical community about the best ways to provide physical and mental health care for adolescents who are struggling with their own gender identity, and it is important that we recognize and understand those struggles are real. With all of that in mind, I have decided to sign SB 480 into law,” he said in a prepared statement.

Just the day before, Holcomb said the bill was “clear as mud,” declining to share how he'd act on the measure but saying he'd consulted with lawmakers, physicians and legal counsel to inform his decision.

On Saturday, hundreds gathered at the Indiana Statehouse to personally appeal to the governor and ask him to veto Senate Bill 480, which bans puberty blockers, hormone therapies and surgical interventions.

Repeated testimony affirmed that no doctors perform such surgeries on children in Indiana.

“We have the utmost compassion for children

suffering with gender dysphoria and they deserve sensible counseling. Gender related procedures on children are growing at an alarming rate in the United States while other countries are scaling back their use. Since these procedures have irreversible and life-altering effects, it is appropriate and necessary for our state to make sure these procedures are performed only on adults who can make the decision on their own behalf,” Johnson, a physician, said in a statement.

ACLU files suit
The four youth represented by the ACLU span the state, from a 10-year-old girl in Monroe County to a 15-year-old boy in Elkhart County. Other parties include their parents and a doctor, whose Elkhart County family practice would be impacted by the bill.

Under the bill, those youth – and hundreds of other youth – would have six months after the bill goes into effect July 1 to cease using their prescribed treatments for hormone therapies. Doctors would immediately be unable to prescribe puberty blockers to transgender children.

Both types of treat-

ments are still allowed for cisgender children without a gender dysphoria diagnosis.

In a virtual press conference, families shared the emotional toll the health care ban would have on their children. Three of the four youth had reportedly self harmed in the court filing, including both transgender girls who spoke of cutting off or mutilating their male genitalia before the age of 5.

“It's been very difficult to see my son unmotivated and losing all that progress,” Maria Rivera, one of the parents, said. “(I) see my child losing all of his hope; it's devastating for us.”

ACLU of Indiana legal director Ken Falk (From the ACLU of Indiana Website)

Ken Falk, the ACLU legal director, said the Seventh Circuit Court had precedence for ruling that transgender discrimination is sex discrimination, which strengthens the case. The Seventh Circuit includes Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

He noted that the bill would bar parents from making medical decisions

about their child's care, violating their parents rights.

The ACLU, in an earlier release, added that similar laws in Alabama and Arkansas are currently blocked by federal courts. Other affiliates are in the midst of legal challenges against new or proposed gender-affirming health care bans in: Tennessee, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Utah and Montana. A federal judge overseeing a challenge to the Arkansas ban, the first passed in the nation, will rule on the issue soon.

The Indiana bill closely mirrored several introduced bills across the country, which has seen a flurry of anti-trans legislation in recent months. Committee testimony featured several out-of-state groups and prominent anti-trans activists.

AG 'ready' to defend law

Attorney General Todd Rokita tweeted that his office was “ready” to defend the state in court and later released a statement.

“Signing the bill that protects our children from irreversible and damaging decisions was the right move by the governor. Banning these experimental procedures

is critical for the health and wellbeing of future generations. My office is thankful for the General Assembly's hard work to ensure this got across the finish line,” Rokita said.

Last year, Holcomb vetoed a measure that would have barred transgender female athletes from competing with their peers, saying the Indiana High School Athletic Association already had a policy for transgender athletes.

Within weeks, the General Assembly returned for a technical corrections day and voted to overturn his veto with a simple majority.

Had Holcomb decided to veto this bill, it's likely that lawmakers would ultimately overturn his veto again.

The ACLU challenged that bill as well, which is currently in court.

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