Travel and Transportation

Mask Up Hoosiers

Business Spotlight pg 4 | Nonprofit Profile pg 6
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table of contents

FEATURES

2 Letter from the President
3 Chamber Briefs and Community Announcements
3 3 Things Podcast
4 Business Spotlight
6 Nonprofit Profile
8 August Advocacy
9 YPB Update
10 Travel and Transportation
14 BTown Summer Challenge
16 Welcome Stacy Bruce as the Chamber’s New Director of Member Services!
17 Mask Up Hoosiers
18 Chamber Member Q&A
19 Kids Question
20 Important Dates & Anniversaries
20 Unmasked Hometown Hero Awards
20 Celebrate the 19th Amendment with Laurie Burns McRobbie
21 Thank you Wes Lasher and The Production House
21 August By the Numbers
21 New Members
Dear Members,

I am writing this month’s Voices article at the last possible minute. I am still reeling from the events of July 3rd, July 4th and July 6th – all incidents connected to racism, profiling, and violence, and all terribly sad and abhorrent. I just was not sure what to write, and I wanted to wait as long as I could to write something.

Here it goes: The treatment of people of color in Bloomington and Monroe County has been horrible going back decades and has ranged from microaggressions at work to racial profiling to physical violence. Taking a stand against these behaviors, and specifically the events that occurred locally in early July as this publication went to print, is required of all of us who want to be decent and humane.

Still not moved to action? How about hearing that my office received five calls and emails within 24 hours of the events noted above from individuals and groups who are no longer willing to come to our Bloomington because of the racist actions of some of our community members? That is five groups that will no longer visit our galleries, buy meals, or stay in hotels. No quick trips to the gas station to fill up before the trip home, and no visits to a retail store to buy some IU gear. Five is not many, but they all notified us within 24 hours of the 4th of July weekend events. How many people did not contact us to tell us they were no longer planning their wedding in Bloomington or rebooking their family reunion somewhere else? How many looked at the news and skipped over Bloomington as a possibility completely?

One caller left me a voice mail. He stated that he and his wife have disposable income (not much, as he’s a preacher), but they will no longer come to spend any of it in our community until things change. In 2018, visitors spent over $418 million in Monroe County. What would we do if they all decided not to come back?

Our success is intricately tied to the success of our neighbors, friends and colleagues. We will all rise or fall together, and we can only rise by standing up for those who need to be recognized as wanted and complete members of our community. I realize I am writing this in the middle of events that have not yet fully played out, and I can only hope and pray that we have chosen to embrace the minority members of our community and stand for equality.

To all of the people of color, the Chamber is glad to have you in our community.

Best,
Erin Predmore
For the first time in two decades, IU Memorial Stadium will not host thousands of community members in celebration of those who have been impacted by cancer. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bloomington Health Foundation has announced that the 21st running of Hoosiers Outrun Cancer (HOC) will be held in a virtual format this year. Those wishing to participate can register online at hoosiersoutrunncancer.org by August 30th and will receive a shirt and commemorative race bib in the mail for race day. The virtual race will take place on Saturday, September 26th.

The Public Media Journalists Association (PMJA) presented the WFIU News team with two PMJA awards at a virtual ceremony held on June 25. WFIU News’ weekly public affairs program Noon Edition earned first place in the Audience Engagement Program category for its live broadcast on climate change last November at The Inkwell in Bloomington. In addition to its first place win, WFIU News’ story on the Indy 500’s milk tradition received second place in the Sports Feature category.

Ivy Tech Community College has selected Joshua Farrington, assistant professor of philosophy in the School of Arts, Sciences, & Education at the Bloomington campus as the recipient of the 2020 Glenn W. Sample Founder’s Award for Excellence in Instruction. The award is the highest honor the College can bestow upon a faculty member.

Regional Opportunity Initiatives, Inc. (ROI) has awarded a $1.2 million Ready Schools implementation grant to Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC), the largest school district in the 11-county Indiana Uplands region. MCCSC serves 20 percent of the region’s students (pre-K through grade 12). Ready Schools initiative helps align school districts to the education and workforce needs of regional employers and prepares students for high opportunity jobs and careers. MCCSC will use its Ready Schools implementation funding to support a multi-year district-wide plan focused on college, career, and life readiness for all students. The grant will fund five distinct strategies: project-based learning, STEAM and hands-on learning, career awareness activities, entrepreneurship activities, and community and industry partnerships.

The Bloomington Community Farmers’ Market is furthering its mission to support access to nutrition for vulnerable populations by using a grant from the Bloomington Health Foundation to triple Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program benefits for low-income seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) participants. The Bloomington Health Foundation in January awarded a grant for $79,976 to the Bloomington Parks Foundation to be used for tripling these supplemental nutrition programs at the Farmers’ Market over the next two years.

WTIU received five NATAS Lower Great Lakes Emmy Awards at the 2020 Emmy Gala held online in June. WTIU’s travel series, Journey Indiana, took home four of the five Emmys. The program earned awards for best feature or segment in the education category for its story “Planting a Seed” and in the environment category for its feature “Preserving the Prairie Land.” Journey Indiana was also honored in the photographer category and for best video essay on Life Skateboards in Muncie, Indiana. In addition to the four awards for Journey Indiana, WTIU’s locally-produced documentary Fingerstyle! Indiana’s Guitar Festival won an Emmy for special events coverage.

Check out the Chamber’s 3 Things Podcast!

Want an insider’s view of our local business community? Listen to the Chamber’s 3 Things Podcast, hosted by Chamber CEO Erin Predmore.

Available twice a month on Spotify, iTunes or wherever you download your podcasts, each 3 Things features a one-on-one conversation with a local professional, a panel discussion on an important topic relative to business in the community, and an overview of important Chamber events and matters that impact members and the community.

Recent topics include:
• Staycations and the B-town Summer Challenge
• A Discussion with black business owners in the community
• How businesses are responding to the coronavirus threat
• Funding for community growth projects
• New healthcare benefits for Chamber members

Have a suggestion for a topic or a person to interview? Contact Chamber CEO Erin Predmore at epredmore@chamberbloomington.org or call 812-336-6381.
Business Spotlight

By Jackie Finch

When Todd Borgman was a little boy, he wanted to grow up to be a lawyer. “My mother and I would stay up late at night and watch ‘Matlock’ reruns,” he said.

But Borgman took a different road through life and is now president of Smith Brehob & Associates, Inc. Founded by Steve Smith in 1980, the company provides civil engineering services to the greater Bloomington, Monroe County and southern Indiana area.

Borgman is surrounded by the results of the company’s labors and says that is one of the best parts of his job. “Whether it is Legos, blocks or robotics, at some point in everyone’s life they enjoy building things,” he said. “When you get to show completed projects to family and friends it is a pretty cool feeling knowing you played a part in the process.”

Steve Smith was working as the City of Bloomington Engineer when he recognized the need for a local engineering firm who understood the local landscape and design standards, Borgman said. “With that in mind, he founded the company.”

Smith Brehob services include civil engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture and land planning. “We work with municipalities, developers and homeowners to design environmentally friendly solutions for their projects,” Borgman said. “Our work has a wide range of sizes, from backyard pools and house layout, to roadway design and large-scale housing developments.”

A born Hoosier, Borgman joined Smith Brehob about six years ago. Before that he worked in the Chicago and Indianapolis area. “My wife and I are from nearby Greensburg and wanted to raise our children closer to family,” he said.

The list of Smith Brehob projects is long and varied. Northwest YMCA, Jackson Creek Shopping Center, IU Health-Liberty Drive, Renwick neighborhood, Verona Park, Summerhouse, Clarizz Boulevard, College Mall Road at Moores Pike, Sare Road Extension, Eastbay Apartments, Gentry Subdivisions and more.

Projects now under way include designing a new Habitat for Humanity subdivision named Osage Place. “It will be located near RCA Park and will include new roads, residential lots and multi-use paths,” Borgman said. “We are also working on the next phases of Verona Park and Mill Creek Tech Park and a large water main design for CBU.”

Another important project is finishing Daniels Way to Hartstrait Road. “The new road will help alleviate traffic on State Road 48 during high traffic volumes and provide easier access for businesses currently located on Daniels Way,” Borgman said. “It should also help promote new business development along its travel corridor.”

Having Bloomington as a home base offers many advantages, Borgman said. “Bloomington has all the amenities of a large city with a small-town feeling. Bloomington and the BEDC have done a great job of creating an atmosphere to attract talented profes-

Smith Brehob & Associates, Inc.

Photo courtesy of Smith Brehob & Associates

Verona Park.

Todd Borgman
sionals and workers for the local businesses and community. Being centrally located in Indiana, we have the ability to reach other large markets as well.”

Of course, the Bloomington area also is known for its karst features which can present problems.

“Local karst features sinkholes which can be challenging when it comes to construction. Depending on the size and number of sinkholes, many properties are undevelopable,” Borgman said.

“Over time, local governments have developed regulations to not only protect the sinkholes, but also protect the public from the possible harm that could come from constructing over them. It’s always a top priority to identify possible karst features from the beginning of any type of project.”

Land availability has and always will be the fundamental element in development, Borgman said. “Bloomington has a unique terrain compared to the majority in Indiana. The karst features, steep hillsides and shallow bedrock all limit the available land. Finding land for sale without any of these features is a hard task. These features greatly increase the cost of building roads and infrastructure.”

The four decades since Smith Brehob was founded have brought many changes, Borgman said. “Advances in technology have played a significant role throughout the history of the company. The newer computer software and survey equipment allows one person to perform the previous work of two or three. We used to have around 30 employees; technology has allowed us to increase output with reduced (10) employees,” he said.

Getting young people involved in engineering and surveying is a problem, Borgman said.

“We have had declining graduation numbers for years. Many schools have dropped the programs in recent years due to the lack of interest. So, if anyone is interested, now is great time to enter our professions.”

For the future, Smith Brehob hopes to continue growing at a reasonable pace, Borgman said.

“With the addition of Interstate 69, Bloomington will have access to several new and expanding markets. Opportunities like this do not come along often,” he said. “At the end of the day, we were founded in Bloomington to work with local people and that will continue to be our main goal moving forward.”

Along those lines, Borgman said, Smith Brehob & Associates, Inc. “would like to say thank you to the people of Bloomington, our hard-working employees and local governments for allowing us to offer professional engineering and surveying services for over 40 years. Without their support, we would not exist.”
Growing up in a trailer park in northern Indiana, Chris Myers later built her own home from the ground up in the Brown County woods. “I know how important my home, my place, is to me,” she said. “I believe everyone deserves to feel that sense of place and security. With it, we can live happily, healthily, fully and thrive,” Myers said.

That’s one reason why Myers said her role as executive director of the Area 10 Agency on Aging is the perfect fit for her. “I like to say that we all have to take care of each other, and that is at the center of what all of us at Area 10 do. It’s not easy. It’s complicated and difficult but also incredibly rewarding.”

The Area 10 Agency on Aging was incorporated as a nonprofit in 1981. It currently serves about 3,000 senior citizens a year through the agency and its two facilities – the Endwright Center in Ellettsville and the Endwright East Active Living Community Center in College Mall.

“The mission of Area 10 Agency on Aging is to serve as a leader in providing resources, solutions and connections for seniors, persons with disabilities and family caregivers living in Monroe and Owen counties,” Myers said. “I like to say that the heart of what we do is about helping people to continue living quality lives in their home space of choice – keeping them mentally and physi-
cally healthy and living with dignity."

Services include information and referral, options counseling for in-home support services, care management, affordable senior housing, home delivered meals, congregate meal program, Mobile Food Pantry, Rural Transit public transportation in four counties, senior community centers, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and adult guardianship program.

Providing transportation is an important part of the agency’s mission, Myers said. “Rural Transit supports aging in place in our four-county area, allowing older adults to continue living in their homes and still be able to access services they need to survive and prosper.”

Operating through an agreement with Monroe County Commissioners for more than 30 years, Rural Transit provides public transit for Monroe, Owen, Putnam and Lawrence counties, plus transport to other areas in the county, city and inter-county.

“Most of our transportation is through our door-to-door or demand response service,” Myers said. “This is where folks call in and schedule a ride for a specific day and time for pick up and return trips. The cost is only $3 each way.”

The service operates from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Although Rural Transit is important for older residents, the program is open to everyone, Myers said.

“We have individuals who use it to get to and from their place of employment, school, shopping, social events and especially medical appointments. When someone is just starting out with a new job and doesn’t have the money to support their own vehicle yet, reliable transportation is critical to sustaining that job and enabling the individual to really become more self-sufficient.”

Home-delivered meals also are an important service and Area 10 delivers meals each weekday to about 100 people in both Monroe and Owen counties. “In addition, we provide home-delivered meals through other vendors chosen by the individual to about 700 more individuals,” Myers said.

“Having a regular, nutritionally balanced meal every day is important for all of us, certainly, but critically important for older adults,” Myers said. “As individuals take prescription medications, the body’s absorption of those medications affects its potency and intended or unintended effects. Without at least one balanced meal a day, the body cannot effectively absorb medications, which could lead to harmful effects and imbalance.”

Whenever a need arrives, the Area 10 Agency on Aging tries to find a solution, such as the new Friend-to-Friend program in direct response to needs identified during the coronavirus pandemic. “As we know, this virus is most dangerous to the population that we serve, older adults and those with underlying conditions.”

Social isolation among older adults is a significant problem, especially during the pandemic. “Area 10 recognized the need to support keeping older adults home and safe, encouraging them to not take risks to get out to access necessary supplies.”

Although Area 10 usually has about 120 volunteers to help provide services, an additional 40 stepped forward during the pandemic. “We match them with individuals staying home to run errands for medications and/or groceries. We also began a free pick-up and delivery service through our Rural Transit program,” Myers said.

But social interaction also seemed to be falling by the wayside for many elderly during the pandemic. “Our RSVP program staff recruits, screens and matches community volunteers with home-bound individuals and individuals living in skilled nursing facilities for regular interactions by whatever means are preferred by the home-bound individual, which could be phone calls, emails, texts and letters or cards,” Myers said.

“All of these efforts will continue for as long as we need them to, as our most important goal is to not risk the very people we are here to serve every day.”

BLOOMINGTON BUSINESS JOURNAL • 7
August Advocacy

The Chamber serves as an advocate on behalf of all businesses for the issues critical to the future of our community. For timely updates, check out the Chamber’s Advocacy Matters site at chamberbloomington.org/advocacy-matters. You can reach Mary Morgan, the Chamber’s Director of Advocacy & Public Policy, at mmorgan@chamberbloomington.org.

November Election Is Just Around the Corner

In the sweltering heat of summer, Nov. 3 – the date of this year’s general election – seems in the distant future. Those months will fly by, trust me. Here at the Chamber, we’re already planning our election guide to provide members with nonpartisan information about local candidates. We’ll also be looking for ways to partner with the League of Women Voters of Bloomington/Monroe County, so that voters can be as informed as possible when they fill out their ballot.

This year, the presidential race is getting much well-deserved attention. But we have many competitive races locally that deserve focus, too, including seats on the Monroe County Council, Monroe County Circuit Court, Indiana State Legislature and more. You can start getting ready by making sure you’re registered by the Oct. 5 deadline. Please also consider being a poll worker – those jobs are hard to fill even in the best of times. You can find out more at the Monroe County Election Central website (monroecountyvoters.us).

– Mary Morgan
Director of Advocacy & Public Policy

Arts Forward Bloomington Urges City to Keep Waldron as Arts Center

More than 300 people signed a letter to the City of Bloomington administration, supporting the continued use of the Waldron building at 122 S. Walnut for arts & cultural purposes. Ivy Tech has owned the building for several years, and recently announced plans to return it to the city. That transaction is expected to be completed in August.

The petition, organized by Arts Forward Bloomington, in part asks the city to keep the building’s “current function as an arts center, particularly a performance venue available for public use.”

Sean Starowitz, the city’s assistant director for the arts, told the Chamber that a public engagement process will be held later this year to get input on the building’s future use.

Monroe County Public Library Seeks Input on Strategic Plan

The Monroe County Public Library is updating its strategic plan and asking residents to help shape their future work.

The plan, for 2021-2023, will guide MCPL’s technology, programs, partnerships and materials. A link to the survey is on the library’s website at https://mcpl.info/.

You can also give public commentary at meetings of the MCPL board of trustees. In August, trustees have a work session on Wednesday, Aug. 12 and a regular meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 19. Both meetings begin at 5:45 p.m. at the downtown library’s first floor meeting room 1B, 303 E. Kirkwood Ave.

NSWC Crane Marks Leadership Transition, Welcomes New Commanding Officer

On July 1, Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division held its Change of Command ceremony, honoring outgoing Capt. Mark Oesterreich, who has led the operation since July 2017 and is retiring, and welcoming the new commanding officer, Capt. Duncan McKay. NSWC Crane is a naval laboratory and a field site for Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). Its work focuses on expeditionary warfare, strategic missions and electronic warfare. Located about 35 miles southwest of Bloomington in Martin County and parts of Greene and Lawrence counties, NSWC Crane employs more than 3,000 people, making it one of this region’s largest employers.

Congratulations to Captain Oesterreich on his retirement and welcome to Captain McKay!

Consultant Hired for Bloomington Parks Master Plan

The Bloomington Board of Park Commissioners has approved a $72,500 contract with Troyer Group Inc. to develop the Parks & Recreation 2021-2025 master plan.

The work will entail public engagement efforts that will include a combination of in-person meetings and the use of Miro, an online collaboration system. A master plan is required in order to receive grants from the state and federal government and other sources. It is also required for accreditation from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The funding for this project comes from the parks department’s general fund budget.

The newest park commissioner is Ellen Rodkey, who also serves on the Chamber’s board of directors. Other commissioners are Les Coyne, Israel Herrera and Kathleen Mills, who chairs the board. The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 4 p.m. More info is at https://bloomington.in.gov/boards/park-commissions.
Census 2020 Deadline Extended Until Oct. 31

Due to complications from the COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline for completing the 2020 U.S. Census has been extended to Oct. 31.

Residents can fill out the census online, by phone or using the mailed-in form. The Census 2020 site (https://2020census.gov/) is available in English and 12 other languages. To complete it by phone, call 844-330-2020.

As of mid-July, Monroe County’s response rate was 62.7% lower than Indiana’s rate of 66.2%. The response rate for Bloomington is even lower, at 57.2%.

Historic Commission Discusses Repair of Johnson’s Creamery Chimney

The chimney of the historic Johnson’s Creamery building is in need of repair, with recommendations that include demolishing the top 15 feet.

At their June 11 meeting, the Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission heard a report on the issue. To do the work, the owners would need a demolition delay review, according to city staff. It is not located in an historic district, but the building is on the Historic Sites & Structures list.

Commissioners discussed their desire to designate the building as a historic structure. They also talked about recommending removal of the cellular antennas attached to the chimney, which cause damage from wind shear. It is technically considered a cell tower.

According to Commissioner Duncan Campbell, this is the second chimney for the building. The original one, built in 1949, was much taller, he said. The main building dates back to 1914. Campbell said he was alarmed to see that the chimney has deteriorated to such an extent.

You're Invited!

WHO: You and Your Business

WHAT: Annual Meeting & Community Awards

WHEN: Thursday, September 17th, 2020

The Chamber’s Annual Meeting and Community Awards is coming up on Thursday, September 17th. We are excited to have you join us for our 105th Annual Meeting. We hope you will be able to join us! More details will be available in the coming weeks so stay tuned to your email.

For the most up to date information visit chamberbloomington.org

The Young Professionals Bloomington have made a commitment to creating an inclusive, welcoming, and affirming environment for ALL young professionals in our community. We will be regularly posting resources regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion on our social media pages. Resources may include podcasts, articles, book recommendations, videos, and more. Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram to view these resources and to find ways to continue the discussion.

Our next scheduled event will take place on August 12th from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm as a hybrid in-person/digital event. We will be having a socially distant picnic at Switchyard Park while also listening to guest speakers from the city share how young professionals can be more engaged with civic activities in Bloomington. You can view event details on our Facebook page or by signing up for our newsletter on our website.

If you are interested in being a part of creating opportunities for our young professionals, we would love to have you join our Steering Committee. This group meets once a month to plan events and create ideas for YPB. If you are interested, visit our Steering Committee webpage to fill out an application.
Travel and Transportation

By Jackie Finch

Miles and miles of roads and streets, plus a transit system to travel those byways and the parking spots needed by motorists. Bloomington residents have seen the transportation landscape change over the years and more changes are on the way.

The City of Bloomington is responsible for 237 miles of streets. Monroe County maintains 728 miles of roads. Then there’s the new 7-Line Trail that will soon be joining the popular B-Line Trail. Bloomington is on the move.

Keeping up with all the road projects and timetables is important for local businesses and the people who live and visit here. Here are some of the highlights of what has been done and what is still in the works.

Bloomington Department of Public Works

Good weather, decreased traffic and hard-working Public Works employees have completed city projects ahead of time with more starting up.

“We recognized an opportunity to get started on some of our projects early and finish them ahead of schedule,” said Michael Large, special projects/operations manager for the City of Bloomington Department of Public Works.

“One of the silver linings of the pandemic is that construction has been able to be expedited by lack of traffic,” Large said. “Our Kirkwood project was done nine weeks in advance. It was not supposed to be done until the end of August.”

The Kirkwood project repaved East Kirkwood Avenue from Walnut Street to Indiana Avenue. It included repairing deteriorating brick crosswalks and installing 100 vehicle-resistant impact bollards at intersections along Kirkwood. The bollard barriers can be removed to create a plaza for special events.

The intersection of Adams Street and Kirkwood Avenue was redesigned with the city’s first protected bicycle lanes and a sidewalk installed along Adams Street. “The protected bike lanes are on both the east and west sides of the road with a decorative tree plot in between,” Large said.

A major College Mall project will begin the first of August and should be completed by the end of October. “It is going to be huge as far as providing improved accessibility to all the businesses along College Mall Road,” Large said.

When projects are done in business areas, the city tries to keep the affect as minimal as possible on businesses. “We know sometimes it is challenging during construction but hopefully worth it to keep infrastructure in good shape or to install an improvement that benefits the area,” said Neil Kopper, interim city engineer.

The West 17th Street project from Lismore to Monroe should be wrapping up in early August. Work included improving storm wa-
ter infrastructure; reconstructing the roadway; installing a multi-use path on the north side and a sidewalk on the south side of the street; converting Lindbergh Drive to a two-way street; and making safety improvements to the Lindbergh Drive and 17th Street intersection.

Motorists will be happy to learn that the city’s two new parking garages are now under construction. “We are actually 30 percent done on the Trades District Garage on the northwest side of City Hall where The Mill is located,” Large said.

The four-level Trades Garage will feature 359 parking spaces and is estimated to be completed in March 2021. The 12-acre Trades District is located on the former site of the Showers Brothers Furniture Co. complex near downtown Bloomington, near West 10th Street and the B-Line Trail.

The Fourth Street Garage project is in the beginning phases of putting pylons in for the site. The seven-level garage will offer 535 parking spaces with an estimated completion date of September 2021.

The city’s sidewalk program replaced and repaired 2,700 linear feet in 2019. “This year we are looking to replace 3,000 linear feet,” Large said. “We will be starting on North Madison at the end of July.”

As with any construction projects, Large asks that people “remain
patient and be aware because our first-priority is always safety for the public and for our workers.

**Bloomington Transit**

Not long ago, a visitor thought a distinctive downtown Bloomington building at Third and Walnut streets was a small shopping center. Nope, it’s the Downtown Transit Center where passengers can catch both local and intercity buses.

Opened in 2014, the facility features an air-conditioned passenger waiting area complete with public WiFi, public restrooms, real-time bus arrival information, public art, bicycle storage, ATM and ticketing.

And that popular Bloomington Transit system now has 41 fixed route buses and 12 access vehicles. In 2019, Bloomington Transit carried 3.16 million passengers on fixed route service and 38,566 passengers on BT Access service.

The goal of Bloomington Transit is “to provide residents with mobility options to connect people with places,” said Lew May, general manager for Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation.

“Many people don’t own or can’t drive a car,” May said. “Parking is limited in certain areas downtown and on the IU campus and public transportation provides a better, more sustainable and affordable option to driving.”

Started in 1973 as a city department, Bloomington Transit became a public transportation corporation with its own governing board of directors in 1982. About 70 percent of BT ridership is IU college students, May said. “Almost 5 percent is IU employees. The other 25 percent includes commuters, senior citizens and persons with disabilities.”

As BT general manager for 21 years, May has seen many changes in local services with even more coming up. “A few things on the horizon over the next year include the introduction of the first battery electric buses to the BT fleet. About 80 percent of the current bus fleet is diesel powered and the other 20 percent is hybrid electric.”

Better electric technology is rapidly emerging, May said. “And we’re excited to introduce the first two battery electric buses to our fleet in early 2021. This new technology has the potential to lower fuel and vehicle maintenance costs.”

Major service changes also are planned for 2021. “Following the completion of our Route Optimization Study in the summer of 2019, we went through a series of public hearings in the fall of 2019 to gather public comment on proposed changes.”

A new service delivery concept being studied is microtransit. “Microtransit is a demand responsive form of transit with flexible routing and flexible scheduling based on customer needs. It’s similar to Uber or Lyft in many respects and we see it having applications in Bloomington where traditional fixed route transit service might not be the best or most cost-effective solution,” May said. “We’re hopeful we can begin a demonstration of microtransit sometime in the next year.”

Today, BT operates modern, low floor, full-size transit buses powered with clean diesel and hybrid electric technology. “BT’s buses are equipped with state-of-the-art technology including GPS-based bus trackers that allow the public to see the real-time location of their bus by a simple click on a smartphone app,” May said.

“Camera technology is included on all buses to ensure the safety and security of the riding public. Low floor technology eliminates the need for people to climb several steps to get into a bus and electric ramps on all buses makes them accessible to people with disabilities including those in wheelchairs or other mobility devices,” May said.

“Today’s BT buses bear little resemblance to the Mercedes vans BT began with in the early 1970s.”

**Monroe County Highway Department**

Although summer may be in full swing with long sunny days bringing abundant flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables, the Monroe County Highway Department is already planning for winter.

“We’ll be starting a new brine system for pretreatment of roads and bridges this upcoming winter,” said Highway Director Lisa Ridge. “We have been very fortunate to have assistance from the County Commissioners for new equipment and dump trucks for the crews.”

The new brine system will involve spraying a water/salt mixture on roads before anticipated winter weather is to hit the area, Ridge said. “This helps to keep the roads clear and will save on overtime. We will receive requests for many repeated areas that become more slick than other areas, such as hills and bridges.”

Monroe County has 728 miles of roads, 154 bridges, more than 3,300 culverts and over 7,000 traffic signs plus seven traffic signals to maintain. That means a never-ending job no matter what time of year.

“We typically run our main construction season in the summer months, basically due to the drier weather months,” Ridge said. “We luckily had a very mild past winter which helps the road conditions. The more moisture on the roadway, the more damage is caused.”

The highway department has 55 employees when all positions are filled. “But we typically never have a full staff which can dictate what crews can be assigned to,” Ridge said.

Monroe County has 18 federal aid road projects currently under way. “We have so many projects going on right now, Ridge said. “Monroe County has one of the highest counts of federal aid projects in the state.”

For an updated list, visit the highway department website (www.co.monroe.in.us) and click the highway page, infrastructure projects. “It gives some timelines also for the projects,” Ridge said.

As for Transform 2045 – the Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization’s long range transportation plan with the year 2045 in mind – Ridge said the key goal “is all about planning. It takes years for a project to come to fruition and being able to plan for these projects in the future helps. Looking ahead at connectivity, project traffic counts is a key goal for motorists to reach their destinations in a safe and timely manner.”

Since joining the Monroe County Highway Department at age 21 as a clerk in October of 1987, Ridge said she has seen many changes as she worked her way up to highway director. “It’s been a little overwhelming at times.”

But she is blessed with “a great support staff, great assistants and couldn’t do my job without all of them. The Council and the Commissioners have been very supportive of the department and I’m very fortunate to work with a great group,” Ridge said. “I only see things improving as we move forward.”

**7-Line Trail**

Bloomington’s popular B-Line Trail will soon have a sibling – the 7-Line Trail. The project will build a protected east-west bicycle lane and improved transit corridor to connect the B-Line, downtown, Indiana University campus and eastside and westside neighborhoods.

“The goals of the 7-Line are to improve safety, increase access and increase walking, bicycling and transit use,” said Beth Rosenbarger, planning and services manager for the City of Bloomington Planning and Transportation Dept.

“The B-Line Trail has been a wonderful addition to our community, and we are sure that the 7-Line will build on that success by improving our city’s network for walking, bicycling and transit.”

Construction for the 7-Line is scheduled to begin in 2021. “At this time, we can’t know the exact completion date, but we will be aiming for substantial completion by the end of 2021 with the majority of work scheduled during the summer,” Rosenbarger said.

The 7-Line will benefit the Bloomington community and the business community by increasing the safety and viability of options to single-occupancy-vehicle use such as walking, bicycling and transit use, thereby increasing accessibility, sustainability and quality of life, Rosenbarger said.
“Research show that higher comfort bicycle facilities such as the B-Line Trail or a protected bicycle lane like the 7-Line result in more people bicycling,” she said. “We have seen this locally with the B-Line Trail – more people are comfortable bicycling on the B-Line because it is separated from motor vehicle traffic.”

More people bicycling and more people using the street means more potential customers for businesses, Rosenbarger said. “Already, there are 3,400 passenger rides on Bloomington Transit buses each day (pre-COVID). Improving the bus stops and improving the route efficiency will make the corridor more attractive to users and businesses alike.”

“Research in other communities has shown that protected bicycle lanes contribute to a vibrant local business scene, and that greater access in terms of walking, bicycling and transit has positive outcomes for businesses,” she said.

The first phase of the project will run from the B-Line Trail to Woodlawn Avenue. Subsequent phases will extend the 7-Line east of the IU camp to the State Road 46/446 intersection. “There will be very few modifications to existing sidewalks and existing street trees,” Rosenbarger said. “Trees will be added to the street in the areas where the bicycle median is wide enough to allow planting. Finally, sidewalk curb ramps will be improved where needed along the corridor as well.”

The 7-Line project is one of seven public amenities being funded through the $10 million Bicentennial Bonds announced by Mayor John Hamilton at the end of 2018 as a gift to Bloomington’s future, Rosenbarger said.

The 7-Line Trail will expand the viability of multiple forms of transportation in Bloomington, beyond use of single-occupancy vehicles, Rosenbarger said. “Doing so supports the reduction of greenhouse gases and increases accessibility for residents at all income levels.”
The B-Town Summer Challenge is underway, and our staff, their families, and other throughout the community have been exploring the community and supporting local business. The challenge ends on August 19th at 5pm so be sure to visit BtownSummerChallenge.com before then to download your checklist and participate in this fun summer challenge!

Amy Eggers and son Duncan checking off “Find a new trail and go hiking” from their checklist!
Brad & Tammy Clarke enjoyed some ice cream from Dairy Cream. “Devour donuts, cookies, or ice cream.” Check!

Tammy Clarke took a “staycation” in Paynetown and check off “Go camping in the great outdoors” from her B-Town Summer Challenge checklist.

Stacy Bruce explored IU’s campus with family. Check!

Mary Morgan visited Oak Bloomington and was able to check off “Get a plant from a nursery or shop” from her list. Meet Spike!
Hi there!

For those of you who don’t know me already, my name is Stacy Bruce, and I am the new Director of Member Services for the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce. Over the past year, I have been serving as the Events Coordinator at the Chamber, and I am excited to be jumping into this new position as Tammy Clarke, my predecessor, embarks on her next journey and fulfills her lifelong dream of moving to Florida!

My passion to build relationships and connect with others is what I love most about this new role. Whether it’s getting out into the community and meeting new business owners or informing members of their benefits, the foundation of the relationship that is built with the business is what’s most important. I want to help businesses achieve their goals and grow within our community. My job as the Director of Member Services is one in which I will have the opportunity to create programs and offer services to help you and your business grow. Bloomington is a premier place to do business, and I want to help both new and seasoned business thrive here.

My experience throughout my career this far has prepared me well for this role, and I am excited to jump right in on August 1st! I have worked as a business development representative for PepsiAmericas, the Executive Director of the Monroe County Apartment Association, and even a Chamber Ambassador throughout my life in Bloomington, and each of these experiences has allowed me to gain new skills and knowledge that I know will help me along the way in this new position.

As I settle into this role, my hope is to work with other organizations throughout Bloomington and Monroe County to grow an inclusive and diverse membership. There is always room to grow and that is exactly what I plan to do.

Members, please know that if you have any questions, concerns, or would just like to chat, I am only a phone call or email away. I want to make sure that you are able to utilize your membership to the fullest capacity.

I look forward to working with you soon!

— Stacy Bruce
We’ve all heard excuses about why people don’t want to wear masks.

Use the #MaskUpHoosiers hashtag to bust those myths with your followers, friends, and co-workers.

**Myth 1:** Only people who have COVID-19 need to wear a mask. I’m not sick.

**Truth:** It is possible to spread the coronavirus before you show any symptoms. Plus, recent studies show that many people with COVID-19 don’t ever have any symptoms at all.

**Myth 2:** You can only spread the coronavirus by coughing or sneezing.

**Truth:** COVID-19 can spread among people who are less than 6 feet apart by talking, singing, or shouting in addition to coughing or sneezing.

Count everyone under your roof.

Hundreds of billions of dollars are at stake every year for the next 10 years.

The results of the 2020 Census inform funding and planning for new clinics, school lunch programs, emergency services, and more. So make sure you count everyone living in your home as of April 1, 2020.

For more information, visit [2020CENSUS.GOV/count](http://2020CENSUS.GOV/count)
Spencer DePoy
Area Sales Manager
Rogers Group Inc.

What projects are your business currently working on?
I-69 and various paving projects throughout the county

What does a typical day look like during a road construction project?
Based on product requirements... but very busy loading trucks from April-Nov

What’s your favorite part about working on road construction projects?
Seeing the infrastructure improvements creating safer roads

What’s your least favorite part?
Nothing...

What would you like the community, especially drivers and pedestrians, to be aware of during road construction?
That every one of these workers came to work with a heart beat.. they need to go home with one too.. SLOW DOWN AND WATCH OUT FOR THEM!

AJ Chandler
Director of Estimating
Milestone Contractors

What projects are your business currently working on?
Highway 446, 10th Street Pedestrian Crossing, Paving and Curbs at IU Hospital, Fee Lane Sidewpath, 14th Street at Hwy 45/46

What does a typical day look like during a road construction project?
4-6 am evaluate weather, double check the days plan, ensure all subcontractors, suppliers and truckers are coordinated and communicating properly. 6-7 am conduct safety huddle with the team and go over the days plan to ensure everyone knows their role. 7-2 support the team in executing plan, make changes to the days plan as the need arises, ensure plans are in place for tomorrow and into the future and that all those involved are being communicated with.

What’s your favorite part about working on road construction projects?
Satisfaction/Pride in what the team has accomplished. Providing a safer and faster travel for the public.

What’s your least favorite part?
Sometimes the hours are long and can be hot or cold and all those hours are spent away from your family.

What would you like the community, especially drivers and pedestrians, to be aware of during road construction?
Construction can be a dangerous occupation, in Road Construction the most danger for our workers and the public are the drivers that travel thru the jobsites daily. Imagine working at a desk all day and having cars going by only feet away at 45+ mph. Please SLOW DOWN when you see the construction signs, don’t become complacent to construction zones. Lane switches or merges can change daily, slow down and pay attention so that you are able to react to protect yourself or our workers if the need arises: We are in this together and have to watch out for each other. Safety is the number 1 core value of our company, everyone out there working, inspecting or stopped in traffic has family that loves them and it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that they are able to go home to that family, uninjured, whenever the work day is done.

Congratulations to Brilliant Coffee Co. on their grand opening and ribbon cutting in July!
Welcome to the downtown area. You can visit Brilliant Coffee Co. at 217 W 6th St, Bloomington, IN 47404 or online at brilliantcoffeeco.com.
The Chamber would like to give a special Thank You to the YMCA Summer Camp and Chris Stone the camp director for all of their help in gathering responses for this month’s question!

“Gatlinburg, Tennessee was my favorite trip because we did a lot of fun things there.” – **Aj**, age 7

“I have never been on a vacation or a trip.” – **Eli**, age 7

“The best trip I have been on was Jamaica because I got to try new food and meet and play with kids from all around the world. Most important I got to spend quality time with my family.” – **Collin**, age 12

“Last week I went to Michigan, it was fun because I swam in a lake and rode a dune buggy.” – **Clayton**, age 9

“The best place I have been is school where I went and learned how to do the long set of monkey bars.” – **Foster**, age 7

“Going to the amusement park because I like the rides.” – **Gabriel**, age 6

“Florida, because of my grandpa lives there and I get to swim in his pool.” – **Sam**, age 6

“France, because I got to see the Eiffel Tower in person.” – **Layla**, age 6

“Chicago, because I got to see lots of cats there.” – **Sophie**, age 6

“St. Louis City Museum because of the tunnels.” – **Clara**, age 6

“Grandma’s cabin because of the lake and boat, she lives in Chicago.” – **Tylor**, age 6

“Nanna’s because of the Popsicle, she lives in Pennsylvania and serves donuts for breakfast.” – **Penelope**, age 6

“Went to Chicago and saw the arch.” – **Wiley**, age 9

“Going to the lake with my grandparents since I do not see them a lot or go to a lake much.” – **Grayden**, age 8

“Disney as it was fun.” – **Trent**, age 8

“Seemng grandma and Grandpa in Maryland.” – **Theo**, age 8

“Going to the store because I got a puppy.” – **Amelia**, age 5

“Tubing on papa’s boat because it was super fun.” – **Aubrey**, age 5

“Going to the lake because we can go as far as we want on the tubes.” – **Mackenzie**, age 5

“Spain because they have more cooler toys than Turkey.” – **Armand**, age 5

“Florida because we stayed there for a while with its sandy beach.” – **Duncan**, age 5

“Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari. They have a lot of fun stuff to play with. I love roller coasters.” – **Kennedy**, age 6

“The best trip I’ve been on was when I think I was 5, to Rome, Italy. It was really fun! I got to see something like the Leaning Tower of Piza.” – **Maddie**, age 9

“France, because the food, the view, the hotel was awesome.” – **Fole**, age 7

“Holiday World. I like the roller coasters and Splashin Safari.” – **Gracie**, age 8

“Mexico because it was warm and we saw turtles.” – **Maya**, age 11

“Hawaii because it was beautiful.” – **Neil**, age 10

“Florida, I got to go the ocean. I caught crabs. I got to do putt-putt.” – **Levon**, age 7

“Florida, I like to spend time with family.” – **Sophie**, age 9

“Michigan because I loved it there.” – **Joseph**, age 9

“Utah, pretty mountains.” – **Addison**, age 9

“The D.R. they have a bunch of water slides and beautiful beaches.” – **Emile**, age 8

“Illinois, family lives there.” – **Audrey**, age 9
On August 20th, the Chamber will be hosting a virtual awards ceremony to honor individuals and organizations who have gone above and beyond over the past few months to step up and serve the Bloomington and Monroe County community in time of crisis.

Unmasked Hometown Hero winners serve as an inspiration, serving others during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic through innovation, caring, support, and strong love for their community, and we are looking forward to “unmasking” them in August and celebrating them for all that they have done. Community members can register to attend the event for $20. To register, please visit chamber-bloomington.org/heroawards.

Be sure to pick up a copy of the September Bloomington Business Journal where we will be featuring all of our awardees!
Thank you Wes Lasher and The Production House!

We would like to give a special thank you to Wes Lasher who has been a great partner to the Chamber during the pandemic. He donated his time and resources to help the Chamber staff create videos that can be shared with our members and the community as a way to reach out to those who would normally be visiting and meeting with in-person. Thank you, Wes and The Production House for helping us reach and engage with our community during this time of change and a new normal.

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Monroe County also maintains over 3,400 culverts, 7,500 signs, 90 miles of sidewalk, and 629 curb ramps.

Valor Healthcare operates more than 30 VA Clinics in the USA. Valor provides a full range of medical services tailored to meet the specific needs of local VA medical centers and the Veterans they serve. Our services include primary care, diagnostics, laboratory, telehealth, behavioral health, and more. We design our facilities to protect the security, privacy, and dignity of our patients, while our clinics utilize the latest design features to ensure Veterans are treated efficiently. Call (812) 336-5723 for more information!

Matrix Integration is a 40-year-old IT solution provider headquartered in Jasper, IN. We also have offices in Bloomington and Fishers, IN, and Louisville, KY. Matrix has approximately 75 employees with 60% of them being technical in nature. We focus on 3 major areas: professional services, technology infrastructure, and procurement. Matrix works with several manufacturers but have 5 strategic core partners: Cisco, HPE, Microsoft, Veeam, and VMware. Visit us online at www.matrixintegration.com.

4 Good Reasons Roofing is a family owned company built on 4 principles: Honesty, Integrity, Quality, and Kindness. Customer satisfaction is our top priority and we back our complete roof replacements up with our own 10 year workmanship warranty at no additional cost. We specialize in roofing (shingle, metal, rubber, cedar shake), guttering, and storm damage claims. At 4 Good Reasons Roofing, we believe in building relationships along our journey and genuinely love our community. Call us today at (812) 360-4469!

The Production House specializes in a wide variety of digital video and audio, multimedia and animation, and since 1996 has been offering a full range of video production services including: commercials, educational videos, television production, training videos, animation and multimedia content design. We are currently offering up 6k Video resolution for your next video project, utilizing the new Black Magic Design Camera 6k camera with variable lens, in addition to 4K GoPro cameras and traditional HD camera setups. Your project can have up 5 HD cameras capturing stunning footage. And last but not least we offer a full range of audio production service focusing on Podcast creation and delivery. For more information, call (812) 325-4176.

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¹APR or annual percentage rate is accurate as of June 1, 2020, and is subject to change at any time. Rate stated is based on a 66-month loan in the amount of $30,000; a vehicle model year of 2018 or newer, and a $25 VSI fee. Payment would be $16.72 per thousand borrowed. Rates, terms and conditions vary based on creditworthiness, qualifications and collateral conditions. Check other available rates and terms online at iucu.org or give us a call. All loans subject to approval.

*Loans currently financed at IU Credit Union are not eligible for this offer. Offer excludes commercial vehicles. Minimum loan amount for this offer is $10,000. Cash Back Bonus will be credited to the Membership Savings of the Primary Borrower within 7-14 days of the loan closing date. Bonus is considered dividends and will be reported on IRS Form 1099-INT. Offer subject to change without notice.