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Winfield American

Vol. 22, Issue 1,072

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March 17, 2023

Nipsco accepting applications for environmental action grants

Nipsco is accepting applications for its Environmental Action Grant to support local nonprofit organizations with environmental initiatives. For the eighth consecutive year, Nipsco will provide support for environmental restoration and education projects throughout northern Indiana.

“Our employees are passionate about investing in the communities where they live and work, and we have a lot of energy to give to the communities we serve,” said Rick Calinski, Nipsco Director of Public Affairs and Economic Development. “We are proud to provide help to local organizations dedicated to benefiting and revitalizing our environment.”

In 2022, winning organizations used the grants to fund education and restoration

projects such as:

- The Nature Conservancy in Indiana: The organization used their Environmental Action Grant to support East Chicago’s Festival de la Monarca, educating the public about endangered Monarch butterflies and their migration patterns while celebrating the culture of their annual migration to Michoacan, Mexico.

- The Watershed Foundation: Environmental Action Grant was used to remove an aging dam from Deeds Creek in Warsaw, Ind. The dam removal is expected to improve water quality, reconnect aquatic organism passage and increase habitat in Deeds Creek.

- Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana-Michiana: Environmental Action Grant

allowed Girl Scouts throughout the region to participate in the “It’s Your Planet, Love It!” leadership journey, teaching environmental topics such as clean water and air, noise pollution, global warming, soil contamination, and agricultural processes.

- Humane Indiana’s Environmental and Wildlife Education Center: Humane Indiana used the grant it received to provide care to injured or orphaned wild animals native to Indiana at their Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The Center receives wildlife as small as hummingbirds and chipmunks to animals as large as coyote, fox, opossums, eagles and other species in need of various levels of rehab assistance.

(See *Nipsco* Pg. 4)



Local students recognized for being “Students of the Month”

Congratulations to the February Students of the Month at Porter Lakes Elementary School. Each classroom teacher selected a student who exhibits the qualities and characteristics that are a good example to others. Each student received a PLE Student of the Month wrist band, a certificate and a special treat from PTO. Pictured are, front row, Layla Holeman, Stefan Ristevski, and Scarlet Schweitzer; second row, Layla Worley, Grayson Frizzell, Keenan Yancey, Eamon Moore, and Benjamin Taylor-Hart; third row, Brayden Unsworth, Ellison Grayam, Owen Garner, Grayson Zwickl, and Colton Katschke; and back row, Lily Clinton, Brightyn Unsworth, Cloey Yuran, David Roth, and Reagan Masching. (Not Pictured: Manny Cisneros)

Lakeshore PBS launched new season of local series ‘Eye on the Arts’ this week

Lakeshore PBS is back with its Emmy-winning local series ‘Eye on the Arts’ that premiered its eighth season on Wednesday.

‘Eye on the Arts’ is a half-hour program that showcases a diverse range of local artists, artistic organizations, events and stories, demonstrating the power of arts in people’s lives, and how art and culture improve the quality of life for residents throughout Northwest Indiana and Chicagoland.

Vice President of Video Production at Lakeshore

PBS, Tony Santucci, has been the executive producer of ‘Eye on the Arts’ for its last seven seasons.

“The team and I are committed to uncovering the vibrancy of life elevated by the arts within our communities. It’s a chance to share the arts’ capability as an economic driver, a foundation for quality of place, and its powers of rehabilitation and expression,” Santucci said. “We let the artists speak for themselves and the result is an honest and intimate snapshot at what it means to cre-

ate and share.”

At the helm once again, Santucci leads the production for the eighth season of the Lakeshore PBS original series with assistance from Alex Hernandez, Kevin Lunn, Miguel Arteaga and Tom Duncan.

“‘Eye on the Arts’ is a fantastic show to help produce! The show is a welcomed challenge because each artist we highlight requires a different approach to shining a light on what makes them unique,” producer Tom Duncan said. “I get to inter-

view interesting people who contribute to the local culture, as well as highlight art forms that audiences might not know about. I cherish the experience of the art making process with the artists; like feeling the calm of a park in the afternoon sun with Christine Newton or watching as Laura Gutzwiller transforms strands of fabric into vivid felt paintings were some standouts so far.”

Newton is an artist scheduled to be featured in the upcoming season of “Eye on the Arts.” Finding calm and

serenity through plein air painting (painting outdoors), Newton uses her art to bring feeling and emotion to everyday landscapes.

“It was a wonderful experience working with the Lakeshore PBS production team. Tom and Alex made the interview and filming very easy and relaxed. They were professional, talented, fun to work with, and respectful of my work and space,” Newton said. “‘Eye on the Arts’ showcases and promotes local talent and educates the community on all the culture that is

right here in our community. It’s also a great value to each individual Artist to have their work recognized.”

Gutzwiller is an artist featured in the eighth season of ‘Eye on the Arts’. Through fabric and needles, she creates wondrous and vibrant felt paintings that instantly draw the viewer’s eye.

“Working with the team from Lakeshore Public Media was so much fun! I was way out of my comfort zone, but they helped me relax and be myself. They were

(See *PBS* Pg. 8)

Indiana Donor Network hits new heights last year; 1,116 organs transplanted

Indiana Donor Network, the federally designated organ recovery organization that coordinates organ, tissue and cornea donation in Indiana and transplantation throughout the U.S., hit new heights in 2022, transplanting an all-time high of 1,116 lifesaving organs.

The milestone is an 18% increase in annual transplants compared to 2021, when 949 organs were transplanted.

“I’m proud to say we’re on the right trajectory and the future is bright for Indiana

Donor Network,” said Indiana Donor Network President and CEO Kellie Tremain. “We are dedicated to investing in cutting-edge technology, new and innovative processes and highly skilled professionals across all disciplines for those in need of lifesaving transplants.”

Also, the selfless gifts of 1,267 tissue and cornea donor heroes resulted in 14,392 tissues recovered in 2022, including 141 hearts for valve transplant, 3,701 skin grafts and 382 corneas.

New liver perfusion technology deployed: Indiana Donor Network took an industry leading step in 2022 by training in advanced perfusion technology that has the potential to keep donated livers functioning outside the human body for up to 24 hours with the use of a liver transporter.

Last year, Indiana Donor Network participated in a trial study in partnership with four Midwest transplant centers, including University of Cincinnati Medical Center, University of Chicago,

Northwestern University and Rutgers’ University Hospital. Once approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Indiana Donor Network intends to deploy the device for use in liver transplants at all transplant centers the organization serves.

When packed in a traditional cold storage device, donated livers can remain outside the body for only 12 hours. Keeping a donated liver functioning longer after recovery with a liver trans-

porter will create more time for medical teams to assess a liver’s viability for transplant, improve a liver’s function, and ultimately make more livers available for transplantation.

Kidney perfusion technology saving more lives: Indiana Donor Network’s team of surgical recovery specialists is also specially trained in the use of kidney perfusion pumps, which are utilized in operating rooms during organ recovery and for transport to a transplant center.

Pumps keep donated kidneys functioning outside the body, allowing the organ’s temperature and vascular performance to be constantly monitored and increasing its viability for successful transplant. Donated kidneys on perfusion pumps can be transported up to 250 nautical miles from Indiana Donor Network’s Organ and Tissue Recover Center, reaching patients at 40 transplant centers throughout the Midwest.

In 2022, Indiana Donor

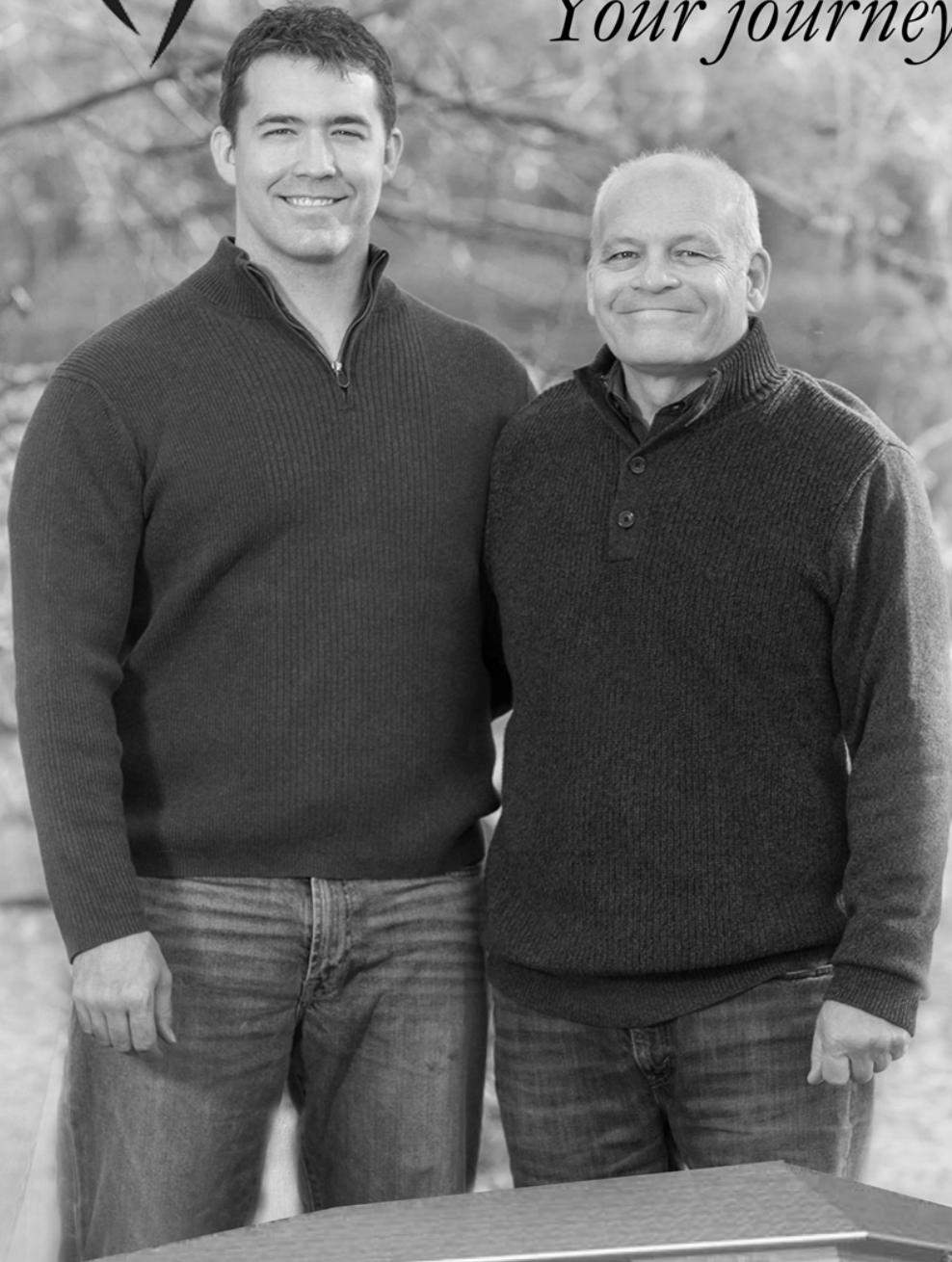
(See *Indiana* Pg. 8)

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Across the street from Lakes of the Four Seasons

(Donor from Pg. 1)
Network utilized 10 kidney perfusion pumps for 622 successful transplant surgeries. Other major milestones achieved by Indiana Donor Network in 2022:

- Provided programs, grief and counseling services and support to 2,253 donor family members.
- Registered 960,000 Indiana residents to become organ and tissue donors, an all-time high number of new registrants in a single year; today, more than 4.3 mil-

lion Hoosiers are registered donors.

- Relied on passionate donation advocates who volunteered nearly 14,000 hours, equivalent to more than six full-time employees.
- Led nearly 950 school and community presentations and activations, reaching more than 200,000 Hoosiers.
- Generated nearly \$180,000 in net proceeds for Indiana Donor Network Foundation and its mission to provide financial assistance and support for organ transplant re-

cipients and donor families.

- Hired 45 new team members for a total of 284, creating its largest staff since the organization was founded in 1987.

Nationally, in 2022 the U.S. surpassed 1 million lifesaving organ transplants since the first was performed in 1954, according to United Network for Organ Sharing. A new annual high of 42,887 organs were successfully transplanted in 2022.

More than 105,000 Americans are currently

awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant, including 1,200 Hoosiers.

“The need for more people to make the selfless decision to one day become a donor hero remains incredibly important,” Tremain said. “Working with our hospital and transplant center partners throughout Indiana and beyond, we remain laser focused on saving more lives each year through donation and transplantation, educating more Hoosiers about how important donation is, and encouraging Indiana

residents to say ‘yes’ to donation.”

Indiana Donor Network’s mission is to save and enhance the quality of life through organ, tissue and eye donation and transplantation. Its vision is to be a leader in organ and tissue recovery.

Founded in 1987, the organization coordinates donation in 85 of the state’s 92 counties and serves transplant hospitals throughout the U.S.

Despite age or medical history, anyone can sign up to be a donor at www.DonateLifeIndiana.org.

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Porter Lakes preschool registration is now open

Your child must be age 3 or age 4 by August 1, 2023. Three-year-olds will attend two days per week. Four-year-olds may choose to attend three days or five days per week. Call 219-306-8076 to register while spots are still available.

(Nipsco from Pg. 1)

Grants are available in the amount of \$500 to \$5,000 for organizations seeking funds for environmental restoration projects and education programs. Applications will be accepted now through April 7, 2023, with grant awards announced the week of April 24, in celebration of Earth Day. Nonprofit organizations with an environmental restoration or education project are invited to submit a grant request at www.nipsco.com/Community. When submitting an application online, applicants should select the "Environmental Stewardship" option in the Area of Impact drop-down box on the application. Applications should include a project description and goals, budget, target audience, timeline and evaluation. The Nipsco Environmental Grant Committee evaluates requests on the following areas: strategic alignment, resource availability, visibility and recognition, project or program impact and organization priorities. Eligible organizations must be a 501(c)3 or other non-profit as determined by the Internal Revenue Service with an environmental project focus and have a direct impact in Nipsco service area. Grant funding is not intended for capital projects including weatherization, LEED-certification, trail/path building or expansion, Green Build construction or solar panel purchases. To see what Nipsco is doing to support the environment of northern Indiana, visit www.nipsco.com/Environment.

DIRECTOR PROFILE: ANTHONY GEISEN



6th Generation from the Geisen family to serve funeral families

Recent graduate from Worsham School of Mortuary Science

2017 Purdue University graduate

Enjoys coaching football in the Crown Point community

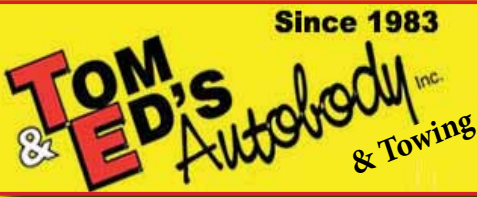


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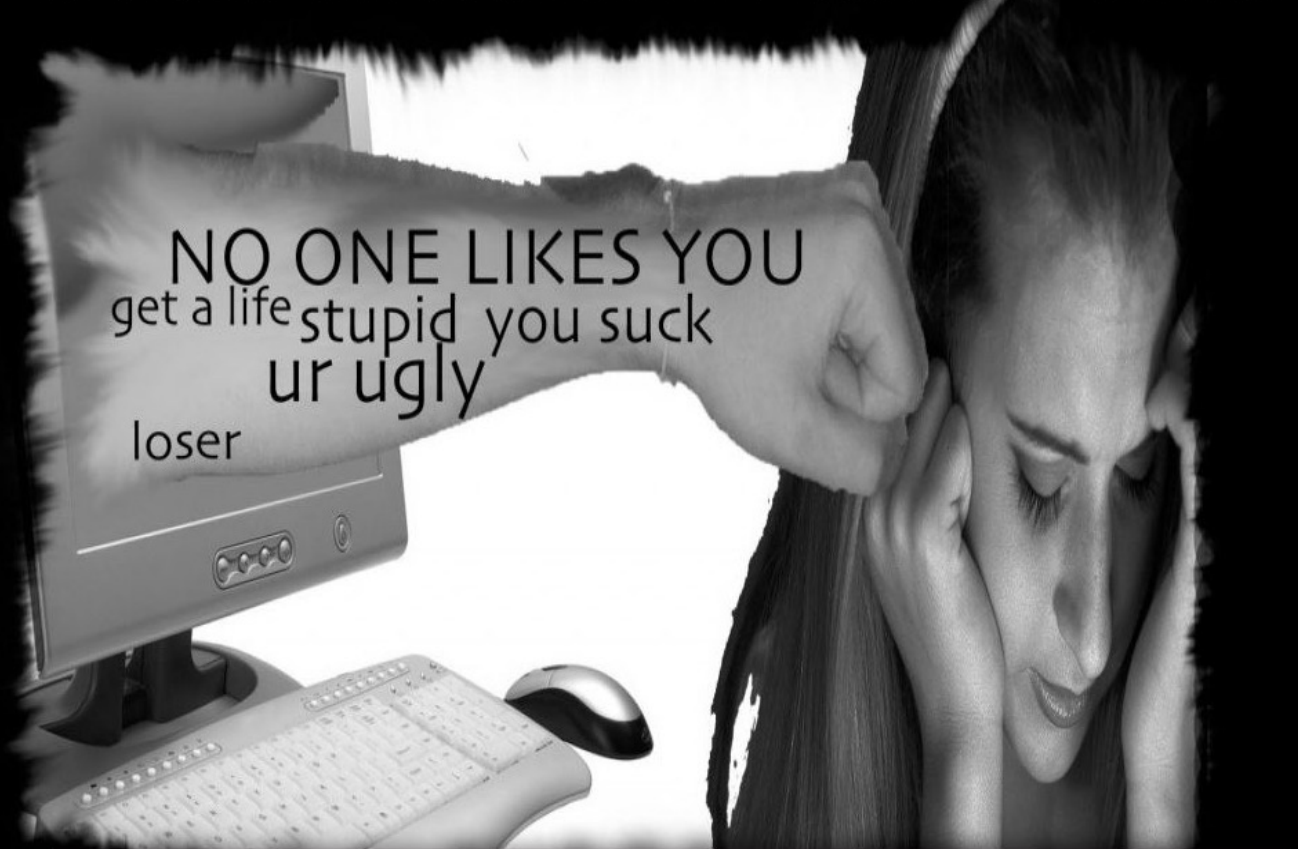
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This week in history

March 18, 1852

Henry Wells and William G. Fargo joined with several other investors to launch their namesake business. The discovery of gold in California in 1849 prompted a huge spike in the demand for cross-country shipping. Wells and Fargo decided to take advantage and in July 1852, their company shipped its first loads of freight from the East Coast to mining camps scattered around northern California. The company contracted with independent stagecoach companies to provide the fastest possible transportation and delivery of gold dust, important documents, and other valuable freight. It also served as a bank—buying gold dust, selling paper bank drafts, and providing loans to help fuel California's growing economy. Wells, Fargo became the leader in transportation in the West. When the transcontinental railroad was completed three years later, the company began using railroad to transport its freight. By 1910, its shipping network connected 6,000 locations. After splitting from the freight business in 1905, the banking branch of the company merged with the Nevada National Bank and established new headquarters in San Francisco. The following April, the banking headquarters was destroyed in a major earthquake, but the vaults remained intact and the bank's business continued to grow. After two later mergers, Wells Fargo Bank became, and has remained, one of the biggest banking institutions in the United States.
www.history.com

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4 in 10 teens have experienced online harassment. Victims of cyber-bullying experience low self-esteem, depression, and even thoughts of suicide. Cyber-bullying puts its victim's lives in jeopardy.

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Franciscan Health helping AFib patients live more active lifestyles

A procedure offered at Franciscan Health Crown Point is allowing cardiac patients with atrial fibrillation (AFib) to eliminate the use of blood thinners and live more active lifestyles.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), AFib is the most common type of irregular heartbeat. The CDC estimates 6 million Americans have Afib, which significantly increases the risk of stroke.

One of the primary treatments for AFib is blood thinners, which are used to prevent blood clots that travel to the brain and cause strokes. While blood thinners are effective, they come with bleeding risks.

“When you have Afib, you’re stuck on blood thinners, sometimes forever,” said Franciscan Physician Network Cardiologist Mark A Mitchell, DO, FHRS, FACC. “If you’re a young guy who works with his

hands at the steel mill all day, your choice then becomes do you want to have a stroke or potentially have a life-threatening bleeding event if you have an accident on the job? If the answer is neither, then that’s where the WATCHMAN can come in.”

Franciscan Health Crown Point offers the WATCHMAN procedure, which was first introduced in the fall of 2020. During this one-time, minimal-

(See *Franciscan* Pg. 8)



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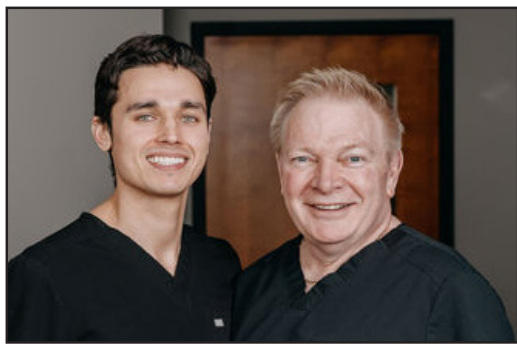
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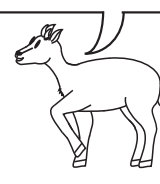
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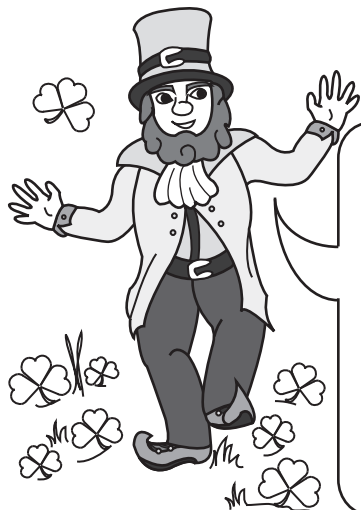
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...in fun and festivities with friends.



Kids: color stuff in!



Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

You won't see me, but I'll be part of all the fun and festivities for St. Patrick's Day. I love the Irish dancers and music of the harpists, bagpipers, fiddlers and drummers. I follow the floats and bands in the parades. I even pop into a few homes to taste the family's special treats and meals like corned beef and cabbage. You can look for me if you want...I'm the knee-high guy wearing green and holding a 4-leaf shamrock. **Meanwhile, fill in my puzzle about Ireland and celebrating St. Patrick's Day.**

11

- 12 is a beautiful "Emerald" 9 in the Atlantic Ocean. It is west of England, separated by the Irish Sea.
- The capital and largest city in Ireland is called 15.
- In the mid-1800s, an important crop suffered terrible blight, causing what is now called the "Great 3 Famine."
- To escape 6, about one and a half 13 people left Ireland, sailing in 11 to get to America.
- Most arrived in large cities and took jobs in 7.
- Today in America, the Irish people share their joy of 1 and 2, like the Irish jig, with everyone else on St. Patrick's Day.
- People like to wear something that is 4.
- You might hear a story about how lucky it is to find a four-leaf 5 or to catch a 14.
- Some cities dye a river or the water in a fountain green and people line the streets to watch 10.
- Everyone can enjoy an Irish-American dinner of corned beef and 8.

True or False?



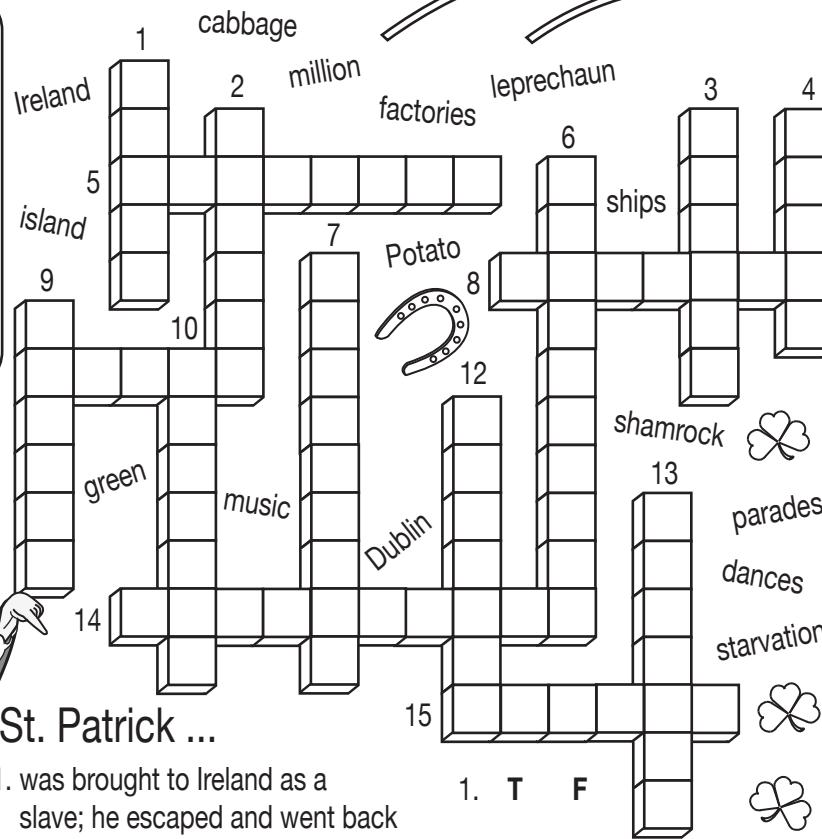
St. Patrick ...

1. was brought to Ireland as a slave; he escaped and went back years later to teach about Christianity
2. has many Irish boys named after him
3. is a symbol of the Irish "spirit"

1. T F

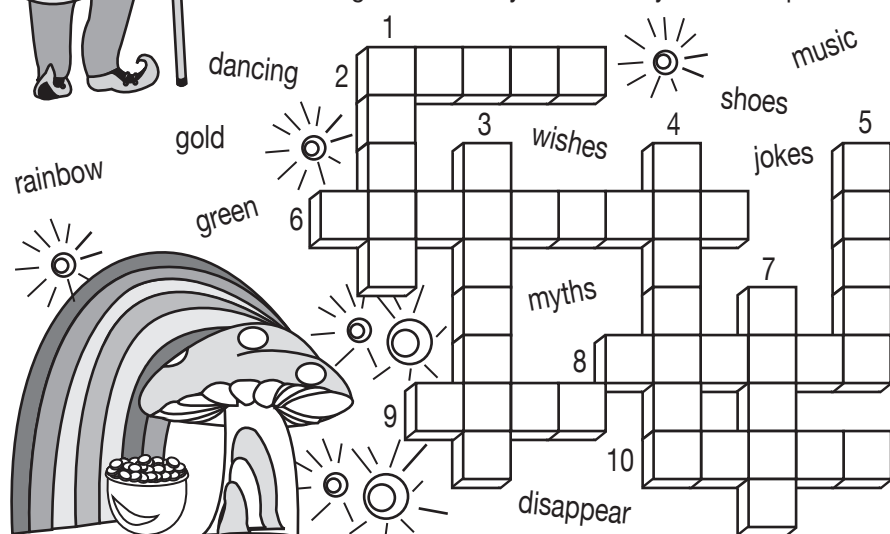
2. T F

3. T F



Upon Catching a Leprechaun!

Leprechauns are found in Irish 2 and legends. They are wee folk who wear 10 and work hard at making 7. That may be because they love 4. The fiddle and harp are 1 to their ears! They like playing 5. It is said that they store their 9 in a pot at the end of a 3. If a person catches a leprechaun, he or she may have a few 8 granted. If they take their eye off the leprechaun, he will 6.



Springing Clocks Ahead!

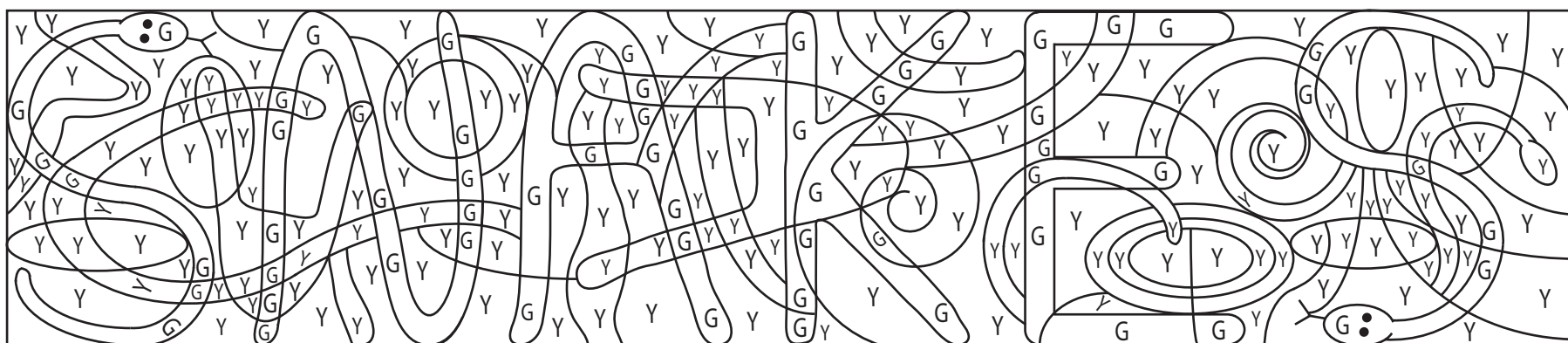
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St. Patrick's Feat

According to legend, what did St. Patrick drive out of Ireland? Use the color key to find out: G = Green Y = Yellow



Obituary ~ Florian Komasinski

Florian Komasinski, age 93, of Crown Point, IN, formally of Hammond, IN, passed away on February 19, 2023. He graduated from East Chicago Roosevelt and soon after served in the US Navy (1948-1953). Florian retired from BP Whiting Refinery after 32 years of service and was a member of Our Lady of Consolation Church. He enjoyed traveling, wood-working, golfing, horse-shoes, playing cards, Cubs games and spending time with his family. Florian was

a loving husband and a great father. He was preceded in death by his daughter- Karen, mother- Hattie, father- Ladislaus, brother- Marion, sisters- Genevieve, Agnes and Elgine, and many nieces and nephews. Florian is survived by his loving wife of 70 years, Marge (nee Revak), sons- Tom (Trudi), Rich (Deb), Jim (Diane); grand-son- Tommy (Cassandra); granddaughters- Brittany (Ryan), Bethany (Evan), Melanie, Mandy; great grand-children- Austin, Baylor, and



Everly. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Dunes Hospice, Valparaiso, IN. Funeral arrangements are private. Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, Crown Point entrusted with arrangements. www.burnsfuneral.com

Obit ~ Mona E. Christman

Mona E. Christman, age 69, of Crown Point, IN, passed away on Sunday, February 12, 2023. Mona was preceded in death by her husband of 25 years- Claude G. Christman; longtime boyfriend- Eddie Kulesa Jr.; parents-William and Rosalene Potts. Mona is survived by her two sons-Justin Christman and C. Robert (Robby) Christman; grand-sons- Zachary and Dylan Christman; siblings- William “Bill” Potts, Jr.; sister-in-law- Cynthia Monson, Tom, sister-in-law-Sandy Christman; nephews- William “Wes” Theodorou, Paul Christman;

nieces- Melissa Potts, Nicole Potts and Kathryn Potts, Dawn Hostetter; cousins- Claudia Shick and Jim Brewer; many great nieces. Mona worked for many years as a cafeteria worker in the Boone Grove school system. She also worked as a Certified Nurse Aide and for the State of Indiana as a Social Worker. She enjoyed hanging out with family and friends as much as possible and shopping all day with her cousin, Claudia. A visitation was held on Saturday, February 18, 2023, at Burns Funeral Home & Crematory,



10101 Broadway, Crown Point, IN. Pastor John Starr officiated. www.burnsfuneral.com

Cross of Christ Wellness Programming available now

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church is bringing Mind, Body and Spirit Wellness to the community for 2023. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., dance your way to health with our Zumba class. Fee is \$40 per calendar month. Pre-registration is required for Zumba.

Wednesdays and Fridays, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30p.m. brings the benefits of Chair Yoga for a fee of \$20 per calendar month, and Thursdays at 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. we offer

a class on Mindful Eating for a fee of \$20 per calendar month.

Classes are running now, come this week, sign-up and pay on-site. Call 219-988-3650 for more information.

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(Indiana from Pg. 1)

ly invasive procedure, a Franciscan Health clinical cardiac electrophysiologist and interventional cardiologist use a catheter to guide the WATCHMAN implant to the patient's left atrial appendage (LAA) in the heart through a small incision in the inner thigh. By permanently closing the LAA, the WATCHMAN device prevents clots from forming in the prime location that can lead to stroke.

Patients can expect to return home the next day and will continue taking blood thinners until the LAA is permanently closed, typically for about 45 days.

James Hoover, 76, is a retired business owner from Michigan City who knows firsthand the benefits of the WATCHMAN procedure. Hoover had a heart ablation in 2009, but was still required to take strong blood thinners to lower his risk of stroke.

Hoover enjoys skiing in the mountains out West and was concerned he would have to stop. He received a flyer in the mail from Franciscan Health about the WATCHMAN procedure and called Eunjin Choi, a cardiac nurse practitioner at Franciscan Physician Network Cardiology Dyer, to set up a consultation.

Hoover met with Choi, who with the interventional cardiac electrophysiology and cardiology team determined he was a good candidate for the WATCHMAN procedure with Dr. Mitchell.

"I can't say enough good things about Eunjin Choi and Dr. Mitchell," Hoover said. "I was an engineer by trade and I like having my questions answered quickly, not two

weeks, three weeks down the road. They were great."

Hoover said the WATCHMAN procedure has allowed him to return to his active lifestyle.

"I've been off blood thinners for several months and I'm feeling like I never have before," Hoover said. "I have not had any return of AFib. I'm 76 and I feel like I'm in my 50s. I told them I'm not going to change my lifestyle and now I don't have to."

Gerald Lipski, 74, of Schererville, was in good health, but two years ago had a slipped disk in his back that required surgery. His pre-surgical testing revealed he had AFib.

He was referred to Dr. Mitchell and after two cardiac procedures, was placed on blood thinners.

Lipski is retired and spends his weekends photographing horse events, often for 10 or 12 hours a day while carrying heavy equipment. He didn't want to have to stop doing what he loves because of the risks involved with taking blood thinners for life.

"I saw a poster on the wall for the WATCHMAN and finally asked about it," Lipski said. "Eunjin explained it really well and I said, 'Well, let's get it done.'"

Choi said Hoover and Lipski were both excellent candidates for the WATCHMAN procedure because they already had excellent qualities of life, were very active and took good care of themselves.

"Compliance is very important," Choi said. "I tell patients that for six months after the procedure, you're

going to be my very good friend," due to the need for follow-up appointments.

Lipski said he would recommend the WATCHMAN procedure to anyone with

brainer if you want to have a good quality of life," he said.

More information about the WATCHMAN procedure is available on the Franciscan Health website.

To make an appointment to see if the WATCHMAN procedure is right for you, contact Franciscan Physician Network Cardiology Dyer at 219-865-0893, Franciscan

Physician Network Cardiology Crown Point at 219-662-0077 or Franciscan Health Heart Center Crown Point at 219-757-6142.

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(PBS from Pg. 1)

so professional and kind. Their genuine interest in my art was encouraging and helped me open up; just like talking to friends," Gutzwiller said. "I hope communities see it [Eye on the Arts] and feel more connected through the stories and perspectives. Sharing, listening and learning from each other can reach far and wide. Programs like this really lift my spirits and I hope others feel the same!"

Additional segments will include spotlights on a children's book author, a ceramicist, a photographer, and an artist who uses wood, paint, resin and broken glass to create dazzling and mesmerizing depictions of animals and people.

The 'Eye on the Arts' series garnered a slate of awards throughout its airing including the Northwest Indiana public media station's first Chicago/Midwest Emmy Award in 2021 in the Outstanding Achievement for Arts/Entertainment, Short Film category. The series was nominated for the same award in 2020 and three more times in 2022.

'Eye on the Arts' is made possible by is made possible through the financial support from Legacy Foundation, NIPSCO, Purdue University Northwest, South Shore Arts, The Indiana Arts Commission, the National Endowment for the Arts, and by viewer contributions. More information is available at www.LakeshorePBS.org/Donate.

"'Eye on the Arts' is a great example of the type of unique programming we pride ourselves in producing for our viewers. It's a show dedicated to exposing our audience to a wide array of arts, while also highlighting the arts and artists in Northwest Indiana and Chicagoland," Vice President of Development Carl Kurek said.

'Eye on the Arts' currently airs on Lakeshore PBS Wednesdays at 7 p.m. The series can also be streamed on-

line at www.LakeshorePBS.org/Watch or via the free PBS Video App available to download on popular digital platforms like Amazon Fire TV, ROKU, Apple TV, iOS and Android. Lakeshore PBS' channel listings and full TV schedule can be found online at www.LakeshorePBS.org.

Lakeshore PBS broadcasts on channel 56 over the air as well as on DirecTV, DISH Network and AT&T U-verse. Comcast Xfinity viewers can find Lakeshore PBS on channel 17 or 21 while RCN viewers can tune to channel 44. The live broadcast can also be streamed online at LakeshorePBS.org or via the free PBS Video App on popular digital platforms.

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