

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

NEW-HARMONY, (IND.) February 2021

LENA FEINER  
MEMORIAL TRIBUTE  
By: Dan Barton



Lena Feiner passed away on November 27, 2020.

Lena was a special friend to many of us in New Harmony, including myself. I first met Lena, through a mutual friend, back in June, 2014. I had just gotten to town, officially, and my friend said to me, “There’s somebody that you just have to meet!” That “somebody” turned out to be Lena Feiner. We were fast friends from that day forward.

Lena was special to me and I’m sure to many of you, because of her kindness and her hospitality, her passion, among many of her other attributes. She was honest and forthright, and enjoyable to talk with. I remember the many occasions when I would stop at her gallery, when it was open on weekends, and we would sit in her kitchen and solve the world’s problems, between us. I drank many a gallon of Lena’s tea, along with scores of cookies, sitting at the island in her kitchen. We often tend to while away time with our friends in that way, in serious good humor, not thinking that the day will come when friends part company, beyond the realm of time and space.

Lena Feiner, owned the Women’s Institute Gallery in her home, in New Harmony. As many of you know, Lena was an advocate for Women’s Rights. And not only Women’s Rights, but the Rights of all citizens whose history had been one of abuse or second class citizenry. In 2015, she participated in the Edmund Pettus, 50th anniversary, Bridge march in Selma, Alabama. In fact, Lena came to New Harmony in 1997 because of its historical place in the history of Women’s Suffrage. She thought that New Harmony

was the perfect place to open a Gallery and Institute that emphasized Women’s Rights.

As I took my last look around the now empty shop and gallery, the memory of my friend’s welcome smile and laughter seemed to rush over me. My thoughts were of how we so often give away our time together on things so less important than our friendship. Sometimes sacrificing the music of a familiar friendly voice and companionship for other things less important.

Lena Feiner will be missed by many of us who knew and loved her.

THE FIVE PERSON  
REVIEW COMMITTEE MYSTERY?

By: Dan Barton  
February 2021

“Just remember: It’s not a lie—if you believe it!” ...George Costanza

In the December 2020, edition of the Gazette, I left you with the promise that The New Harmony Gazette would pursue the names of the members of the Five Member Review Committee, that was left out in Town Council President Alvin Blaylock’s discussion at the Council meeting of October 20, 2020; or let you know if it’s a dead-end. Well, it’s not exactly a dead-end, but it is a bit of a conundrum.

I said, that as publisher of the New Harmony Gazette, I would request the names of the Five Member Review Committee, and I did so, from Town Clerk Karla Atkins and from Town Lawyer Erin Bauer.

Town Council President, Alvin Blaylock had reported that such a committee existed and that the Committee “looked at the 32 qualified businesses and recommended dividing the Grant Funds (\$263,750) equally among the 32 businesses.” Originally, Atkins turned down my request for the 32 businesses, but after she consulted with the Town Attorney, the request was granted and the names of the recipient businesses were released in the November 2020 edition of The New Harmony Gazette.

Then, it only seemed natural to request the list of the Five unknown Officials who, according

to Blaylock, made the recommendation on how, and to whom, to spend the public COVID Funds with, since I already had the names of the 32 businesses who were recipients of the grant money.

Other New Harmony businesses, not on the recipient list, were left out of the grant for various reasons. Either they were not notified by the Town Council personally that they should apply, as some of the grant recipients were personally notified, or they waited too long to file, and missed the filing deadline, or they didn’t think they had met the criteria for eligibility. However, most of the grant applicants who applied in time, were approved. It appears, though, that some of the grant recipients may not have met the criteria description, but were funded anyway.

In that regard, I include the criteria for eligibility that was released by Karla Atkins, Town Clerk, as follows:

- \* Be a sole proprietorship, corporate franchise, LLC, corporation, or independent contractor
- \* Must be considered a small business (100 or less) and actively operation prior to the COVID pandemic or whose opening was impacted boy the COVID pandemic.
- \* Demonstrate the direct correlation of their business disruption to COVI-19 in their impact letters.
- \* Primary office or business location must be within the New Harmony corporate boundaries.
- \* Provide a letter how the influx of the grant funds will help retain a certain number of employees, and
- \* Provide documentation of company employees, positions, average number of hours worked per week, and average annual salary (based upon the last three month’s salary x 4)
- \* Full time equivalent (FTE) is defined as more than 32 hours per week.
- \* Micro-businesses/sole proprietors must receive W-2 or 1099 to apply.
- \* No cash wages will be considered as wages.
- \* Businesses receiving other COVID-19 assistance such as PPP, EIDL are eligible to apply.
- \* Business receiving prior OCRA-19 grant assistance are not eligible to apply
- \* Non-profits are not eligible

Atkins, went on to state: The Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana will be providing program management, oversight and administration of the funds for the communities.

By way of comparison, the description of what The Economic Development Coalition was responsible for, regarding the grant, as was explained by G. Michael Schopmeyer, attorney for The Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, in the following manner:

He said, in part, in his letter to the Gazette, dated, November 25, 2020; "The Coalition itself is not a "public agency,"...but is rather an Indiana nonprofit corporation serving as a grant writing body for the promotion of community development, in the Indiana Southwest Region. Its relationship to the Phase II funds...is to act as a resource for the recipient communities and to ensure they comply with the rules established by HUD and OCRA."

Schopmeyer, turned down the Gazette's request for a list of the Five Members of the Review Committee and suggested that our inquiry be directed toward the New Harmony Town Council. Which was done by the Gazette, twice.

Erin Bauer, New Harmony Town Attorney, replied to The New Harmony Gazette's request for the names of the Five Members, as follows:

"As I stated in November 7, 2020, the Town of New Harmony does not maintain such a list of names. The Town is not required to create a list of names. Request denied."

Mr. Joseph Basile, Director of Legal Services, (and an attorney), Office of Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch was contacted by the New Harmony gazette regarding the Review Committee list. He responded in part by saying:

" Per my discussions with my colleagues in OCRA, it appears that ... OCRA does not possess any records that are responsive to your request."

So, it would appear, unless I'm misinterpreting some of the word parsing and legalese or there is a coverup, included in some of the statements, that neither the State, the Region nor the Town of New Harmony, including the Town Council of New Harmony, have any list or know anything about a Five Member Review Committee. According to Council President Alvin Blaylock, the Committee "looked at the 32 qualified businesses and recommended

dividing the Grant Funds equally among the 32 businesses." Per Blaylock during the October 20th Town Council meeting.

If the responsible government bodies and extra-governmental bodies involved did not know anything about the Five Member Review Committee, then where did Mr. Blaylock get his OK, beyond the vote taken by Town Council on October 20th, made after Blaylock's remarks were already spoken, to divide the funds equally among the 32 businesses? His statement to his Council colleagues appears to be based on invalid information.

But, the Council, on October 20th, proceeded to vote for the passage to divide the funds equally, anyway, based on the recommendation from Blaylock, without any questions from them about who was on the secret committee. The Council vote was three YEA'S for the passage; Blaylock, Watson and Alsop; and Two Council members abstained.

The two who abstained were Tom Williams and Roger Wade, both of whom were on the list to receive the grant funds. Neither one questioned the validity of Blaylock's statement or asked for the names of the Five unidentified committee members.

So, who, Mr. Blaylock, were the Five Members on that COVID Review Committee list? Or was there a COVID Review Committee at all?

If there was no list of Review Committee names that OK'd the allocation of the funds in equal parts, then it sounds like the Town Council voted to pass the ordinance based on invalid information, disseminated by Council President Blaylock.

If you know the names of these five people, that you say were on the secret COVID Review Committee, Mr. Blaylock, then you should release the names. Let the citizens of New Harmony fully participate in their Town government. Do not hide the facts.

There was nothing in any of the New Harmony Town Council minutes over the past four months, whereby the Council voted to authorize a Five Person Review Committee. Nor was there any indication of an Executive Session by the Council to determine allocation of the money.

Groundless statements by politicians are interesting, in that: why would they make a statement that is not based on real facts? According to all of the official sources, there was no Five Member Committee. So, who really made the designation of how to distribute the money? Is this a violation of

Indiana's, "Public Access to Information" laws?

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**PUBLIC MEETING RE:  
BLOCK GRANT PHASE 3 ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT GRANT!**

On or about February 26, 2021 the Town of New Harmony intends to apply to the Indiana Office of Community Rural Affairs for a grant from the State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) COVID 19 Phase 3 Economic Development Grant Program. This program is funded by Title 1 - of the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

The funds will be utilized to administer grants to businesses in the corporate limits of the Town of New Harmony that employ at least 51% Low-to- Moderate income persons in jeopardy of losing their job without grant assistance. The total amount of CDBG funds to be requested is \$250,000. The amount of CDBG funds proposed to be used for activities that will benefit low-and-moderate income persons is at least \$127,000 (51%). There are no local funds expended on this project.

The Town of New Harmony will hold a public hearing on February 16, 2021 at 8:30 A.M. (local time) to provide interested parties an opportunity to express their views on the proposed federally funded CDBG project. Persons with disabilities or non-English speaking persons who wish to attend the public hearing and need assistance should contact Debbie Bennett-Steersman at 812-423-2020 not later than February 10, 2021. Every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations for these persons.

Information related to this project will be available for review as of February 10, 2021 or at [www.southwestindiana.org](http://www.southwestindiana.org) or by calling Debbie Bennett-Steersman at 812-423-2020. Interested citizens are invited to provide comments regarding these issues either at the public hearing or by prior written statement. Written comments should be submitted to Debbie Bennett-Steersman, Economic Development Coalition of SW Indiana, 318 Main Street, Suite 400, Evansville, Indiana 47708 or by email to [dbennett@southwestindiana.org](mailto:dbennett@southwestindiana.org) no later than February 19, 2021 in order to ensure placement of such comments in the official record of the public hearing proceedings. A plan to minimize displacement and provide assistance to those displaced has been prepared by the Town of New Harmony and is also available to the public. This project will result in no displacement of any persons or businesses. For additional

information concerning the proposed project, please contact the Community Development Division of the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, 318 Main Street, Suite 400, Evansville, Indiana 47708 or (812) 423-2020.

### AARON WILSON SPEAKS ON HIS FACEBOOK / CAPITOL VIOLENCE!

*By Dan Barton*

In case you've been off the planet for the past month or so, you may not have read the remarks allegedly made by Posey County Councilman at Large Aaron Wilson, regarding his opinion on storming the nation's Capitol . Back in January, Mr. Wilson posted the following item on his personal Facebook:

"Throughout 2020, we watched Antifa and BLM burn down buildings in this country. We watched these groups steal from businesses in their own community."

"All while these same businesses were being forced to shutdown by local government bureaucrats."

"I'm not condemning anything. We had a whole year of violence in this country from far left groups that caused billions of dollars in damage and ruined innocent people's lives."

"I say we storm the Capitol again next week! These lying cheating, no-good politicians need to learn that the only reason we've had peace in this country for many years is because we've had elected leaders willing to put their country and ethics above their party and themselves. I do not believe this is the last of the violence we will see and the spineless nincompoops in Washington D.C. have no one to blame but themselves."

This statement has since been removed from Aaron Wilson's personal Facebook account.

Anyway, eventually, the eye that never blinks, WFIE, Channel 14 News, caught up with Aaron in the Posey County Council Chambers and put the questions to him.

Councilman Wilson reportedly stated, in his own defense:

"There has been comments made on both sides of the political aisle over the last four years that have incited violence. I do not believe that Donald Trump incited violence in any way."

"'Storm the Capitol' is an expression that's been used when people have grievances that they'd like to take to their elected officials. That's

what I meant by the statement. Timing wise it was not the correct verbiage. But that's what I meant. I didn't even realize what all had gone on. I don't think anyone had any clue of all the facts. But everybody was reporting on it. All I was saying was that I'm not condemning anything until we know all the facts."

"I condemn all violence and cancel culture violence, as well. Which is attacking a family business, attacking anyone due to a difference in political ideology."

### INDIANAPOLIS HAS FALLEN A RED STATE SURRENDERS

IT'S CAPITOL

*By Richard Moss, MD*

I had known this mid-size metropolis since the seventies when I lived here as a medical student, attending the Indiana University School of Medicine. Then, Indianapolis was referred to as India-no-place or Naptown. But Indianapolis has come a long way since then attracting professional sports teams, stadiums, arenas, and major corporations. There are cultural and art districts, comedy clubs, and trendy, upscale neighborhoods. It has an array of tech-schools and universities, gondola rides along its canal, distilleries, symphony halls, theaters, ethnic restaurants, an excellent zoo, and several museums including the largest children's museum in the world. My children and I have enjoyed much of what this city has to offer, in particular its downtown area, known as Monument Circle. Here, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument inspires and dazzles, with its glorious fountains, pools, and statues honoring our valiant soldiers and sailors from Indiana who fought and died in each of our nation's wars. The Christmas lights are iconic and splendid, and each year we visited the great memorial at night, lit up brilliantly, our Rockefeller Center. It had always been a clean and safe downtown, a place I had felt comfortable visiting with my young family – until now.

This year, Monument Circle swarmed not with tourists and patrons but with a succession of homeless encampments, bedecked with tents, sleeping bags, blankets, cardboard shelters, cigarette butts, newspapers, plastic bags, bottles, cans, and, of course, hundreds of vagrants sleeping or milling about. What had been one of the cleanest, most scenic, and safe downtown centers in the country had deteriorated into a third world, garbage strewn, and threatening urban nightmare.

The entrances to the Hilbert Circle Theater and the nearby Indiana Repertory Theater were boarded up, closed, and crammed with itinerants, trash, and debris. It was demoralizing and disgusting, an urban

cesspool of dystopia and vagrancy.

The next morning, we walked around a trendy and historic neighborhood, adjacent to downtown, known as Lockerbie Square. Here are individual homes, tree lined streets, coffee shops, yoga studios, and delightful, antique cobblestone roads. The former home of James Whitcomb Riley, Indiana's great poet laureate, is located here. I did not see vagrants or garbage, but there was a plethora of BLM (Black Lives Matter) signs, with the clenched fist emblem, and other expressions of solidarity for the racist, Marxist, anti-Semitic organization. Had the neighborhood gone "woke," upscale, lefty-ish, and chic as it was? Or were the signs a form of insurance, some of the homeowners hoping to avoid the wrath and destruction of marauding peaceful protesters from nearby downtown?

Post George Floyd, the burning, looting, riots, and violence that occurred in cities throughout the country, also beset Indianapolis. Then, of course, there was the pandemic, with its crushing raft of lockdowns, closures, mask and social distance mandates, devastating to small businesses everywhere.

Democrat Mayor Joe Hogsett, voiced standard liberal bromides about "inequities" and "underlying" causes. In a recent article, he and two associates wrote:

"...many cities still use punitive measures to respond to homelessness. Using police to sweep homeless encampments or issue citations and arrests doesn't reduce homelessness or help people find stability. Instead, it traps people in a homelessness-jail cycle..."

Yes, Mayor, of course.

"This pandemic has exposed failures and inequities across our society, including in how we respond to homelessness. But we know what works. Now is the time for policymakers at all levels of government to invest in housing with services that address the underlying problem, rather than using punitive responses that fail to help anyone..."

And so on.

Mayor Giuliani, where are you?

But, no, Mayor Hogsett, the answer is to hold the "homeless" (vagrants, drug addicts, bums) to the same middle-class bourgeois standards that we hold everyone else to. These include taking a shower, dressing up, not drinking or using drugs, acquiring a skill, finding a job, obtaining a dwelling, and getting off the street. There is also a cornucopia of welfare programs that provide assistance for those in need. Some of these include food stamps, direct financial aid, Medicaid, housing and heating

subsidies, and more. There are church or faith-based charities. Such public generosity should require a minimum of 20 hours community service, beginning with cleaning up the messes they have made.

Our Declaration of Independence proclaims an inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Nowhere does it mention a "right" to a home. That, dear liberals, is up to the individual.

We stayed on Pennsylvania Avenue, a block away from Monument Circle. Next to my building was the office of Senator Mike Braun, also from Jasper, one of our two Republican, allegedly conservative, senators. On the other side of the Circle, a mere block away, was the state Capitol, a majestic, classical structure. All of our representatives must have seen what I saw.

In the state of Indiana, a very red, pro-Trump state, both houses of our bicameral state assembly are overwhelmingly Republican. The governor, who recently won a second term, is also a Republican. Our two US Senators are Republican and seven out of nine Congressmen are Republican. Vice President Mike Pence was an Indiana Congressman and then governor before ascending to the vice presidency.

While recognizing that state and federal representatives do not operate on the local level, and that the current Mayor of Indianapolis is a Democrat, is there no influence they could exert on local officials to clean up this nauseating mess in our capitol city?

The filth and squalor of America's Democrat run cities, well before the George Floyd incident and far worse after, exacerbated by the plague and our absurd and destructive overreaction to it, is well known. We have seen and heard the horror stories of New York City, LA, San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Chicago, DC, and elsewhere. There is rampant homelessness, public defecation, open drug abuse, skyrocketing crime, shuttering of businesses, and closing of parks, schools, churches, and temples. We have witnessed and experienced the destruction of the economy

THE  
**NEW-HARMONY GAZETTE.**

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and the forfeiture of our civil and religious liberties, and the humiliating forced wearing of Chinese facial diapers, by tyrannical left-wing mayors and governors.

But we don't expect this to occur in deep red states.

Yet it does.

Other than Florida and South Dakota, which have both given a good account of themselves through the pandemic, Republican run states have been as slovenly, craven, and ruthless as any blue state. They have given over to the mindless anarchy and violence of BLM/Antifa/SJW mobs running our streets and the homeless bivouacs. Likewise, they have been as tyrannical as the Democrats, enforcing demeaning masks of submission mandates, lockdowns and closures, including, unfortunately, here in Indiana.

Indianapolis is the crown jewel of Indiana, particularly Monument Circle. And so it should remain.

When will our elected Republican leaders at all levels of government stand up to the degradation of our cities, the anarchy and tyranny in open display? When will they challenge a level of oppression that King George III never dreamed of imposing upon the colonies in his day?

If Republicans other than Trump are unwilling to fight as Democrats do, then a new model of organization and defiance for patriots is needed, a Liberty Alliance, or some such formulation. Modeled after the Tea Party movement, it should avoid the mistakes of that crusade. It should remain independent and prevent the Republican Party from co-opting it. We will require a more local, county-level system of defense, aid, and resistance, apart from either party, but in particular the ineffective and worthless Republicans, who have been happy to take our money and votes and do nothing.

Who will stand up for regular, scorned, tax paying, working, patriotic Americans? Who will defend the deplorables that love their country?

Hoosiers, their elected representatives, and a new grassroots coalition of patriots must restore our beloved capitol city, Indianapolis, even as we push back against the jackals in what must remain the freest and greatest nation in the world.

January 2, 2021

Richard Moss, M.D., a surgeon practicing in Jasper, IN, was a candidate for Congress in 2016 and 2018. He has written "A Surgeon's Odyssey" and "Matilda's Triumph,"

available on amazon.com. Contact him at richardmossmd.com or Richard Moss, M.D. on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**FEBRUARY RECIPE**

*by Denise Rapp*

**Crispy Chicken & Rice Casserole**

These's something about cold weather and hot casseroles that go hand and hand. This creamy chicken casserole is one of my all time favorites. What makes it so addictive is the crunch of the almond slices and corn flakes. Yes corn flakes!

This creamy, crunchy chicken & Rice casserole is sure to win your approval too.

Crispy Chicken & Rice Casserole  
Serves 8-10

- 1 c. Uncooked long grain rice
- 2 c. Chopped cooked chicken
- 2 - 10oz. Cans of cream of mushroom soup
- 1 - 8 oz. can sliced water chestnuts
- 1 - 3 oz. can sliced mushrooms
- 1 c. Chopped celery
- 3/4 c. Mayonnaise
- 1 small chopped onion
- 1/2 c. Sliced almonds
- 1 tbs. lemon juice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 c. Crushed corn flakes

**Directions**

Cook rice according to package directions.

In a large bowl, mix the next 10 ingredients together, then fold in the rice.

Spoon into a greased 13 x 9 baking dish. Sprinkle with crushed cereal.

Bake @ 350 for 45 minutes or until it is golden and bubbly.

Enjoy!

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