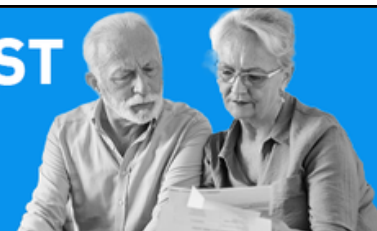


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**TODAY'S VERSE**

*Psalms 89:1 I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.*

**Meet Clementine**



Clementine is a 1 year old female mixed breed (maybe pointer/greyhound) available for adoption from The Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County (AWL) since 2/5/25. Clementine is LIGHTNING FAST with excellent SPEED & AGILITY! She'd make a great hunting dog! Clementine would thrive with an active family that provides her with plenty of exercise. She's a high-octane gal with energy to burn! Clementine is spayed, dewormed, and up to date on her shots. Clementine is looking for her best friend. Could that be you? Clementine's adoption fee is currently discounted to \$80 with approved adoption application. Come say hi Monday - Friday from 12:15p-5p or Saturday's from 9:30-3p!



We're a full week into April. That means we are pretty close to tax day. And you know, especially after following DOGE, the government needs all of our money it can get. There might be a water polo project in Asia Minor that needs funding!

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**CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA**

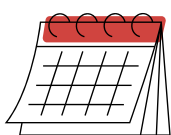
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**BTN**

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!

**Sunday is Palm Sunday and the beginning of the traditional Holy Week – a week in the Christian community that ends with Easter Sunday. And that's our topic today as we dive into a preview of Holy Week . . . By The Numbers!**

**0** Days of federal holidays. Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter are not federal holidays.



**11** The actual number of federal holidays in the U.S. They begin with New Year's Day and continue with MLK Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**8<sup>th</sup> Century**

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, that's the first mention of Palm Sunday being celebrated. (Did you know that some churches save and burn palms and use the ashes the following year on Ash Wednesday?)



**3** Three is a number closely associated with Holy Week. Christian faith teaches that Jesus Christ died and rose on the third day. 3 p.m. is said to be the time that Jesus died on the cross. And Good Friday is the beginning of the Paschal Triduum (three day period) that ends on Easter.



**180,000,000**

The estimates for egg purchases for Easter is about 180 million, according to our friends at AgHires. Of course the price of eggs right now may impact that this year.



**6 minutes**

According to Just Born, Inc., the family owned company that makes Peeps, it takes about six minutes to make the squishy little marshmallow candy.

**13<sup>th</sup> century**

The first time decorated eggs were believed to be used to help celebrate Easter.

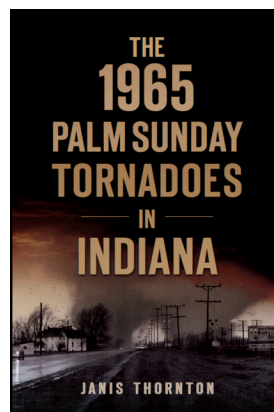
**501,000**

The biggest Easter Egg Hunt recorded happened in Cypress Gardens Adventure Park in Florida in 2007 with half a million Easter Eggs!



**1965**

On April 11, 1965 a lot of us will remember the Palm Sunday Tornadoes that tore through this area. Overall, the storms killed 137 people in Indiana and many more in the Midwest. There is a fascinating book about the tragedy by author Janis Thornton – The 1965 Palm Sunday Tornadoes in Indiana.



Do you remember seeing this sign?

**Butch Sees Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign**



**BUTCH DALE**  
Columnist

Last week I drove a friend to a doctor's appointment in Fishers...SR 32 to I-65 to 465 East, and then into the maize of exits, side roads, one-ways and roundabouts. Signs lined all of the highways and byways. It reminded me of the 1970 hit "Signs" by a group called the Five Man Electrical Band. Remember them? No, I don't either...

"Sign, sign, everywhere a sign...Blockin' out the scenery...Breakin' my mind...Don't do this, don't do that...Can't you read the sign?"

The traffic on the interstates was frightening. Cars and trucks going 70-80 miles an hour, bumper-to-bumper in spots. At one accident scene, vehicles were backed up for three miles. Read the

**TODAY'S HEALTH TIP**

When you read a food label, make sure you determine how many servings are in the package.



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](http://www.thepaper24-7.com)

**THREE THINGS**

You Should Know

**1** April is National Safe Digging Month. Duke Energy encourages everyone to call 811 before starting any digging projects. This simple step helps protect the nation's underground utility infrastructure and ensures the safety of both customers and professional excavators. Call first, dig second. The national 811 "Call Before You Dig" system was created so anyone who plans to dig can make a free call to have underground utility lines clearly marked. Contractors, homeowners, business owners and anyone preparing for an excavation project should call 811 at least three business days before digging begins. The local utilities will send a crew to mark underground lines in the area (electric, natural gas, water, sewer, phone, cable TV and others) with stakes, flags or paint.

**2** It's nearly time to make a splash at Indiana State Parks, with public pools opening Memorial Day weekend, as well as the beach at Indiana Dunes State Park. Recruitment is under way to hire and certify lifeguards to support a safe environment while cooling off this summer. Most state park pools will be open on Saturday through Monday, May 24-26; Saturday and Sunday, May 31-June 1; and then will be open daily June 7 through Aug. 1. The beach at Indiana Dunes State Park will be open for swimming with lifeguards following this same schedule. Lifeguard positions are open to applicants 15 and older. More information is at [on.IN.gov/dnr-lifeguard](http://on.IN.gov/dnr-lifeguard).

**3** Federal and state authorities are operating well within the boundaries of the U.S. Constitution when they deny inmates' requests for sex-change surgeries or hormone treatments, Attorney General Todd Rokita told a U.S. district court recently. "Nothing in the Eighth Amendment's text or history allows prisoners to demand whatever medical interventions they desire," Rokita said. He also is continuing a legal battle to defend the state's own ban on using taxpayer funds to provide sex-change surgeries to prisoners.

**TODAY'S QUOTE**

"I'm proud to pay taxes in the United States; the only thing is, I could be just as proud for half the money."  
Arthur Godfrey

**TODAY'S JOKE**

Why did the taxpayer cross the road?  
To avoid the IRS!

**MONTGOMERY MINUTE**

The Crawfordsville / Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce State Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday at 9 a.m. on the third floor of Fusion 54 in beautiful downtown Crawfordsville. The panel consists of State Senators Brian Buchanan (District 7) and Spencer Deery (District 23) along with State Representatives Jeff Thompson (District 28), Matt Commons (District 13), Mark Genda (District 41) and Beau Baird (District 44). It is open to the public and costs \$10 for Chamber members and \$15 for non-members. Register at [Crawfordsvillechamber.com](http://Crawfordsvillechamber.com).

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

➡ See BUTCH Page A3



## Illinois Man Dead After Police Chase on I-74

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is dealing with a situation where a driver fled from police and then shot himself. Anthony J. Ballard, a 22-year-old black man from Decatur, Ill. Was pronounced dead at the scene.

It began early Thursday afternoon when a sheriff's deputy attempted to stop a Ford Explorer with four adults inside for failure to signal. This was on Interstate 74 near the 32 mile marker. The Sheriff's Office reports that the vehicle didn't stop and continued traveling west. Soon the Explorer sped up and wound up reaching 100 mph. Around the 22 mile marker, the Explorer slowed dramatically and went off the road into the embankment. It hit a guardrail and stopped. Two women and a man got out. The man told the deputy that Ballard shot himself and was dead.

Sheriff's deputies and a Crawfordsville Police Officer went down the embankment and confirmed the driver

was deceased. Medical personnel from Fountain County began treating both females. One complained of a heart condition and was taken to Franciscan Health in Crawfordsville. The other woman and the man were interviewed and later released at the scene.

Police did not identify the three other than to say the man is 68 and the women are 53 and 71. All are from Illinois. The four were going back to Decatur from Kentucky.

Ballard reportedly had more than 100 individually packaged pills and a Glock 9-mm pistol.

The Sheriff's Office said it does not know why Ballard shot himself and is working with the Fountain County Sheriff's Office, the Fountain County Coroner's Office, Crawfordsville Police and the Indiana State Police. They ask that if anyone has any information on the incident to contact Det. Aaron French at (765) 362-3740.

## Grants Available from Youth As Resources

Do you know of any youth-led organization that need funding for a project? Youth As Resources is a program of the Montgomery County Youth Service Bureau that provides grants to youth led organizations.

Youth As Resources holds a fundraising event each year and all the money is placed in the Youth As Resources grant pool and given out to local youth groups and organizations in need of financial assistance with their youth-led service projects. In years past YAR has given grants to North Montgomery High School's FFA chapter to make blankets for children at Riley Hospital. YAR has given grants to Montgomery County 4-H Junior Leaders so they could purchase canned food for the food pantries in Montgomery County. All funded projects were youth-led.

Youth, youth groups and organizations that

have youth-led projects are eligible to apply for YAR funds and support. Grants range from \$25 to \$500. Approved projects must be youth-authored and youth-led, involve both youth and adults, impact the community in an important way, provide maximum services for a minimum cost and teach youth both the long- and short-term values to the community.

Your youth organization can have a lasting impact on our community by planning a service project and applying for the YAR grant to help fund it. The projects are only limited by our own imagination. We have funding available now. If you would like more information on joining Youth As Resources, or if you would like more information on how your group can apply for a YAR grant, please contact Cameron Cole at cameron@mcsyb.org or (765) 362-0694 ext. 114.

## Lunch with the League Friday

The director of the new Wabash Latino Community Center will be the speaker at Friday's Lunch With the League.

Dr. Julio Enriquez-Ornelas will talk about the new center as well as the La Alianza Club, a group supporting Latino and Hispanic culture. The new center was helped by a grant from Eli Lilly. It developed out of a need by La Alianza, who needed a permanent space to meet. The Center will provide a space not only for the La Alianza Club but for the entire Latino community. A number of opportunities for Wabash students, staff, and community members will be available to learn and engage in activities related to supporting the Latino community at Wabash and in Crawfordsville.

An alum of Wabash, Dr. Enriquez-Ornelas

joined the staff at Wabash last year as Director of Latino Partnerships. He has a Ph.D. in Latin American Literature and Culture from the University of California-Riverside and is bringing his knowledge and experience from his academic studies as well as cultural involvement to lead the Center in collaboration with resources and organizations at the college as well as in the community.

Lunch will begin at noon at a new location, St. John's Episcopal Church (212 S. Green St.). Bring your lunch and join Dr. Ornelas as he talks about the exciting opportunities at the Center. Lunch with the League is a free program open to the public, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County.

## LETTER TO EDITOR

### Indiana Conservation Voters Promote Local Regulation

Dear Editor, As Hoosiers, we know how unpredictable our weather can be—especially this time of year.

With recent heavy rains flooding streets and washing debris into our waterways, it's clearer than ever why strong local stormwater management is essential. That's why lawmakers must reject proposed legislation that would strip local governments of their ability to set higher standards than the state's.

House Bill 1037 would prohibit cities and towns from enacting construction stormwater regulations more stringent than those set by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The result? Construction projects under an acre would no longer be subject to local stormwater permits, leaving them unregulated. In urban areas, where small projects are common, that's a recipe for disaster.

Stormwater permits are not bureaucratic red tape. They protect our roads from potholes and our water from harmful pollutants. Sediment is the most common contaminant in our waterways and drinking water sources, often carrying chemical pollutants along with it. Without local regulations, increased sedimentation, flooding, and pollution become real risks, especially as more construction continues to pop up in our neighborhoods.

Think about the

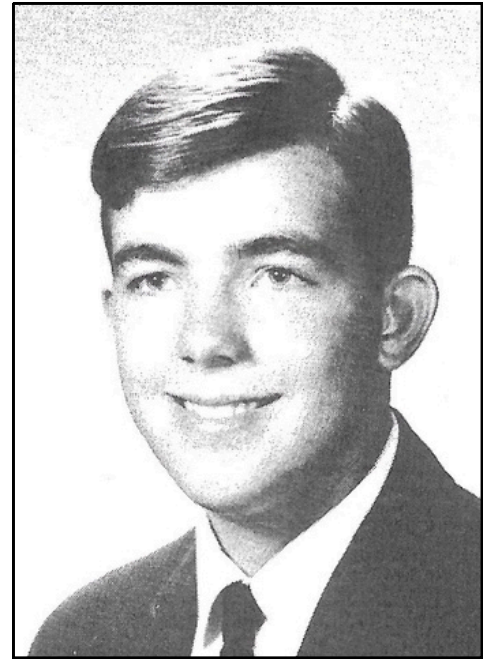
downpours we've just experienced. Imagine the increased mud, runoff and flooding if even more sediment was left unchecked because local authorities had their hands tied. The reality is that without these protections, local water utilities, ratepayers, and taxpayers would be stuck cleaning up messes that could have been contained at the source. This means worse road conditions, dirtier water and higher water bills for all of us.

Small site regulations aren't the only thing on the chopping block. HB 1037 would also remove the ability for stormwater professionals to protect their communities from cleanup costs and make it harder to maintain stormwater infrastructure after construction is completed. Indiana's landscape is diverse, and the same stormwater protections that work fine in Central Indiana don't make sense in Northwest Indiana. A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't make sense for our waterways.

We can't afford to make it easier for construction projects to pollute our streets and waterways. Lawmakers need to put communities first and vote no on this misguided legislation.

*Desi Rybolt  
 Conservation  
 Campaign Manager  
 Indiana Conservation  
 Voters*

## Butch Dale's Flashback Trivia



### Do You Recognize This 1968 Linden High School Grad?

**HINT:**  
 He became a farmer and still lives in the Linden area.

**Answer on Page A3**

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# Perfect for the Day



I had not planned on a party; that was the trouble.

## CARRIE CLASSON The Postscript

There is something ridiculous about a woman who has collected so many dresses that they barely fit in her adequately sized closet, showing up at her own anniversary party with nothing to wear. But that is the position I was about to find myself in.

Every time I've come to Mexico, I've brought one especially nice dress. Every time, it has hung in my small closet in Mexico, untouched. The restaurants we go to just don't require a serious dress. A nice pair of capris or a casual summer dress is much more appropriate for anywhere my husband, Peter, and I go.

But we hadn't even thought about an anniversary party when we packed to leave for this trip. I distinctly remember looking at a lovely dress that takes up no space at all and thinking, "Is there any point in schlepping this all the way to Mexico?"

No, I decided. Wasted space, I decided. Then, a couple of weeks before our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I suggested to Peter that maybe we should have a party. It was at night, so Peter was mostly asleep. I have found this is a good time to spring new ideas on Peter.

"A party?"

"Yes! An anniversary party!"

"Hmmm." This might have sounded as if Peter was thinking it over, but I knew he was falling asleep. However, now that the subject had been broached, I could say the next morning:

"So! What do you think about the party we were talking about last night?"

Perhaps Peter's subconscious had been at work, because he didn't seem opposed to the idea in the morning. "No presents!" he said.

"No presents," I agreed.

"I don't like it being all about me," he added.

"I don't think it will be. We have a lot of friends here now, and a lot of them don't know each other. I think it could be fun to introduce them. Plus, I think the hotel would enjoy throwing a party."

This part, Peter knew, was true. Our chef, Daniel, is a very good cook. He loves to try new things out on us. But most days, he's busy making hamburgers and enchiladas and french fries. Getting a chance to make something a little fancier for an invited party is exactly the kind of thing that gets him excited.

So Peter mentioned the still hypothetical party to a couple of people on his walk that day, and they said they'd love to come, and before he knew it, we had a plan. Then we started a list with everyone we'd like to invite.

"Maybe 16 people," I told Chef Daniel.

"It could be up to 20," I said a little later.

"No more than 25."

"We have 25 confirmed. There might be a couple more..."

At that point, the entire indoor part of the restaurant was reserved for us and the menu was planned, and I ordered a very large chocolate cake. It looked as if the party was on.

And I still had nothing to wear.

Peter, who knows I own more dresses than any sensible person should, was not taking this mini clothing crisis seriously. So I decided to follow suit.

I went to the store that sold Indian imports, and I bought a very long, very bright, very unserious skirt. I will wear it with a string of shiny beads, and it will be perfect for the day—a day that is not especially serious and was not expected, but came together exactly as it should.

*Till next time,  
Carrie*

# Dick is Rolling in Dough



## DICK WOLFSIE Funny Bone

I witnessed a miracle at our church this morning. Unitarians do not, as a rule, believe in miracles, although starting our service on time is about as close as we ever get.

Each Sunday, a select group of congregants (a word few of us ever use) are assigned to bring snacks for the worshippers (another seldomly used word). We often get a wonderful selection of treats, including deviled eggs (the only time we think about the devil) and angel food cake, a term only applied to the children of our members, who we dearly love.

So, what was the miracle? Becky, one of the new members, brought a box of Dunkin' Munchkins, and three of those tiny morsels were jelly-filled.

So, what in heaven's name was the miracle? The miracle was that I had been asking for jelly-filled donut holes for the past several years at more than five Dunkin' locations in Indianapolis, but they were never available.

I have a long history of loving certain products that the manufacturers stopped making. I was hooked on Hebrew National Light Franks. One website published a survey that said they were the number one tasting hot dog in America. They were also 100% Kosher. If they were only 99% Kosher, they would not be Kosher. Yes, that's the way it works. By the way, I can't remember now if they were called "lite" or "light," franks, but I am usually rite about spelling mistakes.

My list of disappointments is endless. Meijer stopped making their coleslaw at the deli counter. It was the only slaw I enjoyed. My hopes were shredded. And Kroger stopped making their cucumber/tomato/onion salad, which was incredibly delicious and healthy. Then, Marsh stopped making...everything.

Not one company called me before making any of these decisions. I did call the Hebrew National headquarters. They didn't have a complaint department. They called it the

kvetching hotline. Not a single person had a clue why they stopped making Light Franks. They do make "reduced fat" franks, but they reduced the fat too much, and I was reduced to not buying them. One woman gave me some double-talk about marketing and sales and had an alternative suggestion for me to try. "What about our baloney?" she asked. I had already heard enough of her baloney, so I hung up.

Back to those Munchkins. Disappointed they weren't available, I went to each location and asked why they didn't carry them anymore. Here are the responses I got.

1: They were not very popular, so we stopped making them.

2: They were too popular, so we always ran out. That made customers angry.

3: There was too much labor involved. You know, getting that jelly in the dough. And some of our employees hated needles.

There should have been some corporate talking points for their explanations. I called their headquarters in Canton, Mass.

In our conversation, the man I talked to injected into the conversation the phrases "Spherical Delight," "Balls of Heaven," and "Marvelous Morsels." He also gave me a brief history of the product and recounted their research that showed that when the product was first called a donut hole, it sold poorly. When they called it a Munchkin, it was much more popular.

Finally, the rep admitted there was one person at Dunkin' headquarters who knew absolutely everything about donuts. He was a genius. So, next time I'm in the Boston area and want to know more about Munchkins, I'm off to see The Wizard.

*— Dick Wolfsie spent his career sharing his humor, stories and video essays on television, radio and in newspapers. His columns appear weekly in The Paper of Montgomery County. E-mail Dick at Wolfsie@aol.com.*

# ↓ BUTCH From Page A1

signs? I just tried to concentrate on not being run over. My friend had GPS navigation on his phone, so he just told me where to go at each leg of the trip. On the return trip, I took a country road to Noblesville and followed SR 32 all the way back. Lots more stops, but definitely safer. No GPS needed..."old school" driving.

For all of the crazy drivers, I suggest INDOT place some giant Burma Shave signs on the interstates. For those of you who are too young to remember, Burma Shave was a shaving cream way back when. The company came up with the idea of placing small advertising signs at the edge of highways to draw the attention of passing motorists. There were usually five red and white signs, often comical in nature, or featuring a safety message, with a reference to the product on the last sign. For instance...

"If you think...she likes your bristles...walk bare-footed...through some thistles...Burma Shave."

"She eyed his beard...and said no dice...the weddings off...I'll cook the rice...Burma Shave"

"No, no she said...to her bristly beau...I'd rather eat...the mistletoe...Burma Shave"

"The big blue tube...is like Louise...you get a thrill...from every squeeze...Burma Shave"

Here are some safety signs they used:

"Is he lonesome...or just blind...this guy who drives...so close behind?...Burma Shave"

"The one who drives...when he's been drinking...depends on you...to do his thinking...Burma Shave."

"If daisies are...your favorite flower...keep pushin' up...those miles per hour...Burma Shave"

"Don't lose your head...to gain a minute...you need your head...your brains are in it...Burma Shave"

"Drove too long...driver snoozing...what happened next...was not amusing...Burma Shave"

"Thirty days...hath September...April, June...and the speed offender...Burma Shave"

At one time there were over 7,000 sets of these signs all over the country, but when the interstate system came along in the 1950s and '60s, car speeds increased, and the small Burma Shave signs eventually were discontinued. A unique part of Americana advertising was no more.

When I returned home, I breathed a sigh of relief. I feel sorry for anyone who must drive in that interstate metro traffic each day. And it also made me appreciate even more why I chose to live in good old rural, small town Montgomery County ... so here is my new sign...

"A country road ... is fun to drive ... keep off the interstate ... and stay alive ... Burma Shave."

*John "Butch" Dale is a retired teacher and County Sheriff. He has also been the librarian at Darlington the past 36 years, and is a well-known artist and author of local history.*



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## Butch Dale's Flashback Trivia

Answer:  
Bill Fugate

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**Home Food Preservation: Canning**



**MONICA NAGELE**  
Guest Columnist

Are you planning to put out a garden this year? I do and I will be spending some time dusting off

Botulinum. It has an 8% fatality rate and patients require hospitalization. Botulism toxin is a neurotoxin; it attacks nerve cells and paralyzes them. Symptoms appear 4 to 8 hours after eating contaminated food and begin at the head and work slowly downward. The danger of Clostridium Botulinum is the number one risk to our home canned foods, and why we must ensure proper canning techniques are being used.

the canner to pickle my favorite, beets, this summer! Home food preservation is a fantastic way to preserve it now and enjoy it later. But, before I start, I must stop and ask myself, "What methods are safe?"

If you have never preserved food before, and want to learn how, I would encourage you to join me for my home food preservation workshops on Thursday May 29<sup>th</sup>, I will be sharing step by step instructions for pressure canning and boiling water bath. You can register for this series, by contacting the extension office. Class is from noon to 5 p.m. at the 4-H Building and cost is \$30. Participants will practice the guidelines and take-home preserved foods.

If you're looking to "can" produce from your garden, there are only two safe methods: boiling water bath canning and pressure canning. Boiling water bath canning is safe to use when canning high-acid foods, which are the majority of your fruits and pickled foods. Pressure canning is required when canning low-acid foods, which includes most vegetables and meats.

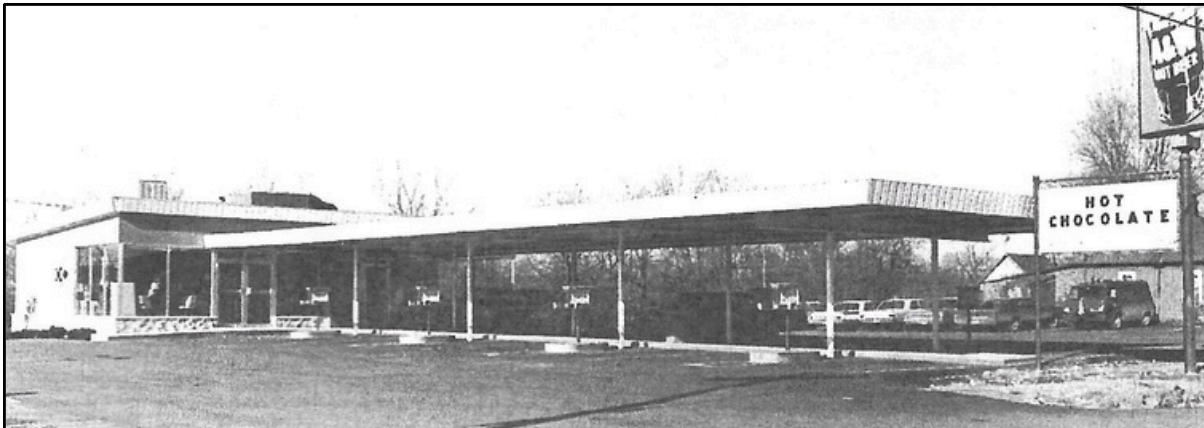
Low acid home canned foods are associated with Clostridium

In order to create a vacuum seal, you must submerge jars in a boiling water bath or pressure canner. Canned foods should also only be made using USDA approved recipes. You can find these recipes from the National Center for Home Food Preservation, So Easy to Preserve and the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning.

Reminder: pressure canner dial gauges should be tested for accuracy each year. This can be done at the Montgomery County Extension office. Contact me at (765) 364-6363 to ensure I am here when you bring your canner lid in for testing. Do not hesitate to call at any time with canning questions. It is better to be safe than sick.

*Monica Nagele, MS/RD, is the Purdue Extension Montgomery County Extension Director, Health and Human Science Educator*

*Back in the Day with Butch Dale*



**Where did people go if they wanted a coney dog and a cold root beer? Well, one of the most popular places was Zach's A&W drive-in restaurant, which was located just south of Crawfordsville on U.S. 231. It was in business for over 40 years!**

**Putting Our Health at Risk**



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

The recent decision by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to implement significant staffing and funding cuts across its agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), raises serious concerns about the future of public health in the United States. These cuts, which will eliminate nearly 20,000 positions, mark one of the largest reorganizations in the department's history. As a physician, it is hard to see this as anything but a step backward – one that will likely cost lives, stall medical progress, weaken the resilience of both our national and global health systems, and make Americans less safe.

United States has been the undisputed global leader in biomedical research and public health innovation. Our tax dollars have funded the discovery of vaccines, treatments for cancer and heart disease, and advanced methods for preventing and controlling infectious disease. The NIH alone has supported the foundational research behind nearly every major medical breakthrough of the past 70 years, often in partnership with academic institutions across the country. That research has not only improved health outcomes and led to economic growth domestically, but also fueled a global engine of medical progress. The CDC, meanwhile, has served as the world's early warning system for disease outbreaks. Whether it is detecting Zika, tracking Ebola, or coordinating the U.S. response to COVID-19, the CDC has historically been trusted worldwide for its scientific rigor and public health leadership.

This reorganization, however, threatens to dismantle much of that capacity. The FDA is slated to lose about 3,500 employees, roughly 20 percent of its workforce, including many in administrative and support roles essential to inspections and safety reviews. Although the cuts reportedly spare front-line drug and food inspectors, the loss of infrastructure will inevitably slow responses to foodborne outbreaks, delay drug approvals, and weaken oversight. The CDC faces similar reductions, with approximately 2,400 positions eliminated and entire programs, such as the Global Health Center,

defunded. That center served as a critical line of defense in identifying health threats abroad before they reached our borders. Gutting it is a dangerous gamble in an era of increasing pandemic risk.

The NIH is expected to cancel over 230 research grants, including a significant number tied to HIV prevention and treatment, while cutting more than 1,200 staff. This threatens to stall research on cancer, Alzheimer's disease, antibiotic resistance, and chronic illnesses affecting millions of Americans. Reducing our national commitment to research also weakens our global scientific standing. Other nations, including China, South Korea, and Germany, are already stepping up their research investments and are ready to take the lead in a field the U.S. once dominated, including offers of employment to some of our top scientific and medical minds. Innovation does not wait. If we pull back, we risk losing not just medical discoveries but also economic growth, skilled jobs, and strategic influence.

Here in Indiana, the impact is already being felt. The Indiana Department of Health is bracing for a 40 million dollar loss in federal public health support, including cuts to COVID-related testing and vaccination programs. The Marion County Public Health Department has lost a \$454,000 CDC immunization grant, threatening local outreach programs and preventive care access. Meanwhile, researchers at Indiana and Purdue Universities, whose

labs depend on NIH funding, stand to lose millions in active grants, according to recent reporting from the Indiana Capital Chronicle. These funds not only support science, they employ people, train students, and produce treatments that eventually save lives in towns like ours.

Globally, the damage may be even more significant. Countries with fewer resources often rely on U.S.-led research and CDC advisories to guide their own health systems. From setting vaccine schedules to establishing treatment protocols, America's science has often been the foundation. Weakening that support structure during an era of climate-driven health crises and rising antimicrobial resistance leaves the world more vulnerable and less prepared for the next pandemic. We are pulling away from a leadership role we earned through decades of investment and collaboration.

At a time when new threats are emerging faster than ever, we should be reinforcing our public health defenses, not dismantling them. The capacity of the NIH, CDC, and FDA to protect Americans has been built over generations. It is a mistake to undo that work now in the name of short-term savings. What we risk losing is not just jobs or programs. It is our edge in science, our resilience in crisis, and our credibility on the world stage. And those are losses none of us can afford.

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

To be fair, few dispute that there is waste in government. Every large bureaucracy has inefficiencies that deserve scrutiny. And HHS, like any federal agency, is not above reform. But there is a wide gulf between sensible streamlining and reckless disassembly. As Dr. Drew Altman of the Kaiser Family Foundation rightly observed in his March 29 essay, previous HHS reorganizations sought to strengthen the government's ability to deliver health programs. This one seems designed to do the opposite. It appears focused on shrinking government not for efficiency's sake, but out of ideological distrust of its role in public health.

Since World War II, the



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## 2025 Nissan Kicks Rides High on Sophisticated Future-Tech Style and Comfort That's Easy to Afford



**CASEY WILLIAMS**  
Auto Reviews

Sixteen years ago, I was looking for an affordable and efficient car that would serve me well both in the city, getting down tight side streets to parallel park, and on trips to the airport with luggage in the rear. That, and I wanted something unique. I bought a Smart ForTwo that's been perfect for its intended purpose, but I may be ready for something a little more capable, but still funky. The 2025 Nissan Kicks SR AWD could work.

Completely redesigned for 2025, the Kicks trades econo-hatch styling for that of a proper crossover.

It's a fetching little devil with horizontal strakes across its face, narrow LED headlamps, and stacks of driving lamps embedded between. Our SR edition adds 19" wheels and two-tone paint with a floating

black roof. Designers deftly disguised tall bodysides with aggressive sills that extend high into the doors. I like the futuristic rear taillamps that arch across the hatch.

Given I'd likely keep this vehicle a very long time, having all of the latest style, comforts and technology matter. Like many new cars, the Kicks has a glassy twin-screen arrangement with crisp digital gauges and touchscreen combined. Devices connect wirelessly via Apple CarPlay and Android Auto plus charge wirelessly in the console below. Automatic climate control, heated front seats, and a heated steering wheel add luxuries – as do a twin-panel panoramic glass roof and 10-speaker Bose audio system with speakers in the headrests.

Whether indulging with Dua Lipa or George Jones, it sounded great.

Tap around to realize how posh the Kicks really is. There's some hard plastic if you tap your fingers, but most surfaces are soft-touch including the gray-and-red stitched panels on the doors, carbon fiber texture on the dash, and French-stitched coverings above. Check the gradient red checks on the seats. Very cool – and comfortable. SR editions add a red-stitched flat-bottom steering wheel, piano black accents, and red around the gear selector.

Go for a drive, however, and you'll find the Kicks is really just a tall sub-compact car.

On paper, a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine producing 141 horsepower should give it some, well, kick, but it took a firm foot to convince the continuously variable transmission to whirl power through our

vehicle's newly optional all-wheel-drive system. Drive modes flick between Normal, Eco, Sport or Snow. There's nothing sporty about any of the modes, but at least it gets a frugal 27/34-MPG city/highway.

The bumpy suspension reminds me a little too much of my Smart, but it's not as bad as it could be.

Base models come with a torsion beam rear suspension, which is fine for a small car, but our SR steps up with a fully independent arrangement. It's still pretty harsh over rough city streets, but does a much better job of settling on the highway and provides a more engaging driving experience should you find yourself with curves ahead. Road noise definitely gets through, but the Kicks is otherwise an acceptable appliance for carrying friends, family, or just your camping gear.

And, it does so safely adaptive cruise with lane centering, blind spot warning, lane keep assist, automatic emergency braking, and rear cross path detection with auto brake.

Am I going to replace my Smart with a Kicks? That's to be determined, but having four doors, all-wheel-drive, flip-down rear seats for luggage, and a cabin that feels right certainly make their

case. And, so does the price. Base models start at just \$21,520, coming to \$32,485 fully all-in. Competitors include the Chevy Trax, Honda HR-V, Hyundai Kona, and Subaru Crosstrek.

*Storm Forward!*

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

**Likes**

- **Brash style**
- **Loaded interior**
- **All-wheel-drive**

**Dislikes**

- **Sleepy transmission**
- **Highway noise**
- **Bumpy suspension**

**2025 Nissan Kicks SR**

*Five-passenger, AWD Crossover  
Powertrain: 2.0-liter I4, CVT  
Output: 141hp/140 lb.-ft. torque  
Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind  
Wheels f/r: 19"/19" alloy  
Brakes f/r: disc/disc  
Fuel economy: 27/34 mpg city/hwy  
Assembly: Aguas, Mexico  
Base/As-tested price: \$21,520/\$32,485*

### New Market Elementary Honor Roll, Character Counts Awards

The following is the New Market Elementary Third Quarter Honor Roll and Character Counts recognitions.

**Preschool Character Counts**

Fairness: Owen Carrell, Cooper Monroe

Caring: Cora Keller, Claire Humphrey

**Kindergarten Character Counts**

Fairness: Liam Hargis, Georgia Collins, Emmi Richardson

Caring: Kali Hess, Parker Chapman, Olivia Bannister

**1st Grade Character Counts**

Fairness: Noah Wilkinson, David Busenbark, Conor Edwards

Caring: Emersyon Dowell, Olivia Stonebraker, Olivia Priddy

**2nd Grade Character Counts**

Fairness: Nashlyn Starcher, Bella Lowe, Paisley Newkirk, Teddy Hartman

Caring: Jaxon Cummins, Aubree Covault, Joslynn Clark, Jordan Olinger

**3rd Grade Character Counts**

Fairness: Kenna Lowe, Jaxon Whitlow, River Miller

Caring: Zane Ritter, Jocelyn Radcliff, Aunysa Pyle

**High Honor Roll:** Hadley Cornelius, Braden Ford, Paige Simpson, Isaac Steiner, Jason Yeary, Ava Barclay, Noah Fruits, Hudson Hockersmith, Benson Jones, Jason McNair, Harrison Melton, Michael Mobley, Cole

Boyd, Enzo Carr, Eli Hester, LauraBelle Surber, Brecken Thomas

**A/B Honor Roll:** Ainsley Anglin, Colten Billman, Delaney Carr, Leo Cox, Emma Datzman, Kaydan Sims, Kinley Archer, Maddison Bacchus, Alexander Badertscher, Elizabeth Emberton, Aisley Kight, Connor Largent, Maverick Roach, Cayson Thomas, Michael Bell-Grayson, Logan Carr, Cora Clos, Jackson Davis, Nevaeh McMullen, River Miller, Serafina Nowak, Aunysa Pyle, Chaseten Scheurich, Riley Ward, Kerstin Wilson, Maisyn Wilson, James Wurtsbaugh

**4th Grade Character Counts**

Fairness: Henley Surface, Liam Howard, Katana Willhite, Elle Collins

Caring: Sam Newlin, Creed Newkirk, Geoffrey York, Wyatt Koester

**High Honor Roll:** Isla Beach, Vera Carrell, Zane Turner, Ace Charles, Sawyer Cohee, Sutton Cohee, Lucille Fishero, Eva Rice, Tyberius Anglin, Oliver Cook

**A/B Honor Roll:** Roran Alesi, Levi Badillo, Jack Gray, Beckett Jones, Landen Marine, Mallory Morphew-High, Mackenzie Peterson, Nolan Rothrock, Tristan Stafford, Henley Surface, Allyss Wilson, Alden Bray, Lucas Edwards, Maddie Hawkins, Amariah Pyle, Charlotte Stull, Gage Van Dorn, Maxine Hartman, Lux Highland, Henry Jones, Calvin McCandless, Gabriel Turner, Syllis Barnett, Peton Doss, Hudson McCandless, Kaison Steiner

**5th Grade**

**Character Counts:**

Fairness: Cyrus Cooper, Coree Perez, Conner McMullen, Dylan Simpson

Caring: Brooklyn Bacchus, Braxton Whitlow, Dorothy Cotton, Nevaeh Nelson

**High Honor Roll:** Isaac Deckard, Trevor Largent, Evy Stephens, Libby Stull, Quinn Badertscher, McCoy Gomez, Tobia Lacy, David Mobley, Ezra Moody

**A/B Honor Roll:**

Mackenzie Bullock, Klaeton Caudill, Rowyn Cravens, Marlaina Halstead, McLaren Mason, Julien Ogle, Adelle Shannon, Avalyn Simpson, Cayson Hester, Coree Perez, Riley Thompson, Dorothy Cotton, Avalynn Gentry, Autumn Hunt, Holly Priddy, Emma Bonebrake, Noah Carr, Koltan Collins, Baine Franklin, Nevaeh Nelson, Graham Wagner



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Picture: Daughter, Ava Dale Barrel Racing

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## Baird FFA, 4-H Bill Heads to Governor

Legislation authored by State Rep. Beau Baird (R-Greencastle) to provide students participating in FFA and 4-H events with excused absences from school recently passed the Indiana Senate and now goes to the governor for consideration as a new law.

"4-H and FFA equip students with essential skills that prepare them for success beyond the classroom," Baird said.

This legislation ensures that students can fully engage in these programs while maintaining good academic standing."

Baird said his bill would ensure that Hoosier students can participate in 4-H and FFA events, up to six times per school year, without being penalized with unexcused absences. Students would have to be in good academic standing for these absences to be



**State Rep. Beau Baird**

excused.

Baird represents House District 44, which includes all of Putnam County and a portion of Montgomery County.

## Commons Pushing Constitutional Term Limits

A resolution co-sponsored by State Rep. Matt Commons (R-Williamsport) seeking to amend congressional term limits into the U.S. Constitution is heading to the governor.

According to a 2025 survey by U.S. Term Limits, 84 percent of Hoosier voters support congressional term limits and 82 percent want state lawmakers to support legislation leading to that.

"Term limits for federal lawmakers has been a long-running conversation," Commons said. "U.S. representatives and senators are the people's voice in Congress, and we want to ensure these elected officials are working in the best

interest of Hoosiers and not just for themselves."

Through Senate Joint Resolution 21, Indiana would call for an Article V convention for the purpose of proposing an amendment to impose term limits on U.S. Congress members. According to Article V of the Constitution, two-thirds of the states must call a convention to set a limit on the number of terms a member of Congress can serve by amending the Constitution.

Indiana is one of 11 states to pass term limit legislation in 2025. After 34 state legislatures pass similar resolutions on the topic, and the term limits amendment is approved, it must be



**State Rep. Matt Commons**

ratified by 38 states to become part of the U.S. Constitution.

Senate Joint Resolution 21 now moves to the governor for further consideration. For more information, visit [iga.in.gov](http://iga.in.gov).

Commons represents House District 13, which includes all of Benton and Warren counties, and portions of Fountain, Jasper, Montgomery, Newton, Tippecanoe and White counties.

## Buchanan Bills Pass Senate

A couple of bills sponsored by State Sen. Brian Buchanan (R-Lebanon) have cleared the Senate.

House Bill 1285 would ensure parents can record a meeting related to their child's individualized education plan. It passed the Senate 46-1 with bipartisan support. House Bill 1489 would establish the Indiana-Ireland Trade Commission in order to increase trade and investment between the Hoosier state and Ireland and it also passed in the Senate.

On HB 1285, Buchanan said it was important.

"Parents have a right to understand what is being discussed during IEP meetings related to their own child," Buchanan said. "This bill adds protections to ensure parents can go back and listen to a meeting so they can make the best decision for their child and family."

The bill would also require at least one

employee in each school building to have training in nonviolent crisis intervention and to be available to assist with de-escalation.

HB 1285 would also guarantee that if a student leaves the school for any reason, the school may not dispose of the child's belongings until a parent has a chance to collect those belongings. The bill has gone back to the House of Representatives for further consideration.

HB 1489 aims to increase trade and investment between the state and Ireland.

"Indiana and Ireland have deeply rooted connections that go back generations," Buchanan said. "With the recent announcement that direct flights between Indianapolis and Dublin would begin this spring, reconnecting Indiana to Europe, this bill would help strengthen our relationship and bring prosperity



**State Sen. Brian Buchanan**

Hoosiers and Irish alike."

Because HB 1489 was amended in the Senate, it now returns to the House of Representatives for further consideration.

Buchanan encourages residents of Senate District 7 to contact him with any questions or comments they may have. Buchanan can be reached by filling out a "Contact Me" form online at [www.IndianaSenateRepublicans.com/Buchanan](http://www.IndianaSenateRepublicans.com/Buchanan) or by phone at (800) 382-9467.

Buchanan represents Senate District 7, which includes portions of Boone, Clinton, Hendricks and Montgomery counties.

## March Recall Madness -- Products Recalled in March

Attorney General Todd Rokita is alerting Hoosiers to important consumer protection concerns for products recalled in March. The office is encouraging consumers to take advantage of opportunities available to them to return, fix, dispose, or replace a purchased recalled item that could be harmful to their families. "The biggest concern of any parent is the safety and wellbeing of their children," Rokita said. "You might think you're getting a good deal, but if you invest in a flawed product, it could lead to a devastating disaster. If you have purchased one of these recalled products, stop using it immediately and pursue resolution from the manufacturer." According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the following consumer products were recalled in March:

- Interior Resources Recalls Children's Steel Utility Bunk Beds Due to Risk of Serious Injury or Death from Entrapment Hazards; Violations of Federal Regulations for Bunk Beds (Recall Alert)
- George Oliver Dressers Recalled Due to Risk of Serious Injury or Death from Tip-Over and Entrapment Hazards; Violation of Federal Regulations for Clothing Storage Units; Sold Exclusively on Wayfair.com by Pliman
- NFH Iron Dietary Supplement Bottles Recalled Due to Risk of Poisoning; Violation of Federal Regulation for Child Resistant Packaging; Imported by Nutritional Fundamentals for Health (NFH)
- APOTHEKE Recalls Pumpkin Ginger 3-Wick Scented Candles Due to Fire, Burn and Laceration Hazards; Sold Exclusively at Crate & Barrel
- LINKCOO Blackout Roller Window Shades Recalled Due to Strangulation and Entanglement Hazards and Risk of Serious Injury or Death; Violation of Federal Regulations for Window Coverings; Sold Exclusively on Amazon.com by LINKCOO
- LaRose Industries Recalls Cra-Z-Art Gemex/Gel2Gem Jewelry Kits Due to Risk of Skin, Eye and Respiratory Irritation and Sensitization; Violation of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act
- Specialized Bicycle Components Recalls Vado and Como IGH E-Bikes with Chain Guards Due to Fall Hazard
- Arsell Recalls Benadryl Liquid Elixir 100 mL Bottle Due to Risk of Child Poisoning; Violation of Federal Regulation for Child Resistant Packaging; Sold on Amazon.com
- Segway Recalls Segway Ninebot Max G30P and Max G30LP KickScooters Due to Fall Hazard and Risk of Serious Injury
- GIKPAL Dressers Recalled Due to Risk of Serious Injury or Death from Tip-Over and Entrapment Hazards; Violations of Federal Regulation for Clothing Storage Units; Sold Exclusively on Walmart.com by ONME Direct
- Sensio Recalls Steam Espresso Machines Due to Burn and Laceration Hazards
- VC Group Recalls Wireless Portable Power Banks with Lithium-Ion Batteries Due to Fire and Burn Hazards
- Woolite Delicates Detergent Recalled by Reckitt Due to Risk of Exposure to Bacteria; Sold Exclusively on Amazon.com
- Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP) Recalls Ski-Doo and Lynx Snowmobiles Due to Crash Hazard
- Aiper Seagull Pro Cordless Robotic Pool Vacuum Cleaners Recalled Due to Burn and Fire Hazards; Distributed by Shenzhen Aiper Intelligent Co.
- Kimpex Recalls Snowmobile Ski and Adaptor Kits Due to Crash Hazard and Risk of Serious Injury
- Tzumi Electronics Recalls FitRx SmartBell XL Quick-Select Adjustable Dumbbells Due to Impact Injury Hazard; Sold Exclusively at Walmart.com
- Gerolsteiner Sparkling Water Bottles Recalled Due to Laceration Hazard; Manufactured by Gerolsteiner
- Onasti Toddler Tower Stools Recalled Due to Serious Fall and Injury Hazards; Sold Exclusively on Amazon.com by Blissful-Time
- Black Diamond Equipment Recalls BD Vision Climbing Harnesses Due to Fall Hazard; Risk of Serious Injury and Death
- Chews Life Recalls Silicone Rosary and Decade Teethers Due to Choking Hazard
- Meijer Recalls Konwin Desktop Heaters Due to Fire and Burn Hazards
- Safety Gates Recalled Due to Risk of Serious Injury or Death to Children from Entrapment Hazard; Violation of Federal Regulation for Gates and Enclosures; Sold Exclusively on Amazon.com by HabiLife Direct
- BMC Recalls Kaius 01 Bicycles and Framesets Due to Fall Hazard
- Sublue Recalls Lithium-Ion Batteries Sold for Sublue Mix Underwater Scooters Due to Fire Hazard

- Lolanta Children's Bathrobes Recalled Due to Burn Hazard and Violation of Flammability Regulations; Sold Exclusively on Amazon.com by Nanchang Zhongcangjishi E-commerce
- Taylor Water Technologies Recalls Phosphate Reagent Bottles Sold with Test Kits Due to Risk of Severe Chemical Burns; Violation of Federal Regulation for Child-Resistant Packaging
- Love Our Home Braided Crib Bumpers Recalled Due to Risk of Serious Injury or Death from Suffocation Hazard; Violation of Federal Ban on Crib Bumpers; Sold Exclusively on Shein.com by Love Our Home
- Round 2 Recalls Auto World Unassembled Deluxe Pit Kit Slot Cars Due to Ingestion Hazard; Violation of Federal Regulations for Magnets
- Children's Nightgowns, Pajama Sets and Robes Recalled Due to Burn Hazard and Risk of Serious Injury or Death; Violation of Federal Flammability Standards; Imported by Marie-Chantal
- Black Diamond Equipment Recalls BD Recon LT Avalanche Transceivers Due to Risk of Loss of Emergency Communications; Risk of Serious Injury or Death
- Luv n' care Recalls Nuby Stroller Fans Due to Laceration Injury Hazard

If you believe you recently purchased a recalled product, stop using it, and check its recall notice (linked above for all products). Then follow the notice's instructions, including where to return the product, how to get the product fixed, how to dispose of the product, how to receive a refund for the product, or what steps must be taken to receive a replacement product. To view recalls issued prior to March visit the Consumer Protection Safety Commission website.

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# Montgomery Murder Mysteries

## Molly's Manifesto: Chapter 2 -- Who Really Needs Help?

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Karen Zach, a 50-year-local history writer, presents her Montgomery Murder Mysteries – historical fiction, based on fact – of the first 13 or so murders in our county. Karen has written a weekly column for The Paper of Montgomery County and was the editor of Montgomery Memories, a monthly publication from The Paper for many years. Now that she is retired, she is sharing these stories and The Paper is very pleased to continue working with Karen and her talented writings.*



**KAREN ZACH**  
Montgomery  
Murder  
Mysteries

“How was your father today? Did he help cut hay?” I ask the boys.

“Mostly, Father just sat in the shade of the big Elm. Once or twice he came to show Harry or George how to stack,” Lee explained. “Mother, I’m very worried about Father. We used to have so much fun out in the fields that we could hardly wait to get up in the morning. Now, Father just seems to exist.”

“I know sweet one, I know! Well, let’s finish up readying the meal.”

Our meals of late had not been what they used to be. Our money with four growing boys was not what it once was, either. I know one thing Alfred worries about is the money, but still, we are rich compared to my best friend, Ida Sutton. Ida’s husband William, we know him as Bill, had been deathly sick for several months. It began with a case of scarlet fever. He’s never gotten over it, really, remaining very weak. Mainly, he just lies in bed, occasionally getting up enough to get the mail or take out the slops.

Losing two of their sons to the same disease, I’m sure did not help their lives any. We’ve tried to aide Ida as much as we can. Up until the last few weeks, Alfred had done their feeding. I don’t know why he’s quit. Perhaps one of Ida’s brothers is doing it for her now. I’ll have to remember to ask her about that. Ida comes from a family of 17, but they’re all as poor as the Suttons sad to say and besides, they’re not at all close.

Yesterday, I took Ida some strawberry jam and homemade bread. We still have plenty for us and I’ve canned several pints, as well. Our whole family loves strawberry jam. I make other kinds, but strawberry is definitely the one. In fact, I make many items from strawberries, bread, cake, and of course, fresh ones with cream. Ida seemed glad to see me yesterday, but she cried for 20-minutes. It was only little Will and his outlandish faces that made her smile and forget a moment of her sorry life. She said, “Little Will, you remind me so much of your father.” I thought that an odd thing to say as little Will’s actions, if anything, would remind someone of my own father, but Ida didn’t know my Pop Pop, so maybe that’s why she sees a touch of Alfred in him. Truly, the Suttons are as poor as they can get. When the census man comes, we’ll probably only have \$200 on our tally but poor Ida will have none. Who even knows if she’ll have a husband by then? Her own Marion is just slightly younger than Will and they love to play Cowboys and Indians, while Mary the seven-year-old wants to be with us. She’s already a big helper to her mother. Tomorrow, perhaps I’ll go see Ida again but for now, it’s time to eat! Definitely, those poor folk really need help.

“Come family, let’s partake of our meal!” I ask Alfred to say a prayer. He bows his head. We wait.

We wait some more and finally, Lee says, “Father, may I?” Alfred nods. I know Lee desires to ask our Heavenly Father to help his own earthly one but



he daren’t in front of Alfred, so he says, “Father in Heaven, bless our Mother who has prepared this meal, my brothers who will so enjoy it and Father who works so hard to put the food on the table! Amen.”

I smile at my son and say, “Well done!” The conversation is slight to say the least but the boys perk-up when I ask Alfred if we might go over to the neighbors, Sam and Annie Cosby’s. Earlier, they had sent their oldest Vernie to see if we’d like cake and ice cream with them. Since our meal had been scant, potato soup and homemade bread, Annie’s German Chocolate cake, my particular favorite, sounded like just the ticket to make us all feel better. I could hardly wait as I’d not tasted Annie’s cake since her Christmas gift to us, and I do love my sweets. Their five sons are almost the same ages as our boys and when we all got together, it is fun mutiny.

However, Alfred said, “No, I think we stay home tonight.” The boys said nary a word. I wasn’t so smart. “Alfred, I think we would all enjoy a visit with the Cosby’s. They’re such wonderful friends.”

He stared at me. “No! I said no and I mean no!”

Trying hard to hold back the tears, I scooted the boys outside to play.

“Alfred, are you okay? You’re beginning to make my head spin. What worries you? Do you need to talk to Sam? The preacher? Your father? Me?” Not long ago, I know I’d have added Bill Sutton to the list as he and Alfred had been good friends for so many years, but now poor Bill was just a shell of a man.

Alfred stares at me, then gets up and heads to bed. I can’t seem to remember our last real conversation. It’s been months. How I long for our night time talks. In the summers, we put the boys down for the night, sit on the porch and plan our future. In the winters, we snuggle in bed and discuss God, our families and our daily routines. Where oh where have those times gone?

Alfred had wanted to be a preacher. He taught school instead for some time and then his father gave him this little piece of land and so we married, set up housekeeping and in less than 10 years, we had four sons. Alfred has to work so hard. I don’t know if that’s what’s wrong with him, or if it’s the money troubles. He could ask Opa for money – he’d gladly give it – yet, Alfred’s too proud for that. Oh my dear Alfred, who can help you? Who can help me?

**To be continued...**

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