

# 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!

## \$526 Million

That \$526 million accounted for just a small portion — 17.2% — of the department's overall General Fund budget of \$3 billion. Others returned far greater percentages and some none at all.

## \$7.92 Million

However, the amount of state funds dedicated to Medicaid continues to grow — to the alarm of Republican budget writers, who noted that expenses related to the low-income insurance program now made up 18% of the \$44 billion two-year budget. About 7.92 Mil.

## 1%

This year's fiscal closeout data shows that two-thirds of state agencies and offices sent less than 1% of the money allocated to them back to the state General Fund.

## 86%

But a handful of agencies stood out for their reversions, or lack thereof. Indeed, the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning alone accounted for 86% of the total reversions listed, or \$526 million of its \$609 million allocation.

## \$8.9 Million Returned Unspent

The Treasurer of State returned \$8.9 million in unspent funds, or a whopping 76.6% of its \$11.6 million overall budget — the highest reversions percentage across all agencies. Most of that amount is dedicated to the state's Education Scholarship Accounts (ESAs), according to the agency.

## 143 Students

The appropriation would be enough to fund about 1,300 ESAs, but the treasurer's office reported that 143 students participated earlier this year. Because fewer kids signed up, the office reverted the money back to the General Fund.

## \$7,500/Student

When lawmakers sought to create a universal voucher program, the first version expanded the ESA fund to all students, meaning that the average student would be eligible to receive \$7,500 per academic year. Bill author Sen. Brian Buchanan, R-Lebanon said another 300 families wanted to participate in the ESA program but were ineligible during the bill's hearing in January.

## \$5.9 Million Returned

Other agencies saw far smaller — but still significant — reversions, including the Indiana State Police (ISP). The department returned \$5.9 million in funds, 2.8% of its General Fund allotment, mostly from a motor carrier fund and a benefit fund.

## \$70,00 Raised Starting Salary

Notably, the ISP got a marked increase in the most recent state budget, earmarked to boost trooper salaries to start at \$70,000 and shorten the matrix used for raises. Carter said the increases, set to take effect in the next paycheck since being enacted earlier this month, made a crucial difference in recruitment.

### TODAY'S HEALTH TIP

If you have diabetes, it's important to do aerobic AND weight training. 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](http://www.thepaper24-7.com).



### INSIDE TODAY'S EDITION

Casey Williams.....A3  
Classifieds.....A3  
Carrie Classon.....A4

### OBITUARIES

NONE

### THE MONTGOMERY MINUTE

#### Say Cheese!

Are you a proud parent or grandparent? Got a great photo of your loved one? E-mail it to [news@thepaper24-7.com](mailto: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

"One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly."  
-Andy Rooney

### TODAY'S JOKE

What carol is heard in the desert? O camel ye faithful!

### The Daily Almanac

Sunrise/Sunset  
RISE: 7:57 a.m.  
SET: 5:23 p.m.



High/Low Temperatures  
High: 40 °F  
Low: 26 °F



#### Today is...

- Green Monday
- National Stretching Day
- International Mountain Day



#### What Happened On This Day

- 2008 Bernard Madoff arrested. Popularly known as Bernie Madoff, the founder and chairman of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, was arrested and subsequently convicted of fraud. The Ponzi scheme he was involved in was the biggest such fraud in the history of the United States.
- 1997 Kyoto Protocol adopted. The Protocol is a part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, an international treaty that calls for the restriction of greenhouse gasses by the signatories. The United States signed the treaty but did not ratify it.
- 1941 U.S. declares war on Germany and Italy. The U.S. responded to Italy and Germany's declaration of war, by declaring war on the two countries.



#### Births On This Day

- 1973 Mos Def American rapper, actor
- 1967 Mo'Nique American comedian, actress

#### Deaths On This Day

- 1997 Eddie Chapman English spy
- 1959 Jim Bottomley American baseball player, sportscaster

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OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Have a very Merry Christmas!

### 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.



One of our roving photographers caught Cameron and Cooper outside and having fun and the boys were nice enough to offer a smile! Got a great photo of your loved one? E-mail it to [news@thepaper24-7.com](mailto:news@thepaper24-7.com) along with the pertinent info (and your contact information so we can reach you if we have questions).

### THREE THINGS You Should Know:

**1** Mayor Barton will be hosting his December Community Forum on Thursday, December 14th from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Mayor's Office. This will be the Mayor's 127th community forum. This event is open to the public to come ask questions, discuss concerns, and learn more about anything regarding the city.

**2** The Paper has an immediate opening for someone who is good with computers and creative to help build our daily pages. The job pays between \$12 and \$15 an hour, depending on experience. If interested, please send resume to [ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com](mailto:ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com).

**3** State Sen. Spencer Deery made the following statement today in response to the return of commercial air service at the Purdue University Airport: "The return of commercial air service at the Purdue University airport may be long overdue, but that doesn't mean it was easy to get done. This would not have happened without Tippecanoe County's ability to get local leaders, university leaders and state elected officials working in harmony. We also need to thank the State Budget Committee for approving \$3.6 million in funding for runway repair and rehabilitation during a meeting in September. "This service will help our community continue to grow in smart, sustainable ways that will lead to even more air service and economic prosperity in years to come. Tippecanoe County's best days are still ahead of us."

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



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13 WTHR **7 DAY FORECAST**

32/37 WINDY AND COLD, FLURRY AROUND	26/40 SUNNY AND CHILLY	26/46 MOSTLY SUNNY	29/42 MOSTLY SUNNY	24/46 ABOVE AVERAGE	26/48 WARMER	38/46 MAINLY SUNNY
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

## 'Tis The Season For Our Christmas Story Contest!

Chestnuts roasting . . . sleigh bells ring . . . dreaming of a white Christmas? Well, stop hearing the songs in your head and start writing your own Christmas story!

We're having our first-ever Christmas story writing contest. The rules are pretty simple – write a story about something Christmasy and be sure to connect it to Montgomery County somehow. It could be a touching story from your childhood and a special memory. It could be a complete work of fiction where you go for a ride on Santa's sleigh? Hey, maybe someone will write that Santa spends his summers baling hay on a Montgomery County farm?

What you write and where your story goes is up to you.

If you want a chance to be published and want to tell your very own tale of Christmas, write it up and

### About The Contest

1. E-mail entries to [ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com](mailto:ttimmons@thepaper24-7.com). Please copy and paste the story in the body of the e-mail. (We cannot accept attachments.)
2. We will gather the entries and get them to our panel of judges.
3. 750-1,000 word limit
4. Story must have a Montgomery County connection
5. Writer's name and contact information must be included
6. The work must be original and all rights must be owned by the writer – and the writer grants permission to The Paper of Montgomery County to publish the work
7. Winners will be notified and will be asked to submit a photo and brief bio to run with the story.
8. All decisions by judges final

send it to us. And keep an eye on The Paper of Montgomery County as the holidays draw closer and we publish the top entries – as judged by our expert panel of top-notch judges!

## Luke Gillespie To Perform Jazz Piano Christmas Concert On Christmas Eve

If you're looking for something different to do this Christmas, try a free jazz piano concert featuring Luke Gillespie on the morning of Christmas Eve (Sun, Dec 24, 10:30am) at Freedom Baptist Church near Waveland. Gillespie, an acclaimed performer and educator of jazz piano, is a professor of jazz piano at Indiana University's Jacob School of Music.

Gillespie has performed with David Baker, Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra, Sylvia McNair, Ann-Margret, Arturo Sandoval, and many others.

Gillespie is the recip-

ient of numerous awards, including the 1994 Indianapolis Jazz Festival Competition, best performance from the Indianapolis Star in 1993, and the 1990 Copland Piano Concerto Competition at Indiana University.

Freedom Baptist Church is located just minutes west of the intersection of US234 and US47, between Crawfordsville and Waveland. The program begins at 10:30am and is free.



LUKE GILLESPIE

## Ashley Halstead Celebrates 5 Years With Hoosier Heartland State Bank

Hoosier Heartland State Bank proudly announces the 5-year work anniversary of Ashley Halstead, Account Specialist at HHSB's Ladoga branch.

Over the past five years, Ashley has consistently demonstrated dedication to her role, and has a genuine commitment to the Ladoga community. Recently, Ashley joined the Board at Fuzzy Bear Ministry Preschool and Daycare, showcasing her commitment to community involvement and support.

Brian Campbell, Assistant Manager at HHSB, commended Ashley's exceptional contributions, stating, "Ashley has

become the go-to person for Ladoga. She owns her position with HHSB, and it shows in the way she represents the bank, both at work and in the community. Her dedication and enthusiasm have had a positive impact on our team and the people we serve."

Ashley and her husband Brandon have lived in Ladoga for the past 7 years and have two boys, Caiden and Corbin. Ashley's passion for travel, family, and music has been a source of inspiration for those around her. Her love for exploring new places with her family and attending concerts reflects her vibrant and

adventurous spirit.

Hoosier Heartland State Bank is proud to celebrate Ashley Halstead's 5-year work anniversary and looks forward to many more years of success together. Ashley's commitment to excellence, both professionally and personally, is a testament to her character and the values upheld by HHSB.

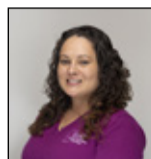
Contact Ashley Halstead today at [ahalstead@myhhsb.com](mailto:ahalstead@myhhsb.com) or 765-942-1036.

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and community.

HHSB offers consumer and commercial banking products, investment services, phone, online & mobile banking and bill pay, unmatched personal service, and a genuine commitment to bettering the communities in which they live.

For more information or to arrange an interview via phone or in-person, please contact Lacey Rogers at 765.323.4833 or Brad Monts at 765.942.2000 or visit [www.myhhsb.com](http://www.myhhsb.com).



ASHLEY HALSTEAD

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Photos courtesy of JEEP

## 2024 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4XE Bridges The Trail Between Gas And Electric

Jeep will soon introduce production versions of the all-electric Wagoneer S and Recon concepts. However, I suspect there are more than a few Jeep traditionalists who are open to electrification, but given the difficulty in finding plugs en-route, aren't quite ready to go all-in. For them, the plug-in 2024 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe bridges the trail between gas and electric.

For something that looks like a Model T on testosterone, it packs an incredibly sophisticated powertrain. It starts with a 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder connected to the four-wheel-drive system through an eight-speed automatic transmission, but is augmented by batteries to travel 22 miles after a quick recharge. That's enough for most owners to run errands, drop kids at school, or do most of their commute. After that, the gas engine fires up to continue on to the next gas

pump or outlet. Combined fuel economy is rated 49-MPGe, or more like "low 20s" on gas alone.

Only details separate 4xe editions from the snarling, menacing recently updated Wrangler style. It's clearly a Jeep with its revised black seven-slot grille flanked by round LED headlamps, but turquoise tow hooks, hood graphics, and logos nod towards electricity. The Rubicon's angry hood extractors, logos, and 17" wheels with off-road tires confirm no loss of capability. Metal bumpers with a front WARN winch and exterior-mounted spare are maximized for capability - as are underbody skid plates and brush rails that protect sensitive bits.

Turquoise accents continue to stitching in the dash and seats, which are heated and feature soft Nappa leather. The turquoise-stitched leather-wrapped steering wheel is heated too. A new 12.3" infotainment screen looks

### 2024 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe Five-passenger, 4WD SUV

Powertrain: 2.0-liter T4, Li-ion batteries  
Output: 375hp/470 lb.-ft.  
All-electric range: 22 miles  
Suspension f/r: Solid axles  
Wheels f/r: 17"/17" alloy  
Brakes f/r: regen disc/disc  
Towing: 3,500 lbs.  
Fuel economy: 49-MPGe (combined)  
Assembly: Toledo, OH  
Base/as-tested price: \$50,695/76,935

slick, but is still intuitive for audio, phones, climate, and navigation. Redundant knobs/buttons for audio and dual-zone automatic climate control are beneath. Wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto make connections super simple. Thump yourself silly with

### LIKES

- Electric range
- Power roof
- Insane capability

the Alpine sound bar in the roof.

Designers stepped up to add refinement and safety. First, they added acoustic front carpet and glass to deaden sound. Active noise cancellation does its part to make this the quietest Wrangler I've yet experienced. Past Wranglers either came with a removable hard top that wasn't easy to remove, or a canvas top that was a ridiculous erector set. Instead, our Wrangler has a power-opening canvas section that opens as a nearly full-length sunroof. Perfect - open air at the touch of a button.

Safety is enhanced by adaptive cruise, automatic emergency braking, blind

### DISLIKES

- Brick aerodynamics
- Limited towing
- Stupid price

spot warning, and rear cross path detection. A trail camera allows for safe stomping in the muck.

It's also nice to drive. Combined output from the hybrid powertrain is rated 375 horsepower and 470 lb.-ft. of torque, giving it plenty of pep when launching onto freeways or clamoring up mountainsides. Disconnecting sway bars and electronically locking differential add to the Rubicon's capability while the four-door Unlimited's longer wheelbase settles the ride considerably. And those fat tires and suspension travel so essential for off-roading also add comfort on the highway and city streets. On-trail or off, this is one of the best-behaved Wranglers



CASEY WILLIAMS  
Auto Reviews

ever created.

No everybody is ready to go full electric, and with the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe, they don't have too. It's an all-capable SUV that can do daily duties on electricity, then fire up to tackle any trail. While Wranglers start at an affordable \$32,095, the 4xe rises from \$50,695 to our Rubicon's \$76,935.

Storm Forward!

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

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## 10 Tips To Help Children With Special Needs Enjoy The Holidays

The holidays are upon us, and while there's loads of merry-making and fun to be had – the changes and sensations of the season can add stress to the lives of children with special needs and their families. The Episcopal Center for Children (ECC), a nonprofit organization serving children with special needs ages 5-14 in the greater Washington, DC area, offers the following tips to help.

"Children with special needs enjoy the holidays but they are especially sensitive to the changes in routines that the holidays bring," said Stephanie Nash, LICSW, president and CEO of ECC. "Making a plan, thinking about your child's needs, and adjusting your expectations can help you create a positive holiday experience for the entire family."

**Tip #1** – Make a plan for the holidays and share it with your family. Create a schedule for your family's holiday activities and post it for your child to see. You may find it helpful to use pictures to help a young child. Talk about the schedule with your child, so he or she can anticipate what will happen.

**Tip #2** – Remind your family about holiday plans. Review the schedule. Discuss the schedule with others in your home, so they understand what is going on and how they can best support your child with special needs (and everyone else in the family), so everyone can have a fun holiday.

**Tip #3** – For holiday gatherings, give your child a job and a plan. Ask your child to help collect

coats, give out treats, or greet arrivals. Rehearse the plan. Give your child a schedule or plan for a festive occasion so he or she knows what to anticipate and when things will happen.

**Tip #4** – Maintain routines as much as possible. There may be special activities for the holidays, but try to keep your child's schedule as close to "normal" as possible. Routines are key for helping children coping with special needs, and it's especially important for children to stick to regular medication and sleep schedules as much as possible.

**Tip #5** – If your child is sensitive to unfamiliar smells, help manage them. Cinnamon is a common holiday fragrance. One way to help a child experience this smell minimally (and gauge reaction to it), is to add cinnamon to play compound before an event. Ask guests visiting your home to not wear heavy perfumes if your child is sensitive to them and think about other smells like evergreens.

**Tip #6** – Eat healthy foods and consider how new or special foods impact your child. During the holidays there are all sorts of fun foods and treats to enjoy. Some children are more affected than others by dietary changes. Pay attention to your child's moods and how diet and situational changes may be impacting him or her. If you are at an event, bring along food that is familiar to your child if you think it may be needed.

**Tip #7** – Take breaks when needed. Sometimes children need a break from the hubbub of holiday

activities and busyness. Fill a bag or backpack with a few favorite toys, games or activities. If you see your child is getting stressed, get out the bag and find a quiet spot to play.

**Tip #8** – Do not allow presents to be a hindrance to enjoyment. Toy packaging today can frustrate children and parents alike. Children who have trouble with fine motor skills may find unwrapping some gifts frustrating. You can adjust packages to their comfort level by loosening ribbons and paper, or pre-cutting fasteners. Ask others who give your child gifts to be aware of his or her needs when it comes to wrapping presents. Some children find it dis-orienting to unwrap things that are new and unfamiliar to them. If that is the case for your child, wrap a few favorite toys for your child to unwrap.

**Tip #9** – Get your child into the spirit of the season through gift giving. Gift giving provides an opportunity to practice social skills. Help your child make a gift for someone else, and practice how to give the gift to that person. Let your child experience the joy of giving.

**Tip #10** – Give your child the gift of your attention. Holidays can be busy for grown-ups and children. Make sure you spend a few minutes of quality time with your child every day. Give your full attention. Practice active listening, where you listen to what your child is saying and then repeat it back to them to demonstrate that you are listening. Focus on offering connection and support.

## What Even Are Palazzo Pants?



**CARRIE CLASSON**  
The Postscript

My Facebook feed reminded me that, exactly 12 years ago, I was considering buying palazzo pants.

I found this astonishing because just that day I had been looking at palazzo pants, and I had not mentioned it to Facebook—or anyone else, except my husband, Peter. Peter did not even know what palazzo pants are.

"You know, they have really wide legs," I told him.

"Isn't that what you just bought?"

I honestly wonder if Peter notices anything at all. The pants I just bought are harem pants. They have elastic around the ankles. They are 100% cotton, and they are green and blue and have pockets. They are fun to wear and very comfortable, but they are certainly not palazzo pants.

"Palazzo pants have big bells at the bottom. And they are usually slippery."

"Slippery?"

"Yeah. Kind of."

"Whatever."

I could tell no useful wardrobe advice was going to come from Peter. But I must add, in all fairness, he always dutifully tells me I look fine in whatever I wear.

I did not buy palaz-

zo pants 12 years ago. Apparently, I considered it, but I remember I did not do it. And I guess, after that first palazzo pant flirtation, I thought the subject was closed, and I was simply not a palazzo pant wearer.

But I have heard that the periodical cicada hatches every 17 years and wreaks havoc on the fruit trees, and, when I was young, I saw a forest tent caterpillar outbreak, where every bit of green was devoured by nasty worms that appear every 10-16 years. I now suspect that the urge to buy palazzo pants is something similar. It's best to be prepared.

Once I was reminded of my close brush with a palazzo pants purchase in the past, I did what any sensible person would do. I posted my dilemma on Facebook, telling folks that I was, once again, considering it. My friends immediately weighed in.

"Resist that urge, Carrie! Stay strong!" my friend from college, Jennifer, wrote.

"I think we need more baggy pants," wrote Chris, who is a man and, like my husband, obviously had no idea what palazzo pants are.

A couple of friends said, "Go for it!" But I had the impression they would have said that if I'd suggested shaving my head, getting a navel piercing or joining a cult. These are good friends to

have, but not always the best source of objective advice.

I went back to the store to look at the palazzo pants in question. I tried to imagine where I would wear these pants, and nothing came to mind. I could imagine them swishing around my ankles. I would wear platform shoes and enormous hoop earrings. I imagined the person I would be, wearing palazzo pants, and a whole new world opened up before me. A world that, in actual fact, did not exist.

In the end, better sense prevailed.

I did not buy palazzo pants. I left them hanging in the store, where I am sure they will be purchased by someone much younger and hipper who already owns a lot of hoop earrings. But I now feel prepared.

I fully expect another attack of palazzo pants to hit. I'll be in my 70s when the next outbreak arrives, and I'll be ready. This time, I suspect I will buy palazzo pants—and I will probably not stop at a single pair. By the time I hit 80, I may wear nothing but palazzo pants.

And that's not a bad thing to look forward to. Till next time,

Carrie

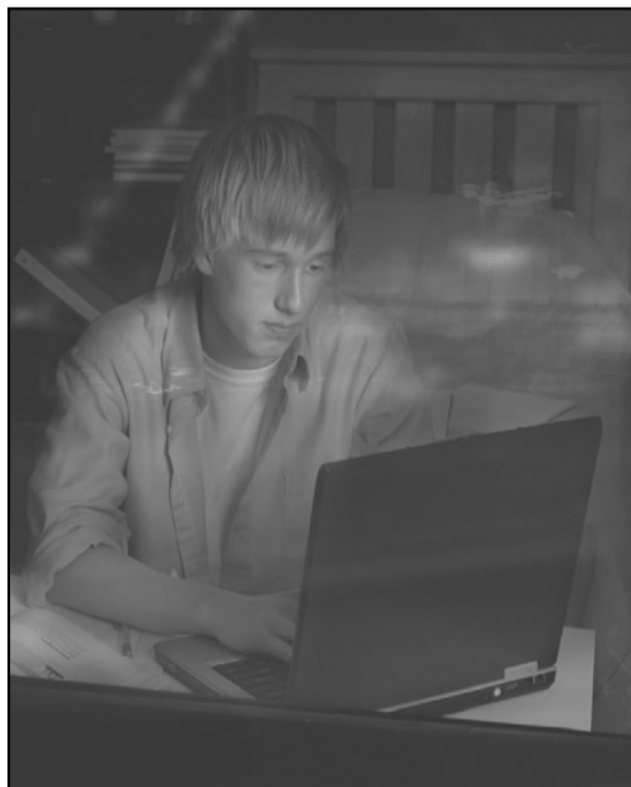
- Carrie Classon is a freelance writer and author and lives in New Mexico. Her columns appear each week.



**John Roberts will return next week!**

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

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