

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 23, 2022



FREE



Buffer zone

Preservation status protects Camp Atterbury mission and nearby areas.

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Edinburgh Courier

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

“No man stands as tall as he who stoops to help a child.”

— Nick Saban Sr.

WHAT'S UP?

Pre-K, kindergarten enrollment

East Side Elementary School will conduct enrollment for pre-K and kindergartners for the 2022-23 school year.

Pre-K is for children 3-5 years old who are fully independent with toileting. Students must live in the ECSC district and transportation is provided by the family.

Kindergarten is for children who will be 5 years old on or before Oct. 1.

Enrollment will be conducted 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 31 and April 1 at East Side, 810 E. Main Cross St. Pre-K registrants can visit the school anytime during those hours. If you are enrolling a kindergartner, call 812-526-9771 to schedule an appointment.

Bring the child, birth certificate, immunization records, proof of residence (a current utility bill, for example) and proof of guardianship.

Good Friday service

Edinburgh Ministerial Association is hosting the annual Good Friday Service at Holy Trinity Catholic Church. Everyone is welcome to attend. Numerous local churches will be participating in the service, which is April 15 at 3 p.m.

Register to vote

Residents who want to register to vote in the May 3 primary have until April 4 to do so, and can do it online at indianavoters.in.gov, in person at their county voter registration office or at any license branch.

NEWS

Amy May, editor 317-736-2726 or 812-379-5761
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ADVERTISING

Cindy Warren 317-736-2737
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Advertising fax 317-736-2754

DEADLINES

Display ads..... 5 p.m. Wednesday
News..... 9 a.m. Monday
Library drop box..... noon Wednesday

CIRCULATION 317-736-2777



DAILY JOURNAL PHOTOS

Two Republican candidates for Johnson County Council District 1 visited the Daily Journal for an interview. From right, Pamela Burton of Edinburgh and David Bleke of Franklin.

Two notable candidates vie for District 1 seat

By Leeann Doerflein

DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Editor's note: The Q&A below includes answers by candidates in their own words. It has been edited for length and grammar.

Two well-known candidates are facing off in the race for the newly redrawn Johnson County Council District 1 seat.

Pamela Burton, an Edinburgh resident who has served as county auditor since 2015, is vying for the seat alongside David Bleke, a Franklin businessman whose name has been on auto shops in the county for decades.

District 1 includes all of Union, Hensley, Nineveh, Blue River, Needham and Clark townships, southern White River Township and southern Franklin Township.

The Daily Journal asked both candidates questions about their experience and vision for the county if they're elected. Here's what they said:

» What makes you a good choice for

county council, and why are you running?

Bleke: I'm now retired and have the time to do it. Although I don't know if that's 100% because I feel like I've got less time. I've taught high school - and do teach high school now - so I am pretty familiar with the younger generation. I have been a Whiteland Town Council member before, so I've served there. The fact that I've owned several businesses and several corporations since I was 23, gives me a business way of looking at things.

Burton: I've been deputy auditor and auditor for this county for 30 years. Being part of the county's financial (organization), I've sat in on almost all of the county council meetings. I'm the person who normally puts feet to their wishes and fulfills their orders and carries out their directives. I came into the office in 1992, and I was hired under (Auditor) Betty Stringer. From there, I ran for auditor in 2015, and I've been the elected official since; this is my second term. I'll have 30 years on in April 2.

» What are the top three issues facing the county?

Bleke: Unfortunately, I think that changes daily. What I say today won't make any sense later. Our roads are an issue. I don't think our budget is an issue today, but going forward it will be, so we have to keep a targeted budget so we don't get ourselves in trouble down the road. One of the issues I think we will be dealing with is fewer county roads. The upgrades to the infrastructure is going to change quite a bit for the newer towns. Along with that, I see a lot of drainage issues out in the county.

Burton: Inflation, but that's not just the county, that's all over the world. Local government, in my opinion, is just as important as state and federal. I heard someone say the other day every tax dollar has a name on it - that's kind of my thoughts as well. In my 30 years in the auditor's office, I have pretended every dollar I ever see comes directly from my back pocket. So when you look at it that way, it makes you a more conservative spender. The elected officials we have now are amazing, but I'm looking forward to bringing some working knowledge on budgets, appropriations, tax

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OBITUARY

EDINBURGH

Linda Caudill

Linda Sue Caudill, 65, of Edinburgh passed away March 17, 2022, at Majestic Care of North Vernon. She was born Dec. 23, 1956, in Shelbyville. She was the daughter of Elmer Ray and Oma Jean (Coomer) Caudill.

She is survived by her mother of Edinburgh;



CAUDILL

brother, David Ray Caudill of Ohio; sisters, Deborah (Gary) Gaddis of Shelbyville and Kathy Jean Caudill of Edinburgh.

She is preceded in death by her father. Linda attended Triangle School in Shelbyville. She enjoyed baby dolls, flowers, animals, playing cards, money and watching TV, especially cartoons.

A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Tracey Tucker at Who-So-Ever-Will Community Church in Edinburgh. Burial was at Flat Rock Cemetery in Flat Rock, Indiana.

Arrangements were made by Eskew-Eaton Funeral Home in Edinburgh.

GOOD OLD DAYS

70 years ago: Floyd and Orval Waltz announce that Orval has taken over the grocery division of Waltz Grocery and Locker service located at 203 N. Kyle St.

65 years ago: Edinburg senior Norma Stants wins the Edinburg Post 233 Legion Auxiliary's annual Americanism Essay Contest. Edinburg junior Gay Lee Busch placed second.

60 years ago: Bud Allison uncorks a shot put toss of 47 feet, 3.5 inches in the Hoosier Relays at Bloomington, breaking Edinburg's school record of 46 feet, 2 inches held by Ronald Ireland.

50 years ago: Rick Finley is named the Most Valuable Player for the Edinburg varsity basketball team as Allen Pendleton is recognized as the leading rebounder.

30 years ago: Award winners for the Edinburg varsity basketball team are: Mike Cravens, rebounding; Travis Bowers, FG percentage; and Justin Lollar, FT percentage.

10 years ago: Edinburg basketball players Jordan Burton, Kyle Wuest and Corey Burton have been named to the South All-Stars with coach Drew Glentzer and staff coaching the team.

AT THE PIXY

The Edinburg Pixy Theatre is at 111 S. Walnut St. Unless noted, shows are at 7 p.m. and admission is \$10. Information/purchase tickets: 812-526-6513, www.TheEdinburgPixy.com or advance tickets for some shows at www.brownpapertickets.com

April 8: Happy Place Comedy with Mark Armstrong

April 10: Palm Sunday concert with

Night Owl Country Band and friends, 3 p.m.

April 30: Addison Johnson (country)

May 7: Happy Place Comedy with Jeffrey Bodart

June 11: Mike Milligan and Steam Shovel (blues)

June 16: Auditions for Fairy Tale Theater, 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

July 9: Bomar and Ritter (folk, pop)

COMMUNITY CHATTER

Tri Kappa bingo

The Edinburg Delta Sigma Chapter of Tri Kappa is hosting its annual bingo event featuring Vera Bradley on April 12 at 6 p.m. in the Edinburg Community High School cafeteria. Doors open at 5 p.m. Event is for people age 18 and older only. Proceeds provide scholarship for local students.

Cost is \$25 for 20 games. Additional game packs can be purchased at the event for \$20. Table space is limited.

Intermission games featuring Kate Spade, Coach and Michael Kors bags will be available for purchase at the event for \$5 in unlimited quantities. Table space may be limited. Tickets for themed raffle baskets are 6 for \$5. Refreshments will be available for purchase (No outside food and drinks).

They will not be doing food pantry donations this year.

Call 812-344-6069 for ticket.

Easter events

Edinburgh Parks and Recreation has Easter events planned for April 16.

Breakfast and pictures with the Easter Bunny will be 9-11 a.m. at the John R. Drybread Community Center downtown. Registration for the breakfast is at the Parks & Rec. office, noon-8 p.m. Monday through Saturday until April 15

The parade will begin downtown at 3 p.m.

Anyone who would like to volunteer at the breakfast, donate candy or pre-filled Easter eggs, or has a golf cart and would like to participate in the parade, contact Event Coordinator Tracy Beier at tbeier@edinburgh.in.us or 812-447-6076.

Dollars for Scholars

The Edinburg Dollars for Scholars website is open through April 15 for students to apply for a college scholarship for the 2022-2023 school year. Students must be a graduate of Edinburg Community High School or an ECHS senior graduating in 2022.

To apply, go to www.edinburgh.dollars-forscholars.org.

Community yard sale

Edinburgh Parks & Recreations annual Spring Indoor Community Yard Sale is set

for April 2, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the East Side Elementary School gym, 810 E. Main Cross St.

Booth space reservations will be taken until March 30. Cost is \$20 with a table; \$15 if you provide your own table.

Reserve space and pay at the parks department or by calling emailing or phoning Tracy Beier, 812-447-6076 or tbeier@edinburgh.in.us.

Immunizations at Taylorsville

Indiana Immunization Coalition will have a community immunization clinic in Bartholomew County in April.

The clinic will be from 9 to 11 April 2 at Taylorsville Elementary School's cafeteria.

Those who attend should bring insurance cards as the organization will bill insurance carriers. There is no cost to those without insurance, except for the shingles vaccine, which often has a required co-pay.

To register online, visit patients.vaxcare.com/registration and use the enrollment code IN 65942.

Taylorsville food pantry

A "Blessing House" self-serve food pantry is located at the German Township Fire Department, 9428 Main St., in Taylorsville.

There will be non-perishable food available in a little gray house at the fire station. The purpose of the self-serve pantry is to allow people who need help to come by any time and get what they need.

Anyone wishing to contribute may leave food donations inside the pantry. For more information, visit blessinghouseministry.org/donate/.

At the Community Center

The John R. Drybread Community Center, 100 E. Main Cross St., is hosting the following programs:

- The Edinburg Bicentennial Committee is selling keepsake ornaments for \$10 to commemorate the town's 200th anniversary in 2022. Pre-orders are available at the Community Center.

- Edinburg's Bicentennial Committee meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Anyone wishing to help with 2022 celebrations can contact the center.

Information/register: 812-526-3539, sdrybread@edinburgh.in.us.



Fish Fry!

Friday, April 1, 11 am - 7 pm
Saturday, April 2, 11 am - 6 pm

Meal is \$8 (includes a sandwich, 2 sides, drink and dessert)
Sandwich is \$5 • Sides, drinks & desserts \$1 each

Fish, Tenderloin, Sides
(French Fries, Baked Beans,
Cole Slaw or Potato Salad),
Drinks and Homemade
Desserts.

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SPRING SPORTS PREVIEWS

Softball

The Lancers won a sectional title last season before falling to Hauser in the regional. They return five starters from a team that went 16-11, including 5-4 in MHC, including two who sustained season-ending ACL injuries last season.

"Spring break runs these first two weeks, so trying to get everybody together makes it a little rough," Edinburgh coach Ben Taylor said. "But we're finding our way. We have a bunch of freshmen and sophomores who either have not played a while or have not played a lot of softball."

Sophomore MacKenzie Bieker will do most of the pitching again after going 14-4 with a 3.42 ERA and batting .451 with 39 runs scored and team-highs of seven home runs and 44 RBIs. Sophomore Kyah Streeval returns at catcher, and junior Gracie Crawhorn (.623, six HR, 34 RBIs, 41 runs scored) is back at third.

Sophomore Alix Streeval, who tore an ACL early in the season, will step in at short. Senior Carly Cowan, who also tore her ACL, will be back in center.

Senior Angel Carman, who saw action in the outfield last season, moves to first, and freshman Katie Hardman takes over at second. Freshmen Jasmine Hester and Shyleigh Goble and sophomore newcomer Zaza Nelson could play left or right.

"We have some talent," Taylor said. "Actually, it's a pretty good mix. We have some girls who were there last year, and then, we're young, I think a competitive young, though."

Coach: Ben Taylor

Last season: 16-11, won sectional championship; lost to Hauser in Class A regional

Key returnees: Angel Carman and Carly

Cowan, seniors; Gracie Crawhorn, junior; MacKenzie Bieker, Alix Streeval and Kyah Streeval, sophomores

Top newcomers: Katie Hardman and Jasmine Hester, freshman

Outlook: Graduation and injuries depleted the Lancers' roster a bit, but there's a solid battery in place with Bieker and Kyah Streeval along with a big bat at third base in Crawhorn. Cowan and Alix Streeval return from knee injuries to provide some more experienced help, but Taylor will need to develop some of the newcomers to fill out the bottom half of the lineup. He's optimistic that Edinburgh can still compete for another sectional championship by season's end — "My eye is on the end at this point," he said.

Boys track

Coach: Amy Schilling

Key returnees: Travis Vidal and Parker Young, seniors; Enrique Callejas and Tanner Kohl, juniors; Austin Brockman, Ethan Campbell and Anduan Chavez, sophomores

Top newcomers: Braylon Bryant and Blaze Jensen, juniors; Jackson Hartwell and Irving Luis-Orozco, freshmen

Outlook: "I expect our boys to be very competitive and do really well in our conference," Schilling said. "We could have a few all-conference contenders and some even a chance to make it out of sectional."

Girls track

Coach: Amy Schilling

Top newcomers: Alanna Hobbs, sophomore; Shyleigh Goble, freshman

Outlook: Goble is expected to represent the Lancers as a sprinter, while Hobbs does so in the shot put and discus.

Girls recognized by area media

A trio of Lancer girls garnered recognition for their play this past basketball season. Gracie Crawhorn, Alyssa Funkhouser, and Callie Hancock were all named as Honorable Mention players in the girls' All-County selections as chosen by The Daily Journal sports staff.

Hancock was also named to the All-Area Girls basketball team by The Republic. The senior led the Lancers with 10.3 points and averaged 3.9 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 1.4 steals per game.

Gracie Crawhorn received honorable mention.

On Tap

Thursday

Winter Sports Awards, 6 p.m. in high school cafeteria

Saturday



Brian Ingels

Lancer Notebook

Girls varsity softball at Hilltop HS, Batavia, Ohio, 10 a.m.

Monday

Boys varsity baseball, at home vs. Salem, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday

Girls varsity softball, at home vs. Columbus East, 5 p.m.

Brian Ingels is an industrial arts teacher at Edinburgh Community High School. Send comments to Edinburgh Courier, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131, courier@dailyjournal.net.

SCHOOL NOTEBOOK

Past yearbooks now online

You can view yearbooks from 1920 and up on ECSC's website. Go to the alumni page at <https://www.ecsc.k12.in.us/about-us/alumni>

The alumni plan to continue to add more yearbooks as they get them. If you have a

yearbook that is not on the site, please send an email to bstraugh@ecsc.k12.in.us.

Calendar

April 15: Good Friday (snow makeup day if needed)

May 27: Last student day

May 30: Memorial Day

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DAILY JOURNAL PHOTO

The Driftwood River, in addition to private land throughout southern Johnson County, is part of a 3.5 million acre area in Indiana included in the Sentinel Landscapes program. The program offers landowners the resources to maintain and preserve the land around those bases, whether that's from sustainable farming practices, wetland restoration or planting trees.

Camp Atterbury area included in land-protection program

By Ryan Trares
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The land surrounding Camp Atterbury features a bounty of wild, wooded and workable land that defines southern Johnson County.

Animals, including numerous endangered species, call the hilly forests, ponds, rivers and wetlands home. Bird watchers, fisherman, hikers and hunters flock to preserves and public land to take in the natural beauty.

At the same time, the forests are interrupted by robust farmland that speaks to county's agricultural tradition.

Now, private landowners in that area will have access to funding to ensure the land, whether used for agriculture, forestry, preservation or other uses, is protected.

A swath of southern Indiana — including almost half of Johnson County around and north of Camp Atterbury — was chosen to

be part of a federal program aimed at conserving land around military bases. The Sentinel Landscapes program offers landowners the resources to maintain and preserve the land around those bases, whether that's from sustainable farming practices, wetland restoration or planting trees.

Indiana's inclusion in the program is a major victory for all residents of the state, said Christian Freitag, executive director of the Conservation Law Center at Indiana University.

"It's no exaggeration that the Sentinel Landscape is one of the biggest conservation projects in the history of Indiana," he said. "It's one of the largest conservation wins in Indiana history."

The Sentinel Landscapes program was created primarily to conserve and strengthen the land surrounding the country's military installations. A partnership between the Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, the program works with private landowners to advance sustainable land management practices

around military installations and ranges.

Sentinel Landscapes was founded in 2013 to strengthen military readiness by buffering military bases from encroachments such as residential development.

"To maintain their military readiness, they need to do training there," Freitag said. "If they have heavy residential development nearby, they're going to encounter complaints about that. And different bases, such as Atterbury and (Naval Support Activity) Crane, have their own water supplies. Heavy development upstream affects their ability to have clean water on base."

The program also aims to conserve natural resources, bolster agricultural and forestry economies, and increase climate change resilience.

"When they were putting together this program, their primary objective was to maintain military readiness for American security," Freitag said. "But they realized that as they're doing that mission, they can accomplish a number of other priorities of the government, such as maintain-

ing working forests and working farms, and helping farmers stay on land."

Up until earlier this year, seven areas throughout the United States had been accepted into the program, in states such as Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina and Washington.

In February, program organizers announced three new additions: around Camp Bullis in Texas, across Northwest Florida, and across southern Indiana.

"These new landscape designations will leverage (Department of Defense) funding and programs to protect the missions at 14 key (Department of Defense) installations and ranges, protecting essential testing and training operations, enhancing resilience to climate change, and preserving our nation's natural resources and working lands," said Ron Tickle, deputy assistant secretary of defense for real property.

The southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape encompasses 3.5 million acres — a swath of land approximately the size of Connecticut.



That area is home to four Department of Defense installations: Camp Atterbury, part of the Atterbury-Muscatatuck Training Center; Naval Support Activity Crane near Bloomington; Lake Glendora Test Facility near New Lebanon and the Indiana Air Range Complex. Woven around and through those areas are six state parks, seven state forests, nine state fish and wildlife areas, 39 state-dedicated nature preserves, three National Wildlife Refuges and the Hoosier National Forest. "It turns out nature is a good neighbor to the military," Freitag said.

The program aims to improve landscape resilience around military bases by maintaining and connecting healthy forests. At the same time, landowners around participating landscapes can address habitat needs of various native species. In Indiana, that includes the federally endangered Indiana bat and federally threatened northern long-eared bat.

Key partners in Indiana include the Conservation Law Center at Indiana University Maurer School of Law, the Nature Conservancy, Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Defense Task Force and the White River Military Coordination Alliance.

Numerous local and state-level conservation organizations also worked together on Indiana's application to the program.

"Ensuring southern Indiana remains a safe haven for native species and conser-

vation of natural lands is critical," said Larry Clemens, Indiana state director of the Nature Conservancy. "This designation gives us important private and public sector tools, and expands upon critical partnerships to protect lands, improve water quality, enhance climate resiliency, and preserve the beauty and splendor of Southern Indiana."

Though entrance in the program does not create any new sources of funding, it does give landowners in those Sentinel Landscapes areas priority to existing programs, such as those that help farmers protect wetlands or keep soil from eroding, Freitag said.

"This is not as though all of the sudden \$100 million falls from the sky and gets used to buy land. That is not the way it is set up," he said. "But now, for properties within that 3.5 million-acre area, the existing federal programs that are already out there and allocated in the federal budget, resources for private landowners, those lands are prioritized."

Resources for landowners within the new program can be found at the Sentinel Landscapes website.

"I expect this will be an injection of tens of millions of dollars that

will now be available to southern Indiana private landowners that otherwise would not have been," Freitag said. "This is a win for private landowners."

AT A GLANCE

Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape
Who: A joint program by the U.S.

Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense and Department of Interior.

Indiana partners: Conservation Law Center at Indiana University Maurer School of Law; The Nature Conservancy; Indiana Economic Development Corporation – Defense Development Office; Indiana Department of Natural Resources; Indiana Defense Task Force; The White River Military Coordination Alliance; and numerous local and state-level conservation organizations.

What: A federal program that works to connect private landowners with government assistance programs that fund land management and restoration projects.

Where: 3.5 million acres of land stretching from Vincennes to Edinburgh to Madison

Military installations included: Naval Support Activity Crane, the Lake Glendora Test Facility, Atterbury-Muscatatuck Training Center, and the Indiana Air Range Complex

Information and resources for landowners: sentinellandscapes.org

AT THE PARKS

Edinburgh Parks & Recreation

722 Eisenhower Drive
Hours: Monday through Saturday, noon-8 p.m.

Info/to register: Tracy Beier at 812-526-3535, ext. 3, or tbeier@edinburgh.in.us
The summer Youth Club will be conducted June 1-July 22.

The club is for children ages 4-12. Activities include swimming, field trips, crafts, breakfast and snacks. Cost is a \$100 registration fee and \$25 per week per child. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon on Mondays and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays.

Signups will be taken April 11-May 14. Contact Elissa Day, 812-526-3535, 317-833-8637 or eday@edinburgh.in.us for information or an online registration form.

Johnson County Park

2949 E. North St., Nineveh
Hours: Monday through Friday: 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturdays (April-October), 8 a.m.-noon

April 9: Scrambled Eggs (adult Easter egg hunt)

May 14: JoCo Pours in the Park, noon-4 p.m.

June 16-19: Johnson County Antique Machinery Association annual show
Info/register for programs: 812-526-6809 or jocopark@co.johnson.in.us

Nineveh Senior Center

The Nineveh Senior Center, 3208 Rodeo Drive, Johnson County Park (next to horse park), for people 50 and older.

March 23: Bingo with prizes, 1-3 p.m. Free coffee.

March 30: Craft class, 3-4 p.m. Elyssa Everling, from the Trafalgar Library will lead a class on making wreaths from book pages.

March 30: Recycle Day, bring old metal, computers, any electronics, washers, dryers, refrigerators, stoves, etc. Talk to Janet Bartram about bringing the large items due to limited storage space.

April 4: Computer Class, 6 p.m. with LaDonna Elmore. The class will cover using computers, smart TV and DVDs. Other classes may be on how to access your email from our computer, scan the internet, use zoom, games and other items of interest.

New members are welcome. Membership is \$15 per year. Call Janet Wolfe, 812-376-3671, to join.



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Council

FROM PAGE 1

rates and more of the financial areas, as well as being a down-to-earth, common sense person. I'm connected and transparent and I've always been a huge advocate of the taxpayers.

» **Does the county need any new tax increases, and if so, what would it pay for?**

Bleke: For me to be completely straight on that would mean some real digging since I'm not on the county council now and I'm not privy to a lot of the study of it. I would like to see fewer taxes going forward. I would like to see more bang for our buck out there when companies come to do stuff for us. Let's keep taxes as low as we can.

Burton: Absolutely not at this point.

» **What would be your budget priorities?**

Bleke: It still goes back to our infrastructure and roads. That's the biggest area. As we go forward, the county is going to have more of that to do. As the towns and cities annex more, sometimes we will do less. We need to be on top of our game there. The way we interface with the cities and towns is important. There are going to be some issues there making sure we have a smooth transition with those annexations.

Burton: Fair and equal and transparent. Every office — from the offices that are protecting us all the way down to the office that helps us take care of our lost and stray animals — are important, and they all work equally as hard. Now, obviously, some areas deserve more than others and the pie is only so big and you only have so many slices to go around. So, I would be fair and equal and transparent and, once again, bring my common sense approach to the county council.

» **With Interstate 69, crumbling subdivision streets and continued population growth, the county is facing many issues related to road funding. Do you have any ideas to raise more money for roads?**

Bleke: My business that I just sold to Pep Boys is Center Grove Tire ... I still own the property. I'm right on I-69, and it is strictly a mess over there. We really need to look at a plan over there and how we are going to move traffic. One problem with the roads here in this county — it's the

THE BLEKE FILE

Name: David Bleke
Residence: Franklin.
Family: Wife, Donna; two children
Occupation: President of Four Star Holding Company, resident; teach automotive repair at City Life Wheels
Educational background: Center Grove High School; Indiana State University
Political experience: A term on the Whiteland Town Council

THE BURTON FILE

Name: Pamela J. Burton
Residence: Edinburgh
Family: Husband, James; two children
Occupation: County auditor
Educational background: Edinburgh Community High School
Political experience: County auditor since 2015

worst that I've seen anywhere — you cannot get east to west in this county. We ... widened Whiteland Road and made it a boulevard, so you can't even pass a tractor or get around anybody. It is one of those things we should look at going forward. I don't know where you start, but I think an end result is a place in our budget where we are being wasteful — and I'm not saying we are. But we should look there and see if there is any money we can divert to stretch this out long term. So we aren't taking too much money out this year, we can look at a five- to 10-year plan for those areas and try to do it so we don't raise taxes.

Burton: That has always been a problem and it will probably always be a problem. You build something, and 30 years later, it is time to be replaced. Do I have a solution? Absolutely not, other than working with the state and our highway department and the current grants and funding available to us to move forward as best we can. There's a sizeable amount of money (from ARPA) that we could use for that. There are no quick answers.

» **County employees and elected officials are underpaid compared to others in the public and private sectors, according to a recent salary study. Would making county employee pay more competitive be a priority for you?**

Bleke: I don't know if it would be a priority, but it certainly is important. One thing a lot of people don't think about is when you work for a government agency,

VOTING

Here is a look at when and where you can cast your ballot early. Early voting runs from April 5 to May 2:

Johnson County Courthouse, 5 E. Jefferson St., Franklin
 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 23 and April 30 (Saturdays)
 8:30 a.m. to noon May 2

John R. Drybread Community Center, 100 E. Main Cross St., Edinburgh
 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 23 and April 30
 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. April 25-29

For Bartholomew County residents, **NexusPark** (former JC Penney store), 2252 25th St. and **Bartholomew County Governmental Office Building**, 440 Third St. are early voting locations.

Here is a look at approved Johnson and Bartholomew County Election Day vote centers. Election Day is May 3, and voters can vote from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.:

John R. Drybread Community Center, 100 E. Main Cross St., Edinburgh
Amity Volunteer Fire Department, 3247 S. County Road 550 E., Franklin
Trafalgar Public Library, 424 S. Tower St., Trafalgar
Princes Lakes Town Hall, 14 E. Lakeview Drive, Nineveh
German Township Fire Station, 9428 Main St. in Taylorsville

your benefits are always much better than the private sector. A dollar or two into the pockets of the employees doesn't always equate to what they're getting on the other end. They probably do need an increase — I'm sure that is probably true — but for me to give a specific answer would be difficult. A lot of studies don't consider (benefits). (A lot) of people keep a job not because of pay, but because they like where they're at. So, do we want to just pay them or do we also want to be a place where they like to work?

Burton: Yes. I've been that employee and I'm now that elected official. The county government sometimes serves as a training ground to prepare people for the public sector, and I do think that more competitive wages would stop that or at least slow it down. But on the same hand, we work for the county government because we love what we do, so that in itself is a benefit.

» **Does the county need a human resources department or any sort of oversight besides the county's elected officials?**

Bleke: With that many employees, we need to have one. I had an HR person when I had 10 employees. There is specific stuff that has to be handled by a specific person or it could get messed up. I know two of the commissioners pretty well, and I think they probably do a very good job, but it is something they don't need to do. It isn't too expensive to just hire one or two people to do HR.

Burton: We definitely need a HR department in my opinion. You're talking about an auditor that has overseen HR and been part of it for many, many years. We've

grown to the point that we definitely need a HR department. Creating and establishing a HR department is totally under the commissioners, so I'm unaware of where they stand and what they plan on doing moving forward, or if it is even an option at this point. But if I were included in that conversation, I would definitely lean strongly toward developing that.

» **How do you think the county should spend the \$31 million it will receive from the American Rescue Plan?**

Bleke: There are a lot of ways you could spend it. With the rescue plan, I'm sure there is criteria to what they can spend it on, and I don't know what that criteria is. I'm sure we are probably obligated to spend it in a certain amount of time ... we would just to have to follow the criteria. If we can spend it on infrastructure, there is a big chunk of that we should divert to roads as long as that is legal.

Burton: I've been part of those meetings and, in my opinion, Johnson County has done an amazing job in forming a committee that has gone out among the taxpayers and held meetings to try to use that money in the most immediately needed areas. I believe some of that is going to include road repairs. There are some funds going toward mental health, which we all know is a huge issue here. As one of the people who was in that meeting — because I took the minutes — they put a lot of work into it. They have a couple of council members and a couple of commissioners on it, and they're taking their time and spending the money wisely.

JAIL BOOKINGS

The following people recently were arrested and booked into the Johnson County jail:

Christopher Donald Lloyd, 32, 113 Shelby Ave., Edinburgh; arrested on a charge of manufacture/dealing methamphetamine; \$6,600 bond.

The following people recently were arrested and booked into the

Bartholomew County jail:

Shara M. Turnbloom, 30, Edinburgh, arrested on a charge of false reporting or informing and an out-of-county warrant; released to other agency.

Sherissa D. Burt, 41, Edinburgh, arrested on a charge of public intoxication by alcohol; released on \$3,500 bond.

RECYCLING

The Johnson County Recycling District changed the hours at its Franklin Recycling Center.

The Franklin Recycling Center, 900 Arvin Road, will now be open:

Tuesdays and Fridays — 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesdays — 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

2nd and 4th Saturdays — 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Edinburgh Recycling Depot, 701 W. River

Road, will continue to have the same hours, said Jessie Biggerman, director. The Edinburgh depot is open for drop-offs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, and 8-11 a.m. on Saturdays.

A medication drop-off site is in the Edinburgh Police Department lobby, 200 S. Main St. Leave expired or unused prescription and over-the-counter drugs in original containers. No questions asked.

Edinburgh to increase residential water rates by \$10 per month

By Leeann Doerflein
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

A rate increase is on the horizon for customers of Edinburgh's town water utility.

The rate is set to increase by an average of \$10.31 per month for residential customers.

Town officials say the increase is needed to fund a \$6.5 million new water plant that will upgrade the 1997-built plant that has been due for an upgrade for more than 5 years. The cost of the new plant is \$8.1 million, including construction costs, design, engineering and bond financing costs, said Mitchell Eschweiler, of Baker Tilly, the accounting firm hired to perform the rate study.

To lower the total cost of the new plant, the town council plans to use the town's \$956,500 allocation from the American Rescue Plan and a \$700,000 grant from the Indiana Office of Rural and Community Affairs. The grant was awarded to the town last year and the council is expected to allocate the ARPA funds at their meeting on March 28.

The remainder of the project is being funded with a State Revolving Fund (SRF)

loan of \$6.4 million that will be paid off in 2042, said Dan Cartwright, town manager.

Eschweiler proposed several scenarios for the rate increase and advertised the highest possible rate increase scenario for the public hearing set for March 28.

The maximum advertised average increase of \$12.02 is likely higher than the town council will ultimately approve, as that figure did not include the ARPA funds. With ARPA funds included, the rate would be \$10.31 higher for residential customers, on average, Cartwright said.

The original scenarios were an average increase of \$12.02, \$10.12 and \$7.28. With the ARPA funds added, the increases would be several dollars under what was originally proposed, Cartwright said.

The scenarios are based on the average water user at about 4,000 gallons of monthly water usage. These customers currently average about \$31 per month for their bill, so they would pay about \$41.31 if the council approves the maximum rate increase.

These rates would increase the amount available for operating expenses for the water utility, would make enough money available to meet the requirements of the bond and raise between \$1.6 million and \$1.8 million for future water infrastructure improvements, Eschweiler said.

Even with the increase, the town's water

rates are lower than comparable utilities. The survey of nearby rates shows Edinburgh's current rates are lower than all but one community, while the proposed rates would put the rates in the middle of the pack, according to town documents.

While a rate increase isn't ideal as gas prices and inflation continues to rise, the town's infrastructure is well past its useful life. The utility pumps thousands into repairs, Cartwright said.

The new plant will save on repairs and it will eliminate the need for sodium permanganate to be added to Edinburgh's water, Cartwright said. The discoloration that plagued residents in 2020 occurred because the plant is no longer able to effectively clean iron and manganese because of its old filtration system.

"It was just over a year ago that the whole community was shook up about the brown water," Cartwright said. "We have been band-aiding our existing water plant for several years. We've dug new wells, we have our water tested. Today there's no problem with our water, but we are band-aiding a very, very old water plant to do that."

Though an increase isn't desirable, it is unavoidable, town officials said.

"A \$10 increase in today's world is tough but we are also getting an entirely new

water plant that will not have any more rust issues that is going to serve the community for the next 30 years potentially," said Ryan Piercefield, town council member.

The plant will also up the town's current capacity from 1.4 million gallons per day to 2.1 million, with the ability to expand to 2.8 million, Bill Jones, Edinburgh's water superintendent said last year. With current daily water usage at about 700,000 gallons per day, there is plenty of room for commercial, industrial and housing growth, he said.

The old plant, located at 308 N. Walnut St., will remain at the site and be converted to a storage building. The new plant will be built next door and continue to pull the town's water supply from a well that is also located on the site, Jones said.

The town council is expected to decide how much to increase rates at their meeting at 6 p.m. on March 28 at the town hall, 107 S. Holland St. The council will hold a public hearing before approving the rates, meaning anyone with questions or concerns about the rates may address the council. Town officials will close on the bond a few days later on March 31, to lock in the interest rate at a lower rate before the Federal Reserve's planned interest rate increase the following day.

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