

A Newspaper Dedicated to the Progress of Our Region

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July, 2021

Evansville, IN

City-County Observer Announces First Annual "Person-Of-The-Year" Winner

First Honoree: Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke

July 2021

The City-County Observer is pleased to announce a new award that will be made annually to honor the "Person of the Year" in Greater Evansville. The first honoree of this prestigious award is none other than Evansville's 3-term Mayor Lloyd Winnecke (R).

Winnecke was elected to the office of Mayor of Evansville in the fall of 2011 and assumed office in January of 2012. His calm demeanor and collaborative style had been apparent throughout his career in banking and journalism. His basic personality traits have made Mayor Winnecke a pleasant person to be around. He is also an excellent communicator.

As a candidate for mayor, Winnecke promised to serve as "Evansville's Ambassador Of Good Will," and that is a role he has so far played effectively. Mayoral candidate Winnecke also made a commitment to energize Evansville's downtown after years of decay and many false starts by his predecessors. Today, downtown Evansville has the potential of becoming an energetic business and shopping destination in the Tri-State, with a growing population base and an expanding array of retail establishments.

As a native of Evansville, Mayor Winnecke witnessed the demise of downtown Evansville that was accelerated when the Washington Square and Eastland Malls were opened on the East Side. When retail pulled out, people did too, leaving downtown Evansville as a shell of its former self. It was Winnecke's diligence and calmly staying the course that seemly have brought people back to



downtown Evansville to live. His steady hand on the plow finally seeded downtown Evansville for future sustainable prosperity.

Mayor Winnecke has also learned to let go of the past when it is appropriate to do so, as has been exhibited in the demolition of some long-standing but, obsolete buildings including the 420 Building that was the home of Old National Bank and the Petroleum Club for many decades. The reality has been apparent that some of the older buildings were functionally obsolete for years, and Winnecke realized this. He found creative ways to navigate through the maze of State and Federal bureaucratic rules and regulations to find the funds for future housing, retail and commercial development.

Mayor Winnecke is likable and also can take a joke very well, even when the joke is on him. In his early days as Mayor of Evansville, his enthusiasm and love for Evansville and its people did lead to some hilarious moments like the chicken fat video that was made to promote healthy living. Much fun was made of the video, and Winnecke took it all in stride while positioning himself to become the first Mayor of Evansville and attempt to reverse

the decline of the downtown. He had to make a multi-million dollar decision to repair and replace our dilapidated water and sewer system, pushed for the needed renovations to our Zoo, and spearheaded the effort to build the much-needed Aquatic Complex in the North Main area. He was one of the masterminds to help work around the tedious process of locating the IU Medical School Downtown and he was a strong advocate for the funding and the building of the Downtown Doubletree Hotel.

Finally, for his perseverance, kindness, and leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the City-County Observer is proud to announce that Mayor Lloyd Winnecke will receive our first "Person of the Year Award" at our annual awards luncheon on September 16, 2021, at Evansville-Tropicana.

Also at this annual event, local attorney Charles L. Berger, retired and The Honorable Vanderburgh Superior Court Judge Rich D'Amour, retired Vanderburgh County Treasurer Susan Kirk, State Senator Veneta Becker, Alex Burton, and Lisa Vaughn and Mayor Winnecke will receive our "Outstanding Community Services Award" for 2021.

In a couple of weeks, we shall announce who our guest speaker will be and how to make reservations for this well-attended community event.

FOOTNOTE: We would like to recognize and thank Deputy Mayor Steve Schaefer for his supportive role in helping Mayor Winnecke to achieve his level of success during challenging times.

Public notice of CALEA re-accreditation of the EPD



July 2021

The Evansville Police Department is scheduled for an on-site assessment as part of a program to achieve re-accreditation by verifying it meets professional standards.

Administered by the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA), the accreditation program requires agencies to comply with state-of-the-art standards in four basic areas: policy and procedures, administration, operations, and support services.

As part of the assessment, agency employees and members of the community are invited to offer comments at a public information session on Wednesday, July 7 beginning at 10:00 a.m. The session will be conducted in the Evansville Police Department Foundation Room at the CK Newsome Community Center, 100 Walnut Street, Evansville.

Agency employees and the public are also invited to offer comments by calling 812-436-4947 on Thursday, July 8 between the hours of 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Comments will be taken by the Assessment Team.

Telephone comments, as well as an appearance at the public information session, are limited to 10 minutes and must address the Evansville Police Department's ability to comply with CALEA's standards. A copy of the Standards is available by calling Captain Scott Doan at the Evansville Police Department Chief's Complex 812-436-5776.

Anyone wishing to submit written comments about the Evansville Police Department's ability to comply with the standards for accreditation may send them to the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement, Inc. (CALEA) 13575 Heathcote Boulevard, Suite 320, Gainesville, Virginia 20155 or email calea@calea.org.

The pandemic has certainly altered how we live and work

By Greg Wathen

CO-CEO of the Regional Economic Partnership

July 2021

The pandemic has certainly altered how we live and work, which is forcing us to adapt to a new normal. The phenomenon of working from home for example is something that will more than likely stick as the economy gets back to an even keel. For greater Evansville's economy, remote work has a higher level of challenge for the manufacturing sector, which is the largest part of the region's annual gross domestic product (GDP). Can manufacturing adapt to this changing landscape?

Many companies are rethinking what they believe is work and that will undoubtedly bring along with it new ways to integrate and use technology; and, in turn, will create a need and demand for reskilling workers. Along with reskilling, it's important to make sure that any new business eco-system will preserve as well as grow diversity as there is a direct correlation between a more diverse team and higher financial performance.

The other, more significant phenomenon has been the residual fallout from COVID as inflation continues to rise with Americans finding themselves paying more for food, gas, and other basic essentials. There is also a continuing debate among economists and federal policy wonks over whether higher prices will be short-lived or will they stay for a much longer period of time.

The U.S. Commerce Department just reported that its personal consumption expenditure price index climbed 0.4% in May. The index is up 3.9% over the last 12 months, nearly double the Federal Reserve's annual target of 2%. The latest figures echo as well other government data showing that inflation is increasing at its fastest clip since 2008.

As consumer demand picks up, will it outstrip the business capability of keeping up? Fed Chair Jerome Powell believes that although prices have turned up more sharply than expected, price increases will ultimately abate with the rise to be temporary. Quite a few economists have a much different view of the situation as Powell's view is hardly unanimous.

Other policymakers and economists expect inflation to persist for months and possibly even years. Paul Ashworth, chief North American economist at Capital Economics, is not as certain as Chairman Powell. Bank of America's top strategist, Michael Hartnett, "estimates that above-trend inflation could persist for years, driven in part by heavy federal spending." He sees inflation firmly in the 2-4% range over the next 2 to 4 years.

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Commentary

We consider ourselves to be a beacon of light for the community

By Staff of the City-County Observer
July 2021

Over the years the City-County Observer has strived to serve as a "community watchdog" by sounding the alarm when our citizen's rights are in danger of being violated by our elected and appointed officials.

We encourage our elected and appointed officials to always consider the welfare of this community. We realize that a community can have no greater ambassador of goodwill than one which keeps its citizens informed about the accomplishments, failures, and triumphs of their elected and appointed officials. The primary focus of this publication is built upon the foundation of our readers for contemporary information in order to enhance their quality of life.

Our mission is to provide vital information concerning social, entertainment, dining, and lifestyle articles for your educational reading pleasure. We will strive to report and inform our readers about important issues that help shape their lives. We will educate and inform you about the competence and triumphs of area restaurants, dining venues, and social atmospheres. We also encourage you to send any and all information to our email to inform our readers about important issues that help shape their lives. Articles concerning weddings, anniversaries, social gatherings, concerts, and other activities are appreciated.

The Constitution of the United States of America is our Beacon of Light. The first amendment to the U.S. Constitution states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."



The right to assemble and to see redress of grievances is enshrined in our constitution. Over the past several years, we have witnessed both peaceful and violent protests throughout our country. Recently outside groups of anarchist agitators attempted to foment lawlessness and unrest to advance their own objectives and cause anarchy.

We are a nation born of the revolutionary spirit of protest, coupling expressions of grievances against injustice with the desire to be free. However, the publisher and staff of the City-County Observer deplore the theft, looting, and burning of the buildings caused by the random acts of lawless anarchists and thugs. In fact, we believe these lawless thugs should be arrested and thrown in jail.

Since the "defund the police" movement has taken hold in some large American cities, violent crime has increased more than 300% in many of those cities. The City-County Observer strongly opposes the "defund the police" movement.

The City-County Observer is a member of ACP, Association of Community Publishers.



Ivy Tech launches Ivy+: Bending the curve on the cost of college

By President Sue Ellspermann and
Evansville Chancellor Daniela Vidal
July 2021

Next to home ownership, the cost of college is one of the biggest investments for Americans. People are either trying to pay for college for their children or they are trying to attend college themselves. It is the crux of why many are questioning the value of a college degree. When calculating the cost of tuition and fees, plus textbooks, along with living expenses, simply put, college can be expensive.

There are many ways families can reduce the out-of-pocket costs of college. Filing the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, to determine if a student qualifies for federal or state financial aid is one way. Applying for scholarships is another. Students could even consider living at home with a parent or guardian.

However, even if students qualify for financial aid, other needs such as food, transportation, and housing may take precedence, and research shows that more than 65 percent of college students forego purchasing course materials, including textbooks, in order to save money.

To help combat this financial



obstacle and ensure Hoosiers can afford a postsecondary education, Ivy Tech Community College has maintained its low-cost tuition model. This year, with the funding support of the Indiana General Assembly, we are pleased to announce that **Ivy Tech will freeze tuition for the next two years.** This means the cost of tuition will remain with no unexpected increases for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years.

Not only that, but beginning this fall semester, **Ivy Tech will pay for student textbooks for at least the next academic year,** investing nearly \$25 million to cover the costs of required textbooks. This investment will save students hundreds of dollars each year and, most importantly, ensure they have the materials they need to succeed on day one.

We did not stop there. We also know that full-time students, which describes about 25 percent of our student body, need to complete 30 credit hours per year to be considered "on-time completion" for a two-year degree. **Ivy Tech will ensure no full-time student will pay more than \$4,500 per year for as many credit hours as they want to take.** If a full-time student does not complete 15 credit hours in a semester, Ivy Tech will allow them to take up to six credit hours at no charge with a Summer-Flex Scholarship to reach the 30 credit hours needed. This will help students maintain state financial aid eligibility and qualify for more aid dollars.

You may think this sounds too good to be true. We can assure you – it is true! With our new **Ivy+** approach to tuition and books, these student-centered initiatives reinforce that Ivy Tech is committed to being your community college, plus remove barriers to student success and completion. Our goal is to ensure Hoosiers succeed in earning a post-secondary credential that either puts them directly into a high-wage, high-demand career, or sets them up for a seamless transfer to a four-year institution where they can complete their Bachelor's degree and beyond. With Ivy+ we are investing in a brighter, more affordable, future for Hoosiers.

BBB warns: Scammers pose as Amazon customer support reps. Again.



July 2021

The Tri-State Better Business Bureau has received multiple reports from local area consumers who have been getting this robocall, sometimes more than once in one day. One consumer told us she received it 12 times! If you get a robocall claiming that your Amazon account has been paused, that there was a problem with your delivery, or any other type of issue has occurred, please don't engage with the caller and ignore all instructions featured in

the voice message.

If you suspect that something might indeed be going on with your account, open your browser and log into your Amazon account. If there are any problems, they should be featured there. If you believe you've been victimized by this scam, report it to bbb.org/ScamTracker and let your friends and family know!

For more information you can trust, visit bbb.org/Evansville or call our local office at 812-473-0202.

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Infrastructure deal aims at rebuilding the Senate

By John Krull
TheStatehouseFile.com
July 2021

INDIANAPOLIS - When he struck a deal with moderate Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. Senate on the infrastructure plan, President Joe Biden had more than updating and maintaining roads and bridges in mind.

He also wanted to rebuild the Senate - and prove our government can work as it should.

It will be in the nation's interest if he's able to do it.

If this deal holds - and that's a sizable "if" - it will be because the Senate once again played the role it is supposed to play in our system of representative self-government.

That chamber of Congress was intended to be the place where moderation would occur, where compromises could be negotiated, where the members could take a long view and see that satisfying as many constituencies as possible was in the best interests of the nation.

That is why senators have longer terms of office - six years - than other elected officials. The extended stay in office was meant to insulate senators from the passions of heated moments and allow for deliberation, even under political pressure. It also aimed to allow senators, even those from opposing parties, time to develop relationships of trust and respect that would help them work through difficult and contentious questions.

Almost all the Senate's rules and customs, many of which have been discarded, ignored or trampled upon in recent years, were designed to encourage



negotiation and resolution. Even the now much-maligned filibuster served a purpose. It prevented the majority party from running roughshod over the minority one.

In this past decade, both Republicans and Democrats have had the experience of being in the minority. Each side has had its concerns dismissed as unimportant and its interests treated with contempt when the other party has had the upper hand.

The result has been that Americans have seesawed back and forth between abrupt policy shifts with each new change of power. Each partisan putsch has increased the levels of rage and resentment across the land, taking us to the point that we Americans more often snarl at rather than speak with each other.

This is not the way it should be.

But that is why Joe Biden may be the right president for this moment and its challenges.

Unlike every president since Gerald Ford, he has been and is a creature of the legislative process. In fact, no president since Lyndon

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Evansville hotel occupancy surges

By James T. Wood, FCDME
President and CEO of Visit Evansville
July 2021

Some very positive news is emerging from Evansville's hospitality industry post-pandemic. Evansville/Vanderburgh County hotels continue to see hotel occupancies rise back to pre-pandemic levels (2019).

The May 2021 hotel occupancy report reached 63.2 percent, back to where we were in May 2019 before the pandemic. Additionally, our hotel occupancy rate was the highest among cities Evansville compares itself to including Fort Wayne, South Bend, Indianapolis, and Owensboro, KY. This time last year, the region's hotel occupancy rate was 29.6 percent. In the month of May, hotel occupancy figures show that Evansville's hospitality industry is on the cusp of recovery in 2021, with a full recovery expected in 2022. Business travel is starting to return, demand for leisure travel is strong and the meetings and conventions and special events are scheduled to return. The numbers strongly indicate that we are returning to 'business as usual' for Evansville's hospitality industry.

Deaconess Sports Park will host a full softball tournament schedule through October, including the Great Lakes Region Softball Tournament, which attracts over 200 girls' softball teams from ten states. The 15U AA Ohio Valley World Series and the USA Softball Men's and Women's Slow Pitch National Championships are also coming to Deaconess Sports Park. We are also set to host the Indiana Archery Corporation - Mixed Northern Region Championship at Goebel Complex this July. In August we will see the return of the E'Ville Iron Street Rod's Frog Follies at the Vanderburgh County 4H Center which is always exciting for the entire region to see these classic vehicles at local hotels, restaurants, and cruising along Evansville's roads. At the Old National Events Plaza (ONEP) we are starting to see the return of the convention business including the 2021 INAFSM Annual Conference, Indiana Society of Association Executives Women in Associations Forum, 2021 IOGA Convention, 2021 National Beta Club, the 2021 Indiana League of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers as well as a host of other events scheduled at ONEP.

Though the pandemic made it extremely difficult for all businesses, we are very excited to be reopened and to see people venturing out and enjoying life once again, taking a family vacation, visiting friends and family members, attending a conference, taking in a ballgame, or going to a concert. Evansville has various first-class venues and entertainment options that attract visitors from around the tri-state region. Evansville's hospitality community looks forward to providing great experiences as we are excited to welcome back our visitors once again.



Community leader Paul Green announces candidacy for Evansville City Council



July 2021

After much soul-searching, a well-known community leader and retired Business Manager of IBEW Local #16 has officially announced he will be a candidate for the At-Large seat on the Evansville City Council in the 2022 election. He will run as a Democrat.

Mr. Green stated that he plans to stay active during retirement by helping to improve his community and to help those in need. He also feels that the city needs to focus more on affordable housing and mental health issues in our community.

Mr. Green also said the idea for running for City Council started last year when community, political, and business leaders asked him to consider running for the At-Large City Council seat. Paul stated that his campaign will focus on business-friendly issues in order to help to create more well-paying jobs with benefits for the citizens of our community. I understand by making the government more business-friendly will create economic growth and in essence, will create a larger tax base for the government to continue to progress.

I also understand by surrounding yourself with talented people that's why I will strive to appoint the appropriate men and women to our community boards and commission with people who want to serve the community, not themselves. I promise to look for creative and innovative solutions to our problems in order that we can make responsible business-like decisions.

I would like to stress that I'm not running against anyone but will be vying for a seat on the Evansville City Council. My campaign will not be negative or will not have personal attacks against any other candidate but will focus on good public policy issues.

When I was Business Manager of the IBEW Local #16, I decided to become a partner with the business community by convincing our membership to become a member of the Southwestern Indiana Chamber of Commerce. As Business Manager of IBEW Local #16, I made the decision to cease all job actions (picketing) including hand billing against businesses. In fact, by interacting with the business community as a partner and getting more involved in worthy community projects, Local #16 has become a valued community leader and partner.

Paul is known for his strong work ethic and sense of fairness. His professional experiences within IBEW Local 16 are extremely impressive. He worked his way up from Electrical Helper to Inside Journeyman Wireman to Business Manager. He also became a NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship Instructor. While at the IBEW LOCAL #16 he served on numerous National, State, and Local committees and boards.

Mr. Green was a member of Mayor Winnecke's re-election Campaign Finance Committee. He also Chaired the successful campaign of 3rd Ward City Councilman Zach Heronemus and was the Finance Chairman of the Amy Back for Vanderburgh County Council campaign.

He is on the Airport Authority Board of Directors. He's a member of the Evansville Electrical Examining Board. Paul serves on the Easterseals Board of Directors is also on the Executive Board.

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Community

Success is something Alexis Berggren has practiced throughout her career

July 2021
Setting the stage for success is something Alexis Berggren has practiced throughout Alexis Berggren's career in the live events industry. Long before she arrived in Evansville, Berggren was managing high-profile events and venue operations for convention centers, arenas and theatres across the country. Now, as she wraps her fourth year as general manager of Old National Events Plaza, she's tapping into years of experience to help position the venue's team for post-pandemic success.

Berggren started her career in the Midwest, spending four years in operations at an organization dedicated to promoting the performing arts in Lincoln, Nebraska. That experience quickly led to the Mid-America Center in Iowa and then the Oregon

Convention Center, holding roles in operations and event services management. Hollywood's Dolby Theater attracted Berggren's talents next, positioning her in leading production roles for events like the Oscars, America's Got Talent, and other key accounts. She then moved to New Orleans, directing event services for the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, where ASM Global (formerly SMG) executives recruited her for the general manager position she's held in Evansville since 2017. As general manager of Old National Events Plaza, Berggren began by pursuing feedback from key stakeholders and clients and quickly identified opportunities where the convention center could improve services and quality. One immediate goal was to offer more

flexibility in terms and packaging by working directly with customers and staff to ensure the venue was meeting their individual needs. Another objective was to work towards diversifying local entertainment, booking a wider variety of performers and events for Evansville's audiences. In addition, the increasing demand and activity at the venue called for some internal assessment and restructuring within each department, ensuring the team could fully support clientele and achieve the highest service standards. As a result, The Plaza has been successful in attracting worldwide talent to Evansville, complimenting the outstanding home-grown staff with new team members from as far as Arizona and Costa Rica. In Berggren's first year, she and



her team outlined a five-year plan wherein the venue would work toward revenue neutrality, and by the end of 2018, the facility had performed 30% ahead of expectations. In 2019, the team continued to increase the number of events and attendance within the facility, and going into 2020, they had forecasted tremendous gains towards their goals. The pandemic posed a new challenge for Berggren and her team as they responded to more immediate community needs. --continued on Page 14

Indiana State Police seek recruits for the 82nd Recruit Academy

July 2021
The Indiana State Police are now accepting applications for the 82nd Recruit Academy. Individuals who are interested in beginning a rewarding career as an Indiana State Trooper must visit our website at <https://www.in.gov/isp/2368.htm> and follow the link to the application. Applicants will first need to create a user account before being able to apply for the Trooper Trainee job posting for the Indiana State Police 82nd Selection Process. The website link provides a detailed synopsis of the application process as well as information on additional career opportunities with the Indiana State Police. Applications must be

submitted electronically by 8:00 AM (EST) on Sunday, August 22, 2021. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted for the 82nd Recruit Academy. Basic Eligibility Requirements and consideration factors for an Indiana State Trooper:
1. Must be a United States citizen.
2. Must be at least 21 and less than 40 years of age when appointed as a police employee. (Appointment date is June 16, 2022)
3. Must meet a minimum vision standard (corrected or uncorrected) of 20/50 acuity in each eye and 20/50 distant binocular acuity in both eyes.
4. Must possess a valid driver's

license to operate an automobile.
5. Must be willing, if appointed, to reside and serve anywhere within the State of Indiana as designated by the Superintendent.
6. Must be a high school graduate as evidenced by a diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED).
The starting salary for an Indiana State Police Department Recruit is \$1,615.39 bi-weekly during the academy training. At the completion of academy training, the starting salary is \$48,000.00 a year. Recruits of the 82nd Recruit Academy are offered an excellent health care plan including medical, dental, vision, and pharmacy coverage for both current and

retired employees and their dependents. The Indiana State Police pension program provides a lifetime pension after 25 years of service. Additionally, the Indiana State Police Department provides comprehensive disability coverage and a life insurance program. Student loan forgiveness programs are being offered at this time through the following: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>.
Current Law Enforcement Officers:
Current Law Enforcement Officers having a minimum of three continuous years of merit full- --continued on Page 14



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What to know about the latest COVID-19 variant and other Coronavirus mutations



By Microbiologist and Pathologist
Daniel Rhoads, MD – Cleveland
Clinic

July 2021

Another new variant appears to be more contagious, but there are lots left to learn

Once again, some of the latest headlines about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic are alarming: Another variant of the virus is now on the rise in the United States. "Although this is concerning, it's not surprising – we've been watching for this and more or less expecting it," explains microbiologist and pathologist Daniel Rhoads, MD. As scientists and public health experts work to better understand what impact these new variants will have on the course of the pandemic, here's what we do and don't know so far.

The Delta Variant

The variant now causing concern around the world is the "delta" variant. Experts say a particular strain of the delta variant (a mutated version of the variant that is more infectious) is responsible for the recent surge of cases in the United Kingdom.

This strain, B.1.617.2, is currently the dominant one in the U.K. and is labeled as a "variant of concern" by the World Health Organization (WHO). The main reason for the concern: Experts believe it to be up to 60% more transmissible than the original

strain of COVID-19.

While research is ongoing, early data also suggests that this particular variant could be one of the driving forces behind the enormous surge in cases – and, subsequently, COVID-19 deaths – in India in the spring.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) recently classified the delta variant as a "variant of concern" due to an ongoing increase of cases. In mid-May, it accounted for only 2.5% of U.S. cases but by mid-June, that number increased to at least 6%, according to the National Institute of Health.

How Does A Virus Mutate?

While the idea of a virus mutating might sound scary, it's actually quite normal. Viruses mutate constantly. This is especially true of viruses that contain RNA as their genetic material, such as Coronaviruses and influenza viruses.

All viruses are made up of a bundle of genetic material (either DNA or RNA) that's covered by a protective coating of proteins. Once a virus gets into your body – usually through your mouth or nose – it latches onto one of your cells. The virus's DNA or RNA then enters your cell, where it can make copies of itself that go off and infect other cells. If the virus can copy itself and hijack enough of your cells without being wiped out by your immune system, that's how you get sick.

Every now and then, an error occurs during the virus's copying process. That's a mutation.

Most of the time, mutations are so small that they don't significantly affect how the virus

works, or they make the virus weaker, Dr. Rhoads says. But occasionally, a mutation helps the virus copy itself or get into our cells more easily.

"If these advantageous genetic mistakes are included when the virus replicates, they're passed on and eventually become part of the virus's normal genome," Dr. Rhoads explains. We can see these mutations accumulate over time, and that's how we get new variants of a virus strain.

If you get confused about strains, variants and mutations, think of it this way: New variants of a virus strain emerge through the process of mutation. In the media, the words strain and variant are often used interchangeably.

What Do We Know About Other COVID-19 Variants?

The delta variant is just the latest one to cause concern in the U.S. as it spreads across the globe. Earlier this year, more infectious variants from the U.K., South Africa and Brazil made headlines as they became more dominant in different parts of the world.

Each has its own set of mutations, but they all contain small changes to parts of the spike protein that helps the Coronavirus attach to our cells.

"This is concerning, because it means the virus could spread more easily," Dr. Rhoads says.

It's hard to measure exactly how much of an impact new variants initially have on the pandemic since many factors contribute to how quickly a virus spreads – including human behaviors.

But those concerns over the new delta variant are for good

reason. The U.K. variant that alarmed experts in the U.S. at the beginning of the year, called B.1.1.7 or "alpha," now accounts for nearly 70% of all U.S. cases. And the variant from Brazil, P.1, accounts for over 11% of all U.S. Cases. The CDC considers both "variants of concern," notes Dr. Rhoads.

There is good news, though, as a study out of England showed that the Pfizer vaccine was still highly effective (88%) against symptomatic disease from the delta variant. "These new variants can also still be detected with our current tests, so that's one thing that should be reassuring," Dr. Rhoads adds.

The Takeaway? Stay Vigilant And Get Vaccinated

In the end, the shape-shifting nature of the Coronavirus (and all viruses) is something that experts across the world are keeping a close eye on, but it's not something you should expect to change the course of the pandemic overnight.

However, the contagiousness of the newer variants is all the more reason to stay careful even as most states roll back social distancing guidelines. Only half of U.S. adults are fully vaccinated but, in many states, that number remains below 50%.

"These new waves of infections show that the pandemic is not close to being over yet," Dr. Rhoads says. "At this time, vaccination has proven to be our most effective tool, and vaccines are readily available for many children and adults in the U.S. Vaccinations are our best defense against these emerging mutations."

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Senator Braun's growing Climate Solutions Act is a win for Indiana farmers

June 2021
WASHINGTON - The U.S. Senate recently passed the Growing Climate Solutions Act, legislation that will help farmers, ranchers, and foresters understand and access carbon markets, helping the environment and boosting farm income at the same time.

Growing Climate Solutions Act. A full list of supporters is available. The legislation, introduced by U.S. Senator Mike Braun (R-IN) and Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), joined by U.S. Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC), John Boozman (R-AR), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and co-sponsored by more than half the Senate, helps producers to generate and sell carbon credits by setting up a third-party certification process through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The bill also creates an online resource

for farmers looking to connect with those experts and get more information and establishes an Advisory Council to provide input to USDA and ensure the program remains effective and works for farmers. "Farmers have always led the way on protecting our environment, and the Growing Climate Solutions Act helps them get paid for their sustainable practices through voluntary carbon credit markets," said Senator Braun. "Hoosiers want real-world solutions, and Growing



Climate Solutions is a bipartisan, common-sense, pro-jobs win that farmers, industry leaders, and conservationists can all support – all without growing the government or adding to our deficit."

Officers of the Month are Dylan Barnes and Quinton Keil



July 2021
 Officers Barnes and Keil have been selected as Patrol Officers of the Month for May 2021 for their diligence and commitment to their duty. On May 21, 2021, these two officers noted information from a BOL that a highly dangerous subject from California was wanted for attempted murder after shooting six people in California. The BOL indicated that the suspect was a convicted violent felon and was armed. It was reported that he claimed he would shoot it out with officers in order to not go back to prison.

The BOL indicted that the suspect was believed to be at a specific address in Evansville and provided his vehicle information. Officers Barnes and Keil took the initiative to set up surveillance at the reported address and after a while, they observed the suspect getting into the vehicle. These officers formulated a plan to initiate a high-risk car stop. They coordinated their plan with a K9 Unit and other patrol units. These officers' initiative, forethought, and planning resulted in a dangerous felon being taken into custody without incident. Their teamwork, skills, and commitment to their duties were recognized by their chain of command. Congratulations on a job well done!!

UE Media Relations receives CoSIDA honor

July 2021
EVANSVILLE - University of Evansville Associate Athletic Director for Media Relations Bob Pristash saw his men's basketball game notes recognized by CoSIDA as the association announced its 2020-21 publication award winners. Pristash's men's basketball game notes took "Third in the Nation" in the winter game notes category. Pristash has led the Purple Aces media relations department since 2011 and is responsible for the publicity of all Aces sports while working on GoPurpleAces.com, the UE Athletics App, and sports photography, as well as being the primary contact for volleyball, men's basketball, softball and men's and women's golf. CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America) was founded in 1957 and is a 3,200+

member national organization comprised of the sports public relations, media relations and communications/information professionals throughout all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. • INFO: For all of the latest information on University of Evansville athletics, visit GoPurpleAces.com or follow the program on Twitter via @UEAthletics. • FUTURE UNAFRAID: To make a gift to the Future Unafraid initiative and contribute to the Purple Aces' response to COVID-19, please visit UEAlumniOnline.com/FutureUnafraid • SUPPORT: For information on giving to UE Athletics or its individual athletics programs, visit the SUPPORT tab on the top of GoPurpleAces.com

Detectives of the Month are Jackie Lowe and Jeff Hands



July 2021
 Detectives Jackie Lowe and Jeff Hands have been selected for Detectives of the Month for their tireless efforts in a murder investigation and the subsequent conviction of a suspect in the crime. On January 25th, 2019, Detectives Lowe and Hands were assigned to investigate the murder of a man who had been shot in the 2300 block of Frisse Avenue. This was a complex case that was solved through time-intensive work using technology, good interviewing skills, and coordinating efforts with detectives from outside agencies. Their work resulted in the arrest of Justin Brewer and they were able to recover the murder weapon that had been thrown into Pigeon Creek shortly after the crime. The murder trial began on May 17th, 2021, and throughout the week, they were both asked by prosecuting attorneys to do additional work to strengthen the case. Many hours of work and attention to detail resulted in a guilty verdict for murder and other enhancement charges. These detectives are both examples of what can result from teamwork and good investigative skills. Congratulations on a job well done!!

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Changes come to nursing homes as more vaccines become available

By Tabby Fitzgerald

TheStatehouseFile.com

July 2021

INDIANAPOLIS - As COVID-19 spread last year, nursing homes restricted visitation for their residents. While more than 184,000 residents and staff of nursing homes and long-term care facilities died throughout the country, loved ones and caregivers were only allowed to see their family members through windows or on a phone call.

In order to keep seniors safe, they weren't allowed to step foot in the building - which carried its own set of consequences.

During the 2021 session, Senate Bill 202 regarding hospital and health facility visitation was signed into law. The bill allows a person admitted as a patient to a hospital or ambulatory outpatient surgical center or facility during a declared emergency or public health emergency to receive visitation

by specified individuals. It was co-authored by Sen. Linda Rogers, R-Granger, Sen. Ed Charbonneau, R-Valparaiso, and Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg.

Leising also authored Senate Bill 229 on nursing home visitation, which would allow family caregivers to visit their loved ones despite restrictions. Although this bill did not become a law, Leising does not see a need to refile it in the next session because of Senate Bill 202.

"Her hope in filing SB 229 and when co-authoring SEA 202 was that Hoosiers would have the support they need when it's needed most," said Jesse Cordray, Leising's press secretary.

If you took a look at nursing homes today versus a year ago, you would see two very different places. A year ago, there was no face-to-face contact between caregivers and their loved ones. But today, visitation requirements are more

relaxed.

As the pandemic continued this past year, people had to get creative on the activities that were taking place in facilities. Most activities took place on a one-on-one basis; families could plan a car parade and wave to their loved ones, or residents could sit in their doorways and play hallway bingo with other residents while still following CDC guidelines.

"The camaraderie and the connection with family and friends is so vital to all of us," said Indiana Health Care Association spokesperson Zach Cattell. "It's especially important for those who are residents in long-term care facilities."

According to the Consumer Voice, an advocacy group representing consumers in issues related to long-term care, 91% of families that participated in a survey reported that their loved



one's demeanor or mental status had declined during the period of isolation.

Within the last year, Indiana became the first state in the nation to embrace the Essential Family Caregiver Program on a voluntary basis. This program has recently been officially established and allows individuals who had been providing care to their loved ones prior to their admission to a nursing facility to receive special status to continue that care.

FOOTNOTE: Tabby Fitzgerald is a reporter for TheStatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students.

The City-County Observer posted this article without editing or bias.

Evansville Regional Economic Partnership hires small business development director

July 2021

The Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP), a unified organization advancing the interests of businesses while fueling economic and community growth, is pleased to welcome Dominic Poggi as the Indiana Small Business Development Center Regional Director.

Serving on the E-REP leadership team, Poggi will provide strategic oversight to create a measurable impact on the formation, growth, and sustainability of small businesses, and help entrepreneurs start stronger, grow faster, and work smarter.

"I'm excited to be joining a team dedicated to growing the Evansville Region, said Poggi. Everywhere I look there are people wanting to help one another, and I can't wait to start helping make the connections that result in an immediate impact or plant seeds for the

long term."

Prior to joining E-REP, Poggi spent 10 years in sales, including startups like Groupon, PreScouter and Label Insight. Most recently, he worked for the American Red Cross as a Disaster Program Manager where he oversaw disaster preparedness, response and recovery across 38 counties including Southwest Indiana.

As part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, the Regional Director plays an important role in developing a culture of entrepreneurship and assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs as well as existing businesses.

Playing an integral role in our entrepreneurial ecosystem, the Regional Director is tasked with developing a rich environment for growth, creativity, and innovation and aids aspiring entrepreneurs as well as existing businesses.

"We are thrilled to have Dom

join the talented team at E-REP, and I know his background in fast-paced entrepreneurial business and the nonprofit world will strengthen the Evansville region's innovation resources, create new opportunities for companies to scale, and accelerate our journey to advance regional prosperity and global relevance," said Tara Barney, E-REP co-CEO.

E-REP serves as the regional host for the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center (SBDC), representing eight counties in Southwest Indiana which connects Hoosier small businesses with the expert guidance and a comprehensive network of resources they need to start and grow. Last year, amid a pandemic the Southwest Indiana Small Business Development Center advisors, outperformed the rest of the state in the number of clients served (499), number of



new business starts (35), and total capital infusion (\$18.8 million).

"Businesses don't live in a vacuum, and they thrive in supportive communities - communities that understand they're part of an even larger national and global fabric," said Poggi.

Originally from the Chicago suburbs, Poggi relocated to Southwest Indiana in 2018. Poggi lives in the Evansville region with his wife and twin boys. With a B.S. in Marketing from Northern Illinois University, Poggi described his new role as the ultimate opportunity to draw on all of the skills gained over the years to help build the community which he now calls home.



July 2021

Hyatt Place Evansville/Downtown, the first Hyatt-branded hotel in the Evansville, Indiana region, is officially open, expanding the Hyatt Place brand's footprint globally in markets that matter most to guests and World of Hyatt members. The new hotel features the Hyatt Place brand's intuitive design, casual atmosphere, and

Hyatt Place Evansville/Downtown celebrates official opening

practical amenities, such as free Wi-Fi and 24-hour food offerings. Owned by Kinship Hospitality LLC, the hotel is a joint venture led by Kinship Hospitality LLC and operated by General Hotels Corporation.

Located 15-minutes from Evansville Regional Airport, the hotel is easily accessible for out-of-town business or leisure travelers. Hyatt Place Evansville/Downtown is within walking distance to the Ford Center, home of Evansville Thunderbolts Minor League Hockey and the University of Evansville Basketball. Only a few blocks away from Victory Theatre and Old National Events Plaza, as

well as top museums and cultural attractions including the Children's Museum of Evansville, Evansville African American Museum, the Evansville Museum of Arts, History, & Science, and the World War II LST 325 Naval Ship, the Hyatt Place Evansville/Downtown offers visitors convenient access to experience live music venues and local restaurants in downtown as well as the neighboring arts district, Haynie's Corner.

"As Evansville continues to grow and thrive economically, we are excited to add to the momentum

by welcoming the first Hyatt Place hotel to the area," said General Hotels President/CEO Jim Dora, Jr. "With smartly designed social spaces and guestrooms with separate work and sleep areas, our multitasking guests can easily accomplish what they need to do while on the road."

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State directs \$200M for Ohio River crossing

July 2021
To improve safety and encourage growth, Indiana is going the extra mile by investing \$200 million to complete the I-69 Ohio River Crossing project. The project includes an interchange with the existing I-69 and Veterans Memorial Parkway, as well as a new, 1.5-mile portion of I-69 approaching the river.



Once fully connected, I-69 will be a continuous interstate from the U.S.-Canada border near Port Huron, Michigan, to the Kentucky-Tennessee state line. These investments will expand our transportation network and attract more businesses to the area, which will help create jobs and boost the local economy. Learn More Construction on the Ohio River Crossing project is set to begin in 2024.

Study committee assignments

July 2021
The Indiana General Assembly is a part-time citizen legislature, meaning we typically only meet for a few months at the beginning of each year. Over the summer and fall months, lawmakers serve on study committees. These committees study key issues facing Indiana that were identified during the prior legislative session.

Each committee discusses topics assigned by the bipartisan Legislative Council, which is comprised of 16 voting members – eight from the Senate and eight from the House of Representatives. My assignments include the following:

- Interim Study Committee on Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Human Services;
- Interim Study Committee on Government;
- Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, chair;
- All Payer Claims Data Base Advisory Board;
- Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services Commission;
- Nonemergency Medical Transportation Commission;
- Indiana Commission for Women;
- Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Interagency Coordinating Council;
- The Commission on the Social Status of Black Males.

Study committees provide lawmakers with a valuable opportunity to take an in-depth look at the issues facing our state. I look forward to working with my fellow lawmakers on ways we can improve our health care system and much more.

To view study committee agendas and stream hearings online, visit iga.in.gov. To view a list of topics that will be examined by the committees, visit <http://iga.in.gov/documents/cd84f5aa>.

Women's Equality Centennial Celebration tickets now available

Individual tickets for the 18th Annual Women's Equality Luncheon commemorating the Women's Suffrage Centennial are now available.

The 2020 luncheon was postponed due to COVID-19 and astronaut, engineer, author and STEM proponent Dr. Mae C. Jemison will speak at this year's event from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 26, 2021 at Old National Events Plaza.

Seating is limited and no tickets will be available the day of the event. Individual tickets are available for \$60 each and special \$100 individual seat tickets or Centennial Patrons who will be recognized in the program. The luncheon will follow social distancing guidelines. Table sponsorships are also available.

Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26 annually, celebrates the 19th Amendment of women earning the right to vote. In November of 1920, Evansville and other Hoosier women joined others in the nation at the polls to celebrate their right to vote.

Please join in commemorating the Women's Suffrage Centennial at the Annual Women's Equality luncheon, a collaboration of Stepping Up and Evansville YWCA. Further information and tickets can be found at <http://steppingupevv.com/wed> and <http://steppingupevv.com/tickets>.



Juneteenth

July 2021
Juneteenth, an annual holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, has been celebrated by African-Americans since the late 1800s.

But in recent years, and particularly following nationwide protests over police brutality and the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and other Black Americans, there is a renewed interest in the day that celebrates freedom.

The celebration continues to resonate in new ways, given the sweeping changes and widespread protests across the U.S. over the last year and following a guilty verdict in the killing of Mr. Floyd.

Here's a brief guide to what you should know about Juneteenth.

What is Juneteenth?

On June 19, 1865, about two months after the Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Va., Gordon Granger, a Union general, arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved African-Americans of their freedom and that the Civil War had ended. General Granger's announcement put into effect the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been issued more than two and a half years earlier on Jan. 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln.

How is it celebrated?

The original celebration became an annual one, and it grew in popularity over the years with the addition of descendants, according to Juneteenth.com, which tracks celebrations. The day was celebrated by praying and bringing families together. In some celebrations on this day, men and women who had been enslaved, and their descendants, made an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston.

Celebrations reached new heights in 1872 when a group of African-American ministers and businessmen in Houston purchased 10 acres of land and created Emancipation Park. Space was intended to hold the city's annual Juneteenth celebration.

Today, while some celebrations take place among families in backyards where food is an integral element, some cities, like Atlanta and Washington, hold larger events, like parades and festivals with

residents, local businesses and more.

While celebrations in 2020 were largely subdued by the coronavirus pandemic, some cities this year are pressing forward with plans.

Galveston has remained a busy site for Juneteenth events over the years, said Douglas Matthews, who has helped coordinate them for more than two decades.

In 2021, the city will dedicate a 5,000 square-foot mural, entitled "Absolute Equality," on the spot where General Granger informed enslaved African-Americans of their freedom. The city will also mark the holiday with a parade and picnic. Events and activities in Atlanta this year have been scaled back, but organizers have made plans for a parade and music festival at Centennial Olympic Park. Similar events are scheduled in Annapolis, Md.; Chicago; Detroit and Los Angeles.

A new national holiday

Previous efforts have failed to make it a national holiday, and few have fought harder for recognition than Opal Lee, an activist in Fort Worth who campaigns for the cause.

On June 17, 2021, it became the 11th holiday recognized by the federal government. The Senate on June 15 passed a bill to recognize the day, and the House approved the measure the next day. President Biden signed the bill into law the day after that, immediately giving federal employees the day off this year.

In 1980, Texas became the first state to designate Juneteenth as a holiday, though the recognition is largely symbolic. Since then, at least 45 states and the District of Columbia have moved to officially recognize the day. Last October, Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York and Gov. Ralph Northam of Virginia, both Democrats, signed into law legislation declaring Juneteenth holidays in their respective states. Last month, Gov. Jay Inslee of Washington, also a Democrat, declared Juneteenth a state holiday starting in 2022, and legislators in Illinois approved a bill that would make it a paid day off for all state employees and a school holiday. More recently, Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana and Gov. Janet Mills of Maine, both Democrats, signed bills making the day a state holiday.

Amid last year's unrest, many businesses moved toward marking it as a company holiday, giving many employees a paid day off. Twitter and Square, a mobile payment company, along with the N.F.L., Best Buy, Nike and Target all recognized Juneteenth last year.

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Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation awards behavioral health support to Youth First, Inc.

July 2021
EVANSVILLE - On June 18, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation presented \$78,574 to Youth First, Inc. The grant provided HIPAA-compliant Zoom licenses and certification training in telehealth for Youth First's mental health professionals.



Youth First partners with 92 schools across 11 Indiana counties. Youth First Social Workers follow behavioral health best practices to proactively meet with individual students, facilitate small groups, and present to classrooms and large groups as well as consult with parents, teachers, and other community agencies. They are easily accessed by any enrolled student, and services are always free of charge. When school buildings closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis, this low-barrier access to crucial mental health support was threatened.

Thanks to the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation grant, Youth First has now equipped its clinical team with HIPAA-compliant telehealth tools and training to continue their critical work. Through this funding, their proven model of building life skills for mental health resilience and brokering community resources to meet basic needs can continue, if and when school buildings are closed, or students or staff are quarantined or ill. These telehealth tools allowed Youth First's services and programs to be delivered uninterrupted this past school year, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. These virtual platforms will continue to be used in situations where services can't be delivered in person.

"The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation is proud to work with community partners like Youth First to overcome barriers to accessing mental and behavioral health services for our local youth," said Dr. Kimberly Roop, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield's Medicaid Plan President in Indiana. "We continue to support telehealth as an important part of a whole-health approach to care, connecting people with mental health services in the way that is most convenient for them."

"Though COVID-19 severely disrupted our lives, it also sparked improvements in the way Youth First serves schools, students, and families," said Parri O. Black, President & CEO of Youth First. "This investment from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation ensures Youth First can provide high-quality remote support for thousands of young people whenever it is needed."

In Indiana, data from the State of the Nation's Mental Health report shows significantly fewer mental health diagnoses last year, particularly among children and adolescents, compared to 2019.

- 10 percent overall drop for young children
- 5 percent overall drop for adolescents
- 13 percent drop for young children diagnosed with ADHD
- 9 percent drop for adolescents diagnosed with ADHD

These findings are part of a report based on Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield claims from 1.8 million Hoosiers.

About Youth First, Inc.:

Youth First's mission is to strengthen youth and families through evidence-based programs that prevent substance abuse, promote healthy behaviors, and maximize student success. Youth First partners with 92 schools across 11 Indiana counties to provide 64 Master's level social workers who assess needs, develop and implement prevention plans, and connect students and their families to vital resources. Youth First also offers community programs involving parents and caregivers to strengthen families. For more information about Youth First, please visit youthfirstinc.org or call 812-421-8336.

Former U.S. Senators Evan Bay and Dan Coats to join IU

By Phyllis Cha
 For Indiana Daily Student
 July 2021

Former U.S. Sen. and Indiana Gov. Evan Bayh and former U.S. Sen. and Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats will join IU, according to a press release from IU.

Bayh will work through the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs and is being appointed as a distinguished

scholar and executive at large. Coats will work at the Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies and is being appointed as a distinguished scholar and ambassador at large, according to the release.

The two will partner together to support the master's degree in international affairs, a joint one-year degree shared by the O'Neill School and HLS.

Grants for four-year-olds to enroll in Pre-K

July 2021

Eligible 4-year-olds heading into pre-K during the 2021-2022 school year can now apply for On My Way Pre-K grants. Established in 2014 as a pilot program and expanded statewide in 2019 through laws I supported, On My Way Pre-K provides grants to low-income families to enroll their children in local, high-quality programs.

Pre-K helps young students learn important skills like following directions and working with others, as well as their 123s and ABCs. These skills provide a strong foundation for students as they enter kindergarten and throughout the rest of their lives.

To qualify for a grant for the upcoming school year, a child must be 4 years old by Aug. 1, 2021, and plan to start kindergarten in the 2022-2023 school year. They must also live in a household with an income below 127% of the federal poverty level and have a parent or



guardian working, going to school, attending job training or searching for employment.

There is also a limited number of grants available for 4-year-olds who live in a household with an income up to 185% of the federal poverty level and with a parent or guardian who meets employment requirements, or who receives Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income Benefits.

Families can apply or learn more by visiting OnMyWayPreK.org or calling 800-299-1627.

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Entertainment

Hank Williams Jr. returning to Ford Center



July 2021

Hank Williams Jr. is making a stop in Evansville, IN at the Ford Center this August! Friday, August 20th at 7:00pm fans can catch Hank Williams Jr. live on stage at the Ford Center with special guest Walker Montgomery.

Randall Hank Williams was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on May 26, 1949. A month later, his father made his Grand Ole Opry debut, singing "Lovesick Blues" and drawing six encores. Hank Williams nicknamed his son "Bocephus" after comedian Rod Brasfield's ventriloquist dummy, and that nickname has stuck with him throughout his career.

Hank Williams Jr. was raised in Nashville and learned music from the finest of teachers. Earl Scruggs gave him banjo lessons, and Jerry Lee Lewis showed him piano licks. At the beginning of his career, mother Audrey Williams worked to mold her son into a miniature version of his late father, and for 20 years he struggled, uncomfortably, to break the mold. When he finally found his own sound and style, he reached sales plateaus that his father never dreamed of: 20 gold

albums, six platinum albums (one of which has sold more than five million copies) and 13 chart-topping albums.

And then in 1975 everything changed for Hank Williams Jr. The music world caught on to those changes around 1979, the year he released his first million-selling album, Whiskey Bent and Hell Bound, along with his autobiography, Living Proof. In the early 1980s, he catapulted to full-on superstar status, with major hits including "Texas Women," "Dixie On My Mind," "All My Rowdy Friends (Have Settled Down)," and in 1984, "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight," a party anthem featuring a riotous video that starred Bocephus in conjunction with stars from inside (Merle Kilgore, Porter Wagoner, Kris Kristofferson, etc.) and outside (Cheech and Chong) country music. Like his daddy, singing "Lovesick Blues" and encoring.

In 1987, Hank, Jr. won his first of five country music entertainer of the year awards, and the two albums released that year - Hank Live and studio effort Born To Boogie - were platinum sellers. Born To Boogie was the CMA's album of the year in 1988, the year he won the CMA and ACM's top entertainer prize. Hank's star rose far beyond the country world in 1989, when manager Merle Kilgore arranged a deal with

ABC's Monday Night Football to have Hank, Jr. rework "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight" into a theme song to be played before each Monday's game. Two years later, the Monday Night theme won the first of four straight Emmy Awards, and Hank, Jr. would be the singing voice of Monday Night Football for 22 years.

The father lived 29 years, and the son spent nearly that long standing in his shadow. But it is what the son did after turning 29 that has landed him a place in the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, that has made him a BMI Icon award winner, and one of the best-selling artists in country music history. By finding his own powerful voice, by turns rebellious and vulnerable, he has become a music icon. He remains an inspiration

to Alan Jackson, Kid Rock, Jamey Johnson and other followers and a sure-bet for eventual entry into the Country Music Hall of Fame, where his plaque will be displayed in perpetuity, just like his daddy's, only different. Stop and think it over.

Tickets go on sale Friday, June 11 at 10:00am CST. Tickets will be available for purchase at ticketmaster.com and they will also be available for purchase at the Ford Center ticket office beginning June 14 at Noon.

FOOTNOTE: Ford Center is managed by VenuWorks of Evansville, LLC. For more information on Ford Center visit: www.thefordcenter.com www.facebook.com/fordcenterevansville www.twitter.com/thefordcenter.

Soul Asylum to play Old National Events Plaza

July 2021

Soul Asylum, in anticipation of their upcoming "Back In Your Face" tour, will rock the stage at Aiken Theatre on Sunday, August 1, 2021, with supporting act Local H. "We are so excited to bring Soul Asylum to the area, proving live music is indeed back. We can't wait to hear what they've been working on since last year's album release," notes Alexis Berggren, General Manager of The Plaza.

Soul Asylum was formed in the early '80s by high-school friends Dave Pirner, Dan Murphy, and Karl Mueller, and became part of the celebrated Minneapolis local music scene alongside fellow indie bands the Replacements and Hüsker Dü. This success led to the band entering the major-label mainstream with 1988's Hang Time and its 1990 follow-up, And the Horse They Rode In On, before achieving a commercial breakthrough with 1992's triple platinum Grave Dancers Union, featuring the Grammy award-winning single, "Runaway Train."

The band's latest album Hurry Up and Wait was released in April 2020 and led to their highest Billboard Chart position since 1995. Soul Asylum front man Dave Pirner reports that making the band's twelfth studio full-length, Hurry Up and Wait, was a completely seamless, enjoyable and productive experience. John Fields, who worked with the band on three previous albums, co-produced the project in the band's hometown of Minneapolis.

Opening act, Local H, was formed in Zion, Illinois in 1990. Known for their unorthodox two-piece setup, Local H became best known for their hit, "Bound for the Floor," a single from their album, As Good as Dead which peaked at No. 5 on the US Alternative Billboard Chart. Their most recent album, Lifers, was released in 2020.

What: Soul Asylum with Local H

When: Sunday, August 1, 2021, at 7:30pm

Where: Old National Events Plaza

Tickets: Tickets start at \$28.00 plus applicable fees and tax.

The band is offering a Soul Asylum Super Special VIP Package for \$125.00 plus applicable fees and tax.

Tickets are available at TicketMaster.com or at Old National Events Plaza Box Office.

For more information about the Aiken Theatre, visit: www.oldnationaleventsplaza.com.

Old National Events Plaza - Thursday, August 19, 2021 "The Best of Times"... are back!

July 2021

After a series of pandemic-related delays, Styx is coming to Evansville, IN at the Old National Events Plaza on Thursday, August 19, 2021. Tickets start at \$39 plus applicable fees and are available at ticketmaster.com.

For fans who have had "Too Much Time on (Their) Hands" over the last year, Styx has committed to rocking Paradise together with audiences in Evansville. Drawing from over four decades of barn-burning chart hits, joyous singalongs, and hard-driving deep cuts, Styx is looking forward to performing songs from a wide range of stylistic cornerstones.

Live entertainment is back in Evansville, The Esprit de Styx is alive and well, and now it's time to see for yourself. Tickets on sale now!



What: Styx

When: Thursday, August 19, 2021

Where: Old National Events Plaza

Tickets: Tickets range from \$39 - \$129 plus applicable fees

Tickets available online at ticketmaster.com or in person at the Old National Events Plaza box office.

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Sports

USI student athletes prosper in classroom

July 2021

University of Southern Indiana Screaming Eagles student-athletes continued to prosper in the classroom during 2020-21, posting 228 individual and a school-record 12 team Great Lakes Valley Conference academic awards.

"The number of USI student-athletes and teams that are being recognized by the GLVC is truly outstanding!" said USI Director of Athletics Jon Mark Hall. "We celebrate these scholar-athletes while being very thankful for the faculty, staff, and coaches who guide and mentor them."

"What makes these statistics even more amazing is the fact that 2020-21 was so difficult to navigate due to COVID-19," continued Hall. "Even though many of our student-athletes seasons were cut short, they continued to thrive in the classroom."

The Eagles earned 181 individual 2020-21 Academic All-GLVC awards, which ranks second all-time in USI history. The Academic All-GLVC honor is bestowed upon student-athletes who complete the two-semester academic year with a minimum 3.30-grade point average (GPA).

Of the 181 Academic All-GLVC

honors, 28 Screaming Eagles earned the Brother James Gaffney Distinguished Scholar Award after completing 2020-21 with a perfect 4.0 GPA.

For those Eagles completing their collegiate careers in 2020-21, USI had 19 senior student-athletes recognized with the Council of Presidents' (COP) Academic Excellence Award. Each honoree completed their intercollegiate athletic career and maintained a 3.5 or better GPA throughout their academic career.

USI set a program record for a second-straight year when 12 varsity programs were designated as an Academic All-GLVC Team with a cumulative 3.3 GPA or better. USI was led by Women's Tennis and Women's Soccer with team GPAs of 3.71 and 3.70, respectively. They were followed by Women's Cross Country (3.58); Women's Golf (3.58); Women's Basketball (3.56); Softball (3.48); Volleyball (3.48); Women's Track & Field (3.47); Men's Soccer (3.40); Men's Cross Country (3.38); Men's Track & Field (3.36); and Men's Golf (3.35).

USI's Academic All-GLVC Honorees
Baseball (24)
Men's Basketball (1)

Men's Cross Country (11)

Men's Golf (5)

Men's Soccer (16)

Men's Tennis (3)

Men's Track & Field (18)

Softball (14)

Volleyball (9)

Women's Basketball (9)

Women's Cross Country (13)

Women's Golf (6)



Women's Soccer (25)

Women's Tennis (7)

Women's Track & Field (20)

Brother James Gaffney

Distinguished Scholar Award (28)

Council of President's Academic

Excellence Award (19)

Team GPA Awards (12)

Meet Allison Hunter Voges, Southern Indiana native and author of children's sports book

July 2021

Meet Allison Hunter Voges, Southern Indiana native and author of the children's book "**Chasing Deer**". Her book, "**Chasing Deer**" is the story of a child on their first experience bow hunting whitetail deer with their family. It is a celebration of the outdoor lifestyle and an encouragement to immerse children in the outdoor experience.

"For so long I've waited for my time to come. Deep breath. Steady hands. My heart pounds like a drum." Filled with the joy, respect, awe, and pride that come with hunting and being in nature, Chasing Deer is a kid-friendly reminder of the wonders of that first hunt.

Allison spent most of her childhood in the outdoors of Southern Indiana. Some of her favorite memories were tagging along on a quail or squirrel hunt with her father or fishing with her grandparents and cousins out on the pond. Any other opportunities were spent walking the creek banks or exploring the land on horseback. After college, she took up archery and found a real passion for the sport. Shortly after picking up her bow, she asked a friend to take her on her first whitetail hunt which fueled her enthusiasm for the outdoors. These days, you can find her out hunting and fishing every chance she gets; whether it's in her home state of Indiana or somewhere else in the US. In the summer months, you can find her noodling big catfish in Illinois, Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky. While she loves the quiet and peace that hunting and fishing brings, she's even more passionate about sharing her love and enthusiasm for the outdoors with anyone she meets. Some of Allison's fondest memories have taken place around the campfire with friends, telling stories about past hunts and dreaming of future adventures.

Allison is the Indiana Chapter President of the American Daughters of Conservation, an organization of women dedicated to North American conservation efforts and inspiring women and young girls to expand their knowledge of the outdoor sporting world. Each year she puts together several hunts and conservation efforts for ADC members both in Indiana and across the US. She is an ambassador for a variety of outdoor companies as well including Savage Arms, DSG Outdoors, Stihl, Hiding Hilda, and Big Tine. Other companies she has worked with in the past include Bushnell, Alps Outdoors, Hardy Facepaint, ScentLok, Insights Outdoors, B3 Archery and a variety of others. Her real goal in life is to inspire and encourage other women and youth to step out of their comfort zones and into the great outdoors. This was one of her biggest motives for writing her children's book.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy of your own, the paperback version of "**Chasing Deer**" is available on Amazon. The hardback version can also be purchased online at BooneAndBuffalo.com. Author signed hardback copies are available for purchase at The Great Outdoors located in Jasper, Indiana, Southern Indiana Butcher Supply in Ferdinand, Indiana, and Pumpkins and More Farmers Market located in Santa Claus, Indiana.

If you would like to learn more about Allison and her book you can find her on Facebook (Allison Hunter Voges) or Instagram (@amhunter11). She has written a variety of articles and blog posts for various magazines and acted as a special guest for a few podcasts which can also be found at <https://linktr.ee/Tornadoalli>.

FOOTNOTE: Allison will also be attending our September 16, 2021, Annual Awards Luncheon at Tropicana-Evansville to sign her book.

Evansville Otters starting pitcher Dalton Stambaugh signed by the Chicago Cubs

July 2021

Dalton Stambaugh, from Fredericksburg, Ohio, signed and joined the Otters heading into the 2021 season. The left-hander brought with him previous affiliated baseball experience with the Baltimore Orioles organization. Stambaugh went 2-0 with a 3.57 ERA while striking out 24 batters in 22.2 innings pitched with the Otters this season.

His last win came against the Schaumburg Boomers on June 13. In the outing, Stambaugh struck out seven and went 6.2 innings pitched. "I'm very excited for this new opportunity and can't wait to get started," Stambaugh said.

"I'm looking forward to representing the Cubs organization and helping in any way I can. I'm also looking forward to building new relationships and meeting new people."

The signing will be the latest stint in affiliated baseball for Stambaugh. Stambaugh was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles organization in the 30th round of the 2019 MLB June Amateur Draft out of Morehead State University. He went on to pitch in 2019 with Gulf Coast League Orioles. "We are very happy for Dalton getting this opportunity with the Cubs," Otters manager Andy McCauley said. "He certainly deserves it." "We wish Dalton the best of luck with the Cubs organization."

Stambaugh is the first Otters player from the 2021 season to be signed to an affiliated organization. Former Otters pitchers Randy McCurry and Chris Nunn were the last from Evansville to sign with the Cubs organization in 2017.

"It goes without saying that Mr. Bussing's commitment has allowed me to acquire and retain the best coaching staff in all of minor league baseball," McCauley said. "All of our assistant coaches - Boots (Day), Bobby (Segal), Billy (Easley) and Max (Peterson) - have put in so much work to help elevate our guys to the next level."

McCauley also said having the history and proven ability of his coaching staff to get players signed into affiliated baseball helps recruit new players to Evansville.

The Otters have sent 82 players to affiliated organizations out of Evansville.

UE Men's Basketball to hold Golf Scramble

July 2021

The Aces Assist Club is set to hold its annual Aces Golf Scramble on Monday, August 30, 2021, at Rolling Hills Country Club in Newburgh, Indiana.

Space is limited due to COVID restrictions and those interested in participating are encouraged to make their arrangements early. Registration is \$600 for a foursome and \$150 for individual players. Champions Level members of the Aces Assist Club receive one complimentary individual entry while All-American Level members get half off of a single entry.

If you are interested in participating, please return the completed form that is in the event brochure linked above. Please call the men's basketball office at 812-488-2297 for more information.

On the day of the scramble, registration opens at 11 a.m. at Rolling Hills Country Club with lunch being served at the same time inside the clubhouse. A shotgun start will commence the tournament at 12 p.m. Contest, individual and team awards will be given out at the clubhouse after the final group completes their round.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available and include Hole sponsors, Longest Drive, Closest to the Pin, and Cart. Please reference the tournament brochure for full information.



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Players do not need to be present to win. Winners will be posted at the Rewards Center by 10am See Rewards Center for earning times. Winners will have until August 24, 2021 to claim their prize. Free Slot Play is valid through August 24, 2021. Players may only win one time during this promotion.



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Success is something Alexis Berggren has practiced throughout her career

--continued from Page 4

Within a week of the State's orders to close all municipal buildings, Berggren led The Plaza team as they transitioned from managing in-person events to supporting virtual emergency meetings and, eventually, four of Vanderburgh County's Superior Courts. In the Fall of 2020, they would assist over 9,000 early voters in passing safely through the facility, providing vital support to the County Clerk's electoral operation.

To ease the impact of mandatory shut-downs, Berggren partnered with officials to research recovery resources for the venue. Her quick and thorough analysis of market trends and forthcoming economic strain led her to develop several mitigation plans based on differing fiscal outcomes. Berggren worked diligently with her team to develop a comprehensive safety and reopening plan, one of the first circulated in the venue management industry at the beginning of the pandemic. She partnered with City and County leaders to ensure the safety of key civic and court staff, members of the public, as well as venue employees. This planning positioned The Plaza for proactive pandemic management and placed the venue far ahead of the industry curve, retaining a handful of essential staff to support the operation of the building and poise the facility to successfully reopen.

As the team at Old National Events Plaza plans for the upcoming year, they're met with a more complex industry landscape than that of 18 months ago. Berggren continues to lean into the network of venue professionals she's cultivated within ASM Global's management team and as an active member of the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) and Trustee of the IAVM Foundation.

Berggren also serves as one of two

County Commissioner appointees to the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. She has proven to be a strong source of support in the collective efforts of Evansville's downtown partners and enjoys networking with peers and community changemakers as a member of the Evansville Rotary Club.

Business is strengthening for the convention center in Q3-Q4 of this year and is building for next year, although perhaps more slowly than anticipated. As events contract for 2022, forecasts are nearing 80% of pre-pandemic event levels. Berggren and her team are ready for what comes next. "In terms of convention centers and theatres within our management company, The Plaza is weathering the pandemic better than most," notes Assistant General Manager, Nick Wallace. "Many venues are just now reopening and have suffered tremendous losses. I'd attribute our current position to quick collaborative planning by local officials, and our team's dedication to managing through the challenges."

The Old National Events Plaza continues to announce new upcoming shows. Fans can look forward to an array of live performances in 2021 and 2022 including Styx, TobyMac, Joe Bonamassa, Soul Asylum, Straight No Chaser, and comedians Leanne Morgan and John Crist. We're told more announcements are on the way in the coming weeks.

It's been a dynamic four years at Old National Events Plaza for Alexis Berggren, both personally and professionally. She added two children to her family in 2018 and 2020, making this season in her life a time of dramatic change and growth. Both at home and at work, she knows there's a lot to do in the future. However, Berggren's

perspective remains clear. "The Old National Events Plaza, and facilities like it, are so unique in that they can drive both significant economic impact and cultural influence within a community. Connecting people

to their passions and providing for a higher quality of life is a tremendous responsibility, and we can make the greatest advancements by being effective ambassadors and dependable partners."

Indiana State Police seek recruits for the 82nd Recruit Academy

--continued from Page 4

time law enforcement service as of November 23, 2021, if they choose, will be assigned to the District where they currently reside.

Current Out of State Law Enforcement Officers having a minimum of three continuous years of merit full time law enforcement service as of November 23, 2021, if they choose, may be afforded their District of choice, if their home state certification is determined equivalent to the Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board standards.

Physical Ability Test (PAT):

Applicants are required to pass the ILEA Exit Standards listed below to proceed in the selection process.

Vertical Jump	16 inches
Sit-ups	29 in one minute
300 Meter Run	71 seconds
Push-ups	25
1.5-mile run	16 minutes 28 seconds

Physical Ability Testing Dates:

Sat., July 10, 2021	8:00 a.m.	Plainfield, IN
Sat., July 10, 2021	1:00 p.m.	Plainfield, IN
Fri., July 23, 2021	8:00 a.m.	South Bend, IN
Fri., July 23, 2021	1:00 p.m.	South Bend, IN
Sat., July 24, 2021	8:00 a.m.	South Bend, IN
Sat., July 24, 2021	1:00 p.m.	South Bend, IN
Fri., Aug. 13, 2021	8:00 a.m.	Orleans, IN
Fri., Aug. 13, 2021	1:00 p.m.	Orleans, IN
Sat., Aug. 14, 2021	8:00 a.m.	Orleans, IN
Sat., Aug. 14, 2021	1:00 p.m.	Orleans, IN
Sat., Aug. 21, 2021	8:00 a.m.	Plainfield, IN
Sat., Aug. 21, 2021	1:00 p.m.	Plainfield, IN
Sun., Aug. 22, 2021	8:00 a.m.	Plainfield, IN
Sun., Aug. 22, 2021	1:00 p.m.	Plainfield, IN

Applicants are afforded the opportunity to attend additional PAT dates to improve current scores or achieve a passing score. Additional information regarding the PAT can be found online at <https://www.in.gov/isp/2880.htm>.

Interested applicants can obtain additional information about a career as an Indiana State Trooper by visiting <https://www.in.gov/isp/3041.htm> to find the recruiter assigned to your area.

Infrastructure deal aims at rebuilding the Senate

--continued from Page 3

Johnson has had Biden's deep understanding of the Senate, its rhythms and its rituals. He remembers what the Senate once was - and has expended a fair bit of political capital trying to prod it into becoming America's great deliberative body once again.

He spoke to that end when he announced the deal after meeting with the moderate senators. The president was asked what guarantee he had that the deal could make it through Congress.

Biden replied that he couldn't offer any guarantees, but then he spoke about the importance of relationships in the Senate.

He said he trusted Mitt Romney, one of the architects of the compromise, the Republican senator from Utah and the 2012 GOP presidential nominee. He said the same about other Republicans who were part of the group that put the package together.

The president added that this did not mean that they don't have serious disagreements over priorities and policies - they do - but that they could work through them if they listened to and worked with each other.

Biden's message was implied but not subtle. It was this: If we Americans start treating each other with respect and consideration once more, then many more of our problems can and will be solved.

There will be more disputes over the infrastructure package the moderate senators put together and Biden endorsed. Partisans on both the right and the left have legitimate reasons not to like parts of it.

But that's the nature of a compromise.

No one gets everything he or she wants.

But neither does anyone walk away from the table with nothing he or she wants.

Such arrangements aren't perfect, but this isn't a perfect world.

If it were, bridges wouldn't weaken over time and roads wouldn't crumble.

But they do, and every now and then, they must be rebuilt and repaired.

The same, it seems, go for our system of government.

FOOTNOTE: John Krull is director of Franklin College's Pulliam School of Journalism and publisher of TheStatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students.

The City-County Observer posted this article without bias or editing.

The pandemic has certainly altered how we live and work

--continued from Page 1

With inflation on the rise, U.S. businesses struggle to hire workers, especially lower-paid employees. In a recent article on the CBS News website, Chipotle Mexican Grill said that they recently boosted prices as much as 4% across its menu to help offset higher costs. The restaurant chain in May raised its average hourly pay to \$15 for 100,000 workers. How many restaurants and businesses in the Evansville region have adjusted their compensation levels to manage their demand for workers?

The real question with all of the changes, how much are prices temporary, and how much will shift to greater permanency. More than likely, wage gains will begin to pick up steam as employees will demand higher wages to offset increasing costs for consumer goods. So many companies have either instituted or are considering price pass-throughs to customers to make up for what they are seeing within their supply chains. Fast rises in prices make for uncertainty in business and uneasiness for inflationary fears. The real question is this only the beginning or will the economy begin to settle. Only time will tell.

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