

THE CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER

A Non-Partisan Publication Dedicated To The Reporting Of Your Local Government At Work
Serving Posey, Vanderburgh & Warrick Counties & Their Communities

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LOCAL COUPLE STARTS “NO CONFIDENCE” PETITION AGAINST MAYOR

By Franz Schroeder

Evansville residents Jim and Charlene Braker are fed up with secrets. More specifically, they are fed up with secret meetings and decisions made without the people's input. Like many local residents, they have decided to take a stand, and they are calling on the community to help. The Bratton's call to action is through a petition with a bold headline that reads “A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE Concerning Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel.”

The Braker's presented their petition Saturday morning at the Independence Day Tea Party on the steps of Evansville's Civic Center. The handed out page after page of the petition, and the phone never stops ringing for more. In fact, a local woman called during this interview, just three days after the start of the petition, to ask for 12 pages for her co-workers.

When asked why they started this petition, Charlene began with, “People should have input.”

“I'm angry because my local Homestead Credit was taken away. I'm upset about the arena. And most importantly, I'm upset about the back door politics,” Jim said. “But what really, it was the secret meetings that started this.”

“I think as citizens, we should have the opportunity to vote on a project with the magnitude of the arena. The citizens deserve a right to be heard. He's [Mayor Weinzapfel] telling us we aren't smart enough to make good decisions,” Jim added.

The text at the top of the No Confidence petition states, “We, the following citizens of Evansville and Vanderburgh County, Indiana, hereby publically states our opposition to the unacceptable performance of Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel . We, the following petitioners, publically state our lack of trust towards Mayor Weinzapfel for conducting and transacting public business in numerous secret caucuses. Other questionable political and economic decisions that brought us to this call for action are: the new downtown arena, loss of local Homestead Credit for 2009-2010, unnecessary annexation of the East, Northeast, and West sides of Evansville, not allowing a public referendum for the proposed arena.”

While the petition speaks volumes for itself, the Brakers want people unite and take a stand. They consider the petition a way to bridge people together.



Charlene and jim Braker proudly display their “No Confidence” petition in front of the Four Freedoms Monument.

Their son, Tim, who was also present during the interview said, “We're all fighting for the same thing. We make come from different backgrounds (like political parties, religions, experiences) but we all want the same thing. We want input in decisions that affect us.”

The Brakers, who are now retired, are also concerned about retirees and other people on fixed incomes. That's another reason they decided to take this stand. “If we don't do something during our retirement, the Lord isn't going to bless us,” said Charlene.

They also voiced their disappointment in the city council. “We

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Evansville Receives Stimulus Funds for Sewer Separation

(EVANSVILLE, IN) – Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel is announcing tonight that the City has received \$3 million in stimulus funds to help pay for the Cass Avenue Sewer Separation Project. Evansville is one of 15 communities in Indiana eligible for \$122 million in grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) which will fund wastewater and drinking water infrastructure improvements.

“These stimulus funds will reduce the impact of the Cass Avenue Sewer Separation Project on Evansville taxpayers by trimming the amount of the loan needed to cover the project cost,” said Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel. “The size and scope of this particular project alone has the potential to impact so many lives on the southeast side and ensure those residents aren’t constantly living with the threat of flooding.”

When complete, the Cass Avenue Sewer Separation Project will affect more than 1,300 people and cover approximately 360 acres on Evansville’s southeast side. The total project cost is estimated at \$20 million. \$3 million will be funded by the ARRA and \$17 million will come from the State Revolving Loan Fund Program (SRF). The City anticipates construction on the project will begin in late 2009.

The Cass Avenue project is located south of Covert Avenue and is centered along Boeke Road. It is most similar to the

project completed in the Lorraine Park area, which will reduce flooding there. The proposed improvements will separate the storm water from the sanitary sewer/combination sewer system located along Covert Avenue. The sanitary sewer will be directed to a lift station, which will prevent sewer backups into the neighborhood. The storm water will be directed to a new trunk line, which will carry it to the existing Levee Authority detention basin located on Fickas Road.

The stimulus funds were released today by the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA). The IFA received more than 300 applications for projects totaling over \$2.5 billion.

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Vanderburgh Sheriff's Deputies, County solidify relationship

By Gavin Kent

After 20 years of fighting to protect themselves in the work place, the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Deputies can finally sleep a little easier. Last week's approval and signing of the employment contract between the county commissioners and the deputies was a big step forward for everyone concerned.

Vanderburgh County Commissioner Steve Melcher made the motion and said he wished this could have been reached earlier in the year. "I think this was a long time coming. I'm glad we were able to reach this milestone."

Commissioner President Troy Tornatta followed suit. He cited a recent ride-along he had with a deputy and noted all the services and protections they offer citizens.

The holdout – Commissioner Lloyd Winnecke – stated that he had a major philosophical issue with the contract. He was specific enough to almost make sense, but made no real argument. He noted that the deal breaker was the minimum staff requirement. He cited the potential annexations "to fund the city" as his main reason. Winnecke said he sees a potential reduction in staff.

Melcher disagreed. "I think it's a good contract. I can't see us reducing. If anything, I can see us expanding."

Sheriff's Deputy Craig Blessinger was among those who worked diligently on the contract. He said the contract solidifies 15-20 years of work. He noted that over the last five years the deputies and Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #73 have labored intensively over the contract.

He stated, "We ensured this contract did not affect the taxpayers, especially in this uncertain economic time. We worked with the FOP to make sure we did this right and all officers were protected. We want to make sure deputies don't lose their jobs."

FOP President Larry Nelson explained some generalities of the contract. He made it clear that the FOP is a labor organization, not a union. He said that the contract ensured job security for 107 deputies. He said the contract essentially levels the playing field. For example, an officer who is placed on some kind of disciplinary restriction where he is suspended will only be suspended for five days, making it the same as the regulations for Evansville Police Department Officers. Nelson also explained that deputies cannot be laid off under the terms of the contract. A reduction in the workforce can only happen through attrition. The contract is a two-year deal with a one-year extension.

This contract offers several intangible benefits, without adversely affecting the taxpayers' pocketbook. Knowing their jobs are secure makes the deputies more effective, which means better service and protection for the people of Vanderburgh County. It gives everyone peace of mind.

One thing we find not only interesting, but important, is that it took 15 years for Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Deputies to get a contract they so richly deserve. Evansville City Police Officers are protected and have been for a number of years. Other public employee groups have employments (or collective) bargaining groups helping them,



Deputy Craig Blessinger and FOP President Larry Nelson took a minute to answer questions after the contracts was approved by the Vanderburgh County Commissioners.

such as the transit workers, some Evansville Housing Authority employees, Evansville Firefighters, jailers and so on. The deputies need the same consideration in order for there to be any sense of fairness and equality.

The benefits spelled out in the contract have been earned and are rightly deserved. It offers peace of mind to everyone. This employment agreement protects them from political pressure and a backlash of vendettas. They are also protected in the case of being wrongly accused, as there is now a procedure in place to ensure everyone is treated equally.

Annexation is a superficial argument. It's a mute point simply because the growth corridor is moving more and more towards the county. There are more people moving into subdivisions in the county, and this means that it's going to take more manpower to serve and protect these areas.

We are not taking a party stance on this matter. This is not a matter of Democrat or Republican, but it is a matter of good public policy. Agree or disagree with Vanderburgh County Commissioners Troy Tornatta and Steve Melcher, they got it right, and to that end, commend them.

We also want to publically commend the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Deputies, especially Dep. Craig Blessinger, FOP Lodge #73, especially President Larry Nelson, for their work on the contract. They did stellar jobs in getting this contract passed.

Independence Day Tea Party

By Don Counts, Staff Writer

The goal of the Independence Day Tea Party is to provide a platform for citizens and grassroots leaders to come together, to inspire participation in the growing movement for a return to constitutional principles, with a dedication to limited government, and individual Liberty.

This was a gathering of local neighbors and friends from all walks of life, from all parties, all organizations, with one goal: the restoration of the Republic, and the Constitution reinstated as the rule of law. Americans united in a single voice in defense of our Nation and free market principles.

The rain may have dampened the day, but it did not dampen the spirits of the Freedom Supporters that came out for the TEA party. The official count was 1,750 participants. What does this tell you? That many people standing in the rain to let their voices be heard. Pens and wet paper don't mix but I tried to give you a full and accurate account of the TEA party.

On the way from the parking lot I met Jim Rodgers. When asked why he was there he said "he supports smaller government." He said "that our government is way out of control, they are spending my children's and my grandchildren's money." Jim said that he is an Independent voter. He said "after he leaves here him and his family is going to Indianapolis, their TEA party starts at 5PM today." He wants our government to be for the American people, get back to the Constitu-

tion. Other countries want to model their Constitution after ours and that we need to start using.

Rob Snelling said that he "hopes that both political parties will not be just for their own party and their own agenda. They have thrown out their employer's (American People) agenda. We just want to stop and look and be Americans." He said there are traitors in Washington DC and we must bring them down."

Jim and Charlene Braken were there with a "No Confidence petition" in our Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel. I saw many signatures on their petition and other copies were being given out for other groups to take back to their friends, family and members.

Mike Sandefur, a member of United Freedom Makers expressed his interest in the Tri-State. He is a second amendment patriot. He said it would be good for all patriot groups to come under one name. They could still maintain their own programs, but would meet for the common good and take information back to their groups.

Comments heard "You (Government Officials) will listen to us, we are coming and we will fire you. It is our Country and we want it back. We are the people and we are coming. All people are created equal that is final. The change we need is reawakening of our American Founders principles and a rededication to the Declaration of Independence.

Jim Bratten was one of the speakers. When I talked to him he said he had worked for Chrysler for 24 years and was now retired. He moved to Evansville in 2003 He is an Independent. He said the government is moving so fast and so furious, leaving no time for debate. He said that our representatives need to have time to read the bills before voting.

Richard Mourdock, Indiana State Treasurer was next to speak. He spoke about his last six weeks of fighting the Chrysler bailout and subsequent bankruptcy. He said the bankruptcy was wrong and he took his case to the Supreme Court to insure that secured creditors would be paid, first to protect Indiana's investment in the company. He said the water has turned red with the blood of our servicemen. Freedom is not free. We need to take freedom to the streets everyday and not just on Election Day. When you take your children to see the fireworks, pull them close and whisper Liberty.

I spoke to Frank Peterlin, organizer of United Freedom Makers, during the party. He wants to know if we are a freedom maker or a freedom taker. He wants to simply bring all freedom loving organizations together to work for change and hope. Historically many organizations have been operating independently and need to be united under one banner.

I saw a Marine veteran wearing a shirt that said "Time Was Served, Vietnam Veteran, Time to Honor". While talking to him I discovered he served at Chu Lai, Vietnam in 1966-1967. I told him I must have been his relief because I was at the same base in 1967-1968. I asked why he was at the TEA party. He said to protest losing our freedoms, higher taxes, too much government. His wife said "we need to go back to taking care of ourselves, we don't need a czar.



Independence Day Tea Party



Obama's Muslim Campaign



By
**Kathleen
Parker**
*Washington Post
Writers Group*

WASHINGTON -- If it ain't broke, the saying goes, don't fix it. And so it was that the Muslim world got to hear the 2009 version of Barack Obama's 2004 Democratic convention speech.

In the first rendition before a swarm of fellow party members, though aimed at a national audience, Obama assured Americans that we are not a nation of Red States and Blue States.

"There's not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America."

Four years later, Obama was elected president of those United States.

At Cairo University Thursday, Obama delivered essentially the same message on a slightly grander scale -- telling the world's 1.5 billion Muslims, as well as the planet at large:

"The interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart."

The nearly hour-long speech, which contained many inspired passages, was essentially a teaching moment. A lecture, if you will.

Here's the lesson: We have to get along or we're all doomed. Freedom works; oppression doesn't. Your homework: Clear your mind of the past, evict stereotypes, and join the global future.

Beyond delivering core messages of partnership and a new beginning based

on mutual understanding and respect, Obama made three big scores: He essentially neutralized Osama bin Laden. He managed to call Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a hateful ignoramus without ever mentioning his name.

And, he affirmed Western values of democracy, human rights, religious freedom and women's right to self-determination -- all while making Muslims feel complimented, appreciated and understood.

No small feats.

To delegitimize the man whose name rhymes with his, Obama had only to show up and not be George W. Bush. Osama the cave-dweller's latest blurt, timed to preempt Obama's speech, was more pathetic than threatening -- the muffled bleat of an emasculated warrior powerless against an enemy he can no longer demonize.

Osama is the withered and quivering Gollum -- seething with envy and nursing his precious hatred -- to Obama's robust and hope-driven Frodo. The forces of darkness and light personified.

Obama similarly defused the nutty nuke-chaser, Ahmadinejad. Obama was talking about Iran's alleged desire for access to "peaceful" nuclear power and his own goal for a nuke-free world.

Whether Obama's approach to Iran is naive or workable can be debated elsewhere. He makes perfect sense in a perfectly sensible world. Most sane people want to live without the nagging threat of obliteration. And most would agree that reasonable people have the right to access nuclear power for nonviolent purposes.

But we know Iran's president to be unsane and un-reasonable. Just the day before Obama's Cairo speech, Ahmadinejad repeated his belief that the Holocaust was a "big deception."

In his own remarks, Obama said that denying the fact of the Holocaust is

"baseless," "ignorant" and "hateful." If Ahmadinejad didn't recognize himself, surely the rest of the world did, including Iranians who will vote in their country's presidential election this month.

Finally, Obama was unflinching in defending American values, though he characterized them not as uniquely American values but as human rights.

Listening to the speech, one couldn't help noticing (at times uneasily) the moments that prompted applause. Every time Obama quoted scripture from the Koran or conceded errors in America's own history, the audience clapped. (The loudest applause, however, came when Obama spoke of democracy.)

Although it made sense to acknowledge Koranic wisdom as a way of showing respect for the audience, I kept thinking: Why not toss a few crumbs to the non-Muslim boys and girls back home? If the message is our common humanity, why not demonstrate that commonality by showing parallels in Jewish and Christian texts?

This omission would have been my sharpest criticism of the speech if not for the fact that I was judging too soon. Obama saved the best for last.

This time echoing his presidential campaign, Obama said: "We have the power to make the world we seek (yes we can!), but only if we have the courage to make a new beginning (fired up, ready to go!), keeping in mind what has been written."

Then he quoted verses from the Koran, the Talmud and the Bible that all pointed toward peace. He wrapped up with the ultimate plea for hope and change:

"The people of the world can live together in peace," said Obama. "We know that is God's vision. Now, that must be our work here on Earth."

Hey, it worked in 2008.

IS IT TRUE?

By the City-County Observer Moles (Numbers 1-47...and counting)

Is it true you should see Resolution 09-ERC-17? Is it true this resolution, created by the Evansville Redevelopment Commission, spells out where some federal stimulus money is going? Is it true some of this money is being used to pay for engineering services for traffic services downtown (which may be arena-related? Is it true that the money could be better spent to fix traffic problems in other areas of the city?

Is it true that the Evansville Fire Department just finished an independent insurance audit on the status of the EFD? Is it true that the EFD goes through this compliance review every 10 years? Is it true our fire department currently has a ranking of “3”? Is it true a number one ranking is the best and number 10 is the worst? Is it true that the word on the street is that our fire department’s ranking could drop to a 4 or 5 ranking because of obvious problems within the fire department? Is it true if this happens, it is not because of our professional, dedicated and hard-working firefighters? Is it true if this happens, the blame should be put on the political leaders and top leadership of the fire department? Sadly, it is true that if this rumor is correct, your insurance premiums shall be increased, just like your property taxes?

Is it true all we are hearing from our elected political officials that the new buzz word at city hall is “efficiency”? Is it true we are very thankful the cliché “transparency in government” is no longer being used?

Is it true when you meet with the mayor of Evansville behind closed doors, take away the Homestead Tax credits from 45,000 Vanderburgh County residents, help mastermind the annexation of property east, west and northeast areas of the county, spearhead the effort a new downtown arena, you can be appointed Evansville Fire Chief by the mayor, even after a national search?

Is it true you may think our documenting urban blight in all wards of this fine city has been forgotten? Is it true we have just begun the argument for Front Door Pride to become a citywide program? Is it true you should stay tuned for an article documenting just how much urban blight is costing the city? Is it true that once this article is written and offers photographic proof, we hope that Evansville City Council member Missy Mosby, Wendy Bredhold, John Friend, and BJ Watts step forward and ask for the mayor’s help in finding a solution to this serious problem? Is it true we hope they don’t call a secret caucus at the mayor’s office to discuss this issue?

Is it true that we know the results of two private meetings (caucuses)? Is it true every time closed door meetings are held, the people of Vanderburgh County’s checkbooks get a lighter? Is it true we (as a community) are wondering what the results of the other six caucuses in the last couple years have been and how much they have cost the taxpayers? Is it true that the presidents of the City Council in the last couple years were Keith Jarboe (new fire chief) and BJ Watts, who co-chaired these meeting along with the mayor?

Is it true that we are extremely pleased with the vote in dedicated and professional deputies of the Vanderburgh County Sheriff’s Office? Is it true 15-20 years is a long time to work on something so important? Is it true Commissioners Troy Tornatta and Steve Melcher should be commended for their cooperation and the approval of the contract?

Is it true that we find it not only amazing but unbelievable that over 1,750 people registered at the Evansville Independence Day Tea Party at the Civic Center in the pouring rain? Is it true that the publisher of the City-County Observer was overwhelmed by her reception after she read her recent editorial titled “My America”? It is true we are thankful for the opportunity to put the First Amendment to use in that setting?

Is it true that the Mayor spent \$4,420 to mail certified letters (\$5.20 each) to 850 people on the Westside to inform them they are going to be annexed? Is it true the mayor did two mailings to those who live in the proposed annexed area? Is it true 2 times \$4,420 equals \$8,840 spent on his mailing campaign? Is it true we wonder how much the mayor spent on notification letters for the eastside and northeast side? Is it true this is another example of efficiency of government in action?

Is it true Mayor Weinzapfel backed out of the Big Brothers Big Sisters Murder Mystery Dinner fundraising event at the Old Courthouse recently? Is it true BBBS is stating that it was a “high-level scheduling conflict”? Is it true the program was titled “What happened to Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel?” Is it true the proposed suspects were Steve Melcher, Troy Tornatta, Lloyd Winnecke, Curt John, Patricia Weinzapfel and Pat Rayburn? Is it true Annie Groves and Sheriff Eric Williams were scheduled to help conduct the investigation? Is it true that donors, sponsors, vendors and ticket holders would like to know the real reason the event was cancelled? Is it true we are wondering how much this cost BBBS? Is it true that if our information regarding why the event was cancelled is correct, the mayor should cover all refunds and expenses pertaining to the event? Is it true we encourage the community to support BBBS with your money and your time?

Is it true if we uncover any other secret meetings (a.k.a. caucuses) held by elected officials, we shall ask that they immediately resign from public office? It is true that if they don’t immediately resign, we shall ask them to do so every edition until re-election day?

Is it true we commend the Mayor and City Council for working to get the state and federal stimulus money to fix the sewer problems on the south side of Evansville?

Is it true that we are pleased to hear Councilwoman Wendy Bredhold announce on the radio yesterday morning that her constituents need to attend the mercury pollution hearings concerning the Third Ward? Is it true we look forward to hearing her state that she wants Front Door Pride to be implemented in her ward in the near future?

— THE CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER —

EDITORIAL-GAVEL GAMUT

TO BUILD A POOL

By Judge James Redwine

You may recall a couple of Gavel Gamuts that I wrote about Jack London's classic short story, *To Build a Fire*. And some of you probably read London's tale in high school. It involved a man's disastrous attempt to cross the Klondike on foot in the winter. His dog sensed the danger, but the man's pride blinded him to it.

I was once again reminded of this harsh lesson when Peg said, "Jim, aren't you awfully hot? You look like you might expire from this southern Indiana heat and humidity." I said nothing and kept my eyes zeroed in on Peg's dog, Haley, who was trying to sneak up on Peg's cats, Oliver and Claudette.

"Don't you think we should have a pool? They sell 'em at WalMart for \$800.00, and it says right on the box, 'You'll be swimming within one hour or so.'" Well, Gentle Reader, I have spent a lifetime struggling with that "or so" thing. My experience is that the sadists who write those convoluted instructions for Christmas toys and home gym equipment have never even seen one of the items they blithely say will be inexpensive, gratifying and easy to set up.

But, of course, husbands only have two acceptable responses to their wives' cheerful call for such things as room additions and swimming pools: (1) I wish I'd thought of that; and (2) Is there any way I can get a new set of golf clubs if I take on this stupid, strike that, endeavor? The response husbands must never make is, "Well, I guess no job is too hard if you don't have

to do it!" So, I chose discretion over sure suicide and said, "What a great idea. Let's do it ourselves. If the pool costs \$800.00 it will probably only take a little more money and not much work for site preparation."

Peg was excited. She went to WalMart and had everything ready for my friend, Rodney Fetcher, and me to pick up using his dad's truck. When we got it home we dumped everything in the yard. As the instructions said to make sure the pool is set up on level ground, I began to check the grade in our yard. It was about 9 inches high on the west side, 5 inches low on the east, 6 inches high on the south and 3 inches low on the north.

That seemed simple enough; I ordered sand from Ray Brown who brought 7 ton and dumped it on the pool site. I don't know if you have ever done anything as ill-advised as to try to level a site after the sand is already down, but I did just that, and let me tell you, it doesn't work.

So after I removed most of the sand and used it to fill eroded areas of JPeg Ranch, my friend, Dick Simmons, looked at the future pool site and told me, "You should have left the sand there and just moved it around as you dug down with your pickaxe and shovel. That way you wouldn't need to buy even more sand later." Dick is one of those great friends who is always ready to help and even more rare, he actually knows what he is talking about. But as he is still recovering from knee surgery, he could only try to get me to understand the complex problem of taking rock and dirt from one side to level up the other. Unfortunately,

twenty years of formal education could not make up for a total lack of talent.

After suffering through several hours of trying to teach me the difference between "down pickaxe" and "up shovel", Dick diplomatically said, "Jim, do you really want a pool?" When I mumbled, "Peg is the one who wants it and she wants it by the Fourth of July", Dick said, "Well, she may get it, but just not by this Fourth of July".

If I survive and you have nothing better to do, we may continue our "To Build a Pool" saga next week. Of course, should you be really bored, do not hesitate to stop by JPeg Ranch with your own pick and shovel.

Order Judge Lynch today!



A work of historical fiction by Jim Redwine.
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Seven black men were murdered by a mob of 300 influential white men during one week of October 1878, in Posey County, Indiana. These horrific crimes have remained hidden from public scrutiny for over 100 years. The events and their subsequent cover-up are examined in depth in this new novel. Southwestern Indiana and southeastern Illinois provide several of the locales for the book.

Explaining the Second Amendment

By Jim Tomes, Guest Contributor

On June 12, 1776 the state of Virginia's representatives assembled to form a Declaration of Rights.

Much of that language was written by George Mason and that declaration served as a guide for other states and the federal government to model their Bill Of Rights after.

It was people like Patrick Henry and Mason that knew the importance of the people having individual rights to protect them from abuse from a government should it become a tyranny.

The Second Amendment is plainly written and was adopted along with the 10 Amendments to our Constitution by the States in 1791.

Its language is clearly written because it took a great deal of refinement and debate to get the final version which we now have. Though over the years and in particular most recent the precious Second Amendment has come under an enormous attack from legislators, judiciaries, legal counsels and even fellow

Americans who seek to interpret it to be something other than what it is - a guarantee of individuals to keep and bear arms.

To this measure let's remember what Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter to Justice William Johnson on June 12, 1823: "On every question of construction [of the Constitution] let us carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning may be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, conform to the probable one in which it was passed."

Another quote attributed to Jefferson is, "The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government."

Members of the West Side Sportsman's Club support the Second Amendment and is grateful that we had Founders of the United States Constitution who understood the importance to include a Bill Of Rights to maintain personal freedom and liberty.

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TIRE & SERVICE

Finding the purpose

By Jamie Grabert, Publisher

A few weeks ago, I was asked to write a speech. This wasn't supposed to be the kind of speech that made people feel good about what was going on in this country. It was to be a call to action. I was told I wouldn't have to deliver the speech. All I had to do was write it - a task simple enough for someone who studied that, and an even simpler task for someone who is as angry as the rest of the American people.

Last Wednesday morning, I still had no idea what I was going to write a speech about, how I was going to write it, or even who I was going to inspire. All I knew was that I had a deadline that was growing closer and closer as the ticks on my watch boomed in my ear. I sat. I stared into the abysmal white of the blank Word document before me. Still nothing.

I looked around the office for some sort of divine inspiration. I picked up my BlackBerry, as if it were going to speak to me. Then I remembered a note I had started on a drive to work one morning. I recall listening to the morning news and growing more and more angry as I drove. I found the document I had titled "My America." I retyped the first couple of paragraphs to tone them down and make them publishable.

Within the next 10 minutes, I was transformed from an angry citizen who felt hopeless to an activist. While I have the right to remain silent, I no longer believe it is in my best interest to do so. It's amazing the words that come to you when you become focused with a distinct purpose. My angry American words became the call to action for which I had been searching. When my purposed had been revealed to me, the words came through divine inspiration. I sat back and looked at the page that had just 30 minutes earlier been a blank canvass. Now, it was full of

purpose and meaning, at least for me.

When the owners of the paper read my editorial, they encouraged me to share it with Frank and Michelle Peterlin, who were the main organizers for the Independence Day Tea Party. Both said those words would be perfect for a speech to be given at the event. Both agreed I was the one who had to present it. I disagreed, but once the owners got wind of this, my argument was mute.

Speech writing is not a problem. Speech delivery equals a big problem. I was nervous, anxious and nauseated for three days. There was no way I was going to be able to do this. I called my mother, who was out of town, her advice was to go slow and remember, "you are with your people."

I thought for a few minutes on that one. My best friend had basically the same thing to say, and fittingly, he words here lately have been something like "power to the people." All I received were words of encouragement. Then came the coaching, a team of people worked with me most of the afternoon on Friday to make sure I would feel better about the delivery of my word. One question was presented to me before I left - what is the purpose of these words. I thought about that my entire drive home.

I woke up Saturday morning, not sure how the day was going to go. It was pouring down rain. A part of me was glad, thinking the whole event might get rescheduled. But the call never came, and I had committed. As I drove to Evansville's Civic Center, I received a phone call from one of our owners, he had been singing "God Bless America" for three days, and was calling to inspire me by singing it one more time. That didn't add to my nerves or anything.



— THE CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER —

EDITORIAL

Finding the purpose

When I arrived at the Civic Center, someone I don't know walked up and told me Frank was looking for me. I found him and received my directions. I was amazed as I looked out and saw the sea of colorful umbrellas and faces of Americans that stood with a purpose. It was at that moment that I realized the purpose behind what I was about to do and the words I had written. And I was with a group of like-minded people, whose purpose was to preserve their freedom and take back this great nation. An act like that may have been treason in 1776, but in 2009, it's an exercise in freedom.

Some people have criticized my participation in the Tea Party because I am a newspaper publisher. They say we should merely report on these things, not take part in them. I strongly disagree. As a newspaper, we have the opportunity to reach a much larger audience. And as I learned on Saturday, sometimes one voice, will help others realize that they too have a voice. And a voice with a purpose that is united and organized, well, that's a force to be reckoned with and heard.

Saturday was one of the proudest days of my life, not because I overcame a fear, but because I did stand with my people. I was proud of the nearly 1,800 people that showed up to make their voices heard by the local, state and national elected officials. I was proud to stand among those who are passionate about taking this country back to its roots of real liberty. I was proud to stand with my people – a group who has a purpose and a mission for the betterment of the country we love.

I kept telling myself that I agreed to do the speech as a private citizen, but I didn't. I said those words from my heart as a newspaper publisher and as someone with the ability to write them. I said those words with a distinct purpose – because I can because the Constitution and Bill of Rights say I can. I want those rights to continue, so I did my part to take a stand.

I am not afraid of the establishment. As a journalist, I know there are laws to protect me. Part of being a journalist is not being fearful of retribution. This is not a job you do to make friends. (Truthfully, you will lose many.) But this job is rewarding when you realize that each story you write has a purpose, and that purpose is freedom.

If you want to see your freedom and rights maintained, it's time for you to stand up. It's time for you to realize that one voice can make a difference. You'd be amazed of the result if speak out for your rights. The time has come for you to use your voice. You can do that by showing up at local government meetings, making phone calls to your state and federal legislators, or send an email. Let these people know you are watching them and you expect them to do their jobs.

Our Policy:

The City-County Observer accepts letters to the editor and op-ed pieces. We reserve the right to edit such items to maintain the integrity of this publication, space constraints, or for misleading and accusatory statements. We will not print letters that have not been signed and are not verifiable with the original source. From time to time, we reserve the right to print (or electronically publish) correspondence from your local officials. Again, all emails and letters must be able to be verified. Any items without accurate contact information and are not signed (a digital signature is acceptable) will not be published. We encourage our readers to submit letters to the City-County Observer, regardless of your political affiliation.

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Chairman and CEO Ira G. Boots Named Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2009 Award Winner in Midwest Region

Evansville, IN, June 30, 2009 - Berry Plastics Corporation, an Apollo Management, L.P. and Graham Partners portfolio company, today announced that Ira G. Boots, Chairman and CEO, received the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2009 Award in the Private Equity/Venture Capital Backed category in the Midwest region. According to Ernst & Young LLP, the award recognizes outstanding entrepreneurs who are building and leading dynamic, growing businesses. Ira G. Boots was selected by an independent panel of judges, and the award was presented at a gala event at the Hilton Chicago Hotel on Friday, June 26, 2009.

"It has been my honor to work with and among so many talented individuals and employees of Berry Plastics through the years. Our commitment to the industry and dedication to our customers has been the catalyst to our growth and financial performance" stated Mr. Boots. "I am humbled and appreciative with receiving this prestigious award from Ernst and Young." Berry Plastics is a leading plastics packaging manufacturer, with over 60 plants in North America.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards celebrate their 23rd anniversary this year. The program honors entrepreneurs who have demonstrated exceptionality in such areas as innovation, financial performance and personal commitment to their businesses and communities.

"We are proud to recognize the achievements of Ira Boots," said Randy Tavierne, Ernst & Young Partner, Strategic Growth Markets. "Winners of the Entrepreneur Of The Year award build leading businesses and contribute significantly to the strength of our region's economy. Their success helps our area grow stronger."

As a Midwest award winner, Ira G. Boots is now eligible for consideration for the Ernst & Young LLP Entrepreneur Of The Year 2009 national program. Award winners in several national categories, as well as the overall national Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year award winner, will be announced at the annual awards gala in Palm Springs, California on November 14, 2009. The awards are the culminating event of the Ernst & Young Strategic Growth Forum, the nation's most prestigious gathering of high-growth, market-leading companies.

Sponsors Founded and produced by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year awards are pleased to have SAP America and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation as national sponsors. Regional sponsors for the Midwest program include Clifton Gunderson

LLP, Smart Business magazine and Becker Professional Review. Locally, the program is sponsored by Winston & Strawn and Grand Valley State University.

About Berry Plastics

Berry Plastics is a leading manufacturer and marketer of plastic packaging products. Berry Plastics is a major producer of a wide range of products, including open top and closed top packaging, polyethylene-based plastic films, industrial tapes, medical specialties, packaging, heat-shrinkable coatings and specialty laminates. The company's 17,000 plus customers range from large multinational corporations to small local businesses. Based in Evansville, Indiana, the company has 68 manufacturing facilities worldwide and nearly 14,000 employees. For more information, please visit <http://www.berryplastics.com>.

About Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Of The Year® Awards Program

Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Of The Year® Award is the world's most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs. The award makes a difference through the way it encourages entrepreneurial activity among those with potential and recognizes the contribution of people who inspire others with their vision, leadership and achievement. As the first and only truly global award of its kind, the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® award celebrates those who are building and leading successful, growing and dynamic businesses, recognizing them through regional, national and global awards programs in more than 135 cities in 50 countries.



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USI is a 2009 Great College to Work For

University of Southern Indiana is one of 150 colleges to be recognized for workplace policies in The Chronicle of Higher Education's second annual Great Colleges to Work For survey. The honor is being announced in a special supplement of the July 2009 issue of The Chronicle, a major source of news, information, and jobs for college and university faculty and administrators.

USI is being recognized for facilities, security, and physical work space conditions in the work environment category. There are 26 recognition categories for four-year institutions and 15 categories for community colleges in the survey. The results are based on responses from nearly 41,000 administrators, faculty members, and staff members at more than 300 four- and two-year colleges.

"Through this program, The Chronicle is able to provide more information to job seekers about the colleges that are the leading innovators when it comes to providing a rewarding work environment," said Jeffrey J. Selingo, editor of The Chronicle of Higher Education.

The Great Colleges survey includes a two-part assessment process: a survey administered to faculty, administrators, and support staff, and an institutional audit that captured demo-

graphics and workplace policies and practices from each institution.

The Great Colleges to Work For program recognizes colleges (grouped by enrollment size) for specific best practices and policies. USI is in the large institutions group with 10,000 or more students. Ten institutions are named in each group.

Along with USI, some other colleges to be recognized in the category of campus appearance and secure environment include University of Notre Dame, Baylor University, Cornell University, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For the categories of adequate facilities and pleasing campus appearance, USI is joined by such institutions as Duke University, Kennesaw State University, and University of Mississippi.

USI President Linda L. M. Bennett said, "Employee feedback to the survey was a primary factor in USI's selection. This national recognition for workplace policies will give USI a competitive edge for recruiting and retaining top faculty and staff. It also gives us important information about how to further improve the work environment on campus."

The survey for Great Colleges to Work For was administered and analyzed by the consulting firm Modern Think LLC.

First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

University of Evansville Presidential Search Committee Named

The nationwide search for the 23rd president of the University of Evansville is underway. The new president will replace Stephen G. Jennings, who recently announced his retirement effective May 31, 2010.

Board of Trustees chairman, Niel C. Ellerbrook has announced the appointment of two trustees to head the Presidential Search Committee. M. Stephen Harkness will serve as chair and Barbara J. Price as vice chair. Additional members of the committee were selected in accordance with established University procedures. The members of the Presidential Search Committee include:

- Five (5) members of the Board of Trustees:

- oM. Stephen Harkness '70, chair, retired president of Duke Energy Generation Services

- oBarbara J. Price '66, vice chair, retired vice president of health, environment and safety at Phillips Petroleum Company

- oAndrew E. Goebel '74 M'78, retired president and chief operating officer of Vectren Corporation

- oLawrence J. Kremer '67 M'72, retired vice president at Emerson Electric Company

- oLinda E. White '76 M'83, president and chief executive officer of Deaconess Health System

- Three (3) members of the Faculty (3) elected by the Faculty Senate

- oBrian R. Ernsting, associate professor of biology

- oDaniel J. Gahan, department chair and professor of history

- oJames C. Schaefer, professor of accounting

- One (1) member of the Alumni Association

- oC. W. Raines '97, general counsel, Aearo Technologies LLC, a 3M Company

- Two (2) Students

- oJoshua L. Fletcher, senior, majoring in communications

- oJasmin Paniagua, junior, majoring in international studies

- One (1) University Administrator

- oAmy R. Brandebury '93, University Registrar

- One (1) Community Representative

- oLarry A. Rascoe, Sr., pastor of the Nazarene Missionary Baptist Church in Evansville

- The Chairman of the Board of Trustees

- oNiel C. Ellerbrook H'06, chairman and chief executive officer of Vectren Corporation

- Representative from Indiana Area United Methodist Church

- oGlenn B. Howell, Evansville District Superintendent

- Representative from the University of Evansville Board of Visitors

- oPeter B. Mogavero, president and chief executive officer of Anchor Industries

- Staff Liaison

- oRebecca L. Simpson '94 M'04 (ex-officio), administrative assistant to the president and assistant secretary to the Board of Trustees

The first action of the search committee was to identify a search consultation firm to assist with the process. The committee selected Witt/Kieffer, a preeminent executive search firm serving the not-for-profit

community - higher education, health care, cultural organizations, and community service institutions - nationwide. Dennis M. Barden, Senior Vice President and Director of the firm's Higher Education and Not-for-Profit Practice, will lead the search effort and will be assisted by Dr. Katherine Haley Will, Senior Consultant and former president of Gettysburg College and Whittier College. With over 60 consultants in 17 locations, Witt/Kieffer conducts senior academic and administrative search engagements, including presidents, chancellors, vice presidents, deans, directors, and other leadership positions. The Board of Trustees will have the responsibility for the final choice and appointment of the next president. The new president is expected to be named in mid-February.

A Website is available at www.evansville.edu/presidentsearch which will be updated regularly as the search process unfolds. In May, President Stephen G. Jennings announced to the Board of Trustees and to the campus community his plans to retire at the end of the 2009-10 academic year. He became the University's 22nd president in 2001 after serving as president of three other institutions since 1983: Oklahoma City University, Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, and the College of the Ozarks in Branson, Missouri.



It's Not Too Late!!

5 Steps to Save Your Swimsuit Season

By Tony Maslan, CSCS

Summer is here and in full swing, and many of you may have already given up on letting yourself be seen in public wearing a swimsuit this year. I'm here with some good news: it's not too late! You still have time to make some significant changes to your appearance and your confidence and "Save Your Swimsuit Season", but in order to make these changes, here are five steps you must follow:

1. Set a measurable goal. Know exactly what it is you want to accomplish.

Many people make the mistake of saying things like "I want to lose weight" or "I want to be in better shape." How much weight? How much more do you want to exercise? If you set a measurable goal such as "I want to lose 10 pounds" or "I want to exercise 3 times each week" you are much more likely to achieve that goal and you can actually measure your progress and know if you are meeting those goals or not.

2. Choose a good strength training program. Have a concern for lean muscle mass. Every pound of lean muscle mass you gain will speed up your metabolism and your body will burn up to 50 extra calories each day without an increase in activity. Focus on doing compound, multi-joint exercises such as squats, lunges, leg presses, bench presses, pull-ups or rows, and shoulder presses. The bigger movements work more than one muscle group with one exercise and give you more bang for your buck.

3. Get an accountability partner. This can either be a fitness professional, or a friend or family member. Someone else needs to know about your goal and be constantly giving you positive support and making sure you are progressing towards your goal. A fitness professional can help make sure that the program you are following is the best one for you and the goals you want to reach. If you don't have anyone else keeping you accountable it will be much easier to skip a workout or stray from your nutrition program.

4. Choose a good nutrition program.

This is the hardest part for most people to do because normally when people plan on changing their eating they think of the word "diet". That word puts terrible images in people's heads. Images of them starving, eating like a rabbit, and never getting to eat any foods they enjoy. I mean, the first three letters of the word spell DIE!!! That can't be any fun. Proper nutrition however is a very essential part of achieving your fitness goals. If you are following a good nutrition plan you will actually be eating more than you would have ever imagined and still be losing body-fat at a rate you will be VERY happy with. You must make sure your plan is something that can become a permanent part of your lifestyle and not just a drastic reduction in calories. A sound nutritional plan should include lean proteins, starchy carbohydrates, and fibrous carbohydrates.

5. Follow through. Stick with your program until you achieve your goal.

This is the clincher. Even though you may not achieve your dream physique in 1 week, or 3 weeks, or sometimes even 3 months you can still make drastic changes to your body by the end of summer and move much closer to your long term fitness and weight loss goals. It is a gradual process when you are doing it correctly, but if you do things the right way you are more likely to stay at the fitness levels that you reach. If any pill or product tries to tell you that in 30 days you will be able to lose all the weight you want, all the inches you want, be as strong as you want, and you will stay there without having to do anything fitness related ever again, they are LYING to you!!! As much as we would like to believe in a miracle pill, lotion, or electric pads that will shock our stomachs for 10 minutes a day and get us a six-pack, it isn't going to happen. Keep focused on that goal date and follow your plan all the way to success.

Tony Maslan is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and owner of Custom Fit Personal Training, LLC. He can be reached at 812-437-2378 or tmasslan@cfpt.us. Find out the 16 Tips to Looking and Feeling Better Than You Have In Years at www.cfpt.us

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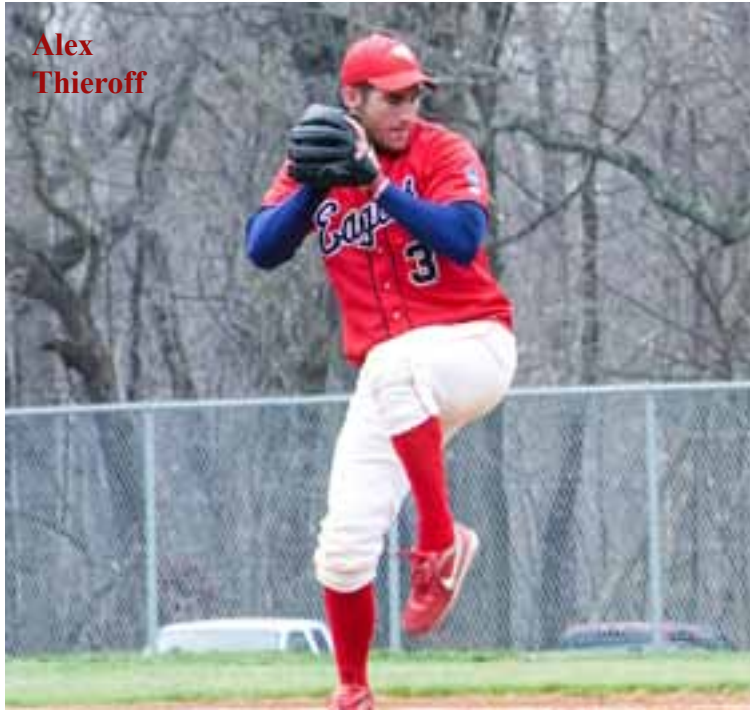
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Former USI baseball players making news

Night Flight scheduled for July 18



Alex Thieroff

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — A pair of former University of Southern Indiana baseball players have made news in the last week.

Senior pitcher/infielder Alex Thieroff signed as a free agent pitcher with Arizona and will be assigned to Diamondback's Yakima Bears, a Class A Short-Season organization in the Northwest League of Professional Baseball.

Thieroff finished his career with the Screaming Eagles this spring with a 2-2 record and a 5.27 ERA during his first full season as a starting pitcher. He combined with P.J. Thomas to throw a no-hitter against Oakland City University in his very first collegiate start in 2008.

The first team All-GLVC third baseman also finished 2009 with a .320 batting average, eight home runs, 48 runs scored and 47 RBIs.

Former USI All-American Darin Mastroianni continues to work his way through the Toronto Blue Jays' organization with a promotion to the Double-A New Hampshire Fisher Cats. Mastroianni was a Florida State League All-Star earlier this month with the Dunedin Blue Jays where he batted .325 with 32 stolen bases and 26 RBIs in 61 games.

USI also is represented in the minor leagues by Jeremy Kehrt, who is with the Boston Red Sox's Lowell Spinners. The Spinners are a Class A Short-Season team in the New York-Penn League.

Kehrt is 1-1 in three games with a 2.53 ERA in 10.2 innings of work.

EVANSVILLE, Ind.—The University of Southern Indiana cross country/track and field program will hold the 32nd annual Night Flight Road Run Saturday, July 18, on the USI campus. The Night Flight Road Run will consist of a half-mile run, for kids seven-and-under, as well as a four-mile run and one-mile run.

Registration fees are \$15 (\$12 for the seven-and-under half-mile) for entries postmarked or received on or before July 11. Entrants running both the four-mile and one-mile runs should add an additional \$5 and include a second entry form.

Late registration will be from 6:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. July 18 on the USI campus. The late registration fee will be \$20 for one race and \$25 for both races as well as \$15 for the seven-and-under half-mile run.

The race times are 7:45 p.m. for the seven-and-under half-mile race; 8 p.m. for the one-mile run; and 8:30 p.m. for the four-mile run. The awards presentation will follow the four-mile run at the USI Physical Activities Center.

Proceeds from the Night Flight Road Run help fund the USI cross country/track and field programs. The Screaming Eagles' Grass Roots Series, which resumes Thursday evening with the second installment of the five-race series, also helps fund the USI cross country/track and field program. The third race is slated for July 30, while the fourth and fifth races in the Grass Roots Series are August 6 and August 20, respectively.

For more information contact the USI cross country office and Head Coach Mike Hillyard (mhillyar@usi.edu or 812/465-1232).

This page sponsored by

Four USI Eagles earn academic honors

EVANSVILLE, Ind.—Four University of Southern Indiana women's track and field performers were named to the 2009 United States Track and Field/Cross Country Coaches' Association All-Academic team.

To qualify for the USTFCCCA All-Academic Track and Field Team, the student-athlete must have compiled a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 and have met the NCAA Division II Indoor or Outdoor automatic or provisional qualifying standard in their respective event.

Juniors Mary Ballinger (Chesterton, Indiana), Lauren Crick (Evansville, Indiana), and Lacy Williams (Haubstadt, Indiana) were selected to the All-Academic squad after gar-

nering All-America honors during the indoor season, while freshman Adrienne Curtis (Louisville, Kentucky) was selected to the team after reaching an NCAA II provisional qualifying time in the 5,000 meters during the indoor season and the 10,000 meters during the outdoor campaign.

Ballinger, who won the national championship in the 3,000-meter steeplechase in May, earned All-America honors in the steeplechase, the indoor 5,000 meters, and the distance medley relay. Crick and Williams each earned All-America honors for their efforts in the distance medley relay as well.

We are looking for sports stories that haven't been told. The City-County Observer is looking for any kind of sports information you would like us to publish. Have a tournament coming? Did your T-Ball team win a game? Do you have an interesting sports story to tell, email it to us at citycountyobserver@live.com.

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‘No Confidence’ from page 1

are disappointed in Missy Mosby's [our councilwoman] participation in back door meetings to discuss the disappearance of the local Homestead Credit and proposed arena. We think she betrayed us. We hold her accountable. We'll remember this at election time," Jim said.

They also said they want clarification on the reinstatement of the local Homestead Credit. They also want their credits back for this year, after they made the calls to find out that it is possible. "We want our money back."

Overall, the Braker family is concerned about the integrity of the local elected officials. "The biggest thing is that we've been lied to. These types of things show a lack of integrity and lack of trust in the people. We've simply had enough of the back door politics of the Weinzapfel Administration."

"I think Mayor Weinzapfel, Evansville City Council and Vanderburgh County Council should do some soul searching. Leadership says you start with being an example yourself," said Tim.

Since Monday's interview, the Brakers have rented space for a tent at the Vanderburgh County Fair and are in the process of setting up a tent in their front yard located at 1700 E. Blackford, Evansville, IN 47714. They are encouraging people to call to get involved. Their number is (812)479-0121.

So far, they are tracking over 5,000 signatures since July 4, 2009. Deadline for the petition is the end of September 29, 2009.

First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

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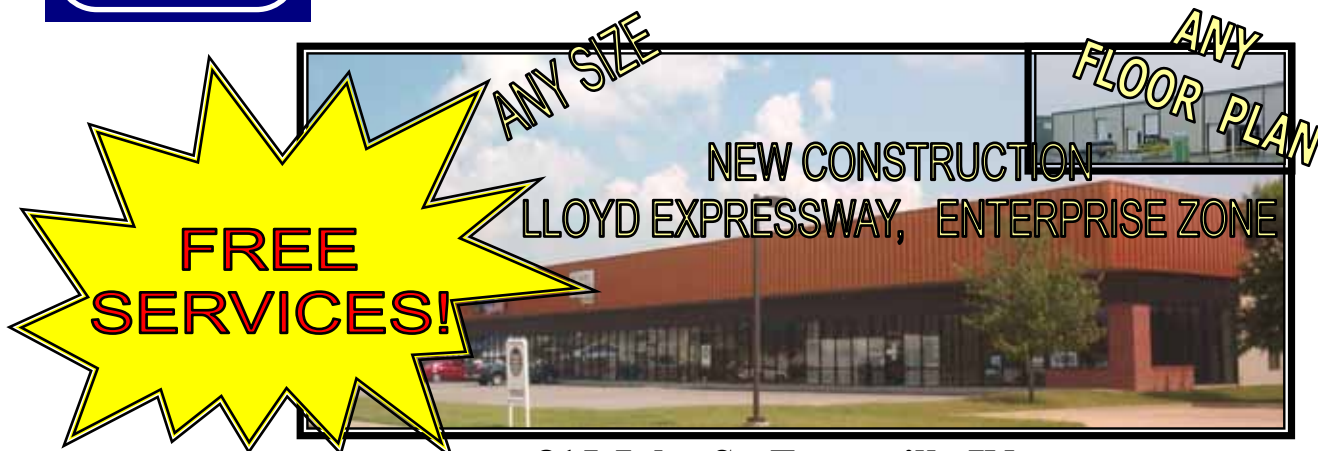


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Contact: Frank Peterlin (o)(812)425-1906 Ext.1103 (f)(812)425-2585 PeterlinVI@AOL.COM

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