

■ TODAY'S VERSE

Romans 12:14

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

■ AWL VIGO



\*\* VIGO'S ADOPTION FEE WAIVED \*\*

Vigo is a 2 year old male Australian Cattle Dog mix (know the breed; Herding Group - Loyal / Intelligent / Tenacious) available for adoption from The Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County (AWL) since 10/9/24. Vigo loves going out for walks, frolicking in a fenced yard, and will gladly sit for treats. Vigo is looking for his best friend. Could that be you? Vigo is available for adoption, to foster, or just simply going out for walks. Come say hi!!

■ MONTGOMERY MINUTE

Two Lunch & Learn sessions are coming up from the good folks at the Montgomery County Community Foundation. The first, Running Effective Meetings & Use of Robert's Rules, is set for Feb. 18 from noon to 1 p.m. The facilitator is Dan Taylor from Taylor, Minnette, Schneider & Clutter, P.C. The second is about the basics of grant writing. It will be led by Cheryl Keim, MCCF Grants & Community Relations Director. It's scheduled for Wednesday, March 4 from noon to 1 p.m. The Lunch & Learn sessions are one-hour educational offerings that take place at the Foundation office, 119 E. Green St. from noon to 1 p.m. Local experts in various areas share information useful to nonprofit organizations on a variety of topics. There is no cost, and participants are invited to bring their own lunch. Register at [tinyurl.com/NPLunchandLearn](http://tinyurl.com/NPLunchandLearn).



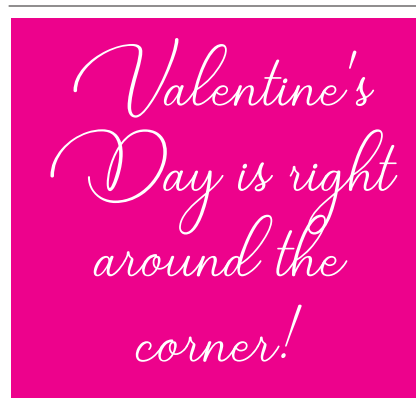
Tomorrow marks the 110th date of Steve Crane's birth. The Crawfordsville native who would go on to become a Hollywood star and husband of Lana Turner was born right here in C'ville.

■ QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages."  
Fredrich Nietzsche

■ JOKE OF THE DAY

You should ask someone to meet you for coffee on Valentine's Day only if you like them a latte.



# The Paper

## OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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### BOOMER BITS... Tips and Advice from Boomers to Boomers

#### Why Won't Social Security Give me my Benefits?

*Dear Rusty: I called the Social Security office, as well as went with my husband when he went to collect his Social Security. Because I work full-time (at about \$800/week), they said I could not file for my Social Security. Yet I seem to read articles all the time about people doing so.*



**ASK RUSTY**  
Social Security Advisor

*My husband just filed for his benefits and is now collecting them. Out of the two of us, his Social Security will be larger. Please advise me.*

*Signed: Wanting my Benefits*

*Dear Wanting my Benefits:*

If you have not yet reached your SS full retirement age (FRA) and you are working full time, you are likely being affected by Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn while collecting Social

Security prior to your FRA. Your FRA is somewhere between 66 and 67, depending on when you were born. The annual earnings limit for those collecting SS benefits prior to FRA in 2025 is \$23,400 (changes yearly) and, if that is exceeded, Social Security will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. If you applied for your benefits and are still working, and were denied, it's likely because Social Security determined that your

current annual earnings considerably exceed the earnings limit and, thus, you cannot collect benefits. That's because the penalty for exceeding the limit would be more than your benefit amount. FYI, the earnings limit will go away when you reach your full retirement age so, after FRA, you can claim your benefits even if you are still working. Or if you stop working before your FRA you can collect your SS

See Rusty Page 3

## AARP Indiana Accepting 2026 Grant Applications

AARP Indiana invites local eligible nonprofit organizations and governments to apply for the 2026 AARP Community Challenge grant program through **March 4, 2026, at 5 p.m.** AARP Community Challenge grants fund quick-action projects that help communities become more livable by improving public places, transportation, housing, digital connections, and more.

Now in its 10 year, AARP will double its investment, awarding over \$8 million in grants as part of its nationwide Livable Communities



initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods and rural areas to become great places to live for all residents, especially those age 50 and older.

"Since the Community Challenge grant program began, we have seen leaders across the state step up to make their community more livable for people of all ages, especially Hoosiers 50

and older," said AARP Indiana state director Sarah Waddle. "We look forward to the opportunity this year to again work closely with local residents, advocates, and policymakers to provide support across the state."

This year, the AARP Community Challenge is accepting applications across three different grant opportunities. All projects

See Grants Page 5

### ■ THREE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

**1.** Sports reporters estimated that 75 percent of the fans in the stands at the College Football Playoff National Championship were cheering for the Hoosiers. And data from the Indianapolis Airport Authority helps support that estimate. Airline tallies show that specialty flights to the championship game were packed with cream and crimson. Frontier Airlines added two flights for the IU/Miami game. Southwest Airlines reported that its 12 additional flights added specifically for the big game flew more than 1,800 fans to Miami. Delta Air Lines said its four specialty flights for the game were "booked to very strong levels," and attributed the loaded flights to "strong demand from IU fans."

**2.** Indiana Gov. Mike Braun recently highlighted the transformative impact of Power Up Indiana's workforce development initiative, showcasing a wide range of success stories from employers and Hoosiers across the state who have leveraged training, upskilling, and career development to strengthen Indiana's economy. Power Up Indiana continues to empower businesses large and small to invest in their current workforce, grow wages, and build a stronger, more competitive talent pipeline. Through Power Up, companies such as Gaylor Electric, Hoosier Crane, Evonik, and Cook Group are leading the charge by creating pathways for employees to access industry-recognized credentials, expand skill sets, and transition into high-demand careers with sustainable wages. Other employers like Arcamed, Twin Springs Counseling, Endress+Hauser, and Dot Transportation have embraced upskilling as a core part of their growth strategy, strengthening their teams and enhancing opportunities for workers at every stage of their career.

**3.** On the other hand . . . Indiana is among the least prepared states for tariff-driven price shocks. At least that's the conclusion of a study conducted by demand planning software Algo <<https://www.algo.com/>>. It shows that Indiana has the 10th lowest trade surplus per capita, leaving the state in a more vulnerable state as trade tensions rise. The study examined average annual import and export data across all states from the International Trade Administration. The states with the highest export surplus per capita between 2019 and 2023 were named the best for exporting goods, with Louisiana leading the way. New Jersey was the worst state for exporting goods.

## Clock Ticks on Social Security

By Russell Gloor  
Association of Mature American Citizens

In 1971, the iconic song writer John Lennon penned the lyrics to his famous song "Imagine," asking us to picture a world in total peace and harmony. Although it was a call to imagine what life would be like in a utopian world, it was also, perhaps, overly optimistic given the realities of that time – realities which are largely similar today, over 5 decades later.

Nevertheless, it is always good to imagine life as it might be. And that goes both ways – we can and should always picture life in a better world, but we might also take pause, at times, to picture how life might be worse. How often have we lamented that "things could be much worse?" when confronting adversity in our daily lives? So, today I'd like to suggest that you picture what life would be like without Social Security.

### First Some Statistics

First, some statistics: Social Security provides benefits to about 70 million Americans, senior citizens as well as those not yet old enough to be so designated. That's about 20% of the entire U.S. population. The benefits offered are financial, providing usually crucial money to those fortunate enough to be eligible. That includes those who have earned benefits by working and are old enough to claim, and others – such as minor or disabled adult children – who have not personally earned a benefit but are dependent on a parent who has. Benefits are also available for dependent spouses, ex-spouses and, sometimes, dependent parents. And let's not forget that even working Americans who become disabled often find financial relief at a younger age with the Social Security disability insurance program. Fact is, Social Security provides a "major" source of income for a majority of senior Americans and, in most cases, those collecting say it is critical to their ability to make their financial ends meet. In a nutshell, a large majority of Social Security recipients say Social Security is critically important to their financial well-being. But what if Social Security were to go away?

### What If Social Security Went Away?

Well, that's not something we like to think about because it would negatively impact so many millions of people. Senior citizens

See Social Security Page 3

# The Paper OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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## Bill Cracking Down on Foreign Adversaries Heads to Senate Soon

The House passed State Rep. Matt Commons' (R-Williamsport) legislation protecting Hoosier technology, intellectual property and land from foreign adversaries.

"Foreign adversaries like China and North Korea should not be benefiting from the hard work and resources of Hoosiers," Commons said. "This legislation would crack down on the misuse of our intellectual material, academic research and control of our valuable land."

The U.S. Department of Commerce maintains a list of adversarial countries including Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Cuba and Venezuela. According to Commons, House Bill 1099 would require contractors of parties to state and local technological product or service contracts who are from an adversarial country to certify, under penalty of perjury, that they aren't acting on behalf of that adversary.

Commons said his bill would further protect intellectual property by requiring students from adversarial countries, who are not dual citizens or permanent residents of the U.S., to pass a security review before being admit-



Rep. Matt Commons

ted into qualifying programs such as engineering, computer science and more at state education institutions.

This bill would also prohibit people and entities acting on behalf of these adversarial countries from acquiring or leasing land in Indiana. Existing land ownership by people or entities from adversarial countries could continue as long as they aren't acting as an agent for that country.

House Bill 1099 now moves to the Senate for consideration. To learn more and follow session, 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.

## If Falling is Concern, Extension Office Has Program For You

Falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults, often resulting in a loss of confidence and reduced physical activity. To help individuals regain strength, improve balance, and move with greater confidence, Purdue Extension and Crawfordsville Mobile Integrated Health is offering A Matter of Balance, a fall prevention program.

This eight-session program will be held on Tuesdays from Feb. 24 through April 21 (no class March 24), from 10 a.m. to noon, at Wellbrooke of Crawfordsville, 517 Concord Road. Participation is

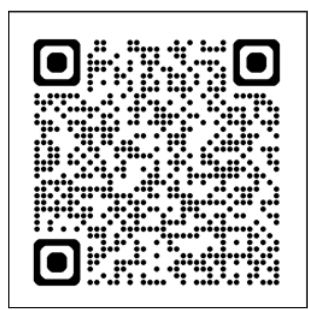
open to anyone who is concerned about falling, has experienced a fall in the past or has limited activities due to fear of falling.

A key focus of "A Matter of Balance" is guided exercise designed specifically for older adults. Participants will take part in gentle, low-impact exercises that help improve strength, balance, flexibility, and coordination, all essential for reducing fall risk. Exercises are done at a comfortable pace and can be modified to meet individual ability levels, making the program accessible for beginners and

those who may not have exercised regularly.

In addition to physical activity, participants will learn how to view falls as preventable, set realistic goals for staying active, and make simple changes at home to reduce fall hazards. Together, these strategies help participants feel more confident moving through their daily routines.

This program is ideal for anyone who has fallen in the past, worries about falling, or has limited activities due to balance concerns, but still wants to remain active and



independent in a safe, supportive environment.

Pre-registration is required by Feb. 17. To register, visit <https://event.me/gBkG99>.

For more information, contact Purdue Extension Montgomery County at (765) 364-6363 or e-mail [monicanagele@purdue.edu](mailto:monicanagele@purdue.edu)

### Crawfordsville District Public Library

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
26	27	28	29	30	31
	National Library Lovers' Month	Black History Month	American Heart Month	National Snack Food Month	
				CLOSED	1 Full Moon
2	3	4	5	6	7
1st Grade Book Club: 4p Cville Chess Club: 5:45p Drop-in Resume Help: 6-7p	Baby Story Time: 10:30a	Toddler Story Time: 10:30a Kindergarten Book Club: 4p World Read Aloud Day	Preschool Story Time: 10:30a Lego Club: 4p Steps to a Healthy You: 11:30a Drop-in Tech Help: 6-7p	CLOSED	Take your Child to the Library Day
9	10	11	12	13	14
2nd Grade Book Club: 4p Cville Chess Club: 5:45p Yarn Works: 6p Drop-in Resume Help: 6-7p	Baby Story Time: 10:30a STEM Activities for Elementary: 4p Yoga for Better Mental Health: 5:30p Genealogy Club: 6p	Toddler Story Time: 10:30a Kindergarten Book Club: 4p	Preschool Story Time: 10:30a 5-8 Grade Book Club: 4p CDPL Board Meeting: 4p Drop-in Tech Help: 6-7p	CLOSED	Book Sale 10a-4p International Book Giving Day
16	17	18	19	20	21
CLOSED	Baby Story Time: 10:30a 3rd Grade Book Club: 4p Dungeons & Dragons for Beginners: 5p New Moon	Toddler Story Time: 10:30a Kindergarten Book Club: 4p Wyrd Words Book Club: 5:30p	Preschool Story Time: 10:30a Elementary Craft: 4p Yarn Works: 10a Craft Collective: 5:30p Drop-in Tech Help: 6-7p	CLOSED	Canvas Painting: 2p Family Art Day at CMMC: 2-4p
23	24	25	26	27	28
4th Grade Book Club: 4p Cville Chess Club: 5:45p Drop-in Resume Help: 6-7p	Baby Story Time: 10:30a STEM Activities for Elementary: 4p Genealogy Basics: 6p	Toddler Story Time: 10:30a Kindergarten Book Club: 4p Mystery of History Club: 5p	Preschool Story Time: 10:30a Teen Anime Club: 6p Drop-in Tech Help: 6-7p	CLOSED	Human Library: 10a-2p
					1

# FEBRUARY 2026

Adults
Teens

All ages
Children

## The Paper

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**Find out if you are eligible today.**

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## CenterPoint Reminds Customers Bigger Energy Bills Coming

As CenterPoint Energy customers continue receiving current bills reflecting January's extreme weather, the company is encouraging those who may need help managing their energy costs to explore available resources now to manage potential bill assistance needs.

January 2026 brought the region's heaviest snowfall in over a decade during Winter Storm Fern, with wind chills plunging below zero. The National Weather Service reported the longest streak of consecutive days below freezing since 2017-18. It marks only the sixth time since 1871 the region has experienced an extended freeze of this magnitude. When temperatures fall this dramatically, heating systems work harder to maintain indoor comfort, resulting in increased energy usage reflected in monthly bills.

Natural gas commodity prices also rose sharply during the storm as severe weather disrupted production in key supply regions nationwide. These costs, set by national markets, are passed through to customers dollar-for-dollar without markup. Every year, the company procures gas on behalf of customers using tools to mitigate most of the exposure to large, demand-based market swings. CenterPoint does not control or

profit from the price of natural gas.

"We understand the colder weather drove more heating use which is generating challenging higher bills," said Mike Roeder, President of CenterPoint Energy Indiana. "We want customers to know that help is available. Our Resource Hub brings together assistance programs, payment options and energy-saving tools, all in one place."

The company also offers Budget Billing, which spreads energy costs evenly across the year for more predictable monthly bills.

Customers can sign up for Budget Billing and explore other resources by visiting CenterPoint's improved Resource Hub at [CenterPointEnergy.com/ResourceHub](http://CenterPointEnergy.com/ResourceHub) or call 800-227-1376.

As cold weather continues, CenterPoint also reminds customers to be aware of the warning signs of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Early symptoms such as headache and fatigue are similar to the flu, but without a fever. Continued CO exposure can lead to more severe headaches, dizziness, nausea, difficulty thinking clearly and fainting. If everyone in a household is experiencing these symptoms, it could be CO poisoning. If CO poisoning is suspected, leave the area immediately, get fresh air and call 911.

## RUSTY

Continued from Page 1

benefits at that time.

None of this means you are losing money, because your monthly SS payment will continue to grow until you later claim (e.g., after you stop working, or only work part-time), or until you reach 70 years of age. When you later claim, your monthly benefit will be higher and, depending on your longevity, you may recover what you didn't get now because you are working. And that includes both your own SS retirement benefit and any spousal boost you may be entitled to from your husband.

So, my suggestion is this: as long as you are working full time and exceeding Social Security's annual earnings limit, continue to wait to claim your Social Security. Then, when you reach your full retirement age (again, between 66 and 67, depending on the year you were born), or if you stop working before that, go ahead and apply for Social

Security again. At that time, your application will be approved, and you will be awarded your own earned SS retirement amount plus any additional amount you may be due as your husband's spouse. To be entitled to a spousal boost from your husband, your own FRA entitlement must be less than 50% of your husband's FRA entitlement. But the amount you get will be reduced if you claim before your full retirement age..

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. Russell Gloor is the, National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org).*

## SOCIAL SECURITY

Continued from Page 1

would suffer harshly because the poverty rate for those aged 65 and over would jump from around 10% to nearly 40%. That means another 22 million people would be added to the total 36 million who already live below the U.S. poverty line. And statistically, the ones most affected would be older women, people of color, and children (about 4 million of whom receive Social Security benefits). Another 9 million or so Americans who collect Social Security Disability Insurance benefits would also be seriously affected.

What would American life be like without Social Security? As a student of U.S. history, I can imagine what it was like in the 1930s – the decade of the so-called "Great Depression." The years immediately preceding the advent of FDR's Social Security program were a time of abject poverty in the United States. Many Americans had very little money and scant resources, with men wandering from town to town to find work to provide food for their kitchen table. Many wore tattered clothing, often the only clothes they had, and minor children had to work (if they could) to help the family survive. That was the environment which gave birth to the U.S. Social Security program. And the program, funded by taxes on workers and their employers, worked well. Starting when monthly SS benefits began flowing in 1940, Social Security has continued to sustain America's seniors and their dependents for about 90 years. In other words, Social Security

is an extremely effective anti-poverty program which would devastate millions if the program went away. But what are the chances that Social Security will actually go away?

### Will Social Security Ever Go Away?

You might have heard that Social Security is now having some financial difficulties – and that is true. But is it in danger of every going away completely? The answer to that is a resounding "No." Despite its current financial dilemma, Social Security will never go away completely. As long as Americans are working and contributing to the program, it will always be here to provide some benefits. But the more important question is, will Social Security be able to pay for all of its benefit obligations in the future? And the answer to that is "No, unless Congress acts soon to reform the program." You see, right now Social Security revenue (mainly income from working Americans) is less than needed to pay all benefit obligations. Social Security revenue in 2024 was about \$1.418 trillion, but SS expenses were about \$1.485 trillion – a deficit of about \$67 billion. And that shortfall has been taken from Social Security's Trust Fund reserves in order for full benefits to be paid to everyone.

The Social Security Trust Funds have supplemented the money needed to pay full benefits since 2021, which means the reserves in the Trust Funds have gone from about \$2.9 trillion in 2020 to about \$2.7

trillion today – a trend that will result in the reserves being completely depleted in about the year 2033 (this according to the Trustees of the Social Security program). If the Trust Fund reserves are fully depleted, Social Security can only pay out in benefits what it receives in revenue, which would mean about a 23% cut in benefits for every Social Security recipient.

Since so many Americans rely on Social Security as a major contributor to their financial well-being, the result of a 23% cut to everyone's Social Security income would be devastating. It likely wouldn't make things as bad as they were in the 1930s preceding Social Security's birth, but it would nevertheless present a very serious problem which would thrust many more Americans into poverty. And that is the crux of the Social Security dilemma – cutting everyone's SS benefit to only 77% of what is now received would mean a return to high levels of American poverty.

### But it doesn't need to happen. Fixing Social Security

Congress has been aware of this looming Social Security issue for several decades but has chosen to "kick the can down the road." Now, there is little time remaining to fix the problem. We are only a short 7 years away from when the SS Trust Funds will no longer have money to supplement Social Security benefit payments. Therefore, Congress must act soon to restore this crucial program to financial solvency. And the longer it

waits, the more difficult the problem will be to solve. Indeed, Congress, instead, recently exacerbated Social Security's financial dilemma by passing legislation which provided additional benefits to a segment of beneficiaries (see H.R. 82 – The Social Security Fairness Act). Regardless of the merits of that recent legislation, it added about \$200 billion to Social Security's expenses over the coming decade, at a time when Congress should be seeking ways to reduce Social Security's costs.

For its part, the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) recognized this looming Social Security issue years ago and developed a potential Social Security reform proposal. AMAC has promoted (and continues to promote) its Social Security Guarantee to Congress and, in fact, also to the new Commissioner of Social Security. AMAC's proposal provides common sense adjustments to the Social Security program – program adjustments which retain the poverty-reduction aspects of Social Security while still providing the full benefits all have earned from a lifetime of working.

In any event, now is the time to mobilize by contacting your Congressional Representatives to demand that Congress take action to reform the Social Security program and restore it to financial solvency. The year 2033, when everyone's Social Security benefit will be cut by almost 25%, is just around the corner. Just imagine the consequences of that!

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# Ken Thompson Takes Point With Best of Boilermaker Hoopsters



**SPORTS,  
SPORTS, &  
MORE SPORTS**  
*with Ken Thompson*

Today begins a five-week series where I rank the best point guards, shooting guards, small forwards, power forwards and centers in Purdue men's basketball history.

I don't want to pretend that I'm an expert on Boilermaker basketball before 1970, when I first saw Rick Mount play in Mackey Arena thanks to WLFI. But since I want to include a handful of former Purdue greats on my list, we'll expand the list to the past 65 years. So no John Wooden or "Stretch" Murphy.

Readers may end up as surprised as I was when I researched these lists that the deepest position, in my opinion, is not center but power forward.

Today's Top 10 list, point guards, was also deep enough that the man who directed three consecutive Big Ten outright championship teams – Porter Roberts – didn't make my cut.

Let's get started at No. 1, which should be no surprise.

**Braden Smith** – After Sunday's victory at Maryland, the Indiana Mr. Basketball from Westfield became the fifth player in NCAA history with 1,700 points (1,711) and 950 assists (954) in his career. The others are Bobby Hurlley of Duke, Keith Jennings of East Tennessee State, Greg Anthony of UNLV and Sherman Douglas of Syracuse. Smith is the only one of the five with at least 500 rebounds, and he has 615.

With a minimum of 11 games left in his Purdue career, Smith seems assured to surpass 1,000 assists. Deep runs in the Big Ten and NCAA tournament could put him within reach of 2,000 career points. That's a threshold only six Purdue players have reached: Zach Edey, Rick Mount, Joe Barry Carroll, E'Twaun Moore, Dave Schellhase and Troy Lewis.

**Bruce Parkinson** – A member of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame (2004) and the Leroy Keyes Purdue Athletics Hall of Fame (2019), Parkinson was a four-year starter.

His accomplishments include leading Purdue to the 1974 National Invitation Tournament championship and its first NCAA tourna-

ment berth in eight years in 1977. Until Braden Smith came along, Parkinson held virtually every assists record.

For now, Parkinson remains the single-game assists record holder with 18 against Minnesota on March 8, 1975. He scored 1,224 points and recorded 14 double-doubles. Parkinson earned second-team All-Big Ten honors as a sophomore and was a first-team pick as a junior after averaging 12.9 points, 4.7 rebounds and 7.4 assists per game.

**Billy Keller** – Like Braden Smith, the 5-9 Keller was described as "too slow and too short." All Keller did was lead Indianapolis Washington to the 1965 state championship, win Indiana Mr. Basketball honors and help Purdue reach the 1969 NCAA championship game.

"I used the criticism as motivation to prove I could do the things people said I couldn't do," Keller said after he was inducted into the Leroy Keyes Purdue Hall of Fame in 2008.

With Keller directing an offense that had Rick Mount and Herman Gilliam, the Boilermakers went 53-23 in his three seasons. Keller could score too, finishing with 1,056 points. His 85.9 career free throw percentage is among the best in school history.

**4. Everett Stephens** – Easily the most athletic point guard in Purdue history, the 6-3 Stephens was a terrific defensive player who blossomed into a 3-point shooter and third scoring option alongside fellow "Amigos" Troy Lewis and Todd Mitchell. He was inducted into the Leroy Keyes Purdue Athletics Hall of Fame alongside Lewis and Mitchell in 2010.

Stephens helped Purdue go 96-28 during his four seasons, including back-to-back Big Ten championships in 1987 and 1988. He was the second Boilermaker to record at least 1,000 points, 300 assists and 150 steals. Stephens played briefly in the NBA for Indiana and Milwaukee.

**Brian Walker** – The former Indiana All-Star from Lebanon began his college career at North Carolina State but transferred in

time to help Purdue reach the 1979 NIT championship game and the 1980 Final Four.

He left Purdue as its career leader in steals and second to Bruce Parkinson in assists. He was elected to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 2010.

**Eugene Parker** – The Fort Wayne native started all four seasons at Purdue from 1974-78. He scored 1,430 points and earned second-team All-Big Ten honors in 1976.

Parker was elected to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 2001. He was a prominent sports agent whose clients included Rod Woodson and Deion Sanders. Parker passed away on March 31, 2016 at age 60.

**7. Lewis Jackson** – A four-year starter, his Purdue teams went 104-37 from 2008-12. At the time, Jackson was the winningest starting point guard in Boilermaker history.

**8. Ricky Hall** – The Fort Wayne native was Purdue's first Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year, winning in 1984 after helping the Boilermakers win an unexpected conference title.

**9. PJ Thompson** – A three-year starter for Matt Painter, Thompson ranks second in career assist/turnover ratio (2.94), 10th in career 3-point percentage (.404) and 15th in career 3-pointers made (161).

During his career, Thompson helped Purdue go 104-37 with the 2017 Big Ten championship. He currently is an assistant under Painter.

**10. Carson Cunningham** – The Andean graduate started his collegiate career at Oregon State before returning home to help Purdue reach the Sweet 16 in 1999 and the Elite Eight in 2000.

Cunningham averaged 11 points and 4.1 assists a game for the 2000 Boilermakers. Including his freshman season at Oregon State, Cunningham scored 1,289 points.

Noteworthy Former Purdue quarterback David Blough has been promoted to offensive coordinator of the Washington Commanders.

Blough has had a fast rise up the ranks, having spent the 2024 season as assistant quarterbacks coach and taking on increased responsibilities in 2025 following the departure of Washington's QB coach Tava Pritchard to Stanford.

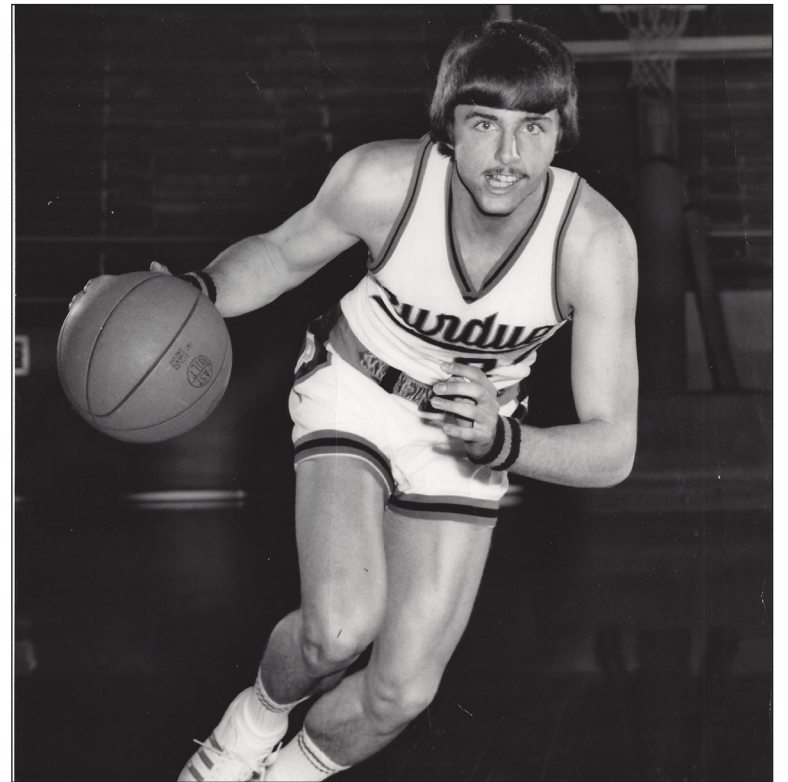
Blough has been praised for his efforts in developing Jayden Daniels, who accounted for 4,459 yards and 31 touchdowns during his rookie season in 2024.

Blough played quarterback for four seasons with



Photos courtesy Purdue Athletics

**Braden Smith**



**Bruce Parkinson**



**Billy Keller**

the Detroit Lions and one with the Arizona Cardinals. His coaching mentors include Chicago Bears coach Ben Johnson and Lions head coach Dan Campbell.

Former Purdue All-American guard Jaden Ivey was traded to the Chicago Bulls on Tuesday as part of a three-team deal with the Detroit Pistons and Minnesota Timberwolves.

In the midst of his fourth NBA season, Ivey is averaging 14.9 points, 3.5 rebounds and 4.0 assists after being taken fifth overall by Detroit in the 2002 NBA Draft.

*Kenny Thompson is the former sports editor for the Lafayette Journal & Courier and an award-winning journalist. He has covered Purdue athletics for many years.*

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# Winter Storms Freeze Out Blood Donations; Help Needed Now

The American Red Cross urges people to take action now to help offset the severe impact of recent winter storms on efforts to rebuild the blood supply during an ongoing blood shortage. Donors of all blood types are asked to make a blood or platelet donation appointment as soon as possible.

Over 500 blood drives have been canceled since the beginning of the year, causing more than 20,000 blood and platelet donations to go uncollected. In the Indiana Region, 33 blood drives have been affected, with 829 blood product donations going uncollected. In addition to the disruption of blood drives, dangerous weather conditions have also made it tougher to transport vital blood products, which could potentially affect deliveries to hospitals in some locations.

Patient care is at risk — donors in unaffected areas are asked to book an appointment to give blood or platelets now by using the Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Those in areas facing extreme winter weather are asked to give when it's safe to do so. All who come to give through Feb. 28 will receive a \$20 e-gift card to a merchant of choice. See RedCrossBlood.org/Heart for details.

Hospital impact  
Shortfalls in blood and platelet donations caused

by recent winter storms are putting further strain on the national blood supply, forcing

possibility that blood could run out when it's needed most. Now is the time to give blood or platelets before doctors have to face difficult decisions about which patients can safely move forward with treatment, and who will need to wait.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Feb. 3-28:  
Clinton County Frankfort  
2/6/2026: 7 a.m. - 1 p.m., Faith Family Church, 508 W Green Street

2/20/2026: 7 a.m. - 1 p.m., IU Health Frankfort, 1204 South Jackson Street  
Tippecanoe County Lafayette  
2/6/2026: 12 p.m. - 5:30

p.m., Northend Community Center, 2000 Elmwood Avenue

2/10/2026: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Northend Community Center, 2000 Elmwood Avenue

2/18/2026: 12 p.m. - 6 p.m., Crestview Community Church, 1400 Ortman Lane West Lafayette

2/4/2026: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Purdue Black Cultural Center, 1100 Third Street

2/13/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Purdue University - Forney Hall of Chemical Engineering, 480 Stadium Mall Drive

2/18/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Purdue University - Krach Leadership Center, 1198 3rd Street

2/24/2026: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., Faith West, 1920 Northwestern Avenue

2/25/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Purdue University - Krach Leadership Center, 1198 3rd Street

### About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](http://CruzRojaAmericana.org), or follow us on social media.

## GRANTS

Continued from Page 1

must be consistent with AARP's mission to serve the needs of people 50 and older along with other eligibility criteria.

- Flagship grants support projects that improve public places; transportation; housing; digital connections; and disaster resilience. Awards range from a few hundred dollars to \$15,000.

- Capacity-building microgrants are paired with expert support, webinars, and cohort learning for projects to improve walkability and bikeability; implement safe, accessible home modifications; and disaster preparedness training. Awards are \$2,500.

Demonstration grants fund projects that encourage replication of exemplary local efforts. This year's focus is on improving pedestrian safety, with funding support from Toyota Motor North America; expanding high-speed internet access and adoption, with funding support from Microsoft; and housing choice design competitions. Awards typically range from \$10,000-\$20,000, not to exceed \$25,000.

"Over the last decade, AARP has invested in communities to help people of all ages and abilities to thrive," said Nancy LeaMond, AARP Executive Vice President and

Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer. "The impact that our Community Challenge grants have had in cities, towns and counties nationwide is significant, supporting everything from crosswalks and home improvements to increased community engagement while also serving as a catalyst for further action. We look forward to expanding the program and its cumulative results over the next ten years."

Since 2017, AARP has invested \$24.3 million toward 2,100 livability projects — including 40 in Indiana — across all 50

states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands through the Community Challenge. The program aims to provide support to all community types, including rural, suburban and urban communities with a special focus on the needs of those 50 and older.

AARP Indiana works in collaboration with communities across the state, bringing people together, and providing resources and expertise to help make the state's counties, towns and cities great places to live for people of all ages.

The Community Challenge is open to eligible 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(6) nonprofit organizations and government entities. Other types of organizations are considered on a case-by-case basis. Grants can range from several hundred dollars for small, short-term activities to tens of thousands for larger projects.

The application deadline is 5 p.m. March 4. All projects must be completed by Dec. 15. To submit an application and view past grantees, visit [www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](http://www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge).

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Photo courtesy Andy Chandler

Lt. Gov. Micah Beckwith serves as the Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development and helps OCRA work with local, state and national partners.

# Two Community Grants Open for Applications

The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs' Community Development Block Grant Owner Occupied Rehabilitation program and Planning Grant program are now open for applications.

First cycle applications for both grant programs will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. ET, on Sunday, March 1, via the Indiana electronic Grants Management System, found here. Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications prior to 3 p.m. ET on Friday, Feb. 27, as technical assistance will not be available after that time.

Owner Occupied Rehabilitation program

The OOR program aims to help low-income homeowners to age in place, have greater mobility and make necessary repairs for their comfort and safety. Additionally, the OOR program supports communities in improving their existing housing stock and empowers them to establish local home repair programs.

Eligible OOR applicants are legally recognized non-entitlement local units of government with the legal capacity to implement the OOR program. Applicants may partner with a non-profit to conduct eligible project activities.

Awarded communities will administer programs that directly

fund repairs on owner-occupied residential properties, such as:

Roof replacements or repairs  
Heating, cooling and water heater replacement

Select lighting and electrical upgrades

ADA accessibility modifications up to the threshold of the home

Applicants are required to use the Homeowner Application Packet provided by OCRA for the implementation of local home repair programs. Submissions that contain forms from any other agency will not be accepted. The forms are available on the CDBG Resources page.

Planning Grants

The following plan types will be open as part of the first cycle:

- Comprehensive Plan
- Water Utility Study
- Broadband Readiness Plan
- Economic Development Plan
- Downtown Revitalization Plan
- Environmental Assessment Plan
- Historic Preservation Plan
- COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan
- Public Facilities Feasibility Study

Three cycles of planning grants are expected per year until funds have been exhausted. This is a change to the prior format of grants being awarded quar-

terly.

**Important Notes:**  
The deadline for bonus points submission has changed to the application due date. Requests for bonus points should be uploaded with the application on eGMS no later than Sunday, March 1, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

A new form, MSR-006-Disaster Designation Bonus Points Form, is now available and must be used to request disaster designation bonus points.

The In-Kind Contribution Policy went into effect Jan. 12, 2026. All in-kind requests must now be submitted using the In-Kind Contribution Request Form.

All income survey documentation should be submitted for final approval in eGMS by Feb. 13 to ensure OCRA has 10 days to complete a review. Final income survey results must be approved by OCRA in eGMS ahead of the application due date on March 1.

Funding for all CDBG programs, such as OOR and Planning Grants, comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is administered by OCRA. For further information on these programs, contact the assigned regional OCRA community liaison.

# Wabash Back and Better Than Ever

College Regains Status With Group of Top Fulbright Producers

**By Richard Paige**  
**Wabash College**

Wabash College returned to a select group of institutions included on the list of U.S. colleges and universities that produced the most Fulbright scholarships among U.S. students.

During last year's Fulbright selection process, Wabash had nine semifinalists, the most in school history, out of an initial pool of 12 applicants.

"That a small institution like Wabash can earn a Fulbright Top Producing designation is tremendous recognition for our wonderful students," said Susan Albrecht, Wabash College Fellowship Advisor. "Our guys are focused and work extremely hard on their applications, so it is nice to see them

succeed in substantial numbers. To have nine semifinalists and six recipients [SA5] from 12 applicants was remarkable. I would love to build momentum from this recognition and see more Wabash men step up and apply."

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is the largest U.S. exchange program, offering opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, independent study, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide, while serving as a cultural ambassador. The Fulbright open study/research award program allows recipients to design their

own projects and work with mentors at foreign universities, non-profits, cultural organizations, or other research institutes. The program awards approximately 2,000 grants annually and operates in more than 150 countries worldwide.

Previously, Wabash has earned Top-Producing status in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

In the previous 11 years, 146 Wabash students have completed Fulbright applications. Of that group, 64 were named semifinalists (44 percent), while 31 were named winners (48 percent of the semifinalists). That 21 percent overall success rate is slightly above the recent Fulbright recipient national average.

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