

# The Hometown Treasure

February 2021 • Vol. 22 Num. 2



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The Hometown Treasure  
P.O. Box 70  
Shipshewana, IN 46565

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## WESTVIEW GRADUATES



Lavinnia Lantz graduated in the 2019-2020 school year.

When asked, “What is something I should know about you?” Lavinnia Lantz responded with, “I am brutally honest.” What motivates her in life is her family. Her favorite quote is, “Little by little, day by day, what is meant for you will find its way.” Advice she has for students currently attending Westview is to not

# STUDIES

focus on trying to impress others—just go at your own pace and focus on bettering yourself. She describes her high school experience as being life-changing, and it taught her a lot.

William Clark, a senior at Westview this 20-21 school year, has excelled inside and outside of school. Will has managed to achieve a GPA of at least 3.85 or higher. Throughout his senior year, his favorite classes have been radio and television, that produces the infamous Westview Television (WVTV) episodes, and graphic design. Will mentions that time management is important to be able to stay on task with all of the different assignments. He also adds, “My parents have helped me the most by being so supportive in academics and in sports.”

Outside of school, Will enjoys hunting and watching football. He adds, “When I’m hunting, I can let go of all my worries and stresses.” Watching football is always fun because he is with his whole family. Will enjoys family time. “It’s important,” he says.

Will’s advice to underclassmen is, “Have fun in high school, and don’t stress about little things. Enjoy life, and don’t worry.”



**“ENJOY LIFE, AND DON’T WORRY.”**  
- WILLIAM CLARK



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Westview School Corporation Administrative Offices  
1545 S 600 W, Topeka, IN 46571  
260.768.4404 | [eashy@westview.k12.in.us](mailto:eashy@westview.k12.in.us)



# SPORTS

**K**eeagan Kohlheim was interviewed about his athletics. He is currently a senior at Westview and is involved in soccer and wrestling. Keegan had a great senior year in soccer and is looking forward to his final wrestling season. Through his years of soccer and wrestling, he describes what he enjoys about the two and it is "Being able to be part of a team, but a family as well." He continues to add, "I also love that no matter what, my teammates have my back."

To start every game, Keegan's pre-game rituals include time in prayer along with a specific music playlist he only listens to before games. After games and during free time outside of school, he loves to hang out with friends, spend time out on the lake, and learn life lessons from his step-dad and grandpa.

As a senior, Keegan is concluding his final minutes on the field and on the mats. His favorite memories from soccer are

winning the NECC tourney along with the sectional championship this 20-21 school year. With wrestling, Keegan's favorite memory was during his junior wrestling season, which highlighted an undefeated season and includes a win at the South-Bend Clay tourney.

After graduating, Keegan plans to attend college to further his engineer studies and become a biomedical engineer.

**"I ALSO LOVE THAT, NO MATTER WHAT, MY TEAMMATES HAVE MY BACK."  
- KEEGAN KOHLHEIM**



WRITTEN, DESIGNED, AND EDITED BY ANDREW CUPP AND BLAKE DIEHL, BOTH SENIORS AT WESTVIEW. ANDREW CUPP ENJOYS RUNNING AND HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY. BLAKE DIEHL ENJOYS WORKING OUT AND DOING WORK OUTSIDE.



## The Hometown Treasure

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Size	width x height	Rate
1/12 page	2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " x 2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> "	\$36
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1/2 page	7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " x 4 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> "	\$192
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Discounts available for print-ready artwork and/or for running in multiple issues.

Call or email for a complete media kit.

Other sponsorships available. Call for details.

### — ADVERTISING INFORMATION —

Deadline for March 2021 Issue:

**12 noon, Tuesday, February 16**

Thursday, February 11 if you need a proof.

**March Issue Date is Tuesday, February 23**

Discounts for ads running more than once.

Call for details! **260-463-4901**

Or email [htads@lagwana.com](mailto:htads@lagwana.com)

### — SUBSCRIPTION RATE —

One Year: \$35

The Hometown Treasure reserves the right to not print any submitted advertisement or press release. Refunds for errors on advertising shall be limited to the amount paid for the first insertion for such advertising.



## Principal's Dozen

WJHS - December 2020

*Back Row (left to right): Lindsey Schwartz, Mykayla Mast, Brian Miller, Jane Miller, and Brianna Munoz. Front: Dallas Yoder, Katura Wingard, Janessa Bontrager, Kiana Mast, and Wendall Miller. Not pictured: Corra Owens.*

*Photo Submitted*

Westview Junior High School recognized the above students during the month of December for their efforts in academics, hard work in class, caring, leadership, citizenship, athletics, or random acts of kindness to others. 📌

## INVESTMENT STRATEGIES. ONE-ON-ONE ADVICE



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# Student Ambassadors

WHS - December 2020

*Back Row: (left to right): Brandon Hernandez-Ballines, Matthew Mortrud, and Reece Overman. Front: Nicole Miller, Courtney Hall, and Ashwaq Alduraibi. Not Pictured: Sharla Frey. Photo Submitted*

Westview High School has selected seven students to receive *Student Ambassador of the Month* honors for December 2020. These outstanding students were selected by their teachers for doing a noteworthy accomplishment, a generous act, displaying great improvements or having an outstanding individual achievement. Students like these make Westview a great place to attend!



Cover Photo by Abby Wenger

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Spring Tune-Up  
 Get in ahead of the rush!

# Word Search

(find all the underlined words) by Erika Byler

## Left-Over Letters Spell Out A Message From Erika!

Enter remaining letters starting at the top and going left to right.

\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_!

I've recently decided to challenge myself with my baking. I've been baking bread off and on for most of the year, and I normally follow a recipe, but I

have yet to find the perfect recipe. I know what texture and taste I want in the final product, but I'm not sure how to get there, so I decided to experiment! I've been playing around with different amounts of flour, oil, water, yeast, etc to get a better idea of how different dough textures yield different breads. It's been a lot of fun and so far I haven't had any major disasters!

Now I just need to figure out what to do with all this bread... 🍞



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E S A L S I T T L B R E  
D L O T L N R F P O U R  
A R D O E E U E D G W F  
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Solution on page 18

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

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<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

**Background:** SARS-CoV-2 infection is transmitted predominately by respiratory droplets generated when people cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe. CDC recommends community use of masks, specifically non-valved multi-layer cloth masks, to prevent transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus-laden droplets ("source control"), which is especially relevant for asymptomatic or presymptomatic infected wearers who feel well and may be unaware of their infectiousness to others, and who are estimated to account for more than 50% of transmissions. Masks also help reduce inhalation of these droplets by the wearer ("filtration for personal protection"). The community benefit of masking for SARS-CoV-2 control is due to the combination of these effects; individual prevention benefit increases with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly.

by Brenda Yoder, LMHC, Advocate for Elijah Haven, Speaker, Writer & Life Coach

## Grief and Loss

Grief is all around us. It is there when you wake up, when you float throughout your day, when you crawl into bed. There are a lot of losses for many of us right now.

The grief is not just from death. We have just experienced a divide in our country that we have not seen before. People are mourning the security of life and society. That insecurity feels different for each of us, and so does the loss.

Then there is grief over the ongoing disruptions in our life with stay-at-home orders or other restrictions that prevent us from going about life as usual. Put one on top of each other, and you have got a heavy load.

### 5 Stages of Grief

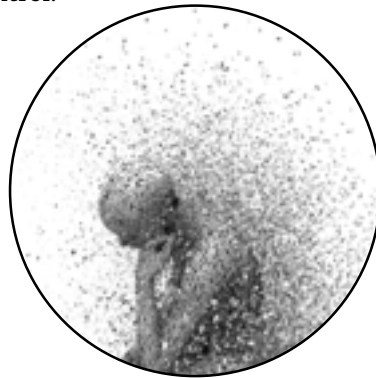
All ages are experiencing grief. As an elementary counselor, many students I work with are struggling with grief. They do not understand why they are so down. They feel some relief when I tell them their anger or depressed feelings are normal. One student said, "I thought I had gotten over it. But I guess I didn't."

There are five stages of grief that are universally accepted processes. They include:

- Denial.
- Anger.
- Bargaining.
- Depression.
- Acceptance.

There is not an order to these stages, nor does everyone go through each stage. It is common for people to experience one or more of them differently.

Whether you are struggling with grief from death, collective grief over national events, the loss of life as you know it, or other losses such as divorce, estrangement, or other relationship losses, your feelings are normal. Working through your feelings, though, can be hard if you let them overtake you and you do not feel in control.



### Strategies for Grief

Here are a few tools for you to manage your grief and help yourself through it.


**Name your feeling as succinctly as you can.** The more specific you are about your feelings, the more in control you are of your emotions and needs. Being lonely is different than being angry. Disappointment is different than the mourning the physical loss of a person. When you name your emotions specifically, you are more apt

to know how to fill that need or to have someone help you with it.

**Know you will not feel the way you do forever.** Hope is the light on the horizon of darkness. When you are encompassed with sadness, depression, and loss, it can feel as though the darkness will not end. Grief does not have a stop date, but the amount of loss in your life will not always be as big. It will not always take up as much space in your heart, mind, and soul. As I explained to my student, grief is like the seasons. Winter storms roll over to spring and summer when there is sun again, but also rainy and gray days. The process is slow, but it moves along.

Hope is essential when you feel hopeless because of your loss.

**Reach out to others.** Some days you may want to be with others. Some days you may not. Others may not understand your grief, but you still need community around you for a healthy balance of light in your darkness. You do not have to talk to others about your feelings, but simply being with someone you are comfortable with is helpful.

Healthy coping tools are essential to help your grief. The sun will shine again. Until it does, know you are not alone. We're all in this together. 

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- 2 Bryan Bontrager, Jason Bontrager, Evan Miller, Caleb Mullet, Laurent Osmun, Declan Ryall
- 3 Jesse Doremus, Peyton Lambright, Alyssa Miller
- 4 Briana Hagerman, Davey King, Lucas Raber, Amy Yoder
- 5 Daryl Beechy, Ethan Bontrager, Kaitlyn Bontrager, Christopher Brooks, Myra Fry, Jayden Mast, Kurtis Miller, Neil Miller, Toby Miller
- 6 Avionna Holmes, Marcus Runyan, Rylan Spencer, Emma Yoder
- 7 Paisley Brandenberger, Ashlyn Lay, Easton McDonald, Jeryle Miller, Lillith White, Dustin Yoder
- 8 Evan Bontrager, Lukas Gingerich, Kinley Hershberger, Andrew Martin, Jared Mast
- 9 Noah Chupp, Christopher Ferguson, Josiah Miller
- 11 Abigail Hershberger, Kelsey Smith
- 12 Isaac Drake, Lucas Lambright, Joshua Otto
- 13 Jackson Alwine, Derek Bontrager, Austin Miller, Jayda Stutzman, Ashlie Yoder
- 14 Zakaria Algaradi, Justin Helmuth, Alayna Hochstetler, Landyn Honyoust, Justin Miller, Caleb Schlabach, Chloe Turner
- 15 Camryn Christner, Lori King, Andrea Lambright, Abigail Miller, Marilyn Yoder
- 16 Alyse Bontrager, Luke Eash, Isla Slabach
- 17 Anthony Fry, Travis Gingerich, Jaxon Marks, Treva Miller

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*Birthdays for children in the area up through sixth grade may be submitted free of charge. Suggestion: Send in your complete list a year at a time. Hometown Treasure, Kids' Birthday List, PO Box 70, Shipshewana, IN 46565*





# February 2021 LaGrange Co. Parks Event



## The Great Backyard Bird Count



- 18 Laine Bortner, Janessa Caldwell, Cameron Eash, Cayden Eash, Adriana Stutzman
- 19 Sage Fisher, Kayla Herschberger, Kyle Herschberger, Destiny Mercer, Lucas Miller, Kandice Parker, Linden Smith, Emmery Spencer
- 20 Devon Bontrager, Ava Chupp, Cohen Shepard, Alex Stutzman, Amy Yoder
- 21 Melody Bontrager, Seth Hochstetler, Hannah Jasso, James Lambright, Caleb Lehman, Avery Mast, Kenlin Yoder
- 22 Makenna Helman, Brandon Mast, Kyrie Mauck, Atzimba Munoz Huerta, Chondra Quinn, Mazen Sowaileh, Amber Yoder
- 23 Julie Bontrager, Bentley Harman, Aaron Hershberger, Mildred McClellan, Isaiah Miller
- 24 Ayah Ali, Sara Bontrager, Archer Geigley, Curtis Graber, Raylan LaForce, Savannah Nelson
- 25 Lindsay Goff, Melody Hites, Jenisa Kauffman, Jariah Lehman, Austin Miller, Lisa Miller, Darin Stutzman, Kylie Wingard, Deanna Yutzy
- 26 Morgan Grossman, Kyle Hershberger, Beckham Misner, Janae Stutzman, Kara Yoder, Marilyn Yoder
- 27 Devon Bontrager, Eli Christner, Miles Glassman, Jamal Omarouf, Cameron Yoder
- 28 Cole Fillmore, Julie Lambright, Bryson Noble, Kaylee Yoder

**Friday, February 12, 12 – 3 pm  
Maple Wood Nature Center**

4550 E 100 S, LaGrange, IN

Be a part of the annual Great Backyard Bird Count! Join the Naturalist at Maple Wood Nature Center (MWNC) to participate in a family bird count. Children will learn to keep count on a large, homemade abacus. Stay warm inside and watch the feeder birds or hit the trails. This is a great way to learn to identify our common winter feeder birds. Celebrate nature in winter with a private bird counting party at MWNC. The tallies will be recorded on eBird.

Anyone wishing to help count needs to reserve a 30 minute or 1-hour time. Families will not overlap or be combined.

**Maximum group size is 20 people.**

*RSVP is required to Leslie Arnold at (260) 463-4022 or [larnold@lagrangecounty.org](mailto:larnold@lagrangecounty.org).*

### How to Participate on Your Own

While you are encouraged to participate with others in our county at the LaGrange County Parks, if that time does not work for you, you may still participate by yourself or with friends. You will need to submit your results on your own. There is information at [www.birdcount.org/participate/](http://www.birdcount.org/participate/).

Choose the easiest way for you to share your birds:

1. Identify birds with Merlin Bird ID app and add sightings to your list. (Merlin Bird ID by Cornell

Lab). They ask for an email address to set up the app but you may skip that and still install and use it.


You need to install a bird pack that contains the bird information when you set up the app. They will recommend installing the US: Midwest bird pack for this area. (Note: The pack is 464 Mb)! The app will help you identify birds by asking a few basic questions and then give you a list of bird photos to help you identify the bird.

2. Use the eBird mobile app.

This app does not help you identify birds, but you can use it to submit your data.

3. Enter your bird list on the eBird website (Desktop/laptop). The web address is [www.ebird.org/](http://www.ebird.org/) submit.

You will need to set up a free Cornell Lab account to participate. This account is shared with Merlin, eBird, Project FeederWatch and other projects at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. If you already have an account, please use the same username and password for submitting your bird list for the Great Backyard Bird Count.

They recommend observing birds for at least fifteen minutes. You may submit one or more lists over the four days of counting and you will become a contributing citizen scientist (community scientist). All eBird entries and saved Merlin Bird IDs over the four days contribute to the Great Backyard Bird Count. 



# LaGrange County Library

## LaGrange - Main Branch

203 West Spring Street • 260-463-2841  
M - F • 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
Saturday 9 am - 12 pm  
Curbside Pickup: M - F • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

## Topeka Branch

133 North Main Street • 260-593-3030  
M - F • 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
Curbside Pickup: M - F • 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

## Shipshewana Branch

250 Depot St. • 260-768-7444  
M - F • 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
Curbside Pickup: M - F • 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

**All library locations will be closed February 15 for President's Day**

**Below are the events planned for February.**

**If you have any questions, please call the library at 260-463-2841 for further information.**

## Youth Department

### Multiple Branches or Virtual Activities

#### Pre-School Virtual Story Time

**Facebook** • Tuesdays, February 2, 9, 16 & 23 • 10 am  
*Miss Brittany shares a book on-line each Tuesday morning.  
This will stay on our Facebook page to be watched at any time.*

#### New Activity Bags Out for Pick-up

**All locations** • Monday, February 8

Craft: Mosaic Heart

Each bag contains activity sheets and a simple craft for 2 children.

#### Home School Group

**In Person** • Main • Wednesday, February 10 • 10 am

**In Person** • Shipshewana • Wednesday, February 10 • 1 pm

**In Person** • Main • Friday, February 12 • 10 am

**In Person** • Topeka • Friday, February 12 • 1 pm

The theme is Geography.

Space is limited. Will also be available on Zoom. Call for details.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841) by February 3 to register.*

#### Teen Craft & Chat

**In Person** • Main • Thursday, February 11 • 4 pm

Activity: Making Adult Coloring Books.

Space is limited. Will also be available on Zoom. Call for details.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841) by Monday, February 8 to register.*

#### STEM

**In Person** • Main • Wednesday, February 17 • 4 pm

Theme: Let's be Rocket Scientists

Space is limited. Will also be available on Zoom. Call for details.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841) by Wednesday, Feb. 17 to register.*

#### Art

**In Person** • Main • Wednesday, February 24 • 4 pm

Theme: Painting a Cardinal. Ages: Kindergarten - Grade 5

Space is limited. Will also be available on Zoom. Call for details.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841) by Wednesday, Feb. 17 to register.*

## Adult Interest

### Multiple Branches

#### 2021 Adult Winter Reading Challenge

**All Locations** • January 2 - February 27

"Imagine Your Story"

Pick up an entry form at any branch. Complete all five reading challenges, then return the entry to any branch by **February 27**. You will win an elegant pen & pencil set.

#### LaGrange County Public Library

##### Gentle Flow Yoga with Farra

Mondays, February 1, 8 & 22 • 10-11 am

Thursdays, February 4, 11, 18 & 25 • 10-11 am

Please bring a yoga mat, rug, or blanket. The first class is free! For each further class a \$5 donation is suggested. Space is limited. Social distancing is observed. Masks are required, but may be removed once you sit at your mat.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841) to register.*

#### Hillsdale College Free Online Course:

"An Introduction to C. S. Lewis:

Writings and Significance"

Tuesdays, February 2 - March 30 • 2 pm

Nine weeks, nine 30 minute lectures. No prerequisites, non-credit.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841 x1030) to register.*

#### Make-N-Take:

Alcohol Inks Workshop

Wednesday, February 10 • 6 pm

Participants will use alcohol inks on glass, metal and acrylic to make at least 6 pendants and finish them into 4 completed necklaces. Ages 12 and up. Cost is \$20 per person. Space is limited. Masks are required, but may be removed once you sit at your workspace. Reservation and \$10 deposit due by Feb. 3.

*Call the Main library (260-463-2841 x1030) to register.*

#### Second Saturday Book Club

Saturday, February 13 • 11 am

This month's book is "Pompeii" by Robert Harris  
Copies of the book are available at the LaGrange Library's Adult Information Desk. Masks and social distancing are required.

**The following health and safety measures are currently in force at all library locations:**

- Masks must be worn by patrons and staff at all times in the buildings.
- Social distancing will be observed.
- Children are allowed in the library if accompanied by an adult and must wear a mask if over 2 years old.
- Computers and study rooms are available for one-hour sessions by appointment only.

Find more information at

**[www.lagrange.lib.in.us](http://www.lagrange.lib.in.us) or call 260-463-2841.**

This page sponsored by





# Mystery Farm CONTEST

## OVER \$50 WORTH OF PRIZES!

**1st Prize:** **Tiffany's Restaurant**, Topeka, \$25 Gift Certificate, lighted pen, notepad set, and a copy of *The Honeyville Journal* from LaGwana Printing.

**2nd Prize(s):** Lighted pen, notepad set, and *The Honeyville Journal* from LaGwana Printing.

**3rd Prize(s):** *The Honeyville Journal*.

*\*Additional 2nd and 3rd prizes will be awarded for every 50 entries over 100 received.*

### RULES:

- 1) Identify farm shown by owner's name, by address, or by road and nearest intersecting road.
- 2) Mail to *Hometown Treasure - Mystery Farm*, P.O. Box 70, Shipshewana, IN 46565.  
**Please include your name and address.**
- 3) Entry deadline: **February 16, 2021.**  
*Allow time for mail delivery.*
- 4) Winners will be drawn and prizes mailed.
- 5) Correct entries listed in our next issue!

## February Contest Sponsored by Tiffany's Restaurant and LaGwana

**Mervin & Carolyn Eash, 7300W 500S, Topeka**, correctly identified last issue's farm as being owned by **Leland & Irene Lehman, 6745S 300W, Topeka**. Congratulations! They won a 1 Year Subscription from *The Connection*, a lighted pen, a notepad set, and a copy of *The Honeyville Journal* from LaGwana Printing. Second prize went to **Leroy E. & Karen Miller, 7905N 900W, Shipshewana**. Third prize went to **Mattie Mullet, 5410S 400W, Topeka**.



There were 27 correct entries this month. **Others that guessed correctly were:** Jr & Esther Beechy, Kevin & Elaine Mullet, Lee & Carolyn Eash, Fannie M. Miller, Vonda Yoder, Freeman & Rosanna Miller, Mark & Erma Miller, Richard & Elva Lehman, Lavon Dean Miller, Erma Lambright, Wilbur & Susie Hostetler, Wayne & Wilma Mullet, Marion & Waneta Miller, Steven & Doris Miller, LeVerne & Dorothy Whetstone, Leroy & Darlene Schrock, Dan & Leona Hochstetler, Harvey & Martha Miller, Crist & LeAnna Miller, Elva H. Miller, Mary Ellen & LeAnna Miller, Harley & Ella Mac Schrock, Grace

Ilene Yoder, David & Arlene Miller, Vernon & Sue Miller, Orla & Marilyn Miller, Vernon & Mary Alice Miller.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Hershey's Kisses are named after the kissing sound the deposited chocolate makes as it falls from the machine on the conveyor belt.



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**Coloring Contest: kids age 6 and younger.** Sponsored by Yoder's Shipshewana Hardware this month! Winner gets a **SPECIAL SURPRISE** at Yoder's Shipshewana Hardware, State Rd 5 South, Shipshewana. Winning drawings will be on display at Yoder's Hardware. **ALL PARTICIPANTS** come in and claim your drawing for A **FREE SURPRISE** at Yoder's Shipshewana Hardware in March. Mail submission to: LaGwana, Coloring Contest, PO Box 70, Shipshewana, IN 46565. **Entry deadline is February 19, 2021.**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# Smart Choices

By Katie Hettinger, PharmD at Topeka Pharmacy

## Medication Question: Should I take a Statin?

You may have heard of a class of medications often referred to as “Statins”. Medications like Lipitor (atorvastatin), or Crestor (rosuvastatin) are some examples. Statins work by decreasing your cholesterol, which helps keep your arteries clear and healthy for good blood flow. These medications are used to help patients lower their cholesterol, and for heart health in patients who have heart disease and have had a heart attack or stroke. Statins are an incredibly important medication to consider if you are at risk for heart problems. Multiple studies have shown patients experience at least a 25% relative decrease in heart events when taking a statin!

### How would you know if you need a statin?

Some factors your healthcare provider may consider include the following:

- If you have high cholesterol, including a LDL level of 190 mg/dL or higher. LDL stands for Low-density lipoprotein, which is often referred to as the “bad” cholesterol
- If you have existing heart disease, have had a heart attack, or a stroke
- If you are between 40 and 75 years of age and have type 2 diabetes

- If your 10-year risk of heart disease is 7.5% or higher (your healthcare provider can check this for you).

### What about side effects?


One of the common side effects you may hear about is muscle aches and pains associated with the use of a statin medication. This can happen, but over 90% of people taking a statin medication do not experience muscle pains!

In a recent study, researchers found that there was no significant difference in the amount of muscle pains people taking a statin medication experienced versus people not taking a statin medication. The likelihood of experiencing muscle pain symptoms from a statin medication is relatively low.

### What can I do if I am still worried about side effects?

Talk to your healthcare provider about alternative dosing. Statins are meant to be taken daily, but some patients take this medication every other day instead of every day.

Consider adding a supplement called Coenzyme Q-10 to your medication list. This supplement is safe and has proven benefits for heart health. When patients experience muscle pains due to statins, it is thought to be due to decreased Coenzyme Q-10 levels in your body. By giving your body the Coenzyme Q-10 back, this side effect often goes away.

Topeka Pharmacy is here to help you address any additional questions! 

## Did you know...

There are a lot of Weird and Unique holidays out there?

Here is a list of some of these strange holidays for February.

Feb 1	National Freedom Day No Politics Day
Feb 2	Day of the Crêpe Play Your Ukulele Day
Feb 3	Carrot Cake Day Feed the Birds Day
Feb 4	Thank Your Mailman Day Create a Vacuum Day Stuffed Mushroom Day
Feb 5	National Weatherperson's Day Chocolate Fondue Day Bubble Gum Day
Feb 6	Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day Lame Duck Day
Feb 7	Send a Card to a Friend Day
Feb 8	Laugh and Get Rich Day Clean Out Your Computer Day
Feb 9	Toothache Day National Pizza Day
Feb 10	Umbrella Day
Feb 11	Make a Friend Day Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day National Inventors Day
Feb 12	National Lost Penny Day
Feb 13	World Radio Day Get a Different Name Day
Feb 14	Ferris Wheel Day Library Lovers Day National Organ Donor Day
Feb 15	National Gumdrop Day Singles Awareness Day
Feb 16	Do a Grouch a Favor Day
Feb 17	Random Act of Kindness Day
Feb 18	National Battery Day
Feb 19	Chocolate Mint Day
Feb 20	Cherry Pie Day Love Your Pet Day
Feb 21	Card Reading Day
Feb 22	Single Tasking Day Be Humble Day World Thinking Day
Feb 23	International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day
Feb 24	Tortilla Chip Day
Feb 26	Pistachio Day Tell a Fairy Tale Day Carnival Day
Feb 27	International Polar Bear Day No Brainer Day World Sword Swallowers Day
Feb 28	Public Sleeping Day Floral Design Day



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# Coloring Contest Winners

Six year old Nicholas Bontrager of 100 S, Topeka was our winner for the January Coloring Contest. He won an ice cream treat of choice at Tiffany's in Topeka.

Everyone else that sent in a page can stop by Tiffany's for a free small ice cream cone through February.

Runners-up were Kyle Eash, age 6; Serena (Topeka), age 5; Deloris Miller, age 4. Honorable Mentions: Keven Lynn Yoder, age 6; Kenlin Yoder, age 6; Amy Sue Miller, age 6; Jayna Grace Yoder, age 6; Angela Plank, age 5; Kelsie Adel Hochstetler, age 5. Check out page 12 for this month's coloring page.

Be SURE to include all your information on the coloring page, even your age! ... we don't want you to miss out! Remember, the contest is only for children up to six years old. 



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# MONEY Wise

by Brittney Schori, *Extension Educator, Purdue Extension - LaGrange County*

## Seven Steps to Downsize Your Holiday Debt

As you may guess, many families increase their spending during the holidays. Do you have leftover holiday debt hanging over your head like a big dark cloud? Take a deep breath and relax. There are a number of time-tested ways to dig out of debt and free up money to save. Every small step toward being debt-free will decrease financial stress and provide increased peace of mind. Here are a few time-tested debt repayment steps that I recommend you consider.

### **Know What You Owe!**

Create a list of outstanding consumer debts that need to be repaid (e.g., loans, credit cards, etc.). Include the names of creditors, balances owed, the number of monthly payments remaining (if known), and the dollar amount of monthly payments. Identifying how much you owe and who you owe it to is the first step to getting out of debt.

### **Decide What You Can Repay!**

Ideally, you'll want to pay at least double the required monthly payment. This would be six percent of the outstanding monthly balance instead of the typical three percent required minimum payment. This is one simple step that can save hundreds, even thousands, of dollars of interest and years of debt repayment. Online credit calculators and the debt payoff table in your credit card statement are useful tools to estimate how long it will take, and how much interest it will cost, to repay existing creditors.

**Increase Income and/or Reduce Expenses!** Track current living expenses for a month or two and identify what your spending "leaks" are. Plug



the leaks through reduced spending and earmark the newly "found" money to repay debt. A second option is to increase your income by getting a second job, working overtime, or freelancing "side hustles." An occasional way to raise income is through the sale of possessions online or at garage sales.

**PowerPay Your Debt!** PowerPay is a free online Cooperative Extension program that works by adding the amount of monthly payments from paid off debts to monthly payments for existing debts. As each creditor is repaid, remaining creditors receive larger payments with freed up cash, resulting in both time and interest savings. To generate a PowerPay calculation, prepare a list of creditors and the outstanding balance, monthly


payment, and interest rate for each debt. For more information on this program go to <https://extension.usu.edu/powerpay/>

### **Consider Refinancing!**

Refinance existing debt (i.e. balances on credit cards) if current interest rates are lower than the rate you were previously paying and you have the willpower to not run up credit card balances again. Before you refinance, however, check the required fees to make sure that the interest savings is not offset by closing costs, application fees, and other expenses.

### **Borrow Cheaper Money!**

Consider transferring high-interest credit card debt to lower-interest loans and credit cards. Other relatively inexpensive borrowing options are cash-value life insurance policies, family loans, and credit union loans. Avoid high-cost borrowing from payday lenders and car-title loans.

**Get Help When Needed!** Don't be afraid to contact a non-profit credit counseling agency for help on how to get out of debt. Credit counselors can provide budget counseling and often negotiate with a debtor's creditors to receive concessions such as waived fees and lower interest rates. 

---

Source: Barbara O'Neill, Ph.D., CFP®, Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
-----

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr Mustang Club

A maximum of two students are chosen by the classroom teacher each nine weeks. Winners are chosen based on their display of the following characteristics: effort, attitude, improvement, respect, and responsibility. Winners receive a Mighty Mustang tag on a chain and their choice of a bag from the principal, Mrs. Whitney. Pictured are the winners for the second quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. Go Mustangs! 

Photos submitted

# Meadowview Elementary

**Back Row (left to right):** Lynn Miller, Micah Whetstone, Daryl Beechy, and Caleb Schlabach. **Front:** Kara Lower, Heidi Lehman, Mariah Yoder, Kristal Miller, and Laylah Lambright.



KG



1<sup>st</sup> Grade

**Back Row (left to right):** Elijah Kemp, Benjamin Chupp, Lyndon Wingard, and Lyndon Bontrager. **Front:** Karla Yoder, Jolisa Fry, Salia Bontrager, and Kristen Bontrager.



2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

**Above: Back Row (left to right):** Adrian Frey, Landon Beachy, and Jeremy Fry. **Front:** Megan Yoder, Lynsey Yoder, Lori Bontrager, and Ava Yoder. **Not pictured:** Seth Miller.

**Below: Back Row (left to right):** Blake Tullos, Bryce Yoder. **Front:** Klover Marner, Linden Smith, Kailey Lambright, and Savannah Cruz. **Not pictured:** Jakoby Whetstone.



3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Back Row (left to right):** Alex Stutzman, Micah Schrock. **Front:** Miley Wirick, Destiney Osmun, Karina Yoder, and Natalie Yoder. **Not pictured:** Easton Workman.

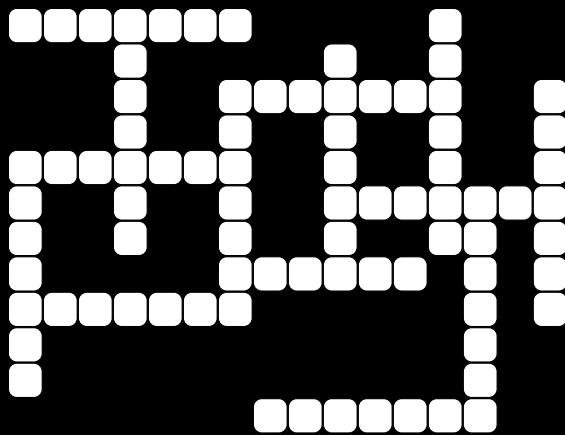


4<sup>th</sup> Grade

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 Seethed  
 Ticked



# Clueless Crossword

Solution to Clueless  
 Crossword is on pg 24.  
 by Emily Vandevander

Use the words listed to fill in the spaces!

## How Challenging Do You Want It?

Occasionally we ask for feedback from our readers so that we can improve the magazine for you. Over the past few months, we have been working at making the puzzles more challenging. Do you like this month's level of difficulty? Do you want them more challenging? Easier? Let us know! If you have other suggestions, let us know that also. Send replies to [news@lagwana.com](mailto:news@lagwana.com) or write to us at PO Box 70, Shipshewana, IN 46565.

Solution to puzzle on page 6



### Left-Over Letters Spell Out A Message From Erika!

Enter remaining letters starting at the top and going left to right.

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# Shining CITIZENS

Second Quarter

# Shipshe-Scott Elementary

Shipshe-Scott Elementary has named their selection of Shining Citizens for the second quarter of the

2020-2021 school year. Congratulations students! 📌 Photos Submitted



**1st Grade**  
First Grade: Back Row (left to right): Carson Miller, Nicole Miller, Krystal Schlabach, Caleb Yoder, Kendra Yoder, and Kinley Yoder. Front: Melanie Slabach, Avery VonGuten, Preslee Rahn, Christopher Yoder, and Harper Yoder.

**2nd Grade**  
Second Grade: Back Row (left to right): Maria Miller, Jace Amsden, Serena Miller, Janice Miller, and Curtis Graber. Front: Ryleigh Weimer, Zachariah Jones, Grace Miller, Elijah Wingard, and Tyson Yoder. Not Pictured: Brinley Kraft and Kole Moon.



**3rd Grade**  
Third Grade: Back Row (left to right): Chandler Engle, Jaylen Rennick, Jayla Lehman, and Joshua Schlabach. Front: Ashby Yoder, Christopher Miller, and Amy Miller.

**4th Grade**  
Fourth Grade: Back Row (left to right): Kameron Meyers, Tryonne Boccol, and Kristen Chupp. Front: Sara Bontrager and Kylie Mast. Not pictured: Jonah Lehman, Brynn Bontrager, Lisa Hochstetler, and Laura Miller.



## Second Grade Studies Body Systems

Second grade is studying the different systems of the body. They made life-sized diagrams of the body and added each system. Pictured are Alicia Bontrager and Kari Hochstetler. 📌 Photo Submitted

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## Math Awards

Fifth Row (left to right), (Fourth Grade):

Janelle Bontrager, Riley Lambright, Logan Miller, Noah Cleveland, and Adrian Yoder.

Fourth (Third Grade): Kevin Lehman, Marowah Algaradi, Nasser Yahya, Mahweensa Marks, Mildred McClellan, and Mason Case.

Third (Second Grade): Landon Nissley, Ashlin Rockey, Ava Wingard, Mallory Antal, Caleb Miller, and James Bailey. Second (First Grade): Brian Herschberger, Nichole Miller, Darin Bontrager, Nyanchai Sornross, and Noah Feipel. First (Kindergarten): Shayla Strater, Emerson Foust, Sean Williams, John Yoder, Aaron Riehl, Lanae Miller, Vincent Vogt, and Carson Miller. Not Pictured: Audrey Yoder and Braylin Leonard.

## Reading Awards

Fifth row, (left to right), (Fourth Grade):

Arie England, Zachary Miller, and Kevin Bontrager. Fourth, (Third Grade): Erin Frey, Keturah Fry, Trinity Antal, Aubrey Young, and Anisah Omar. Third, (Second Grade): Reagan Diehl, Lyric Miller, Jesse Mast, Larry Lambright, Hannah Riehl, and Austin Yoder. Second, (First Grade): Jared Miller, Heidi Miller, Lujain Shammam, Michelle Yoder, Josie Vaughn, and Rebah Williams. First, (Kindergarten): Jada Nissley, Xavier Miller, Caleb Yoder, Kristopher Fry, Max Yoder, Raylan LaForce, Austin Miller, and Aryanna Case. Not Pictured: Ayah Ali, Hadleigh Cotherman, Kenlyn Lambright, and Breanna Yoder.

## Life Skills Awards

Fifth row, (left to right), (Fourth Grade):


Mazen Sowaileh, Lacey Ramey, Janae Frey, Kyle Hochstetler, Anisa Omarouf, and Belen Quiroga. Fourth, (Third Grade): Morgan Bontrager, Jamal Omarouf, JuLayne Whetstone, Kaitlyn Fry, and Leila Graber. Third, (Second Grade): Justin Miller, Hagar Algaradi, Gusmar Munoz-Huerta, Hannah Miller, Kaylene Bontrager, and Dale Siples. Second, (First Grade): Cameron Bontrager, Raghad Aljeradie, Emmett Niccum, Addelyn Miller, Joshua Riehl, and Hannah Miller. First, (Kindergarten): Kylee Hostetler, Seth Slabach, Regan Hochstetler, Olivia Miller, Eric Riehl, Andrea Yoder, Gavin Lambright, and Kadence Jones. Not Pictured: Abdulrahman Alyaharee.

# Topeka Elementary



## Award Winners

Topeka Elementary has named the

second nine weeks award winners for math, reading, and life skills. 

Photos Submitted

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# Reading Reward

This year a lot of things have had to change for students and schools, but some things have not. At Topeka Elementary one of those things is kids loving books and loving to read. Shown are third graders in Mrs. Tobi Culp's class who met their reading goals for the second nine weeks. To celebrate, they got to get comfy and have a reading party. 📖

*Photos submitted*

# Topeka Elementary



# WES Outstanding Citizens

The outstanding citizens are chosen based on the following traits: good behavior, completing their assignments, respectful towards others, acting as a role model to others, respecting others property and rights, modeling good behavior, participating in and out of the classroom, being honest and trustworthy, and finally being courteous and cooperative.

# Westview Elementary



The PTO provided coupons to JoJo's Pretzels, E & S, and Kitchen Cupboard. Here are the winners for the second grading period, in no particular order:

Somyh Aljaradie, Laine Bortner, Willis Hilty, Makenna Bender, Amy Hershberger, Amy Bontrager, Steven Miller, Landon Raber, Coleen Miller, Angela Hochstetler, Hayden Miller, Daniel Yoder, Graci Engle, Addison Kauffman, Karl Hershberger, and Keegan Hershberger. 📖

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## Clueless Crossword Solution

By Emily Vandevander  
to the puzzle on page 18.

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## Notice For Kindergarten Enrollment

### Westview School Corporation 2021

If your child will be five years old by August 1, 2021, and is not pre-enrolled, the pre-enrollment steps for kindergarten are as follows:

1. Contact school of residence to obtain a pre-enrollment form.  
Shipshewana - 768-4158  
Topeka - 593-2897  
Meadowview - 768-7702  
Out of district parents should contact the school that you wish to enroll your child.
2. Return enrollment form to the school as soon as possible.
3. Parents will receive a SEEK Screening schedule the second week of May
4. SEEK Screening will be at the student's school of residence the last 2 weeks of the school year. 

# Westview Schools

## Hostetler is 2021 Lilly Scholar

As we reported last month, the LaGrange County Community Foundation selected Mary Beth Hostetler, a senior at Westview Jr.-Sr. High School, for the 2021 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship. The scholarship awards the recipient with four years of full-tuition to the accredited public or private college or university in Indiana of their choice, along with an annual \$900 stipend for books and required equipment. Since this news broke as the paper was going to print last month, we were not able to do a full write-up in the January issue.


Ms. Hostetler will graduate with academic honors in May 2021 and plans to pursue a career in the field of animal science at Huntington University. She hopes to work in the field of reproduction and genetics within

the livestock industry. Her biggest dream is to start her own blood line and herd of Hereford cattle. She has a goal to give back to the community by either donating the meat to the Clothes and Food Bas-

ket of LaGrange County or selling it at reduced rates based on financial need.

After being named the recipient, Hostetler said "It allows me to focus on my goal of obtaining my degree in animal science and returning to LaGrange County," Her decision to pursue a career in animal science was inspired by her grandfather, Richard Hostetler. "He developed in me a love for animals, and being involved in FFA & 4-H solidified my career choice."

Mary Beth has kept busy throughout high school with involvement in band, choir, soccer, musicals, FFA, being a student aid, and as a member of National Honor Society. In addition to her school involvement, she is involved in her community through 4-H, Bible Memory Ministries, Emma Church Worship Team, all the while helping on the family farm and working part-time at Yoder Department Store.

Applications were submitted by 24 students this year and five finalists were chosen. The finalists are Amelia Johnston of Prairie Heights High School; William Clark, Alexis Miller and Hallie Mast, all of Westview Jr.-Sr. High School. Each of the finalists will receive a \$1,000, four-year renewable scholarship from the Lambright Leadership Scholarship Fund established by Kevin and Carrie Lambright in 2013. 

*Photo submitted*

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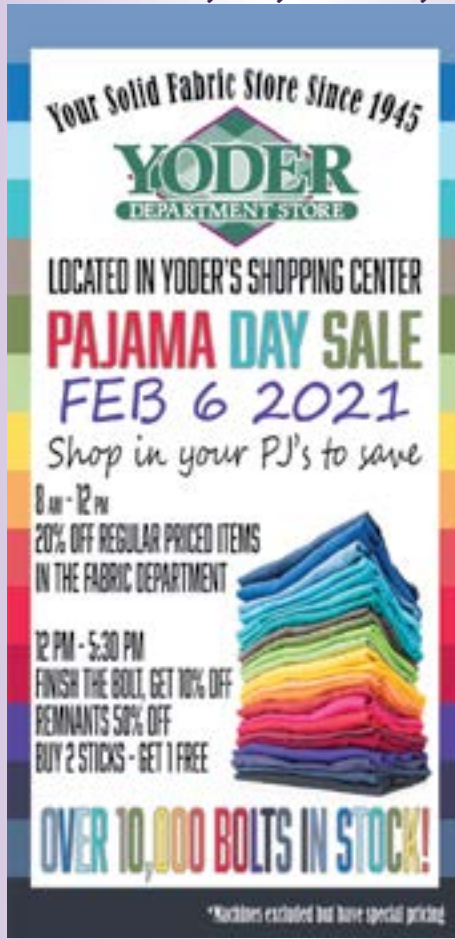
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February 6, 2021



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# Pajama Sale

## February 6, 2021

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# WHEN THE "SOMEONE" YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT... TURNS OUT TO BE YOU!

by Harold D. Gingerich

With affordable DNA testing now available to the public, it has become almost common to hear the story of people who have suddenly discovered new family members. Quite frankly, I imagined that I would be one of those people. I loved the man I called "Dad," who many knew as Joe. And I have been so thankful for my Eicher and Gingerich families. But I often wondered about the identity of my real birth father; maybe I was a chapter in his life that needed to remain closed. The findings from my DNA test led to some amazing discoveries which included an unexpected connection with this community. And those findings also raised an entirely new set of emotions and questions.

Over the years I have frequently told people that my life is a testimony to God's amazing grace. As a child born out of wedlock to a mother who herself was born out of wedlock and left with the mission in Portland, Oregon, my early years were spent in the home of a Mennonite family in Albany, Oregon. I do not remember ever going to bed at night without the Bible being read to me. In fact, my Grandma Eicher, who I called Mama, read to me the Book of Revelation twice before I went to the first grade. My last name at birth was Eicher and I would not be where I am

today were it not for my Mom (Shirley) and the Eicher family. They were God's gift to me.

We have known for years that my mother had found her birth family and had met (as had Janice and I) her Aunt Edith on several occasions. So, we knew a little of that family history. I had already traced her family back to my 17th Great Grandfather Sir William Hastings (1431-1483) the Lord Chamberland of England who was headed by King Richard in the Tower of London (I know it all gets a little crazy, but Shakespeare's play Richard the 3rd is all about Sir William Hastings.). Imagine my surprise the day my DNA results came back and I discover that my DNA was linked to Norway (41%), England (25%), Scotland (16%), Sweden (10%) as well as Ireland and Western Europe. What we did not realize was that the Ancestry website would begin to notify us of possible DNA matches.

Numerous possible matches

The Hometown Treasure · February '21

began to show up. The most intriguing was a lady with whom I shared 1,692 cM. I had no idea what that stood for!

As it turns out, it stands for a unit of genetic measurement called centimorgans. According to Ancestry there was a 100% probability that she was either a grandparent, a grandchild (I knew that couldn't be!), a half sibling, or an aunt or an uncle.

So, now there is a whole new wave of emotions ... and questions. Does she know about me? Does she want to know about me? Will I be an embarrassment to her and her family? Is her father my birth father? Is he still living? Did he ever know about me? Does he want to know about me!? With fear and trembling I sent her a message through

*Harold's father Donald Copeland & Harold at about the same age*



*Emma & Nelson Perry Jones  
Harold's great grandparents*





Nelson P Jones and his horse – Harold's great-grandfather

the Ancestry website in early March of 2020. I introduced myself and mentioned a little about my mother before asking her how we might be related.

Within a day or two I had a response. It was short, gracious, but matter of fact. She really didn't know anything. I thought, "OK, she's probably wondering if I'm some crazy guy who's stalking her." As far as I was concerned that was the end of it.

A week or two later I got an email saying, "Who are you and how are you a part of our family?" Turns out the email was from the daughter of the woman I had contacted. Her name was Chantel, and from that point on Facebook Messenger became our primary means of communication. It was not long until she messaged me saying, "Well, I'm going to get ahold of my Aunt Dolores, and we are going to figure this out!" I thought, "Oh... so do I have an aunt?"

A day or two later Chantel sent me a message asking if she could give her Aunt Dolores my telephone number. At 9:30 that night Dolores called me from California. She talked for two hours and I soaked in every word. She remembered my mother and told me about Mom's kindness to her. She said that they all went to the Mennonite mission church in Portland. She said, "I asked my folks, 'what ever happened to Shirley?', but they would never give me an answer."

The reason was that their 16-year-old son, Donald, had gotten my

19-year-old mother pregnant with me. It was 11:30 at night here in Indiana but as soon as I got off the phone with my newly discovered "Aunt Dolores", I called my brother Brian in Salem, Oregon, who knew that we were close to finding my birth father. I think that he was more excited than I was about what Aunt Dolores had told me.

It seems that my birth father most likely never knew about me. None of the family did. Unfortunately, Donald Lee Copeland passed away on December 5, 2005. But Chantel's mother, my sister LeAnn, and Aunt Dolores started sending me pictures of my birth father and my grandparents along with some family history. I discovered that I have three sisters, a brother, and a whole bunch of other relatives. My sister LeAnn told me on a Zoom call, "I knew from the first time you contacted me that you had to be my dad's son!" I repeatedly told her that I did not want to be an embarrassment to the family. She kept reassuring me that was not the case and that I should stop worrying about it. But the day she posted my picture on Facebook and said, "Let me introduce you to the brother I never knew I had," I stopped worrying.

Exploring my new family tree in these past months has brought to light some fascinating individuals. There were numerous relatives who played a role in Americans struggle for independence. I found men like Lieut. Jonathan Jones (1702-1753), who served during the French and Indian War, as did Capt. Bruster Sims (1725-1765); and William Sims

(1757-1812) who fought in the War for Independence.

And then there was Hugh Jones (1635-1688). The Essex Institute Historical Collection records this interesting paragraph about him. "The record of the decease of Hugh Jones has not been found, but it may be surmised that he came to a mysterious end, as, during the Salem witchcraft trails in 1692, Elizabeth Booth deposed that the uneasy ghosts of four murdered persons appeared to her; and that 'the spectre of Hugh Jones assured her that Mrs. Elizabeth Proctor killed him because he had a poght of syder of her which he had not paid her for.'" (Essex Institute Hist. Collection, vol. ii, p. 198)."

One of the most amazing things relates to Robinson Crusoe (R.C.) Ramsby, a Topeka native who moved to Silverton, Oregon. When I wrote the article entitled Can I Get an Amen – John Shover Ramsby for the March 2020 issue of the Hometown Treasure, I had no idea that I was in any way connected to the Ramsby family. Imagine my surprise when I discovered Ramsby's signature on the marriage certificate of my great grandparents, Nelson, and Emma Jones. R.C. officiated the marriage on the 28th of March 1898. In fact, they were married in R.C.'s home.

As of this writing there has not been a face-to-face meeting with my newly found family. But there is a road trip in our future once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. 📍



July 7, 20 Zoom w/LeAnn Copeland newly discovered half sister

This article sponsored by



## Community Foundation Receives Grant

The LaGrange County Community Foundation (LCCF) has received a \$100,000 grant as part of the seventh phase of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT VII) community foundation initiative.

As part of this grant opportunity, each community foundation that achieved 100 percent board member giving during the period from January 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, was eligible to receive an unrestricted grant of \$100,000 per county served.


## LCCF Impact Grants Now Available

The LaGrange County Community Foundation is now accepting applications to its Community Impact Grants program.

Community Impact Grants are available to nonprofit organizations serving LaGrange County. These grants are made possible through the generosity of donors who have supported the unrestricted and field of interest charitable funds at the Foundation.


Community Impact Grants will be offered in two funding rounds in 2021. Grant applications will be due **April 1** and **September 1**. The Community Foundation seeks proposals for inno-

This grant is in recognition of the important role that LCCF board of directors plays in both leading the foundation and serving communities across LaGrange County.

The unrestricted grant will help fund a portion of the LCCF new headquarters, which will include an 800-square foot community room that will be available for nonprofit use. The facility is set to open in late February 2021. 

vative or creative projects with significant impact in LaGrange County.

Nonprofit organizations serving LaGrange County are eligible to apply in six areas: arts & culture, recreation, health and human services, community development, education and environment. Previous Community Impact Grants have ranged from \$5,000 to \$25,000 per award.

To submit an application visit [lccf.net/community-impact-grants](http://lccf.net/community-impact-grants). All applications are due **April 1, 2021**. Please contact Leanna Martin at [lmartin@lccf.net](mailto:lmartin@lccf.net) or call 260-463-4363 with any questions or for more info. 


## COVID-19 Recovery Grants Awarded

The LaGrange County Community Foundation (LCCF) has awarded \$35,500 in COVID-19 Recovery Grants in November to seven programs in response to the COVID-19 crisis. These grants were made possible through the generosity of donors and the United Way of Elkhart and LaGrange Counties.

Elijah Haven Crisis Intervention Center, Inc. received \$11,000 to support the victim assistance program. Established in 1997, Elijah Haven is committed to providing a safe, healing, nurturing environment for all individuals affected by domestic violence and to advocate violence-free living.

"This grant will allow Elijah Haven to continue to serve victims of domestic violence by offering services free of charge. Those services include, but are not limited to, support groups and individual counseling by a licensed therapist, shelter, transportation, food, basic living necessities, etc.," said Kathy Dunafin, Executive Director of Elijah Haven Crisis Intervention Center, Inc.

Other 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Grant awards include:

- LCYC, Inc., Operation For the Kids, \$5,000
- Compassion Pregnancy Center, 2021 Operating Expenses, \$5,500
- LaGrange County Council on Aging, Inc., PPE Barrier/Protector in LCAT Vans, \$4,500
- The Mongo Community Development Inc., Mongo Light the Night, \$2,000
- Agape Missions of LaGrange County, Agape Missions, \$2,500
- LaGrange Co. Miracle Tree, LaGrange County Miracle Tree, \$5,000 





# 7TH GIRLS BASKETBALL



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**2020-21 7th Grade Girls Basketball Team:** Back (left to right): Mykayla Mast, Madison Grossman, and Breann Cory. Middle: Jalayna Whetstone, Hailey Lambright, Eden Mauck, and Coach Kim Mast. Front: Janissa Lehman, Kaitlyn Yoder, and Brina Williams. Not Pictured: Myra Miller.

Photo by Abby Wenger



# 8TH GIRLS BASKETBALL



Sponsored by

GRANITE CORNER REPAIRS

**2020-21 8th Grade Girls Basketball Team:** Back (left to right): Morgan Riegsecker, Brianna Munoz, Ella Williams and Coach Ryan C. Yoder. Middle: Manager Morgan Rich, Leigha Schrock, Lexi Warren, and Grace Heyerly. Front: Lily Bontrager, Shanna Miller, Rebecca Miller, and Ava Williams.

Photo by Abby Wenger



# They're Coming to The Blue Gate

By Harold D. Gingerich

*Photos submitted*

Can you believe it! We have one of the top 200 theater venues in the world right here in our own back yard. Let us be honest, a lot of us think, "Yeah, if I want to see a show I'm going to Branson or Pigeon Forge." And yet, our own Blue Gate Theater ranks 172nd in the world based on ticket sales. We are talking ... in the world. Not only are audiences lining up to come to the Blue Gate, so are headline performers.

"People were looking for something to do," says Ryan Riegsecker, President of Blue Gate Hospitality Group. They came to Shippshewana for the flea market and the shops, but at 5 o'clock the town closed up." Very few restaurants were open in the evening and there was no place for people to go; there was just nothing to do. That is when Ryan's father, Mel, came up with an idea. Since he loved Gospel Music, Mel opened The Meeting House across

from what is now the Blue Gate Restaurant in 1988. Featuring primarily local talent, The Meeting House offered Gospel Music shows and an original Christmas show called "Back Home for Christmas."

When the Riegseckers built the Blue Gate Restaurant in 2000, the building that had been home to the theater was torn down to make way for parking. There was a room on the lower level of the new restaurant that was used for musical events, but the space was limited. Within a short time, a 300-seat theater was constructed on



the third level of the building.

One of the first shows to come to the new theater featured Bill and Randy Brooks along with their nephew, Allen Asbury, in the musical "His Life". Several local performers were added to the cast. Asbury and his uncles were seasoned performers and had been the headliners in "The Promise" that played in Branson, Missouri for seven years. The large-scale Branson production that told the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, was redesigned for a small stage and retitled "His Life." The show was an immediate hit with the Shippshewana audience. Several other Biblically based musicals were soon added.

In 2009 the Reigseckers made a decision that would dramatically change the future. Recognizing that if the theater was to survive, they needed to expand their offerings. They purchased



the rights to a series of books by popular Christian author Beverly Lewis. Lewis's books explore a variety of themes related to life within the Amish community. Dan Posthuma, a producer for Bill Gaither and Pinebrook Studios, was hired to produce "The Confession". "It was an absolute smash hit," Ryan noted, "and the Amish musicals began to take on a life of their own." In the years that have followed the Blue Gate has written and produced 13 different Amish musicals, the latest being "The Gutt Life ...Christmas with the Yoders & Nick!"

Word began to spread about the Blue Gate Theater and well known performers like Pat Boone, the Gaither Vocal Band, and the Oak Ridge Boys came to play in Shipshewana. Big name artists drew larger crowds, so the Riegseckers started to rent the Shipshewana Town Center that would accommodate over a 1,000 people. "That was a real learning experience for us, what worked and what didn't," Ryan observed. With the floor being flat, the view of the tiny stage was not the best, especially for those with seats in the back. Utilizing video screens on either side of the stage did help. Even so, big name entertainers kept drawing crowds, and people kept coming back. They also told their friends about Shipshewana.

But it wasn't just the theater patrons who told their friends about the Blue Gate, it was the performers themselves. "People don't realize that it's a pretty small world for these enter-

tainers and they talk to each other about the food, the accommodations, the sound, the lighting and all those things," Ryan said. He went on to recall a conversation he had with the Oak Ridge Boys. "They said to me, 'We kept hearing that if you ever get a chance to go to Shipshewana don't miss it!' They have come here every year for the past 12 years and they've been everywhere in the world ...at least twice," he added with a smile, "so that meant a lot to us." Ryan went on to say that, "All we have done is try to take really good care of them (the artists) when they get here ... we want to give them the best possible experience from load in to load out."

Partnering with WNIT, the local Public Broadcasting System (PBS) was another significant step for the Blue Gate. Riegsecker says, "It was actually the Texas Tenors who encouraged us to reach out to our local PBS station. They had done things for PBS in other locations." That partnership has proved beneficial for all concerned. Performers such as the Texas Tenors, Daniel O'Donnell, and the Celtic Women have delighted audiences at the Blue Gate numerous times as a result.


With growth and success also came challenges and several major decisions. In the first several years of renting the Town Center, they only hosted a hand full of shows a year. "The year we did between 25 and 30 shows," Ryan noted, "we said we have got to do something different because setting up and tearing down was killing us, plus we were paying rent." In 2016 the timing was right for both the Town of Shipshewana and the Riegseckers for the Blue Gate to purchase the venue. Within two years they faced another major decision. By that time, they were hosting around 100 shows a year, but their stage was too small, and their

sound and lighting was inadequate for headline shows. What they needed was a state-of-the-art theater. With fear and trembling they broke ground in 2018 for a new \$4.6 million dollar theater that was attached to their current facility. The project was completed in a year and a half. The new Blue Gate Performing Arts Center opened in January of 2020 just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Entertainment and tourism is an ever-changing industry. Riegsecker made an interesting observation. "For years people came to Shipshewana to shop and while they were here maybe they would see a show, now they are coming for the shows and staying to shop which is good for everyone because they are buying gas, eating in restaurants and staying in hotels."

When asked what he wanted readers of the Hometown Treasure to know about the Blue Gate, he was quick to respond. "You don't have to go to Branson, Pigeon Forge or Las Vegas because we have world class entertainment coming here. And everything we do...in all our growth the over-arching thing is wholesome, family friendly entertainment that is in keeping with our community values."

The Blue Gate Theater has an exciting array of artists scheduled for 2021, along with their repertoire of Amish musicals. For a listing of upcoming shows, and to purchase tickets, visit their website at: [bluegatetheater.com](http://bluegatetheater.com).

If the world of entertainment is going to the Blue Gate, you should check it out. 







# 8TH A BOYS BASKETBALL

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**2020-21 8th Grade Boys Basketball A Team:** Back (left to right): Coach Caleb Logan, Jack Massey, Owen Brill, and Ryan Yoder. Middle: Kamden Yoder and Kurtis Mast. Front: Max Engle, Jacob Watts, Silas Haarer, Gavin Engle, and Jaxon Engle.

Photo by Stopher-King Studio



# JH WRESTLING

Sponsored by 

**2020-21 Junior High Wrestling Team:** Left to right: Coach Dave Schragg, Matthew Sabin, Dan Bontrager, and Logan Conklin. Not Pictured: Lucas Hargrove and Carter Kistler.

Photo by Abby Wenger

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# Brain Teaser!!

*What can be  
swallowed, but can  
also swallow you?*

The Hometown  
Treasure 

Pride



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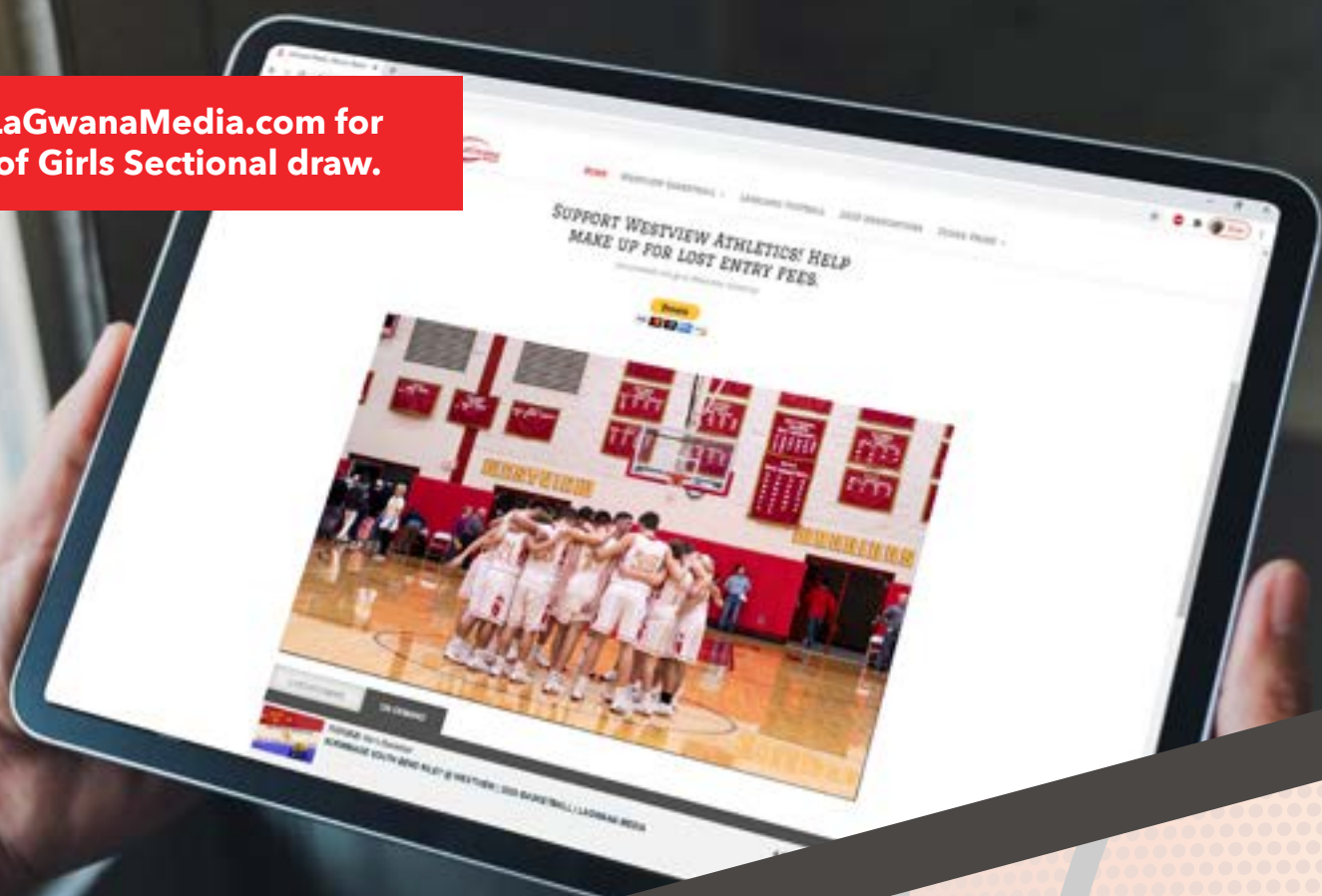
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**JV/V Boys vs Eastside**  
**@ Westview**  
Jan 29 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs West Noble**  
**@ West Noble**  
Feb 4 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Plymouth**  
**@ Plymouth**  
Feb 6 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Mishawaka**  
**@ Mishawaka**  
Feb 9 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Prairie Heights**  
**@ Westview**  
Feb 12 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Wawasee**  
**@ Wawasee**  
Feb 16 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Goshen**  
**@ Westview**  
Feb 19 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Fremont**  
**@ Westview**  
Feb 23 | 6:00 PM

**JV/V Boys vs Concord**  
**@ Concord**  
Feb 26 | 6:00 PM

Watch [LaGwanaMedia.com](http://LaGwanaMedia.com)  
for schedule changes.