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# Winfield American

Vol. 20, Issue 1,012

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December 3, 2021

## Northern League adds Crown Point baseball franchise

The Northern League has announced the addition of a new franchise located in Crown Point, Ind. that will begin competition during the summer 2022 season.

The team will be owned by Ralph Flores, who has significant sports marketing experience and previously served as a basketball agent and managed foundations for NBA players for a 12-year period.

The 21st century Northern League, previously known as the Midwest Collegiate League, will continue its goal

of providing affordable family experiences at its ballparks while maintaining a tight geographical footprint.

"We are thrilled to add a South Lake County franchise to the Northern League," Commissioner Don Popravak said. "We believe the Crown Point community will serve as a great location for our newest team. The Northern League will feature a new name, a wider talent pool, a new team, and the same affordable family entertainment our fans have come to expect. I have a longstand-

ing relationship with Ralph and know his leadership will lead to success for Northern League baseball in South Lake County."

The franchise, which will compete at Legacy Fields at Center Ross Park, will hold a name-the-team competition to involve the community in determining the team name. For more information or to submit your name suggestions, visit [www.lakecounty-inbaseball.com](http://www.lakecounty-inbaseball.com).

"Crown Point has built their city around sports," Flores said. "The vision of

Mayor David Uran is building beautiful facilities in town and providing opportunities for young people



to play sports. Their city is thriving, and one of the reasons for that is the popula-

tion growth Crown Point has experienced in recent years. The mission of being a capital of youth sports is paying dividends for Crown Point, and we're ecstatic to add a pre-professional franchise to a community that has embraced athletics."

Crown Point Mayor David Uran said the city is excited to form a partnership with the Northern League to enhance the quality of life in Crown Point and Northwest Indiana as a whole.

"The City of Crown Point is thrilled to have a Northern

League team in its very own backyard," Uran said. "We look forward to a pre-minor league baseball team playing at our Legacy Fields and calling Crown Point its home field."

Flores has announced that former Kansas City Royals pitcher Justin Huisman will serve as the manager of the Lake County franchise.

"In order to have a successful team, you have to have good people involved, and Justin will be a big part of that," Flores said. "His (See *Baseball* Pg. 6)

## FAFSA state financial aid open for filing for 2022-23 school year

Hoosier students and families are encouraged to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is now open for the 2022-23 school year.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education reminds Hoosiers that filing the FAFSA by April 15, 2022 is imperative for securing money for college and accessing some of the \$390 million in state financial aid and billions of dollars in federal aid available for learners.

"Regardless of family income, filing the FAFSA is an important first step for

anyone interested in education and training beyond high school," said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers. "It's surprising how much money is left on the table each year because many Hoosiers assume they don't qualify for state or federal financial aid. There is a significant amount of funding available to help with the cost of college, but you must at least have a FAFSA on file to use it."

Filing the FAFSA is required for many of Indiana's scholarship and grant opportunities, such as the Frank

O'Bannon Grant and the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant, and many colleges require a completed FAFSA to award merit and need-based scholarships. Regardless of the degree being pursued – including short-term certificates, associate and bachelor's degrees and higher – students should file the FAFSA to potentially qualify for available financial aid.

Currently, there are nearly 15,000 high school seniors who qualify for Indiana's early-college promise program, the 21st Century Scholars program. Completing the

FAFSA on time is a necessary step for Scholars to earn the full scholarship amount of up to four years of college tuition.

Students can file the FAFSA online at [www.FAFSA.gov](http://www.FAFSA.gov). The first step for students who have not previously filed the FAFSA is to create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID. Then, each student will need:

- Social Security number
- Alien Registration number (for non-U.S. citizens)
- Federal income tax returns, W-2s and other records of money earned from 2020

- Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable)
- Records of untaxed income (if applicable)

Improvements to simplify and shorten the FAFSA are coming for the 2023-24 academic year, however this year filers will notice a new look to the form, making it easier to navigate and get assistance. The U.S. Department of Education provides email and live chat assistance for FAFSA filers as well as a helpline at 800-4FED-AID. Hoosier families can also access free FAFSA help

through INvestEd Indiana at [www.investedindiana.org](http://www.investedindiana.org).

The Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship opened October 1 and provides up to \$7,500 per year of college (up to \$30,000 total) for top performing Hoosier students who commit to teaching in Indiana for five years after earning their degrees. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2022.

For questions about state financial aid, students can contact the Indiana Commission for Higher Education by phone at 888-528-4719 or via email at [awards@che.in.gov](mailto:awards@che.in.gov).

## Lake County police equipped with new device to combat drugged driving

More police across Lake County will have a new way to identify and keep drug-impaired drivers off the road. The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute is distributing 97 SoToxa Mobile Test System units to 19 agencies in the region, as part of the state's ongoing efforts to reduce drugged driving and traffic fatalities.

SoToxa, developed by Abbott, is a handheld analyzer that tests oral fluid for the presence of six types of drugs: cocaine, methamphetamine, opiates, cannabis (THC), amphetamine, and benzodiazepines. The test is conducted roadside by obtaining a mouth swab from suspected impaired drivers.

Driving under the influence of any substance, whether legal or illegal, is against the

law in all 50 states.

"We're concentrating our efforts in Lake County as a thoroughfare between Illinois and Michigan where cannabis is legal," said Devon McDonald, ICJI executive director. "This is about making sure officers in the region have the training and equipment they need to address drug-impaired driving swiftly and more effectively."

This is the latest development in the state's roadside oral fluid program, launched by the criminal justice institute last December. To date, there are 87 SoToxa devices in use in Indiana with 798 tests being administered by law enforcement. Of those, 443, or 55%, have resulted in a positive test for one or more substance. Cannabis was the leading drug category with

260 positive tests – 43% of those appearing with at least one other drug.

The program was created as part of the 'Great Lakes, High Stakes' campaign, in partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Region 5 Office, to address the emergence of drugged driving taking place regionally and nationwide.

According to NHTSA, in the 10 years between 2009 and 2018, the presence of marijuana had nearly doubled among drivers killed in crashes who were tested for the substance. More recently, data from a 2021 NHTSA study shows that 56% of drivers involved in serious injury and fatal crashes tested positive for at least one drug, based on trauma centers stud-

ied last year.

In response, officers will begin using the devices in the field starting this month, bringing the new statewide total to just under 200.

Hobart Police Department Lieutenant Ronald Russo is receiving eight of those units and said this technology creates a deterrent and will ultimately lead to safer roads.

"These devices are redefining roadside investigations and will make us more efficient," Russo said. "The faster we're able to identify and remove impaired drivers and deter this behavior, the more lives we can save. It's a game-changer."

In Indiana, officers must have a reason to pull over the vehicle first before administering the test, whether it's for driving erratically, speeding,

or another infraction. If the officer suspects impairment, they will use standard detection techniques such as field sobriety tests and portable breathalyzers to evaluate the driver.

In situations where drugs may be suspected, they can then ask the driver to take the SoToxa test. This is done by collecting an oral fluid sample, which is then inserted into the handheld analyzer. Results are available roadside within five minutes and indicate positive or negative for each of the six drug categories.

"Officers use a combination of training, technology and experience to detect signs of impairment," said Robert Duckworth, ICJI Traffic Safety Division Director.

(See *Police* Pg. 3)



The SoToxa Mobile Test System.



## 'America's Crossroads' college football bowl game in Hobart this Saturday at 1 p.m.

The Hillsdale College Chargers and Truman State University Bulldogs will clash in the second annual America's Crossroads Bowl this Saturday, December 4, in nearby Hobart.

Hillsdale (6-5, 5-2) and Truman State (8-3, 4-3) will represent the Great Midwest Athletic Conference and Great Lakes Valley Conference, respectively, in the contest held at Brickyard Stadium at 1 p.m. CT.

The Chargers finished tied for second in the Great Midwest standings. Hillsdale finished the season winners in three of its last four contests, including a victory at Great Midwest champion

Findlay and a season-closing victory against Ohio Dominican, the league's inaugural bowl representative at the America's Crossroads.

Truman State will be returning to the America's Crossroads Bowl for a second time after finishing third in GLVC play in 2021. The Bulldogs, who also claimed wins in three of their final four contests this season, captured the 2019 bowl title with a 21-7 win against Ohio Dominican.

The America's Crossroads Bowl is one of four NCAA Division II bowl games sponsored nationally in 2021 and is conducted in partnership with the South

Shore Convention & Visitors Authority and City of Hobart.

Tickets are available for \$12 for adults, \$7 for students and seniors, and \$5 for veterans, active military and first responders. Children 4 and under are free. Tickets can also be purchased in groups of 15 or more for a discounted rate.

Regular ticket purchases can be made at [www.americascrossroadsbowl.com](http://www.americascrossroadsbowl.com) or on the Facebook page for America's Crossroads Bowl. Group tickets are available by calling Heather Becerra at 219-301-7756.

## Master Gardeners have scholarship opportunities available for Lake County residents

The Lake County Master Gardeners Association has announced that it will be continuing its scholarship program for the 2022-23 academic year.

Although the LCMGA has been awarding scholarships for the past seventeen years, this will only be the fourth year that scholarship applications will be available through the Crown Point Community Foundation website, and the fourth year incoming freshmen attending a four-year institution are also eligible to apply.

Scholarships will be awarded to undergraduate college and university students, who are residents of Lake County, Indiana. In addition to the majors of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, majors of Forestry, Botany (Horticulture Equivalent), Plant Pathology, Agricultural Education, and Entomology are eligible as well. Other majors that benefit consumer gardening may be considered.

The 2022 application will be available January 7 to February 18, 2022, through the Crown Point Community

Foundation website at [www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html](http://www.thecpcf.org/scholarships.html)

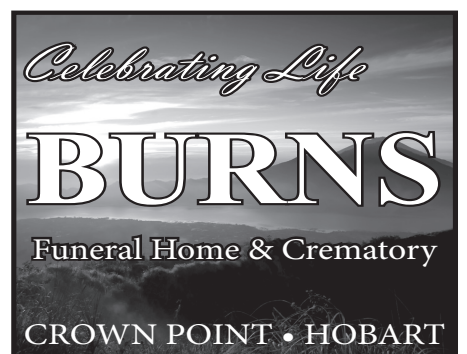
The scholarships are funded by donations made to the Lake County Master Gardener Association in support of the annual Plant Sale, Garden Walk, Lake County Fair, and from donations from generous donors, such as the NW Indiana Beekeepers Association. The Lake County Master Gardeners Association works in cooperation with Purdue Extension-Lake County.

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# Emergency blood shortage persists as patient needs continue over holiday season

Make an appointment to give blood as soon as possible by using the Red Cross Blood Donor app, visiting [www.RedCrossBlood.org](http://www.RedCrossBlood.org) or calling 800-733-2767.

**Lake County**  
*Crown Point*  
• 12/8/2021: 1:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Crown Point Community Library, 122 N. Main Street  
• 12/12/2021: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 218 South Court Street  
*Gary*  
• 12/5/2021: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Tree of Life Missionary Baptist Church, 2323 W. 11th Ave  
*Highland*  
• 12/7/2021: 1:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Highland Parks & Recreation Center, 2450 Lincoln Street

*Lowell*  
• 12/4/2021: 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Lowell Public Library, 1505 East Commercial Avenue  
*Merrillville*  
• 12/6/2021: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Merrillville Blood Donation Center, 791 East 83rd Ave  
• 12/10/2021: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Merrillville Donation Center, 791 E. 83rd Ave

• 12/11/2021: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m., Merrillville Blood Donation Center, 791 East 83rd Ave  
• 12/13/2021: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Merrillville Blood Donation Center, 791 East 83rd Ave  
• 12/16/2021: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Merrillville Donation Center, 791 E. 83rd Ave  
*St. John*  
• 12/15/2021: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., VFW Memorial Post 717, 10400 W 93rd Avenue  
*Schererville*  
• 12/6/2021: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Napleton Autowerks of Indiana, 1349 Indianapolis Blvd

**Porter County**  
*Chesterton*  
• 12/5/2021: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., St. Patrick Catholic Church, 638 North Calumet Road  
• 12/6/2021: 2 p.m. - 8 p.m., Franciscan Health Fitness Centers Chesterton, 810 Michael Drive

*Kouts*  
• 12/16/2021: 2 p.m. - 7 p.m., St. Paul Lutheran Church, 507 Rose Street  
*Valparaiso*  
• 12/8/2021: 12:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., First Christian Church, 1507 Glendale Blvd.  
• 12/9/2021: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., New Hope Church of God, 712 N 450 W  
• 12/14/2021: 12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., Eagles Lodge, 805 Elm Street  
• 12/15/2021: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Charlesworth Financial Services, 2000 Comeford Rd, Suite 3

(Police from Pg. 1)

“SoToxa would not replace those techniques. It’s just an additional tool they can use to keep dangerous drivers off the road.”

In Indiana, drivers can refuse the test, and the results cannot be used as evidence in court to determine if the driver was impaired. The purpose of the device, similar to portable breath tests, is to further establish probable cause, which can then be used by the officer to make an arrest, administer a certified breath test, take the suspect for medical treatment, or apply for a warrant to administer a blood draw.

“Most officers today are equipped with portable breathalyzers to screen for alcohol, but detecting the presence of drugs roadside poses more of a challenge,” Duckworth said. “As challenges evolve, we have to adapt. We’re proud to be one of the first states in the nation to adopt this technology and provide a statewide program.”

The units cost roughly \$4,500 each, are reusable and were paid for with federal NHTSA funds.

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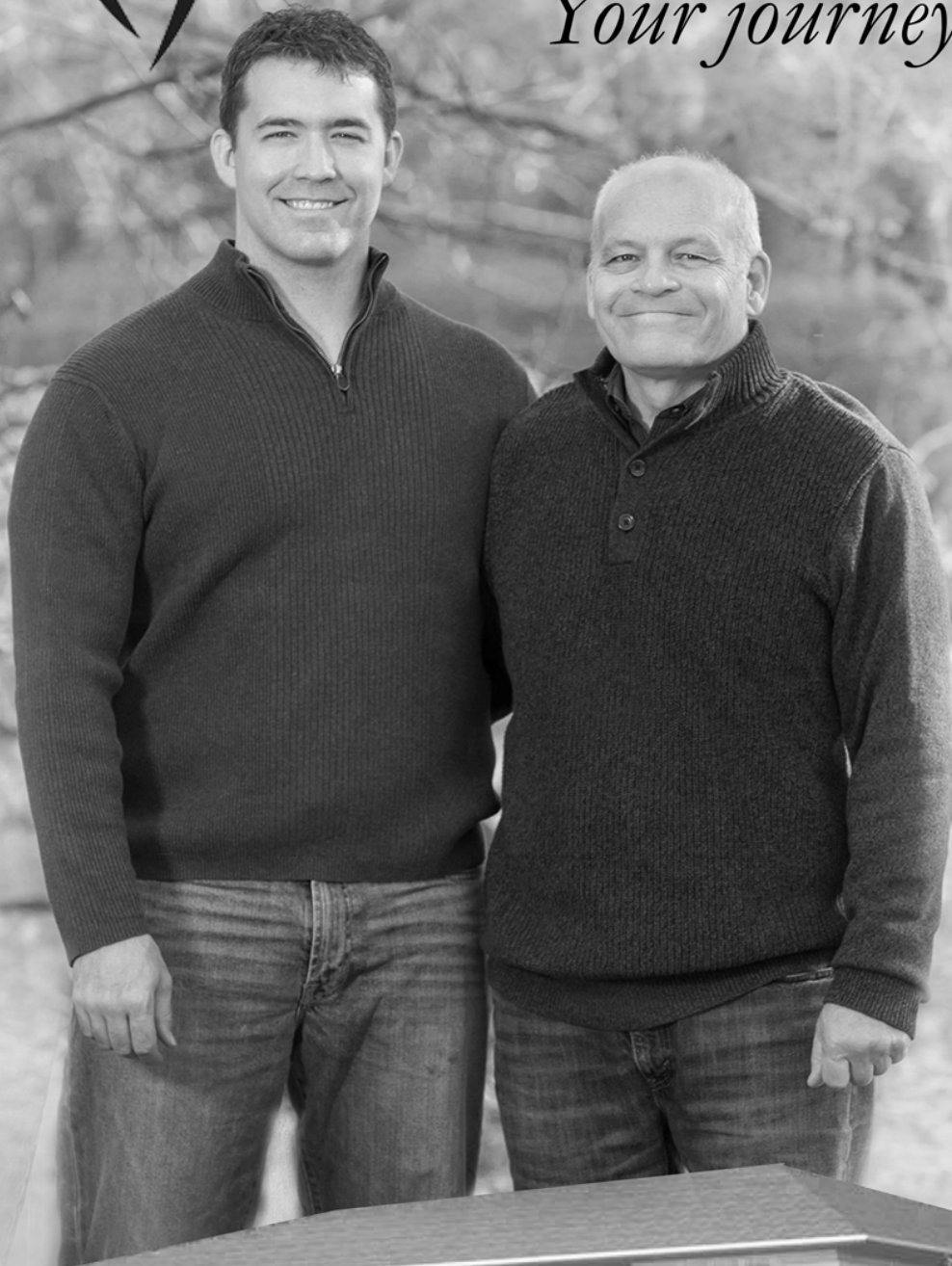
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## Department of Natural Resources holiday gift packs available for limited time

Cross those hard-to-buy-for people off your shopping list in a snap by giving them a holiday gift pack from the DNR.

A gift pack can be used the whole year, whether the recipient enjoys camping or sleeping in the comfort of one of seven Indiana State Park Inns after enjoying the outdoors. The gift pack also saves you up to \$31 over buying the items individually. A limited quantity of gift packs is available.

The \$99 gift pack includes a 2022 resident annual entrance permit, a one-year subscription to Outdoor Indiana magazine (six issues), and one of two \$65 gift card options. One gift card option can be used at the campgrounds — another gift card option is a \$65 State Park Inns gift card. You also have the option of upgrading either to \$100 by paying \$35 more.

Indiana has 36 state park properties throughout the state. The entrance permit grants gate entrance for 2022 to all state park properties beginning January 1.

The inns gift card can be used at any of seven state park lodging facilities, as well as at the award-winning Pete Dye-designed golf course at Fort Harrison State Park in Indianapolis. The card can also be used for lodging, meals in the dining rooms, or gift purchases.

The camping gift card can

be used toward the rental of campsites, cottages, group camps, recreation buildings, rent-a-camp cabins, shelters, youth and rally camps, and cabins (excluding inns-operated cabins).

The camping gift card may also be used to purchase daily entrance, lake permits, horse tags, and any other items sold at gatehouses and park-operated stores and gift shops. The camping gift card cannot be used at any privately operated concessions, camp stores, marinas, or saddle barns.

The offer is available through December 31, 2021, or when sold out. Gift packs can be purchased only at [www.shopINstateparks.com](http://www.shopINstateparks.com).

## Valpo U receives \$1.5 million grant to continue EPIC scholarship program

The National Science Foundation has awarded Valpo a six-year, \$1.5 million grant to fund the Establishing Practices Integrating Commuters Plus (EPIC+) program.

The EPIC+ program will provide scholarships, undergraduate research opportunities, mentorships and social support for commuter students in Northwest Indiana. The program will use a multifaceted, targeted recruitment strategy to reach underrepresented students who are pursuing a major in science, technology or mathematics.

“The goal of EPIC+ is to recruit and retain high-achieving students from diverse populations, especially first-generation and historically underrepresented students, by engaging them in experiential learning opportunities,” said Eric W. Johnson ’87, Ph.D., provost and executive vice president for academic af-

fairs. “This project directly supports the NSF’s efforts and Valpo’s goal to increase the diversity of STEM scholars and the workforce at large.”

EPIC+ aims to alleviate financial and social challenges that impede a commuter student’s ability to participate in the various academic and co-curricular activities that are available on a residential college campus. EPIC+ scholars receive enhanced academic opportunities to integrate them into the wider campus and scholarly community including a multi-year research experience; participation in scientific conferences; presenting at departmental colloquia; faculty mentoring; career networking; and peer support.

EPIC+ is a continuation of the original EPIC program, which demonstrated students in the program were more likely to succeed in STEM studies than Valpo’s general STEM student body.

The funding comes as part of NSF’s Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (S-STEM) program. S-STEM grants enables low-income, talented domestic students to pursue successful careers in promising STEM fields.

For more information visit [www.valpo.edu](http://www.valpo.edu).



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Online and hard copies of 2022 Indiana State Parks special events calendar now available

Advance copies of the 2022 Indiana State Parks special events calendar are available in PDF format by emailing [speialevents@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:speialevents@dnr.IN.gov). You can request a hard copy by calling 317-232-4140.

This calendar offers a high-level listing of events and dates for the entire year for those who are planning vacations and weekend trips to coincide with their favorite activities.

Events on the 2022 calendar range from winter bald eagle watches and full moon hikes in several locations to dates for Easter egg hunts, paddling events, fireworks, organized runs and walks like Volksmarches, holiday buffets at inns, and fall festival weekends at DNR properties across the state.

Individual events with additional details will also be posted by properties on the DNR calendar, which you can see at [www.calendar.dnr.IN.gov](http://www.calendar.dnr.IN.gov) or by visiting [www.interpretiveservices.IN.gov](http://www.interpretiveservices.IN.gov).

Events are also posted at nature centers and park gates. Some state parks also offer periodic electronic newsletters with event details. A list of these is at [www.public.govdelivery.com/accounts/INDNR/subscriber/topics](http://www.public.govdelivery.com/accounts/INDNR/subscriber/topics), where you can select individual parks under 'State Parks'.

"In addition to these special events, our interpretive naturalists offer a wide range of daily hikes, talks, and other outdoor experiences to introduce and connect Hoosiers to our natural and cultural resources throughout the year," said Ginger Murphy, deputy director of Indiana State Parks.

For camping reservations, visit [www.Camp.IN.gov](http://www.Camp.IN.gov) (available 24 hours) or call 866-622-6746 between noon and 8 p.m. Reservations can now be made year-round up to six months in advance to ensure that you have your favorite campsite.

For reservations at Indiana State Park Inns, visit [www.Indianainns.com](http://www.Indianainns.com) or call 877-563-4371.

(Baseball from Pg. 1)

resume speaks for itself, and the knowledge that he brings to the table is immense. He is also a high-character individual. Not only do we want to make our players better on the field, but we want to make them better people. Justin fits that mold 100%."

Huisman reached the big leagues in 2004 to highlight an eight-year professional career that included time in the Royals, Colorado Rockies, Seattle Mariners and Houston Astros organizations. The Thornwood, Ill. native and Thornwood High School product was drafted by the Rockies in the 15th round of the 2000 MLB Draft out of the University of Mississippi. Huisman exited Oxford as the Ole Miss all-time saves king and still ranks tied for third on that list. He plans to impart his baseball wisdom upon a group of young players this summer.

"In summer ball, you want to have a good team and win, but you're also focused on giving these players experience," Huisman said. "Many of them may be young players who did not see a lot of the field or the mound during their spring seasons. This gives them an avenue to get quality experience against good competition. You want to be successful and develop talent while also establishing a good rapport with the players. I love the opportunity to build relationships, and I know that's something I enjoyed when I was a player."

Huisman, a Crown Point resident, is no stranger to the league as he served as the manager of the Northwest Indiana Oilmen from 2012-2014, the franchise's first three seasons in existence. He posted an 87-52 record, leading his team to three postseason berths, two MCL Championship Series appearances and the 2012 MCL title in the team's inaugural season.

"I did the majority of the recruiting with the Oilmen, and the first year compared to the next compared to the next, it was clear we were evolving as a league and as a team," Huisman said. "Now, the league is a little bit more established. It will be easier to get local talent combined with some out-of-town players. This area has a lot of great baseball talent. Hopefully we can help those players recognize that they don't need to go away to find good competition and they can play in a league close to home that challenges them to get better."

Huisman also owns significant college coaching experience as he spent the last 13 years at Trinity Christian College, serving as the head coach for the bulk of that time. He currently works for Great Lakes Sports Hub in Crown Point, doing clinics and lessons.

Samantha "Sam" Salzeider will head up merchandising and gameday operations for the team. She has spent the last six years working in the Chicago Sky organization and was recently part of the team's WNBA championship. Salzeider has served as Director of Retail Operations, Director of Sponsorship Operations, and Event & Marketing Coordinator during her time with the Sky after starting out as a community relations and operations intern. She graduated from Indiana University in 2015 with a degree in sports marketing and management.

Butler senior Andrew Mild, a Crown Point native, will serve as the team's play-by-play broadcaster. He spent the 2021 summer doing pregame, postgame and play-by-play for the Windy City Thunderbolts of the Frontier League.

Flores believes that Lake County and the Northern League will both make perfect homes for his new franchise.

"I loved working in sports and I've always known that some day I would like to get back into it in some capacity," Flores said. "I've followed the league closely for a number of years. I've had the chance to get to know Don extremely well. The opportunity seemed right at this particular time to move forward with getting back into an industry that I love."

The team's motto is "building community through baseball."

"We are going to bring a passion for baseball to the city of Crown Point and South Lake County," Flores said. "We're going to give college and high school students opportunities to work for our team. The players are expected to be role models to the young children who are coming to games. Those are some of the things that we'll be stressing with our ball-club."

### Fall Surprises

Falling rain and cool windy breezes pulled the last autumn leaves from the tree. When the storm was over, what could we see?

Look at the picture clues to fill in the puzzle.

apple nest balloon airplane cat kite

### Autumn Ice?

I wanted to go out one rainy autumn day. As I stepped out the door, I slid away! "Autumn ice" was hiding beneath the eaves. It was made of freezing rain and fallen... evles a

Autumn ice is not so nice!

Follow the dots to see what mixes with cold rain to make a slippery mess.

### Storing Food for the Winter

Start at the arrow to help the farmer squirrels find each giant acorn to put into their sack.

Newspaper Fun! Created by Anmills LLC © 2020



# Emergency physicians suggest tips to protect holiday travelers from flu, Covid

The busiest travel days of the year are here, and the American College of Emergency Physicians is urging anyone visiting family or friends during the holiday season to take all available steps to avoid getting sick with Covid-19 or the seasonal flu.

“Many people are excited about their first chance in a long time to come together,” said Gillian Schmitz, MD, FACEP, president of ACEP. “But we are still in a pandemic and Covid cases can spike because of holiday gatherings, especially in households with somebody who is unvaccinated.”

Covid cases are now surging in more than 20 states, particularly in northern parts of the country where colder weather is likely to send people inside where it is easier to transmit the virus. With the expected increase in holiday travelers, emergency physicians advise gathering with health and safety top of mind. For those hosting or attending holiday celebrations:

- *Get your flu and Covid shot.* Getting vaccinated is the strongest protection available against severe illness, hospitalization, or death from Covid. The Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and recommended for everyone ages five and older. As the winter chill sets in, emergency physicians are also concerned about Covid mixing with the seasonal flu, so getting a flu shot in addition to a Covid vaccine will give everyone a better chance to stay healthy and avoid hospitalization.
- *Cover your face when in public.* Even if you’re vaccinated, health officials recommend you wear a mask while in public, indoor spaces, especially where there are high numbers of cases in the community. That choice can also increase protection for those at high risk of severe illness, such as the unvaccinated or anyone with a weakened immune system.
- *Make smart travel choices.* The CDC advises that those who are not fully vaccinated delay their travel plans. Holiday travelers can protect themselves and each other by following local safety guidelines, social distancing, and covering their face. Many travelers should also consider getting tested before they leave for a trip and once they return.
- *Prioritize safety as a host or houseguest.* To reduce the risk of spreading the virus, small groups gathering outside are safer than those inside. Some hosts may feel more comfortable confirming the vaccination status of house guests before they arrive. Those who are sick or have symptoms should not host or attend a gathering.

“As people move about the country and the winter sets in, responsible steps to lower your health risks can help keep Covid and flu off your holiday guest list,” said Dr. Schmitz. “However, if there is a medical emergency you can be sure that an emergency physician will be ready to treat you 24/7, even on the holidays.”

## New mountain biking trail opens at Indian favorite Brown County State Park

The DNR and the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association (HMBA) held a celebratory ribbon cutting to mark the opening of Limekiln East, a newly completed 1.6-mile beginner-level mountain bike trail in Brown County State Park.

Funding for the project included a Next Level Trails grant to HMBA, which provided the required match. Limekiln East is the second of three mountain bike trails to be completed in the state park as part of a \$200,000 NLT grant to HMBA to develop 7.5 miles of new mountain bike trail. The first, Weed Patch Trail, a 2.4-mile intermediate-level trail, opened in November 2019. The three new NLT-funded trails will connect with existing trails as well as other park amenities, including the campground, park office, nature center, and Hesitation Point. Once completed, the three new trails will bring the total mileage of mountain bike trails within the state park to 43.5.

Limekiln East becomes part of the park’s Limekiln network. The park’s existing Limekiln West Trail connects the campground to the Hoosier’s Nest, fire tower, and park office. Before the Limekiln East Trail opened, beginner mountain bike riders (and hikers and runners) used Limekiln West as an out-and-back. The addition of Limekiln East transforms the former out-and-back into a 3.7-mile beginner directional loop for the park’s daytime visitors. Limekiln East not only adds miles for both new and experienced riders, it also reduces congestion on the popular trail.

“Brown County State Park is premier destination for mountain biking in the Midwest and the new Limekiln East Trail only cements that reputation,” said DNR Director Dan Bortner.

Mountain bike trails in Brown County State Park are multi-use and are open to hiking and trail running as well as bicycling. Riders should obtain a \$5 daily or \$20 annual off-road cycling pass before using park mountain bike trails. Passes can be purchased at gates, the park office or at [www.ShopINStateParks.com](http://www.ShopINStateParks.com).

More information about NLT is at [www.on.IN.gov/NextLevelTrails](http://www.on.IN.gov/NextLevelTrails).

Brown County State Park can be visited online at [www.on.IN.gov/browncountysp](http://www.on.IN.gov/browncountysp) and is located at 1406 S.R. 46 W in Nashville, Indiana.

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## 'Coolest Thing Made in Indiana' contest entry deadline December 15

Indiana Chamber of Commerce's new competition will crown the Hoosier manufacturer that makes the 'Coolest Thing Made in Indiana'.

Entries for the competition are now being accepted through December 15. There is no entry fee.

It will feature veteran manufacturers to budding entrepreneurs in a Hoosier

Hysteria-style, single-elimination tournament.

Winners will be chosen through public fan voting, with the products receiving the highest votes in each matchup moving to a subsequent round. The number of votes received will be reset at the beginning of each round.

The goal, says the Indiana Chamber, is to showcase the

wide variety of manufacturing taking place in the state that has helped our economy thrive.

"We hope to hear from Hoosier makers of all kinds of things. From well-known products to cutting edge items and those truly unique that not everyone may know is made here. We want to spotlight them all," offers

Indiana Chamber President Kevin Brinegar.

To enter, companies must fill out a brief application at [www.indianachamber.com/coolestthing](http://www.indianachamber.com/coolestthing).

All accepted into the tournament field will receive recognition. The four finalists will receive prizes – with the champion earning a trophy, a feature article in the

Indiana Chamber's statewide BizVoice magazine and an invitation to appear on the IN Chamber podcast, among other benefits.

What's bound to be a fierce competition tips off in January, and the winner will be crowned in mid-February.

The Coolest Thing Made in Indiana is sponsored by MCA CPAs & Advisors.

Additional sponsorship opportunities are available for this inaugural competition. Contact Jim Wagner at [jwagner@indianachamber.com](mailto:jwagner@indianachamber.com) or visit the web site.

This marks the Chamber's second large-scale awards program. The organization has presented the annual Best Places to Work initiative since 2006.

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## This week in history

**December 4, 1969**

Black Panthers Fred Hampton, 21, and Mark Clark, 22, were gunned down by police officers in their Chicago apartment. About a hundred bullets had been fired.

Ballistics experts later determined that only one of those bullets came from the Panthers' side. In addition, the "bullet holes" in the front door of the apartment were actually nail holes created by police in an attempt to cover up the attack.

The raid was only one attempt by the government to weaken the Black Power movement. J. Edgar Hoover, of the FBI, had been battling civil rights activists and other minority leaders for years with their Cointelpro program.

There was also an effort by the FBI to prevent the "rise of a 'messiah' who could unify and electrify the militant black nationalist movement." They apparently considered Hampton, an outspoken, charismatic activist, to be such a leader.

Although most media coverage of the Black Panthers focused on their violent rhetoric and the fact that they carried arms, the Panthers were involved in many non-violent community-organizing activities.

Despite the evidence provided by ballistics experts showing that police had fired 99% of the bullets and had falsified the report on the incident, the federal grand jury did not indict anyone involved in the raid. Furthermore, even though a subsequent grand jury did indict all the police officers involved, the charges were dismissed.

[www.history.com](http://www.history.com)

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