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Winfield American

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February 23, 2024

Three Crown Point High School teachers receive Lilly Awards

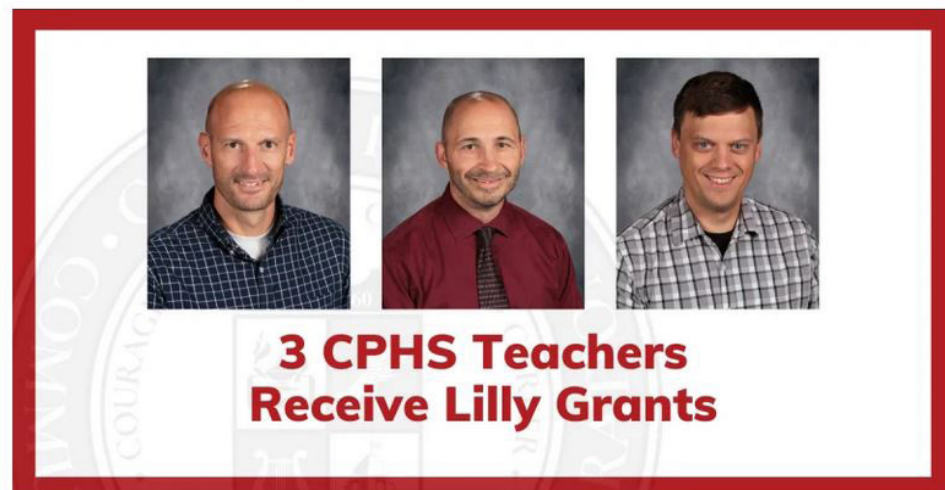
Crown Point Community School Corporation announced that three Crown Point High School teachers are recipients of the 2024 Lilly Endowment Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program (TCFP). Ryan Collier, Matthew Barno, and Eric Beard will each receive a grant of up to \$15,000 to support a personal project of exploration and renewal.

According to their website, TCFP supports Indiana educators by providing resources for them to take time for meaningful renewal. The Endowment believes that through new experiences, exploration and reflection educators can generate renewed energy in their careers, innovative approaches to teaching and educational lead-

ership, and thoughtful ways to encourage students' creative thinking.

Eric Beard will spend three weeks on the coast of northern California and Oregon to study literature, engage in mindfulness activities, and explore nature. The experience will include a five-day yoga and meditation retreat in Big Sur, California, before traveling up the west coast. Additionally, Beard will research two influential authors that first inspired him to teach English—Jack Kerouac and Ken Kesey. This includes seeing the Ken Kesey collection housed at the University of Oregon and a San Francisco museum dedicated to Kerouac's work along with other Beat writers.

Matthew Barno's trip focuses on traveling the great roads of the past and present. Barno will travel Route 66 all the way to Santa Monica, California. During these two weeks, he will stop at historic landmarks related to Route 66 as well as his own historical interests. He also hopes to try regional cuisines and dine at a few classic diners while stopping at as many Route 66 tourist attractions as possible. For the second leg of the trip, he will travel the Pacific Coastal Highway and stop at various locations related to surfing history, American history, or regional areas of interest. For the final leg, he will make his way home from Seattle, stopping at major national parks and national landmarks. The



entire trip will take a little over a month to complete and he plans to document it through photography.

Ryan Collier will begin his project with a ten-day trip to Wyoming to experience life on a working cattle ranch,

including an overnight cattle drive. Over the 2024-25 winter break, he will experience a weeklong dog-sledding adventure in Minnesota, learning to snow-shoe and cross-country ski. In March of 2025, he will learn to snor-

kel while visiting the Florida Keys. As a culmination of these experiences, he will take a short backpacking trip through the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (See *Teachers* Pg. 3)

Winfield Township and West Porter Township Fire District take steps to form fire territory

Officials from Winfield Township and the West Porter Township Fire Protection District have taken initial steps to form a more integrated partnership and establish a new Fire Territory. The new territory will cover all of unincorporated Winfield Township and the West Porter Township Fire Protection District, serving more than 11,000 people across an approximately 20-square-mile area.

Representatives from both participating units of government cited the rising costs of providing Fire

and Emergency Medical Services, as well as a decline in active volunteers, as reasons for exploring the creation of a Fire Territory.

"We are incredibly pleased to announce this new partnership because we know this is the best way to ensure

high-quality and life-saving Fire and EMS services for our residents," said Cody Reynolds, the Winfield Township Trustee.

Both the Township and District will consolidate with the Lakes of the Four Seasons Volunteer Fire Force, which has been providing fire pro-

tection for Lakes of the Four Seasons, Winfield Township, the Town of Winfield, and the West Porter Township Fire Protection District for the past several decades. The new Territory will be known as the Four Seasons-Winfield Fire Territory and will provide full-time fire and ambulance services.

"This proposal means that every one of our neighbors is guaranteed full-time services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As a retired member of the Fire Force myself, I truly appreciate what this means in terms of increased services

for our community," stated Brad Zupan, President of the West Porter Fire Protection District Board.

The new Territory's full operational budget is designed to be phased in over a three-year period in order to lessen any property tax impact to residents. Under the current plan, residents will see an increase in the number of full-time Firefighter/Paramedics from two per shift in 2025 to six per shift by 2027. These full-time positions will be supplemented by part-time positions, as well as volunteer members.

"While two full-time positions per shift may not sound like a lot to some, we have to remember that we currently have none," said LOFS Fire Force Chief Kevin Heerema. "At the rate our call volume has increased in recent years, relying solely on a volunteer force is simply no longer sustainable," he continued. "I appreciate the receptiveness and willingness of the current members of the Winfield Township government and the West Porter Board to correct this decades-old issue."

A series of joint public hearings for the Winfield

Township and West Porter Township Fire District Boards will be held on February 27 and March 12 at the Four Seasons Volunteer Fire Station located at 745 West 275 South, Hebron to discuss the formation of the new Fire Territory. The public hearing on February 27 will begin at 7 p.m., while the hearing set for March 12 will start at 7:30 p.m. These meetings will be followed by a final joint meeting on March 20 at 7 p.m. for both Boards to adopt the necessary ordinances, resolutions, (See *Fire* Pg. 4)

Elementary school music teachers work to make each school unique

Elementary music teachers play an important role in shaping a child's musical interests and talents. Across Crown Point Schools, seven dedicated elementary music teachers each bring their unique passions and teaching styles to their classrooms. While teachers begin with a shared foundational curriculum, their personal interests help grow students' abilities to understand, appreciate, and develop connections to music. No matter which elementary building you might visit, CPCSC music classrooms are full of laughter, movement, music making, and singing.

Jennifer Myers - Jerry Ross

At Jerry Ross Elementary, Mrs. Myers loves teaching what might be parents' least favorite topic: the recorder. She admits it's an unexpected passion. "Recorders get a bad rap for having a not so pleasing sound," she said. "But when everyone is playing them gently, with correct finger placements, notes, rhythms, and articulation of each note, the sound can be impressive considering the typical recorder sound most people associate with." For most of the students, this is their first experience playing a musical instrument with the goal of playing melodies.

It's typically the first time most of them try to become better musicians, tackling harder pieces as they learn and grow. Myers uses a program called Recorder Karate which provides background music to go along with the songs the students learn. By the end of the program, students play their most difficult piece, "When the Saints Go Marching In." "It's awesome when the students accomplish that one," Myers said. *Alex Drakulich - Winfield*

Mr. Drakulich at Winfield Elementary introduces a unique twist to traditional music instruction. In the second half of class, he teaches

an "artist of the month," delving into the history and impact of famous musicians like Dolly Parton, Fleetwood Mac, and more. Students watch a video about the artist, and Drakulich teaches basic history about the musician or group. The class discusses how a particular song might reflect something from the artist's life or time period. When students study Creedence Clearwater Revival, they learn to sing the song Fortunate Son and practice keeping a beat on drums. When they learn about Tina Turner and her song Proud Mary, they have a dance along. Other Winfield



Krista Woodhull - Lake Street

Miss Woodhull makes her classroom a special place by bridging classical with contemporary. "I love talking about composers of all kinds," she explained, "but the ones that I talk about

complete a project where they use musical instruments alongside silenced movie clips to create their own soundtracks. "They can totally change the whole emotion of the scene with their music," said Woodhull. "We talk (See *Music* Pg. 3)



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2024 New Year’s Resolutions to keep to help the environment

Submitted by the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Given the escalating environmental challenges facing our planet, directing some of our New Year’s aspirations toward eco-conscious endeavors can make a tangible difference. Luckily there are lots of ways to put your resolve to work for the planet.

For starters, one of the most impactful resolutions is to adopt a more mindful approach to consumption. Commit to reducing waste by embracing practices like reusing, repurposing and recycling. Shift to buying reusable items and those with

minimal packaging. Support brands committed to sustainable practices. Minimize your use of single-use plastics, another way to make a big impact without much effort. Choose stainless-steel water bottles, cloth shopping bags and glass food containers. Say no to plastic straws, cutlery and excessive packaging whenever possible.

Making more sustainable food choices is yet another way to make 2024 greener than 2023. Adopting a more plant-based diet or reduce meat consumption to significantly reduce environmental impact. Pledge to support local, organic and sustainably

sourced foods. Also, strive to reduce food waste by planning meals, composting organic waste and supporting initiatives that redistribute surplus food to those in need.

Another resolution that of us can make is to reduce personal carbon emissions. Embrace alternatives to fossil fuel-based transportation by walking, cycling, carpooling or using public transit. Also, consider investing in energy-efficient appliances, using renewable energy sources, and supporting initiatives that offset carbon emissions. While they might not be top of mind, changing up daily habits can also

reduce your carbon footprint and overall environmental impact. Conserve water by fixing leaks, taking shorter showers and using water-saving appliances. Grow your own food, support local biodiversity by planting native species, and prioritize eco-friendly practices in your daily routine.

Another way to create positive change is to speak out more for environmental policies and initiatives. Support community groups and environmental organizations, and join in local clean-up efforts or conservation projects. Engage in discussions, educate others,

and advocate for sustainable practices in your workplace, schools and social circles. Spread awareness about environmental issues and inspire others to take action. Share information on social media, organize educational events, or start a community garden or recycling program. Encourage friends, family and colleagues to join in your eco-friendly endeavors, fostering a collective effort toward a greener future.

Making a resolution is just the first step—commitment is key to achieving lasting change. Progress may require adjustments and perseverance, but every

step contributes to a healthier planet. By incorporating these resolutions into your New Year’s goals, you become an active participant in the global movement toward environmental stewardship. Together, let us embark on this journey to protect and preserve the natural world we all call home. Cheers to a more sustainable, eco-conscious year ahead!

(Music from Pg. 1)

about how movies would be different if there was no music in the background.” Students often ask about composers for other movies or TV shows they love, which creates a foundation to learn about classical composers like Tchaikovsky and Beethoven.

Kelly Walton - Timothy Ball

At Timothy Ball Elementary, Mrs. Walton transforms music performances into interactive experiences, blurring the lines between the stage and the audience. Emphasizing that music is meant to be shared, Walton incorporates singing, dancing, and audience participation in what she calls INFORMances. “Our programs are more like everyone having a giant music class together,” she shared. “The grade level giving the performance demonstrates the activity they are learning,

then the audience gets to do it with them.” By inviting guests to participate, Walton fosters a sense of community, promoting that music is a common experience, not just a performance. “I think this involves parents in a different way with their child. It gets people out of their comfort zones and makes a fun talking point at family gatherings.”

Laurie Heridia - Solon Robinson

Mrs. Heridia works hard to create an inclusive classroom environment at Solon Robinson Elementary. “I’ve been intentional this year about incorporating silent movement at the start of each lesson for all grades,” she said. “Some of our students with sensory struggles are able to have a quiet time to focus on moving their bodies within their own space.” This practice sets the environment for the rest of class.

All Solon students also learn a song in honor of Disability Awareness Month every March. Students learn to sing it through both vocalization and sign language. Several grade levels include this song in their Spring performances. Heridia recognizes that music can be a tool for students to shine and find a temporary reprieve from academics in an environment that celebrates differences.

Brooke Robinson - Eisenhower

Mrs. Robinson at Eisenhower Elementary teaches an immersive ballet unit tied to the third-grade’s field trip to The Nutcracker. To help students understand the athleticism of the performers and the strict specifications of dance matched to the music, students try some of the moves themselves, including their own 360 jumps. Students begin to understand how acting involves not just

the voice, but the body. “We learn about the dedication of the dancers, directors, and technical staff - how their work must be precise, timely, and consistent,” said Robinson. “We listen and identify points in the music where we hear certain effects created by the composer: the Mouse King’s heartbeat, the first snowflakes falling from the clouds, toy soldiers marching into the living room of Clara’s house, and more.” To wrap up the unit, students discuss how the skills and training to coordinate a successful ballet performance carry into many other areas of life.

Christine Santaguida - MacArthur

At MacArthur Elementary, Mrs. Santaguida creates a moving tribute at the school’s Veterans Day program. Incorporating various music genres, the program honors veterans while also

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INDOT, ISP encourage drivers to plan ahead for upcoming solar eclipse

Indiana will play a pivotal role in hosting eclipse enthusiasts as they flock to the Hoosier State to catch a glimpse of the first total solar eclipse in seven years on Monday, April 8. The eclipse will be visible over a large portion of the state, with the path of totality spanning from Evansville to the outskirts of Fort Wayne, entering southwest Indiana at 3:01 p.m. EDT/2:01 p.m. CDT and exiting to the northeast at 3:12 p.m. EDT/2:12 p.m. CDT.

Other parts of the state will experience a partial eclipse of at least 90% totality from approximately 1:30 p.m. EDT/12:30 p.m. CDT to 4:30 EDT/3:30 CDT.

Nearly 4 million Hoosiers live within the path of totality, with hundreds of thousands of people expected to visit Indiana for the event. Increased traffic and congestion are also expected as residents and tourists alike make their way to viewing destinations. Areas near the eclipse centerline are anticipated to

see the greatest influx of visitors, including Vincennes, Bloomington, Franklin, and Bluffton. Indianapolis and Evansville are also included in the path.

To ensure a smooth trip, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Indiana State Police (ISP) urge drivers to plan ahead and prepare for potential travel impacts before, during and after the eclipse.

Before the eclipse

- Research your viewing site, considering accessibility, parking and crowd size. Check INDOT TrafficWise on the mobile app or at 511in.org to plan your route and monitor traffic conditions. Plan to arrive to your destination early.
- Anticipate increased traffic and congestion, especially in areas in or near the path of totality.
- Reach your destination safely -- buckle up and put your phone down while driving.
- Pack plenty of snacks and water, as well as charging

cables for electronics and mobile devices, in the event you or your group become stranded.

- Make sure your vehicle has a full tank of gas and top off fluids before you head out in case you're stuck in traffic for a long period of time. Use this eclipse-ready checklist for more road trip essentials.
- Don't forget your solar eclipse viewing glasses! You will need specially designed glasses to avoid damage to your eyes.

During the eclipse

- Avoid travel during the eclipse or in the main path if possible.
- Exit the roadway to stop and view the solar eclipse. Do not stop along highways or park on the shoulder for viewing.
- Do not take photos or videos while driving. Indiana is a hands-free state. Holding mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets while driving is prohibited by state law.
- Do not wear eclipse glasses

while driving.

- Turn on your headlights. Do not rely on automatic lights.
- Watch for pedestrians, especially along secondary roads.

After the eclipse

- Plan your post-event transportation method well in advance. If celebrating, ensure everyone has a safe and sober way to return home. Designate a sober driver or arrange for alternate transportation.
- Exercise patience when leaving your viewing loca-

tion as traffic may be heavy. Follow instructions from law enforcement or emergency personnel and be considerate of fellow drivers.

- Stay put and stick around to avoid the post-event rush.
- Clean up after yourself and dispose of trash in designated receptacles, or take it with you.
- Once again, check INDOT TrafficWise on the mobile app or at 511in.org to plan your route and monitor traffic conditions.
- INDOT will limit road closures and restrictions where

possible on state routes to help with traffic flow surrounding the eclipse. View current construction and maintenance activities on INDOT's TrafficWise map or the free mobile app.

Visit the sites below and follow INDOT and ISP on social media for more information regarding the total solar eclipse in Indiana. www.eclipse2024.in.gov www.visitindiana.com/eclipse2024 www.greatamericaneclipse.com/indiana-2024-eclipse www.science.nasa.gov

**WHEN YOU DRINK
YOU CAN'T THINK.
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(Fire from Pg. 1)

and agreements to establish the new Fire Territory.

If approved by March 31, 2024, both entities will have met the state requirements for the formation of a new Fire Territory and The Four Seasons -- Winfield Fire Territory would officially be established on July 1, 2024.

At this time, the Town of Winfield has elected not to participate in this joint venture.

"While our goal was always to find a solution that

was agreeable to all three parties - Winfield Township, the West Porter Fire District, and the Town of Winfield - we have been unsuccessful to date," added Trustee Reynolds. "Even though the new Territory will not include the Town of Winfield, we will keep the lines of communication open with the hope that the Town eventually joins the new Territory."

This week in history

February 23, 1997

An estimated 65 million people tuned in to Steven Spielberg's Oscar-winning Holocaust drama Schindler's List on NBC.

Schindler's List told the true story of a wealthy German industrialist who helped a group of Polish Jews escape the Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Spielberg shot the great majority of the film in black and white, which only increased the shocking impact of its content. At the Academy Awards that year, the film won Oscars in seven categories, including Best Director and Best Picture.

NBC broadcast the film in its three-and-a-half-hour entirety, uncut and uninterrupted by commercials, as per Spielberg's request. The network made some effort to warn viewers about the film's mature content, airing a message from Spielberg himself cautioning that the content was not appropriate for young viewers. Still, the number of viewers who watched Schindler's List at home that night was more than double the number who watched it in the theater when it was released in 1993.

Controversy arose when Republican Senator Tom Coburn blasted NBC, saying it had taken network television "to an all-time low, with full-frontal nudity, violence, and profanity" and that it should not have aired the movie "on a Sunday evening during a family time." Coburn brought on a firestorm of negative publicity with his remarks, drawing criticism from fellow conservatives, such as William Bennett and Jack Kemp.

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Obituary ~ Dr. Dan Galloway

Dr. Dan Galloway (72), of Crown Point, passed away with loved ones by his side on February 6th, 2024. He was born on January 19, 1952, to Grover and Mildred Galloway in Benton, IL. After graduating from Portage High School, Dan worked as a paramedic while attending college at Indiana University. Upon completing graduate work at Penn State in medical genetics, he attended medical school at Midwestern University Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dan dedicated himself to serving his community in both family and emergency medicine. Dan earned accolades from the Indiana Osteopathic Association (IOA) where he served as past president and member of the board of directors. This group was instrumental in advocating for and establishing Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine, the first osteopathic medical school in Indiana. Dan also received the J.B. Kinsinger award, the IOA's highest to members for outstanding service to the osteopathic profession and the community in 2005. He married the love of his life, Christine (Ostrowski) Galloway, on July 9, 1977, and they were blessed with three daughters, Jennifer, Kimberly, and Lauren, who all followed in their father's footsteps and also pursued careers in service to others. Dan retired in 2022 after a 40 year career in clinical medicine. He enjoyed traveling the world with his wife, family, and friends, especially if it involved cruises. Music was another passion of Dan's. He was skilled



at singing, playing guitar, and the ukulele. He proudly passed along his love of classic rock and the Beatles to his children and grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Mildred and Grover Galloway; his brother, Jim Galloway; his brother-in-law, Jim Daily; and his mother and father-in-law, Stanley and Stephanie Ostrowski. He is survived by his wife, Christine Galloway; his daughters, Jennifer (Andy) Bien, Kimberly (Matt) Lichtenfeld, and Dr. Lauren (Brian) Brankle; his seven grandchildren: Annabel, Olivia, Kailey, Amelia, Madalyn, Bryce,

and Adeline; his sister, Debbie Galloway and her family; and his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Irene and Craig Hart and their family. Dan lived life to the fullest and will always be remembered for his genuine compassion, his ability to bring joy and laughter into any room, and the love he shared with family and friends. Visitation will took place from 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16th at Burns Funeral Home, 10101 Broadway, Crown Point. The funeral service was held on Saturday, February 17th at Burns Funeral Home at 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow at Calumet Park Cemetery in Merrillville, IN. In lieu of flowers, please make a memorial contribution to either the Motyka Dannin Osteopathic Educational Foundation through the IOA at www.inosteo.org or the Peyton Manning Children's Hospital Foundation at www.give.stvincent.org. www.winfieldamerican.com www.burnsfuneral.com.

Forestry educational opportunity available to teachers

Indiana educators are encouraged to apply for the 2024 Natural Resources Teacher Institute (NRTI), which will be held June 24-28 at the Forestry Training Center at Morgan-Monroe State Forest. Hosted by the Indiana DNR Division of Forestry and Purdue University Forestry and Natural Resources Extension, this week-long immersive professional development program will provide educators with the knowledge, skills, and tools to effectively teach their students about forest ecology, research, and management in Indiana. There is no cost to participants, and meals and housing are also provided. Daily activities include visiting public and private forest sites, touring forest industry facilities, and exploring forestry research through the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment. Up to 18 educators will be accepted to participate. Participants must be available to attend all days of the program and fully participate in activities. Participants will earn 30+ Professional Growth Points, as well as receive Project Learning Tree and Leopold Education Project curriculum materials, a forestry tool kit, Indiana-specific field guides, and a stipend for developing and implementing a lesson plan. Learn more at www.dnr.IN.gov/forestry/programs/education/nrti. To request an application, contact Lexi Eiler, forestry education specialist, at leiler@dnr.IN.gov or 317-234-5143.



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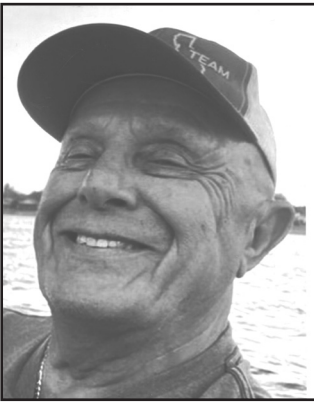
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Obituary ~ Wayne D. Kroner, Sr.

Wayne D. Kroner, Sr., age 77 of Crown Point, IN (LOFS), passed away on Monday, February 5, 2024. He was born on March 8, 1946, in Chicago, IL, to William S. and Margaret Kroner. Wayne was a graduate of Gage Park High School in Chicago, (January class of 1965). After graduation, he worked for Frito-Lay for 44 years before retiring in 2008. He enjoyed his senior golf group along with camping where he enjoyed traveling around the country with his RV family and friends, enjoying the west the most. Wayne was a member of the Lake of the Four Seasons Lions Club since 1985, where he served in many different capacities, including President. He also received the prestigious

Melvin Jones Award in 2011. Wayne always enjoyed helping with all the projects, especially cooking for the dinners and knew his way around the kitchen. He was also a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Holy Spirit Catholic Church helping with the food bank which he enjoyed. Wayne was preceded in death by his parents, William S. and Margaret Kroner, his only brother, William F. Kroner. He is survived by the love of his life, his high school sweetheart, Linda, who he married in July of 1965. They were blessed with 3 amazing children: Kimberly (Mark), Wayne, Jr. (Rebecca) and Keith (Jeanelin). Wayne is also survived by 7 grandchildren: Macy (Nick), Kiana

(Jake), Wade (Paige), Jordan, William, Skylar, and Trent. Along with that legacy are 8 great grandchildren. And, we cannot forget his beloved fur baby, Bella. A memorial visitation will take place at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 7667 E. 109th Avenue, Winfield, on Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 9 a.m. until time of memorial service at 10 a.m. Rev. Thomas E. Mischler officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to LOFS Lions Club or the St. Vincent de Paul of Holy Spirit for the food pantry. Wayne will be deeply missed by all who knew him and loved him. His memory will live on in his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. Such an amazing legacy he leaves



behind. Wayne will forever be cherished in our hearts and so deeply missed. Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, Crown Point, IN, entrusted with arrangements. www.burnsfuneral.com

LOFS Lions Club looking for more volunteers to help serve Winfield and surrounding areas

Our chapter is LOFS LIONS and our motto is 'WE SERV'E. We serve the communities of LOFS (Lake and Porter County), Winfield Township, and West Porter Township. Consider joining our chapter. We welcome you to visit us at our general meetings, which are usually held 6:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month at the LOFS Lakehouse Restaurant. Board Meetings are held the first Wednesday and a social gathering is usually held the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Contact any Lion member or one of the present officers: Yolanda Hernandez, President. Tom Snowden 1st Vice. Danny Moynihan, 2nd Vice. Jeanette Titoff, Secretary. Chuck DeLasCasas, treasurer. We hold several fundraisers throughout the year and donate to community food banks, Fire Stations and more. This year we received enough funds to offer six \$1000 scholarships to students from Crown Point and Boone Grove High Schools! Our aim is To Serve!

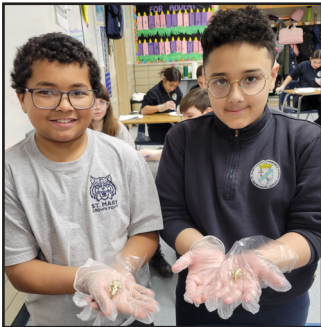
St. Mary students participate in interesting 'hands on' science lesson

Sixth graders at St. Mary Catholic Community School in Crown Point recently immersed themselves in a captivating conclusion to their ecology unit. They delved into the fascinating world of Barn Owl pellet dissection. The air in the classroom buzzed with excitement and curiosity as they were ready to unravel the mysteries hidden within these compact, regurgitated masses.

These young scientists

carefully dissected the pellets and sifted through the seemingly nondescript pellets, unveiling the remains of the Barn Owl's last meals. The classroom became a hub of scientific discovery as the students uncovered an array of skeletal treasures – tiny skulls of rodents and delicate beaks of smaller birds. The intricacies of the food chain came to life before their eyes, as they pieced together the puzzle of the Barn Owl's diet and its crucial role in the local ecosystem. "Mrs. Sarabia utilizes a great balance of 'hands on' learning to make science interesting and relevant for her students," said Principal Tom Ruiz.

For more information visit www.school.stmarycp.org.



LaShawn Walker and Liam Parker found excellent examples of small rodent (vole) skulls.



DeSean Torres and Gwen Patti meticulously dissecting an owl pellet so as to not break the tiny bones within.



Increase in Indiana's winter coyote sightings is no cause for alarm

Coyotes are on the move, and Indiana residents might see them more, but this should not be a cause for alarm. Coyotes are common everywhere in the state, even in urban areas. Coyotes become more active during winter, and the bare vegetation this time of year increases the chance of catching a glimpse. Young coyotes leave their parents to find a new home, making them more likely to be seen during winter. And in January, coyotes will be looking to breed, making them even more active. Seeing more coyotes does not mean they are increasing in number. Where people are, coyotes follow. Coyotes like to eat animals and plants that thrive around yards and homes, including rabbits, mice, fruit, and squirrels. They thrive around people because of the abundant food that comes with human development. Coyotes are a common

member of Indiana's urban wildlife community, as are raccoons, red foxes, and opossums. Coyotes are also an important member of Indiana's wildlife community, helping control rodent populations and cleaning up carrion. Coyotes typically weigh between 20-30 pounds and are similar in height to a German Shepherd. Winter fur, which is thicker, makes coyotes appear bigger than they actually are, potentially causing concern. To reduce the possibility of pets having a negative interaction with coyotes or any other wildlife, keep pets leashed, in a kennel with a secure top, or indoors. Problems between coyotes and people are uncommon. Follow these tips for making your property less attractive to coyotes: • Clean up fallen fruit from trees or gardens. • Keep garbage secure. • Make sure pet food and

treats are not left outside. • If you see a coyote around your yard, take down birdfeeders; coyotes could be attracted to the rodents eating the seeds. • Never intentionally feed a coyote, which could result in its losing its fear of people. Making a coyote feel unwelcome around people can help maintain its natural fear of humans, but never corner or chase a coyote – you should always allow it to have a clear escape path to get away from you. If you see a coyote and want it to go away, try to make it uncomfortable, yell; wave your arms; spray it with a hose; throw tennis balls or small stones at it, but don't throw anything that could be food, like apples; or carry a jar of coins to shake or a small air horn to make noise. Learn more about coyotes at www.wildlife.IN.gov/5688.htm.

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