

*"To read a poem in January is as lovely  
as to go for a walk in June."*  
~ Jean-Paul Sartre

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# Winfield American

Vol. 22, Issue 1,066

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January 27, 2023

## Students do forensic investigation with owl pellets; prepare for open house events

Sixth graders at St. Mary School ended their ecology unit dissecting barn owl pellets. The students were intrigued by their discoveries finding skulls of rodents and beaks of smaller birds in the pellets. This gave insight to the Barn Owl's diet and place in the food web.

"'Hands on science' is an important part of the curriculum at St. Mary's", said teacher, Michelle Sarabia.

St. Mary School in Crown Point offers grade levels Junior Pre-Kindergarten (for three-year-olds) through grade eight. St. Mary's faculty teaches a curriculum supported by cutting-edge technology. To learn more about St. Mary School's upcoming open house event on January 29 from 10 a.m. to noon, visit [www.school.stmarycp.org](http://www.school.stmarycp.org).



James Raggs and Vincent Vicari show off the remnants of a meal eaten by an owl.



Victoria Townsend and Sophia Scalzitti carefully examine their owl pellet.



Sommer Branigin and Claire Staciwa were thrilled to find a full skull in their owl pellet.

## Sign-ups underway for the Crown Point Community Foundation's annual Volunteer Fair

Registration is now open for non-profit organizations to exhibit at the Crown Point Community Foundation's annual Volunteer Fair. The Volunteer Fair is the perfect opportunity to match charitable organizations with those who are interested in volunteering. It gathers nonprofits

from throughout the area in one convenient place, letting potential volunteers meet and talk to dozens of charities. This one-day event will take place on Saturday, March 4 at Crown Point High School from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is the Crown Point Community Foundation's

fourteenth year sponsoring the event, which also includes an on-site blood drive. Non-profit organizations can reserve a tabletop booth for only \$30 with an online payment made during the online registration process. This registration fee includes one table and chair. Plus,

advertising in the Volunteer Fair pull-out program booklet that will be distributed in The Times newspaper and at the event. This special section will include information about your organization, its mission, and your volunteer opportunities. To exhibit, register online

at [www.cpcfgrants.communityforce.com](http://www.cpcfgrants.communityforce.com) and select 2023 Volunteer Fair. Registration is open now until January 31. "Our Volunteer Fair is one of our largest and most anticipated events of the year," said Mary Nielsen, president of the Crown Point Community Foundation.

"It's a great opportunity for area nonprofit organizations to meet potential volunteers face-to-face, share their mission as well as to build connections with other charities in our community." In previous years, over fifty non-profits participated in this event.

## Nipsco offers billing, payment options to customers experiencing financial difficulties

Customers who are experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to visit [www.nipsco.com/assistance](http://www.nipsco.com/assistance) or call Nipsco's Customer Care Center as soon as possible to determine what options might be available to offer help. Some of those solutions include:

- **Payment Plans:** Flexible payment plans are available for customers that need financial support, including a three-month or six-month option for all customers, and a 12-month option for eligible LIHEAP customers. Customers can learn more and enroll at [www.nipsco.com/paymentplans](http://www.nipsco.com/paymentplans). Nipsco's

customer care team will also work with customers to set up a personalized payment plan. Customers can call 1-800-464-7726 to discuss options.

- **Payment Assistance Programs:** Based on income levels, customers may qualify to receive local, state and federal utility assistance dollars as well as support funds from separate Nipsco programs. Customers can visit [www.nipsco.com/Assistance](http://www.nipsco.com/Assistance) to find additional resources, or call their local community action agency, Energy Assistance Program (EAP) agency or Township Trustee's office.

- **Budget Plan:** A free service to all Nipsco customers to help manage their monthly energy bills by spreading out gas costs over an entire year. For more information on billing options and payment assistance, visit [www.nipsco.com/assistance](http://www.nipsco.com/assistance). Customers can review and manage their account via Nipsco's new mobile app available for download on iPhone or Android. Those looking to quickly find information 24-hours a day, seven days a week can use Nipsco's new Chat feature located in the bottom right-hand corner of its website or via the mobile app.

## Crown Point Community Foundation now accepting scholarship applications

The Crown Point Community Foundation is accepting online scholarship applications for high school, college, and trade school students, and adult learners (non-traditional students, 21 & over) who are looking to continue their education in Fall 2023. The 2023 scholarship applications must be submitted online. The link to the applications can be found on the CPCF website, [www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html](http://www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html), the Crown Point Community Foundation's Facebook page, or visit <http://bit.ly/CPCFScholarships>.

The deadline for applying is Friday, February 17 at 11:59 p.m. (CST). Questions about the application process should be made to the Foundation office at 219-662-7252. The application for the non-traditional Adult Learners Scholarships is separate from the 2023 General Scholarship Application for traditional high school, trade school, and college applicants. CPCF encourages all qualifying students to apply for scholarships administered by the Foundation. A complete listing of all scholarships can be found on their website at [www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html](http://www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html).

The Crown Point Community Foundation connects people who care to causes that matter. Since 1990, we have served the citizens of Crown Point and South Lake County through a range of charitable and civic activities, while helping individual donors achieve their philanthropic goals. As a public charitable organization, the CPCF is dedicated to building permanently endowed funds. The Crown Point Community Foundation will help to positively shape the future of the community and act as a facilitator of community good.

## Franciscan Health partners with 57 non-profits on community health

Franciscan Health recently provided \$450,000 in funding for community health improvement through its Social Impact Partnership Program (SIPP). Fifty-seven non-profits located throughout Franciscan Health's Indiana service re-

gions and south suburban Chicago were selected from applications to receive funding of up to \$9,750 per organization. Partners in the Crown Point area are Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Gary, Inc.; Hilltop Neighborhood House;

Housing Opportunities; The Caring Place; The Community Help Network and Tradewinds Services, Inc. Partners in the Hammond/Munster/Dyer area are Boys & Girls Club of Greater Northwest Indiana, Girls

on The Run of Northwest Indiana, Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Indiana, Hope Christian Church, Housing Opportunities, Indiana Parenting Institute Inc. (IPI), Indiana Women in Need (IWIN) Foundation, Mental Health of America of Lake

County Inc., St. Michael's Wheelchair Ramp Ministry, The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana, The Jennifer S. Fallick Cancer Support Center, Top 20, Inc. and Women's Care Center. Partners in the Michigan City area are Catholic

Charities of the Diocese of Gary, Inc.; Citizens Concerned for the Homeless, Inc.; Dunbrook, Inc.; Healthy Communities of LaPorte County; Open Door Community Alliance, Inc.; Stepping Stone Shelter (See Community Pg. 8)



## Tri Kappa seeking scholarship recipients

Beta Rho, the Gary-Merrillville-Winfield chapter of Tri Kappa is seeking candidates for local scholarship awards for the 2023-24 school year. To be eligible, an applicant must have graduated from Andrean, Boone Grove, Crown Point, Merrillville, or one of the Gary High Schools and be a sophomore or higher level student enrolled full-time in an accredited college pursu-

ing a bachelor or higher degree. Interested candidates must have a 3.6 minimum GPA and demonstrate potential within their chosen career field. Additional state scholarships are available in the areas of academics, fine arts, and music. A key scholarship is available to individuals with at least a five-year gap in their education and no other un-

dergraduate degree. The deadline for submitting completed application packets is February 10, 2023. Be advised that there is a later date listed on the website, which is our chapter deadline to submit candidates for state level scholarships. For scholarship packet and more information, email scholarship@betarhotrikappa.org

## Indiana DNR will increase Chinook salmon stocked in Lake Michigan

Indiana DNR will increase Chinook salmon stocked in Lake Michigan by 50,000 starting in spring 2023, per Lake Michigan Committee agreement. The change will increase the annual production target for Chinook from 225,000 to 275,000. Baitfish populations have rebounded from an all-time low in the mid-2010s after lake-wide stocking reductions made by all state agencies during the past decade. Ben Dickinson, Indiana DNR's Lake Michigan biologist, says the improved predator-prey balance in the lake allows for the increase, which should benefit anglers, but bi-

ologists will be monitoring for the need for future adjustments. "Anglers should realize increasing stocking does increase predation pressure and may increase future risk to baitfish populations," he said. "We will continue to closely watch the predator-prey balance to help ensure the long-term health of the fishery." Staff from Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery recently traveled to Michigan to obtain Chinook salmon eggs to meet the new production target. "Indiana doesn't have the infrastructure to take salmon eggs, so partnerships are crucial for our Lake Michigan

program," said Rob Ackerson, Mixsawbah hatchery manager. "We're grateful to our Michigan DNR partners for providing us with the opportunity to obtain eggs." Fish from the eggs will be raised at Mixsawbah to be stocked in April 2023. They will spend one to three years feeding in Lake Michigan before returning to their stocking sites as mature spawning adults in the fall. More information on the hatchery is at [www.on.IN.gov/mixsawbah-sfh](http://www.on.IN.gov/mixsawbah-sfh). More information on Lake Michigan fishing is at [www.on.IN.gov/lake-michigan-fishing](http://www.on.IN.gov/lake-michigan-fishing).

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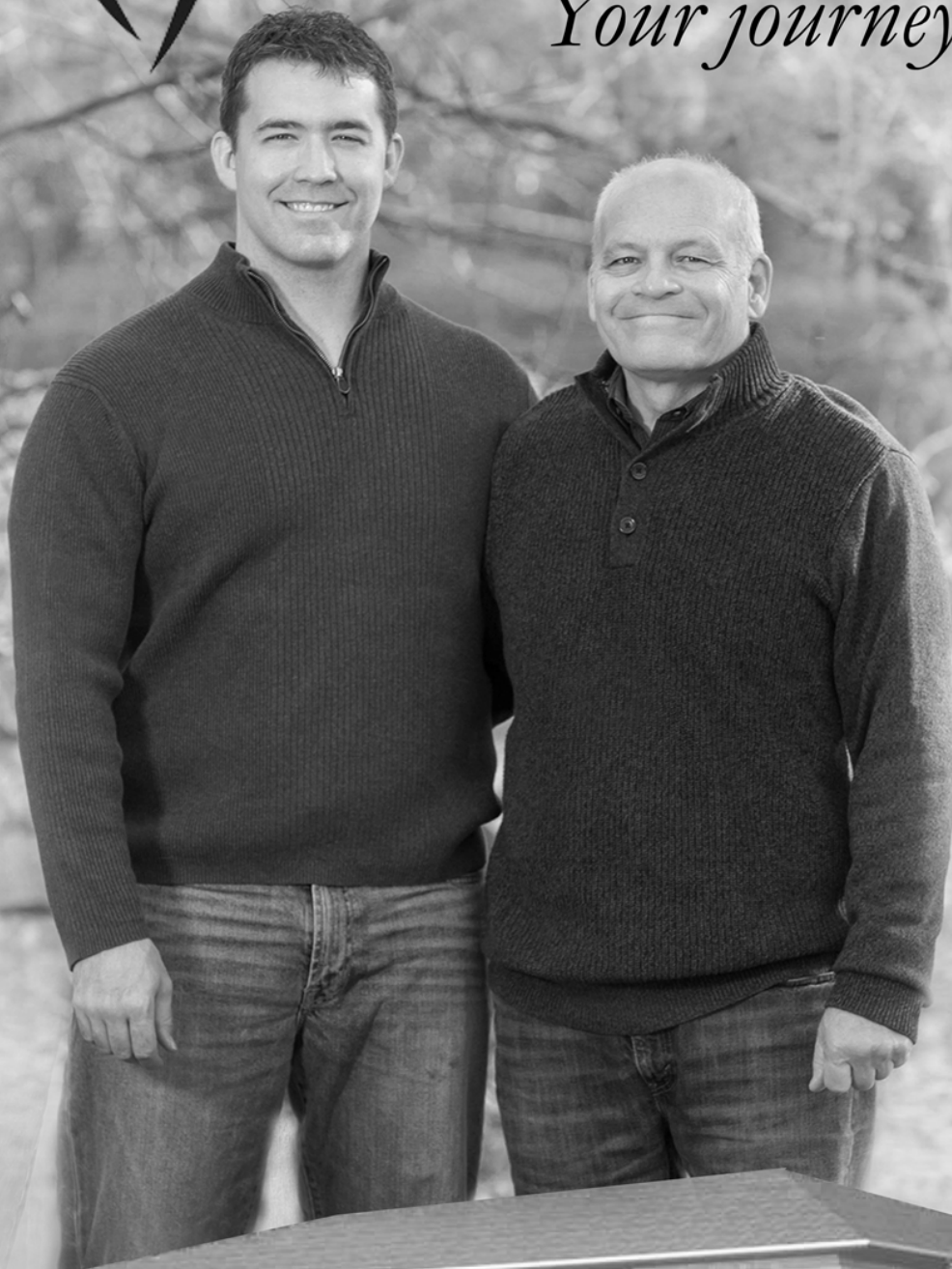
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*This week in history*

**January 27, 1967**


A launch pad fire during Apollo program tests at Cape Canaveral, Florida, kills astronauts Virgil "Gus" Grissom, Edward H. White II, and Roger B. Chafee. An investigation indicated that a faulty electrical wire inside the Apollo 1 command module was the probable cause of the fire. The astronauts, the first Americans to die in a spacecraft, had been participating in a simulation of the Apollo 1 launch scheduled for the next month.

Immediately after the fire, NASA convened to determine the cause of the fire, and both houses of the United States Congress conducted their own committee inquiries to oversee NASA's investigation. The ignition source of the fire was determined to be electrical, and the fire spread rapidly due to combustible nylon material, and the high pressure, pure oxygen cabin atmosphere. The astronauts' rescue was prevented by the plug door hatch, which could not be opened against the higher internal pressure of the cabin. A failure to identify the test as hazardous, based on the fact that the rocket was unfueled, led to the rescue being hampered by poor emergency preparedness.

The Apollo program was initiated by NASA following President John F. Kennedy's 1961 declaration of the goal of landing men on the moon and bringing them safely back to Earth by the end of the decade.

www.history.com

DIRECTOR PROFILE: ANTHONY GEISEN




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I hope the groundhog sees the...

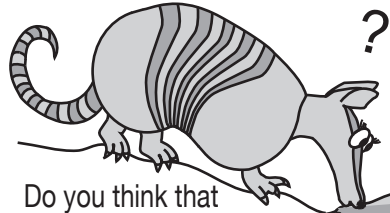


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Kids: color stuff in!



Are you awake, Mr. Groundhog? I don't mean to hound you, but maybe you can predict the winner of the Super Bowl, too? Hello!

Do you think that a groundhog can predict the weather? On February 2, some people will get up very early to watch the groundhog come out of its home. They will stand around the groundhog's hole in the ground and study the sky. As soon as they see the groundhog poke out of its hole they will snap pictures. Who do you think will see the funnier sight...the people or the groundhog?

**Read the clues to fill in the crossword puzzle:**

- a long winter's nap
- a warm-blooded creature
- another name for the groundhog
- curls into this to sleep
- something people believe in or think will happen without facts or proof
- the groundhog's \_\_\_\_\_ pumps more slowly when it hibernates
- the groundhog is part of this family
- young are born in this month
- males are about two feet long and weigh about twelve pounds; females are \_\_\_\_\_
- to tell about an event before it happens

**Time to Rhyme!**

Find and circle the ten words that rhyme with "ground."

count mound frowned pound crowed wound pounce round crouched groaned hound browned found sound crowed round

Our whole family doesn't weigh a pound!

Look at the mound of dirt!

**Groundhog Weather Forecaster?**

Hey, let me shine!

Ahhhh...I'm ready for springtime weather!

What's that sound? Do I hear cheering?

Look at the mound of dirt!

11. it is said that when the groundhog pokes out of his hole and sees the sun there will be six more weeks of winter, but when he sees clouds, \_\_\_\_\_ is near

12. where the groundhog lives

**Football Fever**

Find and circle these football terms:

touchdown	tackle
offense	referee
defense	kickoff
teams	field goal
huddle	quarterback

Look at him bound off to watch the game!

Off to watch the Super Bowl...chicken wings, potato chips, veggies and dips...yay!

**Is Winter Almost Over?**

Why did the groundhogs cheer when they came out of their burrows and saw only clouds? Use the alphabet code to fill in the blanks and find out:

^ \_ # ) { # \*

^ \_ + ^ ( || } ? { &

\* + ( { # + }

Yay! It's cloudy.

H	C	B	R	T	B	N	B	A	S	X	K	Z	A	O	K	I	C	K	O	F	F
D	A	O	F	I	T	F	G	O	V	L	D	R	Z	C	Q	W	C	L	P	K	H
Y	B	S	A	G	O	Q	F	D	Z	U	N	M	E	K	V	A	H	U	A	E	R
L	X	W	J	T	U	F	A	E	R	A	N	I	X	F	B	A	K	Y	L	X	X
E	F	S	V	C	C	Z	I	F	G	P	Y	E	V	R	E	X	B	K	O	W	A
P	A	J	W	A	H	Z	H	E	Z	D	Y	I	E	L	Q	R	C	V	F	K	N
P	O	I	O	I	D	L	L	N	L	Q	W	T	L	M	R	A	E	H	F	T	R
O	U	W	T	A	O	G	L	S	U	D	R	H	C	X	T	E	Q	E	E	E	B
P	E	P	X	Y	W	L	K	E	S	A	G	D	M	V	G	I	G	C	N	A	Y
F	H	G	D	U	N	Z	A	I	U	Q	X	O	J	L	X	H	U	V	S	M	P
P	R	W	O	G	D	T	G	Q	O	G	P	D	A	Q	L	R	L	C	E	S	
J	A	H	U	D	D	L	E	V	Q	J	I	U	C	L	W	N	Z	E			

**Weather Superstitions and Forecasts?**

Grrrr... Who woke me?

Don't look at me!

**Fill in the blanks to spell weather words!**

1. __ ain __ ow	5. o __ erca __ t
2. cl __ ud __	6. cli __ at __
3. met __ oro __ ogis __	7. tem __ era __ ure
4. __ liz __ ard	8. dr __ zzl __

r y e b o \ m p b e z s i v t o t

**Match these weather superstitions and forecasts:**

(More than 1 superstition can have the same forecast...you'll see!)

1. If squirrels store large numbers of acorns	A. it is going to rain.
2. When frogs croak louder and faster	B. it will go out like a lamb.
3. If March comes in like a lion	C. it is going to rain.
4. When tree leaves flip over	D. sailors take warning.
5. "Red sky at night, sailor's delight Red sky in morning,..."	E. it will be a long, cold winter.
6. If animals grow heavy fur	F. spring is far away!
7. If a groundhog awakens from hibernation and sees sunshine and his shadow	G. it will be a long, hard winter.
8. When your bones ache	H. rain is coming.



## Community Hospital receives recertification for complex neonatal, obstetric care

Community Hospital is equipped to care for patients facing complex maternal medical issues and for infants who need neonatal intensive care, state health officials affirm.

The hospital recently was recertified by state health officials as an Obstetric Level of Care III and Neonatal Level of Care III facility. The Maternal and Child Health Division at the Indiana Department of Health granted the certification, effective through September 8, 2025.

A Level III designation indicates a hospital is equipped to care for complex maternal medical conditions and obstetric complications as well as infants requiring neonatal intensive care. Designations are based on Indiana Department of Health reviews of facility capabilities; equipment and technology; medications; policies and procedures; and personnel.

To help provide continuity

in care for high-risk pregnancies, Community Hospital has a maternal-fetal medicine program, laborists on staff 24/7 and an Obstetric Emergency Department (OB-ED). The OB-ED is dedicated solely to pregnant women and those up to six weeks postpartum to ensure they receive timely diagnosis and treatment.

“This certification recognizes Community Hospital’s commitment to healthy mothers and healthy babies,” said Carla Meyer, director of Patient Care Services. “Our team is trained, equipped and prepared in case complications should arise.”

For more information about the Family Birthing Centers at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System – St. Mary Medical Center, Hobart,; Community Hospital, Munster; or St. Catherine Hospital, East Chicago; visit [www.COMHS.org/baby](http://www.COMHS.org/baby).

## Indiana launches Licensing Assistance Program for English learner teachers

The Indiana Department of Education formed a partnership with the University of Indianapolis’ Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) to strengthen Indiana’s English learner teacher pipeline by helping fund coursework leading to full licensure.

The new partnership, called the Indiana Teachers of English Learners Licensure (I-TELL) initiative, will fund tuition, books and material fees for current educators and bachelor’s degree holders to complete coursework leading to English as a New Language (ENL) licensure. This will empower current educators licensed in other content areas to serve English learners as a teacher of record – the educator primarily responsible for a student’s learning. It will also provide financial support to people who choose to transition into a new career in teaching and want to be a part of serving Indiana’s more than 77,500 English learner students.

“Our COVID-19 academic impact data shows that Indiana’s English learner students experienced substantial academic impacts and have still not returned to pre-pandemic year-over-year academic growth,” said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. “The best way to ensure our students accelerate their learning is to ensure they have quality, well-trained teachers supporting them. Like STEM and special education teachers, we also see a significant need for English learner teachers. Through the

new I-TELL initiative, we will provide opportunities for more educators to be trained and certified to teach and positively impact our English learner students.”

An initial list of educator preparation and transition to teaching programs participating in the I-TELL initiative is available here. Additional colleges and universities interested in participating in the I-TELL initiative are also invited to join.

“The number of students in Indiana who don’t speak English as their first language continues to rapidly grow,” said Carey Dahncke, executive director of CELL. “For these students, the need to have access to highly qualified English language teachers is critically important. I-TELL will offer assistance to the many schools across the state who need more of these English learner licensed teachers.”

I-TELL is funded through \$2 million from Indiana’s federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding.

The initiative launches as the number of teachers in Indiana holding ENL licensure has grown by 38% from 2019 to 2021, with over 860 more educators now holding this permit statewide than in 2019. In addition to ENL licensure, many other educators are also qualified to serve English learners across Indiana by meeting previously available alternative rubric requirements. Eligible individuals can learn more and apply for assistance by visiting [IndianaTELL.org](http://IndianaTELL.org).

## Scholarship opportunity available from Lake County Extension Homemakers Association

The Lake County Extension Homemakers Association is accepting applications for the Lucile Smith Memorial Scholarship, which is offered annually. In addition to this scholarship, applications for the Indiana Extension Homemakers Association (state level) Career Advancement Scholarship are also available through the Indiana Extension Homemakers Association.

To be eligible for the Lucile Smith Memorial Scholarship, applicant must be an Indiana resident twenty-one (21) years of age or older, and a resident of Lake County for at least six months. Lucile Smith Memorial Scholarship applications must be received by March 1.

To be eligible for the Indiana Extension Homemakers Association Scholarship, applicant must be a

homemaker twenty-five (25) years of age or older, and a resident of Indiana. Indiana Extension Homemakers Association Scholarship applications must be postmarked by March 15. Students may download the Indiana Extension Homemakers Association Scholarship at [www.iehha-families.org/forms-and-applications/scholarships](http://www.iehha-families.org/forms-and-applications/scholarships)

Both scholarships require that the applicant has been admitted or cleared for admission to an academic or vocational school that is state licensed or accredited. Preference will be given to a person studying at an undergraduate level.

For more information or to request an application, please contact Marylou Hultgren, Education Committee Chairperson at [loubus-2@peoplepc.com](mailto:loubus-2@peoplepc.com)

## St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart is looking for volunteers

St. Mary Medical Center is seeking volunteers 16 and older who have a passion for helping others.

Volunteers are needed to greet, escort and/or transport patients and visitors at the Hobart hospital, 1500 S. Lake Park Ave. A commitment of one four-hour shift per week is required, as well as the ability to work well as a team. Training will be pro-

vided. Weekend shifts also are available and are great for students needing more than 20 service hours.

For more information on how you can make a difference as a volunteer, contact the Department of Volunteer Services at 219-947-6011. All safety protocols are being observed, and masks will be provided as needed.



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(*Franciscan from Pg. 1*) for Women, Inc. and The Salvation Army.

“Our community partners are such an asset to the health and wellbeing of their communities,” said Community Health Improvement Administrative Director Kate Hill-Johnson. “This program honors that and provides additional support that allows them to build capacity and assist even more individuals.”

SIPP is a community health enrichment program sponsored by Franciscan Health, which establishes and builds upon partnerships with non-profit health and human service agencies that provide services in at-risk communities served by the health system. The goal is to foster long-term relationships with community providers to better address significant health issues among vulnerable populations.

A committee comprised of local Franciscan health-care leadership selected the fund recipients and amounts. The recipient organizations received funding based on program applications demonstrating their ability to address priority health needs and health equity based on Franciscan’s Community Health Needs Assessment process. Identified priority health issues include physical activity and nutrition (including food insecurity); mental wellness; healthy relationships (including pregnancy, parenting and recovery) and housing support.

Recipient organizations will collaborate with Franciscan’s Community Health Improvement team to ensure program effectiveness that meet the partner organization’s stated goals. They must participate in program orientation and will submit progress reports at six-month and one-year intervals. Participation in the reporting process is required for consideration of any future funding or assistance.

Bonnie Meyer, president of Community Help Network, said the funding is a blessing.

“This money will help us serve almost 800 food insecure students in South Lake County,” Meyer said. “We are packing 562 Buddy Bags each week and providing monthly \$20 grocery cards to the families of 218 middle schoolers. We are serving between 35 and 40 families per month with our Household Pantry. The SIPP grant helps keep these programs going and growing and we are grateful to Franciscan Alliance for including the Community Help Network.”

“We are grateful that, through SIPP, we are a part of a network of providers that is focused on creating healthier families in our most vulnerable communities,” Jill Schlueter-Kim, executive director of Girls on the Run, said, “The financial support means that we are able to eliminate barriers to participation and include all girls in our programming. At

Girls on the Run, our mission is to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident through a research-based curriculum that creatively integrates running.”

Pamela Henderson, Dunebrook’s grants and communications director, said, “Franciscan’s SIPP is not just an investment in Dunebrook, it is an investment in our community’s families.”

“Much of what we learn in life - how to communicate with one another, how to resolve conflicts peaceably, how to show love, respect and kindness to others, begins at home,” Henderson said. “... No parent has all the answers but learning from the real-world experiences of other parents helps to create a home where children can thrive, be safe and reach their

potential. Franciscan SIPP helps us at Dunebrook bring the philosophy of nurturing parenting to parents to build stronger families, and our future depends upon it. After all, today’s children will be tomorrow’s parents.”

Charlie Williams, assistant director of Women’s Care Center Foundation, said, “Women’s Care Center is thrilled and honored to con-

tinue their ongoing partnership with Franciscan Health.”

“Their support enables us to love and serve every sixth child born in Lake County,” Williams said. “We are very grateful for all the work they do with countless organizations in the area.”

Franciscan Health will announce the benchmark dates for 2023 SIPP applications, review and awards early next year.

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