



Incumbent Joe Hogsett (left) and businessman and former city-county councilor Jefferson Shreve (right) will go head to head in the general election. (Courtesy photos/ WFYI)

Hogsett and Shreve set to face off in the general election

By JILL SHERIDAN
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Marion County voters decided the two candidates who will compete in the Indianapolis mayoral race this November: Incumbent Joe Hogsett and businessman and former city-county councilor Jefferson Shreve will go head to head in the general election.

Hogsett announced last year he would run for a third and final term.

"My message that evening was simple – while the pandemic may have delayed our plans, we could not afford to deny Indianapolis the progress it deserves," Hogsett said.

Both candidates had millions for their campaigns. The Democratic ticket was the most competitive in recent history, and State Rep. Robin Shackl-

eford was able to capture 37.87 percent of the vote, but lost to Hogsett's 58.37 percent. In an email, Shackleford said she was disappointed but proud. "I'm proud of the campaign we ran and the fact that I helped shine a light on the issues you all told me you cared about: violent crime, cyclist and pedestrian safety, affordable housing, and so much more," her statement said.

In his acceptance speech, Hogsett was already looking toward November and called out Shreve for negative campaigning during the primary. "I think we've always been well served by leaders who inspire us to be the best of the city, rather than those who only see the worst of our city," Hogsett said.

The end of slating in Marion County opened up the race to

See ELECTION, A8▶

Black Community matters: THE VALUE OF VOTING



64-year-old Vera Kersey holds up her "I voted #IndyVOTES" sticker outside polling site (WHO TOOK PHOTO)

By JADE JACKSON
JadeJ@IndyRecorder.com

Vera Kersey was letting her dog out Monday night when she heard gunshots ring out in her neighborhood within Martindale-Brightwood.

She was already planning to wake up early next morning to cast her vote in the Marion County Primary Elections. After hearing the shots, the 64-year-old began to hope that who she voted for would focus on the crime in her area.

"They shot up a house on 25th and Sherman, and I live on 28th and Keystone. I hear shooting once or twice often. It's a lot," said Kersey, who has been voting since she was 18.

She remembers voting for President Jimmy Carter and feeling that his presidency contributed its support to

See VOTING, A7▶

Warren community reflects on early morning voting

By CHLOE MCGOWAN
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Despite the sharp winds and chill in the air, voters lined up at the polls in Warren Township on primary election day on May 2.

Voting sites included the Warren Township Government Center, as well as the Gethsemane Lutheran Church and Old Bethel United Methodist Church. While several people voiced concern over the mayoral race, the handful of City-County Council seats up for grabs and the Warren Central High School referendum, many came out to vote simply to make their voices heard — stressing the importance of the Black vote.

"I was hoping the lines would be shorter," said Kathy Watts of Indianapolis, noting how many people were waiting in line with her in the lobby

See WARREN, A7▶



Rajah Tarleton is a volunteer poll inspector at the Old Bethel United Methodist Church.

Property tax deductions available to Homestead property owners

By JADE JACKSON
JadeJ@IndyRecorder.com

State Rep. Cherrish Pryor and the Indianapolis delegation of the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus recently held a town hall at Pro-

gressive Baptist Church to discuss property taxes and deductions available to Homestead property owners.

Property tax rates in Indianapolis increased an average of 18% from last year, further burdening

the 72% of low-income households in the city who spend half of their annual income on housing.

"I've been a champion in the fight against gentrification since 2016, and I've been calling on my colleagues in the Republican Party to address rising property taxes. Now, we're passing legislation that won't have an effect until next year while people are struggling to pay bills this year," said Rep. Pryor.

Senate Bill 46 is a new tax credit for people who own property and are experiencing an increase in their property taxes. If a county decides to adopt this tax credit, they can specify which areas within the county are eligible to apply for it.

Eligibility requirements are defined by the county and can include criteria such as income or age. The amount of credit depends on how much property taxes have gone up compared to the prior year. If you want to claim the credit, you have to fill out a form and give it to the county auditor.

You cannot receive both this

See TAX, A10▶

Carolyn Bryant Donham, Emmett Till's accuser, died at 88 years old. (Photo/Timoria Cunningham)



Emmett Till's accuser dead at age 88

By TIMORIA CUNNINGHAM
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Aug. 29, 1955, a warrant for the arrest of Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam was issued for their involvement in the brutal murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till. There was one more person on that warrant, but it was never served to them. That person was Carolyn Bryant Donham, the woman who accused Till of making sexual advances at her. This sparked an uproar of outrage amongst activists and drove Till's family to seek justice, which now seems out of reach.

See TILL, A8▶



State Reps. Cherrish Pryor, Robin Shackleford, Gregory W. Porter, Vanessa Summers, John Bartlett and Renee Pack, Sens. Greg Taylor, Jean Breaux, and Andrea Hunley held the event



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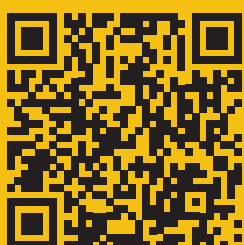
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Students and educators weigh in on 21st Century Scholars bill

By JADE JACKSON
JadeJ@IndyRecorder.com

House Bill 1449 is currently on Gov. Holcomb's desk. The bipartisan bill would automatically enroll eligible students in the 21st Century Scholars program.

The program provides students with financial aid through paying up to 100% of their tuition for public colleges and part of their tuition for private and independent colleges in the state.

Purdue Polytechnic High School Schweitzer Center at Englewood coach Sophie Longest testified for the bill at the Statehouse and said she sees a lot of eligible students who do not apply for the program.

"So many of our students run into that roadblock of getting into college, but wondering how they are going to pay for it. It is a really great program, but if students aren't enrolled when they're in eighth grade, there's no going back after that," said Longest.

When she heard about House Bill 1449 automatically enroll students into the 21st Century Scholars program, she thought that's exactly how it should be.

It makes the program more accessible.

Longest's student Huma Moghul is a junior currently interning at a company where she pitches what the company does to her peers. Within her presentation she speaks about the 21st Century Scholars program.

"Every time I'll ask, 'So, who's a 21st Century

Scholar?' and there will be students who have never heard of it. Unfortunately, almost less than half will raise their hand who have signed up or have heard of it," said Moghul.

She has heard a lot of her classmates say that they wish they signed up in eighth grade.

Even Longest did not know about the program when she was in high school.

"That was also a part of me acknowledging my own privilege and saying 'I just don't need it.' I grew up in an area where the question was always, 'Where are you going to college?' It was never 'Are you going to college?'" said Longest.

It was not until she was a teacher that she realized higher education is a door that is closed to some students.

She said she knew that there were probably legislators who didn't realize the importance of making something available to those who want to go to college but cannot.

"Because of family situations, or money situations or just because they don't even really know where to begin, that's part of what the program does too. The students do a lot of training and field trips to figure out what they want to do next," said Longest.

She is appreciative of the way legislators rallied to bring to the governor's desk.

Contact staff writer Jade Jackson at 317-607-5792 or by email jadej@indyrecorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @IAMJADEJACKSON



Getty Images

Indiana is on track to finally ditch textbook fees

Educator Barnes

In 2018, I reported that eight states had textbook fees. Earlier this year, KPC News reported the number is now seven. Indiana is on track to eliminate these fees and reduce the number to six.

I have identical twin sons who are in the same classes. Their textbook total is the same. This school year, I paid \$240.50 per child for a grand total of \$481.00.

During this legislative session, \$160 million dollars will be set aside annually to cover textbook fees. Textbook fees can include textbooks, curricular materials, or on-line educational programming. This means parents nor school districts have to absorb this cost. As a parent of two 12-year-olds, I need every dime I can keep.

However, I wonder about the unintended consequences of this change. Will the money set aside be enough for school districts? I have worked in various school districts, and my experience has shown me that each school has a different price point of what they are willing to purchase regarding curricular materials.

Some schools require more materials due to students' academic needs. For example, a student might require a textbook or curricular item for intervention on top of the general curricular materials.

If this money does not cover this, will the needed materials get dropped, or will the school district have to absorb the cost?

Contact Indy Kids Winning reporter Educator Barnes at 317-721-2181 or shawntab@indyrecorder.com. Follow her on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, & TikTok @educator-barnes.

Educator Barnes' work is supported through a partnership between Indy Kids Winning and the Indianapolis Recorder. Visit indykidswinning.com to learn more.



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Otteria T., Patient at Community Health Network

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Carmel Symphony Orchestra presents tribute to Aretha Franklin

By **CHLOE MCGOWAN**
chloegmcgowan@indyrecorder.com

A night of rhythm and soul is coming to Carmel as the Carmel Symphony Orchestra pays homage to the one and only Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin. “Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin” will take the stage at The Palladium for the CSO’s final performance of the season May 6 at 7:30 p.m. The performance is part of the Pops Series and aims to highlight the life and legend of the multi-grammy award winning singer and Hall of Famer, said Janna Hymes, creative director of the CSO. “There are a lot of young people that want to hear current music, you know, not that Aretha is current, but a lot of people know the songs, the lyrics ... and they’re really into it,” Hymes said. “So, it’s really important — to me anyway — that an orchestra, which I think is a heartbeat of a community, really listens to the community,” Hymes said. Hymes said the orchestra has been diversifying its repertoire for the last several years to include an array of classical music as well as more modern pieces and pop music. Hymes said she heard about “Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin” — which is a package show that travels to different orchestras around the country upon request — a little over a year ago and thought it would be perfect for Carmel’s audience. “It’s a really great show because it has all of her big hits, but it also has other music on it,” Hymes said. “I think people will be really surprised to hear some other music as well. It’s all really loved music, but somehow, they put it together so that there’s a relationship



between Aretha’s music and this other music.”

Guest singers Tamika Lawrence, Shaleah Adkissin, Melvin Tustall III and John Boswell will accompany the CSO onstage for hit songs, such as “Natural Woman,” favorite cover songs, such as “Bridge Over Troubled Water” and “A Change is Gonna Come,” and to share anecdotes from Aretha’s life, Lawrence said.

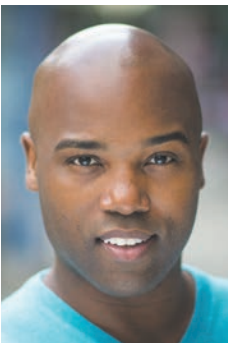
Lawrence, a two-time Grammy Award-winning singer and actress, said she has been performing “Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin” with orchestras in cities all over the U.S. since



Tamika Lawrence



Shaleah Adkissin



Melvin Tustall III

2019. The show holds significance for her as she grew up with Franklin’s music and said she was influenced by both Aretha’s music and her activism. “Part of who I am as an artist is influenced by her not only on stage but how she was off stage and who she was as a businesswoman,” Lawrence said. “I also want to impart stories about her life to

other people so that they might be inspired by who she was and what she did for women, Black women, for people of color and for all musicians.” The CSO loves doing the Pops concerts and is excited to present “Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin,” as Hymes said it will not only show off the orchestra’s versatility with a mix of upbeat and soulful sounds but will also allow audience members to come together for a night, have fun while listening to legendary music and celebrate the end of the 2022-23 season. Lawrence said she hopes those who attend the performance are reminded of “all of the wonderful music Aretha Franklin gave us over the many decades,” as well as her contributions to the music industry and her activism for Black women, people of color and all musicians.

“I hope that they all fall in love again with her discography,” Lawrence said. “I hope that they learn a lot about her, her activism and her intelligence, and how wonderful she was as a well-rounded human being and not just a singer. She was more than that.” “Respect: A Tribute to Aretha Franklin” takes place May 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Palladium, 1 Carter Green, Carmel. Tickets start at \$25 and can be purchased at thecenterpresents.org. More information about the performance and the CSO can be found at carmelsymphony.org.

Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanxx.

Indy author emphasizing children’s safety through board game

By **CHLOE MCGOWAN**
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Indianapolis-based author Charlotte Brown-Parrott is prioritizing the health, safety and wellbeing of Black children — and reminding them they have bodily autonomy. Brown-Parrott, originally from Dayton, Ohio, moved to Indianapolis 10 years ago to escape an abusive relationship. She said she started writing as a way to heal and realized her situation was, unfortunately, not unique, and like so many women of color, started in her childhood. According to Indiana Center for Prevention of Youth Abuse and Suicide, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys under the age of 18 have experienced sexual abuse or assault. More than 90% of abusers are friends, family members or people children know and trust. However, as many as 85% of child abuse victims never report their abuse. In an effort to bring awareness and help educate others on the signs of abuse, Brown-Parrott said she decided to write a children’s book. “I found that writing was healing and therapeutic,” she said. “This was my way of not only finding healing within myself, forgiveness and things like that. It’s also to help others that was dealing with it.” Brown-Parrott self-published her book “My Body is My Body” in 2020 and used her background in graphic design to illustrate the book using words and phrases, imagery and activities that kids can easily understand and remember. She said oftentimes kids can recognize how they are feeling but may not be able to express or verbalize it properly at such a young age, which is why her book uses illustration and emojis to help encourage further discussion with parents as they read together. “It’s kind of almost like a poem aspect, but it gives you empowerment slogans that you can read

through with your little one that have a discussion about stranger danger,” she said. “Why you shouldn’t take candy from a stranger, why you shouldn’t walk somewhere alone ... body safety tips, you know, good touch versus bad touch.” Having formerly worked at a Christian bookstore and as a literary consultant and publisher, Brown-Parrott said she is no stranger to determining the best ways to get her book out to stores, schools and libraries where children will have access to them. Currently, her book is available in hard- and soft-back at the Indianapolis Public Library. She said it is recommended for kids ages 3-11 and features abuse resources and hotlines but purposely does not include any harsh or explicit content — just the basic information kids need to recognize safe and unsafe situations. “It’s a tough subject,” she said. “I didn’t write it where you get knee deep into conversation about sex or abuse. It is this just the basics.” Shortly after the book came out, Brown-Parrott created and designed a companion board game called “Don’t Break the Rules!” The game includes the same characters as the book and encourages parents to play alongside their children to foster healthy conversations about situations that pop up along the gameboard. The game was crafted to be simple, Brown-Parrott said. The way to win is to take your time and not rush to the finish. The rules place an emphasis on paying attention to your surroundings, both in the game and in real life, to avoid life threatening situations. “When they spin, if they land on one of the creditors, this is where we say, you know, the parents get to explain to the child what’s going on here, and why you had to take steps back and so on,” she said. “But the idea of the game is to land safely home without



any problems.” Outside of being an author, Brown-Parrott is also the founder of Me Too Chronicles, a women’s organization that creates child protection strategies and teaches adults about sexual assault and domestic violence through literature, workshops, programming and support groups. Following her success with “My Body is My Body,” Brown-Parrott said she is now working on a full-length adult fiction novel entitled “When the Power Goes Out Darkness Follows.” The book is about dealing with mental illness and recognizing and escaping the cycle of abuse, she said. Brown-Parrott’s book is available at the Central Library branch of IndyPL and Ujamaa Community Bookstore for \$14.95. The companion board game is \$29.95 and can be purchased at metoochronicles.org/me-too-kids-collection. Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanxx.

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THIS WEEKEND IN THE ARTS: MAY 5-7

By **CHLOE McGOWAN**
chloegm@indyrecorder.com

Whether you’re looking to go out with family or friends this weekend, enjoy live music, visit a museum, art gallery or try out a new restaurant, the Indianapolis Recorder has you covered. We’ve put together an extensive list of just a few of the events and activities going on in and around Indianapolis in This Weekend in the Arts.

Unfortunately, we couldn’t cover everything going on in one calendar. So, if there’s something going on that we and other Hoosiers should know about this month, feel free to let us know! Send an email to newsroom@indyrecorder.com so we can include it in the next edition.

Friday, May 5
First Friday Night Market
Garfield Park, 1125 Cruft St.
6-10 p.m.
Free

Presented by Big Car Collaborative, the First Friday Night Market at Garfield Park and Cruft Street will feature local artists, musicians, food trucks and small business vendors. The market will also include featured exhibits at Tube Factory, Listen Hear and the Guichelaar Gallery.

Search “First Friday Night Market” on Facebook

First Friday Porch Party Kick-Off and Gallery Opening with Indianapolis Motor Speedway
The Harrison Center, 1505 N. Delaware St.
6-9 p.m.
Free

The annual Porch Party Indy Kickoff will feature several gallery openings in addition to NXG Youth Motorsports, an Indy 500 Fashion Show, Suspended Animation Aerials, El Sistema Indy, members of Coro Latinoamericano and more. Guests will be able to pick up free porch party decor and yard signs while supplies last.

Harrisoncenter.org
Str8 Up Frederick Douglass
Indiana State Museum, 650 W. Washington St.
10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
Tickets are \$2

Indiana State Museum is featuring a hip-hop exploration of Frederick Douglass’ life and legacy through rhythm, rap and jazz. Performed by artists under the direction of Deborah Asante of Asante Art Institute of Indianapolis, the presentation will include original content, music and dance inspired by the words of Douglass.

Indianamuseum.org

Saturday, May 6
Free Comic Book Day
Indianapolis Public Library, all branches
All day
Free

Guests of all ages can stop by any of the Indianapolis Public Library branches to pick up a free comic book from the library’s selection of juvenile and teen graphic novels while supplies last.

indypl.org
Indy Black Wall-Street Vendor Event

Silver Centre, 10202 E. Washington St.
Noon to 4 p.m.
Free

Business owners, service providers and other local talent are gathering for United X’s Indy Black Wall-Street Vendor Event.

Search “Indy black Wall-Street Vendor Event” on Eventbrite

Jess Hilarious
Helium Comedy Club, 10 W. Georgia St.
7:30 and 10 p.m.
Tickets are \$37

Born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, up and coming comedian Jess Hilarious is known for her quick, witty, to-the-point humor, which has earned her appearances on REL, “Wild N’ Out” and “All Def Comedy.” Her Instagram segment “Jess with the Mess” has become a social media sensation, gaining her 5.3 million followers.
indianapolis.heliumcomedy.com

Sunday, May 7
Afrobeats Dance Workshop
Phiri Art Gallery, 120 E. Market St.
6-8 p.m.
Tickets are \$5

The Afro-Beat dance workshop blends an energetic and fun dance style with a creative cardio workout. Led by instructor Sheila, participants are encouraged to reserve tickets ahead of time and arrive at the studio 15 minutes early.

Search “Afrobeats Dance Workshop” on Eventbrite
Mother Son Sneakerball- A Queen & her Prince!

The Silver Centre Event Hall, 10202 E. Washington St.
6-9 p.m.
Tickets start at \$50

Returning this year, the Mother Son Sneakerball, hosted by Kelah ThePolishedLady and ThePolishedPrince Waalid, presents an opportunity for moms to spend quality time with their sons. The event will include an evening of dancing, dinner, photos, a mom and son dance-off, best dressed prizes and more.

Search “Mother Son Sneakerball” on Eventbrite.

Volleyball Game: Alpha Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Inc/ Rhoer Club
Finish Line Boys & Girls Club of Indianapolis, 3870 N. Post Road
3-6 p.m.
Tickets start at \$5

Sigma Gamma Rho Inc’s Alpha Sigma chapter will go up against the Alpha Sigma Rhoer Club youth affiliates in a friendly game of volleyball. The game is open to the public and provides an opportunity to bond as a community and build relationships on the court.

Search “Alpha Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.” on Eventbrite

Please note: Admission and ticket prices listed are general and before taxes/fees.

Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanxx.



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The cast of the IRT’s 2023 production of Clue. Photos by Zach Rosing.

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VOTING

► Continued from A1

the African American community. Kersey walked through the polling doors of IPS SUPER School #19 Tuesday morning to cast her vote. After needing a little assistance with the voting machine, she gathered her “I voted #IndyVOTES” sticker while heading out the door.

The entire process took less than five minutes since there were not that many people in line.

In fact, as Kersey was casting her vote, only one other voter walked in.

“Every voice makes a difference, and I think if more people would vote, things would get better; instead of staying home and going ‘Nothing’s going to change,’ you don’t know that unless you vote,” said Kersey.

She has been living in Indianapolis her entire life and said the primary elections on this side of town have always had low turnout.

With a population of over 12,000 people in Martindale-Brightwood, 91% of residents are people of color.

“We need change. I vote because I want to see change. Over the years, I’ve never seen a lot of younger people come out. I’ve asked my daughter to come out and vote. They don’t think that it’s going to change anything,” said Kersey.

15 minutes away at the Ivy Tech Community College polling site, 17-year-

old Joshua Lewis passes out political pamphlets.

The Warren Central High School student is too young to vote now; however, he plans to volunteer until then because his family has instilled in him the importance of voting.

His great grandmother was the vice chair of the Indiana Democratic Party, and his grandparents have helped with the voting polls every year.

For African Americans, voting holds significance, given the long and difficult history of racial discrimination in the U.S.

Black people have fought for the right to vote since the earliest days of American democracy.

Lewis’ grandparents made sure to impress upon him this history, but this important history is often not heavily impressed upon other Black youth.

“I’ve talked about voting with a couple of my friends. I think they don’t see the value because older people don’t get as involved with us. If they were then we would all probably get out and vote,” said Lewis.

He feels that voting could improve community problems if the collective focused on their shared issues and backed the right candidate who promises to address them.

24-year-old Ivy Tech student Tierra

Polk said it is important to know what is going on in a community and to have the choice to vote on what goes on.

“A lot of people feel as though one vote does not matter, but in reality, it could make a difference, and that’s a difference I’m willing to vote on,” said Polk.

Voting remains an essential tool for African Americans to make their voices heard. By voting, African Americans can elect leaders who will champion their causes and create policies that benefit their communities.

By voting, African Americans can help ensure that their community is fairly represented in government and that their interests are considered when decisions are made that affect their lives.

Polk feels that voting is a critical means of exercising her right and making her voice heard in a democracy that has not always been welcoming to the

participation of people that look like her.

Although she learned the value of voting from her mother she notes that there is a divided perspective on voting importance even within families because her brother doesn’t vote.

The struggle for voting rights reached its peak during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s when activists like Martin Luther King Jr. and John Lewis risked their lives to secure voting rights for Black Americans.

That was between the time that Kersey was born.

“I’ve been around the primaries a time or two. There’s so much that needs changing right now. Like, the economy. I’m having a hard time finding a job at my age,” said Kersey.

Contact staff writer Jade Jackson at 317-607-5792 or by email jadej@indyrecorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @IAMJADEJACKSON

WARREN

► Continued from A1



Warren Township residents filter in and out of the Warren Township Government Building to vote on Tuesday, May 4, 2023. (Photos/Chloe McGowan)

of the polling center just before 9 a.m. “But it’s a nice thing to see.”

Watts said the turnout was impressive considering how often people in the Black community tend to skip voting on Election Day.

“It’s an important thing to do if you want your voice to be heard,” she added. “I just hope that it turns out our way.”

Charles Hibbitt just moved to Warren Township but said he liked how easy it was to find a polling location and go out to vote. There were 14 total in the area, including fire stations, churches and public schools.

“When I was 18 and was first able to vote, my dad brought me to the polls and emphasized the importance of voting,” Hibbitt said. “As the years went on, I realized the importance of voting.”

David Williams, a retired sports official from the far westside, has worked at the front desk of the Warren Township Government Center four days a week for the last year, including the previous election season. However, working on Election Day is something he enjoys — watching people of all walks of life come in to vote and arriving from early morning to early evening.

Polls in Indiana are open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Williams said it is common to get an influx of voters right when they open, then there is a lull as parents get their kids to school and others head to work. The older crowd usually comes out in droves from about 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., he said, then there is another rush during lunchtime.

However, Williamson said he took advantage of early voting to cast his own vote.

But the flow of community members, teachers and public safety officers through the doors on Election Day provides good conversation, and a chance for Williamson to work on some poetry while he waits.

“You know, you talk to people as they come in, and one guy comes in, he says, ‘I made it through the gauntlet,’” Williamson said, referring to the people waiting outside the polling location attempting to do some last-minute campaigning. “Some [people] will have questions and whatnot, and then some will just stop and want to chat.”

Indianapolis resident Rajah Tarleton is a volunteer Poll Inspector at Old Bethel UMC. Although this is only his

second year in charge of the Old Bethel location, he said he has been volunteering at polling locations for about a decade.

“When I first started [volunteering], I just always wanted to do it ever since,” he said. “I’ve been doing this for 10 years ... basically just helping people out.”

As a poll inspector, Tarleton makes sure votes are properly recorded, feeding ballots into the machine and fixing paper jams as they inevitably come up. He also solves problems as they come up.

Although major issues with people’s ballots are rare, accidents do happen, and Tarleton works patiently with voters to find a solution and make sure their votes get cast.

Ironically, however, Tarleton does not vote. He said he is not interested in politics in that way but always works at the polls anyway, adding that his passion for helping those in his community brings him back each year.

“Sometimes it’ll stress you. But other than that, it’s fun,” Tarleton said.

Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanxx.

IF SOMEONE TELLS THEM
THEY MATTER,
THEY’LL BELIEVE IT.

Sign up May 8-15 with
NO JOIN FEE

Stop in or join online at
INDYMCA.org/Join
Use code YSummer23

the

Y

INDYMCA

The Y.
For a better us.®

CHANGE
THEIR WORLD
BY OPENING
UP YOUR
OWN.

Foster with Firefly.

Every month 600 children in Indiana enter foster care needing the promise of safety and stability. In 2022, there were 10% fewer foster homes than the year before.
You can help change that.

To learn if fostering is right for your family, visit foster.fireflyin.org

FIREFLY

Children & Family Alliance



Here, you'll discover the power of a dressmaker's needle, a valet's voice, and a preacher's pulpit. Our new exhibit celebrates the unsung heroes of the Black community – connected through church, business, family, military, education and politics – who influenced Lincoln and helped pave the path to their freedom. With priceless artifacts and historic documents, you'll discover how people used their resources and connections in powerful ways.

Exhibit open through Oct. 29.

INFLUENCING
LINCOLN

The Pursuit of Black Freedom

INDIANA STATE MUSEUM

indianamuseum.org | 650 W. Washington St.

Hogsett addresses crowd

Incumbent Mayor Joe Hogsett speaks to supporters on election night May 2, 2023, after handily winning the Democratic mayoral primary. He defeated his closet challenger, state Rep. Robin Shackford, by a margin of 58 % to 39 %. In his acceptance speech, Hogsett said he and Shackford will campaign together to make the city a greater place to live. Hogsett will face Republican Jefferson Shreve in the General Election on Nov. 7. (Photos/Curtis Guynn)



Mayor Joe Hogsett speaks on primary election night as his wife looks on.



City-County Council President Vop Osili introduces the mayor on primary election night in May.



Joe Hogsett supporters cheer.

ELECTION

► Continued from A1

more local candidates. The race was the busiest in recent history – with six Democrats and four Republicans.

On the Republican ticket, Shreve defeated his closest competitor, political commentator, lawyer and journalist Abdul Hakim-Shabazz.

In his acceptance speech, Shreve said that these are divisive times but he wants to move forward and work with all residents – the Democrats and Republicans.

“It will take courage to come together to cross party lines, to be kind to those with whom we may disagree, but that’s what we have to do,” Shreve said.

The general election is Nov. 7.

Contact WFYI city government and policy reporter Jill Sheridan at jsheridan@wfyi.org. Follow on Twitter: @JillASheridan.

Martin University hosts event to raise mental health awareness

By TIMORIA CUNNINGHAM
timoriac@indyrecorder.com

Genesys Solutions will host a mental health event at Martin University May 6 from 5–9 p.m. The event will consist of storytelling, panel discussions and a meet and greet. During the event, attendees will have a chance to hear professionals and individuals discuss their mental health journeys. Panelists include Marci Grayson, mediation coach, Robert Webster, owner of Gives Me Life, Allen Wright, Kipp High School graduate, and Lejla Pssalic, Bosnian War survivor. The event intends to raise awareness while giving each attendee the gift of hope.

“My son gave me permission a few years ago to share his and my mental health journey with the world but I wasn’t ready for several reasons; however, the time has come to share our

journey so that we can continue to heal and help others navigate and embrace a space that is all so often filled with shame and loneliness,” said Beatrice Beverly, founder of Genesys Solutions.

Genesys Solutions is an organization that provides a variety of services, including youth and family skills-based training and community and organization services.

Tickets for this event are \$135 and can be found at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lived-experience-storytelling-tickets-601814301777>.

Proceeds for this event will benefit Changing Lives by Supporting Dreams Fund at The Indianapolis Foundation. The funds will provide direct support to individuals and families by addressing hardships and mental health gaps.

Contact staff writer Timoria Cunningham at 317-762-7854. Follow her on Twitter @timoriac.

TILL

► Continued from A1

Donham died at age 88 on April 25 in Westlake, Louisiana while in hospice care. For some, this serves as a satisfying end to this narrative while others feel that justice for the Chicago-native Till will forever remain unserved.

“Carolyn Bryant’s death brings a conclusion to a painful chapter for the Emmett Till family and for Black peoples in America,” Malik Zulu Shabazz, the Till family’s attorney, said in a statement. “The tragic part about Bryant’s death was that she was never held accountable for her role in the death of young Emmett Till.”

In June 2022, a group from the Emmett Till Legacy Foundation worked with filmmaker Keith A. Beauchamp to discover an unserved warrant for Donham from 1955 in the basement of the Leflore County Courthouse.

After the unserved warrant was

discovered, Till’s family and activists around the country traveled to Donham’s home, where several protests took place in hopes that the 88-year-old would turn herself in to the police, which never happened. This did not discourage Till’s family from seeking justice, and in December 2022 Priscilla Sterling, Till’s cousin, filed a lawsuit against the state of Mississippi for not serving Donham the warrant.

“Carolyn Bryant’s legacy will be one of dishonesty and injustice,” Shabazz said. “A legacy that verifies that Mississippi coddles and protects white supremacy. Our unrelenting pressure against Carolyn Bryant will not be forgotten.”

Contact staff writer Timoria Cunningham at 317-762-7854 or timoriac@indyrecorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @timoriac.



People dressed as Zacapoaxtla Indigenous people clash with others playing the part of French soldiers as they reenact The Battle of Puebla as part of Cinco de Mayo celebrations. (AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

The misconceptions of Cinco de Mayo

By NORAL PARHAM III
NoralP@IndyRecorder.com

When someone hears “Cinco de Mayo” they often envision active streets bustling with music, laughter and the pungent aroma of mouthwatering Latino dishes. Although many celebrate Cinco de Mayo, only a small population understands its cultural importance. Some individuals believe that Cinco de Mayo is Mexico’s Independence Day; however, this is not the case. Mexico celebrates Independence Day on September 16, not May 5. Cinco de Mayo marks the Mexican army’s conquest of the French at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Others think that Cinco de Mayo is a holiday celebrated throughout Mexico. Yet, the state of Puebla is the only area that celebrates the holiday. Throughout the rest of the country, it is just another day. To the north of Mexico, however, Cinco de Mayo is a heavily marketed

holiday. Here in the United States, Cinco de Mayo is marketed as an alcohol-friendly holiday with a dash of cultural appropriation. One group of Latino men living in the U.S. believe that the holiday is pushed by Big Beer to increase their sales of imported brews, such as Modelo and Corona. Despite these misinterpretations, many Americans still celebrate Cinco de Mayo, regarding it as justification to enjoy delicious Mexican cuisines, mariachi bands and fellowship with friends and family. However, this type of celebration may appear insensitive to some. “People don’t celebrate it or give it the respect it deserves,” one of the men said. “You can also observe the holiday without the ponchos and sombreros.”

Contact multi-media staff writer Noral Parham at 317-762-7846 or email at NoralP@IndyRecorder.com. Follow him on Twitter @NoralParham.

Super Crossword

ACROSS

1 Gets married again

7 Playmate for Spot

11 Fed. loan agency

14 The — & the Papas

19 Greek Muse of astronomy

20 Take way too much of, for short

21 That lady

22 Scarlett of Tara

23 Equipping a ranch with light, horse-drawn vehicles?

26 Anatomical sacs

27 Playa — Rey

28 Qatari capital

29 Brie exposed to heat?

31 Cooing bird wearing fancy duds?

34 Port in Iraq

35 “I’m — loss”

36 Dark film style

37 Forest cats

41 Bar brew

43 Months before Oct.

45 Pre-Q queue

47 Prez Lincoln

48 Furrier John Jacob —

50 Safe sword

52 Question about one’s relentless following?

56 Thinks alike

59 Sch. in the Nutmeg State

60 Saturated

61 Royal daughter who always moves with short, quick motions?

66 Berlin article

69 Effortless

70 Prefix with chic or tourist

71 Love-letter “hugs”

72 Cab

73 Indigo, e.g.

74 Goose flocks making people chuckle?

81 Suffix with event or context

82 Wove rattan into

83 Tire marks

84 Big brown beast seeking handouts of salmon?

90 Steak or ham

91 — Claire (magazine)

92 Berlin article

93 Cellar, in ads

95 Makes accused

99 Tooth

100 Expectant father

103 Latin I verb

105 Fore and —

106 Way to pack fresh fish

109 Heroic American spy’s petty bargaining?

112 Whopper dropped in water?

116 — about (around)

117 British islet

118 City in central Florida

119 Dancing woman’s moves?

123 Suppressed

124 Lyric poem

125 Discontinues

126 Money, informally

127 Filled cookies

128 Abel, to Eve

129 Sing like Ella

130 Neighbor of Colombia

DOWN

1 Wipe

2 Very learned

3 Disparity in work pay

4 Children’s author Madeleine L’—

5 Abbr. for a handyperson

6 Refused the request

7 Blast from a lighthouse

8 Pet collar attachment

9 Homer Simpson cry

10 “Be right there”

11 Carpet style

12 Big icy chunk

13 Gls’ force

14 Coffee flavor

15 “Now I remember”

16 Italian sports car

17 Cultural exhibition hall

18 Encl. with a manuscript

24 “Can’t, I’m already late”

25 Diminish

30 “MacGyver” network

31 Faux — (slip)

32 Without assurance of payment

33 Disappear as if by magic

38 On the — (hiding out)

39 Kobe sash

40 Rock singer Nugent

42 Bit of work

44 Itty-bitty

46 “Wow, neat!”

48 Gets mature

49 Cpl.’s boss

51 Austin-to-Houston dir.

53 Dir. opposite

51-Down

54 Santa — winds

55 Be a debtor

56 Impersonated

57 Silver-haired

58 Increase

59 Gp. patrolling shores

62 Division: Abbr.

63 Errand runners

64 Top Olympic medal

65 Mauna —

66 Info to input

67 Chopped down

68 Knights, e.g.

72 Eta-iota link

74 Look intently

75 Wholly

76 Heart chart, in brief

77 — -AFTRA (showbiz union)

78 Due to wagering

79 Sport — (off-roader)

80 Good egg rating

81 Israeli weapon

84 ABC a.m. show, for short

85 Police vehicle

86 Reagan-era scandal

87 Positive vote

88 Auction offer

89 Doc treating sinusitis

90 Ski resort in S. Vermont

94 Most ogreish

96 Cartoon gorilla of 1960s TV

97 Lions, 49ers or Steelers

98 Canonized Fr. woman

100 Collusion gal

101 “That’s — haven’t heard!”

102 — & Noble

104 Scampi food

107 Inuit dwelling

108 Greenish-blue colors

110 Accord maker

111 Be choked by

112 Merely OK

113 Sci-fi vehicles

114 Overhaul

115 Fed. agents

120 U.S. “Ltd.”

121 — long way

122 — Na Na

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THE SPATS by JEFF PICKERING

Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

WORD FUN

Study the two words on each line to find the ONE letter in the left column that is NOT in the word in the right column. Write the extra letter on the blank space. Then read DOWN to answer this riddle:

WHAT IS A POTATO’S FAVORITE TV SHOW?

PISTON	___	POINT	PILOTS	___	SPOIL
SETTER	___	TREES	SHOWER	___	WHOSE
REPAID	___	PRIDE	EASTER	___	STARE
ACTORS	___	COAST	MARKED	___	DREAM
COLONY	___	LOONY			
WREATH	___	WATER			

Answers to Weekly Sudoku								
4	1	9	2	5	3	8	6	7
3	5	7	8	9	6	1	4	2
8	6	2	1	4	7	9	3	5
2	9	8	5	7	4	3	1	6
6	4	5	9	3	1	2	7	8
1	7	3	6	2	8	4	5	9
9	8	1	4	6	5	7	2	3
7	2	6	3	1	9	5	8	4
5	3	4	7	8	2	6	9	1

Answers to Super Crossword																												
Answers																												
R	E	W	E	D	S		F	I	D	O		S	B	A		M	A	M	A	S								
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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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				6	3														4	
5									8					6						

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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DREAM

STARE

WHOSE

SPOIL

WATER

LOONY

COAST

PRIDE

TREES

POINT

K

E

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C

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S

MARKED

EASTER

SHOWER

PILOTS

WREATH

COLONY

ACTORS

REPAID

SETTER

PISTON

Answer

Puzzles4Kids

▶Continued from A1



Contact staff writer Jade Jackson at 317-607-5792 or by email jadej@IndyRecorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @LAM-JADEJACKSON

A yellow CAT excavator is shown in the process of demolishing a two-story building. The excavator's arm is extended, and it is spraying water from a high-pressure hose onto the structure. A worker wearing a high-visibility vest and a hard hat stands in the foreground, observing the operation. A banner for RENASCENT is visible on the building, which is partially demolished. The banner reads "RENASCENT Experts in Demolition" and "Clearing the way for a new tomorrow". The building has a mix of brick and siding, with some windows still intact. The excavator is a CAT 336F model. The scene is set outdoors on a grassy area.

By JAYDEN KENNETT
jaydenk@indyrecorder.com

The city will use a combination of local and federal dollars to fund the project, which would require specific regulations to be followed. All eligible residents will receive financial assistance and relocation advisory services to help them

Contact staff writer Jayden Kennett at 317-762-7847 or by email JaydenK@indyreorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @[4ourno4ay](https://twitter.com/4ourno4ay).

2023 SPEAKERS

2023 InnoPower Minority Business Week. **Shared Vision Shared Destination**

ALAN BACON Co-Founder GANGGANG	JANE BEAMAN Vice President and General Manager Pickup and Global Bus Business at Cummins	TIFFANY BENJAMIN CEO, Humana Foundation Humana, Inc.	LATOYA BOTTERON President and CFO Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP)	GARY BRACKETT CEO ChampBuilders	ZENAI BROOKS CPA Cummins, Inc.	DR. COLETTE PIERCE BURNETTE President & CEO Newfields	AL CARROLL President & CEO IndyHub	TAMARA CYPRESS Associate Director, Communications and Design Carrier Corporation
TAMIKIA CATCHINGS CTSP Co-Founder & President, TMC Owner/Operator Catch the Stars Foundation/Tear's Me Galle	DAUNE CONWELL Senior Director, Procurement & Supplier Diversity at Pacers Sports & Entertainment	DEVON DAVIS Assistant Vice President Bose McKinney & Evans LLP	CHRISTOPHER DAY CEO Elevate Ventures	DR. SUE ELLSPERMAN President Ivy Tech Community College	LORENZO ESTERS Chancellor Ivy Tech Community College	DR. TENIKA HOLDEN-FLYNN Executive Director Teach for America	TING GOOTEE President and CEO TechPoint	CHRIS GAHL Executive Vice President Visit Indy
DAVID HAMPTON Executive Director LISC Indy	PHYLICIA MANLEY Vice President and Program Officer JPMorgan Chase	JEFFREY HARRISON President and Chief Executive Officer Citizens Energy Group	TAMARA WINFREY - HARRIS President Women's Fund of Central Indiana	LAUREN JAMES Executive Director Mitch Daniels Leadership Foundation	MALINA SIMONE JEFFERS Co-Founder GANGGANG	ALEESIA JOHNSON Superintendent Indianapolis Public Schools	ANGELA SMITH JONES VP Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Health & Hospital Corp.	KRISTEN LAMPKIN Director, Business Equity for Indy Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP)
TERESA LUBBERS President Sagamore Institute	DR. TOBY MALICHI Founding Executive Chairman and Global Head of Development, Investment & Diplomacy Malichi Group Worldwide	DUJUAN MCCOY Owner, President & CEO Circle City Broadcasting	SCOTT MCCORKLE CEO MetaCX	TEEJAY MOMOH Director, Systems Engineering, Corporate Research & Technology Cummins Inc.	TERRY MORRIS Associate Vice President for Racial Justice	BRIAN PAYNE President/CEO Central Indiana Community Foundation	FRED PAYNE President & CEO United Way of Central Indiana	ANTHONY PHILLIPS II Deputy Chief of External Equity State of Indiana - Office of the Chief Equity, Inclusion, & Opportunity Officer
WANDINI RIGGINS Associate Attorney Bose McKinney & Evans	TIM ROBINSON Vice President, General Counsel, & Chief of Staff Lumina Foundation	SHONDRIA SEATON Associate Director and Global Program Director Eli Lilly and Company	ERIN SHAW Executive Director / Market Manager J.P. Morgan	LATONYA SISCO Executive Director External Diversity Initiatives Cummins, Inc.	DAKOTA SLAUGHTER Associate Bose McKinney & Evans LLP	LARRY SMITH President & CEO Fathers and Families Center	SHAWN SMITH, PH.D. Superintendent of Schools MSD of Lawrence Township	JAY STYLES Senior Director, Business Partnerships EmployIndy
ALICE WATSON President & CEO Indiana Black Expo, Inc.	SUNNY LU WILLIAMS President Techservy Corporation	RICHARD WISE Director, Supplier Diversity Indiana University	MARSHAWN WOLLEY, CFRE, CDE, CFMP CEO Black Onyx Management Inc					

4th Annual ‘What’s Next’ Conference



Aaron Green - CEO - Struggle Made Me, Inc.



Sean Washington, coordinator and mentor, presents to workshop guests.

The Bloom Project, Inc. and Brothers 2 Brothers hosted their 4th Annual ‘What’s Next’ Conference recently at Ivy Tech Community College. This conference was for all male high school students. Attendees were given the importance of presentation and communication skills. Workshops included ‘Black Men in Business’ and ‘Creating Your Brand Mentality.’ Photo/Curtis Guynn



Trean McClendon, director of student life and lead advisor to Brother 2 Brother speaks with students.



Attorney Anthony Murdock II speaks to attendees.

INDIANA MINORITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY

NEW INITIATIVE TO HIGHLIGHT MINORITY BUSINESSES

LIST YOUR BUSINESS TODAY

Honor Her

MOTHER'S DAY GARDEN PARTY

SUNDAY MAY 14TH, 2023

GRAND BALLROOM AT THE HISTORIC UNION STATION
123 W LOUISIANA ST, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46225

Plated Meal - Mimosa Hour - Live Entertainment

Free Digital Mother's Day Photo - Mother's Day Shopping Experience

MIMOSA HOUR STARTS AT 3:00 PM - PROGRAM STARTS AT 4:00 PM
ADULT \$80 - YOUTH (UNDER 12 YEARS OLD) \$25 - TABLE OF 10 \$800

VISIT [EMERGINGPEARLSFOUNDATION.ORG/HONORHER](https://emergingpearlsfoundation.org/honorher) TO PURCHASE TICKETS
BENEFITING EMERGING PEARLS FOUNDATION, INC.

2023 FOURTH ANNUAL

EXHIBITING

April 1 thru May 27

ARTISTS' RECEPTION

Friday, April 21, 2023 | 5pm to 9pm
Meet the Artists Program at 6:30pm

Hors D'oeuvres will be served

The INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE WORLD ARTS EXPO is an exposition of global art and culture.

Come view artworks exploring cultures and countries of the world by established international and local artists at Indy's Global Village.

ARTWORK CREDITS
Oluchi C. Zom
Burning Questions (detail)
Yoshimi C. Fuqua
Okinawan Classical Dancer (detail)

EXPLORE. CONNECT. CELEBRATE.

SPONSORED BY:

Kinship Foster Care in Indiana

Shelvy Haywood Kegl, Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

Black and brown families have shown a strong proclivity to caring for their own over the years dating back to slavery and servitude when families were separated, forcing relatives and friends to become the extended family and assume the role of biological parents. The informal process of caring for other family members is one definition of Kinship Foster Care, which is an out of home arrangement for full time care of a child by relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, godparents and extended family who have an emotional relationship with the child. These placements can be formal, ordered by the court or informal, an arrangement without court involvement. Either arrangement brings additional social, emotional and financial stress to the caregiver.

Indiana is above the national average in Kinship Care placements with four percent or 59,000 children living in a kinship care arrangement. Some studies have shown kinship to be a better arrangement for children to have positive outcomes versus non kinship in some instances based upon factors such as trauma, ethnicity, financial support and age of child. Kinship care also allows for more contact with parents and a higher probability for reunification with parents.

Indiana is now on the move with changes in supporting kinship placement financially by allowing a monthly stipend before licensing and stream lining the licensing process. Kinship care is most often provided by grandparents who encounter additional stress besides the financial, such as second time parenting, guilt over child's failure, social isolation and dealing with the social and educational system.

Kinship Foster Care has proven over the years to be a most relevant model of care, for children in the black and brown community, but more families are needed to address Indiana's overburdened system. Midwest Family Services, an affiliate of Midwest Psychological Center Inc. and a licensed foster care agency based in Indianapolis and able to provide services throughout the State is accepting families interested in becoming licensed for Kinship Foster care or regular Foster Care. Midwest has a goal of getting families licensed within 30 days depending on family circumstance and utilizes a prequalification screening to facilitate the process. Interested families and referrals can be made to, Regina Parrish, Midwest Institute, Inc. at 317-923-3930.

Please see following advertisement.



Midwest Family Services

New Accepting Foster Care Applications

Requirements

- Must be 21 years of Age
- Pass a criminal history and background check that includes a fingerprint-based national history
- Demonstrate financial stability

Midwest family services is fully licensed by the Indiana Department of Child Services and provides Foster Care Services in Marion, Hamilton, Johnson and Hendricks Counties. We seek to increase the number of African American and Hispanic Foster Care Parents in Central Indiana and focus on Increasing the number of successful placements for youth in foster care.

Midwest Family Services
525 E. 38th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46205

For a detailed look at foster parent requirements and placement process, please contact Regina Parrish at (317) 921-3936 or rparrish@midwestpsych.com

EDITORIAL

Mental Health Awareness Month:
A little compassion goes a long way

By CAMIKE JONES
CamikeJ@indyrecorder.com



About 10% of people are left-handed, 8% of people have blue eyes and about 20% of adults are living with a mental illness. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, “It is estimated that more than one in five U.S. adults live with a mental illness (57.8 million in 2021).”

That means it is highly likely that you or someone you know and care about is living with a mental illness. The high number of people living with mental illness shows us that we would all benefit from having an awareness about how this affects our lives.

We all have good and bad days. We all feel sad sometimes. It is normal to grieve after a loss, be upset when we lose a job, or feel stressed when the month is longer than your money. In order to meet the criteria of being considered a mental illness, however, symptoms must impact a person's daily life and functioning over a designated period of time, according to the Diagnostic and

Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the guidebook for diagnosing a mental illness.

On average it may take a person dealing with a mental illness about 10 years before they seek professional help. People may delay getting help because they may be unaware they have a mental illness, there is concern of the stigma attached, they fear being judged, they do not know where to go or they do not have the resources to access treatment.

Imagine how many hard days a person living with mental illness, and the people who interact with them, have endured before they were able to get the help they needed. It is a very tough road – and it is even tougher when other people do not understand their struggle.

At any given moment, it is important to approach that the people we encounter daily with the awareness that they may be experiencing a mental illness. They may be receiving treatment, in between treatment or unable to receive treatment. Even when the person is receiving treatment, it takes time, often years, to overcome various challenges. Receiving the correct diagnosis, medication, and counseling regimen is a journey. As they are finding their way to wellness, people may endure a wide

range of emotions and experiences that add layers of difficulty to their lives.

Since living with a mental illness is so common, having compassion for others as they navigate the bumpy road to wellbeing will help. For those of us who are not suffering, simply being aware of what another person may be going through makes a big difference. The co-worker who always seems a bit grumpy, the driver that cut you off in traffic or the store employee who did not say “thank you” may not be rude or mean-spirited; they may be going through a significant challenge with their mental health.

We could all use a little help, a little kindness and a little grace at times. We can hold one another accountable while still being aware that there are brave people living with mental illness, figuring out how to face life’s many obstacles and doing their best to get through each day.

Contact Editor-in-Chief Camike Jones at 317-762-7850 or by email at CamikeJ@indyrecorder.com.

Holding the next mayor accountable
is the key in the November election

By MICHAEL DABNEY
MichaelD@indyrecorder.com



On Election Day this week, local Black residents, and indeed, all city residents, witnessed another opportunity lost. In a city where Black residents make up nearly 30 % of the general population, we must wait four more years before there’s another chance for voters to consider electing a Black mayoral candidate.

Most American cities of Indianapolis’ size or larger have elected a Black mayor – or a person of color or a woman – at least once, and in many cities more than once.

New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, Detroit, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlanta have all had Black mayors. So has Dallas; San Francisco; Newark, New Jersey; St. Paul, Minnesota; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; and Charlotte, North Carolina.

Even in Boston, whose politics since the turn of the 20th century have been dominated by a power struggle between WASPish Boston Brahmins, Irish-Americans and, lastly, Italian-Americans, has had a Black mayor.

And its current mayor is a woman of Asian descent.

But never in Indianapolis. Once again, come November, the choice for Indianapolis voters will come down to two white male candidates. But regardless of who is elected in November, holding them accountable will be key to the city’s future.

It’s not that there weren’t viable Black candidates in this election cycle.

Abdul-Hakim Shabazz, a Republican, and state Rep. Robin Shackleford certainly offered a chance to break the mold. Shackleford, in particular, put up a stout challenge to incumbent Mayor Joe Hogsett in the Democratic primary. But, with a war chest that reportedly numbered in the millions, Hogsett soundly defeated Shackleford’s insurgent campaign, in much the same way he swept aside his Republican general election challengers in 2015 and 2019 – by massive margins.

We are not saying that mere skin color should be the reason to vote for the candidate for the highest executive office in the city. Not at all. We need strong leadership, regardless of gender or skin color. But the question remains, is Indianapolis open to more inclusive options, and when?

This should be a call to action for the

city and for the new administration. Residents should insist that the next mayor include greater diversity in his senior staff, and that the mayor listen to communities that are suffering the most, investing more in the economic development of Black businesses. Uplifting downtown is important, particularly when it comes to attracting investments and new residents. But such focus cannot come at the expense of the suffering of those who are already here.

It is difficult to balance but mayoral candidates with more diverse backgrounds might be more in tuned with how to maintain that balance, especially given the city’s shifting demographics. U.S. Census data shows Blacks represented 18 % of the city population in 1970 and an estimated 29.4 % today. The change is largely due to an increase in the number of Black residents, as opposed to a dramatic decline in the white population.

Candidates with more varied socioeconomic and racial backgrounds could bring new perspectives to the problems facing the city, such as the local economy, infrastructure, homelessness, policing and public safety. And big city mayors increasingly face issues stretching far beyond city limits,

such as gun violence, immigration and climate change.

A city the size of Indianapolis will need a broader political and economic perspective to not just survive, but to flourish, in the future. Opening up the city’s politics would be a step in the right direction.

In an interview earlier this year on the CBS Good Morning program, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said he was “determined not to be the mayor of two cities – one of the haves and one of the have nots.” His background helped bridge the gap.

Clearly that perspective would be helpful here. And the next mayor, and all future mayors, regardless of race or gender, would do well to keep that perspective in mind.

Noting the increasing number of Black mayors in America, Houston Mayor Turner also said, “Progress has been made but it hasn’t been easy.”

It won’t be easy here, either. But accountability will be key, particularly in commitments made to the Black community – both now and in the future.

Contact Newsroom Manager Michael Dabney at MichaelD@indyrecorder.com

Raise the roof

By LARRY SMITH
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Or, more specifically, raise the debt ceiling.

The United States government consistently spends more money than it takes in. (Its income is derived primarily via tax dollars.) The debt ceiling refers to the maximum amount of money that the Treasury Department is allowed to borrow to pay the government’s bills. Those bills include money for things such as interest on our national debt, military salaries, and social safety net programs.

Is America worth investing in? That’s the key question for bondholders (i.e., those who have purchased our government’s debt). If Congress does not raise the debt ceiling, the government will default on paying the money that it already owes. Even getting close to

defaulting would put at risk “the full faith and credit” of the United States.

For example, S&P, a major financial rating agency, downgraded America’s creditworthiness in 2011 when it merely appeared that the government would default. This made our bondholders extremely concerned that they would not get a return on their investment – or even be repaid at all. The fallout from that debacle put taxpayers on the hook even more. Why? Bondholders’ understandable fear caused an increase in interest rates on our existing debt.

According to Kathleen Day, who teaches at the Carey School of Business at Johns Hopkins, “Whenever they (i.e., congresspeople) skate close to the edge, it costs taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars.”

The phrase, “Close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades” might need to be updated: “Close only counts in horseshoes, hand grenades, and ... the debt ceiling”.

Our national debt stands at a record \$31 trillion. The cap on the amount of money that the government can borrow is \$31.381 trillion. We officially hit that number on Jan. 19th, which led the Treasury to use what are known as “extraordinary accounting measures” to keep paying the government’s obligations. Despite such measures, the government will soon default on its bills unless that cap is increased. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has warned that such a default could come as early as June 1st. That would likely trigger a global financial crisis.

Sadly, the debt ceiling debate has become a highly partisan issue. Most people, regardless of political party, understand that the U.S. must get its fiscal house in order. (“A trillion here, a trillion there, and soon you’re talking about real money!”) Democrats want to ensure that the social safety net, including healthcare for the uninsured, is strong. Republicans insist that, to be fiscally responsible, we must substantially decrease government spending.

The problem with the latter argument is that one cannot genuinely believe in “fiscal responsibility” while also

favoring tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Those tax cuts are the primary reason that our debt is 120% of our economic activity – which is higher than normal. Supply-side economics (aka “trickle-down economics”) always results in higher deficits because the tax cuts never pay for themselves. So, where do we get the money to fund those tax cuts? China (at least primarily).

According to NPR, Congress has raised the debt ceiling 78 times since 1960 – 49 times under Republican presidents and 29 times under Democratic presidents. That’s not surprising given that budget deficits grow under both parties. (Unlike they’re doing today, Republicans did not throw a wrench in the debt ceiling process when Donald Trump was in office.)

Is there a solution? Perhaps. Secretary Yellen would like simply to abolish the debt limit. That is highly unlikely to happen. Alternatively, Congress could stop cutting taxes on the wealthiest people in the nation. In fact, they should raise taxes on that very group. Again, that is unlikely to happen, especially when Republicans control the House and/or the Senate.

Republicans want President Biden to agree to substantial budgets cuts in exchange for their agreeing to increase the debt ceiling. Those issues must remain decoupled; budget negotiations should take place during the budgeting process, not in the middle of a looming debt ceiling default. Yes, they can sit around the proverbial kitchen table and discuss the most prudent way to spend (or stop spending) money in the future – but we must address the immediate problem first.

If the U.S. is deemed not worthy to invest in monetarily, the question is whether we’re worth investing in morally. How we spend money is ultimately a moral decision – whether “we” refers to individuals, businesses, or governments. As is the case with time, spending money is an indication of that which we deem to be important. If the United States government does not keep its word, it isn’t worthy of investment.

Larry Smith is a community leader. The views expressed are his own. Contact him at larry@leaf-llc.com.

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Simon Youth Foundation hosts 25th anniversary celebration



Simon Youth Foundation (SYF) celebrates its historic 25th anniversary by welcoming over 100 guests. Attendees included community leaders, dignitaries, superintendents, business partners, SYF students, alumni and academy teachers.

SYF was recently inducted into the Indiana Historical Society. SYF’s mission believes that all youth, no matter their personal circumstances, should have the opportunity to pursue their dreams through education. Since its inception, SYF has graduated over 26,000 students. Based in 16 states across the U.S., SYF has 40 academies, which partner with 29 school districts. SYF has invested over \$21 million in scholarships to nearly 6,000 students. These students have gone on to attend over 500 different colleges and universities in 32 states.



In addition, SYF has invested \$1.2 million in capacity building grants to support SYF educators’ professional development and continuing education.

SYF made history in 2021 when hiring the first woman and person of color to lead the Foundation, Andrea L. Neely, who works in partnership with the board of directors chaired by founding member Deborah J. Simon.

Eskenazi Health Adopts Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative

By Broderick Rhyant, M.D., chief physician executive with Eskenazi Health Center Forest Manor



The worldwide Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) was launched in 1991 in support of worldwide breastfeeding, which is a program fully endorsed by Eskenazi Health.

Breastfeeding is also recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for the multitude of proven reasons why it’s highly-beneficial to both mothers and newborns.

The CDC states that infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of asthma, obesity, type 1 diabetes, severe respiratory disease, ear infections, sudden infant death syndrome, along with better odds of avoiding gastrointestinal infections such as diarrhea and vomiting. Breastfeeding can help lower a mother’s risk of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, ovarian cancer and breast cancer.

The purpose of BFHI is to ensure that mothers and newborns receive timely and appropriate care before and during their stay in a facility providing maternity and newborn services, and to enable the establishment of optimal feeding of newborns, which promotes their health and development.

Established by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), the BFHI is a global program supporting the implementation of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (the Ten Steps) and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (the International Code) in maternity facilities.

- resolutions. 1 B. Have a written infant feeding policy that is routinely communicated to staff and parents.1 C. Establish ongoing monitoring and data-management systems.
2. Ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge, competence and skills to support.
 3. Discuss the importance and management of breastfeeding with pregnant women and their families.
 4. Facilitate immediate and uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact and support mothers to initiate breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth.
 5. Support mothers to initiate and maintain breastfeeding and manage common difficulties.
 6. Do not provide breastfed newborns any food or fluids other than breast-milk, unless medically indicated.
 7. Enable mothers and their infants to remain together and to practice rooming-in 24 hours a day.
 8. Support mothers to recognize and respond to their infants’ cues for feeding.
 9. Counsel mothers on the use and risks of feeding bottles, artificial nipples (teats) and pacifiers.
 10. Coordinate discharge so that parents and their infants have timely access to ongoing support and care.

Baby Friendly does not shame moms who choose to formula feed or whose babies require formula. It’s about putting practices in place that support and empower a parent’s decision on how she wants to feed her baby, and then providing the timely support and resources for her to meet that goal.

For more information about Family Beginnings and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative at Eskenazi Health, visit: <https://www.eskenazihealth.edu/health-services/womens-health/family-beginnings>

The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding for Hospitals and Health Centers to follow are:

1 A. Comply fully with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and relevant World Health Assembly

be their no matter what.

adopt

www.IndianaAdoptionProgram.org

Healing based organization hosts meditation event

By TIMORIA CUNNINGHAM
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We The Medicine will host a guided meditation intended to help those who have experienced PTSD, anxiety, depression and childhood trauma.

Healing Our Inner Child 2023 is an event where participants can learn new skills to deal with a variety of life experiences. During the event, We The Medicine will teach the power of mindfulness and new integration tools that participants can practice daily, such as the power of intentions and breath work.

During the event participants will also engage in a variety of meditation sessions.

“These talks/meditations come from the heart and are for anyone that wishes to learn more about ancient and modern techniques that help to deal with anxiety, depression and PTSD,” David Price, founder of We The Medicine, said in a statement.

We The Medicine is a nonprofit organization with a goal to inspire transformation by dismantling limiting beliefs and igniting the fire of personal empowerment.

According to their website, the Vision of We The Medicine is to awaken the divine spark within each and every person, empowering them to reclaim their authentic selves. We believe that the source of all healing lies within, and it is our passion to guide individuals on their journey toward self-discovery and wholeness.

The event will take place May 6 at 2 p.m. via Zoom. Tickets for this event are free and can be found at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/we-the-medicine-healing-our-inner-child-2023-guided-meditation-tickets-167676981365>.

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A glance at IndyPL's social work program 2 years later

By **CHLOE McGOWAN**
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In 2021 the Indianapolis Public Library hired its first social worker to bridge the gap between librarians and patrons who need additional services.

Yanna McGraw, an Indianapolis-based social worker, has been active in Marion County since 2008 in various areas, including geriatric, home-based therapy, law facilities and individual mental health cases. She took the job with the library as a way to provide resources and care to those who needed it but didn't know where else to turn.

"What I feel this role is, is to build those partnerships and look at how we can address those things that we see as rules that are broken," McGraw said. "There's always a solution to things, we just might not like the solution but there's always a solution and kind of give people back their dignity."

McGraw is at the library Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to noon and Tuesdays from 3-5 p.m. She said most of that time is spent researching and helping people build their resumes, fill out job applications and get bus passes in addition to referring out to different community organizations to help them acquire basic needs such as food, clothing, housing and mental health resources.

Hundreds of patrons come and go from public libraries each day, many of which are homeless, elderly or in need of additional assistance, McGraw said. Although librarians are incredibly knowledgeable and passionate about helping people, McGraw said they aren't trained to help those with additional mental health needs or those in crisis as it reaches beyond the capabilities of the library.

"I think Librarians want to just fix it and social workers are like 'we have to, like, peel down the layers, look at the whole picture and then come up with a plan,'" she said. "Sometimes that takes planning, talking through and then making those connections with resources."

McGraw isn't by far the first social worker to be in a library, but she is the first for the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library System. This means she's had to build the framework for her position from the ground up using the 27 bullet points in her job descriptions, examples set by libraries on the West



Coast who have already implemented the service and connecting with other library social workers through Whole Person Librarianship.

Dr. Andrea Copeland, chair of the department of Library and Information Science at IUPUI, met McGraw through a social work doctoral student who was writing her dissertation on public libraries. Though she doesn't work directly with IndyPL, she's been someone McGraw can talk to outside of the system.

"You need someone like Yanna, with her expertise and training to be there to help fill in that knowledge gap that librarians simply don't have," Copeland said.

Copeland said McGraw has done a wonderful job at raising awareness in terms of resources and making her own knowledge accessible to librarians and patrons alike, sort of like a "pathfinder."

"I think she's sort of amplified the role that librarians have had in terms of connecting people to resources," Copeland said. "I know she's advocated for less involvement of security and the police when dealing with patrons in crisis."

However, the library still has a lot of work to do, which McGraw mentioned in her presentation for the Board of Trustees March 27 by special request of Dr. Khaula Murtadha. Copeland said this is an innovative new service to the library and there will be some initial confusion as it becomes fully integrated.

McGraw said the things they're experiencing in the IndyPL system are happening in every library across the country, and until there is a system-wide plan

and buy-in from those at the top, it will be difficult for her to make a significant difference.

"If you have a little bit of understanding of it, it could make a difference," she said. "It can make a shift in how you see and view and where you put your dollars at when you decide to donate or contribute to an organization."

In an email response to the Recorder, Murtadha cited an article from Public Libraries Online, which states libraries should "consider their unique needs and what they want this position to accomplish. Library social work programs vary based on the needs of a community."

"Generally, the roles of a library social worker are a blend of the following: staff consultations and trainings, direct patron work, and building community partnerships," the article continues. "Based on the identified needs of both the community and the library, social worker roles can be crafted accordingly."

McGraw and Copeland both echoed this sentiment and agreed that Community Needs Assessments are essential in determining how social workers can best serve their communities with the resources available to them. Copeland added that fully integrating those services into the library system on the front end — like they would with any other policy or procedure — would affect the back end and vice versa.

"When you when you implement a new service, you've got to ask how it affects all the other services and all the other resources, right?" Copeland said. "Until you do that, you will have an experience where you know the social services provided by the social worker are not integrated into the whole."

The work that McGraw has accomplished through the library system in the past year is nothing to shy away from, however, she said she alone cannot do it all. For her work to be sustainable, the community and the library itself must do its part to come together and lift up those in need.

"It's our responsibility as a community to figure out a solution that is not 'person one here, person one here,'" McGraw said. "We need to figure out a centralized way to get the resources to the people that need help the most."

Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanaxx.

Learn about the Importance of Safe Drinking Water

Everyone relies on safe drinking water, and it's important to know how this water gets to a home or business.

Drinking Water Week, May 7-13, is a great time to learn more about the source of local drinking water and what makes it safe to use.

Many federal, state, and local organizations work with communities to protect source water, such as lakes, rivers, and groundwater.

Protecting water sources is an ongoing challenge. Stopping sewage from seeping into drinking water sources by repairing broken septic systems and maintaining sewer systems can greatly reduce germs in our source water.

Over the last 100 years, many improvements in the health, success, and lifespan of the U.S. population can be linked to improvements in water quality.

Providing safe drinking water was one of the most important public health achievements of the 20th century. Water treatment methods used to reduce germs or chemicals that cause illness have helped ensure access to healthy and safe water across for millions of people across the U.S.

Government regulations have helped reduce pollution of the water sources that supply our drinking water systems. However, treating the water before it reaches our tap to kill or remove harmful germs or chemicals is still critical to making sure the water is safe to drink.

Drinking water can become contaminated:

- In the original water source (for example, a river)
- In storage tanks
- In drinking water distribution systems (the pipes that carry water to homes, businesses, schools, and other buildings)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates drinking water quality in public water systems. Every public water system is required to provide its customers with an annual consumer confidence report, which provides information on local drinking water quality.

In addition, the CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network has information and data about some of the most common chemicals that may be found in community water supplies.

Treating water to remove or kill disease-causing chemicals and germs is critical to protect the health of people, animals, and the environment.

EPA regulations do not apply to privately owned wells, although some states do regulate private wells. As a result, the 43 million Americans who get their water from private wells are responsible for ensuring that their tap water is safe from contaminants.

Residents whose homes are served by a well should take steps to protect it and have the water tested at least once a year to make sure the water is safe from harmful germs and chemicals.

The Marion County Public Health Department regulates the construction of private wells and well pumps through state and local ordinances. Contractors must obtain permits for new well construction, and pump repair or replacement, and must follow appropriate procedures to abandon wells no longer in service.

Environmental Health Specialists from the health department oversee the permit process, educate homeowners on private well maintenance and conduct well water sampling at no cost to well owners. Staff also conducts neighborhood surveys to assess the groundwater quality throughout the county.

More information about free water testing to Marion County residents with a private well is available by calling 317-221-2147 or at MarionHealth.org/private-well-program/.



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‘The community as a whole went beyond the doors of the classroom’:
St. Andrew Apostle Catholic School to reopen in the fall

By TIMORIA CUNNINGHAM
timoriac@indyrecorder.com

It has been over a decade since St. Andrew St. Rita Catholic Academy shut down after educating generations of students and creating a space where a lifetime of memories were made. Over a decade later, the legacy of St. Andrew will continue with its reopening scheduled to take place in the fall.

According to Ronda Swartz, executive director of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, discussions to bring back St. Andrew have been occurring for over a year, and she said she is “thrilled” the school is finally coming back.

Many people were unsure if the school would come back, including former St. Andrew student Janay Carpenter. Carpenter attended the school from 2003-2010 and said a few of her fondest memories include the friends she made, weekly mass, art showcases and kickball games.

Like Carpenter, many others were upset when the school announced its closure in 2010, including both former St. Andrew Principal Yolanda McCormick and fourth grade teacher Brooke Charlesworth.

“We were crushed, just crushed when they said we had to close,” McCormick said. “It felt like we were just being discarded, and I just did not like it.”

Charlesworth shared the same feelings and said, “it felt like I had found my dream job at my dream school ... I thought I could see myself there forever.”

Charlesworth was a first-year out-of-state teacher when she began working for St. Andrew in 2009 and said the family-like atmosphere is what captivated her the most.

“It felt like home,” Charlesworth said.

According to Charlesworth, the faculty pushed students to not only grow inside the classroom but outside of it as well.

“The community as a whole went beyond the doors of the classroom,” Charlesworth said.

One memory Charlesworth recalled from working at St. Andrew was taking her students on a field trip downtown at the end of the year, during which they walked on the canal, toured museums and climbed to the top of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument.

“I am so happy to hear another generation of students and administration have a chance to reignite the magic of St. Andrew,” Charlesworth said.

Now under the name St. Andrew the



Apostle Catholic School, the school will serve grades K-8th grade. Although St. Andrew is a private Catholic school, the faculty welcomes the enrollment of students of all faiths.

School hours will be between 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Before school care will begin at 7 a.m., and after school care will end at 6 p.m.

The registration fee is \$100 per family. For further information, contact Rose Springman at rspringman@archindy.org or 317-236-7324.

Contact staff writer Timoria Cunningham at 317-762-7854. Follow her on Twitter @_timoriac.

‘It could be them today, but it could be us tomorrow’:
Local organizations partner together
for community outreach



Kamara Holman created an event title “Bus Stop Blessings” to give back to those in need. Holman plans on doing this event quarterly with the next one scheduled to take place in the fall. (Photo/provided by Kamara Holman).

By TIMORIA CUNNINGHAM
timoriac@indyrecorder.com

Giving back to the community seems to always have been one of Kamara Holman’s passions despite the circumstances she has been through. Holman’s experiences in a shelter with her mother and sister at the age of 16 inspired her drive to help others.

During her time in the shelter Holman, who is the first lady of Pleasant Union Missionary Baptist Church, told herself that she would help others when she was in a position to do so, and that goal is manifested through the outreach work she currently does.

In 2015 Holman started the Blessed 2 Be a Blessing charity after realizing there was a need for more events for people who are homeless. With the help of her kids and husband, the pastor of Pleasant Union Baptist Church, the charity hosted events that served over 100 homeless Hosiers.

“It seems as though the homeless are always left out,

and there are not enough events geared towards them,” Holman told the Recorder.

Over the years, Holman began to design more ways to help those in need, and in August 2020, she started the Hope Project. The Hope Project is an organization that provides a variety of services including clothing assistance, counseling services and job search assistance to those in need in the Indianapolis area.

In 2020 Holman’s outreach work was recognized by WRTV when she was a recipient of the Jefferson Award for Multiplying Good.

Holman’s ideas to help people only grew from there, and on April 15, Holman created a quarterly event called “Bus Stop Blessings.” This event was formed to give hope to those in need. Holman partnered with Pleasant Union, Gamma Delta Iota, The Hope Project and Smart Family Development to serve nearly 400 people in the city with free bus passes, clothing Bibles and lunch.

One person impacted by these acts of kindness was Denise Love. The mother of four found out about the

event on Facebook and decided to attend. Love stated that upon her arrival the faces behind the community service work that greeted her were welcoming.

Transportation had been a need for Love’s family and because of the event she was able to provide them with bus passes. “It takes a load off me,” Love told the Recorder.

Holman wants to expand her outreach in the community and plans to continue helping those in need while spreading the gospel of Jesus. A few of these plans include paying for gas and hosting a charity parade, both set to take place in the fall.

Holman said giving back to the community is important because “it could be them today, but it could be us tomorrow.”

Contact staff writer Timoria Cunningham at 317-762-7854. Follow her on Twitter @_timoriac.

ORDER OF SERVICE



Pastor Nello A. Holman and First Lady Kay Holman

Pleasant Union Missionary Baptist Church
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Indpls, Indiana 46208
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10:50 am

Sunday School
9:15 am

Monday Morning Prayer
6:00am

Wed. Bible Study
12:00 noon & 7:00pm

Thurs. Family Living
7:00pm

Fri. Victory Over Addictions
7:00pm

*Temple of Believers
Deliverance Center*
5230 E. 38th Street
317-377-1834



Bishop James Humbert
Pastor

Sunday School
10:00 AM

Morning Worship
11:30 AM

Tuesday Bible Study
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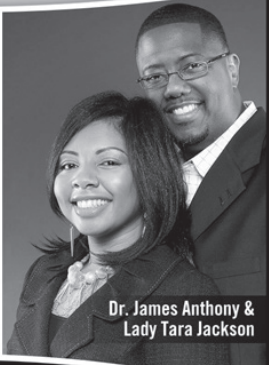
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Black Protestant church still vital despite attendance drop

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — The wide empty spaces in pews between parishioners at a Sunday service at Zion Baptist Church in South Carolina’s capital highlight a post-pandemic reality common among many Black Protestant churches nationwide.

At its heyday in the 1960s, more than 1,500 parishioners filled every seat at Zion. But membership at the historic church — a crucial meeting point for many during the Civil Rights Movement — dwindled over recent decades.

The trend has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which infected and killed Black Americans at a disproportionate rate. Zion’s attendance dropped from 300 parishioners before the outbreak to 125 now.

Founded in 1865 — the year Abraham Lincoln was assassinated — Zion still has a choir capable of beautiful singing, but it too has shrunk by more than half. The stomping of feet and the call-and-response of the leader and congregation have subsided from what they were before the pandemic.

“It saddens my heart,” said Calvernetta Williams, who has worshipped at Zion for 40 years. “What I really say to myself is, ‘Lord, the pastor has a lot of outreach to do, and so do we ... because it’ll never be the same.”

Zion’s shrinking attendance is in line with a recent Pew Research Center survey; it found a significant attendance drop among Black Protestants that is unmatched by any other major religious group. The number of Black Protestants who say they attend services monthly has fallen from 61% in 2019 to 46% now, said Pew, and they are the only group in which more than half (54%) attend services virtually.

Zion broadcasts services online, produces digital content and is active on social media. But the Rev. M. Andrew Davis said his church’s virtual experience can’t match in-person interactions, including the smiles of children, and how sometimes older congregants share testimonials about how God healed them.

Davis’ sermon on a recent Sunday was titled: “Trust during times of trouble.” He recalled the pandemic as one the most challenging times in his church’s history — and offered words of hope.

“We may not ever go back to the way it was, but we can do better,” Davis told parishioners.

Black Americans — two-thirds of whom are Protestant — attend church more regularly than Americans overall, and pray more often, surveys show. But patterns of worship are shifting across generations: younger Black adults attend church less often than their elders, and those who attend are less likely to do so in a predominantly Black congregation.

“It’s imperative that we get our young people back,” said Donnie Mack, a deacon at Zion. “As we say in old churches — if you don’t see any young people, if you don’t hear any babies crying, then, you’re at a dying church.”

Several Black church leaders said it’s proved difficult to convince members to return for in-person worship. They note that many congregants are older, have inadequate access to health care, and hesitate to return to church for fear of catching a contagious illness.

A history of systemic racism and lack of economic opportunity made many Black Americans far more vulnerable to the virus. Black adults also suffer from higher rates of obesity, diabetes and asthma, making them more susceptible. They are also more likely to be uninsured.

Additionally, many Black working people had jobs deemed essential and were less able to work from home during the pandemic, raising concerns about exposing others in their often crowded households to the virus.

“The pandemic exasperated that,” said the Rev. Quardricos Driskell, pastor at Beulah Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

Attendance at his 160-year-old church dropped from a peak of more than 200 people who met in two Sunday services in the early 2000s, to less than half that at a single service.

“We’re lucky if we have 100 on any given Sunday,” Driskell said.

Driskell tries to reach young people by talking openly with them about issues including race, sexuality and gender identity.

“What does it mean to be gay, Christian and single?” he said. “How do we live out our lives authentically as human beings, but yet still maintaining levels of faith ... those are messages that are resonating with younger people.”

Although his congregation has been welcoming to the LGBTQ community, Driskell said that historically that has not

been the case for the Black church.

“The Black church is kind of grappling with and struggling with this idea of religious progressivism.”

Despite the attendance drop, academics, pastors and parishioners agree that churches remain fundamental to Black communities, providing refuge and hope, especially during times of challenge.

“No pillar of the African American community has been more central to its history, identity, and social justice vision than the ‘Black Church,’” Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. wrote in ‘The Black Church,’ his companion volume to the PBS series.

“For a people systematically brutalized and debased by the inhumane system of slavery, followed by a century of Jim Crow racism, the church provided a refuge: a place of racial and individual self-affirmation, of teaching and learning, of psychological and spiritual sustenance, of prophetic faith,” he wrote.

Although there’s broad respect for the historical role of Black churches, including their crucial role fighting for racial equality, polls show that there’s also a perception among Black Americans that they have lost influence in recent decades.

“It still functions in the same way: It’s a source of hope for people who cannot hold on to political promises, they can’t necessarily go to the law and get the things that we need and give them the safety that we need,” said Tamura Lomax, professor of religious studies at Michigan State University who specializes in the Black church.

But attendance had been dwindling — even before the pandemic and the 2020 protests over racial justice — because the way people connected to the church had changed, Lomax said.

A pivotal moment came when the Black Lives Matter movement was founded. Its members, she said, embraced some of the African spirituality and religious practices that were taken from their ancestors during enslavement and rejected the Christ-centered movement that had been pivotal to the civil rights struggle.

“They didn’t want to carry the patriarchal kind of Black masculinity leadership model,” Lomax said.

During the pandemic, Black pastors used their influence to encourage vaccinations from the pulpit, while hosting testing clinics and vaccination events in church buildings.

“It has impacted our community pretty substantially,” said the Rev. Hewitt Clifton Sawyers at West Harpeth Primitive Baptist Church in Franklin, Tennessee. Attendance at the church dropped from about 150 people before COVID to about 80 now. “The people are just really, really afraid to come back.”

Sawyers said his church benefited from a rise in virtual attendance and online donations, which have financed a building renovation. Still, he lamented that many congregants have not returned in person.

“They’ve really gotten to the place that they can turn over in bed and flip on the television or their phone and watch the services, press a button, send their offerings and go back to sleep,” he said. “It’s hard to get them to want to come back to church.”

Although in-person numbers dropped, some Black Protestant churches have grown if one counts a rise in virtual attendance. That’s the case of Enon Baptist Tabernacle Church, which at 5,000 seats is one of Philadelphia’s largest Black churches.

“I believe it has shifted for the better,” said its pastor, the Rev. Alyn Waller. “Many of us have come up with the concept of virtual membership. I have people who belong to my church that don’t even live in Pennsylvania.”

The Rev. Eldren D. Morrison of Shaw Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Georgia’s Cobb County, said in-person attendance plunged by half — from 400 to about 200 — since the virus outbreak. But the pandemic helped pastors like him rethink how to connect with their congregation.

“It’s teaching us that we’re not necessarily looking for numbers, but we’re looking for engagement,” Morrison said. “Whether that’s virtual, or whether that’s people in pews or whether it’s through some type of ministry involvement throughout the community, people are involved with the church and are growing their faith. And that’s what the mission is in the end anyway.”

Associated Press visual journalist Jessie Wardarski contributed.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support through the AP’s collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

NAP OR NOTHING: A cultural fashion statement for Indy

By **JADE JACKSON**
JadeJ@IndyRecorder.com

It is a simple phrase with a profound meaning: Nap or Nothing.

Etched across clothing inside a storefront on Massachusetts Avenue, owner of the streetwear brand Antonio Maxie said the slogan instills pride within people from Indianapolis.

“Nap’ is short for Naptown, which is the nickname for the city. ‘Or Nothing’ is about repping to the fullest: Rep-ping your backyard and being proud of where you’re from,” said Maxie. “It’s important for everybody to let people know where you come from and what made you or built you.”

Nap or Nothing has been around for nearly a decade.

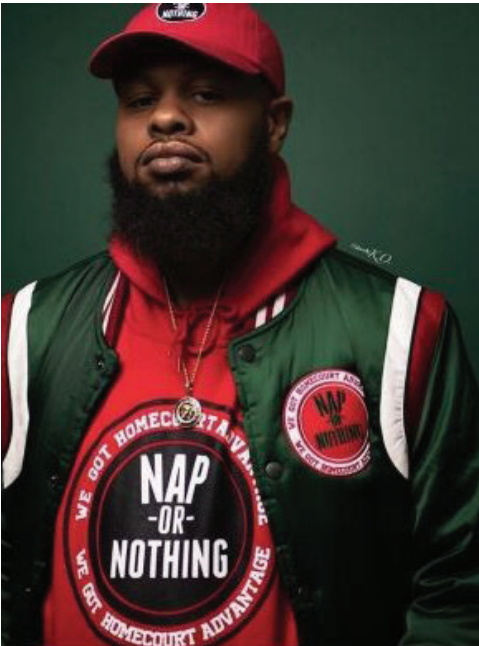
Despite the brand’s release of hundreds of different colors and designs, Maxie said he never planned on owning and operating a clothing brand.

Originally a musician, Maxie’s fashion concept arose when he wanted to make a couple of extra bucks performing at shows.

“So, I started putting logos on merch with phrases from my songs and phrases that I say with my friends. It kind of just kept growing, and growing, and growing,” said Maxie.

Maxie said a friend of his opened a clothing store inside Lafayette Square Mall, and the shop ultimately fell into his lap.

The brick and mortar for Nap or Nothing at Lafayette Square Mall launched in 2015. Because the mall is now temporarily closed due to a redevelopment project, the store trans-



Antonio Maxie

ferred to online sales before moving to Mass Ave.

From local artists to athletes and everyday people, all his customers rock the brand. Nap or Nothing has always shared space with other Indianapolis streetwear brands.

The organization GangGang culture partnered with Nap or Nothing to open multiple locations around the city in 2023.

“I feel blessed. I feel honored. I feel like I keep putting the work in and doing my due diligence to provide Indianapolis with quality representation,” said Maxie.

The recognition Nap or Nothing has gained over the years has been cool according to Maxie, but he’s even more



Models wear Nap or Nothing brand clothing (Photo/Nap or Nothing Facebook)

excited that he can help other people achieve their goals and dreams by incorporating pride into the city.

“I don’t look at it like it’s a ‘me’ thing. It’s a ‘we’ thing. When the doors open for me, they open for others as well. My opportunity is their opportunity. They just have to capitalize as they see fit,”

said Maxie.

Nap or Nothing’s goal is to have bi-weekly drops for products.

Contact staff writer Jade Jackson at 317-607-5792 or by email jadej@IndyRecorder.com. Follow her on Twitter @IAMJADEJACKSON

COMMENTARY

America Needs Financial Literacy

By **ANDRÉ CARSON**

Black Americans have made significant contributions to the United States economy. And yet, a significant wealth gap still persists.

The wealth of the richest 400 Americans is approximately equal to that of 43 million Black Americans.

Black Americans, even when achieving the same education levels as their white counterparts, have difficulty accessing generational wealth.

April marked Financial Literacy Month. As the month reached a close, I re-introduced the Young Americans Financial Literacy Act to improve young people’s ability to make informed and effective financial decisions that will strengthen financial literacy.

Our economy still faces challenges in the wake of COVID-19, but thanks to a Democrat-led Congress and President Biden, we are on our way back up. Job creation is up, unemployment is down, significantly. Black unemployment reached a record low in March.

But across the US population, unbanked rates – meaning no one in the household has a checking account – are higher among Black households, as well as lower-income households, less-educated households, Hispanic households, working-age households with a disability, and single-mother households. According to a 2021 study, among households with income between \$30,000 and \$50,000, 8.0 percent of Black households and 8.4 percent of Hispanic households were unbanked, compared with 1.7 percent of White households.

Without more effective economic education, our

community will fall behind unless we increase access to the tools necessary to achieve and maintain wealth. We must ensure that no community gets left behind – and financial literacy is key.

While 92 percent of K-12 teachers believe financial education should be taught in schools, only 12 percent of teachers are able to do so. My bill focuses on young people between the ages of 8-24 so they can start their financial futures in a better state – regardless of race, gender, or income.

Financial literacy is especially key for young people as they receive their first paychecks and prepare to make long-lasting decisions, like taking out student loans and credit cards.

I’ll continue to advocate for student loan reform to ensure young people don’t need to go into massive amounts of debt just to complete their education. But even with student loan reform, making the transition to financial independence is challenging. Decisions made early in life can have impacts for decades to come.

Without financial literacy, individuals and families are more susceptible to fraud, scams, and predatory lending practices. They also have decreased credit use and higher interest rates, and lack savings and investing strategies that help grow overall financial security.

Financial literacy helps individuals and families thrive, but it also helps our entire economy as a whole as we have more individuals actively participating in a positive economy, activity pursuing home ownership, and acquiring wealth, and not racking up debilitating debt.

So, what’s the solution? My bill has a multi-prong approach and will:

Establish a grant program in the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to develop and implement financial literacy programs for young people ages eight to twenty-four;

Incentivize the development of partnerships between institutions of higher education, local educational agencies, non-profit organizations, and financial institutions to create programs aimed at young Americans in different phases of their life;

Ensure the development of evidence-based instructional material that is geared towards targeted groups and addresses unique life situations, including bankruptcy, foreclosure, student loans, credit card misuse; and

Conduct ongoing assessment and accountability of the program over the short- and long-term to ensure that grant money achieves the greatest impact.

With the persistent impact of centuries of systematic oppression, the racial wealth gap will not close without proactive measures to open access to financial opportunities. With holistic changes at every level, step by step, we can begin to shrink that gap until one day it disappears altogether.



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FASHION

► Continued from B8



Monty Matuka, founder and creative director of MELI said MELI Motorsports is inspired by people of color in the racing industry’s past, present and future. The partnership between MELI and IMS is part of the Race for Equality and Change initiative, which aims to highlight local, minority business owners.

of IMS’ Race for Equality and Change, aims to draw awareness to people of color who have made names for themselves in the racing industry while highlighting the nostalgia of one of the largest sporting events in the country.

“It’s great to have people join the movement and understand the vision and be wanted to help push the narrative,” Matuka said, “because it’s not only a vision, it’s a necessity that we spread love and positivity, and that we can all learn how to connect by listening to one another, learning from one another.”

MELI stands for “More Equality, Less Ignorance” and was launched as a sophisticated streetwear brand in 2020, said Matuka. His goal as a designer was to use clothing to elevate the community by articulating themes of confidence and mindfulness and inspiring those who wear MELI clothing.

Matuka said MELI hosts community events, including First Friday pop-ups, and workshops and is active with Circle City Storytellers to help

provide a platform for others to share their stories and build a stronger community. The luxury clothing brand also “seeks to promote equality through cross cultures awareness,” which Matuka said made the partnership with IMS an ideal fit.

“We’re strong advocates on inclusive inclusivity and diversity in addition to providing tools and resources to the creative arts ecosystem to help allow others to grow and thrive in their purpose,” Matuka said.

Jimmie McMillian, chief diversity officer and senior corporate counsel of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, said one of the main goals of the Race for Equality and Change is to make sure IMS and the NTT IndyCar Series is a sport where everyone feels they are welcome.

The partnership with MELI is just one of the new ways they are hoping to achieve this goal and broaden their reach — while also providing economic and financial benefits to small, local businesses, McMillian said.



“We want his audience of young people who are interested in fashion or interested in design to see something that reflects them and reflects some of the cultural aspects of what he creates,” McMillian said. “His work speaks to people’s culture, and so our hope is that through his work and our logos, our imagery, that the combination of the two will speak to a whole new audience of fans.”

MELI is not the only partnership IMS has in the works; however, McMillian said the uniqueness of what Matuka has to offer with MELI stood out. Part of the brand is to bring different perspectives and viewpoints

to the table, and McMillian said that includes a different look — such as a different fashion sense.

MELI Motorsports is inspired by the history of auto racing and is essentially “paying homage” to minority trailblazers in the sport, Matuka said.

The line includes clothing items with motorsport themed graphics and designs with an inspired, urban take on classic racing jackets and vintage racing tees, Matuka said. The line also features elevated styles cargo shorts, pants and jackets with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway logo as well as MELI logos.

Everything down to the fabric — think leather,

water resistant and vintage wash — and cut of the cloth caters to the racing industry fit for both male and female consumers, Matuka said.

“It’s a nod to a minority culture who have broken barriers in the sport of professional auto racing in both the past, in the present, in the future,” Matuka said. “Obviously the sport of racing isn’t that diverse of a sport, but we see the urge of the motor speedway to open it up and allow us as minorities to understand that we are welcome and in their sport.”

McMillian said IMS will continue to work with Matuka and MELI to further develop their

partnership. However, they are “always interested in hearing and learning new things and new ways to partner with the community to expand the reach and breadth of the race.”

MELI Motorsports launched preorders March 30-April 30, but Matuka said the clothing will still be available to purchase at meli-intl.com, in the MELI Showroom, located at 43 Virginia Ave., Suite 207, and in the IMS museum gift shop.

Contact staff writer Chloe McGowan at 317-762-7848. Follow her on Twitter @chloe_mcgowanax.

ANTHONY

► Continued from B8

version while you’re at it, young man.

Most of all, remember the hard work that got you here and what it is going to take for you to be as successful as you want to be, and ignore all the fans who expect you to lead the league in passing yards while mixing in a ton of scoring tosses. Oh yeah, they also expect a high completion percentage on all those passes with virtually no interceptions thrown to boot.

Since we’ve never met, let me quickly state that all the aforementioned is completely unreasonable for a rookie Quarterback in the NFL, but don’t tell that to all the people who are looking to buy a replica jersey bearing your name so they have something to wear to Lucas Oil Stadium each Sunday this season.

Above all, keep your family close, as they are your true support system and will love you unconditionally, no matter how difficult things may get.

Make them proud and the rest will indeed take care of itself.

Get ready to take a lot of selfies with fans and to be interrupted for an autograph while dining out in public.

Those folks mean well, but they will look to live through you vicariously and will not understand

that you need your privacy to preserve your sanity.

Remember to give back, as one of those kids screaming your name at training camp just might be the next Anthony Richardson and needs to know you care, even if it’s just for a few seconds. A kind word to him or a fist bump as you turn to walk away will do just fine.

Above all, be yourself and make your mark as a man first, and then as a football player.

Ignore those who will be unreasonable and call for your benching because you didn’t meet their ridiculous expectations. Play hard on every snap and leave it all on the field. The NFL is beyond brutal and not just physically.

Reflect on your good fortune that is undoubtedly the result of hard work. Your time is now, and while you’re the future of this franchise, take it day by day and enjoy this ride.

If you do all that, something tells me you’ll be just fine.

Danny Bridges, who thinks Anthony Richardson has a chance to be really special in his pro career, can be reached at (317) 370-8447 or at bridgeshd@aol.com.

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An open letter to Anthony Richardson

By DANNY BRIDGES

Dear Anthony: Welcome to Indianapolis. By now you’ve moved into what I must assume is great housing for you and yours and have been provided a list of restaurants and grocers that deliver. Undoubtedly, you’ve also been fitted with a nice SUV that’s equipped with a state-of-the-art GPS system to ensure there’s no getting lost to the practice facility as well as your new tailor and barber.

Now that I’ve touched on the important essentials, let’s dive into some other matters that will indeed rear their annoying head in the coming weeks.

First of all, not everyone is your friend so take your time to evaluate those who allegedly care about your best interest.

Keep anyone other than your family, lifelong friends and coaches at some distance.

Make sure they respect your privacy and the tremendous challenge you now have to memorize an enormous playbook while maintaining your impressive physical stature.

Don’t live on my pizza and BBQ diet and get all that sleep that a world class athlete needs.

It’s okay to put your cell phone on voicemail while you are slumbering and dreaming of throwing a forty-yard frozen rope on fourth and long for a game-winning touchdown.

Heck, go ahead and run it in for a two-point con

See ANTHONY, B7►

Local fashion company partners with Indy 500 for exclusive line



MELI, a local and Black-owned luxury streetwear brand is partnering with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for an Indy 500-inspired line of clothing. (Photos provided by Monty Matuka)

By CHLOE MCGOWAN
chloegm@indyrecorder.com

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway is gearing up for the Indy 500 in a fashionable way this year.

MELI, a local fashion brand founded by current creative director Monty Matuka, partnered with the Indianapolis Motor Speedway ahead of the annual race to launch an exclusive luxury streetwear line entitled MELI Motorsports. The line, which is part

See FASHION, B7►



Florida quarterback Anthony Richardson (15) celebrates with teammates after an NCAA college football game against South Carolina on Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022, in Gainesville, Fla. (AP Photo/Matt Stamey)

Colts select Anthony Richardson in 2023 NFL Draft

By NORAL PARHAM III
NoralP@IndyRecorder.com

The Indianapolis Colts made a powerful move in the 2023 NFL Draft by selecting quarterback Anthony Richardson of the University of Florida. Many members of the Colts’ front office and fanbase believe Richardson is the future of the franchise.

The Colts had been looking for a quarterback to lead their team for many, many moons; Richardson appears to be the perfect match for the boys in blue.

Richardson had a standout season with the Florida Gators, albeit only starting 12 games last season. During that time, Richardson amassed over 2,500 passing yards and more than 650 rushing yards. Richardson’s ability to make plays through an air raid passing attack and ground

game intrigued many front offices.

The Indianapolis Colts were the fortunate team as they received the No. 4 pick in the 2023 NFL Draft.

Richardson was full of excitement and tears after being drafted by the Colts, saying, “I’m going to bring energy. I’m going to bring hard work. And, God willing, I’m going to bring (Indianapolis) a super bowl.”

With Richardson now officially a member of the Indianapolis Colts, the organization hopes to make it to the playoffs as early as this season.

Fans are already brimming with excitement over the team’s fortune.

“I think it is a great addition to the franchise,” longtime Colts fan Duane Bean said. “Richardson is a high risk, high reward. You

can’t teach his strengths, but you can coach his weaknesses. With (coach) Steichen, I’m sure Anthony will bloom in the (colts’) offense.”

If Richardson plays in the first game of this season, it will be the seventh consecutive season that the Indianapolis Colts have started the season with a new quarterback. Hopefully, Richardson’s prowess will put an end to this inconsistency.

Fans cannot wait to see the impact and success Anthony Richardson has playing with the Indianapolis Colts.

Contact multi-media staff writer Noral Parham via phone at 317-762-7846 or email at NoralP@IndyRecorder.com. Follow him on Twitter @NoralParham.

Palacio’s two homeruns power Indians past Clippers, 8-5

By NORAL PARHAM III
NoralP@IndyRecorder.com

The Indianapolis Indians achieved an unforgettable victory over the Columbus Clippers. The game was held at Victory Field in Indianapolis, and fans were treated to an exciting matchup between these two minor league baseball powerhouses.

The Indians got off to a promising start, scoring five runs in the first inning. These efforts came off the bats of Ryan Vilade, Josh Bissonette and a home run courtesy of Josh Palacios.

The Indians also scored one more run in the bottom of the fifth thanks to Aaron Shackelford’s single, widening their lead to Indians 6-0.

The Columbus Clippers did not respond until the second half of the sixth inning. Bryan Rocchio knocked a triple on a line drive that allowed Tyler Freeman and Bo Naylor to cross home plate, leading the Clippers to trail the Indians 6-2.

Indianapolis responded with another home run

from Josh Palacios in the bottom of the seventh, causing them to lead 8-2.

However, the Columbus Clippers did not give up. In the top of the eighth inning, Bo Naylor slammed his fifth home run of the year, bringing the score to 8-4.

The Clippers carried the momentum in the final inning with a sacrifice fly from Richie Palacios.

Unfortunately for Columbus, their velocity would come to a halt after Richie Palacio’s late-game heroics.

The Indians secured the victory 8-5.

The win against the Columbus Clippers marked Indianapolis’ tenth win of the season. The Indians are currently the No. 8 seed in the International League West. Their next game is May 2 against the No. 3 seed Toledo (17-9).

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City League Championship game



Women gather to celebrate City League Championship game. Attendees include Doneisha Poesy, Angela Hill, Matzine Sanchez-Gutierrez, LaKeisha Zackery and Shannon Williams. (Photo/Stacia Sloss)

