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A Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce Publication

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Pictured front, l-r:
 Cynthia Hamstra,
 Christine Bartlett,
 Megan Schueler.
Pictured back, l-r:
 Yael Massen,
 Paula England,
 Joni Sterrett,
 Lori Chandler,
 Ted Ferguson,
 David Ferguson,
 Donna Bryant,
 Ferguson Law.
 Photo by
 Chris Howell.

Spotlight: Ferguson Law

By Kasey Husk

With attorneys on practically every branch of their family tree, Bloomington lawyers David and Theodore (a.k.a., “Ted”) Ferguson didn’t have to look far when it came time to choose a career path. “It feels like we were born to it, that that’s what we should do,” David said. “It seemed like my dad’s family had a lot of lawyers, but my mother — we like to tease her because she had a lot too,” he said. “We went through her family tree: her dad, her brother, two of her sons, one daughter, two nephews, two nieces and her husband. This poor woman!”

Today, David and his brother Ted are the second generation of leaders at Ferguson Law, a Bloomington law firm whose numerous practice areas include civil litigation, landlord/tenant issues, family law and insurance and utilities law. Now in its 62nd year, David said the firm owes its longevity to the dedication of its employees and its commitment to going the extra mile for its clients.

“We like to work really hard for our clients, and we like to know our clients,” David said. “I really enjoy the personal relationships and getting to know the clients and getting to understand the issues. That’s just more

SPOTLIGHT
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**Coming in May:
 Women in Business**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

APRIL

11 hYPe Let the Dogs Out, Ferguson Dog Park

25 Primetime 2018, Monroe County Fairgrounds

MAY

8 Morning Buzz, College Mall

TBA Women Excel Bloomington Awards

Election Coverage:

**Q&A With
 Candidates**

VOTE

See page 7

ADVOCACY Update

The Chamber represents business interests to local, state and federal representatives, serving as an advocate on behalf of all businesses for the issues critical to the future of our community. If you need assistance with a business advocacy issue, please contact your Advocacy Team at The Chamber.

2018 General Assembly

The Indiana General Assembly started its 2018 short session in January with more than 800 bills filed. Not a single issue dominated this non-budget session. Rather, lawmakers focused on a range of issues including Sunday alcohol sales, workforce development, taxation, and the opioid epidemic. Below are a few bills that were signed into law that the Chamber supported. To see the full list of bills the Chamber followed that were passed

and defeated, please visit the website.

Sunday Alcohol Sales

Sunday sales including carryout and cold beer sales in grocery and convenience stores emerged in various bills throughout session. Two bills did not receive a hearing and there were competing bills in the House and Senate, HB 1051 and SB 1 were consolidated into one uniform bill, SEA 1.

SEA 1: Sunday Carryout Sales

SEA 1 allows the sale of alcoholic beverages for carryout on Sunday from noon until 8 p.m. The Governor signed the bill into law at the end of February.

Workforce Development

Workforce development was a top priority for the legislative session and the

two bills below, SB 50 and HB 1002, changed considerably from their introduction to their final enactment.

SEA 50: Governor's Workforce Cabinet

Originally introduced as a comprehensive workforce development bill, SEA 50's focus changed substantially throughout session to focus on the creation of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet; effectively repealing the State Workforce Innovation Council. This Workforce Cabinet will be tasked with conducting a regular review, analysis, and evaluation of all workforce-related programs and developing a comprehensive career navigation and coaching system for all Indiana high schools to participate in.

HEA 1002: Workforce Funding and Programs

The Chamber applauds the bill's authors' for codifying the Next Level Jobs employer training grant program and increasing the funding by \$10 million. Other successes of the bill include the establishment of a career and technical education (CTE) student portal, and an annual review, by the Legislative Services Agency, over workforce programs for the next 10 years. The enrolled bill also transforms Ivy Tech's regional board of trustees to a campus board of trustees.

Taxation

Two bills emerged during session focusing on tax exemptions for companies selling software as service

and the senate version, SB 257, was enacted into law as SEA 257.

SEA 257: Sales Tax on Software

SEA 257 and its defeated counterpart in the House, HB 1316, focused on exempting technology companies that sell software as a service (SaaS) from Indiana sales tax. According to SaaS advocates, this bill makes Indiana one of four states to offer a tax exemption and is favorable for a friendly business climate.

Opioid Epidemic

Combating the opioid epidemic was another top priority for the Indiana General Assembly and bills emerged around treatment centers, administration of overdose drugs, and requirements for physicians and healthcare practitioners.

HEA 1007: Expanding Mental Health Access

This bill allows the division of mental health and addiction to approve up to nine additional opioid treatment programs that are operated by a hospital and meet other specified requirements. It urges the assignment of a study committee to evaluate the impact opioid treatment programs have on neighborhoods and communities in the immediate area where the treatment programs are located.

Annexation

Three bills with annexation language, SB 268, HB 1023 and HB 1104 emerged

as possible contenders while three more bills HB 1129, HB 1254 and HB 1312 emerged, but did not receive hearings. However, only one was signed into law by the Governor, HEA 1023. It focuses on the right to remonstrate in sewage contracts.

HEA 1023: Annexation Remonstrance Waivers

HEA 1023 allows a municipal board to waive the requirement in a sewage works contract that a property owner loses their right to remonstrate against pending or future annexations by the municipality of the area that is served by the sewage company.

Short-Term Rentals

Three bills, HB 1035, SB 349 and SB 382, emerged with language surrounding the actions a municipality can take regarding short-term rentals such as Airbnb. Two of the bills were signed into law as HB 1035 and SEA 349, but have different implications.

SEA 349: Study of Taxes on Short Term Rentals

Urges an interim study committee to research which entities are required to collect sales tax on short-term rentals and whether local units can impose a local innkeepers' tax on those rentals.

HEA 1035: Short-Term Rentals

HEA 1035 does not allow a municipality to enact a local ordinance banning short-term rentals and states that short-term rental of an

owner's primary residence is permitted. However, if the property is not the owner's primary residence a local unit may require a zoning variance or impose other regulations including corresponding permits and fees.

Water Resource Management

The Indiana General Assembly took strides to address drinking water, wastewater and storm water management needs during session.

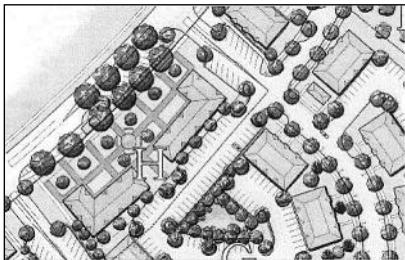
HEA 1267: Water Infrastructure Task Force

Establishes a Water Infrastructure Taskforce to study drinking water systems and wastewater management and develop a long-term plan for addressing drinking water and wastewater needs in Indiana. 

Have questions about Chamber advocacy?

Contact Anne Bono
812-336-6381
abono@Chamber
Bloomington.org


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Anne Bono. Courtesy photo.

Spring Opportunities in Full Bloom

I'm sure all of you are excited for the change of seasons. Spring came in with a blast of winter weather, followed by several days of rain. But we have to remember that all of these weather changes help bring green grass, beautiful flowers and open windows in homes.

There are a number of things to look forward to in the coming weeks — and you can read about all of them in this issue of BizNet. Between our Franklin Initiative program, our hYPe events, Chamber networking opportunities and celebrations — and so much more — things are on a positive track.

Before the school year wraps up, there are still a few Franklin Initiative events scheduled in April. Volunteers are always needed for those events — and anyone can be a volunteer! If you have the heart to give back to our local youth and want to share about your professional life and experiences, we would like to add you to our volunteer listings. With a flexible schedule and multiple events and themes, there are numerous ways to get involved. Feel free to call The Chamber and ask about participating in a Franklin Initiative event.

April brings one of our largest events to the community: Primetime! This community event brings out a number of Chamber member businesses and organizations to the Monroe County Fairgrounds on Wednesday, April 25. Attendees will have the opportunity

to meet these organizations and learn about what services they provide in our community. We'll have some food and drink to enjoy, including our friendly BBQ competition as well. This is a family-friendly event — be sure to join us!

One of the highlights of our event schedule is our Women Excel Bloomington Awards presentation in May. This community event celebrates the achievements of seven nominees — women who have made positive impacts in our community both personally and professionally. Anyone may make a nomination, and past honorees

have come from all different backgrounds. Last year one of the honorees told us that she “had never been celebrated so much,” and that’s the reason why the WEB Awards exist. There are so many people who make Bloomington their home and do great things in a variety of ways.

We hope that community members take a few moments to nominate a local woman — nominations may be done on The Chamber’s website, ChamberBloomington.org, or by stopping by the office for a nomination form.

In May we will also be hosting our next quarterly speed-networking event, Morning Buzz. This has been a high-demand event during the last year, and we fully expect it to be another capacity event. Morning Buzz is held in the food

If you have the heart to give back to our local youth and want to share about your professional life and experiences, we would like to add you to our volunteer listings.



Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce
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STAFF, PARTNERS & BOARD MEMBERS

The Chamber invites its members to contact these individuals with comments or questions regarding Chamber activities.

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Anne Bono, *Vice President, Director of Advocacy & Public Policy; Interim President and CEO*
Serena Duke, *Member Services Coordinator*
Taylore Fox, *Advocacy Associate*
Jim Inman, *Director of Marketing and Communications*
Carol Kelly, *Events Coordinator*
Trevor Owens, *Franklin Initiative Program Associate*
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CONTACT BIZNET

If you are a Chamber member who would like to announce promotions, expansions, community events, or other news in the “Chamber Briefs” section, please contact Carol Kelly at the Chamber: 812-336-6381 or ckelly@ChamberBloomington.org.

To advertise in *BizNet*, please contact Laurie Ragle at 812-331-4291 or lragle@heraldt.com. Be sure to ask about discount rate packages for Chamber members!

For subscription information or customer service, please contact Jim Inman at 812-336-6381 or info@ChamberBloomington.org.

Please send press releases to info@ChamberBloomington.org.

Thank you for your interest in *BizNet!*

CHAMBER VOICES

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Why YPs Need Diverse Skills

By Jim Inman, director of marketing and communications

A 2017 article from the Association for Talent Development stated five important skills that young professionals need to succeed. Certainly, an education is important, and a strong work ethic ... but what about career development skills?

The five skills — Networking, Presentation Skills, Business Writing, Communication and Time Management — are all topics touched on at different hYPE events. hYPE events offer a variety of professional and social development

opportunities, and attendees can actively participate each month. With networking being at the top of the list, hYPE can help connect local young professionals in many ways. The other skills fall into different events hYPE hosts ... in short, hYPE can help young professionals succeed in a number of ways.



That's why we invite you to check out hYPE.

Our March event was a great opportunity to learn about financial matters. The Budgeting 101 workshop was held on Wednesday, March 21 at The Legacy on South College Avenue. David

HYPE NEWS

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Courtesy photo.

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- Accident Fund Insurance Company
- All Seasons Heating and Air Conditioning
- American Mortgage Service Co.
- Andy Mohr Honda
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- JPF Properties
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- Storage Express
- Strauser Construction
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Clutch Fabrication
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Contact: Rose Smith
812-339-8037

Core Projective, LLC
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Contact: Kelly Boatman
812-287-0031

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Bloomington, IN 47401
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812-320-1480

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DFW Airport, Dallas, TX 75261
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Graduate Bloomington
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Bloomington, IN 47408
Contact: Karen Grudzien
312-267-4187

Regency Multifamily
3400 S. Sare Rd.
Bloomington, IN 47401
Contact: Amanda Eads
812-361-3299

Richland Bean-Blossom Health Care Center
5911 W. State Road 46
Ellettsville, IN 47429
Contact: Steve Kassen
812-876-6400

SLCT Stock LLC
114 S. Indiana Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47408
Contact: Nick Ayala
765-667-2997

Tacos & Tequila Sports Bar
2100S Liberty Drive, Suite C
Bloomington, IN 47403
Contact: Mey Cristobal
812-272-4359

Vintage Vogue
422 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47401
Contact: Kelsy Groover
812-335-3513



New Hires & Promotions

Monroe Hospital Welcomes Trueblood

Monroe Hospital is proud to announce the addition of Eric J. Trueblood, MD. Dr. Trueblood is a pulmonary disease specialist. Having years of diverse experiences, especially in pulmonary disease and critical care, Dr. Trueblood is board certified in Pulmonary Disease, Critical Care Medicine, Internal Medicine, and Sleep Medicine.

Jones, McGlasson & Arter, P.C. Welcomes New Attorneys

Jones, McGlasson & Arter, P.C. welcomes two new attorneys to their staff, Chester “Chet” H. Arter, III and Jerry L. Siefers, Jr. Arter practices in real estate law, corporate transactions, contracts for non-profit and for-profit businesses and general litigation. Siefers practices in elder law, Medicaid planning, corporate transactions and contracts for non-profit and for-profit businesses.

Author Solutions Welcomes Sarah Cowley

Author Solutions welcomes Sarah Cowley as the new talent acquisition manager. Born and raised in Bloomington, Cowley is excited to recruit and retain talent to her hometown. Cowley has approximately 15 years recruitment experience spanning from agency to corporate Fortune 100 environments.

Awards & Designations

FC Tucker Company Celebrates 100 Years

FC Tucker offices from around the state of Indiana celebrated 100 years of providing real estate services to clients and customers. The local FC Tucker in Bloomington was honored as first franchise to open in the state in 1989. Individual honors went to Chris Cockerham, Jeff Franklin, Jamie Morris, Amanda Richardson, Aaron Steele, Alex Everett and Julie Davis Adams.

Building Associates Receives Chairman Award

Building Associates, a Duro-Last Master Contractor, was awarded the Duro-Last Chairman Award which honors contractors who achieve more than \$1 million in sales. The award is in recognition of outstanding achievement in quality workmanship, customer satisfaction and 2017 sales excellence. It was presented at Duro-Last’s National Sales Seminar held in January.

Express Employment Professionals Wins Talent Award

The Bloomington Express Employment Professionals office announced that the company has won Inavero’s Best of Staffing® Talent Award for providing superior service to job seekers. Express Employment Professionals received satisfaction scores of nine or 10 out of 10 from 67 percent of their placed job candidates, higher than the industry’s average of 45 percent.

CHAMBER BRIEFS
continued on page 23



Born in Bloomington, rooted in Italy ... Just a few steps off of the historic courthouse square, our outpost on West Sixth Street brings Italian flavors to life. A tradition since 1999, **Grazie! Italiano** is a fun, casual Bloomington restaurant where food is made fresh, using locally-sourced ingredients and authentic Italian cooking methods. Visit us at 106 W. Sixth St. or call 812-323-0303 to make a reservation.



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Spencer Psychology is an outpatient mental health private practice, serving adults, adolescents and children. We have been in business in Bloomington for 20 years, and currently have 10 clinicians with specialties in a broad variety of areas including trauma, depression, anxiety, OCD, personality disorders, grief, divorce, couples counseling, work/career problems, parenting support, personality disorders and disruptive behavior issues. We welcome members of the LGBTQ community, and people of all faiths and belief systems. Visit us at spencerpsychology.com.

The Franklin Initiative Update

Helping Students Succeed

By Jim Inman, director of marketing and communications

With May on the horizon, students are gearing up for the end of the school year ... but that doesn't mean there aren't still opportunities to get connected through The Chamber's Franklin Initiative.

On Wednesday, April 11, Franklin Initiative volunteers will meet at Jackson Creek Middle School for the final Reality Store® of the 2017-18 school year. This program offers middle school

students the opportunity to see how the "real world" works, based on a variety of factors. Students visit tables at the school to manage housing, utilities, cars, insurance, student loans and multiple other costs ... and the students have to make sure their budget can handle everything.

On Thursday, April 12, mock interviews will be held at The Academy of Science and Entrepreneurship. These interviews allow students to bring their resumes and skills to the table and meet with local professionals. Students learn about

preparing for the meeting, dressing for an interview and other professional skills. Volunteers provide feedback to the students so they can be better prepared for being hired for a job.

Friday, April 20 will be a job shadow event, also with The Academy of Science and Entrepreneurship. Students at The Academy offered three different career options, and Chamber staff worked to connect the students with a local professional in one of the requested careers. The job shadow experience is another opportunity



Courtesy photo.

for students to have real experience in a business or organization and understand the dynamics of employment.

The Franklin Initiative will be hosting an Employment and Job Skills Fair in late April. If

your business would like to connect with local high school students, we would like to share details with you! Please contact The Chamber at 812-336-6381 and speak with Carol Kelly or Trevor Owens.

The Chamber is actively

seeking a manager of talent and education. This role would be involved in the growth and engagement of The Franklin Initiative, as well as hYPe. For details on the position, visit ChamberBloomington.org.





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Women Excel Bloomington

It's time for the ninth annual Women Excel Bloomington awards! The Chamber is currently accepting nominations for women in the Bloomington area who demonstrate

outstanding leadership in influencing the growth of others in the community and/or in their professional organization.

"The Women Excel Bloomington awards

have become one of the highlights of our Chamber schedule," said Anne Bono, interim president and C.E.O. of The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce. "The honorees demonstrate their interest in the community, their workplace and in their daily lives. We encourage everyone who knows an amazing woman in our area to nominate them for a 2018 WEB award."

The WEB Awards will be held in May, although final details of date, time and

location were not available at press time. Please check The Chamber's website for updates.

Nominations may be made electronically on The Chamber's website, ChamberBloomington.org. A nomination form is available on the website or by calling The Chamber at 812-336-6381. All nominations, electronic or printed, must be submitted to The Chamber on or before Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 5 p.m.



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Women Excel
Bloomington

The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce

Candidate responses are published exactly as received, with no editing. The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce does not endorse candidates.



Penny Githens
Democrat

What do you see as priority items to be addressed in 2019's budget session?

The Indiana General Assembly needs to expand pre-K programming to all 4-year olds, address sustainable funding for our infrastructure needs, restrict the entities which are allowed to grant school charters, adequately fund public education, prohibit vouchers from going to poorly performing schools, complete the overhaul of ISTEP testing, develop a program for broadband in rural areas, push programs that allow Hoosiers to earn a living wage, rapidly expand treatment facilities to combat the opioid crisis, regulate the DNR sell-off of logging rights in state forests, and address environmental concerns such as the proper containment of coal ash ponds. If we are going to ensure the safety of our students, we must also address common-sense gun legislation. To stay competitive, we must enact hate crime legislation.

What are your priorities in terms of managing the state's water resources as a whole? How do you see Monroe County being affected by water issues in our state?

We need to replace all of the lead pipes still in use in our water delivery systems. We need to upgrade our water treatment plants and investigate whether or not other areas of Indiana need to create the type of storm-water system being implemented in Indianapolis to ensure that waste water is not going into our waterways.

With regard to Lake Monroe, we need to block all efforts by the state to countermand local ordinances directed at logging and tree harvesting within the watershed area. Lake Monroe is critical as a water supply for this area and brings in millions of tourism dollars. We need to study possible sources of pollution of this vital resource, including failing septic systems and run-off from farming activities.

Each session, bills regarding education and workforce development appear to address the current and future needs of our workforce. What should the priorities be in terms of job growth, business growth, and business expansion?

One of the fastest growth sectors in our state's economy is renewable energy, and we need to train workers for this sector. In Ohio, the Department of Education surveyed various industries to learn what they saw as future needs, and the state responded by creating training for some of these jobs – like utility lineman – in their vocational schools.

To date the legislature has blocked efforts by Indianapolis and the surrounding area to develop light rail for transportation. (Light rail previously existed between Indianapolis and several of the surrounding communities.) I believe that if Indiana is to attract companies like Amazon, the state needs to support, rather than prevent, the building of this type of infrastructure. Good public transportation supports growth across other sectors.

Indiana is one of five states that does not have a law to impose tougher sentences for hate crimes. Since Indianapolis is a possible contender for Amazon's next headquarters, do you think there needs be legislation enacted surrounding crimes motivated by hate?

Even without the possibility of Amazon coming to Indiana, we need hate crime legislation. We do not know, for example, which companies will not even consider coming to Indiana due to our lack of such protections. And we do not know how many talented individuals existing companies cannot attract due to our lack of such legislation.

I also support passing hate crime legislation because I feel very strongly that all taxpaying Hoosiers deserve equal protection under the law.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Candidate responses may be also be found on The Chamber's website — www.ChamberBloomington.org.

The following candidates did not respond to the Chamber's request for answers:

E. Thomasina Marsili — Democratic candidate for State Representative, District 46
Bob Heaton — Republican candidate for State Representative, District 46
Peggy Mayfield — Republican candidate for State Representative, District 60
Shelli Yoder — Democratic candidate for County Council, District 1
Martha "Marty" Hawk — Republican candidate for County Council, District 3

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Matt Pierce
Democrat

What do you see as priority items to be addressed in 2019's budget session?

In a budget year, the highest priority is ensuring adequate funding for public schools and higher education. Too much money has been siphoned-away from public schools for private school vouchers and charter schools. The school funding formula needs to be fair to all school corporations.

The legislature must expand treatment options for those suffering from drug addictions so they can get immediate access to treatment. The opioid epidemic will ultimately be solved with public health measures, not a "war on drugs" approach.

An independent redistricting commission should be established to avoid partisan gerrymandering when legislative and congressional districts are redrawn in 2021. Manipulating district boundaries to benefit one political party makes it more difficult to find common sense solutions to the challenges we face.

What are your priorities in terms of managing the state's water resources as a whole? How do you see Monroe County being affected by water issues in our state?

While the state can benefit from regional water resource planning, it is important to ensure our community will always have access to an adequate water supply. Lake Monroe needs to be protected from any attempt to revive past proposals to divert its water to Indianapolis.

I supported House Bill 1267 that establishes a water infrastructure task force to analyze the maintenance needs of water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, and then recommend how to best fund needed repairs. Many systems likely have undetected leaks that are wasting valuable water resources and still need improvements to end combined sewer overflows that pollute rivers and streams during heavy rains.

Each session, bills regarding education and workforce development appear to address the current and future needs of our workforce. What should the priorities be in terms of job growth, business growth, and business expansion?

Focusing on quality of life issues will help attract the skilled workforce essential for any business to grow. Workers entering the workforce now decide where they want to live, then seek employment in their chosen city. This means Indiana needs to be a state seen as having amenities like public transit, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and entertainment and recreation opportunities.

Businesses also need access to capital to finance start-ups and expansions. Indiana has not had a good track-record in attracting venture capital to the state. With most large venture capital firms located on the east and west coasts, Indiana needs to project a forward-thinking image that will make the state a place where they want to invest.

Indiana is one of five states that does not have a law to impose tougher sentences for hate crimes. Since Indianapolis is a possible contender for Amazon's next headquarters, do you think there needs be legislation enacted surrounding crimes motivated by hate?

I am a long-time supporter of adding a hate crimes statute to Indiana law. I am disappointed the legislature has yet again failed to pass a hate crimes bill, keeping Indiana among a handful of states that do not have such a law. The negative reaction of major tech companies around the country when Indiana passed the discriminatory RFRA law shows how a backward-looking image can harm investment in our state. Passing a hate crimes bill would help when competing for investments from major companies like Amazon, but it should be adopted simply because protecting all of Indiana's citizens is the right thing to do to.



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Jeff Ellington
Republican

My priorities will be to create scholarships for professionals who enter the mental health field in Indiana. Public schools will also need more funding, as there have been capacity issues because of population growth. Workforce development is a top priority as the state needs to attract top employers from other states and nations.

What do you see as priority items to be addressed in 2019's budget session?



Amy Swain
Democrat

Only 212 of the 900 bills introduced this session passed, the fewest since 2012, and many consequential bills were left on the table as the legislature ran out of time, causing the Governor to convene a costly extra session. We need to do better. For 2019, the state legislature must prioritize:

- Hate-crime bill
- Workforce development
- Education issues
- Opioid-death crisis

What are your priorities in terms of managing the state's water resources as a whole? How do you see Monroe County being affected by water issues in our state?

I am on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Statutory Committee on Interstate and International Cooperation. Both committees have big says in protecting Hoosier water sources, which are crucial for health, well-being and also business growth. I will be working on the interstate committee next year to hammer out agreements with Ohio and Kentucky on groundwater protection. Regarding Monroe County, I will protect Lake Monroe as a local water source and will oppose use of the lake for out-of-region uses.

Legislators must work with experts and industry to determine potential issues that affect our water resources and options for dealing with those issues. Some protections are federally mandated while some remain for the State and local governments to decide. Lake Monroe is an exceptional resource for many reasons, and must be protected for local use; other waterways and practices that could affect its water quality are likewise important.

Looking to other states for models and to determine the best course of action is also warranted; solutions that keep costs down for consumers, create new jobs, and remove negative environmental impacts are ideal.

Each session, bills regarding education and workforce development appear to address the current and future needs of our workforce. What should the priorities be in terms of job growth, business growth, and business expansion?

The legislative priorities on education and workforce development, generally, should be STEM: Science, technology, engineering and math. We should encourage more education, more workforce development, and more industry that makes Indiana a "science state," attractive to manufacturers and high-tech businesses. Part of that is also encouraging health care and mental-health sciences to grow in Indiana. And one way to do that is to help IU Health grow and succeed in the region and the state. Health care will only grow as part of the Hoosier economy.

A law passed this year requires evaluation of Indiana's 30 workforce development programs; evaluations will prove useful to help determine efforts moving forward.

Assisting businesses as they improve efficiencies makes sense; profits can be maximized and jobs can be created while price increases can be kept relatively low so as not to adversely affect those on a fixed or low income.

Education at all levels is important to attract business to the State and to encourage expansion of existing enterprises. Matching necessary work skills with educational opportunities is already underway in many areas, and I support continuing those efforts. Vocational education and employment are often overlooked and are appropriate topics for the legislature to address for job growth, including in rural areas.

Indiana is one of five states that does not have a law to impose tougher sentences for hate crimes. Since Indianapolis is a possible contender for Amazon's next headquarters, do you think there needs be legislation enacted surrounding crimes motivated by hate?

No Hoosier should be the target of violence or crime because they are Christian or Jewish, white or black, male or female, or because of any other personal feature. We must be tough on crimes of violence so employers know we are a safe, friendly state. I am open to examining proposals in 2019.

With the rise in reported hate crimes in Indiana, a growing majority of voters and business owners insists the legislature address this issue, and prosecutors request this action to provide additional options in sentencing. When elected, I will work to pass a hate-crime bill; Indiana will not attract businesses like Amazon or witness expansion of others with good wages if we allow citizens and potential employees to be terrorized.

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Lee Jones
Democrat

There are areas that should be annexed such as the islands of County surrounded by City. Areas that are densely developed will probably be better off with City resources. The City and County should work together to determine what areas it makes sense to annex, and where it will not be beneficial. If this were an open, transparent process it could be done in a way that will be a win – win for both entities. The City needs to recognize that the County provides many resources, such as the justice system and the health department, that are used by citizens of the City. The County should not be deprived of the income to maintain these programs.

On June 30, 2022, the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire. How do you think Monroe County should prepare for future annexations after the expiration of this law?



Patrick Stoffers
Democrat

Monroe County needs to be prepared for this possibility even sooner than 2022, as the City of Bloomington's legal challenge with the state is pending.

The city made a poor choice in not engaging county leaders in an annexation attempt of such grand size and scope. I would urge current and future administrations to heed those lessons, for every Monroe County taxpayer's sake.

Meanwhile, the county clearly needs to be even more vocal and engaged at the state level, through our counties association, advocating for legislative safeguards that can assure transparency in annexation processes.

The annexation attempt also reminded us of the need to remain fiscally sound with healthy reserves. Responsible government should be able to weather readjustments in revenues and expenses.

The opioid crisis continues to place pressure on our justice system. Monroe County Jail has a total bed capacity of 294 inmates, after a new mental health dormitory opened earlier this year. However, in an agreement with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana, Monroe County Jail is to not exceed a cap of 278 inmates. Do you have any recommendations to address this growing overcrowding?

The best way to deal with the overcrowding of the jail is to strengthen and support Community Corrections. The very diverse programming and less intensive restrictions offered by Community Corrections can help many people become more productive citizens of our community. Recently a program was instituted to divert as many people as possible from the jail. When an individual is being booked into the jail they have a meeting with a probation officer who is trained to administer tests to determine if this person is a threat to the community or themselves, or at risk of fleeing. If they are found not to be, a less stringent form of restraint such as house arrest, an ankle bracelet and/or daily testing is imposed.

While substance abuse placed additional burden, the stress on our justice system accelerated when the Legislature's 2014 Criminal Code revisions shifted a portion of the state's responsibility to counties.

Opioids are a public health issue, and we responded as such. We convened a regional summit to raise awareness, created the Opioid Awareness Commission to plan for comprehensive action, reauthorized a needle exchange program, and recently launched Pathways navigator program to help individuals find the right help at the right time.

I am hopeful these efforts divert individuals from the justice system as more options for recovery become available and community coordination increases.

This epidemic, as well as the legislation changes, do compel us to reevaluate alternatives such as home detention and work release programs.

Monroe County is in the process of updating the County Development Ordinance (CDO). What specific changes do you think are needed to create a more business-friendly environment?

The former zones and ordinances were complex and confusing which made it difficult for businesses to determine where they could locate. The recently passed plan for the urbanizing area surrounding Bloomington has simplified the whole process. The aim is to have development locating in places where it is compatible with what is already there. This makes it less likely there will be remonstrance from the citizens previously located there. All of this should speed up the permitting process. The ordinances to support this effort will be much more streamlined and easier to understand. The new plan will also encourage adaptive re-use which is repurposing of previously existing buildings. There has also been a recent change allowing more than one business to locate in these buildings.

This update is long overdue. Development processes should be clear, simple, and transparent for everyone. When our county garage project was in the planning phases at the City's Plan Commission, I experienced firsthand the frustration of moving "goal posts". This is unacceptable, and I will work to assure county petitioners do not experience similar frustration from seemingly evolving expectations. The County Development Ordinance is our opportunity to assure of this.

The Westside Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) is the economic engine for Monroe County. Given the expected growth because of I-69, Ivy Tech, and Cook Medical, how will you collaborate with the City of Bloomington to improve (or ensure) connectivity to the Westside TIF?

Because of I69 most of the Community living east of the highway will have only two bridges that allow convenient access to the west side of Bloomington. There is one bridge on Vernal Pike, and the other is on SR 48. Traffic in the TIF District is already congested and can only become more so with increased development. The Cook redevelopment of GE could bring more than 500 new jobs with it. Many of the roads that used to give access across SR 37 are now cut off which is increasing congestion at the bridges, especially at the one on SR 48. It will probably become necessary to develop a new road, east of Curry Pike that will connect Vernal Pike to SR 48.

Connectivity investments between the Westside TIF and the city progress in order to relieve the traffic burden on West 2nd and 3rd Streets. It is imperative city and county officials meet and coordinate regularly.

The same applies to projects with shared infrastructure. The county's Fullerton Pike project demonstrated that through communication and collaboration, taxpayers ultimately benefit. The county coordinated with City Utilities to right-size a large water main as our road was excavated.

As the west side and downtown Bloomington employment hubs grow, so does residential growth in key county corridors. It is imperative we evaluate and optimize our commuter transit system in the county, with our partner Rural Transit. This would also offer opportunity for coordination and collaboration between city and county transit systems.

West Side Revitalized:

Growth in Bloomington's life sciences sector leads a story of ongoing success

By Kasey Husk

When local restaurateur Ray McConn sought to open his first bar and restaurant businesses in Bloomington 45 years ago, the idea of doing so on Bloomington's west side never even occurred to him.

"It used to be pretty sleepy over there," the owner of Mother Bear's Pizza remembers. "There just wasn't anything to draw people."

But while the west side of Bloomington/Monroe County has been growing steadily for at least the last two decades thanks to carefully planned development, in the last several years there's been a surge of business growth and revitalization in the area. This growth — buoyed in large part by the expansion of the life sciences and high-tech industries in Bloomington — has brought with it increased opportunities for residents, employers and employees in the area.

Among those who've benefited from this expansion is McConn, who in late 2016 opted to open the second location for his iconic Bloomington pizzeria to the west of Indiana 37. Since then, the location's earnings have far surpassed expectations: "we thought we'd do \$2 (million) or \$2.5 million, and we are on par for \$3.5 (million) or so," McConn said.

"The west side was a no-brainer, in a way," he said of choosing his second location. "We needed to do something. Business at the east side was approaching \$5 million per year, and we were straining to handle the volume. We were looking west (because) it seemed like an obvious opportunity; there were big commercial operations, Ivy Tech is close by and there's student housing right across the interstate."

Revitalization efforts unfolding

As early as 1993, community leaders were coming together to discuss the future of the west side, said Barry Lessow, head of the Monroe County Redevelopment Commission. The vision, he said, was for the area to become "a vibrant, high-quality employment center, a great place to live, a great place to raise a family, and close to amenities."

Now, 25 years later, many members of that original group say the growth of the area has surpassed anything they'd ever envisioned, Lessow said.

"There's been an appreciable and significant amount of good, high-quality growth and development on the west side," especially in terms of employment, infrastructure and capacity building, Lessow said. "It is really thrilling to see how many smart public and private investments and how much coordinated development and connectivity there has been within the last few years."

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Ray McConn, president of Mother Bears Group. Photo by Chris Howell.



Photo by David Snodgrass.

"There's been an appreciable and significant amount of good, high-quality growth and development on the west side," especially in terms of employment, infrastructure and capacity building.

—Barry Lessow

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In many ways, the growth of the west side has been spurred by the rise of life sciences and technology fields in Bloomington and Monroe County. In recent years, the area has both attracted new business in those fields and seen the expansion of existing companies.

Among these expanding companies is AB BioTechnologies, which creates and tests injectable drugs. The company moved to Jonathan Drive on the west side



Photo by Chris Howell.

The completion of I-69 is also likely to play a role in making the west side more attractive to businesses. "Everything we produce will fly out of Indianapolis, so it is really important to us to have easy access to it."

—Jeff Schwegman

as a fledgling company in 2010. At the time, founder Jeff Schwegman was drawn to the area primarily because a friend with a business had space to offer them, he said. However, he has stayed because of the "tech heavy" neighborhood that surrounds the company, and because he appreciates that the area offers access to the same stable power grid that General Electric once helped establish, something vital to the company.

The company has increased its investment in the area with the construction of a new, 23,000-square-foot facility across the street from its current premises on Jonathan Drive, which is expected to be completed this month, he said. This new facility will allow the company to start manufacturing injectable drugs and to increase its staff from 13 to perhaps 30.

Over the years, local stakeholders such as the city and county governments and economic development organizations have worked hard to promote this kind of redevelopment in the area. Among these efforts has been the creation of various tax-increment financing, of TIF, districts. In a designated TIF district, the county focuses efforts to increase the tax base and, for a period of time, is able to concentrate the increased tax income generated by such efforts into further projects that can help encourage growth within the district.

In an age of property tax caps, TIF districts are "one of the few opportunities and vehicles in the county toolbox for creating a situation that will encourage industries — good industries — to move into particular areas where we know there is the capacity for it and the land for it," Lessow said.

Revitalization efforts on the west side have included investment in local schools. This helps ensure that Monroe County has an available workforce to offer existing and would-be companies, and that residents have the skills they need to pursue high-quality jobs. The county government played a role in both the expansion of Ivy Tech Community College's nursing program and the creation of the Indiana Center for the Life Sciences. These efforts, he said, "increase the community's capacity



Courtesy photo.

The former GE Appliances plant on North Curry Pike, which Cook Group purchased for its expansion. GE shut down its side-by-side refrigerator manufacturing plant on Aug. 26, 2016. Photo by Chris Howell.

"Our vision is to take this property and turn it once again into something the community can be proud of, to spur future growth, and enable more employees and families to reach their full potential."

—Dan Peterson

to provide employees ready to take the variety of jobs that local industries are creating."

Local government also seeks to ensure that Bloomington is a place that people *want* to live, another important factor in ensuring that local companies have the workforce they need to thrive, Lessow said. Companies and individuals alike are increasingly focused on wellness these days. Adding trails like the Karst Farm Greenway on the west side makes the area more appealing to people who want to have an active lifestyle where they live and work.

Other efforts have included expanding the capacity of local roads to handle the increased traffic that comes with more business in an area and the impending completion of I-69. Right now, the county and city are working to create a "grid system" that would distribute traffic to and from the west side more evenly, particularly around the new businesses going into that area, said Alex Crowley, director of Bloomington's Economic and Sustainable Development Department. Such upcoming projects include creating a Vernal Pike connector to bring traffic across the railroad tracks to the west side, as well as extending Profile Parkway so that it connects the Whitehall Crossing area with the old ABB property, currently a vacant lot ready for development, he said.

The completion of I-69 is also likely to play a role in making the west side more attractive to businesses. "Everything we produce will fly out of Indianapolis, so it is really important to us to have easy access to it," Jeff Schwegman said.

Lessow believes that by investing in both human capital and infrastructure improvements, the Bloomington/Monroe County area will continue to be attractive to potential employers who see not only a community where

they can work, but where they and their employees can enjoy living.

"I think we are going to continue to see employers that want to find a good community in which to locate and grow," he said, "where they know they are going to find a well-prepared workforce, well-educated with the right types of education and training that are responsive to the needs in the community, and that these opportunities will create opportunities for the employer, employee and community. I expect we'll continue to see that attraction to the sort of businesses and industries we are always hoping to come to this area."

Growth and opportunities

Indiana's beginnings as a life sciences hub can be traced back to the decision to launch the company that would become the Cook Group in Bloomington, local experts say. As more life sciences and technology companies have joined Cook over the years, the area has seemed to draw more companies in the same field — often to complement existing businesses in the area.

It is perhaps fitting, then, that a recent announcement by Cook has generated even more excitement about the opportunities it presents for the future of the west side.

In November 2017, Cook Group announced that it would purchase and redevelop the former General Electric refrigerator plant on the west side. This decision not only means that the area is likely to see hundreds more jobs in the coming years, but local leaders say it is likely to spur even more development among prospective companies.

The GE plant once provided hundreds of people in Monroe and surrounding counties with jobs, and its

closure was a "psychological blot" on the community, said Monroe County Commissioner Geoff McKim. Worse still, the abandoned building was starting to become blighted, he said, an eyesore for the community.

Cook's purchase of the building will change all that, Lessow said, because the company is committed to creating an attractive facility that adds "visual value and economic value to an area." The GE plant, in short, is likely to go from being a liability to an asset in the eyes of someone looking to pursue further development on that side of town.

Crowley agreed.

"Cook is going to do a lot in their investment to really make that a lot more attractive of a building and land, which will benefit everybody that is already there and create a more appealing location for someone looking to maybe move here," he said.

Dan Peterson, vice president of industry & government affairs at Cook Medical, acknowledged the once-and-future role of the former GE property as a source of pride for the community. "Our vision is to take this property and turn it once again into something the community can be proud of, to spur future growth, and enable more employees and families to reach their full potential."

The former GE property is located just over a mile from the Cook Group campus on Daniels Way, which the company began operating two decades ago, in 1998. "Its proximity to our world headquarters is a very nice bonus," said Peterson. "While we explored many options for expansion, the GE property was one of the only properties left in Bloomington with the space we need for future growth," he said.

The acquisition of the facility represents a significant expansion even for a company the size of Cook, which currently employs more than 4,300 people in Monroe County. "The facility essentially doubles the space we have on our Cook campus," said Peterson.

For Crowley, another important takeaway from the decision is that it affirms the Cook Group's long-term commitment to the Bloomington area. After the death of founder Bill Cook, locals questioned whether new leadership would ultimately choose to continue reinvesting into the Bloomington area. Purchasing the GE property, Crowley said, shows the company is "doubling down on their commitment to the community."

Moreover, the Cook Group's decision to sell off one aspect of its business, Cook Pharmica, to New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company Catalent brings a new, large-scale player in the life sciences field into Bloomington, Crowley said. That addition, he said, helps "diversify and strengthen" the robust life sciences sector in the Bloomington and Monroe County area.

Being among a cluster of like-minded organizations can bring many benefits for those businesses, local experts say. One such benefit is knowing there is a larger talent pool of possible qualified employees in the future. Said Schwegman of AB BioTechnologies, "we all trade employees back and forth now and again."

Existing businesses also benefit from the growth of these industries, even when not directly related. More workers on one side of town means more



Photo by David Snodgrass.

The GE plant once provided hundreds of people in Monroe and surrounding counties with jobs, and its closure was a "psychological blot" on the community.

—Geoff McKim

WEST SIDE REVITALIZED

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Mark and MaryAnn Dougherty, married for 41 years and owners of Carpets Plus Colortile for 25 years. Photo by Chris Howell.

WEST SIDE REVITALIZED

Continued from page 13

people wanting to eat at restaurants, and more people shopping are nearby retailers. For Carpets Plus Colortile, which has been located on Liberty Drive on the west side for about a decade, more businesses in the area means more work. About 50 percent of the full-service flooring company's business comes from commercial customers, so the more businesses the better, said Mark Dougherty, who owns the business with his wife Maryann. Increased traffic also means increased visibility for the company.

Likewise, existing companies also benefit from infrastructure improvements — like road expansion or the building of trails — that come along with revitalization of an area.

“When you start to have critical mass of development, you start to have critical mass of supporting investments that make life easier for everybody,” Crowley said.

Looking to the future

With the revitalization of the west side having already exceeded expectations, locals are optimistic about its future growth.

“We want Monroe County to continue to grow and have expanded job opportunities, so we certainly want to develop along with other employers as part of an interconnected and vibrant ecosystem of businesses,” said Peterson. “When one company grows, we all win.”

The area has properties that are “shovel-ready” and waiting for a developer who wants to build on them, and more such properties can and will be standing by for local officials and economic development partners to promote, Lessow said. Such properties are attractive to businesses that are eager to get up and running on projects as quickly as possible.

That's not to say there isn't room for improvement, McKim said. While he praises the county's urbanization plan and said he believes the county has earned a reputation for being “business friendly,” he'd like to see more focus on establishing more housing on that side of town.

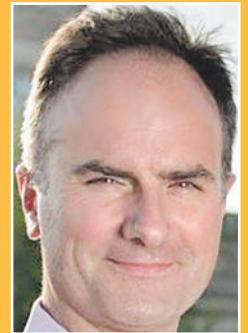
“It is clear that housing isn't necessarily being built at the rate that is needed to allow the workforce that we need for these businesses to live comfortable,” he said. “I feel from a county's perspective that's something we need to look at more closely.”

Peterson echoed this concern. “One issue certainly for Bloomington is affordable housing,” he said, adding, “We need a broad spectrum of housing at accessible prices, continued access to great education, adequate transportation opportunities within Monroe County, and look at ways to effectively allow people to move in and out of the region.”

Still, by and large, economic development officials broadly agree that the area is on the right track to assure its prosperity into the future.

“I think we have created, and businesses there have created, a place that is very attractive to do business,” Crowley said. “I think we will continue to see steady economic growth out there, growth in employment and growth in wages, which of course everybody wants.”

“I suspect the next three to five years will be very interesting for the whole city and the west side,” Crowley said.



Courtesy photo.

“I think we have created, and businesses there have created, a place that is very attractive to do business. I think we will continue to see steady economic growth out there, growth in employment and growth in wages, which of course everybody wants.”

—Alex Crowley

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Ann Boehm
Republican

I don't agree with involuntary annexation and believe Indiana should re-evaluate the state laws.

On June 30, 2022 the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire. How do you think Monroe County should prepare for future annexations after the expiration of this law?

Looking ahead the county may experience ongoing fiscal pressures due to limited revenue sources. What plans do you have to raise revenues and for addressing the demand of service delivery?

We lose the majority of our revenue to exempt property. Indiana University continues to acquire prime property in our county and I think it's time for a discussion on how the University should be contributing through fees if not taxes. There are other universities around the country that do this so this is not a new concept either. The campus is so integrated into Bloomington throughout downtown and surrounding neighborhoods and highways now. We cannot continue taxing our residents to make up for these losses but that is what's happening. Bloomington has become the most expensive city in Indiana to live in. This is why I'm running for office. The exempt property in this county costs us over 1 billion dollars per year.

What is the single most important issue you see facing Monroe County in the coming term, and what is your specific plan to address that issue?

The rising taxes in our county with little results. As I stated above, we have a University that doesn't give as much back as they gain. They continue to expand into Bloomington's infrastructure but do not contribute with property taxes to pay for all the services they receive. The leaders in this county continue to tax us for projects they feel are important but with little transparency and businesses that are not service based do not come here. Funds are stolen with little consequence and monies taxed for one purpose are allocated to others rather than repealed or given back to the residents. We cannot survive this way with inexperienced leadership that does not listen to their constituents but continue to tax us and do as they please.

CHAMBER VOICES

Continued from page 3

court of College Mall, and 50 participants come together to do targeted, focused networking. One of our past participants said that she "got a week's worth of work done in 90 minutes." That sums up the power of the Morning Buzz event. Watch for registration information on The Chamber's website,

ChamberBloomington.org.

The Chamber's membership is strong, as our faithful BizNet readers can tell you. Each month we publish information about our newest members, as well as our renewed members, in this publication. We encourage everyone that sees these new businesses to go out and visit them — either in their store or on their website. While some of these member businesses are large organizations, much of The Chamber's

membership is made up of small businesses — businesses that started out as someone's dream or personal goal. Remember that when you visit a business, you aren't just making a purchase, but you're helping to keep our community thriving and growing in multiple ways.

As always, we appreciate our readers and our Chamber membership. Your Chamber team is strong and looking forward to a great 2018!



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Ann Collins
Republican

Involuntary annexation should be eliminated. There is really no way the county can prepare for the loss in assessed value if this is to happen. County Council members should be at the front line fighting this, unless the city can show an actual benefit-which they haven't. If the annexation, of the county, is an opportunity, offer the chance to do it voluntarily. Don't just force someone to submit because it is "allowed."

On June 30, 2022 the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire. How do you think Monroe County should prepare for future annexations after the expiration of this law?



Jayme Washel
Democrat

I think the city and county should start discussing next steps now, whether the process were to restart through the law expiring or the city were to win its lawsuit. Some of the previously proposed areas, like the islands inside the city's territorial boundaries make sense to annex - especially when it comes to public safety concerns. However, many of the other proposed areas are more contentious and need to be further evaluated. I don't think we should wait until there's a clock running on the process to start discussing that. The annexation process is a complex one, but I think this is a case where there is a compromise and we need to work hard to find it.

Looking ahead the county may experience ongoing fiscal pressures due to limited revenue sources. What plans do you have to raise revenues and for addressing the demand of service delivery?

We are only limited in revenue because we are limited in vision. Cutting services isn't going to be a long-term solution. Growing the economy in the county is the solution. Making Monroe County attractive to new businesses, along the I-69 corridor is a must. Limiting "chain" restaurants and major big box stores and possible warehouses is a possibility. We want to foster local business, but we must recognize that national chains, with a proven track record, will give us a stable, long term income stream so we must be more welcoming.

As Deputy Fire Chief at BFD, I deeply understand the strain on city and county services. Monroe County needs to explore smart growth opportunities. The food and beverage tax will allow us to increase revenues without placing the entire burden on Monroe County Residents. The Public Safety LIT is another example of a revenue source we can leverage to help address fiscal pressures. State property tax caps mean that the County and City will have to work together: making our services complimentary, avoiding duplication, and collaboratively addressing our problems. Fiscal constraints should mean that we have to be team players and get creative, we can use different taxes when appropriate but we need to be careful about unduly burdening Monroe County residents whenever possible.

What is the single most important issue you see facing Monroe County in the coming term, and what is your specific plan to address that issue?

The opioid crises is a top issue. We are focused too much on prescription addiction without having any consideration to addressing the underlying pain issues for which they were prescribed. We make people suffering feel like they are addicts, even if they don't abuse it. Instead of cracking down on those people, we really need to study why some people make the jump from pain management, to addiction. If we are making legitimate users feel like addicts, that may be contributing to the crisis. Intervention needs to be focused on when the jump is made from "taking as directed" to abusing them. Having mental health professionals involved is something we should look into as they might be able to stop this before it starts.

The biggest challenge and opportunity facing Monroe County in the coming term is the convention center. This is an opportunity to dramatically increase Monroe County's appeal as a tourist destination, create jobs and generate millions of dollars of investment for the community. But, we only have one shot to do this right. If this project is mismanaged, we could have a real problem on our hands. This convention center is for the entire community and the planning and design process needs to represent that. The bidding process needs to be a transparent and open to the public. Our government has to do everything it can to make sure the convention center is a good use of taxpayer dollars and a real investment in our future.

HYPE NEWS

Continued from page 4

Hays, Douglas Hughes and Wayne Thacker from Comprehensive Financial Consultants shared insights on student loan management, understanding debt, retirement planning for young professionals and more. We appreciate their interest in hosting the event!

Our next event has been modified a bit, but we still plan to play with some four-legged friends! hYPe

Lets the Dogs Out will be held on Wednesday, April 11 at the Ferguson Dog Park on Bloomington's north side. You do not need a dog to participate — we're working on having a food truck available, and casual networking with attendees. Registration is available on The Chamber's website.

And in May we plan a "throwback event" — a Field Day event featuring some fun team games. Details will be announced in April!

The Chamber is actively seeking a manager of

talent and education. This role would be involved in the growth and engagement of hYPe, as well as The Franklin Initiative. For details on the position, visit ChamberBloomington.org.

Are you receiving our emails and following us on social media? Contact The Chamber at 812-336-6381 or info@chamberbloomington.org to be added to hYPe communications. And you can find hYPe on Facebook and Twitter as well!



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Kate Wiltz
Democrat

On June 30, 2022 the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire. How do you think Monroe County should prepare for future annexations after the expiration of this law?

While annexation might make sense for “islands” within the city, we must be careful not to view it as a one size fits all solution. There is no economy of scale on annexation. Attempting to incorporate large areas adjacent to the city stresses both city and county resources, while focusing on those smaller areas where the city is already providing (or could easily provide) services is more feasible. First, County and City officials can spend time now gathering input from the residents of those areas under consideration and considering public opinion prior to any planning activities. Second, an open discussion of the impact on the County budget – specifically the income tax revenue and public safety monies - must take place prior to any annexation efforts.

Looking ahead the county may experience ongoing fiscal pressures due to limited revenue sources. What plans do you have to raise revenues and for addressing the demand of service delivery?

The primary opportunity for increasing revenue in Monroe County is economic growth. but that growth should utilize areas and resources that are currently well-served. Looking at current economic development zones and areas for potential redevelopment is critical to reaping the benefits of growth while minimizing the financial outlay. This smart growth increases assessed values which in turn lowers the tax rate for a given district. In addition, new business increases the local income tax revenue which is an increasingly important part of the County’s budget. As a member of County Council, I will work support innovative redevelopment opportunities that support this model of smart growth.

What is the single most important issue you see facing Monroe County in the coming term, and what is your specific plan to address that issue?

The single most important issue is actually the constellation of issues that fall under public health. The ongoing addictions crisis is impacting Monroe County’s ability to provide the services and infrastructure needed for improving quality of life for all of its citizens. People struggling with addiction are stretching the capacity of our jail, courts, and community corrections departments when arrested for misdemeanor offenses. Parents and children whose lives are torn apart by addicted family members need mental health, medical they need shelter and accessible housing as well. There are many new approaches to intervention and treatment being explored right now. I will hold our county departments accountable to fulfilling these community needs in an interdepartmental coordinated effort and in partnership with nongovernment agencies.

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Eric Spoonmore
Democrat

On June 30, 2022 the state law prohibiting a municipality from annexing property will expire. How do you think Monroe County should prepare for future annexations after the expiration of this law?

It is difficult to predict how to prepare for future attempts at annexation because state legislation on this topic is constantly evolving. As witnessed in 2017, new laws enacted by the Legislature could disrupt or terminate any previously executed plan.

Regardless of potential changes to the law, county government should always work closely with city officials on annexation related issues. I believe there are some small pockets of Monroe County where annexation would make sense. I also believe annexation is most successful when done in small increments over time.

With respect to annexation, the best outcomes for the community will happen when we have clear, open lines of communication among governmental units, considerable opportunities for resident input, and common-sense decision making from elected officials.

Looking ahead the county may experience ongoing fiscal pressures due to limited revenue sources. What plans do you have to raise revenues and for addressing the demand of service delivery?

In 2017 alone, the Republican dominated Indiana Legislature imposed over 40 new tax hikes and fees on Hoosiers including a gasoline tax. In addition, local residents are now paying a food and beverage tax, higher utility rates, and the public safety income tax has increased.

While the large number of taxes are burdensome to all, they hit our most vulnerable populations hardest, and we must be careful before expecting more from citizens. Therefore, increasing taxes on residents should be a last resort for raising revenue to provide services.

I believe the best way to grow revenue is to grow the tax base. I will continue to encourage responsible economic growth in Monroe County through a variety of incentives and tools available to local government.

What is the single most important issue you see facing Monroe County in the coming term, and what is your specific plan to address that issue?

Much of Monroe County is becoming increasingly unaffordable to ordinary people. Housing costs in Bloomington are among the highest in Indiana, and incomes for a significant portion of residents are simply not keeping up with the cost of living.

To address these issues, I will work to pass responsible, balanced budgets that facilitate growth of median income in our area while also bolstering aid to those in need. I will continue working to incentivize the creation of high-quality jobs in Monroe County, and I will prioritize workforce development initiatives that expand our Life Sciences, Technology, and Entrepreneurial sectors. In addition, I will continue to advocate for committing significant resources to public health initiatives and harm reduction strategies to combat the opioid epidemic.

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Nicole Browne
Democrat

Research has been done with respect to implementing voting centers in Monroe County--with mixed reviews as to whether there would actually be a cost savings. With Monroe County already utilizing e-Pollbooks, we have absorbed a significant portion of those implementation costs. While I would be supportive of voting centers in Monroe County, until or unless it is mandated by the State of Indiana, it would still require a unanimous vote by the three member Monroe County Election Board (of which I am one) to bring voting centers to fruition in Monroe County. In the interim, utilizing e-Pollbooks and the combining of several precincts into super precincts, Monroe County has come as close to voting centers as we are likely to get without a mandate.

What is your stance on the use of voting centers for elections? State your reasoning and why you think your recommendation is fair for voters and will reduce election costs?

With records and payment portals, the Monroe County Clerk's Office is already making case-related information and court documents easily accessible and available to the public and media. Because the Clerk's Office works in tandem with the Courts, and cannot provide or offer legal advice of any kind, the portals allow for user friendly access and impartial transparency to all. I receive regular communication from users of the records and payment portals regarding their positive experiences, their getting exactly what they needed and how easy it was to do so.

The clerk is responsible for case-related information and court documents. What is your stance on making this information easily accessible and available to the public and media? Please explain your stance.

I feel strongly about the importance of regular, face to face communication and each department having the ability to keep an open mind about the perspectives of other departments. There are instances in which, if you can simply have a bird's eye view as to how one department's decision impacts the processes of another department, you can communicate from a more empathetic perspective and work toward compromise and resolution.

How can departments work together to create synergy and efficient operations?



Jacob Franklin
Republican

I fully support and advocate for an accessible and efficient election process, which I believe vote centers can be. Convenience of vote centers may outweigh that of precinct voting in areas of dense population such as a municipal election but may not be as beneficial to those in rural areas. I will study like counties that have transitioned to vote centers before committing to changing how and where you cast your ballot. Vote centers have high upfront costs but should be more reasonable. I still believe our current election security, process and vote count is not administered properly and is way too expensive. Four years ago, candidates received emails regarding thousands of over votes. It is my belief that cross ticket votes were thrown out.

I believe all information permissible by law should be made available to the public and media. Basic information is already easily accessible through, <http://myase.in.gov> as well as www.in.gov, which are free websites. If the person(s), business or media would like to have more detailed copies of the courts records then a request for public documents may be filled out and submitted. Many times, these records need to be certified, which would not be accommodated on online copies. I will not only ensure you receive quality public service, but that records are archived for easy retrieval.

Having worked as deputy clerk for nine plus years, I have built rapport with the court(s), sheriff, prosecutor and probation offices necessary to facilitate synergy and efficient operations between these offices. Also, being in the office during business hours shall allow for prompt communication regarding operations. Communication and proper understanding of what other offices need is key and shall allow for proper synergy and efficient operations among different offices. By understanding that I work for the public and court(s) with a specific job to do shall be the driving force in creating synergy and efficient operations. We are a pilot county for paperless offices and E-filings through the Board of Judges decision not Clerk's.

Follow the campaign on: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and www.JacobFranklin.us (coming soon)

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Erika Oliphant
Democrat



Margie Rice
Democrat

If elected, what will be your top 3 priorities for the Prosecutor's Office and why?

First, we need to eliminate cash bail by improving our pretrial release program. Cash bail is especially hard on low-income people, and jail does more harm than good among nonviolent offenders.

Second, we need to treat addiction and mental illness as public health issues. We need to build up our treatment court capacities and increase opportunities for diversion. Evidence-based practices reduce recidivism. By addressing the cause of criminal behavior, we can respond humanely to the opioid crisis while simultaneously diverting people away from jail or prison.

Third, we need to focus resources on violent crime that poses the greatest risk to personal safety. Criminal jury trial experience and training are necessary to effectively prosecute violent crime and keep our community safe.

PRIORITY #1: As any good businessperson knows, the first priority is to have a good plan. I will take a fresh look at office operations, how taxpayer dollars are utilized, and how increased efficiencies can provide better service. It's important to have a leader who won't feel pressure to protect the status quo for status quo's sake. PRIORITY #2: I will focus on restorative justice and reduced recidivism. When the jail is full of repeat offenders, we have to ask whether what we're doing is working. I'll join forces with private sector leaders, elected officials, law enforcement and citizens to launch a true collaborative effort to reduce crime in our community. PRIORITY #3: Finally, I'll aggressively combat violent crime including domestic violence and gun-related offenses.

Where would you focus your efforts to move cases through the court system more efficiently?

First, I will review the workload of individual prosecutors, as well as that of the entire office, to ensure that we can advance the interests of justice in fairness, accuracy, and timely disposition of cases.

Additionally, I plan to train deputy prosecuting attorneys on best practices for reducing recidivism. Research suggests that in cases of addiction or mental illness, it is important to engage someone in treatment intervention shortly after the time of arrest. One way that we can ensure early treatment intervention is to screen cases for program eligibility at the time that a charging decision is made and make an immediate referral. While the office does that to a certain extent now, improvements can and should be made.

I commit to efficient and swift prosecution. As Deputy Prosecutor, I did not support the ages-old system of over-charging just so the prosecutor has leverage. Everyone knows that when 12 charges are filed, the prosecutor will settle for two. A better model is to charge the most important offenses and offer a reasonable plea designed to protect the community. If the defendant won't take the plea, proceed quickly to trial. The only case that gets worse with a delay is the prosecutor's case. Once defense attorneys grasp that the prosecutor's office is serious and fully capable of proving what they charged, then cases will get resolved more quickly and often without a trial.

Taxpayers and defendants and defendants' families pay when the system drags on.

In light of the opioid crisis placing pressure on our jail and justice system, what is your plan to address any overcrowding in the Monroe County Jail?

Incarceration should be reserved for violent offenses that pose the greatest risk to our safety.

Our pretrial release program can relieve some of the pressure on our jail. By releasing nonviolent offenders with risk-based conditions, without regard to ability to pay a cash bond, we reduce the population of people sitting in jail awaiting trial.

By increasing opportunities for diversion, many cases can be resolved in a manner that avoids expensive trial court resources while simultaneously providing treatment that reduces recidivism. We should collaborate with other agencies and stakeholders to provide services outside of jail.

Finally, our problem-solving courts are currently making great strides in combatting addiction, reducing recidivism by 67%. We need to maximize our use of these programs and work to expand them.

I support a multi-pronged initiative to ending jail overcrowding. My plan consists of:

- Prosecutor-led Diversion Programs: I want to be able to look back at my first term and see that the number of people prosecuted in Monroe County was reduced because we prevented crime in the first place. We must divert those suffering from mental illness or addictions from jail to treatment
- Reduced Recidivism: Our jail is full of repeat offenders. Taxpayer resources are better spent treating pain, addiction and mental illness than on warehousing people.
- Mentoring Programs: Early intervention is being utilized in Indianapolis, San Diego and elsewhere. Rather than the formulaic approach to prosecution (arrest, charge, initial hearing, several pretrial conferences, plea or trial, sentencing and *then* services), treatment is offered upfront.

If elected, how do you foresee the opioid crisis impacting the Prosecutor's office and what are your recommendations to help address this crisis in the courts?

The opioid crisis has increased our workload substantially in the past few years. People facing addiction commit all manner of property crimes to acquire drugs. So long as the opioid crisis continues, case volume will increase, putting pressure on the courts and other criminal justice resources.

We must support organizations in the community that provide harm reduction and treatment intervention outside of the criminal justice system. This can prevent some addiction-related criminal offenses.

Once someone commits a criminal offense as a result of addiction, we must use an evidence-based approach to divert him or her away from jail and into treatment. I have first-hand experience combatting addiction in problem-solving courts, and I have studied the best practices for long-term success.

More than 175 Americans will die of a drug overdose, today. The Prosecutor must be on the front lines in combatting this public health emergency. More cautious prescribing, accountability for irresponsible distributors, dispelling stigma, and aggressive treatment programs are essential.

At the Opioid Summit, a recovering addict who is now running a not-for-profit noted that addiction is a symptom of a larger problem. It's the underlying pain and problem a person is attempting to self-medicate away that must be addressed. Society cannot arrest and prosecute its way out of this problem. As noted in my first three answers, I will take a methodical, targeted, community-based approach to issues that threaten the safety and wellbeing of our citizens. Prevention is every bit as important as prosecution.

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Matt Schulz
Democrat

If elected, what will be your top 3 priorities for the Prosecutor's Office and why?

My top priorities will be to seek justice, promote public safety, and assist victims of crime because these priorities encompass the critical mission of the office. I am the father of four young children, a small business owner, and a proud resident of Monroe County. This is a wonderful community, but we have challenges including, but certainly not limited to, violent crime, sex crimes, domestic violence, drug addiction, and alcohol offenses. These challenges threaten community safety and must be addressed in a firm, fair manner. I have a criminal law background with experience in both prosecution and defense, as well as proven leadership experience to ensure that each case is handled in a fair, just, and professional manner.

Where would you focus your efforts to move cases through the court system more efficiently?

We are fortunate Monroe County is participating in a Pretrial Release Pilot Project Program. This program was created after the Indiana Supreme Court initiated a study of pre-trial release assessments that resulted in a new rule urging trial courts to use evidence-based risk assessments to inform pretrial release decisions. This is important because it reduces the reliance upon cash bail by informing courts of flight risk and public safety issues. I will support the continued use of this program. Further, I will create a formal training program within the office to ensure each of the 19 attorneys and the support team are highly skilled professionals, aware of best practices for deferral/diversion programs proven to reduce recidivism, and focused on the critical mission of the office.

In light of the opioid crisis placing pressure on our jail and justice system, what is your plan to address any overcrowding in the Monroe County Jail?

In addition to continued support of the Pretrial Release initiative mentioned above, which reduces reliance on cash bail, many more cases can be evaluated for diversion and deferral programs. Monroe County currently has very successful Problem Solving Courts addressing drug addiction and mental health issues. We are fortunate that community leaders inside and outside the courtroom have acknowledged the need for these Problem Solving Courts and I will support their continued use and expansion. Indiana law allows prosecutors to divert or defer individuals charged with misdemeanors and certain felony offenses. In addition to continued use of programs focusing on drug addiction and mental health, programs incentivizing education and employment will be utilized to address significant risk factors for recidivism including lack of education and unemployment.

If elected, how do you foresee the opioid crisis impacting the Prosecutor's office and what are your recommendations to help address this crisis in the courts?

The opioid crisis is a serious, long-term public health issue impacting all levels of this community. The Prosecutor's office is impacted by the sheer volume of cases and will continue to see cases involving individuals facing addiction and in need of professional help. The challenge, of course, is access to care and cannot be solved by one person. As Prosecuting Attorney, I will support programs incentivizing treatment over jail, and I will continue to seek new ideas and best-practices for successful models across the state and country.

While supporting alternatives to incarceration for individuals facing addiction, dealers and traffickers taking advantage of those facing addiction will be prosecuted aggressively to the extent allowed by law.



Pictured l-r: David Ferguson and Ted Ferguson, Ferguson Law. Photo by Chris Howell.

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

enjoyable for me.”

According to family lore, the brothers’ father, the late Jim Ferguson, ran for

prosecutor and won when he was still in law school at Indiana University. That ambition carried him far, and Jim — after meeting the requirements of his ROTC commitment in the

Air Force — returned to Bloomington to start the firm that would become Ferguson Law in 1956. In time, Jim’s brother, Steve Ferguson, joined the firm as well.

David joined his father, uncle and brother in the family business shortly after graduating from the IU School of Law himself, 37 years ago. Though numerous partners have come and gone over those years, at one point, five Ferguson men all worked for the firm at the same time: David, his father Jim, his brother Ted, his

uncle Steve, and his cousin Matthew (currently CEO of CareerBuilder).

“It was fun, we all seemed to get along and everyone had their own interests and there was always plenty for everybody to do,” said David, who said he believes the law firm had fewer conflicts than most firms because the family members were able to work so well together.

From his late father and his uncle, David said he learned to go the extra mile for clients and to always err on the side of being “over-prepared” for any situation. To this day, David said his uncle, Steve Ferguson — currently chairman of the board of Cook Group — says that he “can never have too much information.”

“Prepare hard and always, always ask lots of questions and look as many places as you can for the answers,” David said. “That’s what I learned from them.”

In the lifetime David has spent both watching his father practice the law and doing so himself, he’s seen dramatic changes, largely due to Bloomington’s growth and, of course, the advent of technology. David was in high school in 1972 when his father and uncle moved into Ferguson Law’s current location on East Sixth Street, and he remembers painstakingly

carrying box after box of heavy law books down from the old second-floor offices on the Courthouse Square. Those books still line the shelves of the Ferguson Law offices and, while certainly not obsolete, get less use with each passing year as attorneys turn to digital resources in their place.

David also remembers well an era when almost all lawyers came into their offices bright and early every Saturday morning to check their mail, just in case some important documents had arrived. “Now, sadly, the mail is 24 hours a day and it comes to your phone and it is awful because you can’t just let it go,” he said, noting that even court documents are being exclusively e-filed these days.

“I haven’t yet experienced a reduction in the amount of paper I’m dealing with, but I’m still hopeful,” he joked.

People sometimes don’t realize “how much law there is,” David said. Laws are changing every year, which makes it difficult for lawyers to simply have the answer to a question off the top of their head or find it quickly. That can mean more time goes into researching questions for clients.

Despite being busy, however, Ferguson Law makes it a priority to give back to the community through pro-bono work for several organizations.

Among these are Monroe County CASA, the District 10 Pro Bono Project and IU Protective Order Project. While each organization serves a different population group, the goal of each is providing legal counsel for people who are vulnerable or unable to afford or access a lawyer on their own.

Participating in such programs is important

to Ferguson Law because “the statistics are awful on how much of the public is unrepresented or under-represented,” he said.

“In general, people do better when they are represented and knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities,” he said. He added, “it is important for all of us who are lawyers to try and give back when we can.”

Ferguson Law currently has five attorneys, but is looking to add another soon. Over the years, the firm has been a great “launch pad” for young lawyers who got their start there before moving on to larger cities, David said.

It will be these young partners that Ferguson Law will look to in the future when it comes time for the two brothers to retire, David said, as there is no third generation of Ferguson family lawyers to take the helm. Still, he is hopeful about the firm’s future.

“I hope it is here 62 years from today,” he said. “I would be very proud of that. It’s been a great place to work.”

In the meantime, David plans to continue to carry on the legacy of his family. Even after 37 years in the field, practicing law remains something he enjoys because he likes “being able to help people and solve problems,” he said.

“I like figuring things out,” he said. “People come in and say, ‘Gosh, there’s this problem I have, there’s this issue and that issue’ and it’s fun to be able to sort through those. ... When you can help people solve those puzzles they are confronted with, it is really gratifying. It makes you feel like you’ve really accomplished something.”

Berkshire Hathaway Announces Award Recipients

Congratulations to the 2017 award winners for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Indiana Realty. They are: John Vitello, Sherry Bumgarner, Margie Eberle-Polley, Lauree Wright, De Ann Wright and Sandy Sabbagh.

Opportunities & Events

It's Strawberry Shortcake Festival Time

Order a pre-sale kit for your place of business, customers, clients or anyone else important in your life and have it delivered to their local business free. All orders must be received by Thursday, April 19 and will be delivered on Wednesday, May 2 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. For more information visit bgcbloomington.org/ssf2018.

FMCCS and MCCSC to Host Girls in Engineering, Math & Science

FMCCS and MCCSC will host Girls in Engineering, Math, and Science on April 14. At GEMS girls in fifth and sixth grades will work side by side with female scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to explore the wonders of STEM. The event will be held at Bloomington High School North. For more information visit mccsfoundation.org.

Habitat for Humanity Benefit Concert

Please join us on April 15 at 2:30 p.m. at the Buskirk-Chumley Theatre for a very special benefit concert with Eddie Mony and special guest Sylvia McNair. 100 percent of ticket sales will be used to support affordable housing and home ownership in the Bloomington community. For more information visit <https://goo.gl/Yqxbja>.

Comprehensive Financial Consultants Shred Day

Comprehensive Financial Consultants is holding a CFC Shred Day on Wednesday, April 18 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at their office at 674 S. College Ave. Rid yourself of all of your old, unnecessary paperwork weighing you down. There is no need to RSVP — come and go as you please! For more information email Mallory at malloryevans@cfc.us.

30th Annual Senior Fair

Senior Fair is full of exhibits showcasing the products, services and information needed by seniors. The event will be Wednesday, April 18 at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church Bedford from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come for free health screenings, five chances to win \$100 and information for seniors. For more information visit seniorfair.weebly.com.



Core Projective provides project management and technical writing services with a focus on the Bloomington community and the life sciences industry. Kelly Boatman, PMP, helps businesses manage projects nimbly and adaptively with flexible, customized, on-demand expertise. For on-site, remote, short-term, and ongoing project needs, Core Projective is your local resource for managing projects, developing project management talent, optimizing project management processes, and writing business and technical communications. Visit coreprojective.com.



Cruise Planners, an American Express Travel Representative, has a tremendous reputation for quality, service and very competitive pricing; providing clients with unforgettable, stress-free vacations. Cruise Planners travel advisors will help you discover exciting adventures around the world with ocean cruises, river cruises, all-inclusive resort vacations, land tours, guided and escorted tour vacations, and independent travel packages from budget to luxury levels. Let us plan and reserve your next relaxation, exploration, or adventure vacation today. Call 812-320-1480, visit tripsbysteve.com or email steve.coopersmith@cruiseplanners.com. Facebook: @tripsbysteve.

SCIHRA Holds Spring Conference

The South Central Indiana Human Resource Association is holding their 2018 Spring Conference on Friday, April 20 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Monroe Convention Center. Breakfast and lunch are included and there are five CEUs available. For more information visit scihra.org.

Other

Ferguson Law Offers Family Law Mediation Services

Bloomington law firm Ferguson Law recently began offering family law mediation services. Attorney Megan J. Schueler became a licensed family law mediator in 2017, and enjoys helping people amicably resolve their disputes. Schueler specializes in mediations involving divorce, partnership dissolution and custody issues. For more information call Ferguson Law at 812-332-2113 or visit ferglaw.com.

Bloomington Country Club Holds Golf Membership Promotion

Become a member of Bloomington's only private country club and start enjoying the benefits of membership today! Sign up for one full year and the \$1,500 initiation fee will be saved plus you will receive a 25 percent discount off your membership dues. More information: Call Chris Coffey at 812-332-1116, ext. 105 or email ccoffey@bloomingtoncc.com.

Century 21 Scheetz Donates to Habitat

Century 21 Scheetz Bloomington donated to Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County on behalf of the Century 21 Scheetz Foundation. Century 21 Scheetz realtors can contribute a portion of their commission to the Foundation, which allows the Foundation to help families and individuals with immediate needs in the local Bloomington community. For more information visit <http://bit.ly/2CbUKor>.



Congratulations to Pure Barre on their ribbon cutting, celebrating their grand opening on Friday, March 9. Visit them at 2894 E. Third St., Suite 104 or call 612-554-9843 for more information.



Whatever you need, we'll handle it from here.

Keeping your space clean is a priority. We can help with simple, reliable services* that benefit you and our planet.

Get started by calling 812-824-7998 or visiting RepublicServices.com.

*Recycle available in select areas.



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HT-319347-1

Your choice of a great rate, or a great rate.

13-Month Relationship Certificate*

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3-Year Certificate

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APY[^]



Learn more at

www.iucu.org



*To join the Credit Union, you must be an individual or entity qualifying within the Credit Union's field of membership. A \$5.00 ownership share is required in the Membership Savings account. This account must be established in order to open any additional products or services. The \$5.00 will not be accessible for withdrawals or overdraft transfer, but will continue to earn dividends. Checking account required to open relationship certificates.

[^]APY or Annual Percentage Yield is available as of 4/4/18. Rates are subject to change at any time. A checking account is required to open a relationship certificate. Minimum balance is \$10,000.00. Dividends on all certificates are compounded daily and paid monthly. A penalty for early withdrawal will be imposed; the early withdrawal penalty is 180 days' dividends or all dividends earned, whichever is less. Fees and/or penalties may reduce earnings. A maturity notice will be sent shortly before the certificate matures. Automatic renewal does not apply to relationship certificates.

We started a credit union
and created a community.

IU Credit Union

Federally insured by NCUA

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