

“IF WE CANNOT RECONCILE ALL OPINIONS, LET US ENDEAVOR TO UNITE ALL HEARTS.”

NEW-HARMONY, (IND.) January 2020

HARMONY WAY BRIDGE AUTHORITY MEETING HI-LITES

by: Dan Barton
January 2020

Back in November, 2019, the New Harmony and Wabash Valley Bridge Authority had a meeting in Illinois. It was announced that there would be an In-Depth Inspection and Structural Evaluation of the Harmony Way Bridge. Thirty-one firms were to bid on the contract. The last inspection was done in 2017 for \$65,000. Now the Federal Highway Administration has indicated that the 2017 inspection is outdated and another one is necessary. It has been projected (at the January 2020 meeting) that the cost of this inspection could cost anywhere between \$250,000 and a million dollars.

Because, the new inspection will cost somewhere between 5 and 15 times more than the 2017 inspection, which was paid for by Indiana Landmarks in conjunction with Efroymsen Family Fund, I was curious to know why such a difference. “Will the federal inspection be 5 to 15 times more comprehensive?” I thought! So I texted Bridge Authority Commissioner, Lora Arneberg to see what she thought. She replied to me that, “There are many different levels of studies, as they get more complicated and have more steps, they get more expensive. The study in 2016 was a very basic inspection to try to ascertain the repairs needed to re-open the bridge. The study we are talking about now is required every 5 yrs. by federal highway administration standards and includes things like underwater divers inspecting the piers and other steps not done in 2016. (Spring 2017) The estimated cost of \$250,000 is a good estimate for this size bridge for that work and what it has historically cost for that structure in the past.”

The State of Indiana, just recently announced that they are providing the Bridge Authority with \$350,000. The Authority also is reviewing a private grant from a local citizen for \$50,000, which had expired on December 30, 2019. It is hoped by the Authority, that this expiration date can be extended for at

least six months, in order to help defer some start-up costs.

The federal study will include diving to look at the piers, study of load bearing for the entire bridge, a critical fracture study and will include the use of new types of equipment that can study the strength of the steel without actually destroying any of it.

More than one company is allowed to work on the bridge at the same time. It is expected that sometime in January, 2020, Illinois Department of Transportation will be able to determine the eligibility of the firms that respond to the statement of interest. The Authorities will then name a committee formed by Commissioners from each state to vote on which firm or firms will qualify to do the inspection.

The study is expected to be completed sometime in the Summer of 2020. At that point they can start publicizing “Requests for Proposals” for work contractors.

It was announced to the Authority in January by Shuletheis Insurance Branch Manager, Andy Weintraut, that the Indiana Bridge Authority Commissioners have all been bonded as of January 1, 2020, and they can officially start doing business.

Our elected officials here in Posey County, Congressman Larry Bucshon, State Senator Jim Tomes and State Representative Wendy McNamara, have all been appealing to the Governor’s Office for help with funding and working on state legislation that will cover our Authority Commissioners for liability, under our state’s tort laws. This is a number one priority for our Commissioners. The deeds to pass title from the White County Bridge Commission to the New Harmony and Wabash Valley Bridge Authorities have been completed. The bridge will officially transfer title on or before the deadline of February 18, 2020.

By the February meeting there should be some news about where they stand regarding liability coverage and what the make-up of the Bi-State Authority and management

will look like. If the Tort Law option is not concluded before the title transfers, the bridge will need to have ownership under Illinois, as the lead agency, since their legislation covers the Illinois commissioners for liability under their states laws. Once Indiana’s commissioners are covered, either by state law or privately, the title will then revert to bi-state ownership again.

Right now it’s mostly red-tape, insurance and ownership issues that have been taking center stage. By the March edition of the New Harmony Gazette these issues may be cleared up.

BEWARE! TELEPHONE AND EMAIL SCAMS IN PROGRESS!

By: Dan Barton
January, 2020

When I came into my office on Tuesday morning the 18th and checked my email, I noticed an odd request from a long-time “friend.” Immediately my antenna went up. My “friend’s” email stated the following:

“How are you? I need a favor from you. I need to purchase a Nordstrom Gift Card for my nephew, Its (SIC) his birthday but i (SIC) am unable to do this now because I’m currently traveling. Can you get the card from any store around you? I’ll reimburse you as soon as i (SIC) am back. Kindly let me know if you can handle this. (Friend’s Name)

It just seemed strange and out of place. My friend has never, ever, made a request of this nature from me, and knowing my friend’s personality, likely never would. Also, the email writer used small case “i” instead of upper case “I” when referring to themselves. My friend is very meticulous about written communication.

Anyway, I responded: “I will get to work on it right away. No reimbursement necessary. Such a small thing. Just have to know where to find one..Got a hint for me?”

The Scammer's response: "Thank you very much. The amount I need on the Gift card is \$300. my (SIC) nephew told me to scratch the back of the card to reveal the pin and the serial number and then take a snap shot (SIC) of the front and back of the gift card and forward it to him online, you'll do that and send it to me here online so that i (SIC) can forward it to him as he said. Once again thanks."

Again, punctuation and spelling errors galore. Also, the Scammer's command, "you'll do that," did not sound like my friend; who knows that I don't take lightly to commands. The Scammer continued: "You can get these card (SIC) from any store around you like Walmart or CVS. Thanks" Once more, spelling and punctuation errors, also my friend knows that the closest Walmart is about a 60 mile round trip and CVS is about 40 to 50 miles. They certainly are not "around" me, anywhere!

I called a mutual friend and ran the scenario by them. "Does it sound like our friend? Or does it sound like a scam operation?" Friend number two said, "It does not sound like our friend, it sounds like a scam? Our friend would never do this."

Finally, I emailed back the Scammer, "Unfortunately, I'm not going to have time to go through all of this. Maybe, you should just get your nephew a good ol' Christmas card and give him some good advice. It's the holiday season and I'm really busy. Sorry."

I then phoned friend number one. No answer, voicemail. I left a message to call me. No return call. An hour or so later I drove by my friend's house and bingo, was able to make contact. "It's a scam!" my friend said. "Three people have already called me before you came here." (Now it's up to seven, I understand.)

I said, "Did you report it to the Sheriff's Department or the County Prosecutor's office?" "No!" my friend said. "I called the FBI! They told me to file a form online, which I did three times, but it wouldn't take!" This Scam operation on my friend apparently started with a call to her cell phone about a phony federal lawsuit. My friend said that it caused the loss of a good amount of money.

I went to the Sheriff's Office in Mt. Vernon and reported this incident to them. Though, it's out of their realm, Sheriff Tom Latham agreed to meet with me on the following

Monday morning, at the crack of nine, to give me some advice that I will pass on to those of you in our community. This, so that in the future, we might be able to avoid getting trapped by these Scam Artists. It's my understanding, though, after talking to a County Deputy, that these scams are often coming from outside of New Harmony and Posey County, even from other countries.

Stay alert!

**CELL PHONE AND EMAIL
SCAMMING ALERT!
SHERIFF LATHAM INTERVIEW
DECEMBER 30, 2019
By: Dan Barton, Publisher**

What follows are excerpts of an interview with Posey County Sheriff, Tom Latham:

SHERIFF LATHAM: These types of scams are very prevalent. (Cell Phone and email) Most of them; and I noticed there was some improper grammar usage, are very common and usually signify that these scams are coming from overseas, because they can't speak English very well.

When this started hitting our area, the scams were coming from Nigeria; now mostly from Jamaica and the Caribbean, etc.

When I was an investigator (Detective) for five years, I worked on multiple scams similar to this one.

The ones that are most common are scams where they call and say they are in a Mexican jail. Most of the time they are able scan FaceBook profiles for information on the victim. Usually, they'll start looking on the person's FaceBook profile and see how the person's grandchildren refer to them. Then they'll call them. Grandma, is a very common term that the grandchildren use to refer to their grandmother. But sometimes there are unique ones, like Mimi, or something like that.

The scammer will see the information on the FaceBook profile. They'll call the person and say, "Mimi! It's Darin and I'm in jail in Mexico and I need \$500." The scammer will pick the victim's brain. Social media makes it very easy for them to do this, unfortunately.

This type of scam is not extremely odd. They search the Web, they search FaceBook,

Instagram and all of these social networking sites. People reveal too much information about themselves. Even on the backs of their cars.

What bothers me the most is we, the Sheriff's Office, can post this information on FaceBook and run the information in the newspapers, or other media outlets, and still we get scam, after scam, after scam! We are trying to educate the people here within the community of Posey County. But it's inevitable, it still happens.

Most of the time the scams are those lottery type, "Hey, you've just won the Lottery!" You just send us \$500 and we'll send you a million dollars!" The question about winning something like that is, "Did you sign up for it? No? Then you didn't win it."

If these people committing these crimes would work as hard at doing positive, good things, in society, instead of bad, just think what a success they could be. All of the time and effort they put into stealing, instead of investing that same amount of time into working, and acquiring the benefits of that work, over time...

DAN BARTON: My friend tried to notify the FBI about the scam, that they fell prey to, but the FBI didn't offer much help. The FBI said to fill out a form online. Though, my friend did that three times, the form wouldn't take.

LATHAM: When I first became a detective, I started working these types of cases. I was getting inundated. I was a new detective and didn't know where to go with these things. Around here, they don't send you to Investigator's School. The difference between working the road and becoming a detective is, "Here's your new car and call me if you need anything!"

I'd call the FBI, and I went to a couple of computer classes. I learned how to pull I.P. addresses (Internet Protocol) and find out who owned that particular I.P. address. I could then subpoena that record and find out who it was. So, I'm new at this, and I find out all of this information, and I'm really excited about it. I've got all of this information, that's necessary for the FBI to investigate my cases. I've come to know a lot of the FBI agents, now. But early on, they were different folks. They'd say, "Detective, we truly, truly, appreciate your efforts, but I can tell you that

this I.P. address is connected to Russia, and we've been to Russia and investigated these types of things. It's a dead end! We have no authority in Russia and there is nothing the federal government can do to keep up with the ever changing technology."

From someone who doesn't deal with this type of situation; to them, it looks like the police should be able to just go in and do something about this, and get it done. It's frustrating for me. You said, that your friend was told by the FBI to go fill out a form online. That is the same thing I was told when I first started working on these types of cases. I honestly think that what filing an incident report does with the FBI, is just provide crime statistics for them. They are mainly concentrating on terrorist threats, bank robberies, drug gangs, and all sorts of other things.

The FBI reaches out to local agencies such as ours and asks for one of our people to be tied in with them. I think, Jeremy Fortune was the last person, and the one who was a Task Force Agent. Now, without that office, time is much more limited. I'm not saying that this is not important, but compared to the Mexican Mafia, terroristic threats and those kind of things, it just doesn't compare.

BARTON: Are you doing anything in this area at present, in terms of citizens filing incident forms with the Posey County Sheriff's Office? Would you actually look into a complaint of this nature?

LATHAM: We would look into it as far as we could go. Absolutely! If a complaint is filed with my office it will definitely be looked into. If it isn't, then I will deal with it. We're not just a filing system. If a case is filed with my office, it will be looked into.

I will tell you this, and I'm not just saying it, there are a lot of blocked walls with these types of complaints, especially if it ends up in Jamaica, Nigeria, Canada or Russia. Then we've obviously reached our ends. We can only do so much!

The scammers used to send people to C.V.S. Pharmacy for the Green Dot Card. It got to be so common that even C.V.S. was turning people away. People would say they wanted four, \$20 Green Dot Cards, and the C.V.S. folks would say, "Hold on a second! Why do you need those cards?" And then the person being scammed would say, "Well, I got this letter or phone call..." C.V.S. would then say, "I'll sell them to you, but I'm going to

suggest that you don't buy them, because it's probably a scam."

We at the Posey County Sheriff's Office can't do this alone. We need community involvement; you, C.V.S., everybody in the public has the eyes and ears, and that's what we rely on. As much as we inform, as much as we educate, there is always that one person who misses the story. If we can keep the circle going, it helps.

If I were asked, "What is the best advice for me to give someone, it would be: 1) If it sounds to good to be true, then it probably is too good to be true. 2) If you didn't sign up for it, then don't deal with it. and 3) If you don't know who they are and they are asking for your personal information over the phone or email, do not give it."

One of the fears that people have is someone who calls and says they are calling from the I.R.S. For whatever reason they become just so intimidated by them. So, these scammers are calling and pulling on the person's fears. The I.R.S. is not going to call you. But again, this is the way they pull on your fear strings. This way they can get you to give them information about yourself.

The other one is, "You owe money! If you don't pay it, I'm going to send the sheriff to your house and your going to be arrested!" These are fear strings they're pulling on. If I need something, then I'm going to call you, myself. Or, I'm going to come and talk to you. And it's not going to be some guy that doesn't speak very good English. It's not going to be a guy with a Middle Eastern accent and calls himself, John Smith. There's a lot of common sense that plays into this stuff. But again, these people are able to "Act Upon Your Fear" and that's where the manipulation comes in.

BARTON: If there's a form that a person needs to fill out to report a scam incident do we have to come to the Sheriff's Office or can it be done at our home or in New Harmony?

SHERIFF LATHAM: We don't have a specialized form for this. If we were to get involved, it would be an "Incident Report". We would send a Deputy to your location or we would have your Town Marshal do the report with you. A person can initiate an Incident Report by calling it in to our Dispatch Center number, which is: 812-838-1320.

**THE NEW HARMONY TOWN
COUNCIL - MEETING HI-LITES -
DECEMBER 17, 2019
by: Dan Barton
January, 2020**

*Opening bids for Street Paving Grant #2019-2 were
E & B Paving - \$102,280

*Jerry David Enterprises - \$165,750

*This paving will cover - Tavern from Short to Third St., Tavern from Arthur to West and Park from Main to East St. Main St. from South to Park, Murray from South to Park and South St. from Main.

*Alvin Blaylock announce a new four year lease between the Town of New Harmony and the Fire Department. He said that in 2019 the trustees paid New Harmony \$7,438. They have now agreed to pay: 2020 \$7,500 ; for 2021 \$7,600 ; for 2022 \$7,600; for 2023 \$7,700.

*Blaylock also announced a financial commitment letter for the upcoming Community Crossing Grant #2020-1 for the Town's share of the grant - \$31,562.

*The January, 2020, Town Council meeting will be held on January 28, 2020.

* New Four Year Appointments: Zoning Appeals - Virginia Alsop, Roger Wade. Roger will take David Flanders spot. All appointments are as of January 1, 2020.

* Planning Commission: Gary Watson will take David Flanders spot, and Alvin Blaylock and Aaron Straub will remain on the Commission. These are also for four years.

* Sue Krozel is leaving the Parks Board and will be replaced by Brenda Sawyer.

Dan Mason of Historic New Harmony, announced that he has been meeting with officials from the University of Southern Indiana to correct a communications gap, regarding the previously announced closure of the Murphy Auditorium Theatre. He believes that he has that straightened out and there will be theatre productions in the Summer of 2020. Also, he says, that Historic New Harmony is in the process of revamping all of their tours in New Harmony. Mason said that he was just invited to the Getty Museum in Los Angeles to have HNH become a part of "Keeping It Modern" production to develop a preservation plan

for the Atheneum. They are going to develop a handbook for taking care of Richard Meir's masterpiece structure.

Council President Blaylock announced that he made a call to Congressman Bucshon's office about the problems New Harmony's been having getting something done about the flood plane issue. He was sent a form to fill out and which he said that he will be doing and then sending it back to the Congressman's office. He is hoping that this will get Congressman Bucshon on board with us to start working and pushing to make something happen.

Genome Revelations

by: Ann Rains

December 2019

Back in the late 20th century it took more than a decade to completely sequence a human genome. Presently, the sequencing takes only a couple of days. A genome is "broadly, the genetic material of an organism," according to Merriam-Webster.

In those early days of sequencing the human genome, the cost was prohibitive. Only people such as Bill Gates or Steve Jobs (SJ actually had it done) could afford the small change of a couple of billion dollars to have their genome sequenced.

Studying a person's chromosomes reveals information about people's actions that many of us may have pondered in puzzlement. How does he/she drink numerous alcoholic beverages throughout the day and not keel over? How did he/she become addicted so easily to opiates or meth?

The answer may be in our DNA. The Human Genome Project discovered that some

people's bodies can detoxify alcohol more rapidly than normal. Essie Osborne is a case in point who was tested. Also, genes can have variations making the tendency towards addiction more likely.

The four page article In Discover magazine, "Addicted, More or Less" by Bill Sullivan, provided information to which I could personally relate. I only need to have one gin and tonic to feel tipsy and for my cheeks to become radiantly rosy.

Now I know why. I have AFR (alcohol flush reaction) which is a "genetic variant that impairs production of an enzyme that helps break down alcohol in the body." People with AFR are less likely to become alcoholics, thank goodness.

That toxic enzyme is acetaldehyde which is converted from alcohol by the liver. Acetaldehyde also comes into play with diabetics, which is another story. In the liver function of a normal human body, acetaldehyde is broken down to acetate which is not toxic.

Because there are wide variants in the human genome, people do not process the substances they put into their bodies in the same manner. Many people have mutant genes which actually lead them down the path to addiction.

I am not sure what the answer is to the underlying problem of addiction in our society. What is the treatment for a person whose genome reveals that he/she is genetically predisposed to addiction? We used to think it was all in their mental state, attitude or self control.

Of course, scientists now know how to clone. Wouldn't that make life boring? Genome sequencing is still in its infancy. The gene mutations found in Americans may be different in foreign populations. Why are some people combative and others are content exhibiting a peaceful and loving attitude? In the future will we be asking our intended spouses to undergo genome sequencing? Are genome revelations a Pandora's Box?

Have a blessed New Year!

planetprayers@gmail.com
©Ann Rains

January Gazette Recipe 2020

by: Denise Rapp

Marinated Shrimp Salad

Serves 20

I always like to be thinking outside the box when it comes to food. I want food to be an experience, not just something to eat. I love this marinated shrimp salad because it is elegant and extremely flavorful.

Yes, we all love shrimp cocktail but let's try something a little different.

Who knows you may just find your new favorite thing.

3 lbs of raw deveined shrimp
4tbs Pickling spice
1 tbs white vinegar
3 celery stalks
16 c. Water

Bring water, vinegar, celery and spices to a hard boil.

Add shrimp and cook until shrimp are pink about 7-8 minutes.

Drain, rinse & cool enough to peel.

Add peeled shrimp to a large bowl and add the remaining ingredients.

Toss and refrigerate over night.

Serve in a trifle bowl or some pretty glass bowl so you can see how beautiful this salad really is.

32 oz. jarred artichokes (quartered)
15oz. Can black olives
Sm. Sliced red onion
2 lemons - sliced
1 1/2 c. Italian Dressing

Enjoy!



SHAFFER CONSTRUCTION & REPAIR

Decks • Siding • Woodworking •
Painting (int. & ext.) • Fencing • Etc...
INSURED

REASONABLE RATES
"We'll Do You Right"

New Harmony, Indiana

812-682-3701

THE NEW-HARMONY GAZETTE.

Dan Barton
Publisher

New Harmony Gazette
P.O. Box 551
New Harmony, IN 47631

Contributing Writers

Dan Barton
Ann Rains
Denise Rapp