

■ TODAY'S VERSE

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me".

■ AWL BANDIT



Say Hello to Mr. Perfect!! Brutus is a 1 year old male Shepherd available for adoption from The Animal Welfare League of Montgomery County (AWL) since 9/17/25. Brutus is cat, dog, and kid friendly. He's perfect!!! Brutus loves going out for walks, frolicking in a fenced yard, and will gladly sit for treats. Brutus is looking for his best friend. Could that be you? Brutus is available for adoption, to foster, or just simply going out for walks. AWL is open Monday-Friday from 12:15-5p and Saturdays from 12-3p. Come snuggle cats in a community cat room, walk dogs, or lend a helping hand!

■ MONTGOMERY MINUTE

The Annual Meeting of the Crawfordsville | Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce will be held during Connections & Conversations May 6 beginning at 8 a.m. on the third floor of Fusion 54 (101 W. Main St.) in beautiful downtown Crawfordsville. The 2025-26 Chamber Nominating Committee has announced the proposed slate of candidates to serve on the Board of Directors, effective June 1, 2026. The slate can be found at the Chamber's website.



T-minus 5 days and counting to the Big Tax Day! Ever wonder why we continue to put up with politicians who spend more than our grandchildren can repay? Maybe instead of chucking the tea in the Harbor, we should chuck them?

■ QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Death, taxes and childbirth! There's never any convenient time for any of them."
Margaret Mitchell

■ JOKE OF THE DAY

How do accountants manage their money?
They act their wage.



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

Help! My Monthly Payment is Less

Dear Rusty: My last Social Security payment decreased by about \$400, so I went to my online SS account and found a November 2025 letter explaining that my 2024 tax return showed a greatly enlarged AGI (Adjusted Gross Income). Thus, SSA decided to withdraw monies, as of Jan 2026, from my bank account because I'd owed far more monies to them! The letter itemized my greatly diminished 2026 SSA monthly payment, explaining should my next tax return show a regular AGI, then SSA would return my SS income to regular amounts (and return every prior month's deficits?). Said letter also mentioned an optional recourse, that of compiling an "Appeal" to regain my ongoing decreased income! The extra amounts now withdrawn for Medicare Parts A and D alone are outrageously high. I'm a retired senior citizen on a fixed income. According to SSA, my



ASK RUSTY
Social Security Advisor

having sold a piece of land in 2024 allows SSA to decrease my SS income! Has this become a common practice against USA (senior) citizens? Thank you in advance for your input!

Signed: Feeling Wronged

Dear Feeling Wronged: From what you have shared, it appears that your SS benefit amount has been affected by a provision known as "IRMAA" (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount). IRMAA isn't really a Social Security

issue, rather it is a Medicare premium thing. But when IRMAA applies, it reduces your net Social Security payment because Medicare premiums are automatically taken from your Social Security benefit, thus making your net SS payment less. If you look at your gross Social Security payment (at your online "my Social Security" account) you will see that your gross SS payment did not change, but your Medicare premium did, thus affecting your net SS payment.

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Prioritize Smoke, Carbon Monoxide Alarms During Spring House Cleaning

(StatePoint) Spring is the perfect time for a home refresh! While dusting the ceiling fan and scrubbing the tub are likely already on your to-do list, the most essential task of all may not be on your radar: cleaning and testing your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. A fresh home is great, but a safe one is even better. Did you know that working smoke alarms in the home doubles your chances of safely escaping a house fire? That's according to the National Fire Protection Association. This spring, Kidde, a pioneer in early

smoke detection for over 100 years, is highlighting the importance of keeping your smoke and CO alarms up to date. Here's what they want you to know:

- Install devices throughout the house, on every level including the living room, kitchen, bedrooms, hallways, basement and garage. It's also a good idea to keep fire extinguishers in the kitchen, basement, laundry room and garage.
- Smoke and CO devices aren't just plastic boxes – they're sophisticated mini-computers. Their sensors and circuits constantly

analyze air particles, and like any computer, dust and neglect can inhibit their functionality. Clean your alarms this spring, and regularly after that, to help prevent false alarms. Use compressed air or a vacuum cleaner with a soft brush to clean the vents, and then wipe the device with a dry microfiber cloth.

- Smoke and CO alarms are electronic devices with sensors and circuits that wear out over time. It's recommended to replace them every 5 to 10 years depending

See Smoke Page 4

■ THREE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1. The Salvation Army Indiana Division has received a \$3,000,000 matching grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Capital Project Initiative for Residential Youth Camps. The Salvation Army has launched the Transforming Lives Initiative to raise the \$3,000,000 needed to receive the full matching grant. The grant is one of 40 implementation grants being awarded through phase 3 of the Lilly Endowment initiative, which aims to help Indiana residential youth camps improve the overall camp experience and outcomes for youth through new, enhanced, and expanded facilities integral to quality youth camp programming. The latest grants, which were competitive, are providing partial support for large-scale capital projects.

2. USDA's Research, Education, and Economics Under Secretary Dr. Scott Hutchins announced the launch of the USDA National Proving Grounds Network for AgTech (NPG-Ag), a nationwide initiative designed to rigorously evaluate agricultural technologies under real-world U.S. farming and ranching conditions. The initiative has been designed to thoroughly test and validate both existing and emerging tools under real-world production conditions, ultimately providing farmers and ranchers with trusted, practical insights that they can rely upon when making technology-investment decisions. American farmers and ranchers are facing real pressures, and they need confidence that new technologies will deliver tangible value on the ground – whether through lower input costs, reduced labor demands, or greater overall efficiency. The NPG-Ag delivers a targeted solution to this agricultural challenge, meeting today's demands and preparing for tomorrow's needs.

3. New data from Compare the Market reveals the leading causes of death across all 50 states, ranked by deaths per 100,000 residents, highlighting geographic divides in Americans' health risks. Using the latest mortality data, the study ranks the top 10 causes of death in Indiana. Heart and vascular diseases cause 1,004.34 deaths per 100,000, cancer is second at 419.48 per 100,000 people and accidents were third at 251.06. This mirrors the U.S., except the national numbers are a little lower. Heart is at 920.07, cancer at 373.07 and accidents at 237.18. Want to see the whole report? Go to <https://www.comparethemarket.com.au/health-insurance/features/leading-causes-of-death/>

Hospitals: Hoosiers Face Rising Costs; Hospitals Left Unpaid



A new Payor Scorecard, analyzing data from 70 Indiana hospitals, shows hospitals delivered more than \$717 million in care in 2025 that went unpaid as insurers delayed or denied payments—while continuing to raise premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Hoosiers.

The Indiana Hospital Association (IHA) estimates that if all Indiana hospitals were included in the dataset, total unpaid care would exceed \$1.6 billion statewide. The findings reveal a widening gap between what insurers collect from patients and employers, and what hospitals are ultimately paid for care delivered.

"Hoosiers are paying more every year for health insurance, so the question is simple: where is that money going?" said IHA President Scott B. Tittle. "Insurers are shifting more costs onto patients through higher premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance, while also delaying and denying payments they already agreed to make to hospitals. That combination creates real barriers to care and financial stress for Hoosier families and our health care system."

What the data shows The Payor Scorecard analyzes hospital and physician billing and payment data to show how insurer practices affect patients and providers after care has been delivered, highlighting payment trends, denial patterns, and insurer behavior that threaten patient access and hospital sustainability. Produced by Kodiak Solutions, the scorecard uses Kodiak's advanced revenue cycle analytics and national benchmarking database—covering more than 2,300 hospitals—to compare payor performance across plans over time in Indiana and nationwide.

Key findings for Indiana in 2025:

\$717 million in lost hospital revenue due to claim denials and bad debt write-offs—money hospitals were contractually owed for covered care but never received.

Nearly 13% of dollars billed to insurers were initially denied, representing \$4.7 billion in delayed payments to hospitals.

According to Kodiak, more than 80% of those denials were ultimately overturned, but hospitals still had to spend significant time and money re-

See Hospitals Page 3

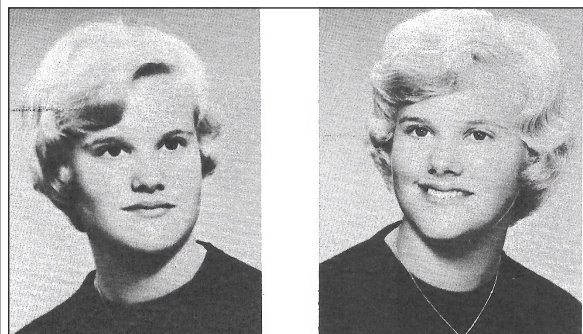
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OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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RECOGNIZE ME?

Flashback Trivia with Butch Dale



Do You Recognize These Twins Who Graduated from Coal Creek in 1966?

HINT:

Their last name is very familiar in the Wingate and New Richmond neighborhood, and has been for many years!

Mayor's Forum to be held April 29

Crawfordsville Mayor Todd Barton has scheduled his monthly Community Forum for Wednesday, April 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at his office, 300 E. Pike St.



This will be Barton's 154th such event since taking office. Holding a monthly community forum was something Barton pledged to do during his campaign and he has continued to do so every month – except during the COVID pandemic.

This event is de-

signed to allow the public to come ask questions, discuss concerns, interact with the mayor and learn more about anything regarding the city.

BIRTH

Kaisen Andrew Addler

A baby boy, Kaisen Wayne Andrew Addler came into the world April 8, 2026 at Witham Health Services in Lebanon. Kaisen weigh an even seven pounds. His parents are Kaden and Jennifer Addler of Waynetown and this is their first child.

Maternal grandparents are Chuck and Judy Waddell of Waynetown. Paternal grandparents are Jason Addler Sr.,

Waynetown, deceased, and Kristie Garman of Cromwell.

Maternal great-grandparents are Larry and Joyce Harrell of Indianapolis and Thomas and Gladys Waddell of Indianapolis. Paternal great-grandparents are Kandy Dopkowski, deceased; James Covey, deceased; Richard Schmidt of Romeoville, Ill. And Sandra Covey of Wingate, N.C.

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OBITUARY

Charles Rushing

January 16, 1940- April 7, 2026

Charles Rushing of Crawfordsville, Indiana passed away Tuesday evening at Hendricks Regional Health in Danville. He was 86 years old. Charlie was born January 16, 1940 to John and Viola Rushing in Vigo County, Indiana. He married his late wife, June Rushing, on March 6, 1971 in Crawfordsville. He is survived by his four sons: J. Bradley Rushing (Katherine) of Lafayette, David Rushing (Heidi) of Woodbury, Minnesota, C. Kent Rushing (Amber) of Lebanon, and Daniel Rushing (Heather) of Plainfield. He is also survived by his 5 grandchildren: Matthew Rushing of Martinsville, Kate Rushing of Plainfield, Calvin Rushing of Plainfield, Haylee Rushing of Woodbury, Minnesota, and Hannah Rushing of Woodbury, Minnesota. He was preceded in death by his parents, step-mother, Mary Musson Rushing, wife, and his siblings, William "Bill"

Rushing, Lois Ruark, Johanna Phares, and Glenn Rushing. At the beginning of his career, Charlie proudly served his country as a member of The United States Airforce from 1958-1962. While in the service, he spent 2 years in Japan. Following this, he worked at R.R. Donnelly for 41 years until his retirement. He was a member of Harvest Fellowship Church where he delighted in serving the Lord. He enjoyed spending time with his family, Tuesday breakfasts with his friends, biannual trips to Hilton Head Island, woodworking, and serving his community. Charlie will be remembered by those who loved him as a kind and hardworking man who was full of life. He taught the people around him many valuable lessons, but mainly that the joy of helping others has no price, and that great fulfillment can come from selflessness. His presence will



be deeply missed but remembered forever for the unconditional love and light he brought into the lives of others. Visitation will be held at Burkhart Funeral Home in Crawfordsville on Friday, April 10th, from 3 - 5 pm. A service will be held the following day, Saturday, April 11th at 10 am at Harvest Fellowship Church in Crawfordsville, followed by interment at Indian Creek Hill Cemetery in New Market.

Preserving History, One Piece at a Time

By Andy Chandler

As the United States of America celebrates its 250th year as a country this summer, the subject of history is naturally at the forefront. Aside from the culture wars; what will and will not be taught, and if what we teach should be used to solicit pride or shame, comes a question rarely asked: Who's preserving it all?

That is a question that State Representative Tim Yocum (R-District 42) wished to find the answer for recently. Yocum is from Helt Township in Vermillion County, site of the Ernie Pyle Birthplace and World War II Museum.

The museum has been through somewhat of a historical odyssey itself. From 1975 to 2009, the museum was owned and operated by the State of Indiana Department of Natural Resources. After closing in 2009, it was reopened under non-profit ownership, the Friends of Ernie Pyle, and has been operated by them ever since.

During the 2009 closing, many of the artifacts were taken by the State to Indianapolis. Being that Pyle is a native son of the township, Yocum asked for permission to see the artifacts, and their current state of preservation.

A former county commissioner, the now state representative stated, "Being an official at the state level, I felt I could get some action on it. Preserving history is one of my biggest passions."

We were led to the lab and storage area. It is a temperature and light controlled area of historical timepieces as well as a lab for restoration resembling a college science laboratory. Cameras and wires run overhead.

We were shown Ernie Pyle's corre-



Photos courtesy Andy Chandler

From left, State Rep. Tim Yocum, head curator, Dr. Susannah Koerber and Friends of Ernie Pyle Board President Steve Key.



The patch Pyle and other war correspondents wore.



From left, Steve Key, Tim Yocum and Dr. Susannah Koerber.

spondent uniform, and several other pieces of clothing Pyle wore. "We arrange them by texture and fabric in order to preserve them in the same manner because clothing needs different levels," said Dr. Koerber.

One of the items mentioned in Pyle's column, which is known to be in the State's collection, was the suit coat that Pyle wore to see First Eleanor Roosevelt at the White House in 1943. Sure enough, the suit still has the same holes in the elbows that Pyle described in

his column about the meeting.

In addition to items such as Pyle's hats and typewriter bag, the curator has many other non-Pyle items to show. On the next table was a flag. It has a connection to a dark period of our history: it was a flag that was hanging from a nearby box at Ford's Theatre the night President Lincoln was shot. It was interesting to note the somber reverence, yet child-like enthusiasm Mr. Key and Rep. Yocum displayed when shown both the Pyle artifacts and the Ford's Theatre flag.

Overall, Mr. Key and Rep. Yocum were pleased and impressed with the efforts at preservation and restoration, and so, there will be more visits to the State Museum in the future.

As we are approaching the 250th anniversary of our nation and with the bicentennial of the state, ten years past, the people of Indiana should be proud that their heritage and legacy in the form of these objects and objects like them are being preserved in such a meticulous manner.

Cody Laster, Steve Collisi Honored as Agents of the Month

F.C. Tucker West Central is proud to recognize its January 2026 Agents of the Month, Cody Laster as the Sales Agent of the Month and Steve Collisi as the Listing Agent of the Month. Their dedication, hard work and commitment to serving their clients and community continue to set them apart.

Cody Laster has been named Sales Agent of the Month for his outstanding work helping buyers and sellers achieve their real estate goals. A lifelong resident of Montgomery County and a 2019 Southmont High School graduate, Cody brings a strong foundation in customer service, communication, and leadership to his real estate career.

Before entering real estate, Cody gained valuable experience working in multiple roles at Walmart, where he developed a deep understanding of people and service.

He later pursued real estate full time, quickly establishing himself as a rising professional in the industry. Cody has earned recognition as a Rising Star within F.C. Tucker, a Top 25 Affiliate, and a Denver-Hutt Rising Star for Outstanding Service. He has also been elected Treasurer of the Montgomery County Board of Realtors three times and now serves as Vice Chair.

Cody is actively involved in his community, volunteering regularly through his church and supporting organizations such as Trinity Mission and Pam's Promise during Realtor Action Day and Realtor Week of Service. A dedicated family man, he enjoys spending time with his wife and family, as well as fishing and golfing in his free time.

Steve Collisi has been named Listing Agent of the Month for his exceptional work representing sellers



Cody Laster

throughout Parke, Putnam, and Montgomery Counties. Steve is known for his professionalism, attention to detail, and strong commitment to helping clients successfully navigate the selling process.

Before transitioning into real estate, Steve owned and operated his own business for more than 33 years and also served as a

police officer. These experiences shaped his strong work ethic and dedication to serving others, which continue to guide his approach in real estate.

Steve is actively involved in the community as a member of the Parke County Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals and the Rockville Rotary Club. As a member of the F.C. Tucker West Cen-



Steve Collisi

tral team, he is known for building lasting relationships and helping clients make confident decisions. He understands that a home is more than just a place. It is where life happens.

Steve lives in Marshall, Indiana with his wife, Leanna, and values time spent with family. Whether working with buyers or sellers, he is commit-

ted to understanding his clients' goals and delivering results.

"Cody and Steve exemplify the level of service, professionalism and market expertise that make our office stand out," said John Downey, co-owner at F.C. Tucker West Central. "Their dedication to their clients and our community is something we are proud to recognize."

HOSPITALS

Continued from Page 1

submitting and appealing claims to receive payment.

More than one-third of denials—totaling \$1.8 billion—were driven by requests for additional information, even when care was appropriate and properly delivered.

On average, hospitals waited 46 days to receive payment from insurers after care was delivered. Nearly 30% of insurer payments were delayed more than 90 days.

Commercial insurers took three times longer to pay for care than traditional Medicare, straining hospital cash flow.

Medicare Advantage plans denied payments at roughly three times the rate of traditional Medicare, demonstrating a clear trend in insurer behavior.

In 2025 alone, Indiana hospitals spent over \$400 million pursuing payments insurers owed for care already delivered.

Commercial insurers are shifting a larger share of costs onto Hoosier patients and providers while reducing what insurers ultimately pay.

In 2025, nearly 25% of the allowable amount on commercial claims—the maximum amount a health insurance company will pay for a covered service—was attributed to patient responsibility, exceeding the national average.

When patients are unable to cover those growing out-of-pocket costs, Indiana hospi-

tals are left absorbing the cost of care provided but are never fully reimbursed. This leads to significant increases in bad debt. In fact, bad debt for Indiana hospitals rose nearly \$270 million from 2024 to 2025.

"What we're seeing in Indiana mirrors national trends—higher denial rates, longer payment delays, and more administrative barriers after care has been delivered," said Matt Szaflarski, vice president of revenue cycle intelligence at Kodiak Solutions. "The data shows these practices aren't isolated incidents. They're becoming standard operating behavior across many commercial and Medicare Advantage plans, creating downstream impacts for patients and providers alike."

Hospital prices decline as patient costs rise

The Scorecard findings come at a time when Indiana hospitals have reduced prices. In 2024, all five of Indiana's largest hospital systems lowered prices, according to a State-commissioned study, and national rankings show Indiana hospitals continue to make care more affordable for Hoosiers.

Despite these declines in hospital prices, patients are facing higher insurance premiums and rising out-of-pocket costs. Employer-sponsored health insurance premiums continue to rise in Indiana and

nationally, affecting individuals, families, and employers across the state.

The impact on Hoosiers

As insurance companies raise premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance, they are paying less while Hoosier patients pay more.

That results in: Financial stress for families facing higher out-of-pocket costs

Delays in care as claims are denied, disputed, or reprocessed

A growing burden of unpaid care absorbed by hospitals—costs that ripple through the entire health care system and raise costs for all Hoosiers

"In simple terms, insurers are collecting premiums but not reliably paying for care," said Tittle. "This is the hidden cost of insurance—more paperwork, more waiting, and more financial uncertainty for Hoosier families."

Holding insurers accountable

IHA is releasing the Scorecard as part of its Access Denied effort to expose harmful insurer practices and elevate patient voices. Hoosiers can share how insurer practices delay or deny care—and urge policymakers to take action.

To learn more or share your story, visit AccessDeniedIN.org. "If we want to lower health care costs and protect access to care, insurers must be held accountable for the promises they make," said Tittle.

RUSTY

Continued from Page 1

IRMAA, essentially, makes Medicare a "means tested" program, where those with a higher AGI can pay a higher Medicare Part B (and Part D) premium.

However, IRMAA is usually based on AGI from two years prior to the current year (because your current AGI information isn't available from the IRS when Medicare premiums are determined in October of each year). FYI, you may have received a notice in the mail in early December telling you what your 2026 Social Security and Medicare amounts would be. In a nutshell, the land you sold in 2024 apparently increased your AGI to exceed the base IRMAA thresholds (which are \$109,000 if you file your taxes as a single, or \$218,000 if you file your income tax as "married/jointly").

And the IRMAA supplements are "progressive" (higher if your AGI is more), so if your Medicare premiums went up by about \$400 (about twice the 2026 standard premium) it's likely that your 2024 AGI was over \$137,000 if you filed as a single (or over \$274,000 if

you filed as "married/jointly"). FYI, you can see the 2026 IRMAA brackets/premium amounts at this link: www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/medicare-premiums.html

A couple of additional points:

- Your Medicare premiums will, indeed, revert to the standard amounts for 2027, if your 2025 AGI amount is under the IRMAA threshold for your tax filing status.

- There is no premium for Medicare Part A (which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization care) because you are receiving Social Security benefits. However, there is a premium for Part B of Medicare (which is coverage for outpatient medical services), and you must also separately pay a premium for Part D (which is coverage for prescription drugs offered by private insurers). And these IRMAA supplements apply even if you have a Medicare Advantage plan from a private insurer.

Unfortunately, your only "recourse" is, as SSA suggested, to appeal the IRMAA supplement, but that is usually successful only if you can prove you had a "life chang-

ing event" which caused (or will cause) your AGI to be less than that used to determine your IRMAA surcharge. Your best option at this point will likely be to appeal using a "Request for Reconsideration" (Form SSA-561) asking that your 2026 Medicare premium be based on a recent year's (e.g., 2025) lower income.

Finally, IRMAA isn't really a new thing – it was enacted in 2003, effective in 2007. But it does have a profound effect on many seniors, as I explained in this article I recently published on the topic: <https://amacfoundation.org/irmaa-a-medicare-surprise/>

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) or email us at ssad-visitor@amacfoundation.org.

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Trio Leave Huge Shoes to Fill for Purdue Basketball



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



Photos courtesy Purdue Athletics
Braden Smith



Trey Kaufman-Renn



Fletcher Loyer

Braden Smith may not have repeated as the Big Ten Conference Player of the Year or become the first two-time winner of the Bob Cousy Award as the nation's best point guard. However, the Indiana Mr. Basketball from Westfield did claim consensus first-team All-America honors.

After earning first-team All-America citations from the United States Basketball Writers Association and National Association of Basketball Coaches, Smith becomes Purdue's 30th consensus first-team All-America selection, the second most in NCAA history.

Smith also was selected to the Wooden Award All-America first team. He'll be honored alongside Purdue coach Matt Painter, this year's "Legends of Coaching" Award winner, at the 50th Anniversary Wooden Award Weekend on Friday at the Los Angeles Athletic Club.

Smith joins Terry Dischinger (1961, 1962), Rick Mount (1969, 1970) and Zach Edey (2023-2024) as two-time first-team consensus All-American Boiler-makers.

Smith is joined on the consensus All-America first team by Arkansas' Darius Acuff Jr., Duke's Cameron Boozer, BYU's A.J. Dybantsa and Michigan's Yaxel Lendeborg.

Not since Duke from 1999 to 2002 has a school had a player earn consensus first-team All-America honors in four straight seasons. Smith's honor gives Purdue five consecutive years of having a player earn at least one first-team award. That

feat hadn't been accomplished since UCLA from 1971 to 1979.

Smith paced the nation with 345 assists on his way to becoming the NCAA's career leader with 1,103. Despite Smith leading the nation, this year's Cousy Award went to Acuff.

Smith also played a major role in helping Purdue set an NCAA single-season record with a 2.19 assist-to-turnover ratio (764 assists / 349 turnovers).

The best point guard in Purdue history also departs with 1,932 career points and 673 rebounds. No other player in NCAA history has at least 1,500 points, 1,000 assists and 500 rebounds.

Smith also became the NCAA leader in career minutes played by a four-year player with 5,067 minutes.

He leaves Purdue with school records for games played (149) and started (149). Smith's 1,932 points rank eighth in school history.

"I'm glad I was able to get the opportunity to even come to Purdue, because it was kind of a last-minute thing," Smith said. "I'm not even really supposed to be here, so for me just to be in a position and have an opportunity to play alongside people who enjoy the game just as much as I do and just want to win. I think it just makes it a no-brainer to not want to be a part of something like that."

Fletcher Loyer, who also played and started all 149 games of his Purdue career, finishes 11th in school history with 1,829 points. Loyer also departs with a school record of 309, 3-pointers.

"I think just the decision

to come to Purdue obviously is going to turn out to be the best decision I've ever made to come play with these guys, to come play for Coach Painter and to attend Purdue University," Loyer said. "It's a special place, and I'm glad I did it."

"I learned so much with these guys. I've seen Braden have bad games. I've seen him have bad weeks, have bad days, but I've seen Trey have bad weeks, bad days, but every single day they showed up with a smile on their face, ready to work hard, ready to push me to be my best and push the rest of the guys on our team to be their best."

Trey Kaufman-Renn, a three-year starter, finishes his Purdue career with 1,655 points. That total ranks 19th in school history. Kaufman-Renn's 762 career rebounds are 11th in school history.

"Being able to get a great education, being able to play winning basketball ... as a 19-, 20-, 21-, 22-, 23-year-old, that's all you can ask for," Kaufman-Renn said.

The trio became the winningest senior class in Boiler-maker history, going 117-32 with two regular season Big Ten titles and two Big Ten Tournament championships.

Painter paid tribute to Smith, Loyer and Kaufman-Renn before taking questions following Purdue's 79-64 loss to top-seeded Arizona in the West Regional final.

"Really proud of these

three guys sitting right here and everything they've done for our program," Painter said. "Really set a standard of how to go about their business. It's going to be hard to emulate that."

"You know, they showed up every day and worked. That's what you want. All three of them will get their degrees from Purdue University, which means something."

"You can have it all. When you have the character that these guys have and the skill that these guys have, you can have it all. You can get a great education. You can treat people right. You can have a great basketball career. You can become a pro. I think these guys are great role models for young people out there to understand the big picture of things."

"The standard they set for our program, it's going to be tough to match. But that's what we're going to try to find. We're going to try to find guys like this that have character, that are wired to be successful."

Painter hopes he has found the successors to Smith, Loyer and Kaufman-Renn with the No. 1 ranked recruiting class according to 247 Sports.

Luke Ertel of Class 3A state champion Mt. Vernon is a heavy favorite to win Indiana Mr. Basketball like Smith. Ertel is ranked 41st nationally by 247 Sports, the second-highest ranked recruit in the Painter era behind future All-American Caleb Swanigan. Swanigan

was ranked 33rd coming out of Homestead and was voted Indiana Mr. Basketball in 2015.

Jacob Webber of LaLumiere is a highly regarded shooter much like Loyer. The 6-6 small forward is ranked 64th in the country and fourth in the Painter era behind Kaufman-Renn.

Sinan Huan continues Purdue's two-decade run of 7-footers. The Chinese native and standout at Georgetown Preparatory in Rockville, Md., is ranked 83rd in the Class of 2026.

Caden Pierce, the younger brother of Colts wide receiver Alec Pierce, could step into Kaufman-Renn's power forward role. The former Ivy League Player of the Year from Princeton committed to Purdue over national runner-up Connecticut.

Webber's LaLumiere teammate, 6-8 power forward Rivers Knight, is the lone Boiler-maker incoming freshman ranked outside the 247 Sports Top 100. The three-star recruit is 211th overall.

The final member of the class won't arrive in West Lafayette until after his two-year Mormon mission. Jamyn Sondrup, a 6-9, 225-pound center, is a four-star recruit out of Springville, Utah.

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.

SMOKE

Continued from Page 1

You can determine whether it's time to replace or upgrade your alarms by looking at the manufacturing date. Be sure to opt for self-testing devices that help ensure the alarms are operating as expected, like the Kidde Smoke Alarm, 10-Year Battery Powered

or the Combo Smoke CO Alarm, 10-Year Battery Powered, which last a full decade. Kidde's Detect line of devices offer revolutionary technology that provides fast, precise smoke detection, giving individuals and families more time to react and

get to safety. The line also prioritizes enhanced sensing technology, which helps to reduce those nuisance alarms that can lead to consumers disabling their devices.

Remember, a self-testing device is not a substitute for a manual push test.

No matter what style devices you have in your home, be sure to take time this spring to manually test them, and then monthly after that.

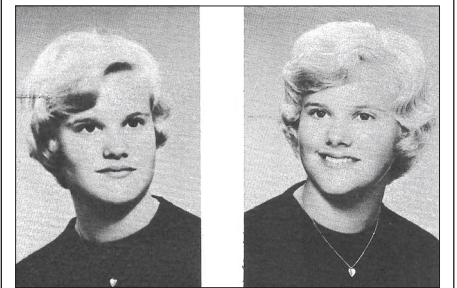
More information about fire and CO safety can be found by visiting <https://www.kidde.com>.

"A happy, healthy home starts with

safety. Make sure your fire and carbon monoxide detectors are part of your seasonal refresh routine: clean them, test them, and replace any units that have reached their limit," says Isis Wu, president of Global Residential Fire & Safety at Kidde.

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ANSWER: Ladonna Gene and Deanna Rene Olin

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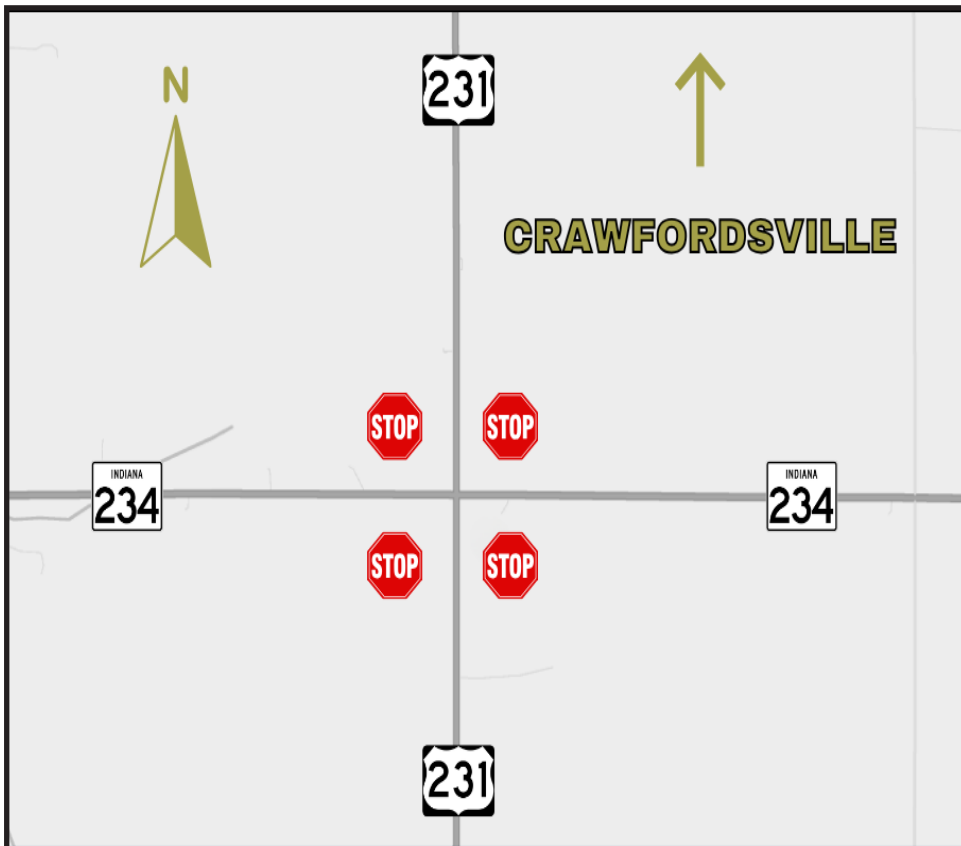


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ALL-WAY STOP COMING TO U.S. 231 AND STATE ROAD 234 IN MONTGOMERY CO.

- BEGINNING ON/AFTER MONDAY, APRIL 13
- CREWS WILL BE IMPLEMENTING DUE TO INCREASED TRAFFIC FROM A NEARBY PROJECT
- WARNING SIGNS AND RUMBLE STRIPS WILL BE IN PLACE ON U.S. 231

4-Way Stop Coming to U.S. 231, State Road 234

The Indiana Department of Transportation announces the implementation of a all-way stop at U.S. 231 and State Road 234 located south of New Market.

On or after Monday, April 13, INDOT traffic

crews will be installing the signage to reflect the change from a two-way stop to an all-way stop. The purpose of the change is due to increased traffic from nearby culvert replacements taking place on S.R. 47.

Warning signs and rumble strips will be in place on U.S. 231 to advise local drivers of the changes coming to the area. INDOT encourages drivers to be aware of the upcoming changes and to use caution in the area.

What Did You Do With . . .

Yes, beginning this article with a question – what did you do with ... your grandparents?

I absolutely adored my 4'10", close to 300 pound maternal grandmother (Sarah "Hazel" Morgan Smith – great snuggling lap!). Everyone loved her and one of the things we did together was decorate the relatives' graves. She always told me about those "we visited."

Selling embossed stationery was something she did so I'd received some from her a few times with my name and address at the top. I was thrilled – stationery honoring me! Another item I distinctly remember is when her last brother Stanley passed away when I was five. She would not let go of me and cried and cried all over me but Mom told me if I could soothe her in her sorrow to just suck it up and be with her. I was happy to do it and as I get older, I see that I had a real plus being the only granddaughter (both sides)!

So my maternal grandfather was Leland "Carl" Smith and he was the total opposite of my grandmother, guessing about 6' and weighing around 155. Think tall and thin! He was a major reader, rarely sitting unless he had a book - okay, when pro wrestling was on, he'd usually just watch that until it was off and then back to our books. Kind of nifty that his great grandfather Simeon Smith was one of the instigators of the Seneca NY Library. Pap (Carl) took me to the library quite a bit. A WWI veteran, he was sick for life (shrapnel riddled in his legs), but he didn't give up! He wanted to see his three grands graduate from high school, marry



Karen Zach
Special Guest Columnist

and enjoy at least one of his great grandchildren – Nikki made him so happy! We have wonderful memories of both the Smith grands.

Bazzanis up! Loved my Italian grandmother who was with us (and all of her several great grands) until she was 82. Born on All "Saints" Day we giggled about her birthday being named for her. We'd talk for hours on her front porch and loved hearing all the tales (when she killed a very large black snake wrapping itself around her brother and up to his chest when she put it to its demise by grabbing its neck and squeezing until finally; and when she and my gpa' eloping; their trip to America; her dad and gpa's sense of humor – she definitely had a fun one as did my dad and I'm sometimes funny too! I really could write a book of all the fun we had with my "Nonna."

Actually, I've written quite a bit about her but little about my "Nonno," Antonio (Tony) Bazzani. He and his two brothers came to America when they were very young working in the coal mines. At age 30, (my grandmother 15) he went back to Italy to visit. So, yep, she fell in love with "the American," and he with her. Ready to leave, at their reception he, her oldest brother and two or three guests all received an "invitation" to join the Italian

Army. He was with her brother all the time but one day Nonno was sent elsewhere and Tomaso was blown up on the Piave bridge with 1000 others. Intro to America - a railroad strike and they were stuck in the closed-up Ellis Island – dark, dirty and damp with the men on one side and women and children the other – there for two weeks but finally "back home again in Indiana". Don't really think he was all that excited about kids but he'd play with the boys or hold me for maybe 10-15 minutes then he'd say Bosta (enough) and if we didn't leave him alone, he'd let off a stream of cuss words (in Italian of course). Okay, I seriously could write a whole book about all my grands, especially my Nonna – I'm a good baker – she was not but worked in a bakery because she could speak to the customers knowing 8 languages but otherwise, I think I'm just like her! Now, what did you do ... with your grands?

For years, Karen Zach was the editor of Montgomery Memories, our monthly magazine all about Montgomery County. Her column, Around the County, appeared every Friday in The Paper of Montgomery County. Karen retired from all that a few years ago but sent us this gem to share with you. You can reach her at karen.zach@sbeglobal.net.

National Safe Digging Month; Contact 811 Before You Dig!

With spring in full swing and outdoor projects underway, CenterPoint Energy reminds customers and community members that April is National Safe Digging Month. No matter the size of the project, always call 811 before digging to help protect yourself, your neighbors, and underground utilities. This includes projects like building or repairing a fence, planting trees, installing a deck, placing a mailbox, or laying a patio. Customers and community members should contact 811 at least three business days (excluding weekends and holidays) before starting work to have underground utilities located at no cost.

"No matter the project depth or size, if you're in the yard or garden, it's important to have underground utilities located and marked before starting any outdoor home improvement project. Even shallow digging can be a potential safety risk if you don't know what is below the surface. A hit utility line can result in a safety incident or loss of utility service," said Gregg Maurer, Vice President of CenterPoint's Indiana Gas

business. "By taking the easy and no-cost step to contact 811 before digging, our customers and community members are taking an important action in helping keep themselves, their loved ones and communities safe."

In 2025, CenterPoint's buried natural gas infrastructure in Indiana was damaged over 900 times by digging projects. About 200 of those incidents involved projects that did not contact 811 to have utility lines marked before digging. State laws require safe digging practices to help prevent damage to underground natural gas, electric, communications, water and sewer lines. Digging without knowing what's below can lead to serious injuries including death as well as service disruptions, fines and costly repairs.

Know what's below! Steps to dig safely

To prevent damage and stay safe, CenterPoint urges customers to follow these steps before starting any digging project:

Plan ahead! Contact 811 at least three business days before starting, no matter the project size or depth. Make the request

early in the week for weekend projects. Confirm all utility lines are marked before beginning work.

Adjust plans if needed. Relocate projects that are too close to marked utility lines.

If using a contractor, verify they have contacted 811 before beginning work.

Smell natural gas? Act fast!

If a natural gas line is struck outside of a home or business, customers are reminded to do the following:

Leave the area immediately on foot. Do not attempt to restart or move powered equipment or use your mobile device or any other item that could cause a spark.

Go to a safe location, then call 911 and CenterPoint at 800-227-1376.

Remain in a safe area until directed by emergency personnel to do otherwise.

Don't try to repair a natural gas leak. Leave all repairs to a qualified technician.

Visit 811BeforeYouDig.com to learn more about the process to have underground utility lines located and marked. For more natural gas safety information, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/Safety.

Early Voting Under Way Across Indiana

Indiana Secretary of State Diego Morales is reminding Hoosiers that early voting is now under way.

Beginning April 7, eligible voters across Indiana can take advantage of in-person absentee voting at designated locations in their county. Early voting allows Hoosiers to avoid long lines, accommodate busy schedules, and ensure their voices are heard.

"As a naturalized citizen and Indiana's Chief Election Officer, voting is very personal to me. It is one of our most fundamental rights as Americans. Early voting provides flexibility for those who need it, but Election Day remains a proud American

tradition that I will always encourage eligible voters to participate in. Every eligible Hoosier should make a plan to vote, and if you're able, take part in the time-honored tradition of voting in person on Election Day," said Diego Morales, Indiana Secretary of State.

Hoosiers can vote early at their county election office or other satellite locations on designated days, during designated hours. Voters should check with their local county election office for specific times and locations. County election contacts can be found at:

<https://indianavoters.in.gov/CountyContact/Index>

To cast a ballot, voters must bring a valid government-issued photo ID. Those who are unsure of their registration status or polling information can visit IndianaVoters.com to verify registration and learn more about the voting process.

Early voting will continue until noon on the day before Election Day, May 5.

Secretary Morales encourages all eligible Hoosiers to make a plan to vote and take advantage of the resources available to ensure a smooth voting experience.

For more information, visit IndianaVoters.com.

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Oh the wonderful things to do...

Plenty on Tap at Gen. Lew Wallace Study & Museum

Spring has finally arrived, and the 2026 season at the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum is well under way. The Carriage House Interpretive Center exhibit, Wallace Family: A Legacy of Service, is open and available for the public to enjoy free of charge. In commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the

Declaration of Independence, this year's exhibit explores the enduring tradition of public service within the Wallace family – from military service and elected office to civic leadership and activism.

By sharing these stories of service, sacrifice and stewardship, the hope is to inspire visitors to reflect on their own

role in civic life and to renew their engagement in strengthening both our nation and our local community.

Numerous programming events are scheduled to complement the 2026 exhibit. On June 6 – 7, there will be the first Civil War Encampment on the grounds in more than a decade. The 10th Illinois Cavalry group will set up camp. They strive to re-enact the citizen soldier from Illinois. It was formed to provide enjoyable opportunities for individuals and families to experience, learn, and in return, teach others about all aspects of life in the mid-19th century. The American Civil War is one of

the most fascinating and defining moments in our collective history. Everything from the military conflicts and tactics to civilian life with its social expectations and customs, are experiences that the living historians of the 10th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment attempt to re-create.

The Dr. Howard Miller Lecture Series also returns for 2026. The next lecture will feature Museum favorite Gail Stephens. Gail is a retired U.S. Department of Defense employee who served as a volunteer at Monocacy National Battlefield. Her experience at Monocacy led to an interest in the life of General

Lew Wallace and her publishing of Shadow of Shiloh: Major General Lew Wallace in the Civil War. She has lectured across the country, led battlefield tours, appeared on podcasts and radio, and has aided our museum with exhibit design. Gail will join us to discuss General Wallace's Civil War military career on June 11 at 7 p.m. in the Carriage House Interpretive Center.

ArchiCamp is an architecture-themed camp designed for children ages 8–12, offered through the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum. Using historic local buildings and engaging, hands-on activities, the program

introduces campers to the rich history of Montgomery County while sparking their creativity and curiosity. At its core, ArchiCamp aims to foster a sense of stewardship and responsibility, encouraging young participants to appreciate and help preserve our shared cultural heritage.

Registration is open and the Camp is set for June 16-17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Limited spots are available so register early. Activities for the 2026 camp include walking tours of historic downtown Crawfordsville, building and painting birdhouses and creating stained glass windows, and more.

Park Day at Wallace Museum April 25

Want to do a good deed and get some fresh, spring air all at the same time? Then mark April 25 on your calendar and spend the day at the Gen. Lew Wallace Study & Museum for National Park Day.

Each year, thousands of history enthusiasts, community-minded citizens, families, Boy and Girl Scouts, ROTC units and more come together in an effort to help keep our nation's heritage not only preserved, but pristine. Activities are chosen by each participating site and can include building trails, raking leaves, painting signs, putting up fences and contributing to site interpretation. In addition to the satisfaction that volunteer work brings, participants receive official Park Day swag and may have the chance to hear a local historian describe people and events of the past at their site. Park Day can also be used to

fulfill the service requirements associated with scout groups, student organizations, training corps programs, many school systems, and more.

Officials at the Gen. Lew Wallace Study & Museum are hoping that volunteers will remember one of Crawfordsville's gems that day and volunteer. Park Day 2026 will be on April 25 and begins at 9 a.m. For more information, visit www.ben-hur.com or email study@ben-hur.com

Park Day allows the American Battlefield Trust to cast a spotlight on beloved American landscapes nationwide. Projects will keep historic sites and battlefields clean, open and accessible for the enjoyment of all – this year, Park Day projects included painting signs, garden maintenance, trash and leaf removal, marker clean-up, trail and fence building and more!

Book Club in 11th Season; 5 Books on Schedule

The Hoosier Authors Book Club enters its 11th year with five planned book discussions.

The first meeting will take place in the Lew Wallace Carriage House at 200 Wallace Ave. on April 16 at 7 pm. The General Lew Wallace Study & Museum's book club will discuss Everything is Tuberculosis by John Green. Green is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of: Looking for Alaska, An Abundance of Katherines, Paper Towns, The Fault in Our Stars, Turtles All the Way Down, The Anthropocene Reviewed and, most recently, Everything is Tuberculosis. A native of Florida, John and his family reside in Indianapolis.

Everything Is Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease of injustice, poverty, and global inequity revealing the failures of public health, the power of personal narrative of curable illness, all through the lens of a personal connection with a patient

named Henry, highlighting that TB's persistence is a reflection of societal choices, resource disparities, and the stigma that prevents people from seeking care.

The title signifies that viewing history and the world through TB reveals deep-seated societal failures, highlighting that in a just world, zero people should die from this preventable infection. This narrative nonfiction title follows the journey of one TB patient, Henry, and his life and treatment in Sierra Leone while simultaneously shedding light on the battle against tuberculosis in impoverished countries.

A limited number of books will be available for check-out at the Carriage House at the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum. If you can't attend the discussion in person, you can attend by Zoom! Register in advance for this meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5DRgKMLWlhdcx_JA

5DRgKMLWlhdcx_JA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Other books that will be read by the Hoosier Authors Book Club this year include: If this isn't Nice, What Is? The Graduation Speeches and other Words to Live By written by Kurt Vonnegut and edited by Dan Wakefield on May 21; Rabbit Hutch by Tess Gunty on June 18; Joy Goddess: A'Leia Walker and the Harlem Renaissance by A'Leia Bundles. September 17; and When Knighthood was in Flower by Charles Major on October 15.

All discussions are free and open to the public. Meetings are held in the ADA-compliant Carriage House Interpretive Center. For more information about the Hoosier Authors Book Club visit <https://www.ben-hur.com/programs/hoosier-authors-book-club/>.

ISO Welcomes Jun Märkl Back to the Stage

The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra (ISO) welcomes Music Director Jun Märkl back to the podium this April for two weeks of performances at Hilbert Circle Theatre, featuring two classical programs, a spotlight on the orchestra's newest principal musicians, and immersive audience experiences.

Märkl's return begins April 17–18 with French Images: Debussy, Ravel & Fauré, a program celebrating the color, elegance, and expressive nuance of French music. This concert will highlight four of the ISO's newest principal musicians, Claire Thai, Principal Harp; Julianna Darby, Principal Clarinet; Bryson Karrer, Principal Second Violin; and Jungah Yoon, Principal Flute, showcasing their artistry in featured roles throughout the program.

Tickets for all performances are available

now at indianapolis-symphony.org or by calling the ISO Box Office at 317-639-4300.

Audiences will experience a vibrant selection of works including Debussy's Sacred and Profane Dances and selections from Images, Ravel's virtuosic Tzigane, Saint-Saëns' Tarantelle, and Fauré's beloved Pavane.

Enhancing the evening on Friday, April 17, guests may also add Circle Theatre Tastings: A Taste of France, part of the ISO's new pre-concert tasting series. This guided wine experience invites patrons to explore a curated selection of French varietals inspired by the evening's program, French Images, adding another layer of flavor and atmosphere to the concert experience. With the purchase of a concert ticket, patrons may reserve the tasting for \$30. Reservations are available while sup-

plies last.

The week also includes Into the Music: Debussy on April 16 at 6:30 p.m., a free, pay-what-you-wish event designed to make classical music more accessible. Märkl will co-host the evening alongside Ryan Ahlwardt, offering an engaging onstage

discussion and full orchestral performance of Debussy's Images. In partnership with Newfields, artwork will be displayed on screen throughout the event, visually connecting audiences to the music.

Märkl continues April 24–25 with Jun Märkl Conducts Rach-

maninoff and Dvořák, a program filled with sweeping melodies and vibrant energy. Pianist Drew Petersen joins the ISO for Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, one of the most beloved works in the piano repertoire. The program also features selections from Bizet's

L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2 and concludes with Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 and Slavonic Dance, Op. 46, No. 8.

Together, these performances showcase Märkl's artistry and the ISO's commitment to both musical excellence and engaging audience experiences.



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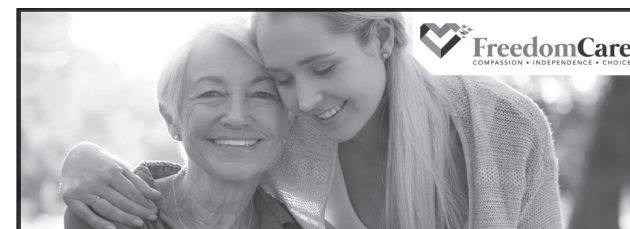
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