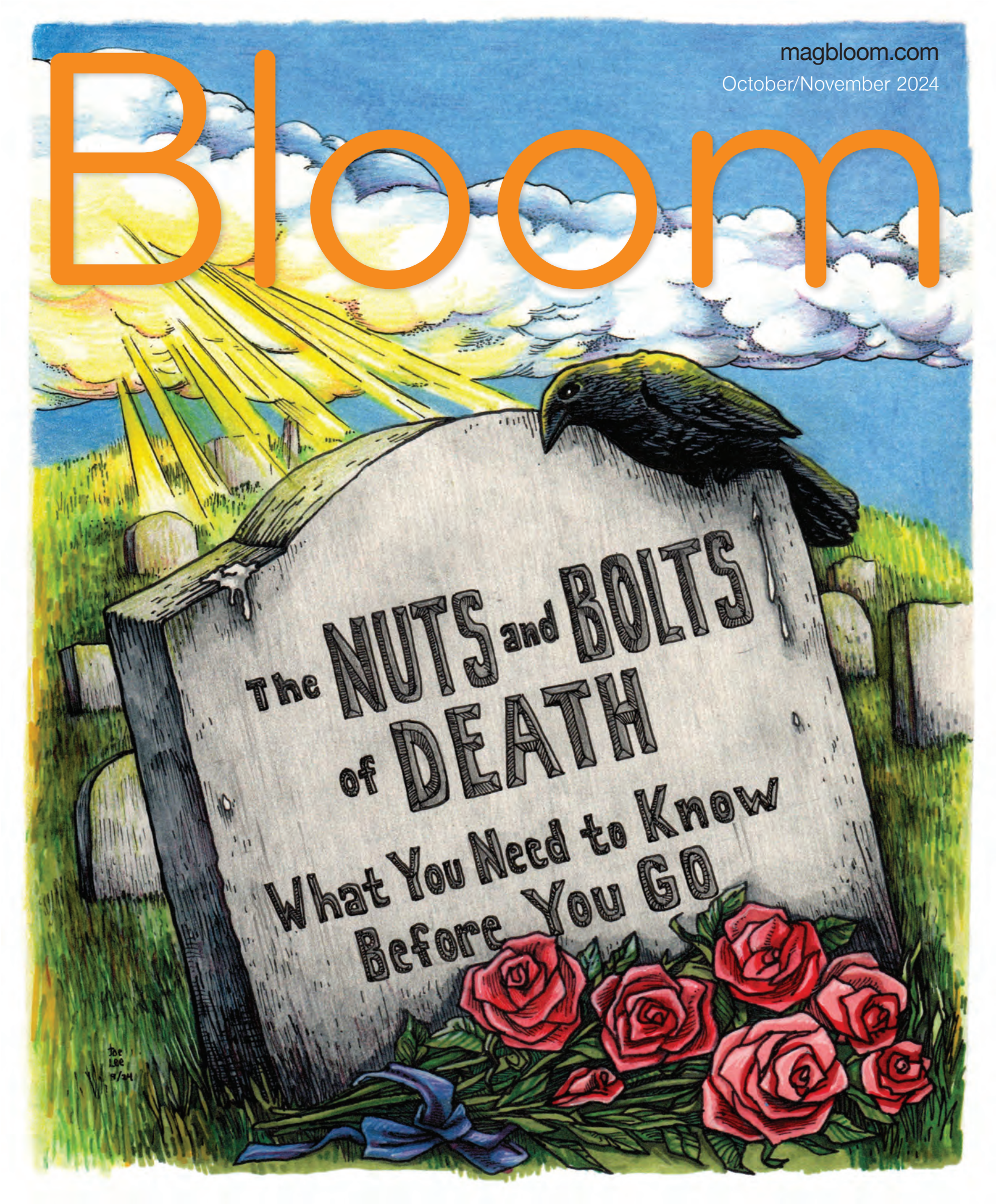


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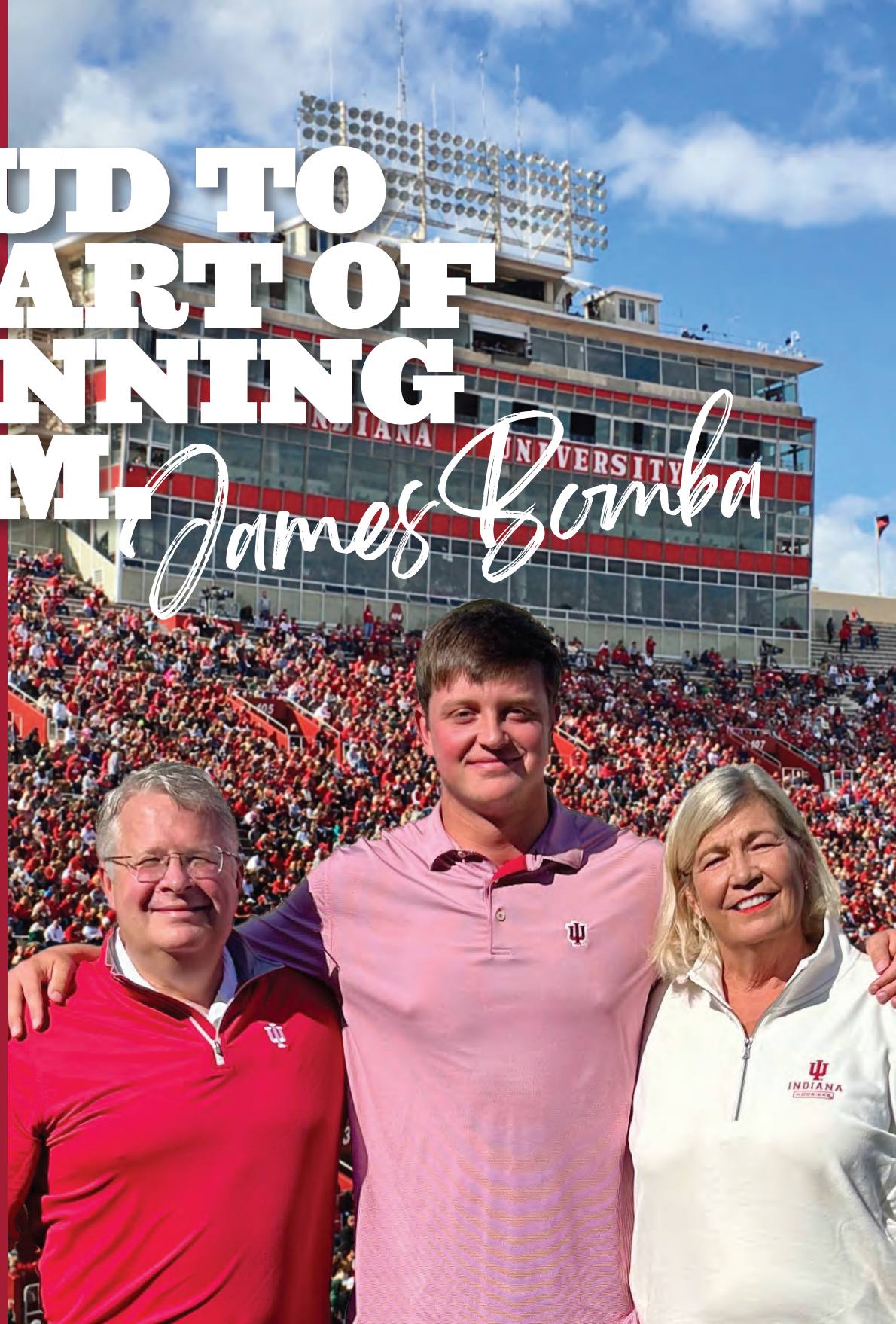
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7/24

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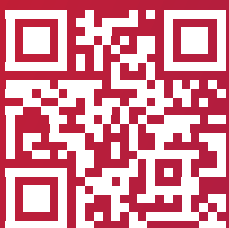
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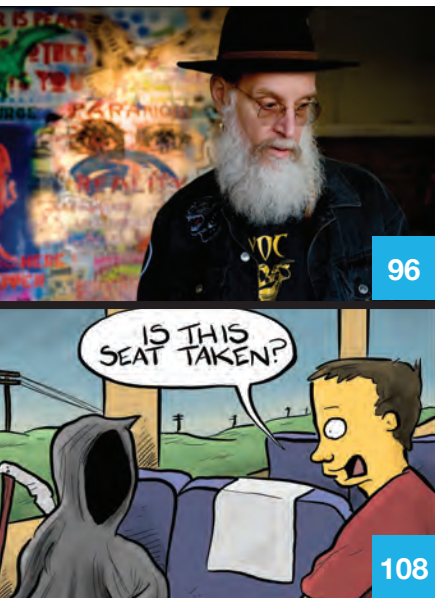
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96 Portraits Through the Years

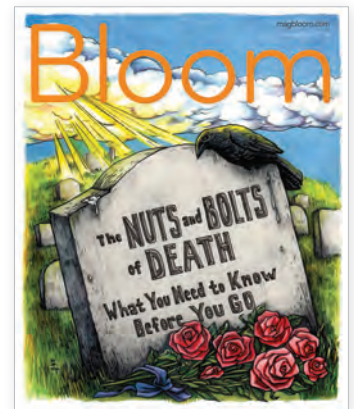
Bloom has published more than 5,000 stories over the past 18-plus years. Most of those stories included pictures of people taken by our team of talented contributing photographers. Join us in this retrospective showcasing some of our favorite portraits.

Photography by Martin Boling, Marti Garvey, Jeffrey Hammond, Jim Krause, Rodney Margison, Jeff Richardson, Sarah Slover, Stephen Sproull, Lynae Sowinski, Ben Weller, and Shannon Zahnle.

108 The Nuts and Bolts of Death

It's coming, but we really don't know when or how. Dying isn't as simple as just picking a casket, a funeral home, and a cemetery anymore—there are multiple options and many other things to consider, including how to make your death less of a burden on your loved ones. Consider this your guide to making an organized, considerate departure.

By Susan M. Brackney, photography by Rodney Margison.



Cover illustration by Joe Lee

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30 Arts/Entertainment
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Learn about two of the newest eateries in town—a Mediterranean-inspired bistro on the south side and a gluten-free café in Fountain Square Mall.

56 Fashion/Shopping

A book fair featuring local authors is coming to the convention center in November; and Bloomington's only locally owned menswear store has reopened after a major remodel.

60 Home/Family

The Switchyard Park pavilion will soon light up with dozens of decorated Christmas trees; and there's a 12-acre farm west of Bloomington that's home to 150 rescued cats and kittens in need of special care.

68 Science/Education

The new IU Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology will open soon with two major exhibitions; and Ivy Tech Bloomington launched a semiconductor fabrication certificate program this semester.

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Meet two Hoosiers who hope they'll be elected in November to represent us in Washington, D.C.; and Bloomington has a thriving Filipino community—read about what bonds its members.

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IU student-athletes are giving back to the community through Hoosiers for Good; and it's full speed ahead for the Monroe Convention Center expansion project.

118 'Those Were the Days'

Take a look at these photos from *Bloom* magazines past—recognize anyone?



Introducing the Indiana University Health

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at IU Health Bloomington

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is a heart condition characterized by irregular and often rapid heart rate, stemming from erratic electrical signals in the heart's upper chambers (atria). Instead of a normal, coordinated contraction, the atria quiver, leading to inefficient blood pumping. AFib increases the risk of blood clots forming in the heart, which can travel to the brain and cause a stroke.

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editor's message



Suggestions

I recently made two suggestions to Mayor Kerry Thomson that I would like to share with you. Both suggestions had been on my mind for a very long time.

Whenever I drive by one of our ubiquitous apartment complexes, I am dismayed at why all, or nearly all, of the ground floor commercial spaces are vacant. It's depressing. Hundreds of valuable spaces sitting empty.

I believe all of that real estate could and should be put to good use for affordable housing.

I happened to bump into former mayor John Fernandez at Bloomingfoods Near West recently. We were both waiting for our sandwiches to get made, standing around with our hands in our pockets looking at each other.

To break the silence, I told John about my "stupid" idea to turn those hundreds of commercial spaces into low-income housing units. Bloomington, like so many municipalities, has a big need for affordable housing.

I was surprised John was enthusiastic about the idea. Ironically, it was during his tenure as mayor in 2007 that the Unified Development Ordinance requiring commercial spaces on the ground floor of buildings came into being. Probably a good idea back then when there were many fewer buildings and a need for retail (before Amazon). Not now.

Emboldened by John's reaction, I emailed the suggestion to Mayor Thomson. Same thing. She was very enthusiastic. In her response, she mentioned that having residents at ground level would make our streets safer. She also said that using existing infrastructure to resolve the need for low-income housing is what her administration would like to do.

I know it would be expensive to transform these spaces into homes but not nearly as costly as purchasing land and building homes from scratch. We would also be distributing the homes around the city and not creating a low-income neighborhood or putting pressure on one school.

Who knows? We'll see.

George Taliaferro (1927–2018) was an All-American football player and the greatest athlete in the history of Indiana University. He was the first African American to be drafted by the National Football League and played for several professional teams. And when his playing days were over, he returned to Bloomington as a professor of social work and special assistant to IU President John Ryan, developing equal opportunity policies for the university.

A few years ago, IU Athletics honored Taliaferro for his football exploits with a statue in front of Memorial Stadium. Nice. But his greater accomplishment was to help desegregate Bloomington. And for that, he deserves a monument in the city. My choice for a statue would be George in civilian clothes (he was a dapper dresser), holding a football in one hand and in the other, the "colored" sign he took down from the Princess Theatre.

George's wife, Viola "Vi" Taliaferro, (1928–2023) was the first African American judge in Bloomington and the first in Indiana south of Indianapolis. She served nine years as a Monroe County Circuit Court judge specializing in juvenile justice. She put the best interest of the child first and inspired others to do so as well. Among her many honors, she was Woman of the Year, Judge of the Year, and a Living Legend. The Indiana State Bar Association has an Honorable Viola J. Taliaferro Award.

My second suggestion is that the City rename Switchyard Park as the George and Viola Taliaferro Park in their memory. It would be fitting.

Finally. VOTE. Vote as if democracy in our country is dependent on the outcome of this election. Because it is. Elect Vice-President Kamala Harris.

Malcolm Abrams
editor@magbloom.com



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contributors



Susan M. Brackney WRITER: THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF DEATH A professional writer since 1995 and regular Bloom contributor, Susan has written for the Boy Scouts, stoners, interventional radiologists, would-be beekeepers, depressives, the 1%, and many others. Her work has appeared in such publications as *The New York Times*, *Discover*, *Organic Gardening*, *Hobby Farms*, and *Indianapolis Monthly*. She is also the author of four nonfiction books.



Janet Mandelstam WRITER: BLOOMINGTON'S VIBRANT FILIPINO COMMUNITY Freelance writer Janet Mandelstam has been a *Bloom* contributor since the first issue. Formerly an award-winning newspaper reporter and editor, she worked at *The Detroit News* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* before becoming the communications director at two nonprofit organizations.



Rodney Margison PHOTOGRAPHER: THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF DEATH Prior to joining the staff at Bloom, where he's the managing editor, Rodney had a robust career as a newspaper photojournalist and reporter. He now emphasizes editorial and artistic portraiture. Several of his photos can be seen hanging in gallery spaces around Bloomington and beyond.

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Bloom Magazine is published six times a year by Bloomington Magazine, Inc., P.O. Box 1204, Bloomington, IN 47402. Street address: 414 W. 6th St., Bloomington, IN 47404 Tel: 812.323.8959.

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Bloom Magazine Honored With Prestigious Award

For three decades, the Stone Age Institute and Indiana University's Center for Research into the Archaeological Foundations of Technology (CRAFT) have been awarding their Outstanding Craftsmanship Award to a wide range of artisans in a varied range of professions.

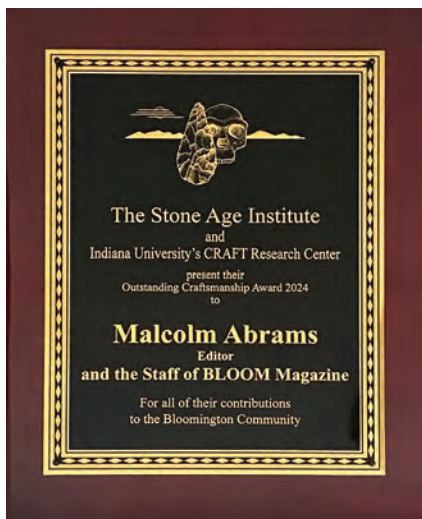
"As archaeologists who study the origins and evolution of human technology and aesthetics, we see this award as a celebration of people who have truly mastered their craft," says Stone Age Institute co-founder and co-director Nick Toth.

In addition to many scientists, winners of the award include Apple Computer co-founder Steve Wozniak, director George Lucas, actor Jesse Eisenberg, authors J.K. Rowling (Harry Potter series) and Jean Auel (*Clan of the Cave Bear*), and musicians Booker T. Jones, Jeff Beck, Stewart Copeland (The Police), Janis Ian, and John Raitt (Broadway legend).

Recipients with Bloomington ties include Bill Cook and Gayle Cook, Bill and Kathleen Oliver, Carrie Newcomer, John Mellencamp, and drummer Kenny Aronoff.

In announcing the 2024 recipient, co-founder and co-director Kathy Schick said, "*Bloom Magazine*, under the leadership of Malcolm Abrams, has been an invaluable resource for the

Bloomington community and members of Indiana University. We have learned so much about the place where we have lived now for half our lives. One of our institute advisory board members, Rich Mabyak, who spent his career as editor of several national magazines, was amazed at the quality of *Bloom*—the writing, the photography, and even the high quality of the paper used!"



The 2024 Outstanding Craftsmanship Award received by *Bloom*.

Upon receiving the award, *Bloom* founder, editor, and publisher Malcolm Abrams, exclaimed, "Are you kidding!?" He added, "On behalf of my longtime colleagues, Executive Publisher Cassaundra Huskey and Managing Editor Rodney Margison, we are so honored to receive this award. Thank you." ✨



The Bloom staff; (l-r) Debby Mathebula, Cassaundra Huskey, Malcolm Abrams, Rosalie Sherwood, and Rodney Margison. Photos by Rodney Margison

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The Big Picture

Road Hogs

Photo by Jeremy Hogan of *The Bloomingtonian*

First responders rescue hogs from a semi-trailer that overturned during a collision at South Ind. Old 37 and South Ind. 37 on September 1. No people were injured in the crash, but nine of the 162 pigs involved died.





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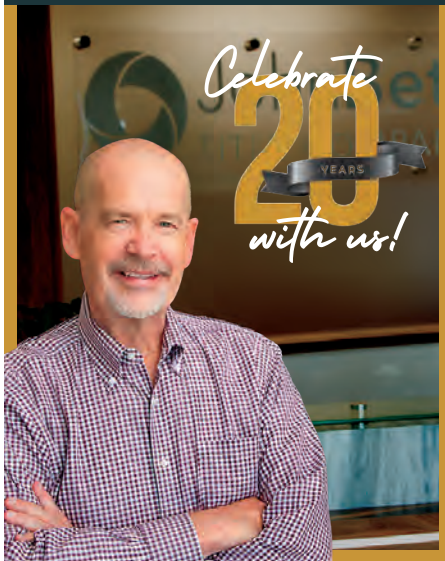
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up front

Edited by Rodney Margison

Dunbar-Kruzan Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce honored Sherry Dunbar-Kruzan as the inaugural recipient of its Mae Cassady Lifetime Achievement Award at the August 22 Women Excel Bloomington (WEB) Awards celebration.



(l-r) Former Mayor Mark Kruzan, Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Eric Spoonmore, and Sherry Dunbar-Kruzan.

Courtesy photo

Dunbar-Kruzan is talent development and recruitment manager for TASUS Corporation, a supplier of components and products to the automotive manufacturing industry. She was previously the head volleyball coach at Indiana University.

According to the Chamber, the WEB Awards celebrate the achievements of local women leaders who inspire through their actions and initiatives, serve as mentors, excel in their professions, and demonstrate outstanding leadership and community service, balancing professional success with a commitment to volunteerism and civic engagement.

Study: IU Ranks Near Bottom for College Free Speech

Indiana University ranked 243rd out of 251 colleges and universities—and next to last among public universities—in the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) and College Pulse 2025 College Free Speech Rankings released in September.



IU President Pamela Whitten.

Photo by Rodney Margison

FIRE CEO Greg Lukianoff says in a press release, “The Middle East crisis plunged campuses into absolute chaos last academic year and administrators largely failed in their response, clamping down on free speech protections instead of fostering spaces for open dialogue.”

At IU in April, armed state troopers broke up a protest encampment on Dunn Meadow, resulting in 57 arrests—contrary to a 1969 policy allowing such assemblies. Then, despite the low ranking and a vote of no confidence by Bloomington faculty, in September, trustees rewarded IU President Pamela Whitten with a \$175,000 bonus.

Tivoli Fashions Recognized for Business Longevity

Bloomington’s Tivoli Fashions, located in Fountain Square Mall on the downtown Square, was recognized by Governor Eric Holcomb and Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg as one of 48 Indiana companies to receive a 2024 Indiana Century and Half Century Award in recognition of their longevity and impact on the state’s economy and communities.



(l-r) Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, Tivoli Fashions owner Cheryl Nichoalds, and Indiana Secretary of Commerce David Rosenberg. *Courtesy photo*

The ceremony was held August 15 at the Indiana Statehouse. The awards celebrate all types of businesses that have been in Indiana for 100 years and 50 years, respectively. More than 1,250 Indiana companies have been recognized during the award’s 33-year history.

“Tivoli Fashions is both honored and humbled to have received the Half Century Award, having started business in 1973,” says Cheryl Nichoalds, Tivoli owner.



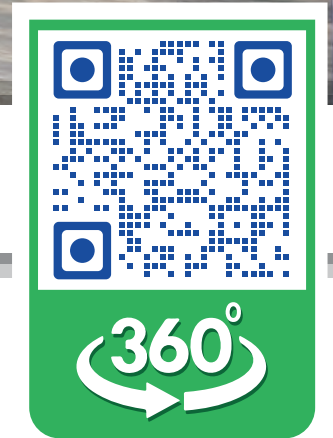
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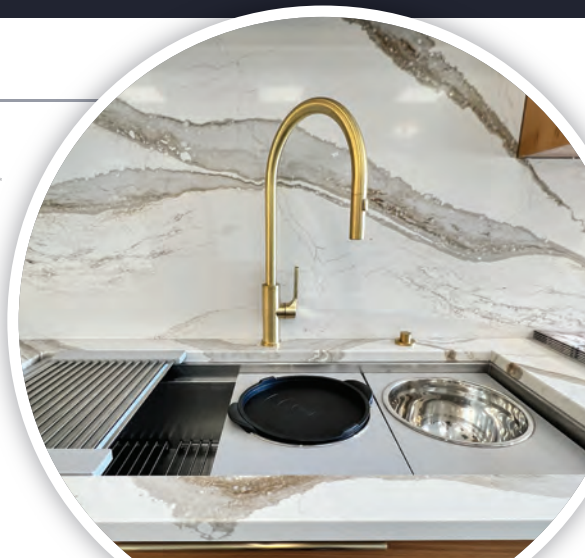
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"In our town, **we like to know** the facts about everybody." —Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

Stephen Curtis Performance Psychologist

by Carmen Siering

When Stephen Curtis examined stress and learning for a science project in eighth grade, he probably didn't realize how that early interest would drive his career, which focuses on how psychological issues affect human performance.

"Ninety percent of my clinical work has been helping people reduce their anxiety levels," he says.

Curtis, 73, met Deb, his wife of 52 years, while a student at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. He transferred to Indiana University when he decided to pursue neuroscience. He went on to earn a doctorate in experimental psychology and neuroscience from the



Stephen Curtis has worked with players on high school, Big Ten, and NCAA championship teams, as well as with Olympic, PGA, and LPGA athletes. *Photo by Jim Krause*

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University of Kentucky, and completed postdoctoral work at the Medical College of Pennsylvania and Indiana University.

In 1990, Curtis started private practice in Bloomington, focusing on performance psychology with athletes, musicians, students, and faculty.

"I think I worked with about 15 different sports over the years," he says. "It was part of my practice to help kids manage their fears."

He's worked with players on high school, Big Ten, and NCAA championship teams, as well as with Olympic, PGA, and LPGA athletes.

From his work with sports teams, Curtis developed *Clarity*, a survey that elicits answers to emotion-based questions. The survey compares what players feel is happening on their team with what they wish would happen in an ideal world.

"We got a gap analysis between ideal and real, which turned out to be very helpful," Curtis says. "We actually saw benefits from taking action on the results."

In 1993, Curtis shared the survey with a

friend at Boston Consulting Group. Soon, large corporations, among them Hallmark Cards, American Airlines, and Toyota, were using *Clarity* and seeing increased sales and other improvements.

Curtis has authored five books, among them *Life Performance for Students* (Cognella, 2019) and *Performance Psychology for Everyday Life* (Cognella, 2023).

His current research focuses on brain damage and dementia as performance issues, both of which are exacerbated by stress.

Curtis says anyone who suffers from stress has impaired mental and physical performance, and that culturally, nearly everyone suffers from stress and anxiety. He compares chronic anxiety to the feeling of being chased by a bear. But, he says, we can unlearn our chronic anxiety behaviors.

"You can learn to calm down and maintain that sense of calm day to day," he says. "And then maybe you can look back and see the bear isn't chasing you. That, in fact, there is no bear." *

Gloria Howell

Director, Black Cultural Center



Gloria Howell had every intention of earning her Ph.D. from IU and then leaving to get a job in the South. “The broader Bloomington community is one of the reasons I’m still here,” she says. *Photo by Jim Krause*

by Janet Mandelstam

For Gloria Howell, life has always been about community—from the community of women who nurtured her as a child in the small town of New Albany, Mississippi, to the community of students she now supports as director of the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center at Indiana University.

Howell, 35, says she was raised by her mother—a single Black woman—her grandmother, and “a whole family of aunts and cousins.”

Her life has also been about telling stories, both sharing her own and empowering others to tell theirs.

At the University of Mississippi she majored in broadcast journalism and, she says with a laugh, “At one point I thought I was going to be Oprah.” But an internship at a small local television station changed her mind. Too much technology and not enough storytelling. “Sometimes you do an internship to find out what you *don’t* love. But I still liked to tell stories.”

It was a mentor at Ole Miss who encouraged Howell to go to graduate school. “She put me on the path to student affairs.” While earning a master’s degree, Howell says, “I realized that I really like research, and I wanted to go for a Ph.D.”

With relatives in Indianapolis, she enrolled at IU. “My first job at IU was as road manager for *Soul Review*, an ensemble at the African American Arts Institute.” She wrote her dissertation on the institute. “I thought I’d get my Ph.D. and leave to get a job in the South. I had every intention of going back south. But the community embraced me. The broader Bloomington community is one of the reasons I’m still here.”

And Howell has embraced the community as well, serving on the City of Bloomington’s Black History Month planning committee, the Free Tutoring Program at Bethel AME Church, and other groups. This past summer she was honored by The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce as one of five *Women Excel Bloomington* award

winners, “women who inspire through their actions and initiatives.”

Howell has been director of Neal-Marshall, one of the oldest Black culture centers in the United States, since 2020. “It is an inspirational and motivational center for students in both their academic and personal lives,” she says. “We help them with everything from where to do laundry to making big life decisions.”

“I see this work as a calling,” she says. “It’s spiritual. My family taught me that service was like a ministry.” ✨

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SCAN ME!

Glen Merzer

Vegan Comic Writer



Glen Merzer has written for such television shows as *The Facts of Life*, *St. Elsewhere*, *China Beach*, *City*, and *Blossom*. Photo by Martin Boling

by Carmen Stiering

If one word could describe Glen Merzer, it would be “storyteller.” Merzer, 68, performed standup comedy in the ’70s, won two national awards as a graduate student playwright in the ’80s, wrote for network television in the ’90s, hosts a podcast, and remains a prolific author. After attending Indiana University as a graduate student, he moved back to town in 2018 with his wife of 28 years, Joanna Samorow-Merzer.

A native of Bellmore, New York, Merzer first attended New College of Florida with an interest in writing comedic plays. When his interests didn’t mesh with those of producers, he headed to San Francisco, working in comedy clubs until the cigarette smoke drove him to apply to grad school.

He started his MFA at IU’s Department of Theatre and Drama in 1980. He left before earning his degree, but not before winning the American College Theater Festival’s National Student Playwriting Award for his full-length play, *The Cashier*, which was

presented at the Kennedy Center. He took his award money and travelled to France. There he wrote *Amorphous George*. After joining the University of Alabama MFA program, he submitted the play to the same festival and won the National Comedy Award. With the win, he chose to leave the program and travel to Los Angeles to write for network television.

“I wrote an episode of *The Facts of Life*, got into the Writers Guild, got a literary agent with ICM, and started getting work freelancing,” Merzer says. He wrote for popular ’90s shows, among them *St. Elsewhere* and *China Beach*, and later held staff writing positions on the network sitcoms *City* and *Blossom*.

Merzer’s storytelling moved in a different direction when, in 1996, he was approached by Howard Lyman to co-write the book *Mad Cowboy*. Lyman, a fourth-generation cattle rancher turned vegetarian, wanted to share his wellness journey as well as expose what he

considered the propaganda of the beef and dairy industries and the government agencies that protect them.

“I told Howard that I have two reasons to write: to make people laugh and to make people vegan,” says Merzer, who has been a vegetarian since 17 and vegan since 35. “That’s still the case.”

The co-author of multiple books on vegan health and wellness, Merzer’s latest book is *Food is Climate*. He hosts *The Glen Merzer Show*, a podcast focusing on veganism, climate change, and related concerns, which can be found on YouTube and most podcast providers. ✨



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Alexandra McNichols-Torroledo

Photographer with a Cause

by Sophie Bird

Using an 85-year-old large format camera, award-winning photographer Alexandra McNichols-Torroledo captures black-and-white images that address human rights, immigration, climate change, and the struggles of Indigenous communities in North and South America.

Born in Colombia, McNichols-Torroledo now lives in Terre Haute, Indiana. Her interest in photography has spanned more than three decades, resulting in numerous awards, four published books, lectures in several countries, and dozens of solo and group exhibitions at galleries, museums, and universities.

Past projects include a series called Diaries of Death, which captured re-enactments of paramilitary deaths and human rights violations in Colombia; a photo-sculpture series on immigrants in Terre Haute called Stone Faces; a collection of portraits of North American Indigenous people protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline entitled Water Protectors; and a series documenting the impact of deforestation on the Indigenous Mura people of Brazil, which was on exhibit at the John Waldron Arts Center in late 2023. Six of the Mura photos were chosen for an October group exhibition in London.

Torroledo frequently visits Bloomington to give guest lectures and exhibit her work. Previously, exhibitions have been at the Indiana University Education Library in October 2023 and at IU's Gayle Karch Cook Center in early 2024, when she presented three lectures at IU's Hamilton Lugar School of Global and Economic Studies' Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

McNichols-Torroledo, who refers to herself as "self-exiled," left Colombia at age 25 in response to paramilitary violence. She says these lived experiences have made her work with Indigenous communities, immigrants, and survivors of political upheaval particularly meaningful.

"I educate myself and I educate international audiences," she says. "My projects are not an isolated photograph. They're long-term projects."

Visit alexandramcnichols-torroledo.com. ✨



(this page and opposite page)
Examples of photographer Alexandra
McNichols-Torroledo's work.
Courtesy photos





Alexandra McNicols-Torroledo. Photo by Kathryn Coers Rossman



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Listen Up Bloomington!

'The Firehouse Follies' Is Back



Performers read from a script during a June 2019 performance of *The Firehouse Follies*, a live radio variety show on WFHB-FM. Photo by Charles Beckett

by Barb Berggoetz

Richard Fish knows Bloomington is home to many talented people—singers, actors, comedians, writers, producers. He wants to harness that talent to continue reviving a live radio variety show, *The Firehouse Follies*, on WFHB-FM.

“We’d like to open our arms to everyone and see how much fun we can have,” says Fish, director and producer of the nonprofit, independent Blooming Audio Enterprises. “In the process, we can spotlight what a great place we live in. That benefits everybody.”

Follies live radio shows, usually four annually, ran from 2007 to 2019, but stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Founder and original producer, Mike Kelsey, died in 2019. Last November, Fish produced the first revival show, as he says audio theater is experiencing an “unbelievable renaissance.”

The next show will be 2 to 4 p.m. November 17 at the John Waldron Arts Center. Tickets are sold at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater box office and at The Waldron door. Fish says this event will have comedy

sketches, a parody about The Kinsey Institute, Bloomington singer-songwriter Krista Detor, a band, perhaps a radio play, and other performers.

“With a live audience at The Waldron, we hope to fill the house,” he says. “If you do comedy, the audience laughs and they become part of the show. It makes it really fun for the listener, too.”

This show’s theme, Keep Bloomington Weird, focuses on the city’s uniqueness and talented residents, says Fish, who helped start WFHB. “It’s weird how wonderful this place is.”

For now, two shows annually are planned, with the goal of more shows if additional people get involved and financing allows. “I’m trying to do this in such a way that everybody ought to be paid a small amount,” says Fish. “But this is still a start-up and shoe-string venture.”

Fish, an actor, writer, and musician, wants more young people and diverse groups to help produce and perform, including high school and college music and drama students. “I’m enormously excited about the prospects and possibilities,” adds Fish.

For more information, contact Fish at fish@WFHB.org or visit WFHB.org. ✨

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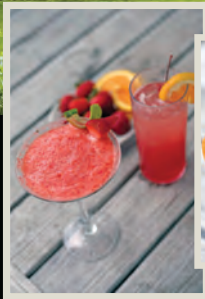
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While virtual imagery is omnipresent in today's culture, Pictura Gallery, a contemporary photography space inside the FAR Center for Contemporary Arts at 202 S. Rogers St., remains committed to the physical presentation of original artworks.

Pictura began in 2008 as a midlife project for David Moore, a local businessman and advanced amateur photographer who saw a vacant storefront across from his office on the downtown Square as a place to "give photography its due."

Although Moore, his wife Martha, and first Associate Director Brenda Stern had no gallery experience, they received practical advice from their first exhibited artist, local documentary photographer Tyagan Miller, as well as from faculty at Indiana University.

The addition of two curators, Lisa Woodward and Mia Dalglish, from the Rhode Island School of Design and IU, respectively, expanded their focus from local artists to include more national and international practitioners such as Steve

McCurry, Jerry Uelsmann, Kelli Connell, Rania Matar, and fall featured artists Clarissa Bonet (until October 25) and Kristen Joy Emack (opening November 1).

This curatorial duo continues to pick the artists, design the exhibitions, and shape the artistic vision for the gallery. They regularly hold portfolio reviews and serve as jurors for international photography competitions to see the works of emerging and professional artists, some of whom have gone on to show at major museums.

Moore says Pictura embraces all styles, forms of lens-based media, and perspectives. "It offers experimentation, it offers questions, it offers curiosity, it offers challenges."

A new business model emerged eight years ago when the Moores purchased a storage building from the Monroe County Sheriff's Auxiliary. The additional space and challenges of a volatile art market shifted Pictura to a not-for-profit entity ▶



"Chasing Light," featuring photographs by Clarissa Bonet, is on exhibition until October 25 at Pictura Gallery inside the FAR Center for Contemporary Art, including (right, top) *Glimpse* (2019); (right) *Solitude* (2021); and (left) *Public Private Space* (2019). Photos by Clarissa Bonet





(above, left) *In Progress* (2016); (above, right) *Fortress* (2016).

with the addition of the FAR Center as a rental space to help support their activities. Visitors can still purchase artworks directly from the artists, but the gallery receives no commission.

FAR also enabled the expansion of community engagement through workshops, children’s programs, art shows by local groups, makers’ markets, films, concerts, and multimedia events. As longtime Bloomington residents, Moore says he and Martha always wanted to create a valuable cultural amenity that would give back to their community, adding, “Business can have a heart.”

Learn more at thefar.org.

—*Nanette Esseck Brewer*



(l-r) David and Martha Moore, founders and owners of Pictura Gallery and FAR Center for Contemporary Art. Photo by Jeff Richardson

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OCT 18, 19

POP UP OPERA

OCT 25, 26

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FALL CONCERT



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MAINSTAGE SEASON

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF KAVALIER AND CLAY
An opera by Mason Bates and Gene Scheer
A collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera




NOV 15, 16, 21, 22

THE NUTCRACKER
A ballet by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky



DEC 5, 6, 7, 8

ALCINA
An opera by George Frideric Handel



FEB 7, 8

JACOBS



LIVE AT THE MOVIES

FEB 21, 22

THE TURN OF THE SCREW
An opera by Benjamin Britten




MAR 7, 8

SPRING BALLET



MAR 28, 29

SINGING HOOSIERS
SPRING CONCERT



APR 5

CARMEN
An opera by Georges Bizet



APR 18, 19, 25, 26

JAZZ CELEBRATION



MAY 3



The Overlooked Role of Black Women In the American Suffragist Movement

New interest in the women’s suffrage movement—which spanned from 1848 until 1920, when women gained the right to vote with the ratification of the 19th Amendment—has taken root on Broadway with the musical *Suffs* and locally in a play by Resilience Productions.

Founded in 2016, Resilience combines the efforts of playwright Gladys DeVane, director Danielle Bruce, and historian Elizabeth Mitchell. Their mission is to tell underrecognized stories of African American history.

The company presents two programs per year at the Monroe County History Center, 202 E. 6th St. Their current production, *From Truth to Justice: The Price Paid for the Ballot*, originated with Bruce, who says she felt voting would be a relevant theme with the upcoming U.S. presidential election.

DeVane adds: “We look at what’s going on now. Voting rights are being taken away. We don’t think about what we had until we are about to lose it. Look at what we went through to get here.”

Performances will be held October 18, 19, and 20, with shows always selling out.

The play’s title references leaders in Black women’s rights—Sojourner Truth and Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. While many pictures of suffragists depict white women wearing long dresses, plumed hats, and purple-white-gold sashes, few include Black women, who were also active in the movement.

Protesters have accused the musical *Suffs* of whitewashing history. While DeVane has not seen the show, she doubts they’ve told the whole truth. She says that her play begins, “We are going tell you ... the true story of the suffrage movement. It perhaps will dethrone some of your heroes.” This reappraisal includes such revered figures as Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. While she doesn’t want to take away from the good things they did, DeVane wants people to recognize that they weren’t perfect and to acknowledge their racist ideas, noting, “None of the textbooks talk about those things.”

Central to this conflict was a disinterest by white suffragists—mostly middle-class women—in the humiliation and stereotyping felt by Black women, as well as differences over universal suffrage (women’s rights) versus Black suffrage (human rights), reflecting racist fears of Black men being allowed to vote before white women. Resilience Productions addresses this while acknowledging the importance of voting.

Learn more at monroehistory.org. —Nanette Esseck Brewer



Resilience Productions combines the talent of (l-r) historian Elizabeth Mitchell, director Danielle Bruce, and playwright Gladys DeVane. Photo by Rodney Margison

BLOOMINGTON ROOTS

u p c o m i n g s h o w s

Sam Bush Band
Emily Scott Robinson
John Prine Tribute

OCT 18

BloominGrass

feat. Sam Bush Band & John Prine Tribute with Emily Scott Robinson and Jason Wilber & Dave Jacques of the John Prine Band
Buskirk-Chumley Theater

Leyla McCalla Band
Alice Randall
Sunny War

OCT 19

BloominGrass

feat. Sam Bush Band, Alice Randall, Leyla McCalla, Sunny War, Emily Scott Robinson, & John Prine Tribute
Buskirk-Chumley Theater

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NOV 14

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FAR Center for Contemporary Arts
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NOV 23

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B-town's Dave Weber Designs Aerial Apparatus for P!nk

by Carmen Siering

Locally, Dave Weber is known as a musician, music producer, sound engineer, and co-owner (with his wife, singer-songwriter Krista Detor) of The Hundredth Hill Artist Residence and Retreat. Globally, he might be better known as the guy who designed the aerial apparatus for P!nk's latest tour.

The interactive kinetic sculpture was created at Weber's studio, Airtime Aerial Design.

"From a very young age I've been interested in how things work and taking things apart and, sometimes, being able to put them back together," Weber says. "It led me to be interested in lots of different things—construction, fabrication, engineering."

In the 1990s he was also interested in acrobatic flying and catching, which he learned alongside his sister, Dreya Weber, at Bloomington's High Flyers Family Circus, where he also learned how to care for and set up flying trapeze rigs.

Dreya is a professional aerialist who has worked as an aerial choreographer for multiple artists, among them Cher, Brittany Spears, Madonna, and Taylor Swift. She has coached and created aerial choreography for P!nk since 2004.

"Last fall, Dreya was working on P!nk's current tour when P!nk decided to add another aerial piece for the song called "Try,"" Weber says.

It is unusual to add complicated new choreography in the middle of a tour, but if it was going to happen, Weber wanted to be involved. When Dreya showed him a wire mandala toy and asked if he could make a person-sized aerial apparatus based on it, he says he had no doubt he could.



Weber created a prototype and hung it in their barn. His daughter, Isla, also an aerialist, worked through some choreography with Dreya on Zoom. It was rough, but it seemed the design worked. Weber fine-tuned things on CAD software, then built the apparatus out of chromoly steel, the material used in stock car roll cages.

"The rig itself is incredibly simple in some ways," Weber says. "All of the shapes on the top, bottom, and middle—the wings—are exact duplicates. They just have hinge points around the main rings that allow them to move."

Weber hopes to have more opportunities like this in the future.

"This is a beautiful combination of all the different things that I do," he says. "Engineering and music and performance and problem solving and collaboration. It's all in there."

For more information and to see P!nk in action on Weber's apparatus, visit airtimeaerials.com. ✨



(top) P!nk and some of her backup performers riding the aerial apparatus designed and built by Bloomington's Dave Weber; (far left) Weber (right) helps install the apparatus on the stage where P!nk would be performing; (left) Weber demonstrates the device. *Courtesy photos*

An Author's Musing on Her Book While Writing at Hundredth Hill

by *Freda Love Smith*

The book I'm working on now has shape-shifted over the years. It started as a novel, morphed into a biography, and now it's a novel—about a woman writing a biography. The subject has remained steady: Angela DeAngelis, Indiana University alumna, member of the Symbionese Liberation Army, prime mover in the 1974 kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, and victim of the largest—and first televised—police shootout in U.S. history. It's a biography I can't shake.

In *My Autobiography of Carson McCullers* (Tin House Books, 2020), protagonist author Jenn Shapland discovers her own story reflected in McCullers'; her queerness, illness, struggle to actualize, and delight at finding love. "To tell another person's story," writes Shapland, "a writer must make that person some version of herself, must find a way to inhabit her." One way I've begun to inhabit DeAngelis is by inserting myself as a character in the book. At first, I saw my role as detective, attempting to solve the mystery of how this sorority girl, actress, and teacher became an armed revolutionary. Later, the question changed: Why did I care so much?

I've been thinking a lot about the 1971 wedding of DeAngelis and her fellow theater student Gary Atwood. The reception was on a farm outside of town, but none of the attendees I've talked to remember the exact location. This week, I'm in residence at The Hundredth Hill, a gorgeous artist retreat near Bloomington. Monday was Labor Day,

and as I hiked through the surrounding forest and fields, I heard faint strains of music and voices from a nearby property. I imagined I was hearing Angela and Gary's celebration. It could have been right here, after all. Their reception was a revel: wine, weed, a roasted pig, skinny-dipping, and dancing. Friends say they'd never seen Angela so happy.

This overheard party is one example of my attempting to inhabit DeAngelis by retracing her steps in Bloomington. I grew up here in the 1970s and '80s, moved away in my late teens, returned to marry and raise a family, and left again in 2006. I always assumed I'd land in Bloomington to live out my life, and although that hasn't happened, this book keeps bringing me back. I've spent hours in the IU library, where I discovered DeAngelis in archived theater programs and *Indiana Daily Student* features about the Miss IU competition (she was a finalist). I've strolled through the Indiana Memorial Union, where a photo of her, which hung near the Whittenberger Auditorium, caught my eye as a teenager. I

made a trip to Granfalloon for a rare reunion gig of The Screaming Gypsy Bandits—the band that played at her wedding reception.

As the novel evolves, I grow less interested in solving mysteries. More and more, I feel my job is to bear witness to the surprising turns that life can take, to the ways our passion can steer us right. Or wrong. Perhaps the most meaningful way I can inhabit Angela DeAngelis is to simply walk her—and myself—home.

Freda Love Smith is a writer, teacher, and retired indie rock drummer. Her books include the memoirs I Quit Everything (Agate Midway, 2023) and Red Velvet Underground (Agate Midway, 2015), and the forthcoming novel Daughter Universe (2026). She drummed for indie rock bands including Blake Babies and The Mysteries of Life. Smith lives in Evanston, Illinois, and teaches creative writing at Northwestern University.



Freda Love Smith was the first artist enrolled in the *Bloom Magazine* Annual Residency at The Hundredth Hill Artist Residence and Retreat. Courtesy graphic



The 1971 wedding invitation for Angela DeAngelis and Gary Atwood. Photo courtesy of Indiana University Archives

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Artists Young & Hawes Reflect On Impact of the Climate Crisis

by *Sophie Bird Murphy*

In their Bloomington home studio, artists Dena Hawes and David J Emerson Young make drawings, paintings, and sculptures for collaborative exhibitions that “create a space of reflection about the beauty, the fragility, and the irreplaceability of the natural world,” says Hawes.

The husband and wife team, who also spearhead the local nonprofit Artists for Environmental Restoration, use art to inspire reflection on the climate crisis and its impacts on people and the environment.

“Our work is a marriage between different approaches to addressing the topics of global warming and climate change,” says Hawes. “We’re hoping that art can be kind of a messenger into some more complex conversations.”

In his work, Young favors ink,

acrylic paints, and linen canvases to depict stylized figures and landscapes. His climate change series, which now includes 19 paintings, addresses aspects of the climate crisis like melting glaciers, droughts, and wildfires.

Young says these images allow the viewer to “simultaneously behold the beauty of nature and the devastation that is happening.”

A metalsmith and multimedia artist, Hawes uses found objects like driftwood, river stones, and bones to create sculptures that honor the juxtaposition between natural and manmade materials. Her most recent series, called “Suspended in Time,” was exhibited at the FAR Center for Contemporary Arts in July.

“They’re small sculptures that give a sense of intimacy, scale, and immensity,” Hawes explains.

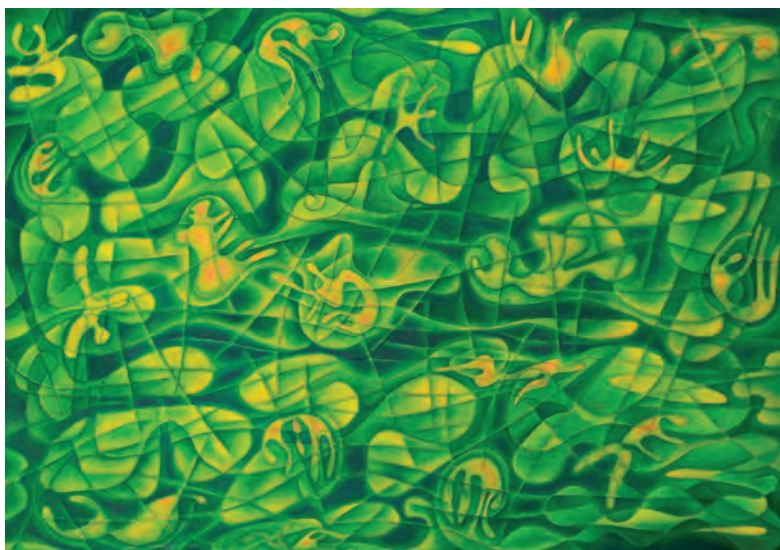


In 2025, Hawes and Young plan to show their work at Backspace Gallery in February and at the John Waldron Arts Center in August.

Visit artistsforenvironmentalrestoration.org/events. ✨



(below) Artist spouses David J Emerson Young and Dena Hawes (standing at center) outline guidelines for a project to campers at EXPLORE youth arts day camp at The Hundredth Hill Artist Residence and Retreat in June. *Photo by Rodney Margison (elsewhere on this page and opposite page) Examples of both artists' work. Courtesy photos*



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BuffaLouie's Opens New Locations

BuffaLouie's, one of Bloomington's iconic restaurants, has two new locations, with a third slated to be open in time for Indiana University basketball season.

Many of the restaurant's staples are now available during football season at Memorial Stadium's north end zone concession stand, while the restaurant's second full-scale location is opening in the Carmel, Indiana, Arts & Design District.

"If folks see our logo, they'll find the same food, same quality, no short-cuts," says owner Ed Schwartzman.

BuffaLouie's was invited to take on the concession stands through IU's new partnership with Levy Group, a national event hospitality organization. The football stadium stand has a full working kitchen and offers the restaurant's wings, Chicago-style Italian beef sandwiches, pork tenderloins, and more.

Schwartzman will also be opening a concession stand behind the north bleachers at Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall to coincide with the IU basketball season.

Meanwhile, Nick Williams, a former BuffaLouie's



BuffaLouie's owner Ed Schwartzman at the restaurant's new satellite location inside a concession booth at Indiana University's Memorial Stadium. A second full-scale restaurant is opening in Carmel, Indiana, with former BuffaLouie's employee Nick Williams as managing partner. Photo by Bobby Goddin

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employee, says he learned more working at the Indiana Avenue location than in his hospitality classes at IU. The 2016 grad says the restaurant "felt like family," and that someday opening a BuffaLouie's of his own seemed like the best job he could imagine.

Williams set a daily phone alarm for 8:30 a.m. for years, to remind him to "open a BuffaLouie's." Now the managing partner of the Carmel location, Williams laughs that he no longer needs the alarm; he's reached his goal.

The new location largely mirrors the Bloomington restaurant, with splashes of its own personality—sports memorabilia from the Indianapolis Colts and Indiana Pacers joining the traditional IU athletic décor. There's also a wait staff rather than patrons ordering at a counter, and a full-service bar.

Schwartzman says that the word "franchise" doesn't accurately describe his relationship with the new BuffaLouie's. "We're family, and we're growing," he says. "We have so many IU alumni who believe in us; I believe we could be successful anywhere. We're just taking this one step at a time."

Visit buffalouies.com for more information. —Chrissy Alspaugh

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BY JACK BAKER



Adventures in Italy Enjoying Local Wines

There are times and places when adventure comes together with a wine experience. On our first trip to Italy in 1992 we rented a villa near Iano in Tuscany, which, to our surprise, came with a pool. In the evenings we lounged in the water with a glass of sangiovese, gazing at the twinkling lights of Volterra across the valley. Little did we know the lights were at the local prison, but *che importa*—who cared, it's Italy!

As we finished lunch in the only pizzeria in Iano, the proprietor, with typical Italian generosity, offered a complimentary drink, but warned it would be 'macho.' Worried, I accepted anyway. It was my first grappa and *sono un fan da allora*—I became a fan.

On an adventure to Italy's Veneto region, we traveled the Prosecco Road that winds through the hills north of Treviso. At each



Wherever he is traveling in Italy, our wine columnist takes the opportunity to try local wines. Photo by iStock.com/Andreyes

prosecco stop the maker served its prosecco in the 'proper' way—all the others were wrong. But that's Italy, where regionalism and rivalries still exist. I've heard, '*Non lo capisco, lui e del sud*' ('I can't understand him, he's from the South'), and from a winemaker, '*Non ho mai sentito*,' ('I've never heard of that wine'), although it was clearly made a mile or two down the road.

While visiting one of my wife, Jan's, cousins in Bassano del Grappa, northwest of Venice, Maria, of course, demanded we stay for lunch. After a classic tortellini in *brodo* (broth), and fresh porcini mushrooms with rosemary pork, she poured her homemade grappa from a vintage blue bottle.

On a stay outside of Orvieto we purchased our jug of wine from the gas pump at the local wine co-op. For those needing more gallonage than a jug, large bladders were available for a car's back seat. Back at the apartment, the refrigerator was too small to fit the jug, but a piece of cord and a stake secured it in our cold, fast-running flume of mountain water.

During a rare opportunity of working with archeologists in the Forums of Caesar, Trajan, and Nerva in Rome, we put in full days of digging, washing and cataloging artifacts, data entry, and weed pulling. Each day we walked to Gli Angeletti for a quick lunch and carafe of slightly *frizzanti* (sparkling) white wine. The archeologists said we were working too hard and should '*rallentare, prenditela comoda*' ('slow down, take it easy'). Taking their advice, our lunchtimes increased, as did our intake of wine. Soon we matched their two-hour Roman lunch.

Any time we're in Rome we take a glass of prosecco on the roof of Hotel Pantheon. It's a panoramic view of the Pantheon and city beyond. And *berrò a questo*—I will drink to that. ✨

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The Uptown Cafe

Past, Present & Future

by Lynn Schwartzberg

I arrived in Bloomington during the summer of 1976, a teenager from New Jersey ready to take on the challenge of Indiana University. During my first semester I discovered a small, unassuming restaurant on North Walnut called The Uptown Cafe. This tucked-away spot was open for breakfast and lunch and won my heart with its potato omelet.

Fast forward nearly 50 years and Bloomington looks very different than it did back then. There are dozens of new restaurants, blocks of tall apartment buildings, and The Uptown. I can still order my potato omelet and cottage cheese pancakes, but it now sits at 102 East Kirkwood, filling the entire main floor of the Allen Building.

The Uptown, founded and still owned by Michael Cassady, is one of the legends of the Bloomington restaurant scene. The restaurant is now co-owned by Michael's son Galen, who has worked at The Uptown for nearly half of his life—really! A recent change at the helm in the kitchen has already sparked fresh creativity on the menu. Adam Noffsinger, an Evansville native, is now the head chef, bringing his vast knowledge and skill from years of work in North American and Asian kitchens.

Noffsinger studied at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. After graduation, he worked in some of New York City's finest restaurants including Oceana and Daniel. His work took him to Chicago, where he was sous chef at NoMI. Adam then traveled to Tokyo, where he combined his classic French training with the dynamic flavors of Japan. He worked in the kitchen at The Oak Door at the Grand Hyatt Tokyo where he was

chef de cuisine. It was there that Adam fell in love with Japanese food and techniques.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, Noffsinger returned to Indiana to earn a master's degree in East Asian food studies from IU, then returned to Japan in June 2023 to study fermentation. When he came back to Bloomington, Adam took a job as a bartender at The Uptown while studying at IU. After a short while, Michael offered him a job as head chef. Adam took the job, feeling ready to return to the kitchen and take a break from school.

The news of a new chef and interesting new lunch and dinner specials started trickling out. And then news of the potatoes hit—no more Michael's home fries at breakfast! Crispy, smashed new potatoes have replaced them. A new menu is in the works for release this fall with fresh new flavors. What will stay are the classics, including gumbo and other New Orleans favorites, breakfast dishes, soups, and steaks.

A look to the future sees a new restaurant in a building that will be going up across the street next to the CVS. A ground floor restaurant serving lunch, dinner, and weekend brunch is in the works. Noffsinger is working on the inventive menu, hopefully bringing in some Japanese influence. A bar on the second floor will have a view of East Kirkwood and the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Galen hopes to stay open late for food and drink after a show or local event. The projected



(l-r) Michael Cassady and son Galen Cassady, co-owners of The Uptown Cafe, plan to open a second, different restaurant on East Kirkwood across the street from The Uptown sometime in the future. Photo by Shannon Zahnle

opening for the new concept is at least a year off.

The new menu at The Uptown is expecting a late fall release. Currently, some new items are being served as daily specials. Noffsinger is even preparing some of his winning dishes from the Chef's Challenge for guests at the restaurant. Who knows, maybe one will make it onto the menu!

For nine years, Lynn Schwartzberg was The Herald-Times food columnist. For 13 years, she served as general manager of One World Catering.

TAPPED

Into Bloomington

BY GREG SIERING



All About the Bubbles!



Enjoying a good beer can be a delight for all the senses—a frothy white head, enticing aromas, hoppy flavor and bitterness, and a crisp finish. An often under-appreciated element that influences all of these sensory experiences is carbonation, and a beer's success can hinge on how well the brewer puts those little bubbles to work.

Carbonation is a natural byproduct of the brewing process. As yeast eats sugars in the wort (unfermented beer), it creates alcohol and carbon dioxide (CO₂). The gas created during fermentation is discarded (or sometimes captured for later

Upland Brewing Co.'s Campside Pale Ale has a high amount of effervescence.
Photo by Rodney Margison

reuse), and after the beer has finished fermenting and maturing, more CO₂ is re-injected to carbonate and

pressurize the beer during the bottling or kegging process.

But what role does CO₂ play in a beer's character? We all like a nice head on our beer, and that is driven by a cascade of rising CO₂ bubbles, both on the initial pour and throughout its time in our glasses. Other elements of the beer can determine how long a head will last—like bubble-reinforcing proteins in wheat malt—but generally higher carbonation is essential for a rich, lasting head. This rising CO₂ also brings aromas along for the ride, drawing malt and hop character to your nose. I notice these impacts the most in well-carbonated wheat beers, like Upland Wheat Ale, Bloomington Brewing's 10-Speed Mosaic Wheat, or Three Floyds Gumballhead.

Carbonation can also play a style-defining role in terms of taste and body. When CO₂ dissolves in beer, it creates carbonic acid, which can add acidity to beers and showcase tartness. You can taste this CO₂-enhanced acidity in an effervescent Saison Dupont at The Uptown Cafe, a Berliner Weisse at The Tap or Heartwork Brewing, or in one of Upland Brewing's sour ales. Carbonation and resulting acidity also adds a crispness to the beer's finish, which is why these and other well-carbonated beers often come across as crisp and refreshing, the carbonation balancing out the malt's sweetness.

Acidity from higher carbonation can also accentuate hop flavors and bitterness, and at higher levels give that bitterness a sharper edge. I find this notable in Czech Pils and some highly carbonated IPAs. Finding the right carbonation level lets the brewer dial in the sharpness of the hops. Too much carbonation can lead to off-style acidity or hop bite.

Carbonation can also play a significant style-driving role in stouts, with CO₂ taking a back seat to nitrogen as the origin of the bubbles. Draught Guinness, for example, uses a beer gas that is 75% nitrogen and 25% CO₂. The nitrogen forms smaller bubbles, and, along with producing less carbonic acid, that leads to a smoother, almost creamy, mouthfeel and more mellow flavors. Ask for a stout on nitro wherever you find Guinness on tap or try the nitro stout at Heartwork Brewing.

Beer science is awesome, and by paying attention to the impact of carbonation, you can refine your beer palate and understand how these bubbles can make all the difference in your pint glass. Cheers! ✨

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Brightside Cafe in Fountain Sq. Where Everything is Gluten-Free



Brightside Cafe owners (l-r) John Moore, Thomas Moore, and Abe Carney serve breakfast all day, lunch beginning at 11 a.m., and a large selection of made-from-scratch desserts—and everything is gluten-free. Photo by Chrissy Alspaugh

Carney and John's talks about gluten grew into a full-fledged idea. Encouraged by Carney's experience opening other local restaurants including Nourish, Brilliant, and Crumble on Swain, Thomas and Elissa invested in bringing Brightside Cafe to Bloomington.

Most of their baked goods begin with a rice-based flour that bakers skillfully manipulate into flaky croissants, brownies, and breads that other restaurants purchase for their own menus. "To a lot of people, it doesn't even matter that our items are gluten-free. They're just delicious," John says.

But for Brightside's many customers going through "a really difficult gluten-restricted journey," he says, the restaurant is a place they can trust.

"Our customers truly appreciate that what they'll get here is safe and made with the attention and loving care that they might not get in other places," Thomas says.

Brightside Cafe is in Fountain Square's lower level at 101 W. Kirkwood. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. For more information, visit brightsidegf.com. —Chrissy Alspaugh

Since opening in February, the proprietors of the Brightside Cafe have assured countless customers with restricted diets that they will be well cared for by the eatery's dedicated gluten-free kitchen.

"So many customers leave with their eyes filled with tears because we're providing menu items they haven't been able to eat in decades," says co-owner and operator Abe Carney. "To come to work every day and see people so happy and relieved they found us, it's the most gratifying work I've ever done."

Located in Fountain Square Mall, the Brightside menu includes cinnamon rolls, biscuits and gravy, cookies, barbecue chicken sandwiches, soups, and more.

Carney, a Bloomington native, didn't know much about gluten until coaching youth baseball with assistant coach John Moore, who talked about his difficult journey into a gluten-free diet. John and his brother, Thomas, were working corporate jobs in Los Angeles when celiac disease entered first Thomas' life, and later John's.

The brothers eventually moved home to Indiana, where Thomas and his wife, Elissa McKee, founded and operates 1823 Bakehouse, a gluten-free restaurant in the Moore's hometown of Franklin.



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Half Bottle Bistro

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Jonathan and Rachel Odell, owners of Half Bottle Bistro, want guests to come in and sit a spell. Located at 3115 S. Sare Road in the Mediterranean-inspired Verona Park neighborhood (where the couple also lives with their three young kids), the space is designed to give visitors a coastal, vacation-like experience.

“We want diners to enjoy their company, hang out a while, try a new wine,” says Jonathan, who grew up in Southern California. In 2001, he moved to Bloomington, where he started learning the inner workings of the restaurant business and where he met his wife, Rachel, while working at Scotty’s Brewhouse.

After another five-year stint in California, in 2018 the Odells returned to Bloomington to be close to Indiana family, and eventually found themselves on a somewhat turbulent path—opening a restaurant.

Curious why one didn’t exist in Verona Park, Jonathan reached out to inquire about a lease. But it would be two years of concept and name changes before Half Bottle Bistro was born earlier this year. “In the nearly two years it took to secure this location we explored multiple concepts, developed three business plans, and played with a dozen names,” says Jonathon. Those included Harbor, Rosemary, Jon’s Wife Rachel, and others. “We landed on the lively and lovely Half Bottle Bistro.”



The Odells brought on Chef Abel Garcia of Hoosier Bistro, whose previous gigs include Finch’s Brasserie, the Roost, No Coast Reserve, and Cardinal Spirits. The menu is designed to be wine-forward with shareable appetizers, salads, sandwiches, and desserts; a collection of beach town meets heartland dishes.

“I’m so tickled with how delicious our oysters are,” says Jonathan. “We get so many people who say they would never order oysters in Indiana, but then they try ours and say they’re the best they’ve had.” Another popular appetizer is the roasted corn, ►

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(opposite page, top) Half Bottle Bistro is designed to give visitors a coastal, vacation-like experience; (opposite page, bottom, l-r) co-owners Jonathon and Rachel Odell with Chef Abel Garcia; (above) the restaurant is nestled into the Mediterranean-inspired Verona Park neighborhood at 3115 S. Sare Road; (right) a popular appetizer is the roasted corn, a chilled corn salad with lemon aioli and queso fresco served with tortilla chips; (below) this version of the iconic beef Manhattan is made with beef bourguignon and served over a toasted brioche slice covered in mashed potatoes. *Photos by Rodney Margison*



a chilled corn salad with lemon aioli and queso fresco served with tortilla chips. For entrees, the beef Manhattan, an iconic open-faced sandwich with origins rooted in Indianapolis, is made with beef bourguignon, and served over a toasted brioche slice with mashed potatoes.

“I couldn’t be more thrilled with how the space evolved,” says Jonathan. “It’s like heaven.”

For hours of operation and lunch and dinner menus, visit halfbottlebistro.com. —*Heather Ray*

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Andrew Davis Clothiers Gets a Head-to-Toe Makeover

Andrew Davis Clothiers, in Fountain Square Mall at 101 W. Kirkwood, reopened on August 8 after an eight-week, \$200,000 store renovation. Store owner Andy Mallor used the opportunity to “modernize” the luxury men’s clothing store while adding central air conditioning to the roughly 2,600-square-foot space. For the launch, the store featured an exhibition with local artist Steve Dawson, showcasing over 45 original paintings and the new store branding.

“To me, clothing is art, and when customers walk in here, I want them to have an experience,” Mallor says. “That’s one of the reasons we decided to collaborate with a local artist for the relaunch, showing off the new, open space and contemporary atmosphere while highlighting local artist and talents.”

Working with a local electrician and general contractor to bring his vision to life,



(above, l-r) Chief Operating Officer DeJohn Rose and store owner Andy Mallor show off the new point-of-sale station at Andrew Davis Clothiers; (left) the shoe and accessories area is an example of the modern atmosphere achieved in the remodel; (below) one of two IU apparel sections in the store. Photos by Rodney Margison



the store was updated floor to ceiling to open the space while keeping the “warm and inviting” atmosphere, Mallor says. That includes designing a more open floor plan, moving dressing rooms and point of sale stations, adding new paint colors and flooring, and creating custom-made light fixtures.

Providing men’s apparel, accessories, and footwear in Bloomington since 2007, Andrew Davis stays contemporary by curating its collections and collaborating nationally with 14 other independent luxury men’s stores, together named The Luxe Group, where Mallor has served as president for seven years. ▶





“What makes all our shops unified is the quality of merchandise,” Mallor explains. “We’ve always had the desire to provide quality to our customers at Andrew Davis, and our goal is that whatever price point a customer is buying at, we’re offering them the best quality at that price. No one leaves here without proper fit and styling.

“I’ve been a retailer for 30 years and I think it’s important for businesses to evolve over time. I’m proud to say that the store is now one of the most beautiful and easily shoppable men’s stores in the country,” he continues.

“We love downtown Bloomington, our neighbors in Fountain Square Mall, and have signed another 10-year lease,” Mallor says. “We’re excited to see the area continue to thrive.” —*Brittany Marshall*

(top) Mallor says Andrew Davis stays contemporary by curating its collections and collaborating nationally with 14 other independent luxury men’s stores; Richie Gillespie, wedding and custom clothing manager for Andrew Davis Clothiers.



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First Local Author Book Fair At History Center, November 2

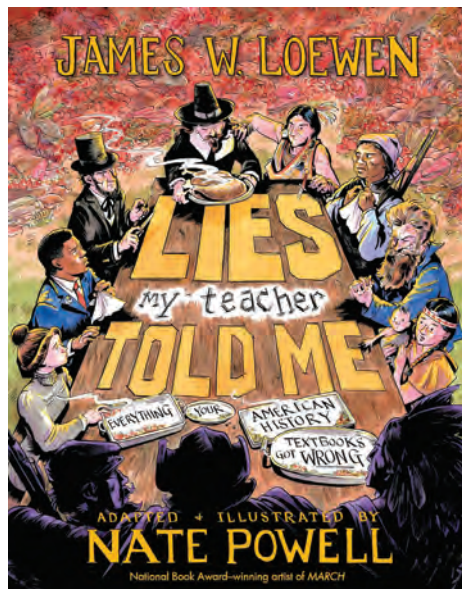
The Writers Guild at Bloomington's first Local Author Book Fair on November 2 will showcase 30 area authors who write children's books, graphic novels, mysteries, science fiction, fantasy, self-help, and other fiction and non-fiction genres.

"There is an incredible wealth of writers in this town," says Molly Gleeson, writer and guild member organizing the fair. "We want to honor their work and give the public the opportunity to see the rich literary scene in Bloomington."

Visitors to the free fair can talk with authors and buy their books from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Monroe County History Center, 202 E. 6th St.

Live music by local performers, a free raffle offering local products, free refreshments from Needmore Coffee Roasters and Two Sticks Bakery, and food vendors will be available.

Five authors are "special guests" at the event: Nate Powell and Rob Harrell, both



(l-r) Nate Powell, who adapted and illustrated *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, among others, and Rob Harrell, author of *When Pigs Fly* and more, are two of five "special guests" who will be at the first Local Author Book fair on November 2 at the Monroe County History Center. *Courtesy images*



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known for graphic novels and other books, and Keiko Kasza, Tanya Konerman, and Teresa Robeson, who write different types of children's books.

Harrell—also a cartoonist who illustrates his books—says he's excited to attend the fair and thinks it's especially worthwhile during a time when book banning is more prevalent. He says books are often wrongfully banned to try to "whitewash our history" or to keep information about gender identity or sexuality from young people.

"It reeks of information control," says Harrell, who grew up in Bloomington and lives in Zionsville. "A lot of bans come from a very small minority of people."

Gleeson, who suggested the fair to the guild's board, says the center's space accommodates 30 authors, so those who responded first are attending, but 11 more are on a waiting list. "I think we've tapped into a need. Certainly, the authors are excited about this opportunity," she says.

The fair, she explains, has been a "real labor of love" for the guild to give authors exposure in a low-key, non-stress environment. "It's hard to get your books out there," Gleeson says. —*Barb Berggoetz*



Harrell says book bans "reek of information control," adding that the book fair is especially worthwhile now when book banning has become more prevalent. *Courtesy photo*

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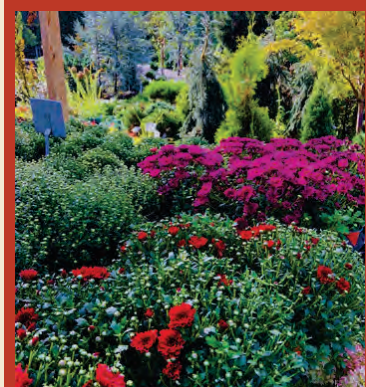
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The Ranch Cat Rescue

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(above) These sibling kittens have cerebellar hypoplasia, a neurological disorder that affects their ability to balance and coordinate movement; (above, right) Alison Zook, owner of The Ranch Cat Rescue, says, “Normal women in their 40s don’t buy a multiacre farm and move to the country with 150-some-odd cats. But I love it.”

Photos by Rodney Margison

Bambino lost his eyes to feline infectious peritonitis.



Rosie (above) and Julio (below) became a bonded pair living at The Ranch. Both have rear-limb paralysis—Rosie’s rear legs are fused forward while Julio’s are fused backward.



by Rosalie Sherwood

Alison Zook has been a cat person all her life. “Cat people are *born*, we are not *made*,” she says with a laugh. That’s appropriate, coming from a person who has dedicated her life to caring for rescued domestic cats in need. “Saying it’s a calling sounds pretentious to me, but my heart bleeds knowing there are cats out there that need help. I do this because I can’t *not* do it.”

The Ranch Cat Rescue is the manifestation of Zook’s calling—a large house and barn on a 12-acre farm, providing living space for around 150 cats and kittens, plus Zook, who provides their care 24/7.

But The Ranch Cat Rescue isn’t your typical shelter; it’s a unique combination of nursery, day care, hospital, rehab, hostel, and hospice. The goal for all residents is adoption whenever possible. But in the meantime, Zook and volunteers care for momma cats and their newborns, orphaned kittens, medically complex rescues recovering from injuries or



Cat-rina came to The Ranch with a busted right eye that, along with his left ear flap, were removed. He loves face rubs and cheek scratches and wants badly to be loved.

surgeries, and youngsters with disabilities in diapers. There’s also an isolated space for terminal leukemia-positive cats to live comfortably for their remaining days.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, The Ranch is funded solely by donations, and the need is great—Zook says they use 150 pounds of food and 400 pounds of pellet litter every week and have substantial medication and veterinary expenses. “I get a lot of \$5 donations from folks who say ‘It’s not much, I wish I could do more.’ But those amounts add up; that’s what pays for vet bills and keeps the lights on.” ▶



The barn is home to more than 65 feral and behaviorally challenged “working” cats who roam free inside the space.

Household items are also needed: new or used blankets, towels, rugs, laundry detergent, bleach, paper towels, trash bags, and more.

Because of The Ranch Cat Rescue, cats like Bambino, who lost his eyes due to feline infectious peritonitis, and Rosie, who has rear-limb paralysis, can thrive while living life a little differently. And Zook says that’s motivation enough to keep going. “Normal women in their 40s don’t buy a multiacre farm and move to the country with 150-some-odd cats. But I love it. I would not do anything else. I wouldn’t change a single thing.”

Visit theranchcatrescue.org for more information and donation wish lists. ✨



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New Hope for Families 6th Annual Christmas Tree Festival Fundraiser



Visitors ogle the Christmas trees being auctioned to benefit New Hope for Families at the annual Hope for the Holidays tree festival. *Courtesy photo above left, photos above right and far right by Tatiana Wheeler*



by Janet Mandelstam

The sixth annual Hope for the Holidays tree festival is set for November 18–20. That means business, civic, and church groups in Bloomington are hopefully thinking of themes for the Christmas trees they will decorate to benefit New Hope for Families, the only site in Monroe County where families and children can find shelter together.

“Themes are usually pretty topical,” says Emily Pike, New Hope’s executive director. “Last year there were three Barbie trees.” And, adds board chair Sherry Dunbar-Kruzan, “There’s always a Harry Potter tree.” Some of the trees come with extra swag, says Pike. “Last year that included Taylor Swift tickets and some very expensive bourbon.”

Pike says she expects between 60 and 70 trees this year. The participating groups provide their own trees. Some bring a decorated tree to the festival; others do the decorating on site. “Setup day is like a big party,” says Dunbar-Kruzan.

The decorated trees are for sale with all proceeds benefitting New Hope. Unsold trees are auctioned off on the last day. “At least one-third of the trees that are purchased are donated back” to the families supported by New Hope, Pike says. “Twenty-eight families moved into homes in the past year and will be celebrating their first Christmas in their new homes. Some have never had a big Christmas tree before.”

Since its inception in 2011, Pike says, New Hope has found homes for 238 families and provided shelter for 324 families.

The free event at the Switchyard Park pavilion is open to the public on Monday, November 18, from 6–8 p.m. and on November 19 and 20 from 4–8 p.m. The auction will be held at 6 p.m. November 20.

The festival, says Pike, “is a successful fundraiser and also a successful ‘fun-raiser.’ It’s a family event and a reminder of families at Christmas.” ❄️

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Welcome Fall





How Taylor Swift's Music Can Help Young People with Autism

I was wracking my brain to come up with topics for this issue's column when suddenly, a friend texted me:

"I got Taylor Swift tickets!"

"Well, don't I wish I were going with you?" I responded. And I really, really do. That's when it hit me—Taylor Swift! Yes, I'm a "Swiftie," and I have been ever since she released her first album in October 2006. One thing I have always liked about her as an artist is that she appeals to a variety of age ranges, so pretty much anyone from age 6 to 66 can sing along and find a song or two they like. Also, a lot of the themes she sings about are things everyday people experience: relationships and breakups, friendships, manipulation, and more.



Taylor Swift arrives at the 2022 MTV Video Music Awards. Photo by Evan Agostini/Invision/AP

Taylor holds a special place in my heart, and not just because I like her songs. One of the biggest challenges for teens and young adults with autism can be independent living and social interaction skills. To help with this, several Indiana University students who have an interest in working with children or adults with autism and related developmental disabilities engage with me throughout each week in these areas.

Explaining to college students how the autistic brain works and how people with autism process language is always interesting for me, but it's especially interesting if you can use something like a Taylor Swift song as an example. For young adults with autism, understanding and expressing feelings and emotions can often be difficult due to their abstract nature. People with autism often think in very concrete and literal terms and are often visual thinkers, so having a visual illustration or series of illustrations to represent a process can often help.

Romantic relationships can be harder for teens and young adults with autism to grasp than peer relationships—again, because of their abstract nature, but also because of the more advanced social skills involved. For young

people with autism, social behavior and social skills often require direct instruction and support depending on the individual's level of need and developmental level. Some young people with autism may have an interest in finding a significant other while others may not.

In her song "Red," the title track to her seven-time platinum album, Swift describes falling in love and then breaking up with an old boyfriend, supposedly actor Jake Gyllenhaal. She sings:

*Loving him was like driving a new Maserati down a dead-end street
Faster than the wind, passionate as sin, ending so suddenly
Loving him is like trying to change your mind
Once you're already flying through the freefall
Like the colors in autumn, so bright, just before they lose it all*

*Losing him was blue, like I've never known
Missing him was dark grey, all alone
Forgetting him was like trying to know
Somebody you've never met
But loving him was red*

As you can see, there are several concrete visual references used to illustrate what being in a romantic relationship can be like: the Maserati and the use of colors to refer to specific emotions. Further along in the song, fighting, which is also part of relationships, is compared to *trying to solve a crossword / And realizing there's no right answer*. Obviously, love itself can't be seen, held in one's hands, tasted, heard, or touched. But a car can, the color blue can, a crossword puzzle can.

Taylor Swift holds a lot of power in the music industry. But I doubt even she knows how her music can impact the lives of so many young people living with autism and those who work with them. ✨

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Loren Wood Builders

The Most Robust Design-Build Team in the Region

Nestled in Bloomington's Hoosier Acres neighborhood, a well-preserved midcentury home has been remodeled to thrive "for another 70 years of life," says Loren Wood, owner of Loren Wood Builders Design-Build (LWB).

"In Bloomington, I think it's pretty rare to find an untouched, architecturally significant midcentury home," adds Wood. "The design itself has stood the test of time."

The home was designed by midcentury architect Jasper Ward and built in 1960. The original owners discovered the plans for the house in the Ladies' Home Journal and had it constructed with slight adaptations to fit their needs.

The remodel, which took place in 2022, was designed by Indianapolis-based Haus Architecture and executed by the LWB team.

"[This home] represents the ideal type of project for which we're really well suited," says Wood. "Our clients came to this project with the goal of preserving and enhancing the original architecture ... It's rare to get the trifecta of the house that deserves it, the clients that want it, and the team that's able to do it. Everything came together on this project."

Keeping with the original style of the home, LWB fully renovated the kitchen and bathrooms, lovingly restored the original redwood woodwork, preserved the existing windows, installed new hardwood flooring, and rebuilt the closets. In response to some structural issues caused by heavy rain events, they also fortified the home's foundation, addressed basement flooding, and replaced water-damaged systems. New insulation, wiring, plumbing, and HVAC systems were installed throughout the house to bring the home up to modern standards. LWB even fabricated custom furniture pieces out of standing dead walnut trees that were removed from the property.

During the planning and buildout process, the new homeowners lived in California and communicated with LWB about progress on the project remotely. To help put their minds at ease, the LWB team stepped in to help caretake the home in their absence, including looking after the heritage plants that had been left behind by the home's first owners.



Wood says ensuring fast and reliable communication was key to helping the clients feel supported and at ease despite the distance.

"Home construction projects often represent one of the biggest financial investments our clients will make in their lifetimes," he explains. "We don't just want to deliver the project, we want to curate an amazing, incredible client experience where not only was the finished product what they expected, but the process was also exceptional."

With 75 full-time employees, LWB offers a wide breadth of residential and commercial services, including design, interior remodels, new construction, and commercial builds on restaurants, offices, and warehouses. Previous notable commercial projects include The Elm restaurant, the Lotus Education & Arts Foundation firehouse, Osteria Rago, and countless other commercial and residential properties.

"We have the most robust design-build team in the region," says Wood. "There's not another team that has that same robust group of individuals that all share the vision, values, and capability of executing really high-level work and delivering challenging, highly detailed projects. That's where our company stands out."

Visit lorenwoodbuilders.com.

—Sophie Bird Murphy



The Newly Created IU Museum Of Archaeology & Anthropology

by Craig Coley

The Indiana University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, newly created to serve the community and the university, combines the missions of the Mathers Museum of World Culture, which closed in 2020, and the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, which occupied the same building at 416 N. Indiana. The process of integrating the two as the IUMAA culminates in a grand opening event on Saturday, October 19, with food and behind-the-scenes tours from 12:30–5:30 p.m.

Anthropology and archaeology are different approaches striving toward a common goal—telling people’s stories—and the museum benefits from their synergy, says IUMAA Executive Director Brandie Macdonald. “We are finding impactful, important, and relevant



ways to tell community stories the way communities would like them to be told,” Macdonald says.

Two exhibitions will be complete at the time of the opening. “Divine Adornment” displays and explores fashion from an apolitical, Islamic perspective. In “Whispers from the Divide,” videos taken by IU digital art professor Arthur Liou as he traveled on the northern and southern sides of the U.S.-Mexico border are projected on opposite sides of a wall, showing the human experience of the political divide.

The museum’s centerpiece will remain unfinished until April 2025. The Glenn Black collection included 2 million objects from the Angel Mounds, a Native American metropolis built on

and around earthen mounds in southern Indiana between C.E. 1000 and 1450, and now a National Historic Landmark Site. The museum is creating an immersive exhibit that will be inviting and accessible to visitors of all ages.

Macdonald says the museum is taking time to develop the Angel Mounds exhibit in consultation with descendants of the Mississippian people who lived there. “I’m Chickasaw and Choctaw, so my people come from Mounds,” Macdonald says. “Native people are not people of the past. They’re still here, and the types of pottery and the fetishes found at Angel Mounds are still dominant within communities today, still inspiring communities today.”

Future exhibits will similarly present the university’s archaeological collections in cultural context. For example, there are plans to involve the Center for Underwater Science, which conducts marine archaeology, in an exhibit focused on a 16th-century shipwreck found off the coast of Jamaica. “It’s really thinking about globalization 400 years ago,” says Jean-Luc Howell, director of curatorial affairs.

Learn more at iumaa.iu.edu. ✖



(top, l-r) Brandie Macdonald, executive director of the Indiana University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (IUMAA), demonstrates the new museum’s VR Dome to Howie Qu, an IUMAA employee, and Camden Hill, the museum’s development and external communications manager. The VR Dome is an interactive virtual reality dome that projects footage from Angel Mounds State Historic Site along with narration by an individual who is a descendant community member of the Miami Tribe; (left, top) artifacts found at Angel Mounds are processed by researchers at the IUMAA. The Angel Mounds collection contains more than 2.5 million artifacts; (left) Brandie Macdonald. Photos by Chris Meyer, Indiana University

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Citizen Scientist

BY SUSAN M. BRACKNEY

The ‘Never Home Alone’ Project—What’s in Your House?

You may think you have the house to yourself, but you’re never really alone. In truth, we inadvertently share our homes with myriad spiders, ants, weevils, beetles, and countless others. Researchers behind the “Never Home Alone” project hope we’ll not only look for these tiny roommates but that we’ll also document and report our finds.

The “Never Home Alone” project originated with North Carolina State University researchers who initially took samples from 50 homes in the Raleigh area. Although they’d expected to find only a

few dozen species, they found more than 1,000 in all. They’ve since partnered with iNaturalist.org to broaden their inquiry to include observations from citizen scientists worldwide. Globally, 54,820 observations including 7,214 different species have been submitted to date.

LOCAL FINDINGS

Some Bloomington-based observations have included the varied carpet beetle, dimorphic jumping spider, and Japanese house centipede to name a few. As for critters

common in Hoosier homes? Research grade observations have included everything from the metallic bluish-green cuckoo wasp to the American nursery web spider. There have been deer mice, white-footed mice, and sometimes even tree frogs, too.

“As we have studied homes in other cities, we have found even more species, some of them new to science, virtually all of them poorly studied,” the researchers note. Mapping the global distribution of such indoor biodiversity could advance our



See a spider in your house? Take a picture and report it to the “Never Home Alone” project. Photo by iStock.com/CBCK-Christine

understanding of several topics of interest including changes in the ranges of certain invasive species, potential threats to human health, and the effects of climate change, among others.

HOW TO HELP

Want to get involved? You need only keep an eye out for organisms sharing the interior of your living quarters with you. These may be what the “Never Home Alone” researchers refer to as “residents”—like those camel crickets living full-time in your crawlspace—or “tourists”—say, the odd moth which fluttered in through an open door. Pets and plants don’t count.

Snap a clear, closeup photo of any residents or tourists you find living indoors with you and then share it, along with a few extra details, to the “Never Home Alone” project via the iNaturalist.org online portal. (If you haven’t already done so, you’ll need to sign up for a free iNaturalist account and log in with your credentials first. Then, enter “Never Home Alone” in the iNaturalist search box.)

On the “Never Home Alone” main page, click the “Add Observation” button. You’ll be asked to try to identify what you saw and when. You’ll also need to enter your location, any notes you have, and potential keyword tags. Finally, you’ll be asked to upload the photo you took. Your observation will be evaluated for quality, and any entries deemed to be “research grade” are included in scientific datasets. ✖

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Ivy Tech Bloomington Launches Semiconductor Fabrication Program



"I'm 100% certain we'll place our graduates," says Michael Waterford, IT Bloomington's employer liaison for the U.S. Department of Defense and Microelectronics. "I'm already getting job descriptions from companies." Photo by Martin Boling

by Paul Bickley

In response to southern Indiana's microelectronics boom, Ivy Tech Community College Bloomington launched a semiconductor fabrication certificate program in August. Five students are piloting the program.

Students can earn the seven-course certificate in two semesters. Indiana's Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant covers all costs for this and other "high-value" certificates for eligible students. Sarah Cote, dean of Advanced Manufacturing et al., says that students can parlay the certificate into an associate degree in electronics and computer technology at the Indianapolis and Terre Haute campuses.

Last summer, ITB Bloomington (ITB) hosted a two-week microelectronics summer camp for high school students with lectures on semiconductors and automation; field trips to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division (Crane) and Purdue University's Birck Nanotechnology Center; and lab time to build robots and navigate them through a maze.

ITB completed certificate-program preparation last April after receiving a \$2 million grant from Bloomington-based Applied Research Institute and after four national microelectronics manufacturers

committed to moving into Westgate@Crane Technology Park, a campus for microelectronics researchers, innovators, and producers just outside Crane. NHanced Semiconductors, Everspin Technologies, Trusted Semiconductor Solutions, and Reliable MicroSystems plan to invest \$300 million and create new, high-paying jobs in the area.

"Ivy Tech moves quickly," says Michael Waterford, IT Bloomington's employer liaison for the U.S. Department of Defense and Microelectronics. "When Cook and Catalent needed biotech technicians, we created a program. When Berry Global needed packaging technicians, we created a program. Now Ivy Tech is well positioned to support Crane as they support the warfighter."

According to the DoD, the Microelectronics Commons, a CHIPS and

Science Act-funded national network of eight regional innovation hubs, will provide \$2 billion from 2023 to 2027 for domestic microchip, semiconductor, and other microelectronics prototyping and workforce development. The hubs will connect regional industrial, academic, and government organizations to spur "lab to fab" prototyping for defense and commercial technology, to decrease U.S. dependence on international microelectronics production, and to boost local economies through new workforces.

The Silicon Crossroads hub, comprising Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan and led by Applied Research Institute, has already received \$32.9 million.

"It's coming," says Waterford. "It's just a matter of how much. I'm 100% certain we'll place our graduates. I'm already getting job descriptions from companies." ✨

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community

Bloomington's Vibrant Filipino Community

by Janet Mandelstam

Ask members of Bloomington's Filipino community what defines and binds them, and three words keep surfacing: family, faith, and food.

FAMILY

The spirit of *kapwa* is alive in the Filipino community. The Tagalog word roughly translates to "kindred spirit" or "togetherness" or "taking care."

"We take care of our families," says Cindy Berin, a physical therapist who has been in Bloomington since 2000. "We respect our elders."

Multigenerational families, not nursing homes, are the norm.

That spirit of *kapwa* has led many Filipinos to extend care beyond family and enter the medical field. In Bloomington they serve as doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and other health professionals.

"As boomers aged in the Philippines," says Berin, "many nursing programs developed. And they sent their graduates overseas." In fact, many students had enrolled "in order to apply for jobs abroad," says Emmy King, who recently retired after 37 years as a nursing assistant. "And many countries need nurses."

Check the staff rosters at local hospitals, clinics, and care facilities, and you will find the ranks filled with Filipinos, a mix of immigrants, many of long standing, and native-born Americans.

"Medical taking care is a noble, honorable thing," says Sarafin Tandor, a chaplain. "It is a job, but it is second nature to Filipinos."

While medical fields still attract many members of the community, some younger Filipinos are following a different career path. Jona Rivera, president of the Filipino American Association at Indiana University, says the most common major among association members now is business. Like Rivera, whose parents immigrated from the Philippines, most are American born but continue to celebrate aspects of Filipino culture.

"Our biggest event," she says, "is Filipino Cultural Night every March. It's a night to showcase our performance groups, especially the many dance groups."

FAITH

When Cindy Berin lists "the best ways to find a Filipino," at the top of her list is in church. The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia, and Catholicism is the major religion of the country. In



(above) Cindy Berin is a physical therapist who has been in Bloomington since 2000; (right, top) a musician performs during a Filipino church service at Cornerstone Church; (right, bottom) Sarafin Tandor leads the monthly church service. He, too, is a physical therapist who came to the U.S. to work. Photos by Kathryn Coers Rossman



Bloomington, many Filipinos attend St. Paul Catholic Center, which serves Indiana University and the broader community. It's where Berin has been active in the church choir for many years. And when Emmy King first went to St. Paul, she says, "I turned around and saw a whole pew of Filipinos,"

Others are part of a "born-again Christian" fellowship that holds services at Cornerstone Church. "Faith is very important to Filipinos; it is part of our lifestyle," says Serafin Tandor, who leads the service on the first Sunday of every month. Like many in his congregation, Tandor is also a physical therapist who came to the United States to work. The service, he says, is based on "three Cs": Come together, Create a family environment, and Connect through fellowship. The monthly service attracts an average of 50 members, he says.

FOOD

"Filipinos are a personable and hospitable culture, and they love food," says Hartzell Martel, whose eponymous ice cream shop has long been a local favorite. In an extensive menu of flavors, Martel will create varieties using fruits like mango and lychee that are popular in the Philippines. ►



(above) The monthly church service attracts an average of 50 members; (below, l-r) John and Ginger Knight with son Chase. Ginger opened the food truck Johnny's Grub to Go in 2016 along Ind. 46 on the way to Nashville. "I love what I do," she says. "I'm introducing my culture here."



And then there is Kamayan, a celebratory meal in the Philippines that the IU student association replicates in Bloomington. "The table is covered in banana leaves, the food is put directly on the leaves, and we eat with our hands," Rivera says. No plates or cutlery involved.

More recent additions to the food scene are food trucks featuring Filipino food. Ginger Knight opened Johnny's Grub to Go in 2016 on Ind. 46 on the way to Nashville, Indiana, "and it really took off," she says. Her menu includes such native specialties as pork adobo—"which is like the official dish of the Philippines"—lumpia (spring rolls), and ube, a cake made from purple yams. "Americans love it," she says, "and I love what I do. I'm introducing my culture here."

EXHIBIT

Many aspects of her culture—the culture of Bloomington's Filipino community—are likely to be part of an upcoming exhibit at the Monroe County History Center. Planning is in the very early stages, says curator Hillary Fleck. "We're working with the community to collect items like photos, clothing, letters from home, family mementos."

And perhaps a nurse's cap or an ube cake? ✨

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Paintings and prints by multifaced artist John Mellencamp now through December. His story of small town beginnings to rocking the world stands as a testament to the power of passion, determination, and perseverance. John's intensity—along with a little lightning and luck—has led to an artistic legacy that is truly something to see.

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Valerie McCray

Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate

by Rodney Margison

When Valerie McCray decided to run for U.S. Senate, she didn't realize there was usually a hierarchy to climb. "When I jumped into politics, I jumped in the deepest end of the pool," she jokes. But had she known about the bureaucratic red tape, she says, "I think I would have been discouraged from running."

As it turns out, the political rookie won 90 of Indiana's 92 counties in the 2024 Democratic Party primary (after withdrawing from the 2022 primary for Indiana's other U.S. Senate seat) and now faces MAGA Republican Jim Banks, who currently represents Indiana's 3rd District in the U.S. House of Representatives. (Libertarian Andy Horning and Independent write-in candidates Antonio Alvarez and Phillip Beachy are also on the ballot.)

McCray was born and raised in Indianapolis and attended Arsenal Tech High School. After graduating, she became a flight attendant for American Trans Air, and wound up living in Michigan. "I was married at the time, became pregnant with my son, then had to decide what I was going to do, keep flying or go ahead and pursue this degree that I had in my mind," she says.

For its proximity, she chose the University of Michigan, where she went on to earn her bachelor's and master's degrees, and then a doctorate in psychology. A divorce in the midst of her education meant that she was also navigating being a single mother. "My son was raised in University of Michigan family housing until he was about 14," she adds.

Worked in Prisons

With Ph.D. in hand, in 2000 she moved back to Indianapolis, into the same neighborhood where she grew up. Soon after, she began working as a clinical psychologist at the Indiana Women's Prison. "I worked in prisons off and on for 30 years," McCray



says. "It's very intense. Something's happening constantly ... and you've got to be able to respond quickly."

It was working there that McCray says she saw how people—including some of her own cousins—could fall through societal cracks. "I know for a fact that these are people that, with different circumstances, would be just fine if they didn't have the poverty issues," she explains, "if they didn't

have some of the sentencing issues that were unfair. If you're stupid at 18, you're still stupid at 19, and you're not any better at age 21, so that three-strikes-you're-out rule just really devastated our communities. Those kids were locked away for 25 years. And seeing the devastation to their families ... that sort of spearheaded me into thinking about politics. There are some changes that need to happen." ►

Guns and Maturity

“It’s who I am as a psychologist that I am really campaigning on,” she says. “It’s a different lens. Everybody’s talking about gun violence and who has a gun, who doesn’t have a gun. And for me, I’m looking at the developmental stages of people, mainly young men, and what would gun laws look like if we actually factored in the psychological—the development of the brain, the development of ethics, the development of character that happens in those teenage years. We could really push back a lot of the school shootings, for example, or even the neighborhood gunfights—because most of those gunfights, they’re really childish stuff. It’s the same stuff that we argued about when we were teenagers, whether it’s girlfriends or territory or whatever. The difference is, now they’ve got all these guns so they have these very, very permanent consequences to what would have been black eyes and somebody just getting beat up.”



(opposite page and above) Valerie McCray is running for U.S. Senate against MAGA-Republican Jim Banks. “We’ve got people who care more about a pregnancy than they care about the woman that carries the pregnancy,” she says. “We have to push back the whole Roe v. Wade thing and get that codified or enshrined in our Constitution.”
Courtesy photos

Reproductive Rights

Topping her platform, however, is preserving a woman’s right to reproductive care. “We have to push back the whole Roe v. Wade thing and get that codified or enshrined into our Constitution so we don’t have to keep going through this year after year, or every couple of decades, trying to get women’s rights,” McCray says. “We’ve got people who care more about a pregnancy than they care about the woman that carries the pregnancy. Women are dying or have been in near-death situations because of the rollback of Roe v. Wade. In Indiana, we’re losing doctors—we can’t recruit. OB/GYN hospitals are closing. And in some small towns, we were having problems anyway, and this is not helping at all, getting women the care they need.”

Ultimately, McCray says, “There’s so many issues that we need someone who understands what it’s like on ground level. And trust me, I know what it’s like on ground level.” *

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The Light the Way Campaign To Finance New Beacon Center



The Rev. Forrest Gilmore is the executive director of Beacon Inc. Photo by Rodney Margison

by Jeremy Price

October marks the beginning of the Light the Way campaign for the proposed new Beacon Center to address homelessness in Bloomington. Groundbreaking is scheduled for the spring of 2025, but Beacon Inc. Executive Director Forrest Gilmore knows there is plenty to do, including fundraising, over the next six months.

“I think we’re mostly extremely excited, but, yes, there is quite a bit of work to be done,” Gilmore says. “We’re ready.”

Beacon, which currently operates out of the Shalom Center on South Walnut, purchased the former Weddle Brothers Construction site on West Third Street, just southwest of downtown. Beacon will raze the 4.2-acre plot and build a two-story, 45,000-square-foot facility that will include a 50-bed overnight shelter, moving away from the bunk bed, dorm-style currently used in



An architectural rendering of the proposed new Beacon Center to address homelessness in Bloomington. Courtesy illustration

favor of private spaces with single beds. As well, the center will have 25 apartments—20 for those who have experienced long-term homelessness due to disabilities and five work-exchange units for residents supporting the center with maintenance and security. The overnight shelter will be pet-friendly, and a kennel will be available for pets that are not allowed in the day center.

There will also be an administrative office, a resource center, showers, cafeteria, and office space for resources such as a HealthNet clinic, Centerstone therapists, social workers, and Bloomington Police Department resource officers.

“Our emphasis on the facility is improving the quality of service,” Gilmore says. “The biggest thing is focusing on additional space for service providers. We want to make the space useful and accessible.”

Beacon has set the fundraising target at \$20 million to reach that goal—\$18 million for the property purchase, architects, engineers, and construction, and \$2 million as operational support with the move and increased costs.

A \$7 million grant from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority provided a strong foundation, and Beacon currently has just over \$10 million in hand. The goal is to complete fundraising by groundbreaking with move-in scheduled for the fall of 2026.

Then, the current plan is to sell the Shalom Center to fund operational costs, including a staff of 20–25 people. ✨

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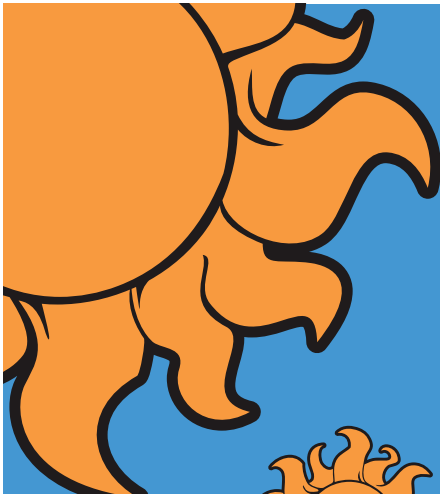
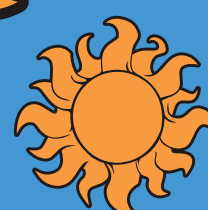
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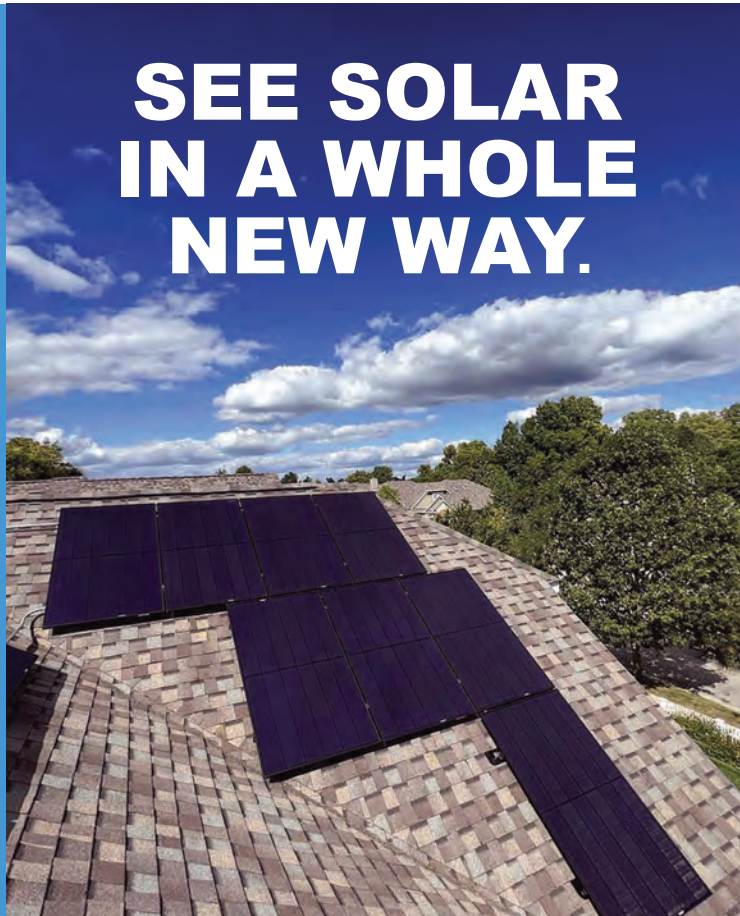



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Dave Askins at City Hall

of B Square Bulletin



Playing Chicken With the City Budget

To write this column I have to predict the future about a month in advance.

That's the time lag between writing these words and their appearance in the glossy print of *Bloom Magazine*.

To predict City Council action, some Bloomington residents might resort to the ancient practice of examining chicken entrails, carefully splayed out in a tableau of gore, searching for hints of the civic future to come.

That's possible in this town, because on December 21, 2012, the City Council eliminated a prohibition in City code against the slaughter of a chicken.

During the same meeting, the Council rejected a stipulation that the killing of any chickens be accomplished in a humane manner and that the event be kept out of public view.

Coming into public view in the last week of August was the City's annual budget

process, in the form of a weeklong series of meetings. Reviewing the guts of City Council meetings, not chickens, is how I try to predict the future.

Predicting action on the budget still has a poultry connection—because it can resemble a game of “chicken.” That's when two drivers speed straight at each other—you know how it works.

In the budgetary game of chicken, the players are the City Council and the mayor.

It's Bloomington Mayor Kerry Thomson's first budget after being sworn into office at the start of the year. Four out of nine councilmembers are serving in their first ever elected position.

In an optimal scenario, the Council and the mayor would drive in the same direction, each in their own lane. That's about what you'd expect from an all-Democrat group of elected officials.

But based on the week of August budget hearings, which featured presentations from all the departments and offices in the City, some members of the Council seem interested in playing opposition politics.

At the end of the week, some councilmembers said they'd vote against the proposed budget if some of their priorities were not added. Mostly missing from their rhetoric were suggestions of items to cut, or specific funding streams to use. They lamented a lack of collaboration and compromise from the mayor.

They seemed to have forgotten the mayor's offer in early June to hold a meeting in July focusing just on developing budget priorities. The Council rejected the offer—because they had scheduled their six-week summer recess through all of July, ending with a meeting on July 31.

A summer recess is not required by state or local law.

The vote to adopt the 2025 budget is currently set for October 9. Between early September and then, it's possible the Council and mayor will have gotten themselves aligned.

But looking ahead to next year's calendar, councilmembers should scrap the idea of a summer recess.

Or if they insist on a recess, then they should use a special order of business to start their first meeting after the break. Each councilmember should read aloud an essay with the title: “What I did on my summer vacation.” ✨

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Renwick Village Center

A European-Style Piazza

Tucked away from the busyness of Bloomington's east side, nestled in the upscale Renwick neighborhood, the Renwick Village Center offers dining options, shopping, and office spaces in its European-style Piazza, complete with center fountain, picturesque landscaping, and outdoor seating.

At **ALIBI**, customers get a luxury shopping experience whether they're identifying their own personal style with the help of an expert stylist, or shopping for a gift, owner Stephanie Topoligus says. Topoligus scours wholesale showrooms and markets across the U.S., stocking several brands of premium denim including Mother, Paige, Pistola, and Moussy in a variety of sizes, cuts, and styles.

"I studied art and worked in art museums for about 20 years, and I've always had an eye for design, style, and collecting," Topoligus says. "I love curating each season's collections, studying trends and designers, and discovering functional treasures."

Visit wearalibi.com.

C3 Bloomington, Renwick's neighborhood bar and restaurant, just celebrated its 10th anniversary. From a rotating, seasonal cocktail menu—*Bloom* readers voted C3 as their favorite place for cocktails—to the food menu with popular staples including the C3 Caesar salad, burger, filet sliders, and frites, customers can come in every week and find new offerings or stick to the classic menu. Employee retention is a source of pride for the restaurant, reinforcing its identity as a "neighborhood fixture."

"The Renwick Village Center was constructed in conjunction with the housing development to add to the sense of community of the neighborhood," says Allison Smith, C3 general manager. "We love watching the Village Center blossom and hope to continue serving culinary options for everybody, every palate, and every occasion."

Learn more at c3bloomington.com

Crumble Coffee & Bakery, approaching its 11th anniversary, makes all food in-house and from scratch, offering a variety of sweet and savory pastries with rotating flavors and weekly specials. In 2023 alone, Crumble sold over 58,000 beverages in the Renwick neighborhood, serving a variety of coffee, espresso, tea, and alternative drink options. Crumble also provides quiches, pies,



(l-r) Laura Edgar, co-owner of Crumble Coffee & Bakery; Stephanie Topoligus, owner of Alibi; Michelle Richardson, co-owner of Richardson Studio; and Allison Smith, general manager of C3 Bloomington get together at the center fountain of the Renwick Village Center's European-style piazza. Photo by Rodney Margison

cinnamon rolls, and cookies, and takes special-order pastries, pies, cakes, and more.

"I believe we are one of the only places in Bloomington that makes croissants entirely from scratch, and we have an incredible team of talented bakers who are constantly looking for ways to improve and offer new and delicious items," says Laura Edgar, Crumble co-owner.

Visit crumblecoffee.com.

Richardson Studio first opened in 2007 and moved to the Renwick Village Center in 2019. With nearly 30 years of photography experience, co-founder Michelle Richardson says she works to customize and represent clients' unique personalities, lifestyles, and preferences in each photoshoot. Clients also receive guidance throughout the shoot, with studio photographers ensuring that poses, lighting, and backdrops are crafted to bring out the best in each subject.

"My mission is to bring to Bloomington businesswomen and men the opportunity to create a headshot that delivers immediate impact," Richardson says. "Choosing to update your headshot is a big decision, and I love helping clients see beauty, power, and personality through their own images. The Renwick Village Center community gives me a supportive luxury space to create that experience."

See richardsonstudio.com for more. —*Brittany Marshall*

Dr. Tim Peck

Democratic Candidate for 9th District

by Rodney Margison

Dr. Tim Peck, the Democratic Party candidate for Indiana's 9th District Representative, says the issue most important to him is for people to "have access to the services they need to live a fruitful and free life." It should come as no surprise, then, that the emergency physician lists health care reform as a chief way of achieving that.

"The part that I am most skilled at, have deep knowledge of, that many others don't—certainly those in Congress don't—is health care," he explains, "in terms of how the business of health care works, Medicare and Medicaid reform, the VA."

The Boston Marathon Bombing

Peck did his medical training at Harvard University. In 2013, on his first day of chief residency at a Boston-area hospital, the emergency department treated 23 patients from the Boston Marathon bombing. "That was a pretty incredible experience," Peck says. "It really shaped a lot of how I see the world ... saw the world, anyway."

Peck left traditional medicine in 2015 to start a telemedicine practice treating patients in nursing homes. "That really saved a lot of lives that otherwise wouldn't have been saved," he says, noting that the practice also saved Medicare more than \$100 million.

That led him to Washington, D.C., where he worked alongside legislators to craft bills to help expand telemedicine, "to show that telemedicine is something that can increase access [to health care], increase quality [of care], and lower costs."

"That brought me in front of 400 different congresspeople and senators, testifying before Congress and working on bills," he says. "By the end of 2018, beginning of 2019, we had passed four bipartisan bills— all bipartisan, which is quite important to the



Dr. Tim Peck, his wife, Missy, and their son, Cass, on the campaign trail. Growing up in New York City, Peck's father was head of homeless services for the Salvation Army and his mother worked for the Catholic church. "That is where I come from," he says. "A very social service-oriented family." *Courtesy photo*

message—and I really learned how to work across the aisle during that time."

A fifth bill, however, the last that needed to go through, didn't survive due to the government shutdown that ran from December 20, 2018, until January 25, 2019. "We were treating 5,000 patients a day and my practice had closed," he says. "People started dying because we [had been] saving lives that otherwise wouldn't be saved. I took that very personally. It was at that time I decided to run for Congress. I never want to see that happen again."

A Social-Service Family

Peck's desire to serve comes naturally. Growing up in New York City, his father was head of homeless services for the Salvation Army there and helped create the city's first homeless shelter for Vietnam veterans. His mother worked for the Catholic Church. "That is where I come from," he says. "A very social service-oriented family."

Peck says he has "a hundred ideas" for laws he'd like to pass about changing the way health care is handled in the country. ►

“Health care right now is based off of ‘do a thing and get paid,’ rather than ‘do a thing well and get paid’ [or] ‘if I treat you and I give you a good experience and a good outcome, I get paid,’” he explains. “And if I treat one of your loved ones and I give them a terrible experience and a terrible outcome, I get paid the same amount of money. That makes no sense, and that fundamental piece needs to be changed.”

Government Doesn’t Belong in Exam Rooms

Also central to his health care platform is women’s reproductive rights.

“It’s very personal to me,” Peck says. “It is real. I’ve had experiences that aren’t the hypothetical experiences that many people think they are. I have treated many women who have been raped, girls who have been raped, women who would have died unless we treated them with an abortion, which we did. And never once did I ever think, ‘What does the government have to say?’ The government just doesn’t belong in my exam room.”

The key to accomplishing anything, particularly in Congress, Peck says, is being able—and willing—to work with everyone. “You need to meet people where they are and learn what’s important to them. No matter who we are as Americans, we all really want the same things: a successful family, a faithful family, food on the table, freedom of speech and religion and our First Amendment rights, the ability to educate our children and have a better life for our children than we’ve had for ourselves. These are common grounds that we have as Americans.

“But you’ve got people who are caught up in the whole political system,” he says. “You’ve got to meet them where they are and have empathy for their day to day.” ✨



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Little-Known Black History About B-Town's Underground Railroad

by Rodney Margison

As a state, Indiana claimed to be anti-slavery from the beginning. The first Constitution of Indiana, created in 1816, didn't just outlaw slavery—Article VIII, Section 1, expressly forbid any future alteration or amendment to the constitution from ever permitting it.

But that didn't mean the state wanted African Americans living here. In the rewritten constitution of 1851, Article 13, Section 1, states: "No negro or mulatto shall come into or settle in the state, after the adoption of this Constitution." Section 2 voided all contracts made with any "Negro or Mulatto" and levied fines on anyone employing or otherwise encouraging one to remain in the state.

"Indiana did not want Black people here," explains Elizabeth Mitchell, an expert on Bloomington's Black history. "That's why they didn't want slavery here, because if you had slavery, you brought Black people, and 'we don't want them here.'" In fact, Blacks and Mulattos who were here prior to 1851 were encouraged to move to Liberia. "You had \$50 we'd give you if you'd leave," Mitchell adds.

Despite all that, Blacks came to Indiana anyway. "Indiana was one of several states linked to the Underground Railroad," she continues. "There were numerous conductors in Bloomington, both Black and white, who worked on the Underground Railroad."

But it wasn't safe. "Because of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, that made slave hunting lucrative all over the nation," Mitchell says. "[The conductors] risked their freedom and possibly their lives to harbor freed slaves and assist them to traverse through this area, which was kind of rugged. It was all farmland, and they helped them seek their freedom."

One of Bloomington's conductors was Aunty Myrears. She lived where the Duke Energy powerplant now is on South Rogers Street, across from Switchyard Park. Notley Baker, Bloomington's

The Underground Railroad



Before the end of the Civil War (1861-1865), Indiana was one of several states linked to the Underground Railroad, a covert system of escape routes, safe houses, and conductors established to liberate enslaved African Americans. Many Black conductors and abolitionists risked their lives in an already hostile environment because of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which allowed for legal abduction of presumed escaped slaves without due process.

Indiana contributed to this volatile climate by enacting a state constitution, in which Article 13 banned "Negroes" and "Mulattoes" from settling in Indiana in 1851. Limited information is available about Black conductors and abolitionists because of the covertness of the Underground Railroad system, the dangerous political climate, as well as exclusion of Black oral traditions from historical records.

daughter Sarah Ann. Hannah Breckenridge McCaw, born a free Black woman in Indiana, lived east of Bloomington with her husband Henry McCaw, where they served as vigilant conductors on the Underground Railroad. Hannah raised her grandson Willis O. Tyler, an orator who attended Indiana University. In an *Indianapolis Recorder* newspaper article from 1908, Willis described his grandmother's significant involvement in the Underground Railroad as having "charge of the station."

Aunty Myrears and her sister were conductors who lived where the present-day power plant is, near 1606 S. Rogers St. Aunty Myrears used her home to provide refuge to enslaved people and directed them to follow other conductors through the Monon Railroad Stockyard, now Switchyard Park.

The conductor Aunty Myrears's first name is missing from all public records. Historically names such as "Aunty" and "Uncle" were given to enslaved Black people instead of formal titles such as "Mister" and "Miss" to classify them as inferior and subservient. Often these terms replaced their first names and effectively erased their identities from public records.

Other noteworthy Black conductors include Bloomington's first Black barber Notley Baker, his son-in-law Smith Hawkins, and



Map of the Underground Railroad in Indiana, from *History of the Underground Railroad* by William M. Cockrum, published in 1915.



Hoosier Line/North Star - Artists Rachel Kavathe & Tom Fansler
Fabrication by Tii Environments
Additional fabrication assistance from Lincoln Tech Class of 2021

Information for this interpretive sign was provided by Liz Mitchell and Erin Carter and developed in partnership with the Monroe County History Center. More information on the source materials used for this sign, and an audio file of this sign text, is available by scanning the QR code.



The marker that has been placed at Switchyard Park commemorating Monroe County's Black conductors on the Underground Railroad. *Photo by Rodney Margison*

first Black barber, was another, along with his son-in-law, Smith Hawkins, and daughter, Sarah Ann. So was Hannah Breckenridge McCaw and "probably more," Mitchell says.

To commemorate those Black conductors, a marker has been erected in Switchyard Park, not far from where Aunty Myrears lived. Mitchell helped spearhead the project, the first of several to be placed throughout the community celebrating a Monroe County African American Cultural Site.

"In the history of Bloomington, no one ever talked about the Black conductors," Mitchell says. "No one ever talked about these Black folks." ✨

Update on Expansion of the Monroe Convention Center

by Craig Coley

Expansion of the Monroe Convention Center, delayed for years by conflicting ideas about how to proceed, now has a path forward and a plan to more than double the facility's size. The board directing the project has chosen a site, an architect, and a builder—quick work for a group that first convened in October 2023 to restart a project that began in 2017 and stalled in 2019.

The new facility will be built across South College from the current center, with an over-street walkway connecting the two. The 60,000-square-foot expansion will include a 35,000-square-foot exhibit hall, which alone is larger than the usable space of the existing center. This main hall can be partitioned to allow multiple activities, such as a four-court basketball tournament.

John Whikehart is president of the Monroe County Capital Improvement Board, which is directing the expansion, and he had also been part of the effort that stalled. Whikehart says there is now greater political consensus among the



An architectural rendering of a proposed design for the Monroe Convention Center expansion. The rendering was the latest design proposal available at press time. *Courtesy Illustration*

county and city political bodies which have representatives on the board. “I am totally convinced that this project is going to make it this time,” Whikehart says.

The Convention Center building at 302 S. College was constructed in 1923 to serve as a car dealership and later used as an assembly plant and showroom for Ford Model T cars. Converted to a convention center in 1991, it

hosts events ranging from trade shows and conferences to professional development training to fundraising dinners to weddings.

Executive Director Talisha Coppock says it has been clear since the late 1990s that the center wasn't large enough to meet demand. Groups outgrew the space and moved their events. Coppock anticipates welcoming them back while accommodating the growth of current users. “And with the growth of their events,” Coppock says, “there will be more spillover into our local economy to support small businesses and restaurants and help redevelop the south side of downtown.”

Beginning in 2018, a 1% tax was added to restaurant and bar bills to fund an expansion, generating about \$20 million thus far. The expansion—and renovation of the existing center—is projected to cost about \$52 million. The project will go before the City Council later this year or early next year, Whikehart says, and construction could begin as early as next spring. ✨

(l-r) John Whikehart is president of the Monroe County Capital Improvement Board, which is directing the expansion. Monroe Convention Center Executive Director Talisha Coppock says it's been clear since the late 1990s that the center wasn't large enough to meet demand.

Photo by Bobby Goddin





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B-Town's Secretly Group

4 Big-Time Record Labels

While much has changed in the music industry over the decades, the mission of brothers Ben and Chris Swanson—co-founders of local music company Secretly Group—remains the same as in 1996: to appreciate and promote unique, iconic voices.

Secretly Group is comprised of four record labels: Secretly Canadian, Dead Oceans, Jagjaguwar, and Saddest Factory Records. Besides the Bloomington headquarters, it has offices in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Sydney.

Ben Swanson describes Secretly Canadian as “a label of three-legged dogs” that takes a chance on artists that are sometimes a bit—or a lot—left of center. As for Secretly as a whole, Swanson describes each label as different sections of a newspaper: unique, but consistent in their creative approach. Iconic artists represented by Secretly include the late Jason Molina, Yoko Ono, and noted folk band Bon Iver, with whom they will be releasing a new three-track EP this fall.

“Working with the Secretly Group since 2010, I’ve been able to foster a career that I couldn’t even imagine,” says S. Carey, Bon Iver drummer and supporting vocalist. “Their continued focus on art and creativity, and not on



Ben Swanson, co-founder of Secretly Group, compares each of the companies four record labels to different sections of a newspaper—unique, but consistent in their creative approach. *Photo by Sarah Slover*

An advertisement for Harrell-Fish Inc. Mechanical & Building Solutions. The ad has a red and white color scheme. At the top is the HFI logo with the tagline 'Mechanical & Building Solutions'. Below the logo, it says 'CALL THE COMPANY YOU TRUST Harrell-Fish Inc 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICES'. On the left, there are three checkmarks next to the services: Heating and Air, Duct Cleaning, and Plumbing. In the center, there is a photo of a smiling family (a man, a woman, and two children). At the bottom left, there is a photo of a white service van with the HFI logo and the number 119. At the bottom right, there is a blue map of Indiana with the text 'BEST PLACES TO WORK IN INDIANA'. At the very bottom, there are icons for a website and a phone, with the text 'Visit Our Website harrell-fish.com Call Today (812) 339-2579'.

commercial aspects in the music industry, gives artists more freedom to find their voice.”

Swanson says lawyers are a surprisingly great source of new artist discovery. Robert Meitus, a partner in local law firm Meitus Gelbert Rose, collaborates with the Swanson brothers regularly.

“Secretly Group is a gem on the timeline of Bloomington’s business and cultural history, truly existing alongside music greats like Hoagie Carmichael and John Mellencamp,” Meitus says. “I have especially come to know Ben and Chris over the years as the distributor of many of our music law clients as well as a devoted record label for artists we represent, such as Foxygen and Lonnie Holley. In each case, Ben, Chris, and their staff have shown high integrity and incredible business acumen.”

Swanson says, “We take the long view. We have the belief that every record we do has the potential to be pulled off the shelves by some random crate digger 20 years from now and be rediscovered—and maybe even appreciated—in a new context, even if it is not loved and adored today,” says Swanson.

Visit secretlygroup.com for more information. —*Elizabeth Ellis*

Hoosiers for Good IU Athletes Pitch In

by Greg Siering

College sports has involved big money for years—ticket sales, television broadcast deals, and merchandising—but little of that ever went to student-athletes. The 2021 introduction of “name, image, likeness” (NIL) rules let those athletes start accepting paid endorsement deals, sometimes very lucrative ones. Now, a local organization is leading the way in shifting those NIL opportunities from cashing in to giving back.

Hoosiers for Good was founded in 2022 with the goal of helping Indiana University student-athletes use their sports celebrity to support local charitable organizations, and since then the program has connected 132 Hoosier athletes with 32 charitable partners. Instead of signing endorsement deals to promote local businesses, Hoosiers for Good athletes receive financial compensation to spend their time, energy, and sports cachet to promote nonprofit organizations that do good work in our community.

Many of the athletes come from high-profile sports like football, basketball, and soccer, but other participants come from non-revenue sports such as volleyball, wrestling, tennis, and rowing. According to Tyler Harris, executive director of Hoosiers for Good, the organization wants to be very broad-based, and that includes representing a variety of Hoosier sports.

Hoosiers for Good seeks out student-athletes who have high name recognition and robust social media followings that can be useful in promoting local charities. But the Charitable Incubator Program allows student-athletes—particularly those without that high profile—to propose a plan for making a difference in the community. Those athletes, Harris says, “have just as much of an impact—they are showing up, they’re putting in the work, they’re passionate about the cause, and maybe someday, because of this process, they’re

going to serve on that charity’s board.”

The athletes support their charities in various ways, including direct volunteering at organizations like Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County, Girls Inc., or Stone Belt, or supporting fundraising efforts through personal appearances or signed jerseys for charity auctions. Social media campaigns are central to all projects as they allow high-profile athletes to spotlight the charities’ work, often to large online audiences.

The student-athletes’ work, Harris notes, goes beyond volunteering. It helps them learn how to leverage their athletic prestige and experiences to do good in their communities, lessons Hoosiers for Good hopes will be a win for everyone involved. ✧



Tyler Harris is the executive director of Hoosiers for Good, enlisting Indiana University student-athletes to support local charitable organizations. Photo by Bobby Goddin

A man in a white and blue Griffin Realty t-shirt and glasses stands next to a white car. The car has a "griffin realty" logo on the side. The background is a vibrant, colorful mural with the word "LOVE" in large red letters, "This" in blue script, and "CITY" in white block letters. The Griffin Realty logo is also visible on the mural.

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Through the Years



Over the past 18-plus years, *Bloom* has published more than 5,000 stories about our remarkable community. Most of those stories included pictures of people taken by our many talented contributing photographers. For this article, we looked at them all, chose a few hundred that we loved, then narrowed our choices down to a few score, then a few dozen, and finally to these few presented here. We think they're masterful portraits. Hope you like them.

—the editor



Jared Thompson

Ten years ago, the proprietor of The Comedy Attic graced our cover for the story “Comedy in Bloomington: The Art and Business of Making People Laugh.” The idea for the picture was his. *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. April/May 2014 issue.*



Jill Bolte Taylor

“Jill Bolte Taylor: Bloomington’s Gift to the World” was our cover story after the brain scientist was named by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. *Photo by Ben Weller. June/July 2008 issue.*



Gene Coyle

“I’ll let you in on a dirty little secret,” Gene Coyle says, “being a spy is fun.” Coyle was a 30-year CIA veteran.

Photo by Martin Boling. April/May 2018 issue.

Joe Lee

Depicted are the two faces of Joe Lee—clown and editorial cartoonist.

Photo by Jeffrey Hammond. October/November 2007 issue.





The Clerkin Brothers

When other 7- and 8-year-olds were riding bikes or reading comic books, Dennis (left) and Jerry were playing bridge. They went on to become champions. *Photo by Jeffrey Hammond. October/November 2010 issue.*



Ransom Haile

Artist Ransom Haile shows off his tattoos while enjoying a glass of vino. The picture was for our cover story "Bloomington Ink: What's It All About." *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. October/November 2010 issue.*



Sharon and Brad Fugate

The Fugates' home in Bittner Woods starred in our annual homes issue 11 years ago. Brad and Sharon owned the furniture/clothing store Relish. *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. June/July 2013 issue.*



The Boys

Skateboarders on East 10th Street pause to get their picture taken.

Photo by Marti Garvey. October/November 2008 issue.

Marvin Chandler

Born in Bloomington in 1929, Marvin Chandler was a piano prodigy at age 4. In addition to a musical career, he pursued the ministry and served briefly as pastor of Bloomington's Second Baptist Church. Featured in our cover story "Growing Up Black in Bloomington." *Photos by Shannon Zahnle. February/March 2013 issue.*





Charlie Nelms

From Cotton Fields to University Leadership—that’s the title of Charlie Nelms’ autobiography. The former vice president of Indiana University Bloomington is shown at a launch party for the book. In the background is former IU President Michael McRobbie. *Photo by Rodney Margison. June/July 2019 issue.*

Charlotte Zietlow

The grand dame of Bloomington, Charlotte Zietlow, was one of three women who graced the cover for our feature “10 Women Who Helped Shape Our Town.” *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. February/March 2015 issue.*



Ross Gay

Ross Gay was one of three local poets featured in *Bloom*’s cover story “Our Poets of Distinction.” *Photo by Jeff Richardson. December 2017/January 2018 issue.*

Jim Keplinger

Local comic book writer
Jim Keplinger emulates
Ted Noodleman, one of his
creations. *Photo by Stephen
Sproull. February/March
2016 issue.*



Toby Strout

The longtime executive director of Middle Way House, Toby Strout made the Bloomington shelter and advocacy center for victims of domestic abuse a model for programs around the country. *Photo by Ben Weller. February/March 2008 issue.*

Sha'Darrion "Shai" Warfield-Cross

A basketball standout at Bloomington High School North, "Shai" is also an accomplished singer. She gained national attention when folks in Martinsville objected to the way she sang the national anthem at a high school basketball game. She was featured in our story "Growing Up Black in Bloomington." *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. February/March 2013 issue.*





Rosemary Miller

The artist and preservationist Rosemary Miller helped save the Monroe County Courthouse and founded The John Waldron Arts Center. She is pictured here at a celebration of her 90th birthday. *Photo by Ben Weller. April/May 2008 issue.*

David Ebbinghouse
David Ebbinghouse was featured in our cover story on graffiti artists. “To me, art is like medicine for the soul,” he said. *Photo by Ben Weller. February/March 2008 issue.*



Liliana Guzman

Bloomington artist Liliana Guzman received the 2023 Rhonda Wilson Award, which celebrates new talent in photography. Shown with her photo series entitled “Next to Myself: Visualizing the Multiple Layers of the Latinx Female Experience and Body.” *Photo by Sarah Slover. December 2023/January 2024 issue.*



Daixuan Ai

Daixuan Ai composed *Silent Theater*, a 13-minute chamber ensemble, as a response to the attack on an Asian American IU student. *Photo by Martin Boling. December 2023/January 2024 issue.*

Krista Deter

This picture of singer-songwriter Krista Deter was submitted by *Bloom* contributing photographer Jim Krause for our feature story “The Photographers of *Bloom* Magazine.” *April/May 2021 issue.*



Kenny Aronoff

Longtime Bloomington drummer Kenny Aronoff was appearing in a movie with Al Pacino. “Catching Up With Kenny” was the title of our interview with the famed musician. *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. October/November 2013 issue.*



Emily Pike

Emily Pike, then executive director of The Nest preschool at New Hope for Families, is pictured with several of her charges. Pike is now executive director of New Hope. *Photo by Martin Boling. December 2017/ January 2018 issue.*



Jeff Mease

The plan was to acquire a herd of water buffalo and manufacture mozzarella cheese. Restaurateur Jeff Mease is pictured here with six of his 19 “pets” named Buffy, Ginger, Nilla, Sassy, Blanca, and Bella. *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. August/ September 2012 issue.*



Mat Alano-Martin

Bloomington comic Mat Alano-Martin awaits inspiration.
Photo by Shannon Zahnle. April/May 2014 issue.



Meadowood Tea

Meadowood residents Louann Dillon (left) and Theo Hosek are dressed to the nines for afternoon tea at Meadowood Retirement Community. *Photo by Shannon Zahnle. August/September 2011 issue.*



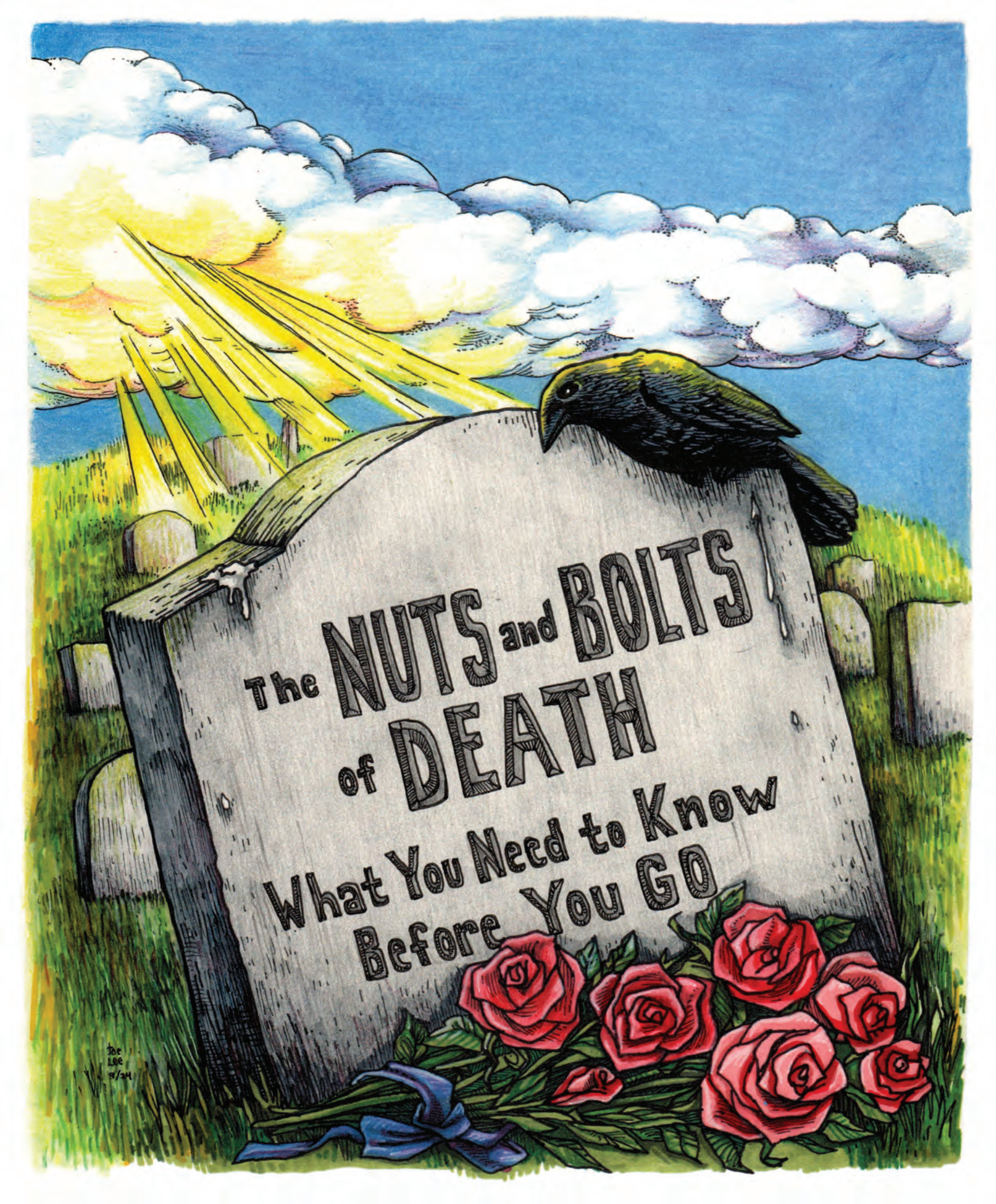
Avery Njau

A student at Bloomington High School North and already an actress, Avery Njau plans to be a doctor when she grows up. She was featured as one of Bloomington's Black leaders of tomorrow. *Photo by Rodney Margison. February/March 2019 issue.*

Lil Bub

She was the most amazing creature on the planet, an international celebrity, author, movie star, and the pride of Bloomington, Indiana—the one and only Lil Bub. *Photo by Lynae Sowinski. December 2012/January 2013 issue.*





The **NUTS** and **BOLTS**
of **DEATH**

What You Need to Know
Before You GO

None of us gets
out of here alive.

Yet few of us take the time to plan for—much less *talk* about—death. Inevitable and expensive, death is the ultimate big ticket item. Besides the disposition of our physical bodies, there's the distribution of our personal belongings, as well as myriad end-of-life tasks like freezing social media accounts and closing out credit cards.

When we depart with a lot of unfinished business, we can cost our dear ones dearly. Fortunately, by preparing for our own deaths well in advance, we can save money, time, and (some) heartache. Better yet, it can be surprisingly life-affirming.

The NUTS & BOLTS of DEATH

What to Know
Before You Go.



By Susan M. Brackney
Illustration by Joe Lee
Photography by Rodney Margison

'Give It Some Thought'

"Think about all the preparation that people do to have a baby, to have birth come in," says Joy Harter, a death doula and the owner of Anchored Passages. "And what do we do for death? We don't prepare nearly as well as we should and could."

Just as a birth doula supports parents welcoming new life into the world, a death doula helps the dying as they depart. Harter is also a grief counselor and elder care consultant. "If there's some way that I can bring greater ease and greater comfort and some joy at the end of life, then that's what I do," she says.

Flexible with her fees, Harter charges between \$75 and \$125 per hour. Still, not all of her clients are facing their imminent demise. Some just want to be better prepared for their eventual deaths. "There's something about thinking about [death] sooner than you need to that can lessen the fear about death and can just bring greater ease not only to the person but to the family," Harter says.

Planning ahead also opens up some surprising options, including medical device donation and green funeral services, among others. "We're so programmed to think of just the traditional burial service," Harter continues. "Well, you know what? You have some say in that. You don't have to do the traditional route at all. Just give it some thought."



"If there's some way that I can bring greater ease and greater comfort and some joy at the end of life, then that's what I do," says Joy Harter, a death doula, grief counselor, and elder care consultant. Photo by Martin Boling

"There's something about thinking about [death] sooner than you need to that can lessen the fear about death and can just bring greater ease not only to the person but to the family," Harter says.



Have a Health Care Directive

By giving it some thought—and taking a few basic steps now—we can improve the quality of the life we have left. Kel McBride is the self-described "Lively Death Lady" and Bloomington-based author of *The Death Changing Experience: An Oddball's Guide to Creating a Life and Death Plan*. "I find that once people have a plan in place, this little nagging voice in the back of their head that says, 'You need to do this! You need to do this! You could die. It's not taken care of'—that little nagging voice goes away, and now you can focus on living a little bit easier," McBride says. "Coming to grips with our death makes us a lot more likely to live the life we want."

What's more, McBride notes, "One in four of us won't make it to 65." As a result, we're never really too young to start thinking about our final wishes. In fact, attorney Andrew Mallor suggests that everyone over age 18 have certain kinds of plans in place. "When kids go off to college, they should go with a health care directive," he says. "And I would say that the percent of people who have that is pretty small."

Also known as an advance directive, the document enables you to decide who will make medical decisions for you if you're incapacitated. "Right now, it also incorporates what's called the living will, which

says that if death is imminent, I don't want heroic measures," Mallor says. "In Indiana, you can also say, 'I want all the heroic measures.'"

While the State of Indiana doesn't have an official advance directive form, free online tools like prepareforyourcare.org can help you get started.

Have a Funeral Planning Declaration

The state also allows anyone over 18 to complete a funeral planning declaration. You can use that document to express your final wishes regarding burial, cremation, funeral services, celebrations of life, and more. "Part of it is [about] taking control over what ultimately is going to happen to all of us at a time when we're competent to make that decision," Mallor says.

The funeral planning declaration also enables you to designate someone specific to make other decisions for you as needed. "I think many people just assume, 'Oh, I'll just get buried, and my kids will take care of it,' not realizing that they do have choices and should, in the interest of their own self-determination, be able to say, 'Wait a minute. I think I might want this [instead]," Harter says.

A-Ticket, a-Tasket, a Coffin, a Casket

What we want to be done to and with our bodies after death is one of the biggest decisions we can make for ourselves. (Pro-tip: These days, there are more options than the usual concrete vault burials or flame cremation, and, if embalming's not your thing, you can skip it.) Cost, environmental impacts, personal preference, and convenience for your loved ones are all factors to consider.

Depending on the method you choose for the final disposition of your remains, you might not need a fancy casket or coffin at all, but let's take a look anyway. First, what's the difference between the two? "A casket is generally [rectangular] and a coffin is anything that's not rectangular," says David Beebe, owner of Going in Style Coffins. He should know. Beebe designs and builds custom coffins which can double as bookcases.

"The idea with having it as a bookcase is that you really never want to have death too far off," he says. "It's really healthy for us to think about it—not morbidly—but realizing life is going to come to an end someday. You walk by and see the coffin and think, 'Hmm. If this is my last day, what do I want it to be like?'"

Beebe is a former pastor who strives to make his work affordable. "I've witnessed a lot of people who've not prepared for the end," he says. "When a person is at the end of their life or when someone's just passed, that's the worst time to be making these kinds of decisions."

Made from ambrosia maple, cherry, and sycamore to name a few, Beebe's coffins fetch between \$1,500 and \$2,000 each. To keep costs down, he scours Facebook Marketplace for rough sawn lumber. "There's a whole lot of farmers here in Indiana who have cut down trees and they've left the ▶



Attorney Andy Mallor recommends everyone over age 18 have certain kinds of plans in place in case they become incapacitated. "When kids go off to college, they should go with a health care directive," he says.





David Beebe is the owner of Going in Style Coffins. He designs and builds custom coffins, some of which double as bookcases.

wood in their barns thinking that someday they're going to use it," he says. "I mill it. I plane it. I join it. I get it to the dimensions I want and glue it together."

Beebe sometimes displays his work at A Fair of the Arts, the monthly art show held in conjunction with the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market. "There are some people who'll walk by, see it, and just turn around, like, 'I don't want to deal with that,'" he says.

Plenty of others stop to chat. "People have come by and said, 'We just arranged for our pre-need types of things and the cheapest casket available was \$5,000,'" Beebe says. "I've had people say they cost \$10,000 to \$12,000."

To be fair, casket prices range widely. According to Allen Funeral Home and Crematory's April 2024 price list, theirs run between \$1,295 and \$6,595. Alternatively, you can find a basic pine box for \$795 on discount-caskets.com. At the other end of the spectrum, how about the "Promethean Bronze" casket? Made in Batesville, Indiana, that baby costs \$29,999.

As with most big purchases, it pays to shop around. Generally speaking, Kel McBride says, "Making numerous phone calls

for pricing, as well as being willing to [have a body transported elsewhere], can not only save cash but also open up options."

Thinking Outside the Box

Your budget, personal values, and religious beliefs could cause you to choose something altogether different. If you're interested in less expensive and "greener" burial options, for example, there are sundry hand-woven willow trays and baskets, ranging from \$900 to about \$3,500, as well as basic shrouds and custom quilts from \$250 and up at funeraryartisanscollective.org online.

"For green burial, we want that container to be biodegradable, to go back to the earth and it's usually pretty simple," says Sam Perry, a funeral director, mortuary science educator, and president of the education side of the Green Burial Council. "So, no precious metals, no exotic woods, no metal decorations on that container—or limited. That kind of brings you to simple pine boxes, shrouds, wrapping the body in some sort of linen, cotton, silk. And that can be a personal piece [you already have] or it could be something that's purchased."



“And then there’s the cemetery,” he continues. “The big part is to be buried without vaults which are made of concrete. The creation of concrete is really detrimental to the environment, so, we’re skipping that step in green burial.”

It’s worth noting that vaults and their installation can add another couple thousand dollars or more to your bill. Finding a local cemetery willing to forgo a vault isn’t impossible, but it can take a little extra time and investigation. “Most cemeteries require an outer burial container, which ... helps to hold up the ground so the graves don’t continually sink in,” says Eric Powell, a funeral director and co-owner of The Funeral Chapel.

That said, however, “There’s no law in any state that makes green burial illegal,” Perry says. “The thing is just finding the funeral director or the cemetery that’s going to be willing to go in that direction with you.”

Bloomington’s White Oak Cemetery once offered green burial plots, but they’ve since sold out. Reserved for traditional burials, its remaining 4-by-10-foot plots cost \$800 each for city residents. For its part, Monroe County as a whole boasts more than 300 historic cemeteries, some of which may be amenable to burial without a vault. “As one of the funeral directors told me, they almost all have ‘onesies’ and ‘twosies,’ referring to single or double plots, that are available,” McBride says.

Any historic cemeteries that aren’t located on private property, but are instead publicly held, are managed by township trustees. “So, if someone wants green burial and they want to be buried in Monroe County, they can reach out to the township trustee that’s managing the historic cemetery in their area to find out if there are open spaces,” McBride says.

If you’re not so picky about your final resting place, you may be able to purchase a traditional cemetery plot secondhand. “I’ve even seen [plots] for sale on Craigslist before,” McBride continues.

Besides the plot itself, you’ll also need to pony up fees for grave opening and closing. And then there’s a headstone to think about. Excluding charges for engraving and installation, a simple flat marker can start at \$200 to \$300. A more ornate, upright headstone may cost a couple thousand dollars or more, depending on its size and complexity. ►



“Most cemeteries require an outer burial container,” says Eric Powell, a funeral director and co-owner of The Funeral Chapel in Bloomington.

“There’s no law in any state that makes green burial illegal,” Perry says. “The thing is just finding the funeral director or the cemetery that’s going to be willing to go in that direction with you.”





Cremation Nation

All of that expense is one reason increasing numbers of people are choosing cremation. “Society as a whole has changed,” Powell says. “I think cost and mobility are the two big things now. ... You can bury a small amount of the ashes if you want or you can keep some and take them with you,” Powell says. “They make jewelry now that you can put ashes in, so you can have a piece of your loved one with you all the time. They mix ashes with different things like metal roses and metal products—there’s a million different options.”

Technically, there are also different types of cremation, including flame cremation and water cremation. Both yield ashes that can be kept in memorial urns, sprinkled or buried, shared with friends and relatives, and so on. Flame cremation—without any kind of funeral service—can cost \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Pro-tip: You can do some good and score free cremation by donating your body to the Anatomical Education Program, administered by the Indiana University School of Medicine. Specific donor criteria apply and you must die within the state of Indiana. (For details visit medicine.iu.edu/give.) When the school is finished with you, the remains are cremated and returned to your loved ones.

On a related note, let’s say you intend to be cremated and you happen to have an implanted pacemaker. You’re also in position to do some good for others while keeping hazardous waste out of the landfill. Up to two million people die each year because they lack access to pacemakers and defibrillators. Via the My Heart Your Heart program (myheartyourheart.org), a collaboration between the University of Michigan Medical School and World Medical Relief, used pacemakers are collected, tested, and refurbished for implantation in less fortunate patients living in other countries. To date, patients throughout Africa, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean have been helped.


Pacemakers are routinely removed to keep their batteries from exploding during the (flame) cremation process. (Prefer to be buried? Although there may be an extra fee involved, look for a funeral director who’s willing to remove and donate your device.)

Now, as for water cremation—also known as alkaline hydrolysis—it’s comparable in price to flame cremation, but no casket or similar container is needed for the process. “There’s a lot of evidence to say that it’s more environmentally friendly than flame cremation, because of a reduction of resources used,” Sam Perry, with the Green Burial Council, says. “Warm water with lye is washed around the body at a pretty high pressure. And, so, just like in flame cremation, the soft tissues are reduced.”

At present, water cremation isn’t legal in Indiana, so if you have your heart set on it, you’ll need to pay to transport your body to a legal water cremation state—Illinois is closest. No matter which process you choose, if you want your remains scattered in Bloomington’s Rose Hill Cemetery Scatter Garden, that’ll be \$300. Want a memorial engraving, too? That package is \$575.

If you’d rather remain contained, most any sturdy vessel that has meaning for you could work perfectly well. For a ballpark on more official cremation urns, the Allen Funeral Home and Crematory’s April 2024 price sheet lists them at \$85 to \$1,475. On top of that, securing an urn in a mausoleum can cost several hundred dollars. Inurnment at Rose Hill ranges from \$500 to \$725, for instance.

Pro-tip:
You can do some good and score free cremation by donating your body to the Anatomical Education Program, administered by the Indiana University School of Medicine.



Closing Ceremonies

Eric Powell, the funeral director, has encountered many myths about cremation, burial, and funeral services during his 30-year career. One of the most common? “A lot of people think that, with cremation, there are no services, no viewing, no anything,” he says. “And there doesn’t have to be, but there are options within that where you can have a visitation and a funeral followed by cremation.”

As you might expect, traditional funerals, complete with open-casket visitation, aren’t cheap. “Right when I started, a traditional funeral was \$8,000 or \$9,000,” Powell says. “Now, when you look at everything, you’re probably looking at \$13,000 to \$15,000.”

Body preparation alone, including hair styling, makeup, and embalming, can add a couple thousand dollars to your bill, but there’s no law in Indiana that says you must be embalmed before cremation, burial, or any type of funeral service. “The only time we ever embalm for cremation is if we’re going to have an open-casket visitation,” Powell says. “And people can be buried without being embalmed. We would just have a closed casket.”

In the case of green burials, Perry says, “We don’t want to embalm the body. We want to leave it as natural as possible, but that means still giving dignity care to the body. ... It seems like a lot of people who choose green burial don’t necessarily want to view the body, but they want to have the body be a part of the ceremony, because it’s a symbol of who that person was.”

You might decide you’d prefer to have a more free-form celebration of life rather than a full-fledged funeral. Since you’re still around, you have an opportunity to really think about how you wish to be remembered. “You have a voice and you have a choice,” Joy Harter, the death doula, says. “Use it!”



Stan Has
A Near-Death Experience

Pre-Planning vs. Pre-Payment

Ideally, pre-planning means completing your funeral planning declaration as completely as possible and, Perry says, “Have it printed, planned, signed, witnessed, notarized, and then have money associated with that document that can pay for the funeral.”

There are a few different ways to set aside funding, one of which is pre-payment with a funeral home. “In Indiana, when somebody gives us money on a pre-need basis for services in the future, we have to take that money and put it with a third party,” Powell explains. “That’s state law.”

They also must guarantee pricing on services like embalming and use of the funeral home and merchandise like urns and caskets. “No matter if it’s two years, five years, 10 years, 20 years—we guarantee that you’ll never pay any more for it than you pay at the time,” he says.

What they don’t guarantee are “cash advance” items—charges assessed by outside entities like cemeteries, florists, and publications like *Bloom*. (An “In Memoriam” page in *Bloom* costs \$1,640.) “Because they’re not our charges, we don’t have control over those,” Powell says. “When I started doing this years ago, obituaries were free in *The Herald-Times*. Now, obituaries are around \$200 or \$300. You never know when things like that are going to change.”

Keep in mind, it isn’t necessary to pre-pay to pre-plan. “You can come in and write everything down and say, ‘I want this type of casket,’ or ‘I want this cremation service’ or ‘Here’s vital statistic information for my death certificate,’” Powell says. “You can do all that and not pre-pay for anything.”

Aside from pre-paying the funeral home, you could instead have your own bank or investment account for that purpose. “You would set up a beneficiary for that ‘Pay on Death’ account who then could do your funeral services,” Perry says.

Money, Wills, and Trusts

Making sure you’ve named beneficiaries for all of your accounts—and keeping them current—is paramount. “We have cases, sadly, where someone thinks their life insurance went to their spouse, but they never changed the beneficiary before they got married,” says Andrew Mallor, the attorney. “Planning properly includes making certain that those things all align with your wishes.”

What if you don’t have children or specific heirs in mind? “A beneficiary doesn’t have to be a son or daughter or another family member,” says Edward Jones financial advisor Aaron Dobrin. “Beneficiaries can be charitable organizations.”

If you do have minor children to plan for, consider setting up a trust. “A trust appoints a third party to take care of the assets with the direction that you give them,” Mallor says. And as for furry ►

family members? “We do pet trusts in Indiana,” Mallor says. “The pet trust could be designating somebody to take care of the pet and providing them with funds, etc. ... Sometimes it’s transitional until the pet can find a home. Sometimes it’s permanent.”

When working on estate planning, Dobrin recommends inviting family members to sit in: “The idea that this all has to be very private and the plan only rears its head when I pass away and, suddenly, it’s thrust upon my beneficiaries—that’s one of those myths we try to dispel.

“You can create a financial plan with never having to reveal dollar amounts to family members,” Dobrin says. “A financial legacy plan is just, if you pass away, what do we do? What are our next steps?”

To share your plans regarding probate property, you should have a will. “Probate property is property you own in your own name,” Mallor says. “It doesn’t operate on jointly held property. It doesn’t control life insurance. It doesn’t control pensions, profit sharing, retirement funds.”

“For many people, the amount of assets they have in probate are minimal,” he adds. “Their home is in joint name, their retirement plan has a beneficiary, their life insurance has a beneficiary.” Thanks to Indiana’s “Transfer on Death” and “Payable on Death” statutes, transferring such assets is extra simple. Have real estate to pass to your kids? “During your lifetime, you can do a “Transfer on Death” deed and name your children as the beneficiaries at your death,” Mallor says. “If it’s jointly held, it’s the death of the survivor.”

Indiana law has also made it easier to deal with digital assets. You can include digital asset information in your will, and the executor

of your estate legally should have access. “The problem is, if they’re password-protected and you don’t have the passwords, you can’t access it,” Mallor says. “We encourage people to have a digital questionnaire that’s kept secret. It’s only there for the personal representative, so they can [access online] banks and Facebook and social media.”

Having your social media accounts memorialized after your death is particularly important. “You want to do that as soon as possible, so someone doesn’t take it over,” Kel McBride says. “There’s tons of [deceased] people on Facebook, but their accounts get stolen, and now, all of a sudden, they’re selling sunglasses.”

We all have a passel of passwords and usernames. And what about subscriptions, P.O. boxes, safe deposit boxes, and other odds and ends? You can document all of this and much more for the people you leave behind with life organizers like NokBox (thenokbox.com) or Carol Havens’ *When the Time Comes* (whenthecomestimecomes.shop.) Both cost under \$50. Just don’t forget to let someone you trust know where they can find your life organizer when they need it.

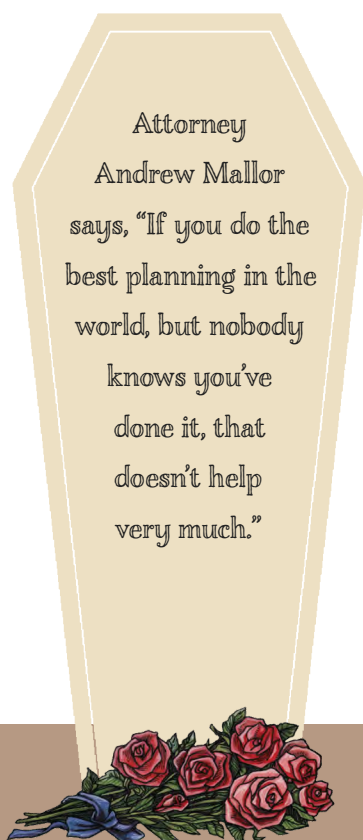
Finally, Mallor says, “If you do the best planning in the world, but nobody knows you’ve done it, that doesn’t help very much.” With that in mind, tell your friends and family 1) that you have plans in place and 2) with whom you’ve entrusted those plans.

Dealing with Stuff

There’s at least one other thoughtful thing we can do for others (and ourselves!) while we’re alive. “If there’s a set of china or a special chair or a recipe box, have conversations with your family about what they want after you’re not here,” says Cheryl Smith, founder of Consider It Done Transition Services. “Also, talk about gifting [things] before you leave this world, because there’s a lot of joy in watching people love what you have loved.”

For nearly 10 years Smith has helped people to make decisions about their possessions and downsize to smaller homes. She also helps families deal with the belongings of loved ones who’ve died. “Before I started this business, I worked in a funeral home and I helped people after they had a loss,” she says. “That’s when I really got in touch with the whole idea of making sure things are ready for your loved ones.”

Just what does being “ready” entail? Getting rid of the stuff you no longer want or use and thinking carefully about what you would want to have happen with what’s left. (Pro-tip: To really get the hang of this, check out Margareta Magnusson’s *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning*.) Smith suggests making a “who-gets-what” spreadsheet. “Here’s the kicker—make sure everybody knows who gets what,” she says.



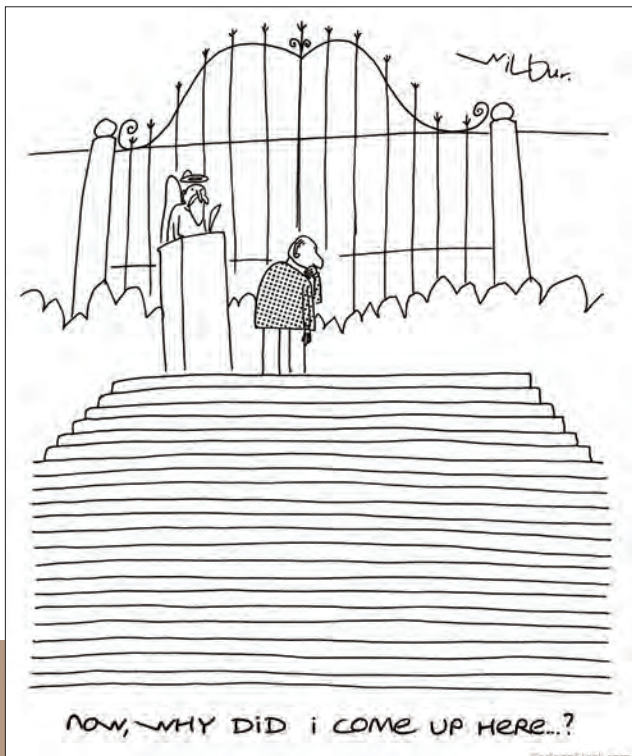
Depending on the items you have, you might decide to sell some of them through Smith's consignment shop or donate them to one of the area's many nonprofits. Have old photos or Monroe County ephemera? "Those family photos could have some really amazing information in the background," says Monroe County History Center Curator Hilary Fleck. "If it's a group of people downtown, then it's like, 'Oh, look at this business that we've never before had a photo of!'"

The history center sometimes accepts donations of items related to Monroe County history. They also take items for their annual garage sale. "You could say, 'I want all of this stuff to be donated to the Monroe County History Center Garage Sale,'" Smith says. "You're the boss of your things, and it's OK to make those decisions."

You might decide you want (or need) to turn most of your stuff—including the house itself—into cash. Brian Sample, owner of Estate and Downsizing Specialists has helped people do just that for 35 years. "We go in and meet with the client on the front end and help with the transition," Sample says. "Or, in many instances, it's an estate, so someone's passed away."

One of the main reasons to handle this now rather than letting the task fall to family members after your death is that they may not necessarily know what's valuable and what isn't. "There's all kinds of things that can go wrong, and it may result in them having a diminished return on what they would have had in estate value," Sample says.

Case in point: "We get jewelry boxes all the time [about which] a family says to us, 'Oh, we've taken everything [of value] out of there,'" he says. "And I've had those jewelry boxes bring \$6,000, \$7,000, \$8,000 for what was left in them that [the family] didn't even know was there."



(above) Cheryl Smith, founder of Consider It Done Transition Services, says to have conversations with your family about what they want after you're gone. "Also, talk about gifting [things] before you leave this world, because there's a lot of joy in watching people love what you have loved."



(left) For more than 35 years, Brian Sample, owner of Estate and Downsizing specialists, has helped people turn their belongings, including their house, into cash. "We go in and meet with the client on the front end and help with the transition," he says. *Photo by Cassandra Huskey*

Both Sample and Smith offer free initial consultations. Smith's work ranges from small by-the-hour projects to full estate clean-outs. Sample specializes in personal property auctions and real estate sales. "We charge people between 10 and 40 percent, and it depends entirely on the value of the items that we're selling," he says.

"Making decisions about your things [provides] peace of mind for both sides—for you, because you know where everything's going to go," Smith says. "That frees up so much space in your heart and your mind. And you know that when you leave this world, the people you love can mourn you and not [deal with] your things. They can focus on the person instead of the stuff." ✖



Those Were the Days... From Issues of 'Bloom Magazine' Past

After more than 100 issues, *Bloom* has a trove of local history to share. In this series, we'll unearth moments from Bloomington's past, when we were all a little younger. This fourth column comes from issues of 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2018. We hope it brings back some good memories.



Photo by Alistair Blair



Time to Shape Up

In *Bloom's* very first issue in August/September 2006, we published a story about Women With Will, a group who exercised together, set common goals, and motivated one another. Pictured jogging on the IU campus are (l-r) Amanda Tanner, Emily Ward, Cheryl Stine, Joanne Wilhelm, Betsy Sagba, Martha Wailes, Julie Shertzer, and Dana White with son P.J.



Bellydancing in B-town

"You can't swing a cat in Bloomington without hitting a belly dancer," said belly dance teacher and henna artist Heather Pund, a member of the Dark Side Tribal dance troupe, in *Bloom's* August/September 2010 feature story "Bellydancing in B-town."



Photo by Adam Reynolds

2011



Photo by Shannon Zahnle

Learning to Cook

Holding up a future entrée are (l-r) Jan Bulla-Baker, Chef Matt O'Neill, and assistant Breanne McCarthy Anderson with Bloomington Cooking School. Bulla-Baker and O'Neill, along with two others, started the school in 2001, a story told in *Bloom's* August/September 2011 issue.



2008

Photo by Ben Weller

Food Pantry Founders

(l-r) Laura Marks and Jessica Mott said they knew what it was like to need help making ends meet: They both had to use food stamps at some point in their lives. Marks and Mott were featured in an Our Town story about how they used that experience to form the Bloomington food pantry Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Their story was in *Bloom's* August/September 2008 issue.





Photo by Adam Reynolds

A School Like no Other

High school students Whitney Blake and Cassidy Molin help Early Childhood Program students climb the rhino sculpture outside Harmony School. This picture was included in a *Bloom* feature story about the school in our August/September 2009 issue.



Photo by Rodney Margison

Political Activist

A 2018 Bloomington High School North graduate, Caleb Poer said politics became personal as he got older. When a small group of students began wearing Confederate flags as capes during the lunch hour, he organized a protest outside the Monroe County Community School Corporation administrative offices and got the flag banned in all the corporation schools. Here, Poer (holding “Am I Next?” sign) marches with other high school students at an April 20, 2018, anti-gun rally in downtown Bloomington—a story and photo that *Bloom* published in our August/September 2018 issue.



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