

Friday, December 26, 2025

Volume 40 Number 45



Warren Weekly

Your Hometown Newspaper

PO Box 695, Warren IN 46792 • 260/375-6290 • email: editor@warrenweeklyindiana.com

Thought for the Week: "I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year." Charles Dickens

RECEPTIONIST CARRIES ON FAMILY TRADITION OF CARING FOR OTHERS

Continuing a family legacy of service that spans three generations, Bonnie Meyers takes pride in welcoming residents, families and staff in her part-time role as a receptionist at Heritage Pointe of Warren, the senior living community where her grandmother and mother once worked.



Meyers' connection to the community began decades before she joined the staff. Her grandmother, Celia Rublek, worked as an administrative assistant to longtime administrator Dewey Souder, who served until 1965, when the community was known as the United Methodist Memorial Home. Her mother, Anne Brauchla, was a seamstress who oversaw the community's sewing room and later became a resident. "I was married in the Applegate Chapel at Heritage Pointe in 1972, by the Reverend Souder, the administrator at that time," she says.

Growing up in Warren, Meyers often visited Heritage Pointe, where she had experiences that sparked her interest in caring for older adults.

"I really liked the older people, and they really liked visiting with younger people," she says.

Meyers, 73, and her husband, David, moved to a villa at Heritage Pointe in 2017, attracted by the community's amenities and a view of the 9-hole golf course. Retirement, however, didn't suit them.

"We thought we'd retire, golf and goof off. After a year, we thought, 'That's not for us,'" she says.

A former certified nursing assistant who spent 15 years working at Heritage Pointe, Meyers accepted a receptionist position when the opportunity arose in 2019. She was already volunteering in the gift shop and helping with activities.

"I wanted to be out of the house and be active," she says. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she staffed the entrance to the skilled nursing at Heritage Pointe, screening visitors and ensuring masks and temperature checks were completed. Today, she greets visitors at the front desk, assists residents, answers phones and provides clerical support. She easily got to know the residents and their loved ones. She views the front desk as a critical link for families. "We are a lifeline for families when they call or come in," she says.

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TRASH PICK UP

Warren's Holiday Trash Collection Schedule for Town routes will be Saturday, December 27th and Saturday, January 3rd.

COUNCIL NOTES

The Town Council of the Town of Warren met Monday, December 15, 2025 in a Regular Meeting at Assembly Hall, Council Meeting Room, 131 N. Wayne St, in accordance with rules of Council and applicable law.

Those present were: Council Members, Steve Buzzard, Ron Boxell, Michelle Schweikhardt, Jeremy Rufener; Clerk-Treasurer, Marilyn Morrison; Employees, Dennis Spitler, Dustin Fortney, Scott Canady,; Others.

Ben Adams, Commonwealth Engineering, submitted a draft letter to Indiana

Finance Authority, SRF, detailing planning for use of the monies remaining in the loan issued for Water improvements. Buzzard moved, seconded by Boxell to support the plan. Approved unanimously. Also discussed was Industrial Pretreatment amendment to the Town Code to be more closely aligned with IDEM. After review, consideration of an Ordinance to amend Code and the Industrial Pretreatment Enforcement Response Plan were moved to the January 12th meeting for action. An update to the Study of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and need for expansion is still in progress.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 13, November 10, Executive Meeting of November 5 and Special Meeting of November 17th were approved as submitted.

Marshal Spitler submitted the November Activity Report.

Fire Chief Poulson had submitted the Fire Department November Activity Report.

Utility Manager Fortney reviewed the Utility/Street Department Activity Report. Requested was consideration of purchase of a snow blade for the Bobcat so as to be more effective. Submitted were quotes from Bobcat of Ft Wayne for 84' inch blade for \$3700, Truland Equipment for a 90' blade at \$4335, and W.A. Jones for a 108' blade for \$4871.40 with recommendation that the Bobcat Blade be purchased but might not be available. Buzzard moved that the Bobcat Blade be purchased but if not available the larger Truland Blade be purchased. Seconded by

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WARREN WEEKLY • Owner/Publisher: Nicki L. Zoda
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Phone: (260)375-6290 **e-mail:** editor@warrenweeklyindiana.com
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 Email and Kindle subscriptions are \$24 per year. Mail name, address, and payment to WARREN WEEKLY at: PO Box 695, Warren, IN 46792 or you can subscribe online at www.warrenweeklyindiana.com on the WW Forms tab.
 Deadline for news and/or advertising is 10 a.m. Tuesday, for that week's edition. Call if you need something in but won't have it here on time.
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Kudos, Kicks & Karats

A NEW YEAR, A NEW BEGINNING

by Bryan Golden

The New Year is a time of resolutions. It's a time when people commit to making a change in their life. Losing weight, changing jobs, saving money, making money, a new relationship, getting in shape, going back to school, or giving up smoking, are just some of the goals people set for themselves on January 1st.

Although it's possible for anyone to make a change or a new start, it takes determination, commitment, and persistence. A new goal must be your own. You have to really want it. Without a burning desire, your motivation will fade quickly. It's virtually impossible to make a change due to external pressure.

You may agree to what someone else wants you to do, but it's very difficult to succeed without an internal drive. So, in order to successfully make a change or reach a goal, you have to make sure it's what you really want.

Don't start off on the wrong foot by making excuses as to why you will probably fail. If you don't truly believe you can do it, you won't. People who do this will say something like, "I'll try to do it, but ..." Or you may hear, "I tried before and it didn't work but I'll give it another go." Before you begin, make sure the only things you are telling yourself are, "I can," "I will," and "I will do whatever it takes."

A new beginning is a three-step process. You have to first know what you want, formulate a plan to achieve it, and then take the necessary action to get it. Setting a specific goal is essential. The more detailed the better. If you want to lose weight, how much and by when? If you want a new job, what will it be and how much will it pay? If you want to save money, how much and how often?

Next, you need a plan. Just like your goal, your plan must be as detailed as possible. If you are going to lose weight, what will be your menu each week? Are you going to go on a specific diet, cut out certain foods, or just eat less? For finding a new job, what will be your strategy? Do you need a new resume? Will you look online, in the classifieds, use an employment agency, network, cold call, or all of these? If you want to save more money, in what areas will you cut back? Do you know where your money is going? Have you created a budget?

You want your plan to be doable. The smaller the steps are, the more likely you will be to succeed. Any time you feel a step is too big, break it down further. It doesn't matter how small each step is so long as you keep going and never give up.

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at Town Hall
Downtown Warren

BANQUO CHRISTIAN CHURCH
8924S 900W 35
Harold Smith, Pastor

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

BOEHMER UNITED METHODIST

Steve Nevius, Pastor
Denise Heiniger, S.S. Supt.

Sunday Worship 9:30a.m.

Sunday School 10:45a.m.

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Van Buren, Indiana 765-934-2199

Worship 9:30 a.m.

Youth Group 4:30-7:30pm at SwitchUp

Handicap Accessible

Little Panther Preschool 765.934.2099

HEALING WATERS MINISTRY —

5811 W 600 S, MT ETNA

Pastor Wayne Couch

260/515-2517

Sunday Prayer 9:15 a.m.

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Sunday Evening Service 6:00 p.m.

Daycare provided during Worship

DILLMAN UNITED BRETHREN

8888S 1100W-90, Warren 375-2779

Matt Kennedy, Pastor

Worship Service 9:00a.m.

Sunday School 10:00a.m.

HANFIELD GLOBAL METHODIST

CHURCH

101 N 400 E - Marion 765/664-8726

Curtis Bunker, Senior Pastor

Worship 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

THE NEW BEGINNING

SR 218, 2 1/8 mile west of Poneto

Steve Sutton, Pastor

765/728-2065 for more info

Sunday Worship 10:30a.m.

Thursday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

HERITAGE POINTE

Chaplains Ginny Soultz, John Moyer &

Cindy Osgood

Sunday Morning Worship 9:30 a.m.

Mon-Fri Chapel Services 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Catholic Mass 1:00p.m.

Thurs. Catholic Mass 10:30a.m.

WARREN 1st BAPTIST CHURCH

727 N Wayne St, Warren

260-375-2811

office@warrenfirsbaptist.net

Pastor Mark Joyner

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

**HILLCREST
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**
375-2510

Pastor Gale Sonny Bloom, Jr.
Bus Service 375-2510

www.warrennaz.org

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Worship 10:30 a.m.

SOLID ROCK CHURCH OF WARREN

485 Bennett Dr, Warren, IN

375-3873

John Boyanowski, Pastor

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

LANCASTER WESLEYAN

3147 W 543 S, Huntington

765.251.2322

Ron Forsythe, Pastor

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Worship 10:30 a.m.

Wednesdays:

Bible Study & Prayer 7:00 p.m.

LIBERTY CENTER BAPTIST CHURCH

694-6622

Aaron Westfall, Pastor

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Fellowship 10:00a.m.

Worship 10:15a.m.

Tues. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

Wed. Choir 6:30p.m.

Monthly Meetings

1st Mon Ministry Team 7:00 p.m.

3rd Sat Mens Prayer Breakfast 8:00 am

4th Mon ABW 1:30 pm

**LIBERTY CENTER
COMMUNITY CHURCH**

Pastor Diane Samuels

Fellowship Time 9:00a.m.

Morning Worship 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

THE CHURCH AT MCNATT

375-4359

Daniel Tucker, Pastor

Lois Slusher, Supt.

Brittney Miller, Youth & Family Dir.

Coffee Fellowship 8:30 a.m.

Worship 9:15 a.m.

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

Bible Study - Wed. 6:30 p.m.

MT. ETNA COMMUNITY LIFE CHURCH

260/468-2148 Sr 9 & 124

Rev. Dr. Scotty Murphy

Good Morning Church (Sunday School

for all ages 9:00 - 9:45

Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00

Everyone is Welcome

**SALAMONIE
CHURCH OF BRETHREN**

468-2412

Mel Zumbrun, Pastor

Worship 9:30 a.m.

Church School 10:45a.m.

1st CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF WARREN

375-2102

www.firstccw.net

Troy Drayer, Senior Pastor

Takarra Myers, Youth Director

office@firstccw.net

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Youth Sunday School during

Worship Service

Youth Group-Wed 6:00 p.m.

Communion 1st Sunday of the Month

VB CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

765/934-3321 Parsonage

Jeff Slater, Pastor

Jim Knight, Superintendent

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Adult Worship 10:30 a.m.

Children's Church 10:30a.m.

Evening Praise Hour 6:00p.m.

Hour of Power (Wed) 7:00p.m.

VB CHURCH OF THE VINE

765-934-1431

Pastor Brad Hensley

vanburencurchurchofthevine@gmail.com

Worship Service 9:30 am

Sunday School 10:45am

Not Home Alone - Wed 3:00 pm

Prayer Group (Thur) 6:30pm

AREA NEWS

MORE PAGE 1

Rufener, the motion was approved unanimously.

Morrison read a notice from the Town Attorney noting that he had been notified that proper procedure had not been followed in making appointment to Town Council due to Buzzard's retirement and that action was required to make the appointment official. Morrison noted that Buzzard's notice of resignation had been forwarded to the County Clerk. Rufener moved, seconded Boxell, to appoint Scott Canady to Town Council effective January 1, 2026. Motion approved unanimously.

Wage and Benefits Ordinances 2025- 14, 15, 16 as presented at the November 10th meeting were submitted for consideration of Adoption. Buzzard moved, seconded by Sweikhardt, to adopt Ordinances 2026-14,15,16. Motion approved unanimously.

Morrison reported that an Ordinance for consideration of setting a Stormwater Utility was on hold as the consultant was doing further exploration of methods.

Morrison submitted two proposals for a Software System update as the current system is being phased out. Quoting were BS&A/Boyce and Frey System. Reviewed was a comparison chart of the company's offerings and a cost comparison. As the quotes were multi-faceted, a direct comparison was not possible. Following

discussion, Schweikhardt moved, seconded by Rufener, to contract with BS&A/Boyce with initial cost of \$23,425 compared to Frey at \$29,823.09. Motion approved unanimously. Due to backlog, the initial start up would not be done until August, 2026.

A contract with ENTRUST, Electric Engineers, for the year 2026 in the amount of \$10,000 was submitted with note that the contract is identical to the one held in 2025. Buzzard moved, seconded by Boxell, to accept the contract. Motion approved unanimously.

Buzzard moved, seconded by Sweikhardt, to approve Claims Registers for Oct and November. Motion approved unanimously.

Buzzard moved, seconded by Boxell to approve the November Payroll Accounts Register. Motion approved unanimously.

Morrison reported that Keystone End-of-Year training is underway with sessions being held through Wednesday.

Sweikhardt reported that she had worked with DNR in preparation for

possible grant application for Tower Park improvements in 2027. Several planning documents had been forwarded and packets will be prepared. Schweikhardt also updated on a recent WHARMM (Warren, Huntington, Roanoke, Markle, Mt Etna) meeting noting that discussion centered on need to prepare for Budget Impacts in the next few years due to action by the State Legislature in tax restructuring.

The next meeting of Town Council is scheduled for January 12, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

Council Member Buzzard was thanked for his years of service to the Town.

MEMORIAL BOWS

Bows placed on the Town of Warren Christmas Tree this year were in honor of the following. White ribbons for those who are deceased, Red for those who are living, and Yellow for those who are Veterans or Active Duty.

Sara Sumwalt, white; Cooper Lows, red; Kahlen Lows, red; Bill Lows Sr, white; Angel Marie/Charley,

white; Bruce E Laymon, Ronny Sheets, yellow; Deb yellow; Georgina G. Baker, white; John Buzzard, Laymon, white; Ruskin white; Tonya Buzzard, Laymon, white; Lucy E. white; Lloyd & Gwen Laymon, white; David B. Mains, white; Carl & Laymon, white; Thomas L Pauline Scheib, white; Laymon, yellow; Gordon & Thea Cocklin, white; Mark Cocklin, white; Rodrigo Botello, white; Dollie Carter, white; Bud Lee, white; Ty Allen Green, white; Hugh & LouAnn Shafer, white; Kimmy Shafer, white; Santos R.S. Villanueva, white; Shelly Stafford, white; Bob Zimmerman, white; Fred & Lela Zimmerman, white; George & Helen Bentley, white; Vern & Maribelle Sparks, white; Bill Evans, white; Eloise Evans, white; Jerry Williams, white; Janice Williams, white; Bill Martin, white; Lewis A. Smith, yellow; Roy & Cleo Stuber, white; Burton & Elizabeth Gebhart, yellow; Andy Gebhart, red; Ben & Eliz Govel, yellow; Sam Stuber, Yellow; Bernard Gebhart, yellow; John & Lana Stuber, yellow; Gerald & Maxine Sheets, white; Mark Pinkerton (3), white;

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Community Calendar

Items listed here are open to the public. If there is an admission charge or items are for sale or a donation is necessary, there is a one-time \$5 fee to be listed. Events can be listed for as long as 6 months. (If an event is canceled, please notify WW.) Only event, place, time, and sponsor, for events in Warren, and the surrounding area will be listed.

Dec 24		CHRISTMAS EVE
Dec 25		CHRISTMAS DAY
Dec 31		NEW YEARS EVE
Jan 1		NEW YEARS DAY
Jan 7	Noon	W - Chamber of Commerce Luncheon @ KBC
Jan 7	7:00p	V - Town Council Meeting @ Town Hall
Jan 12	5:00p	W - Town Council Meeting @ Assembly Hall
Jan 13	6:30p	W - Salamonie Summer Festival Meeting @ KBC
Jan 19	6:30p	W - KBC Board Meeting @ KBC

Bread of Life Food Pantry - Wednesdays - 2 - 4:00pm at KBC;

Bargain Basement - Friday & Saturday - 9 - 4 at KBC

These Events Can Also Be Found at www.warrenweeklyindiana.com



- Jeff



AREA NEWS CONTINUED

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Jordan Family, white; Jordan Family, yellow; Kim Penrod "Gigi", white; Allan Penrod "Grampy", white; Wayne & Joenita Keller, white; Dustin Conner, yellow; Marge Jones, white; Carlene Jackson, white; Guy Jackson, white; David Jentes, white; Charles Crown, white; Charleen Ruble, red; Jen Ruble, yellow; Roger Ruble, yellow; Sandy Hethcote, white; Coleen Franklin, white; Myron Franklin, white; Jane Souers, white; Dwight Boxell, white; Margaret Boxell, white; Brett Kiel, white; Pee Wee Miller, yellow; Jon Ruble, yellow; Jim Joyce, yellow; Bob Rice, yellow; Athalene Rice, white; Nathan Mills, white; Willa Dene Schwob, white; Dale Schwob, yellow; Jimmy Schwob, white; Janice Brown, white; Barbara Brown, white; Dale Brown, yellow; George Sliger, yellow; Linda & Marvin Gephart, white.

WARREN WEEKLY
WILL NOT BE
PUBLISHED NEXT
WEEK.

**BE SAFE, PLAN AHEAD,
AND DRIVE SOBER FOR
HOLIDAY TRAVEL**

AAA predicts the heaviest travel during the weekends before and after Christmas

INDIANA —AAA predicts at least 109 million travelers will hit the road across the U.S. this year for the Christmas holiday, more than 2.5 million of those from Indiana. As Hoosiers drive to their holiday destinations, INDOT urges motorists to plan ahead, travel safely, and drive sober as increased traffic is expected starting Saturday, December 20.

"Motorists should expect increased traffic and potential delays as early as this weekend for holiday travel," said INDOT Commissioner Lyndsay Quist. "While the weather looks favorable, we still encourage drivers to plan ahead, practice patience, and allow for extra travel time. We want everyone to reach their holiday destinations safely."

AAA expects the busiest travel days to be Saturday, December 20, and the weekend after Christmas, from Friday, December 26, through Sunday, December

28, with heavier traffic between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. on those days. Traffic restrictions related to maintenance or construction should be minimal outside of longer-term projects. Visit 511in.org or download the INDOT TrafficWise app on your mobile device to see current closures and restrictions, view traffic cameras, and plan your route.

Buckle Up Phone Down

While just under seven percent of Indiana drivers don't wear their seatbelts, they account for 45% of passenger car fatalities, and texting while driving increases the risk of a crash by 50%. Buckling up and putting the phone down are two simple actions drivers and their passengers can take 100%

of the time, not just during holiday travels, to prevent crashes — or survive if one occurs.

Drive Sober

December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month, a timely reminder to never drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. From 2019-2023, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that

more than 4,900 people died in drunk-driving crashes during the month of December. It is never safe to drink and drive. Make a plan to use a rideshare, designate a sober driver, or use public transit so everyone makes it home safely.

INDOT Hoosier Helpers

The Hoosier Helper Safety Service Patrol, sponsored by GEICO, will be active this holiday season. The purpose of the program is to help keep interstates safe, provide traffic control and minor medical care at crash sites, and offer limited roadside assistance like changing a tire.

Since 1991, INDOT Hoosier Helpers have assisted more than 400,000 motorists, driven more than 20 million miles

and responded to over 1.2 million incidents statewide. Hoosier Helpers cover 177 miles of interstate in central, northwest and southern Indiana, including the Indianapolis and Louisville metropolitan areas and Gary. Drivers in need of assistance from a Hoosier Helper should contact INDOT Customer Service at 855-INDOT4U (463-6848).

Stay Informed

Motorists in Indiana can monitor road closures, road conditions, and traffic alerts any time via:

* Facebook: facebook.com/indianadepartmentoftransportation

* X (formerly Twitter): @INDOT

* TrafficWise: 511in.org

* Mobile App: iTunes App Store and the Google Play store for Android

**FREE EXPUNGEMENT
PRESENTATION**

A free presentation by local attorney, Heidi Fowler, explaining Indiana's Expungement Law and local resources for legal assistance will be given on Tuesday, January 20th from 6 – 7 p.m. The event will be held at Ivy Tech Community College - North

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Season's Greetings

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EXP. 12/31/25



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
Thank You for your support and looking forward to serving you in 2023.

Blue Poppy DESIGN
Tamara 260-228-0390 10715 S Meridian Rd, Warren

Lisa M. Garrott
Attorney at Law
Estate Planning &
Business Law



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visit us at: www.hrglaw.com



AREA NEWS CONTINUED

MORE PAGE 4

Campus, 3701 Dean Drive, Tech Center Building, Room TC-1225. Look for the building with a greenhouse facing St. Joe Road.

Indiana's law allows a one-time opportunity for some low-level convictions, misdemeanors, and arrest records to be expunged (sealed) from criminal records. The Second Chance Initiative, a partnership of the Volunteer Center, the Volunteer Lawyer Program and Indiana Legal Services, offers individuals that meet qualification requirements the opportunity to have their Indiana conviction records expunged.

Volunteer Center Executive Director Ani Etter states, "A criminal record is one of the largest

obstacles to better housing, employment, and education. The Second Chance Initiative provides an option for low to moderate income individuals to have a chance at a better future."

For more information, visit www.volunteerfortwayne.org.

DEAN'S LIST

Kimber Cobbs of Warren, IN, was named to the dean's list at Olivet Nazarene University during the recently completed fall 2025 semester. To qualify for inclusion on the dean's list, a student must have been enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student and must have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or

higher on a 4.00 grading scale.

Olivet Nazarene University is an accredited Christian, liberal arts university offering more than 200 areas of undergraduate and graduate study, including the Doctor of Education in ethical leadership. Olivet's 275-acre park-like main campus is in Bourbonnais, Illinois, 45 miles south of Chicago. Additionally, Olivet offers Graduate and Continuing Studies via online education. From Oxford to Tokyo, hundreds of Olivet students also experience the global classroom each year through study abroad opportunities, internships and worldwide mission trips.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

by Dr. Glenn Mollette

We can't think about December without thinking about Christmas. December is saturated with Christmas. Christmas shopping, Christmas baking, Christmas Carols, Christmas television programs, Christmas religious services and the Christmas spirit.

Christmas has an accelerated pace of hustle and bustle but it also has an eerie haunting side. I was going through my cell phone contact list this morning and was appalled at how many contacts I have in my phone who are now deceased. Every time I turn around I discover an acquaintance has passed. For so many of us, we can't really arise to the crescendo side of

Christmas celebrations without wading through the mire of grief. We think about parents, spouses, children and friends whom we loved so much who are not here to celebrate Christmas with us. We remember old times that were good times. Those times aren't as possible as they once were. So, this presents a major hurdle for many of us to overcome and it's not easy.

Christmas presents a yearly challenge for us to create a new and special time. What was, will not be again. Thus, we have to recreate our holidays which means they will be different. They can't be the same, because what was no longer exists. Therefore, what was, cannot happen again.

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God Bless your families this wonderous season! Thank you for continuing to trust us and support the community in all the many things Warren offers!

Warren Service & Supply

May the
Christmas gifts of Peace,
Love and Hope
be yours this Christmas Day
and throughout the Year.



GENEALOGY REPORT

LEAVITT

Kenneth B. "Kenny" Leavitt, 58, beloved father, grandfather, brother and friend, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025, at Marion Health, leaving behind a rich tapestry of memories and a legacy of laughter.

Born on July 15, 1967, to the late Sherry Leavitt and Sarah Hammitt, he grew up with a spirit full of enthusiasm.

A proud graduate of Eastbrook High School - Class of 1985, Kenny pursued his passion for mechanics at University of Northwestern Ohio, earning his degree in 1986 and embarking on a notable career as a diesel mechanic.

His talent and tenacity saw him thrive as a heavy equipment operator and as the owner of Leavitt Excavating, where his affection for large, heavy-duty vehicles found its perfect outlet.

Kenny's commitment to his community was evident in his active participation with Upland Lions Club and his dedicated service as a volunteer firefighter with Upland Volunteer Fire Department.

His love for people shone brightly through his charismatic personality, effortlessly making those around him laugh and feel at ease.

Kenny cherished his time at Central Christian Church of Van Buren, attending with his son, Kody.

Among his many joys, none surpassed his love for his grandchildren. The highlight of his life was spent creating beautiful memories with them, whether through shared laughter, weekend adventures or simple moments spent in each other's company.

An enthusiast of all things NASCAR, Kenny reveled in the thrill of the races and going to truck pulls and enjoyed road trips through the Smoky Mountains, where his love for nature found its home.

He is survived by his daughter, Katie (Kyle) Stanley; son, Kody Leavitt; grandchildren, Natalie, John and Hadley; siblings, Laurie Leavitt, Patty (John) Schlachter, Kathryn (Kevin) Carpenter and Jerry Leavitt; close family friends, Chris Barker and Hadley Martin; numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Kenny was preceded in death by his parents, Sherry and Sarah, and son, Kenneth "Robert" Leavitt.

In honor of Kenneth B. Leavitt, funeral services will be on Friday, Dec. 19, 2025, at 1 p.m. at Jones-Smith Chapel of Armes-Hunt Life Celebration Funeral Home and Cremation Services, 259 N. Main St., Upland, with Pastor Tony Miner officiating.

Visitation will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday prior to the service.

Burial will take place at Jefferson Cemetery, Upland.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to an animal rescue of your choice, honoring Kenny's love for all creatures great and small.

JOHNSON

James E. Johnson, 81, of Huntington, passed away on Friday, Dec. 19, 2025, at his residence.

He was born on January 17, 1944, in Weeksbury, Ky., to the late James Ellis and Ora Mae (Coleman) Johnson.

James married Margaret A. (VanWyk) Price on January 3, 1981. She preceded him in death on November 7, 2024.

He worked for Majestic, Huntington, for 34 years.

James enjoyed woodworking.

He was an avid fisherman and hunter.

James is survived by seven sons, Todd (Kathy) Johnson, of Huntington, Tracy Johnson, of Huntington, Rodger Johnson, of Huntington, John Price, of Warren, Larry "Butch" (Karen) Price, of Huntington, Mark (Londa) Price, of LA, and Dennis (Mitzi) Price, of Salem; three daughters, Lorie (Kenny) Foust, of Andrews, Pam (Sam) Stouder, of Huntington, and Trina Johnson, of Phoenix, Ariz.; two sisters, Oma Jo (Kermit) Johnson, of Miamisburg, Ohio, and Linda (Denton) Houston, of Jenkins, Ky.; 17 grandchildren, Jay, Telinda, Trisha, Sandra, Brandi, Joshua, Rochelle, Joseph, Jacob, Michelle, Anthony, Kelsey, Devan, Joey, Emma, James and Andrew; many great-grandchildren.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by one sister, Margaret Jones, and a grandchild, Jeffery Price.

Calling hours will be on Friday, Dec. 26, 2025, from 10 a.m. to noon followed by a noon funeral service at McElhaney Funeral Home, 715 N. Jefferson St., Huntington, with Pastor Jason Fields officiating.

Burial will be at Monument City Memorial Cemetery, Andrews.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Huntington County Humane Shelter in care of McElhaney Funeral Home, 715 N. Jefferson St., Huntington, IN 46750.

HOWELL

Kenneth Blaine Howell, 73, of Huntington, passed away at 1:09 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 19, 2025, at The Waters of Huntington.

He was born on January 5, 1952, in Marion the son of Rex Howell and Bonnita (Ramsey) Howell.

Blaine graduated from Eastbrook High School - Class of 1970.

He worked at RCA, Marion, for many years as well as in construction when he worked in the UP.

Blaine was an avid outdoorsman.

He loved hunting, fishing and camping.

In the 70s and 80s, Blaine supported his family by trapping and selling furs as a professional.

Survivors include his two sons, Jay (Bobbie) Howell, of "Chari" White; a sister-in-law, Huntington, and Chad Coulter, Lana Chapman; two of Gas City; two daughters, grandchildren, Miranda Zoch Bev (Tom) Mauger, of Fort Wayne, and Heather Howell, of Kentucky; two grandsons, Michael (Chris) Howell, of Indianapolis, and Reagan Mauger, of Fort Wayne; four granddaughters, Melissa Howell, of Huntington, Mercedes Gamble, of Fort Wayne, Cheyene Gamble, of Fort Wayne, and Presley Tylynn, of Fort Wayne; six great-grandchildren; two sisters, Carmen (Jerry) Anderson, of Warren, and, Robin Groves, of Warren.

Blaine is preceded in death by his father, Rex E. Howell, mother, Bonnita Howell, son, Josh Howell, grandson, Harrison Howell, grandfather, James Howell, and brother-in-law, Ken Groves.

There will be no services at this time.

TOWNE

Mary L. Towne, 95, of Upland, and formerly of Huntington, passed away on Friday, Dec. 19, 2025, at University Nursing Center, Upland.

She was a 1948 graduate of Allentown (Pa.) High School and a 1953 graduate of Huntington College with a bachelor's degree in education.

Mary later earned her master's degree from St. Francis University, Fort Wayne.

She was a former member of College Park United Brethren Church and a current member of The Church at McNatt.

Mary was past president of Evening Missionary Society.

She was a Sunday school teacher of Galilean Class.

Mary was in the Who's Who of College Students.

She was born on July 7, 1930, in Allentown, Pa., the daughter of the late Robert P. and Lenore Clara Marie (Frey) Chapman Sr.

Mary was united in marriage to Evan T. Towne on July 1, 1951, in Allentown, Pa. Evan

preceded her in death on August 26, 2019.

Survivors include two daughters, Linda (Dick) Schweikhardt, of Van Buren, and Komeh (Joe) Zilka, of Van Buren; a sister, Charlotte Buren; a brother, Robert Chapman Jr.

Visitation will be on Monday, Dec. 29, 2025, from 10 to 11 a.m. at Myers Funeral Home, Huntington Chapel, 2901 Guilford St., Huntington.

Funeral service will be on Monday, Dec. 29, 2025, at 11 a.m. immediately following the visitation at Myers Funeral Home, Huntington Chapel.

Interment will be at Van Buren Cemetery in Van Buren.

Memorial Donations can be made out to The Church at McNatt in care of Myers Funeral Home, 2901 Guilford St., Huntington, IN 46750.

NUNLEY

Rory P. Nunley, 62, of Bluffton, passed away Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025, at University Park Health Care Center in Bluffton.

He was born Jan. 19, 1963, in Bluffton to Franklin and Dorothy D. (Meeks) Nunley.

He married Donna Pilkinton on July 31, 1986, and she preceded him in death May 2, 2020.

He is survived by his three children, Micheal A. Nunley, Franklin J. Nunley and Dorothy Pamer; and 10 grandchildren. He is also survived by his mother Dorothy Nunley; brother, Roger Nunley; and five sisters Betty (Jan) Masterson, Ann (David) Alvaro, Judy (Russell) Baur, Cynthia (Darryl) Smith and Denise (Steven) Heiniger.

He was preceded in death by his wife Donna Nunley; his grandson, Aiden Nunley; his father, Franklin Nunley; and a brother, Donald Nunley.

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AREA NEWS CONTINUED

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A private family service will take place with burial at Mossburg Cemetery in Liberty Center.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

SPARKS

Max E. Sparks, 77, of Huntington, Indiana, passed away at home on the family farm on Sunday, December 21, 2025.



Max was born on December 7, 1947, in Huntington County, Indiana. He was a 1966 graduate of Lancaster School in Huntington County and spent his entire life devoted to farming. A lifetime farmer, Max found both purpose and contentment in the land. Farming was not only his livelihood, but also his greatest hobby and passion. He especially enjoyed visiting with neighboring farmers.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Vern E. Sparks and Maribelle L. (Lahr) Sparks; his brother, Danny J. Sparks; and his nephew, Jeremy Sparks.

Surviving are his wife, Doris Sparks, of Huntington; his brother, James L. (Vicki) Sparks, of Huntington; his sister, Linda E. (John) Allen, of Warren, Indiana; his nieces, Jody (Allen) Saunders, Shelley (Allen) Kiel, Tiffany (Sparks) Grant, and Kari (Sparks) Dietrich and his nephew, Adam Sparks.

To honor his wishes, no viewing or services will be held.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Glancy-H. Brown & Son Funeral Home, Warren.

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The baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He was God in the flesh. He came with a divine purpose to bring joy and life. He brought joy to Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the wisemen who traveled from afar to worship him. Unfortunately, Jesus was troubling to some who did not understand his mission and purpose.

This month of December we will not forget those who were so special to us. They helped make Christmas bright. Let's focus on the one who really brings light to our lives and is the light of the world and that's the baby Jesus, who said, "I am the light of the world." We need his light to navigate the darkness. Yes, the world has a dark side. Death and grief are difficult to navigate. We need the Christ child who came to help and save us to lead us through this

month and the rest of our lives.

This December let's focus on loving those we know and those who are here. Let's draw close to each other. Jesus will help us. He said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." He will make our journey lighter and brighter. Reach out to others. Don't wait for your phone to ring. You make the call. Send the text and reach out. Spread God's love and spread well wishes and goodness to all you know.

When we give love and hope to others, it comes back to us. If we invest in others, the investment in some way will be returned. Jesus is our example. He came to earth. He lived, loved and walked among us. We are the benefactors of his life. As we look to Him this season, may others be the beneficiaries of the Christmas spirit that dwells in you.

MORE PAGE 1

Meyers is also deeply involved in the wider Warren community. She recently led the effort to create the city's new Veterans Memorial Park, inspired in part by her husband's service in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. During her visits to other small towns that have veterans' memorials, she wondered why Warren didn't.

"I'm very passionate about it," she says. "I see how much it means to veterans' families."

She also serves on the Warren Library Board, is active in her church and stays fit with chair yoga and swimming at Heritage Pointe. Her husband continues to work part-time and enjoys spending time in their villa's spacious garage.

"There is a lot of room to work on stuff," he says. "I like fixing things."

Home maintenance is one of the many conveniences the couple values at Heritage Pointe. "They do everything for us," Meyers says.

As receptionist, Meyers hopes her work reflects the standard of care she believes defines Heritage Pointe, which offers independent living, assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation and skilled nursing.

"It's the way they serve people and do things that stands out," she says. "They treat people with dignity 24/7."

ASK SHIP

Q: I am 76 years old and have a supplement Plan G. The plan has increased each year and it's getting very expensive. I am wanting to change Medigap policies to save money but I am worried that I won't be accepted due to my health. Is there any guarantee that would allow me to change plans?

A: Under normal federal rules, someone is NOT guaranteed enrollment into a Medigap policy after their first 6-months on Medicare Part B or during other special circumstance-based situations. Someone can join or change their Medigap policy any time of the year BUT only if they can find a company willing to accept them.

The good news is that starting 1/1/26, Indiana's new Medigap "birthday rule" (HEA 1226) goes into effect. This law guarantees acceptance into a new company's Medigap policy.

Here how it works:

1. This is a new Indiana law to allow those age 65 or older on a Medicare Supplement (Medigap), a guaranteed opportunity to change companies. This does not allow someone on a Medicare Advantage plan guaranteed rights to join a Medigap. This also

does not allow those under age 65 on Medigaps to change policies.

2. How it will work: Within 60 days of your birthday EACH year, you will have an opportunity to go from one company's Medigap to another—guaranteed. Guaranteed means that they MUST accept you and cannot judge you based on your preexisting medical conditions. Plans can still base your premium rate off your age, gender, zip code and tobacco use.

3. The law states that you are only guaranteed to get the SAME lettered Medigap plan that you currently have, but from a new company. For example, if you have a Plan G, you would only be guaranteed for a Plan G at any other company that sells it. You would not have guaranteed rights to drop to a Plan N or increase to a Plan F, for example.

4. To enroll in a new plan, you would simply need to make calls to insurance companies that sell Medigap policies OR meet with a licensed insurance agent/broker that can assist with the enrollment.

This new law will be beneficial to those that are looking to reduce their

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Losing 20 pounds may feel overwhelming, but dropping two pounds a month doesn't seem too bad. If you keep at it for 10 months, you will reach your goal. Saving \$3000 might appear beyond reach, but cutting back \$9 a day on family spending is manageable.

Finally, you must take action. The best goals and greatest plans will go nowhere without action. The reason you divided your plan into small sections is so it would be easy to take action, one day at a time. All you have to do is keep going, until you achieve your goal.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2024 Bryan Golden

AREA NEWS CONTINUED

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monthly premiums for their Medigap by price shopping for a lower priced company.

If you run into issues with companies denying your enrollment, you can contact the Indiana Department of Insurance to file a complaint.

If you have questions related to Medicare, call SHIP at (800) 452-4800 or find SHIP online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find SHIP on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

FIRST DAY HIKES ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

Kick off America's semiquincentennial with other outdoor lovers at one of the many First Day Hikes offered Jan. 1 at Indiana's state parks and lakes.

First Day Hikes are a healthy way to start the new year. They offer a chance to get outside, exercise, enjoy nature, and connect with friends. Find one near you at IN.gov/INStateParkEvents.

The hikes are organized by Indiana State Parks in cooperation with America's State Parks. They will take place in all 50 states. First Day Hikes originated more than 30 years ago at the Blue Hills Reservation, a state park in Milton, Massachusetts. The program was launched to foster healthy lifestyles and promote year-round recreation at state parks. For more information, visit the America's State Parks website, stateparks.org.

Indiana's hikes are listed below. More may be added, so check the website if your favorite place isn't listed. Make sure to wear sturdy, comfortable shoes and dress for the weather.

- Brookville Lake. Meet at the Campground Shelter at Mounds State Recreation Area at 11 a.m. to hike the Wildlife Wander Trail, a .75-mile hike that should take approximately 45 minutes.

- Brown County State Park. Meet at 11 a.m. at the Olympic Pool parking area for an out and back hike on Salt Creek Trail, rated easy, a 2-mile total hike on which you can learn about the trail and the history of the bridges over Salt Creek. Hot chocolate will be provided at the trailhead.

- Chain O'Lakes State Park. Meet at the boat rental parking lot at 11 a.m. This guided hike is about 1.5 miles over easy terrain. Hot cocoa and cookies will be served afterward. A \$1 donation for the cookies is suggested.

- Charlestown State Park. Meet at the parking lot at 10 a.m. for a 2.5-mile hike to Rose Island on trails 3 and 4. This hike takes approximately two hours and is considered moderately rugged.

- Clifty Falls State Park. Meet at the outdoor pool at 10 a.m. This 1.5-hour rugged hike will explore the canyons and ravines of Clifty Falls. Refreshments will be provided afterward.

- Deam Lake State Recreation Area. Meet at the parking lot at the entrance of the campground at 10 a.m. for a 2-mile hike of the Lake Vista Loop. Runners of any level can meet at the same location to run a 3- or 5-mile loop through the campground and adjacent roads. Hot chocolate and coffee will be available before and after the event.

- Falls of the Ohio State Park. Meet at the overlook deck near the front Interpretive Center doors at 1 p.m. for a guided fossil bed hike. This hike is subject to Ohio River water levels and current weather conditions. The Interpretive Center will be closed, and there is a \$2 daily self-service parking fee for use of the parking lot.

- Fort Harrison State Park. Meet at Delaware Lake Shelter at 10 a.m. or 1 p.m. for a 2-mile hike on Harrison Trace, a paved trail. Hot chocolate will be provided at noon.

- Hardy Lake. Meet at the main trailhead at 11 a.m. for a 2.5-mile hike to some of the

most beautiful parts of the park.

- Harmonie State Park. Meet at the campground overflow parking lot at 1 p.m. CT for a moderate hike of Trail 5 or a leisurely walk on the paved campground roads. Hot cocoa and cookies will be available afterward.

- Indiana Dunes State Park. Meet at the City West Shelter for a 2-mile loop along the beach and Trail 7 starting at 10 a.m. CT. Enjoy snacks and a cozy campfire provided by Friends of the Indiana Dunes.

- Lieber State Recreation Area. Meet at the Nature Center at noon for a 1.5-mile hike on the Trout Lily Trail. Hot chocolate, cookies and a warm fire will be available afterward at the Nature Center.

- Lincoln State Park. Meet at the beach house at noon CT for a 2-mile hike that covers Civilian Conservation Corps history. Snacks and hot beverages available after the hike.

- McCormick's Creek State Park. Meet at Centennial Shelter for hot chocolate and cookies, then hike along Echo Canyon Trail at your own pace. The event runs from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

- Mississinewa Lake. Join Upper Wabash Interpretive Services staff at 10 a.m. for a 1-mile stroll through the woods. Advance registration is requested by emailing TRody@dnr.IN.gov.

- Monroe Lake. Meet at the Bay View Shelter in Fairfax State Recreation Area. Participants can walk or run a 1.3-, 2.9-, or 3.7-mile course. Advance registration is available through Dec. 30 for \$20 at bit.ly/monroefirstday. Same-day registration is \$25, cash or check only.

- Mounds State Park. Meet at the Nature Center at 5:30 p.m. for a guided hike to the Great Mound. The hike is along the paved accessible path. The Nature Center will open at 4:30 p.m. to welcome hikers with cookies and hot chocolate.

- O'Bannon Woods State Park. Join park staff at the Nature Center at 10 a.m. for

a 1.5-mile easy hike on the road. The park's oxen, Carter and Cash, will join the hike.

- Ouabache State Park. Meet at the bison enclosure parking lot at 1 p.m. for a hike around the bison enclosure. The hike is on a mostly level gravel surface and includes a stop at the feeding station to observe the bison up close.

- Patoka Lake. Meet at the archery range at noon for a winter discovery hike.

- Pokagon State Park. Meet at the CCC Shelter for a brief Friends of Pokagon member meeting and presentation of park volunteer awards at 2 p.m., followed by a 2.5-mile hike on a moderate trail. Light refreshments will be provided by the Friends of Pokagon.

- Potato Creek State Park. Meet at the Nature Center at 2 p.m. for a 1-mile moderate hike on Trail 1, then warm up around the fire with s'mores and hot drinks. Bring binoculars to be prepared for the possibility of viewing eagles and other wildlife.

- Prophetstown State Park. Meet at the Coneflower Shelter in Prairie View Picnic Area at 1 p.m. for an easy 2-mile hike.

- Raccoon State Recreation Area. Meet at 11 a.m. at the Bluebird Shelter parking lot for a 1-hour moderately rugged hike through the woods to a sandstone canyon.

- Salamonie Lake. Hike along the Tree Trail and enjoy s'mores afterward. Meet at the Interpretive Center at 4 p.m. Advance registration is requested by emailing TRody@dnr.IN.gov.

- Shades State Park. Meet at Hickory Shelter at 11 a.m. for a rugged hike of Trail 1, which will include Devil's Punch Bowl, Silver Cascade Falls, and Prospect Point. Come a few minutes early for a warm beverage and a treat.

- Shakamak State Park. Meet at the log cabin at 1 p.m. for a moderate 1-mile hike. Hot chocolate and cookies will be provided afterward.

- Spring Mill State Park. Three hikes will be offered.

For the first, meet at Spring Mill Inn at 9 a.m. for a 1.5-hour hike through three nature preserves. For the second, meet at the Gus Grissom Memorial parking lot at 10 a.m. for a .25-mile accessible hike on Trail 6 with great views of the karst landscape. For the third, join volunteers at 10 a.m. at Spring Mill Inn's front patio for a 5k or 10k trek. Afterward, meet at Spring Mill Inn for hot chocolate and snacks in the Lakeview Room.

- Starve Hollow State Recreation Area. Meet at the Forest Education Center at 1 p.m. for a Pinecone bird feeder program, then, at 2 p.m., hike around the campground and lake's edge. Light refreshments will be provided.

- Summit Lake State Park. Meet at the park office at 9 a.m. to enjoy coffee, snacks, and a craft. Afterward, hike Trail 3 to enjoy the Snowman and Friends Scavenger Hunt.

- Tippecanoe River State Park. Meet at Trail 8's parking area at 11 a.m. for a 1.2-mile hike through the Sand Hill Nature Preserve. Learn about wildlife that's active during winter as well as some of the park's resource management efforts in the nature preserve.

- Turkey Run State Park. Meet at Turkey Run Inn at 11 a.m. for a guided hike through Rocky Hollow. Hiking boots are recommended.

- Versailles State Park. Meet at the Oak Grove parking lot at 10 a.m. for a moderate 2-mile hike over sections of trails 2 and 3. Light refreshments will be available at Oak Grove Shelter after the hike.

- Whitewater Memorial State Park. Meet at Poplar Grove Shelter at 2 p.m. for a 2.5-mile hike of the Memorial Loop Trail that should take approximately 90 minutes.

Interlake Off-road State Recreation Area will also be open New Year's Day. Participants must provide their own ORV, and all ORV rules and regulations apply. The office will be open for participants to purchase their 2026 ORV pass.