

2023 ★ 2024

# Discover HANCOCK COUNTY



Daily Reporter

# Hancock County Specialist!

**Talk with a Real Estate  
Professional with over 34 Years  
of Experience who Knows the  
Advantages of living in  
Hancock County!**



**Gina L. Rininger, CRS., GRI  
Realtor/Broker**

Call/Text: 317-997-4663  
gina@ginasellsindyhomes.com





# CONTENTS

Springhurst Health Campus  
35147210



## Daily Reporter

22 W. New Road  
Greenfield, IN 46140  
317-462-5528

**PUBLISHER**  
Richard Clark

**EDITOR**  
Aaron Kennedy

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR**  
John Senger

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Kristy Deer, Mitchell Kirk  
Anne Durham Smith  
Shelley Swift, Lacey Watt,  
Maribeth Vaughn

**PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Tom Russo

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Keely Spitler

- 6 Welcome
- 8 Our Communities
- 12 Events & Festivals
- 18 Arts Organizations
- 22 Area Markets
- 24 Area Parks

### FEATURES

- 28 Community Spotlight
- 102 Education
- 106 Faith



**PUBLISHED BY**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or duplicated without the written permission of the publisher.

On the cover: Atalie Weirich enjoys the splash pad at Riley Park Pool on a sweltering summer day.



# WELCOME



Hancock County has a problem.

There are so many delicious dining destinations and so little time to try them all.

In this 2023-24 edition of Discover magazine, we have a sampler platter — just a peek — of what Hancock County’s menu has to offer by featuring stories about home-grown restaurants in Carnegie’s, The Depot, FoxGardin Kitchen & Ale, The Mug, Trax BBQ, and Sugar Creek Brickhouse to give readers a little taste of the many great local dishes offered in this county.

We would have loved to profile even more local restaurants — there are many that are just as worthy but not

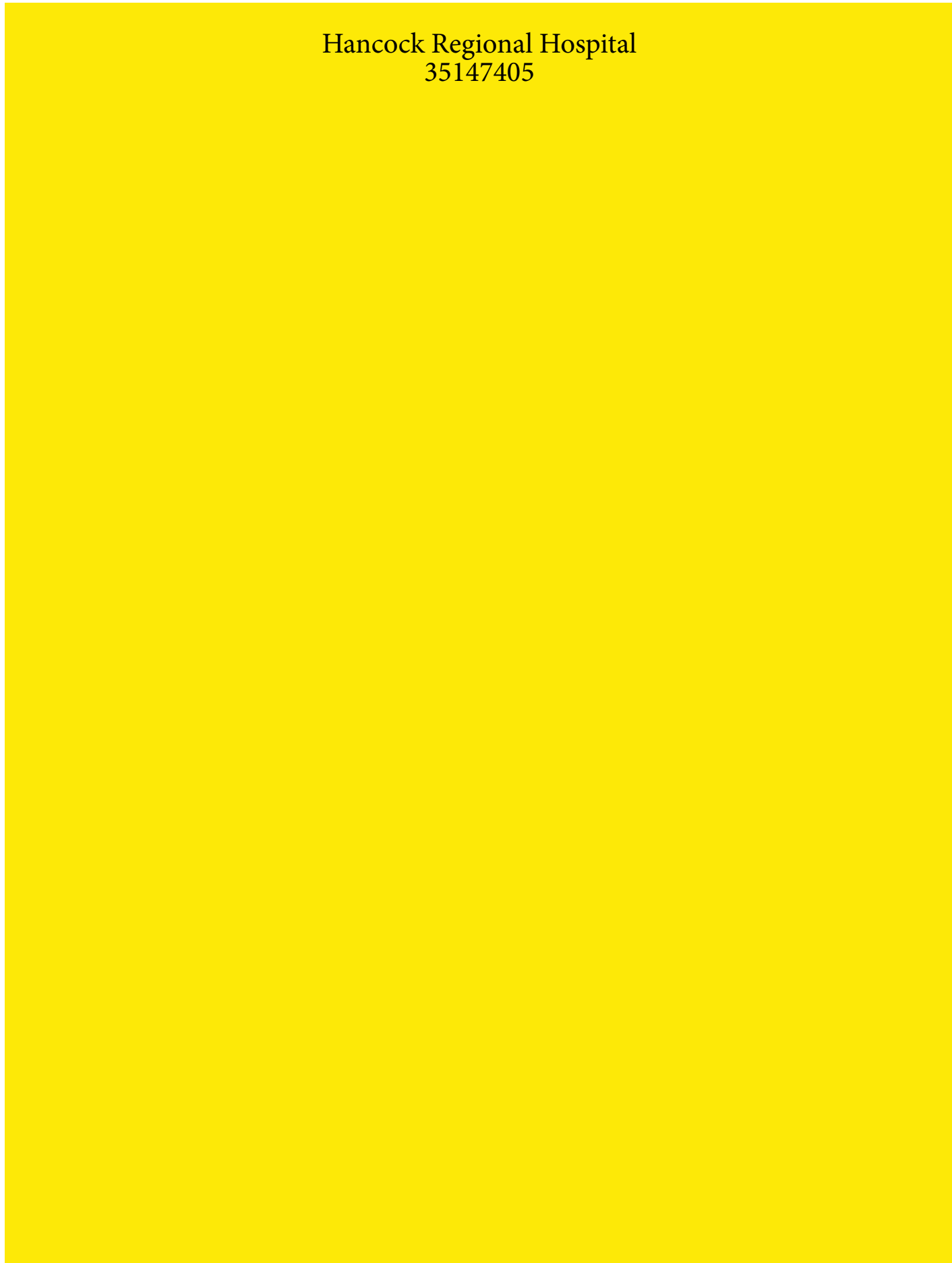
shown here — but we were quite full after these six.

Beyond our spotlight stories on local cuisine, you will find some of our favorite stories from the past 12 months, featuring some of the other great people, places and things to be found within Hancock County.

We hope you enjoy these stories and continue to discover the people, places, events and other things that give Hancock County its unique character (and flavor).

AARON KENNEDY  
editor, the Daily Reporter

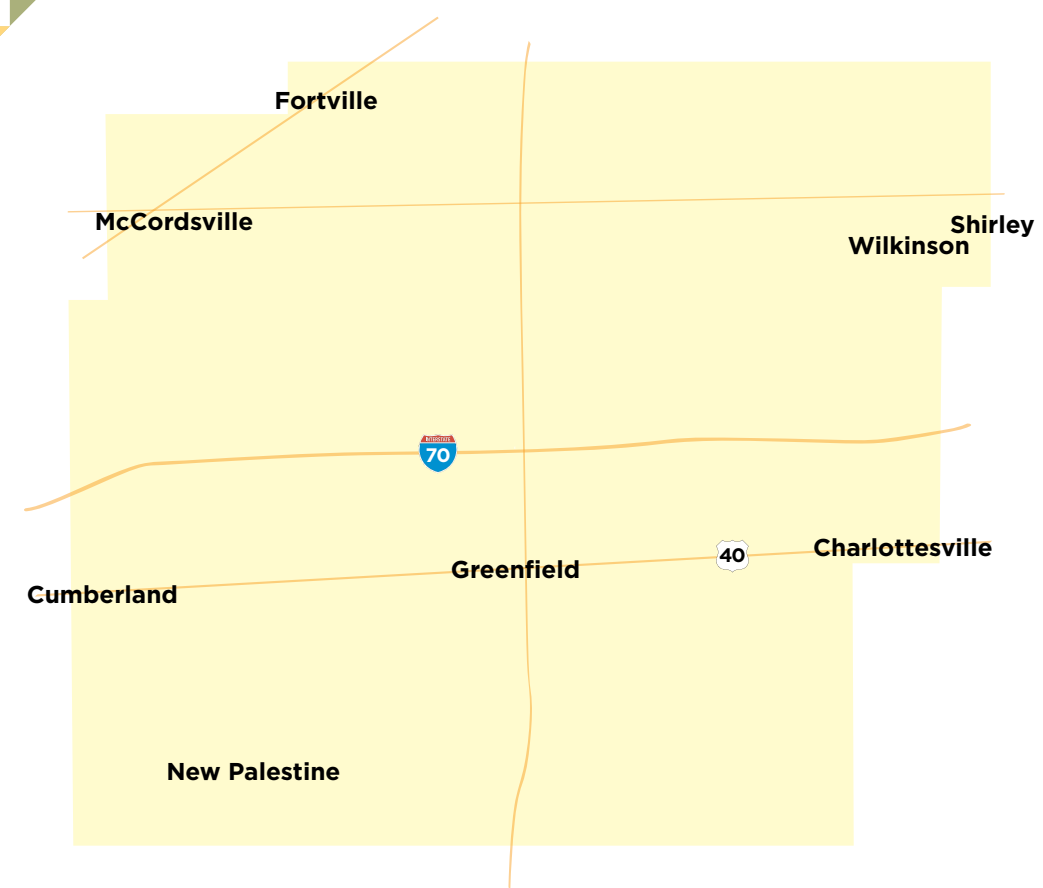
Hancock Regional Hospital  
35147405





## OUR COMMUNITIES

Hancock Regional Hospital  
35147419



### Charlottesville

Charlottesville was platted in 1830. It is a quiet little town in eastern Hancock County, in Jackson Township. Described by those who live there as a close-knit community, Charlottesville is home to Eastern Hancock Schools, the smallest of Hancock County's four public school corporations.

### Cumberland

With a population estimated at 5,954 in 2020, the town of Cumberland straddles both Hancock and Marion counties. It was established in 1831 along East Washington Street, or U.S. 40, which is also known as the Old National Road. It connects Cumberland with Indianapolis to the west and with Greenfield to the east.

### Fortville

Fortville, a town incorporated in 1865, is located at State Road 67 and Fortville Pike in Vernon Township. The town is named after Cephas Fort, who platted the original settlement on his land in 1849. Fortville has a vibrant Main Street, and significant efforts have been made in recent years to turn the downtown area into a destination for shoppers, diners and visitors. Fortville's most recent population count, in 2020, was 4,784.



## OUR COMMUNITIES

### Greenfield

The heart of Greenfield is centered at State Road 9 and U.S. 40, an area dotted with antique stores, boutiques and restaurants. Its population in 2020 was estimated at 23,488. Selected as the county seat of Hancock County in 1828, it was incorporated in 1876. Greenfield was once a stop along the old Penn Central Rail Line, on which presidents and the Liberty Bell traveled, historians say.

### McCordsville

McCordsville, one of the fastest-growing towns in Indiana, is located in the northwestern corner of Hancock County. The heart of this town of over 8,500 residents is at State Road 67 and County Road 600W (also known as Mt. Comfort Road). Leaders are planning long-term improvements that will include a town center complex of government offices, shops, restaurants and green spaces.

### New Palestine

Located in southwestern Hancock County, the town of New Palestine is a quaint, quiet town with a population estimated at just under 2,700



Art on display at Depot Street Park.

residents. The town sits along U.S. 52, about 20 minutes east of downtown Indianapolis. New Palestine was established in 1838. It first consisted of 15 blocks and 36 lots. The area became incorporated as a town in 1871.

### Shirley

Shirley was established in 1890 when the Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan railway extended to the area. The town's name comes from Joseph A. Shirley, a railroad official. With about 819 residents, the town straddles the Hancock and Henry county lines, claiming both Brown Township in

Hancock County and Greensboro Township in Henry County.

### Wilkinson

Located in the northeast corner of Hancock County, Wilkinson has a population of 414, according to the latest U.S. Census estimate. State Road 109 runs through the heart of this small town, connecting it with Anderson to the north and Knightstown to the south. Celebrated aviation pioneer Harvey Weir Cook was born and raised in Wilkinson. The town's favorite native son is often called a flying ace for his distinguished career during World War I.

Valvoline Express Care  
35147479



Lydia Vaughn, 5, wore a homemade unicorn headband as she delivered flowers to Riley Festival queen, Claire Bishop, on Oct. 7, 2022, during the annual Parade of Flowers.

# Festivals celebrate our diverse communities

## Riley Festival

[jwrileyfestival.com](http://jwrileyfestival.com)

The works of Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley are the focus of the annual Riley Festival, but even folks who aren't familiar with his poetry can find something to their liking during this four-day celebration, which coincides with Riley's Oct. 7 birthday. Each year, the festival selects one of Riley's poems as the festival's theme. The festival features entertainment, arts and crafts vendors, a Riley Festival queen, carnival-style food and contests in poetry writing, photography, baking, pumpkin decorating and more. Highlights include the Parade of Flowers, in which children place flowers on the Friday of the festival at the base of the Riley statue on the north side of the Hancock County Courthouse; a large parade at 11 a.m. on Saturday morning; and an entertainment tent. The 2023 festival is Oct. 5-8 with the theme "Nine Little Goblins."

Cardon & Associates/Morristown Manor/Cypress Run  
35147409



Kids catch sight of Santa Claus during the 2019 parade of lights in downtown Greenfield.

### Pumpkins and Peddlers Festival

[townofshirley.com](http://townofshirley.com)

The town of Shirley's Pumpkins and Peddlers festival features vendors, entertainment and food in Shirley Park, east of Main Street inside the town limits. This year's event will be Oct. 21. For updates, visit [facebook/shirleyindiana](https://facebook.com/shirleyindiana).

### New Palestine Oktoberfest

[nplions.com](http://nplions.com)

New Palestine's fall festival is taking a new twist this year, with a German-themed Oktoberfest. Sponsored by the New Palestine Lions Club, the event will be Sept. 16 with a parade at 11 a.m., traditional German food, American food, beer and wine, and even a root beer garden kids area with activities, bounce houses and games. Bring lawn chairs for live music by Der Polkatz.

### Greenfield Christmas Festival and Parade of Lights

[jwrileyfestival.com](http://jwrileyfestival.com)

Downtown Greenfield lights up for Christmas in early December with the Parade of Lights and the arrival of Santa Claus by fire truck. The event typically includes musical entertainment and the lighting of the plaza tree during opening ceremonies. Following the parade and entertainment, children can visit with Santa in his house on the plaza to share their Christmas lists. Holiday festivities continue the rest of the month with events through Greenfield Main Street, such as a downtown market, breakfast with Santa and holiday movies at the historic theater.

### Will Vawter Juried Art Competition

[hancockcountyarts.com](http://hancockcountyarts.com)

The Will Vawter Juried Art Competition features a juried art exhibit as well as an en plein air competition designed to capture scenic Hancock County on canvas. This June event is organized by the Hancock County Arts and Cultural Council.

### Strawberry Festival

A community church fundraiser hosted by Bradley United Methodist Church has become a downtown summertime tradition. The event, started in 1984, originally relied on local hand-picked strawberries. Today, frozen berries are mixed with fresh ones to pour on top of shortcake and ice cream. Proceeds from this early June event donates thousands of dollars to local organizations.

Custom Exteriors  
35147434





A child has his face painted Aug. 19 at the first annual McCordsville Festival.

### Entertainment @ Depot Street Park

Greenfield Banking Company has sponsored free concerts since 1987 originally on the courthouse plaza but starting in 2022 at Depot Street Park, Greenfield's newest park and stage in the downtown district. The concerts feature musicians performing everything from oldies to patriotic marches and Southern Gospel. The musical series is a collaboration with Greenfield Parks Department and frequent updates can be found on [facebook.com/greenfieldparks](https://facebook.com/greenfieldparks).

### Hancock County 4-H Fair

[yourhancockfairgrounds.com](https://yourhancockfairgrounds.com)

This weeklong event every year in June celebrates the achievements of children and teens who have spent months preparing to show animals and compete a wide variety of projects including

foods, tractor maintenance, sewing and model rocketry. Fairgoers can enjoy the projects on display in the 4-H building in addition to checking out the fun at the pet parade, tractor pull and talent show. Family-centered fun also includes live music, carnival rides and fair food. From tangy barbecue to gooey grilled cheese and refreshing lemon shake-ups, there's something to satisfy any hankering.

### Pennsy Trail Art Fair and Music Festival

[facebook.com/pennsytrailartfair/](https://facebook.com/pennsytrailartfair/)

Artists, musicians and local food vendors combine for the Pennsy Trail Art Fair and Music Festival. Visitors can peruse a range of artistic offerings from pottery and basketry to chic jewelry and fine art. The festival, scheduled for the last weekend of July, features interactive art therapy activities for children and adults,

arts and crafts vendors and live music. The event is a benefit for Mental Health Partners of Hancock County.

### Lord's Acre Festival

[mccordsvilleumc.org](https://mccordsvilleumc.org)

The festival, which traditionally happens in mid-September at McCordsville United Methodist Church, features a fish fry, live entertainment, vendor booths and children's activities. The event, started in 1952, takes its name from the concept of farmers donating proceeds from an acre's crops to the church. The festival is set for Sept. 15-16, 2023.

Cumberland, Town of  
35147438



Portrait artists from in and around Hancock County convened together Aug. 12 for the Portrait Society of America Indiana regional Exhibit presented by Hancock County Arts. Artists were given the opportunity to paint portraits of local radio personalities, Terry Stacy, Abdul-Hakim Shabazz, Julie Patterson and others as their subjects.

# Discover arts and music

## Hancock County Arts

Address: 20 N. State St., Greenfield

The mission statement of Hancock Arts is to “provide leadership for the creative community by encouraging, celebrating, and promoting arts and culture throughout Hancock County.” This arts organization showcases gallery shows, workshops and events that promote local art and artists, including the Will Vawter Fine Arts Competition. Visit [hancockcountyarts.com](http://hancockcountyarts.com) or [facebook.com/HancockCountyArtsCouncil](https://facebook.com/HancockCountyArtsCouncil) for more information.

## Twenty North Gallery

Address: 20A N. State St., Greenfield  
317-967-2461

A venue of Hancock County Arts, Twenty North Gallery features exhibits in downtown Greenfield. For details and hours, email [hancockcountyarts@gmail.com](mailto:hancockcountyarts@gmail.com) or visit [hancockcountyarts.com](http://hancockcountyarts.com).

## Friends of the Theater

Friends of the Theater is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the H.J. Ricks Centre for the Arts, a venue in downtown Greenfield. The group has periodic volunteer days and raises money through a membership program, grants, donations and an annual holiday variety show. The Friends help assure the Ricks remains a place for all ages to enjoy. Visit the website to learn more: [hctheaterfriends.org](http://hctheaterfriends.org) or email [info@hctheaterfriends.org](mailto:info@hctheaterfriends.org).

House Ads - DR  
35147333

**THEATER GROUPS**

**CrazyLake Acting Company**

The CrazyLake Acting Company is a community theatre that performs one to two productions a year at the H.J. Ricks Centre for the Arts. Recent productions include “Mamma Mia!” “Once Upon a Mattress” and “Play On!” Visit [crazylakeacting.com](http://crazylakeacting.com) or email [chris@crazylake.com](mailto:chris@crazylake.com) for more information.

**Hancock County Children’s Theater**

The Hancock County Children’s Theater is a summer workshop for Hancock County children in grades 4-8. Students spend the month of June learning all aspects of theater production culminating in two performances. Participants rehearse and perform at Greenfield-Central High School For more information, visit [hancockcountychildrenstheater.org](http://hancockcountychildrenstheater.org) or email [pjohnson@gcsc.k12.in.us](mailto:pjohnson@gcsc.k12.in.us).

**KidsPlay Inc. children’s theater**

KidsPlay Inc. children’s theater is an all-volunteer community theater for children in the third through eighth grades. The group performs two shows a year with children from Hancock and the surrounding counties. For more information visit KidsPlay on Facebook. com or email [kidsplayinc@me.com](mailto:kidsplayinc@me.com).

**Ricks-Weil Theatre Company**

Performing classics to musicals to premiere plays, the Ricks-Weil Theatre Company delivers the community artists in productions at the historic, art deco H.J. Ricks Centre for the Arts. Ricks-Weil Theatre Company is home to artists, theatre administrators and loyal patrons and donors. For more information, visit [facebook.com/RicksWeilTheatreCompany](http://facebook.com/RicksWeilTheatreCompany).

The cast of Crazy Lake theatre production rehearse for Play On June 20 held at the H.J. Ricks Centre For The Arts.

**MUSIC GROUPS**

**Brandywine Wind**

Call Jerry Bell at 317-652-2033 or Gary Davis at 317-440-0834.

[Brandywine-wind.org](http://Brandywine-wind.org), [www.facebook.com/brandywinewind](http://www.facebook.com/brandywinewind)

Greenfield’s all-volunteer community orchestra regularly performs in various venues throughout the county.

Its mission is to provide an artistic avenue for area musicians to prepare and perform music for the enjoyment of our community and each other.

**Greenfield Community Choir**

[greenfieldcommunitychoir@yahoo.com](mailto:greenfieldcommunitychoir@yahoo.com)  
[greenfieldcommunitychoir.com](http://greenfieldcommunitychoir.com) and on Facebook

The Greenfield Community Choir, Inc. is all about bringing quality choral music to the Greenfield community. Concerts are designed to be of high quality, entertaining, engaging, and will bring a smile to your face.

**Hancock County Children’s Choir**

[hancockcountychildrenschoir.org](http://hancockcountychildrenschoir.org)  
[info@hccchoir.org](mailto:info@hccchoir.org)  
317-620-0096

Hancock County Children’s Choir strives to bring excellent musical education and mentorship, equipping youth with essential life skills while igniting a community interest in youth and the arts. The choir has several community performances throughout the year.

**DANCE GROUPS**

**Wilkerson Dance Studio**

1114 W. North St., Greenfield  
317-462-1673

[wilkersondance@gmail.com](mailto:wilkersondance@gmail.com)  
[wilkersondance.com](http://wilkersondance.com)

Wilkerson offers year-round dance classes for all ages and seasonal performances. Classes are available in tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, modern and contemporary dance.

**Hearts Ablaze Clogging Team**

3254 W. County Road 400 S., Greenfield  
317-498-5566

[facebook.com/heartsablazeclogging](http://facebook.com/heartsablazeclogging)  
[knowhimjc@heartsablaze.me](mailto:knowhimjc@heartsablaze.me)

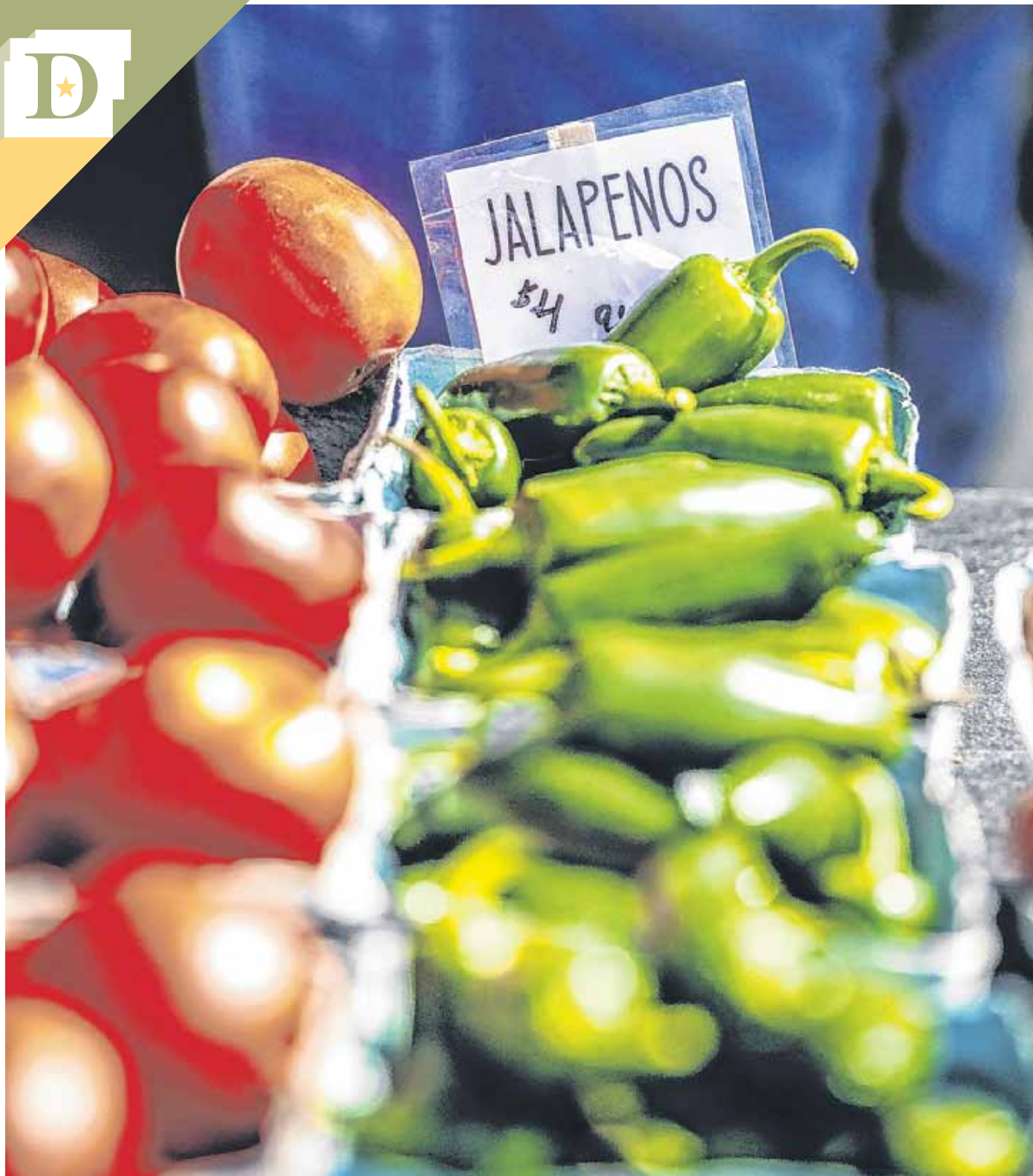
Hearts Ablaze Studio is a recreational and competitive clogging studio that also offers private piano and violin lessons convenient to both New Palestine and Greenfield families.

**Ricochet Cloggers**

260-409-3005  
[richochetcloggers@gmail.com](mailto:richochetcloggers@gmail.com)  
[www.facebook.com/ricochetcloggers](http://www.facebook.com/ricochetcloggers)



House Ads - DR  
35147334



A selection of tomatoes and peppers on display at the farmers market at the Hancock County 4-H Fairgrounds in Greenfield in August 2021.

# Discover farmers markets

healthy365  
35147417

Hancock County has an active farm-to-table community that includes a number of farmers markets. Here's a list:

### Cumberland Farmers Market

[facebook.com/CumberlandINFM](https://facebook.com/CumberlandINFM)

8 a.m. to noon Saturdays, May to October at Cumberland Town Hall, 11501 E. Washington St., Indianapolis.

### Fortville Farmers Market

[fortvillefarmersmarket.com](https://fortvillefarmersmarket.com) or [facebook.com/FortvilleFarmersMarket](https://facebook.com/FortvilleFarmersMarket)

4 to 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, mid-May to September, at the intersection of South Main Street and Noel Street in downtown Fortville.

### Greenfield Farmers Market at the Fairgrounds

[facebook.com/FarmersMarketAtTheFairgrounds](https://facebook.com/FarmersMarketAtTheFairgrounds)

May to October: Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon, at the Hancock County 4-H Fairgrounds, 620 Apple St., Greenfield.

July through September: Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to noon at the fairgrounds.

November through April: First and third Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the heated show arena at the fairgrounds.

### Healthway Park Farmers Market

4 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays from June through September, Hancock Wellness Center parking lot, 4055 S. Roy Wilson Way, New Palestine.

### The Market in McCordsville

[facebook.com/themarketinmccordsville](https://facebook.com/themarketinmccordsville)

Select dates April through October at 7724 Depot St., McCordsville. Market includes free crafts for children.



Cheyenne Price enjoys a quiet moment out on the Penny Trail at 400W.

Hancock Co. Senior Services, Inc.  
35147432

Hancock Regional Hospital  
35147407

# Discover area parks

## CUMBERLAND

### Lions Park

*301 Buck Creek Road, Cumberland*

This 6.5-acre park features a variety of playgrounds and equipment, green space for kickball and more, a sandy beach volleyball court and pickleball courts. There are two covered shelters that may be rented. Both shelters have electrical outlets. There is also a full size basketball court and a separate small court with an 8-foot goal. Lions Park also features the Buck Creek Trail for walking and biking.

## FORTVILLE

### Hampton Fields

*400 block of West Church Street, Fortville*

This 6-acre park includes two tennis courts, a picnic shelter, paved parking, concession station (in season) three baseball diamonds, seven bleachers, playgrounds equipment and six picnic tables.

### Landmark Park

*200 E. Church St., Fortville*

This 3.2-acre park is in a more urban setting, as it is centrally located one-half block from the main street in town. It has an area adjacent to Fortville United Methodist Church for passive recreation with paved walks through the landscaped setting and a gazebo. It also has a soccer/football field.

### Memorial Park

*9088 W. County Road 1025 S., Fortville*

This 25-acre community park is situated at the junction of Stottlemeyer Ditch and Jackson Ditch that creates rolling hillsides and running water. The park also has many facilities for activities and recreation as well as playground equipment. Amenities include four shelters, three playgrounds, two tennis courts, two softball/baseball diamonds, a basketball court, foot trails and sledding.



Roxy, a chihuahua, stays afloat on a raft as her owner Sabrina Nikos looks on during the annual Paws Pool Party event Aug. 13, 2022, at the Kathy Dowling Aquatic Center in Greenfield.

**GREENFIELD**

**Beckenholdt Park**

2770 N. Franklin St., Greenfield

Beckenholdt Park includes a large pond with a fishing pier, wetland with an observation deck, a two-acre dog park, walking paths, interpretive signs, a picnic shelter and more.

**Brandywine Park**

900 E. Davis Road, Greenfield

Brandywine Park is a 60-acre sports complex offering 20 soccer fields, three softball fields (two adult, one youth), playground equipment, a paved trail and a wooden trail along Brandywine Creek. The park is now connected to the Pennsy Trail via a connector trail; its trailhead is located by the playground.

**Depot Street Park**

251 Depot Street, Greenfield

Inspired by history, Greenfield's newest park features railroad decor in an urban setting. Located along the Pennsy Trail adjacent to the historic grain elevator, the centerpiece of the park is an amphitheater that hosts free community concerts and events. Downtown businesses nearby offer food and treats, and visitors can take a photo with an interactive statue of artist Will Vawter. Picnic tables on rolling railroad tracks, fountains, tracks

running through the park and large swings pay tribute to the area's railroad heritage. Park construction also led to the renovation of Depot Street, the last brick street in Greenfield.

**Greenfield Parks and Recreation Department**

280 N. Apple St., Greenfield

The city's parks and recreation department offices are located in the Patricia Elmore Center in Greenfield. The facility hosts activities for seniors, a preschool and art classes. For more information about activities and events available throughout the year, visit [greenfieldin.org/recreation](http://greenfieldin.org/recreation) or call 317-477-4340.

**James Whitcomb Riley Boyhood Home and Museum**

250 W. Main St., Greenfield

The home of Greenfield's famous son offers tours year-round, including references to Riley's poetry and facts about his life, family and community involvement. The museum features artifacts and occasional displays of other notable historical figures. An interactive statue on site allows visitors to pose next to Riley and read a book. There is also a garden and Lizabuth Ann's Kitchen, which hosts community events.

**Kathy Dowling Aquatic Center**

280 N. Apple St., Greenfield

Greenfield's aquatic center features a free splash pad and paid entry to a large swimming pool featuring water slides, a toddler play structure, diving boards and climbing walls. Concessions are available. The splash pad is open May through September; the pool is open Memorial Day weekend through the first weekend of August.

**Michael's Playground**

1414 W. McClarnon Drive, Greenfield

Michael's Playground is Greenfield's first inclusive playground, dedicated to access for children of all abilities to play.

The city's northside playground is located behind Greenfield Central Junior High School, among youth baseball diamonds and a pavilion with picnic tables.

**Pennsy Trail**

Just south of U.S. 40 between Hancock County roads 150 West and 400 East

The Pennsy Trail is a 5.6-mile path, following the old Pennsylvania Railroad Line that once ran through Greenfield. This paved multi-purpose trail features historical markers, parking areas, water fountains, accessible restrooms, an arts garden, play and exercise equipment, and tributes to Greenfield's sister city: Kakuda, Japan.

**Riley Park**

Apple Street and U.S. 40, Greenfield

Riley Park is 40 acres and offers a 7,200-square-foot skate park, two basketball courts, pickleball, tennis courts, playground equipment, disc golf, sledding hills and plenty of open areas for play and fishing along Brandywine Creek. Located within the park is the Riley Park Shelter House, Riley Park Pavilion, the Patricia Elmore Center and the city's public swimming pool and splash pad.

**Thornwood Nature Preserve**

1597 S. Morristown Pike, Greenfield

This 40-acre woodland features seven trails, two creeks, a suspension bridge and educational posts. A campground is available on weekends only with a

staff member present. The preserve includes diverse habitats, wildlife, birds and native plants; coming soon is a new nature center with exhibits and classroom space.

**NEW PALESTINE**

**Jacob Schramm Nature Preserve**

1926 S. County Road 600 W., New Palestine

The Jacob Schramm Nature Preserve features mature woods that seem to arise out of the surrounding farm fields. An easy loop trail takes you through the property, which features American basswood, American beech, American hornbeam, shagbark hickory, slippery elm, sugar maple and sycamore trees. In spring, beautiful wildflowers blanket the forest floor. For more information, visit [conservingindiana.org/preserves/jacob-schramm-nature-preserve/](http://conservingindiana.org/preserves/jacob-schramm-nature-preserve/)

**Southeastway Park**

5624 S. Carroll Road, Indianapolis

Though technically part of the Indianapolis Parks system, Southeastway Park is located in New Palestine. The 188-acre nature park features walking/biking trails, forest trails in 80 acres of forest, several prairies, a pond, Buck Creek, a sledding hill, six picnic shelters, several picnic sites, playgrounds and an activity center with seasonal educational programs. Visit [funfinder.indy.gov/#/details/27](http://funfinder.indy.gov/#/details/27) for more information.

**Sugar Creek Township Park**

4161 S. County Road 700W, New Palestine

The 88-acre park features a playground, a fitness trail and a nine-hole frisbee golf course. Visit [sugarcreektwp.com/park/](http://sugarcreektwp.com/park/) to learn more.

**SHIRLEY**

**Shirley Park**

200 Second St., Shirley

Shirley's main park offers an outside shelter, a community building, playground equipment, baseball diamonds, an outdoor stage and volleyball and basketball courts.

Malcolm Grass Memorial Park 201 Main St., Shirley

This small park, named for the late Hancock County sheriff, features a seating area, a war memorial and a memorial to Grass, who was killed in the line of duty in 1986.

**WILKINSON**

**Weir Cook Community Park**

147 N. Main St., Wilkinson

This small park offers playground equipment, shelters, green space, basketball court, veterans memorial, and a memorial to Harvey Weir Cook, the flying ace who was born in Wilkinson.

Union Savings & Loan Association  
35147217



Carnegie's server Keriane Ross looks over the last details of a table setting. Since opening in 1999, Carnegie's has been a staple for high-end dining from chef Ian Harrison. The former Greenfield library was turned into a quiet restaurant with an inviting atmosphere that offers its clients a world-class dining experience.

# Wining & dining

Carnegie's attracts fine dining customers for miles around

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER  
[sswift@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:sswift@greenfieldreporter.com)



GREENFIELD

Chef Ian Holloway is flattered that patrons come to his Greenfield restaurant when they want to celebrate a special occasion.

"We're sort of known as the place to celebrate special occasions like birthdays and anniversaries," said the chef, who has been serving up fine fare at Carnegie's Restaurant since 1999.

The two-story establishment at 100 W. North St. was once a Carnegie library — one of the 2,50 such libraries built by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie between 1883 and 1929 — hence the name.

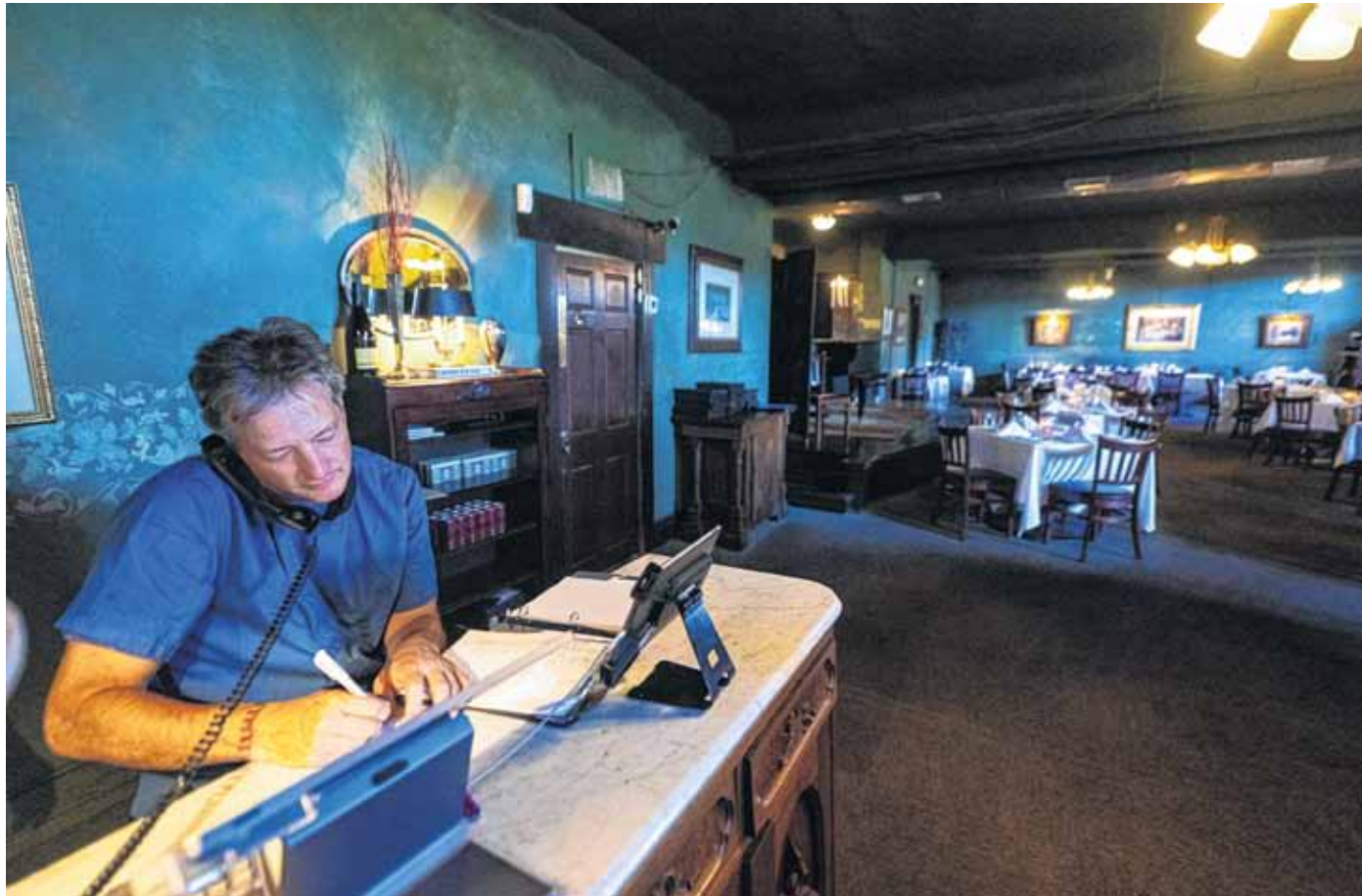
Holloway thought it would be a great place to realize his vision of a high-end restaurant serving high-end food, like the beef tenderloin medallions and cream of roasted red bell pepper soup for which he's become known.

It turned out he was right.

Now open Thursday through Sunday evenings, the restaurant is often packed with diners enjoying a variety of steak, chicken, seafood and pasta dishes, often followed up by Holloway's signature creme brulee.

Holloway fell in love with cooking at an early age, flipping

Muegge Plumbing & Heating  
35147431



Carnegie's owner/chef Ian Harrison takes a reservation.

pictures of cuisine from around the world in his mother's Time Life cookbooks.

"I would read those and it would take you to different places through food around the world. I just found it fascinating. I was drawn to being a chef ever since then. Something about the creativity of it and being able to put things together with different flavors always appealed to me," he said.

Holloway grew up in Franklin but moved to Greenfield with his mother his senior year. His mom was an art teacher in Franklin, so the two would commute to school together each day while calling Greenfield home.

After graduating in 1988, Holloway earned a hospitality degree from IUPUI while working for a number of Indianapolis restaurants. He focused on

training with chefs at high-end eateries like Fletcher's and Benvenuti, where started out as a pastry chef and worked his way up to executive chef.

Holloway then took a sabbatical to Florence, Italy, where he worked as a pastry chef at Enoteca Pinchiorri.

He then returned home and worked at Benvenuti, but grew tired of the commute from Greenfield to Indianapolis.

"I always wanted to own my own restaurant and had been looking for places to open," he said. Soon thereafter his partner, Jodi Thompson, spotted a hand-written For Sale By Owner sign in front of the Carnegie's building.

"She said, 'If you want to open a place in Greenfield, that would be an excellent choice,'" said Holloway, who jumped at the chance and bought the building.

"I think it's worked out great," said the

chef, who lives just a few miles from the restaurant.

He now spends his days procuring fresh ingredients, including the herbs he grows in the garden behind his establishment. He also bakes his signature house bread in a stone bread oven he built himself.

Six years ago, he expanded the restaurant's outdoor patio with a pergola, fencing and additional seating to create a romantic outdoor setting for guests.

Patrons have the option of dining al fresco or in the cozy, candlelit restaurant downstairs, where a pianist sometimes plays. The upstairs portion of the historic building features a special events space often used for parties, meetings and wedding receptions.

Holloway loves cooking up his signature dishes for his faithful legion of

frequent patrons, as well as guests

"We get people from all over the world who are visiting people in Greenfield, but we draw from Richmond and Bloomington and maybe as far as Westfield, all over Central Indiana," said the restaurateur.

"That's probably my favorite part of running the restaurant, is meeting the people and getting to know the people in the community and trying to provide service, to provide good food and atmosphere," he said.

The chef maintains a relatively small menu with a rotating list of three to four specials each week. "We like to focus on a few things and do them really well while providing a little variety with our specials," he said.

Steak, salmon and chicken picatta round out the regular menu dinner options.



Outdoor dining is plentiful and peaceful.

Holloway enjoys offering diners a unique dining experience in a high-end setting, one they can savor and enjoy.

"We're going to be doing a wine dinner for a special group soon and they mentioned you can't find too many white-tablecloth-type restaurants in Indianapolis anymore. It's a dying

breed," said the chef, who gives credit to his wait staff for giving diners a great experience.

"I'm so appreciative of them. It's a fun place to work and we all get along well, so many of them have been with me for years. I couldn't do it without them," he said.

**Comfort Inn**  
35147327





Customers eat at Sugar Creek Brickhouse restaurant in New Palestine.

# ‘The Brickhouse’

New Palestine family shares love of home-cooked meals at Sugar Creek Brickhouse

By Kristy Deer  
DAILY REPORTER  
[kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com)

## GREENFIELD

It’s hard to select the best thing on the Sugar Creek Brickhouse menu, James Evans says, but there are indeed a few favorites customers want again and again. In addition to having top-notch barbecue, which James smokes and prepares, he noted it’s really hard to bypass the pork tenderloin sandwich or the traditional chicken wings. And he said customer’s can’t get enough of their smash burgers, wraps and pizza. “We feel like we’ve got some of the best food in the state,” James said. “Nobody

Faith Lutheran Church  
35147447

Hancock County Arts Council  
35147248

Libby’s Ice Cream  
35147356

offers what we do in this area like our pork tenderloin, that's a Hoosier thing and nobody out here has that."

Apparently, he's not alone with that thought. Since 2017, Sugar Creek Brickhouse, 5821 W. U.S. 40, better known as "The Brickhouse," has been open for business and is thriving.

The family-owned restaurant, located on the westside of Hancock County, is on the south side of U.S. 40. It's operated by James, who manages the restaurant; his wife Lauri Evans, who handles the business operations; and their two adult sons, Garrett and Austin Evans. The New Palestine family and some 40 employees at "The Brickhouse" say the restaurant is all about serving good, homemade food at a price people can afford.

"We saw that the building was available back in 2017 and thought, 'why not try it,'" Lauri said of starting the business. "My husband has had businesses in the past, but we never knew this would be so successful — it kind of exploded on us."

Part of their menu includes a daily chalkboard special with items they picked from some of their favorite meals, like sloppy Joe's and Coney dogs.

After opening up, doing things on a smaller scale in 2017, Lauri noted that they started growing the menu and serving more people, particularly when COVID hit. Their outdoor eating patio and pickup service helped the restaurant build a solid and loyal base of customers who continue to come back again and again.

"We really did think it would be a small, little restaurant, but James did such a great job of setting

everything up," Lauri said. "It's been successful from the start."

Providing food that wasn't being served in the southwest portion of the county, James said, seemed like a good idea, and he's been right. Part of the reason the family feels they're having success is because they make things fresh.

"We do everything from scratch," Lauri said. "We bread our own chicken, our own tenderloins, everything."

While grocery prices have skyrocketed nationwide, the family noted they are mindful, trying to keep prices consistent so families can afford to go out for a meal.

"I wouldn't say we're making a lot of money, but we're making enough to keep doing this and support the community, and that's what I wanted," James said.

Garrett enjoys working in the kitchen. He recalled the day, six years ago, when his parents came in and told him that they planned to start a new business, something he couldn't believe.

"They just came in and said, 'We're opening a restaurant,'" Garrett said while prepping fresh vegetables for the day's menu. Their other adult son, Austin, is the general manager and runs the night shift at the restaurant.

Standing in a second building, next to the main "The Brickhouse" building where the restaurant and kitchen are located, Lauri laughed and recalled her youngest son's reaction to the family saying they planned to start the new business.

"Garrett was surprised because we didn't ask him first," she said.

Having both their son's working with them and having loyal customers along with being able to keep a full



Customers eat at Sugar Creek Brickhouse restaurant in New Palestine.

staff, Lauri said, makes "The Brickhouse" feel like a family place to enjoy a good meal.

In addition to their restaurant, the business does some catering for the county schools, James said. That allows them to get into the community, something the family loves to be a part of, including Cumberland where many of the current customers came from and crossed the county line during COVID when Marion County shut businesses down.

"We still get a lot of folks coming over from there," Lauri said. "That's good."

Standing inside the restaurant, James explains how the red brick building used to be a biker shop before he transformed it into a restaurant. With large stone walls on the inside, mild, comfortable lighting and plenty of tables inside and out, as well as a full bar, the restaurant stays busy.

"We do a good business on the weekends," James said.

In addition to running a full-time business, James is also an assistant coach with the New Palestine High School (NPHS) Dragon football team. He noted the importance of serving the

community, either through business or in his spare time.

"When you live in a small community, it's that community that we care about and who supports us, and we don't forget that," James said.

Thanks to the success of the business, the family is able to help support the NPHS football team and the NPHS band through sponsorships, plus they are starting a partnership with the Mt. Vernon High School Marauders as well.

"Even in the McCordsville area, they don't have places that offer the type of food we have," James said.

That includes things like sweet potato fries, an Asian pork wrap, a Sugar Creek salad and loaded tots.

"We make a great (brisket) burnt ends, but we can only put it on the chalkboard for a special item now and then because we sell out so fast we can't keep it on the menu," Lauri said.

As for how the family came up with the name Sugar Creek Brickhouse, Lauri said it was pretty simple.

"Well this is Sugar Creek Township, and we're in a brick house," she said with a laugh. "The name says it all."



The Depot, which was developed from an abandoned grain mill into a popular restaurant, sits next to Depot Street Park.

# A place to gather

Former grain elevator thrives as The Depot

By Mitchell Kirk  
DAILY REPORTER

[mkirk@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:mkirk@greenfieldreporter.com)

## GREENFIELD

Back in the olden days, when many folks spent their time working in the fields, area farmers would often finish a long day gathering at the local grain elevator, sitting on an outside deck, talking about work, life, politics and other things.

It was that idea, one of having a gathering place for local citizens, that pushed area contractors to purchase an old grain elevator, remodel it and then open up what has become a popular, one-of-a-kind restaurant called The Depot.

Two years ago, Sept. 1, 2021, Thomas Moore and Ronnie Riggs, partners in Depot Street Investments, opened up the old 1906 grain elevator, turning it into The Depot at

Visiting Angels of East Central Indiana  
35147368



Pictured from top: A preserved portion of the old mill is displayed at The Depot, which was developed from an abandoned grain mill into a popular restaurant. // The Depot, which was developed from an abandoned grain mill into a popular restaurant, sits next to Depot Street Park.

240 W. Mill Street, and it's been thriving ever since.

The two Greenfield natives brought the historical city landmark back to life after two decades of dormancy and say they are more than pleased with how The Depot and its surroundings have become a happening hangout spot, complete with food, spirits, fun times and summer concerts.

"The Depot, that building was one of the oldest buildings around and we were able to recreate and turn it into something future generations will want to see, and that's probably the most important thing to us," Moore said.

The old former grain elevator sat empty for some 20 years with the last semi known to go through in 2003. Now, thanks to Moore's and Riggs vision, it's a

destination place for a good meal and a good time.

Modern tables and chairs stand between the elevator's original wooden pillars. Flat-screen TVs hang on the walls along with framed feed sacks found throughout the elevator. Under the slick bar top, an old rail spur discovered buried outside serves as a foot rail. Not far from a drink station is a feed mixer.

"We spared no expense," Moore said at the time the business opened. "We tore nothing out. We modified to make it work."

The restaurant offers a full menu, compete with appetizers that include things like fried pickle chips, tower nachos, elevated rings and tater kegs. They offer salads, soups and smash burgers which include the famous, "1906" double-smashed Angus Chuck beef patties burger complete with sharp



Customers dine inside The Depot.

cheddar, apple-wood smoked bacon, BBQ brisket, spicy coleslaw, Depot BBQ Sauce and onion straws.

"All of us who have anything to do with the restaurant are from Hancock County so our grandparents taught us how to cook," Moore said with a laugh. "The portions are a pretty good size here,

so we know our customers are not going to go home hungry."

The restaurant also offers flatbread, steaks, other sandwiches and wraps.

However, Moore noted, it's not only the food that makes The Depot a county favorite for many. It's the ambiance — the feeling of stepping back in time that

**Campbell Brothers Concrete**  
35147376



Customers dine at The Depot.

also attracts the crowds to a modern, yet historical setting.

“When we started putting some ideas together for the restaurant, our number one thought was we wanted people to be comfortable,” Moore said. “You think of that Sunday dinner, that kind of atmosphere, people laughing and having a good time, and that’s what we wanted to create and I think we did that keeping a lot of the old material from back in the day.”

Moore noted the whole idea of opening the restaurant in the old elevator was to keep the theme of a natural “gathering place,” and he feels they accomplished that.

“We feel like it’s worked out perfectly,” Moore said.

In addition to The Depot restaurant itself, the contractors have cleaned up and refurbished the area around the elevator, even creating spaces for other businesses. They turned a former fertilizer barn into a

thriving retail space on the outskirts of Depot Street Park.

That 2,500 square-foot-space was previously used in conjunction with the adjacent grain elevator (now The Depot), both of which were previously owned by Co-Alliance.

They purchased the elongated metal structure in September of 2022 and spent 10 months converting it into retail space, which now houses Libby’s Ice Cream and Organic Robot Designs screen print shop. They added a boardwalk on the side of the building facing the park to link the two shops together, and to provide a space for picnic tables and chairs that overlook the park.

The upscale deck ties in the look at the neighboring restaurant, which has its own deck overlooking the park.

Between the restaurant and retail space is an outdoor beer garden The

Depot restaurant owners created last year. The garden gets a lot of activity during the summer’s concerts, thanks to the addition of picnic tables and umbrellas on the patio.

“I’m from this county and this place means a lot to me and our family,” Moore said. “All I tell my kids is one day, when it’s my time to leave this town, that it’s going to be better than when I got here and I think we’re doing that.”

According to their website, in April 2020, Depot Street Investments purchased the grain elevator to avoid demolition by the City of Greenfield due to concerns for its structural integrity.

Members of Depot Street Investments are local business owners who grew up in Greenfield and have fond memories of the elevator and its property. Moore and Riggs wanted to keep that feeling. The owners didn’t want to see such an

important piece of the city’s history destroyed and chose to restore the building to its past glory so families can continue to visit and make memories.

Moore and Riggs not only enhanced the building. They did so with other local history. They added lumber throughout the interior donated by the New Palestine’s Masonic Lodge, and bricks on an exterior east wall from the College Hill schoolhouse built in 1894 at Morristown Pike and County Road 200S.

“I think we’ve got a lot of county history invested in this place,” Riggs said at the time the restaurant opened.

When entering The Depot, the builders and restaurant owners want patrons to be astounded at the history that has been preserved by Depot Street Investments — from the building and woodwork to the machinery, signage, and the original basement on display.

“The Depot is incredible,” Moore said.

**Brown’s Chapel Wesleyan Church**  
35147390

**Bradley UMC**  
35147378

**Family Medicine of Greenfield**  
35147211



# SUPPER TIME

FoxGardin's scratch kitchen inspired by home cooking

## FORTVILLE

It was those evenings at the dinner table in the early 90s that showed Jake Burgess what a good meal tasted like when made with love and passion. For Burgess, his mother was his inspiration.

Being a graduate of Mt. Vernon High School and a lifelong resident of Fortville, it made sense for Burgess to open up what would be his first of many restaurants named after his inspiration — FoxGardin.

The name for the restaurant came from his mother's maiden name and his former business partner's maiden name. Putting the two together created what would be known as a restaurant that would win

honors, such as being listed in the Top 10 restaurants to try by IndyStar in 2018.

Fortville's location, FoxGardin Kitchen & Ale, opened on Main Street in 2015, and since then the business has expanded with four locations listed on their website. That includes FoxGardin Family Kitchen near Fishers, The Den by FoxGardin in Carmel and Smoky's Concession Stand in Lapel.

Before the opening of the Fortville location, Burgess was a corporate chef of a fine dining steakhouse and worked in Indianapolis, Carmel and Cincinnati, but he eventually tired of working in the corporate world.

By Lacey Watt  
DAILY REPORTER  
[lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com)

FoxGardin Kitchen located on Main Street in McCordsville.

Greenfield Parks & Recreation Dept.  
35147283



Pictured from top: FoxGardin Kitchen located on Main Street in McCordsville. // A colorful chalkboard at FoxGardin Kitchen



“With my expertise and experience, I thought I’d have the best food outside of Indianapolis, and why not put it in my hometown of Fortville,” Burgess said.

FoxGardin is a scratch kitchen gastropub, meaning that everything is fresh and made daily. That includes hand-cut fries, homemade sauces, hand-cut steak and more.

“We don’t use frozen products. We have ice cream, that’s about it in our

freezer,” Spencer Wood Foster, director of operations for the Burgess Restaurant Group, said while laughing. Some popular food items are the bone marrow fries, beef manhattan,

fish tacos, and of course, the Fortville tenderloin.

Wood Foster shared that while many people have questioned or weren’t sure about the bone marrow fries, many end up getting hooked. It is the most-liked appetizer on their website with many reviews.

Burgess, having shared that he had worked with some of the best chefs in the world, wanted to bring traditional pub food but elevate it to make it the best possible.

Wood Foster explained that their restaurants also come with a high level of service and staff knowledge that someone would expect to see in places where someone would spend more money or be downtown.

“Just much more approachable, family friendly, but still really good for a date night. Anybody can find their thing,” Wood Foster said.

Fortville’s location used to be for patrons 21 years old and older only, but since the new law in the state of Indiana, anyone underage can visit as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

Wood Foster shared that, despite the new law, the restaurant still has an adult atmosphere but is more than happy to serve children, and they have an area where minors are allowed to sit.

And it’s not just inside the restaurant

where they like to make a difference. Wood Foster shared that she believes there is an importance in being involved in the community, such as sponsoring or catering events locally.

Wood Foster said that they will use their anniversary party as a charity event for a different charity every year, which includes an outdoor bar and live music with all the money raised that day going to the chosen charity. This year, they chose the Mt. Vernon Education Foundation.

“That’s kind of my favorite part of my job, is the philanthropic involvement that we have,” Wood Foster said. “We like to stay as local as we can, right? So we see that impact but it’s really important to us.”

FoxGardin Kitchen & Ale adds to the local community, being located at 215 S. Main St., near the heart of

downtown Fortville. Hours of operation are from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sundays through Thursdays with Fridays and Saturdays staying open until midnight, allowing an extra two hours for conversation, while the kitchen closes approximately one hour before close each night.

Reservations can be made online at their website, foxgardin.com, after choosing the Fortville location. They also can fill orders to go.

“That’s what good food and restaurants do. It brings people together and it’s one of the most community things that’s out there,” Burgess said. “...The togetherness, the conversations that happen when you’re at a restaurant, when you’re at a table sharing the food amongst each other is such a community and beautiful thing I fell in love with.”

**Carrington Homes**  
35147395



Trax BBQ's famous beef brisket.

# MEET ME AT THE TRAX

Husband and wife restaurant serves up award-winning bbq

By Lacey Watt  
DAILY REPORTER  
[lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com)



## MCCORDSVILLE

After a successful run as a pop-up restaurant at the Scarlett Brewing Company, Andrew and Whitney Kelin figured it was time to branch off and open up Trax BBQ, located right by the railroad tracks that cut through the town.

With local fresh meats and ingredients, Trax BBQ gives a small and local mom-and-pop-shop feel while serving up smokehouse plates, sandwiches and more featuring their pulled pork, brisket, ribs, sausage and chicken — all done Carolina BBQ style.

“We try to keep it as local as possible,” Andrew said.

Their ground beef and sausages come from Kincaid’s Meat Market, and for larger meats, Andrew shared that they use bigger stores but have parameters set to where the meats that they get from them have to be at least a state touching Indiana, or approximately 250 to 300 miles away.

They also have a small farm property where they grow their own tomatoes, herbs and chili peppers.

Chicago’s Pizza  
35147396





Trax BBQ is known for their famous beef brisket. The restaurant is based in McCordsville.

Being in the business for a long time, Andrew has experience such as holding positions as executive sushi chef at Kona Grill and executive sous chef at Flemmings. He also worked at Capital Grill in downtown Indianapolis and Mezza Luna in Broad Ripple.

“It was time to make that jump,” Andrew said. “I was tired of working for other people and wanted to go out on our own.”

Being from the Fishers-Geist area, Andrew shared that they were looking for a place to call home. Originally from Nashville, Indiana, Andrew enjoys the small-town feel.

“I like to know my guests and regulars by first name. Give it that small-town feel,” Andrew said.

Located on the corner of Railroad and Depot Street, specifically 7724 Depot St., Andrew shared that when he started doing research while going down the path of making their restaurant, they took a road trip.

On that trip, one of the very first photos he took was of a black and white photo of him on the railroad

tracks, describing it as foreshadowing for what they would eventually choose to name their restaurant.

Andrew shared that while his recipes are an inspiration for the restaurant, he and his wife run the show, and he enjoys working alongside her.

“It’s kind of like having your best friend as your partner,” Andrew said. “You’ve got someone you can always count on who is also invested in your business as well.”

Serving the community since November 2018, they offer dry-rubbed meat and vinegar-based, made-in-house sauces, having everything they serve be from scratch and made fresh daily.

The number one seller for Trax BBQ is their brisket, with mac and cheese, hush puppies and their pickles coming in close behind.

“...And of course the pickles. They have their own kind of cult following,” Andrew said. “They’re my great-great-great-great grandmother’s recipe on the pickles.”

And while they don’t serve alcoholic beverages, the brewery they are attached to, Scarlet Brewing Company, takes care of the alcoholic beverages someone could enjoy with dinner.

Trax BBQ can also be found and enjoyed at Ruoff Music Center in Noblesville, where they have a food truck set up for concert season. There, music lovers can try their mac and cheese with pulled pork or brisket on top, or a sandwich with a side of chips or slaw.

“If you’re at a show and you want to come early and have great food before a concert, we’re always there,” Andrew said.

Their concert lineup this past summer has consisted of 35 shows, with some of their most recent being Jelly Roll and Jason Aldean.

As far as the future, Andrew shared that they are always talking about potential expansion and “may have a few things in the works” for future plans.

Hours of operation to grab some BBQ back at the restaurant are Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from noon to 9 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 8 p.m.

“It’s the satisfaction at the end of the day that you know you’re putting out a great product,” Andrew said. “People seem to like it.”

For a full list to their menu or to check out their catering, visit [www.traxbbq.com](http://www.traxbbq.com).

Miller’s Jewelry  
35147403

Fortville, Town of  
35147375

Shining Stars Child Care Academy  
35147328



Angie Reed fills up a container of root beer at the Mug in Greenfield.

# The Mug

Drive-in serves up home-grown beef burgers and other delights

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER  
[sswift@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:sswift@greenfieldreporter.com)

## GREENFIELD

On a recent summer night, the burgers were sizzling and the patrons were nibbling at The Mug drive-in restaurant in Greenfield.

The relatively tiny burger shack has made a big impression on diners since it opened in September 2014.

Owners Chris and Amy Baggott were looking for a good way to sell the abundance of ground beef they produce at Tyner Pond Farm — a Greenfield cattle farm which produces locally-grown meats — and the little restaurant at 117 Apple St. seemed like the perfect spot.

Once known as The Frosty Mug under previous ownership, The Mug quickly made a name for itself as a great place to grab a burger and shake.

Joyner Homes  
35147435



A freshly made chicken sandwich is ready to go.

Nowadays customers know it as a great place to enjoy locally-processed burgers and hand-cut fries, with the giant Hoosier breaded tenderloin topping the list of most popular menu items.

“It’s definitely enough for two people,” said Angie Reed, who serves as director of operations for both The Mug and the the Baggotts’ other Greenfield restaurant — Griggsby’s Station.

Reed describes The Mug as a “modernized old-fashioned drive-in.” Some diners seek out the eatery when checking off a stop along the Indy Tenderloin Trail, while

others are referred to the restaurant by local hotels.

A number of hungry families wander over from the adjacent Riley Park, pool and splash pad across the street.

“We have some who travel for miles to come eat here, including some regulars from Anderson,” Reed said.

Customers seem to love knowing their burgers are locally sourced, she said, adding that the jalapeno cream cheese bacon burger is a fan favorite.

The fresh-cut fries and sweet potato waffle fries are also a big hit, as are the

garlic fries topped with fresh garlic, olive oil and parsley.

With the restaurant just a year away from its 10th anniversary, Reed said there are no big plans on the horizon to add in something new.

The hours of operation did change just before Summer 2023, however, when they shifted to being open just Thursday through Sunday.

“It actually works out really well with staffing,” said Reed. “We’re almost as busy (throughout the week) as if we were open every day.”

Customers have the option of bellying up to the counter inside the restaurant, if they can grab one of the eight stools, or dining at picnic tables on the outdoor patio or screened-in porch. A collection of sidewalk chalk and outdoor chalk is typically scattered around to keep kids busy.

Patrons can also pull into one of the 17 parking spots surrounding the restaurant and have a server take their order, or order with a QR code on their phones.

The car service remains popular to this day, since Reed, but came in especially handy when the restaurant was overrun with carryout orders.

Chris Baggott can’t believe it’s been nine years since he and his wife went out on a whim and created their little burger stand. They’ve been thrilled with how quickly the community embraced their vision of embracing a classic burger made from local meat.

“I think it’s been fantastic. We’ve been very very happy with how well it’s been received,” said Baggott, who thinks The Mug is a perfect compliment to the local restaurant scene.

“What I like about the local restaurant scene is that we have something for everyone. The Depot does their thing, Carnegie’s offers fine dining, and we offer burgers and fries. We have something for everyone, so the restaurants aren’t super competitive with one another,” he said.



A couple enjoy the nice afternoon weather at the Mug in Greenfield.



# ‘ORDER UP!’

New restaurant opens its doors after delays

## NEW PALESTINE

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Jan. 28.*

The long-awaited opening of a new restaurant took place this week in the southern part of the county where some businesses haven’t had the best of luck in keeping their doors open.

After several delays due to construction shortages and other reasons, Tony D’s officially opened their doors Tuesday, Jan. 24 with breakfast. The owner, Dennis Beikman held a practice run earlier this month and didn’t see the results he wanted, so he held off on officially opening the restaurant until this week.

“It’s been a long time coming and we’re

hoping to God, it’s going to be great,” Beikman said.

The opening of Tony D’s, which broke ground on the site at the corner of U.S. 52 and Mt. Comfort Rd., way back in October 2021, has been needed community and town officials say.

“The need is there for sure,” New Palestine town manager, Jim Robinson said. “There is a lot of interest from people around here for a place to sit-down and eat a meal locally.”

The restaurant will be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. However Beikman noted, they’ll open up seven days a week once he can hire a few more cooks and the people trained.

By Kristy Deer  
DAILY REPORTER  
kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com

Pictured: Tony D’s, a long-awaited restaurant opens in New Palestine.

F C Tucker - East  
35147399

Tony D's offers a full breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert menu, as well as a full bar. It's located behind Needler's grocery store and is within a stone's throw of the new Taco Bell. The menu features a full breakfast menu and a large selection of sandwiches, wraps, soups and salads, pasta, burgers and entree dishes for lunch and dinner.

"I'm very pleased with the building, the final product, how everything has turned out," Beikman said.

While people are excited and seem to be prepared to support the new business, which is employing over 40 people, it's been a colder market for other small business owners in the area.

Two smaller businesses, Brew 52 and 3:17 Beans & Donuts, both closed

operations over the past couple of months. Brew 52 had to shut its doors at 4346 South 500W. because they constantly had issues with finding enough workers.

"I'm not sure what all happened with Brew 52," Robinson said. "They had good sandwiches and soups, but they had issues with keeping staff."

Brew 52 officials repeatedly posted on social media of their need for help and had inconsistent hours due to the lack of workers. The owner ended up shutting the doors for good in late 2022.

"In order to properly serve our community and do it correctly and consistently, we have decided to close the next couple weeks and get our staffing issues fixed," the owner wrote in the fall.

They opened back up for a little while in November but closed for good shortly after.

The owner of 3:17 Beans & Donuts, Keith Oliver, sold his spot at 5933 U.S. 52 to a different business owner, Tia's Food and Drink Restaurant, back in September — just eight months after the business opened.

"We sold it to Tia's Restaurant. They still do coffee and donuts but have added more breakfast and lunch food," Oliver said.

That establishment offers a fresh scratch menu and has been welcomed by community members who are constantly posting positive reviews for the eatery, which is planning a kitchen renovation to add more service. Oliver is now the co-owner of Norman's Lawn Maintenance, he said.



A view of Tony D's exterior.

**Mt. Vernon Community School Corp.**  
35147243

**Lady Payne Accounting**  
35147326

**Hancock Co. Sheriff's Department**  
35147457



# Restaurant renewal

The Grill reopens after facelift



## MCCORDSVILLE

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Dec. 23.*

For Robert Garcia, it started out as a plan to simply update his restaurant's kitchen and relocate his office.

"I thought, since we're going to be closed already, we might as well just really give the store a whole new look," he said. "Get it updated, give it a whole new feel and change it around."

That's exactly what The Grill in McCordsville got. It's the first major update in the eatery's nearly 16 years, and comes at a time when much of its surroundings are developing as well.

The restaurant, located at 6621 W. Broadway, was closed for about six weeks

while work was underway. Improvements include new booths, lighting, televisions and wall-hangings. The bathrooms and bar were redone, and a separate dining area often used for private parties was updated as well.

"We gave it a very modern feel, with the same flavor and same taste and the same great food and service," Garcia said.

March will mark 16 years in business for The Grill. Aside from touch-ups and new coats of paint, the recent renovations made up its first extensive renovation.

"We should be good for another 20 years, so hopefully our guests won't ever have to worry about us closing," Garcia said with a laugh.

By Mitchell Kirk  
DAILY REPORTER  
mkirk@greenfieldreporter.com

The Grill in McCordsville has reopened after an extensive remodel.

Greenfield Banking Company  
35147451



Diners eat at The Grill in McCordsville.

The Grill is about to get plenty more potential guests when Gardens on Gateway Senior Apartments right behind it opens, which is slated for this winter. The 119-unit complex is just one development representing McCordsville’s growth over the last several years. The town continues to work with housing developers on new neighborhoods, and a two-building apartment complex kicking off the new town center recently broke ground.

“With regards to the area, it’s starting to really grow and develop,” Garcia said. “We’re really starting to build up around here.”

The recent updates to The Grill are not only aesthetic, but operational as well. Garcia said the kitchen “went from a Pinto to a Rolls-Royce” by opening up with more room and getting new lighting, flooring and equipment.

“It’s unbelievable,” he said. “We doubled it in size, it’s much more practical, it’s more economical, your service work pattern’s a

lot better back there, it’s more efficient.”

Garcia has been in the restaurant business for nearly 40 years.

“One of the things that I really enjoy about it is the challenge,” he said. “It’s different every single day. It’s very interesting work. You’ve got to really be on top of it as far as the restaurant business is concerned, because this industry — people have so many choices. That’s why to me it’s very, very important to make sure we do the best that we can to take care of our customers, and bend over backwards, give them that customer service they deserve. We appreciate them spending their hard-earned money here with us, so it’s very important to make sure that we take care of them.”

Like his line of work, he’s fond of McCordsville as well.

“It has that hometown feel,” Garcia said. “It’s an up-and-coming area, which is very, very exciting for us. We’ve been



Staff members are busy preparing meals.

here — it’ll be 16 years in March. We’ve seen a lot of growth exploding now, and it’s a great community.”

That community helped The Grill get through the COVID-19 pandemic, which was far from kind to restaurants.

“We were very blessed and fortunate,” Garcia said. “In those 16 years that

we’ve been here, we have built such a loyal, solid base and foundation, and I’m telling you that even through COVID, they came in droves. We were very, very blessed to have such a great community. Now that we’re past that, hopefully things are going to continue to grow and get better. We’re excited about that.”

McCordsville, Town of  
35147369

Nameless Creek Youth Camp  
35147388

Greenfield Main St., Inc.  
35147452



# Tuscan Table

Chef celebrates Italian roots through new restaurant in Greenfield



## GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Aug. 5.*

Growing up in south Florida in an Italian family, Tony Lepore remembers there always being plenty of hand-made pasta laying out to air-dry in his grandmother's kitchen on Sunday mornings before church.

"When we came back from church, my grandmother would finish up all the food. She'd take pork and let it simmer in the sauce until everything just fell off the bone," said Lepore, his dark brown eyes twinkling at the delicious memory.

Over 40 years later, Lepore is bringing his family's Sicilian style of cooking to Greenfield.

Over the past two weeks, he and his wife Tracey have held a soft opening for the Tuscan Table Ristorante in the former American Legion building on the northeast corner of Osage and Center streets.

The menu features hand-made dishes made from fresh ingredients, including Italian classics like spaghetti bolognese, pasta primavera and chicken marsala.

The building that houses the restaurant belongs to Lepore's boss, Bill Huffman, who ran his business — Photon Automation — out of the space until moving to a much larger building in Greenfield.

Lepore has worked the past three years as a mechanical design engineer for Huffman, who invited him to use the

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER  
sswift@greenfieldreporter.com

Tony Lepore, head chef at Tuscan Table Ristorante, in the former Photon/American Legion building in Greenfield.

Calvary Baptist Church - Greenfield  
35147391





The dining area of Tuscan Table Ristorante.

vacant building to realize his dream of opening a restaurant.

“I’ve loved cooking from a very young age,” said Lepore, 54, who jumped at the chance to make his lifelong dream of opening a restaurant come true.

His culinary prowess was revealed at work as a matter of chance, when he offered to take over weekly cooking duties from Huffman, who had made a habit of cooking breakfast on Mondays and lunch on Fridays for his staff.

“Bill loves to cook, but as the company grew he got busy and couldn’t do it anymore, so I said I’d do it,” Lepore recalled.

He made chicken cacciatore stuffed shells on his first day, and Huffman was blown away by the dish.

“He told me, ‘If you want to do a supper club here, go for it,’” said Lepore, who quickly went to work fine-tuning the building’s kitchen to suit his needs.

One of his first items of business was buying a commercial mixer to help make the many varieties of hand-made pasta he enjoyed as a kid.

The accomplished chef loves nothing more than seeing a patron’s eyes light up as they taste one of his signature dishes.

“The thing I love the most is when I

cook something that someone has hated all their life,” said Lepore, who recalls one recent guest who devoured a plate of his signature sausage and peppers, despite disliking onions and peppers all his life.

“He finished everything on his plate,” Lepore said with a grin.

With a raspy deep voice, olive skin and short curly black hair, he looks and sounds every bit a Sicilian chef.

On a recent weeknight, he demonstrated his pasta-making skills, methodically rolling out the dough to make cavatelli.

His mother, Lucille, was the one who taught him to cook, ever since he was a little boy whisking eggs in the kitchenette she ran in south Florida.

Lepore grew up in Coral Springs, Fla. just northwest of Ft. Lauderdale. It was there that he became passionate about his mother’s and grandmother’s Italian-inspired cooking.

His mother’s parents had immigrated to the United States from Italy, where his grandmother learned to cook in Sicily. She passed that love of cooking on to Lepore’s mother, who passed it on to him.

Lepore still loves to experiment with new dishes while preparing some of his favorites, including Fruitti di Mare,

a traditional seafood pasta dish which translates to “fruit of the sea.”

“I like to familiarize traditional Italian dishes to the American palate,” said Lepore.

“For example, bolognese sauce doesn’t have tomato in it in Italy, but I add tomatoes to match it to the American palate. Authentic Italian lasagna calls for a béchamel sauce instead of ricotta cheese, but I (forgot the sauce and) use a lot of cheeses and let the cheese stand on its own,” he said.

Lepore talks passionately about food, and says he likely would have started his culinary career sooner had he not been pulled out of his mother’s kitchenette and put to work in his dad’s mechanic shop around the age of 7.

While he found he had a knack for mechanics working for his dad, his main love has always been in the kitchen.

At the age of 32, Lepore graduated from the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale’s culinary program in 2003 and quickly landed a head chef’s job at an Italian restaurant in Florida.

“I was replacing a chef who was Spanish, and the recipes were all written in Spanish,” he said.

His boss couldn’t translate the recipes back into English, so Lepore cooked him every item on the menu from scratch.

“I made him every dish the way I know my mother and grandmother would make it, the way I like to make it,” he said.

His success at that restaurant soon eventually landed him a second head chef’s job at a different Italian spot, a gig that went great until the owner got into a bit of trouble “and the cops came and took him away,” Lepore recalled with a grin.

Lepore then went to work cooking for an acquaintance who owned several Mulligan’s Beach House franchises along the Florida coast. It was during his time there that he met his future wife, Tracey, in 2004.

The two married the following year and eventually moved to her home state of Iowa, where they embraced the quiet life in an old farmhouse on a two-acre spread.

One day, a fellow mechanical engineer told Lepore about a great little company called Photon in a relatively quiet Indiana town.

Lepore flew in for an interview and immediately clicked with Huffman.

“When I saw the kind of work environment Bill was developing, I decided to take the chance and make the move,” he recalled.

He and Tracey moved to Greenfield three years ago and have been living in an RV while searching for the perfect house. They finally found the one they were looking for — a historic farmhouse in Lewisville — which they are moving into this weekend.

Because of that, the Tuscan Table will be closed this weekend but will officially open next Sunday, Aug. 13.

Since all ingredients are purchased fresh in small quantities, diners must make an online reservation with their menu request in advance, rather than show up at the door.

“It’s a different way of doing things, but I hope people will like it,” said Lepore, who charges \$45 for the complete meal, from appetizers and salad to dessert.

He and his wife work as a two-person team, preparing and serving the meals in the cozy dining space they converted from a former office area. She painted the dining room, he laid the floor and they worked together to build the decorative shelves from pallets.

“When Tracy and I do something together, it comes out outstanding,” said Lepore, seated in the dining room they worked together to create.

Their hope is the community will be hungry for the chance to enjoy some authentic Italian food, so that their restaurant venture can thrive. “I’m only 54,” Lepore said, “so I’ve still got plenty of gas left in the tank.”

To reserve a table for an upcoming Sunday, visit [TuscanTableRistorante.com](http://TuscanTableRistorante.com).

**Hancock County CASA**  
35147494



# Fall favorites

Family-owned businesses are traditions for locals, visitors



## GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Aug. 25.* There's something special about seeing families come to Tuttle Orchards every fall, says Ruth Ann Roney, just like they have throughout the 95-year history of the family farm.

Apple picking at the farm opens today, Aug. 25. Several other businesses focused on agritourism will also soon be welcoming families from across the region with favorite fall traditions from hay rides to festive foods to pumpkin picking.

Roney, the general manager Tuttle's, said the site that offers a tractor-themed playground, corn maze, sunflower maze, flower picking, a store and more is a family favorite.

"It's always fun to have the families, especially when they say, 'Oh, I came here with my grandparents,'" Roney said, adding that the family connections even stretch to seasonal employees. "There's a lot of people who came on a

kindergarten field trip and now they're 16 and coming here for their very first job."

New this year is a grill open six days a week, in addition to the traditional sweet shop offering homemade goods. Combination passes are also available for select days and experiences, and fall events like build-your-own caramel apples will return Sept. 9 and Sept. 16.

Apple picking is also happening just south of New Palestine at Pleasant View Orchard. Owners Adria and Jeff Kemper said more varieties will become available throughout September and fresh cider will be available around Labor Day.

"It's a fun, family friendly environment and it's a fun place to work and for people to come with their families and just experience the outdoors, it's kind of just a getaway from everyday life," Adria Kemper said.

The playground and wagon rides are free at the orchard, which also

By Maribeth Vaughn  
DAILY REPORTER  
mvaughn@greenfieldreporter.com

You Pick apples are about to be ready for the public at Tuttle Orchards.

House Ads - DR  
35147329



Fresh selection of produce at Tuttle Orchards. // Fresh peaches for sale.

offers a store full of products and a cafe featuring warm, homemade sweets. They also have free events: a Silly Safaris animal show is Sept. 2 and Oct. 28, and live music or wine tasting is on site every Saturday.

There are also two local businesses that offer pumpkin picking and kids activities, from playgrounds to bounce pads to train rides.

Piney Acres, located near Fortville, is

open Sept. 23 through Oct. 30 with corn mazes — one for kids and one for adults who want more of a challenge; animals, a gem mine, playgrounds and more. A fall preview night is open to anybody starting at 5 p.m. Sept. 22, with all the features of the farm plus back-to-back fall movies.

Coming in October is Piney Acres Scream Farm, with three haunted attractions across 70 acres.

Cassandra Jones, assistant office and farm manager, said since Piney Acres is family-operated by the Rex Zenor family, it's important to them to keep families coming back together to enjoy the festivities.

“One thing I love about Piney Acres is, it's a family-owned farm so they definitely have the family attributes and what it means to enjoy fall and Christmas activities with families,” she said. “One of my favorite things is definitely going out and seeing Rex and how much he cares about his farm and how much his family cares about the farm.”

Lark Ranch in Greenfield opens for the season Sept. 23 and will be open Saturdays and Sundays, as well as Columbus Day and occasional Fridays in October.

Lark Ranch is one of three fall farm businesses owned by the Lark family: it opened in Greenfield roughly 15 years ago because the Lark family has farmed in the area for years, said Adam Lark, owner/operator. His grandma Lenore Lark enjoys coming out to the Greenfield location daily to help out and care for the animals.

Families coming to Lark Ranch will see all of their favorite longstanding activities like the train ride, pumpkin picking, bounce bubble, playgrounds and amusement rides. There will likely be some new food vendors and rides this year.

Lark said he's glad families make it an annual tradition to return to the ranch: he's run into couples who got engaged in the corn maze, for example, and now they're bringing their children. Other families choose Greenfield as a central location to meet up with extended family like grandparents or cousins for a day of fun.

“As people are getting more on their phones, there's really not a lot of good opportunities for families to get together and put their phones down and just enjoy each other's presence and have a fun day,” he said. “Here they can just have a good day, being in the moment.”

## AT A GLANCE

Here's a list of local fall hot spots for families. Tuttle Orchards, 5717 N. 300W., Greenfield; [indianapolisorchard.com](http://indianapolisorchard.com), [facebook.com/tuttleorchards](https://facebook.com/tuttleorchards); 317-326-2278; pricing: free admission, experiences and food priced individually.

Lark Ranch, 1611 N. Meridian Road, Greenfield; [larkranch.com](http://larkranch.com), [facebook.com/TheLarkRanch](https://facebook.com/TheLarkRanch); pricing: \$15-20 per person, varies based on day; discounts or free admission available to military personnel, veterans, Riley Hospital for Children patients and foster children.

Piney Acres Farm, 1115 E. 1000N., Fortville, [pineyacresfarm.com](http://pineyacresfarm.com), [facebook.com/PineyAcresFarm](https://facebook.com/PineyAcresFarm); 317-326-1700; pricing: \$5-14 per person.

Pleasant View Orchard, 10721 N. 850W., Fairland, [pleasantvieworchardin.com](http://pleasantvieworchardin.com), [facebook.com/PleasantViewOrchard](https://facebook.com/PleasantViewOrchard); 317-861-4025; pricing: experiences free, food priced individually.

**State Farm Insurance - Ben Eades**  
35147367

**Potter Family Eye Care**  
35147363



# W

GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Nov. 4.*

When Don and Frances Hull first opened their Hometown Comics & Games shop in 2009, they wanted it to be an inviting place where customers of all ages could connect over shared interests.

Thirteen years and countless friendships later, the Greenfield couple feel like their plan has been a success.

Several times a week, customers gather at the 4,500-square-foot comic shop at — 1040 N. State St. in Greenfield — to play a variety of games, in addition to perusing the store’s selection of comic books, cosplay items and other merchandise and memorabilia.

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER  
sswift@greenfieldreporter.com

Michael Triplett, left, and Dale Cross enjoy a card game. Teens and young adults have built a social circle playing various games at Hometown Comics in Greenfield.

Derek Deputy said the people who play games like Yu-Gi-Oh! and Dungeons and Dragons on a weekly basis eventually start to feel like an extended family.

“It’s nice to hang out with people you have something in common with who enjoy a shared hobby,” said Deputy, 31, who has been playing games at Hometown Comics for about 12 years.

The Mt. Vernon High School graduate now lives in Castleton but makes the half-hour drive to the Greenfield shop to help run Yu-Gi-Oh! matches twice a week — with open play on Wednesdays and tournaments on Sundays.

As a Yu-Gi-Oh! judge, he helps run

League of Women Voters  
35147465

Knotek, Dr. Georgia, D.D.S.  
35147464

# Fun & friendship

Game playing forges friendships at Greenfield shop



the popular card games based on the anime cartoon he watched as a child.

“As a judge, I try to get to know everyone,” said Deputy, who added that he’s seen players range in age from 6 to 80, but they are mostly in their 20s and 30s.

He’s seen several friendships form among players over the years “and definitely one marriage, probably more,” he said.

Michael Pena, 30, has also seen friendships form through the Dungeons and Dragons games he helps lead at the shop’s game rooms, which are equipped with long tables and dozens of chairs.

When he’s not working as a lab technician, Pena enjoys serving as “dungeon master” for the sci-fi fantasy role playing game that was first introduced in 1974. As a dungeon master, it’s his job to create the backstory for each game and lead players through it.

Pena first got hooked on the game near the start of COVID, “when we had a little bit of free time,” he said.

He quickly developed a love for the game, in which characters embark upon imaginary adventures within a fantasy setting.

Pena also enjoys playing Magic: The Gathering, and Pokemon Go, in addition to card games and board games with family and friends.

He prefers interactive games like Dungeons and Dragons over video games, “which you typically play alone or by talking to people through a headset. It’s nice interacting with people face to face,” he said.

Ethan Hager, 26, of Greenfield, shared the same sentiment.

“I like the community of people who play,” said Hager, who plays Dungeons and Dragons at Hometown Comics & Games. “The community has always been very welcoming.”

Hager said playing D&D, as it’s widely known, is also thought-provoking and competitive.

It’s also a good way to build relationships, he said, even for people who might be considered socially challenged.

“When you play, you’re forced to interact with people. It’s a really good way of getting people together,” he said.

Dale Cross first started playing Yu-Gi-Oh! at Hometown Comics as a way to help his adult son Dustin build friendships. His son has Asperger’s Syndrome, a form of autism which makes interacting with people challenging.

“Before we started coming here years ago he was very shy and wouldn’t speak, so my wife and I thought this would be a good place for him to try,” said Cross, 65, who drives from Lawrence to Hometown Comics to

play Yu-Gi-Oh! with his son each week.

Since then Dustin, 34, has started interacting and has made some friends, and he and his dad have become hooked on the game.

“It’s a lot of fun,” said Cross, who grew up in a family that loved playing card games like pinochle, euchre and hearts.

Joe Schaecher, 49, said Dungeons and Dragons is also a good game for people who struggle with social interactions.

“It’s a medium for people who are not very socially adept. They can get the chance to be part of something here,” he said while seated in one the shop’s game rooms.

“D&D is a special way to teach a person how to read social situations. It teaches them how to open up and about teamwork, and it brings out one’s creativity,” he said.

Schaecher said the characters’ personas players take on during game play is a great way to allow players to express themselves.

“D&D is something that has no limits, no bounds,” said Josh Franke, 33, of Greenfield, who has been playing the game since he was a teen. “Whereas video games are limited to what the game designer came up with, in D&D you can do anything you can conceive.”



Teens and young adults have built a social circle playing various games at Hometown Comics in Greenfield.

House Ads - DR  
35147330



Hancock County Courthouse, on the fourth floor, has hundreds of signatures on the wood, walls and support material surrounding the courthouse stained glass windows and tower bell. Some of the signatures date back to the 1800s.

# Hidden history

Signatures surround stained glass windows, walls and clock tower

By Kristy Deer  
DAILY REPORTER  
[kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com)

ERA Integrity Real Estate - Agency Office  
35147398

Frey Water Conditioning  
35147450



**HANCOCK COUNTY**

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on July 21.*

As far back as the late 1800s, when a lawyer secured a first win at a trial in the Hancock County Courthouse, attorneys made their way up to the fourth floor of the courthouse — a place people were not supposed to go — and signed their names as a reflection of their accomplishment.

While the tradition has since died off, hundreds of signatures are still on the fourth floor and tower bell area of the courthouse, including some dating as far back as the late 1890s.

Most people who go into the

Hancock County Courthouse for official business are trying to get in and out as quickly as possible. However, for historians or people who enjoy the beauty of an old historical structure where they wished walls could talk, the courthouse is an interesting place to soak up a bit of the county's past.

The Romanesque Revival style Hancock County Courthouse, built in 1896 and completed in 1898, is a marvel in many ways. With picturesque stained glass windows, simplified arches, massive staircases and even a

cavernous courtroom on the third floor, the courthouse is worth more than a passing glance.

The courthouse becomes particularly interesting when it is discovered there are many hidden historical tidbits inside.

For starters, there's a secluded staircase in one of the courtroom areas allowing access to the unoccupied fourth floor — the attic area. There is also an underground tunnel connecting the old jail to the courthouse where officers used to walk inmates back and forth; plus, there is also a hidden picture of Steve Dyer, who ran the county's substance abuse program, hanging somewhere inside.

However, some of the most intriguing pieces of the past are up on the fourth floor, where no one was ever supposed to venture, yet hundreds have.

As far as anyone currently working at

the courthouse can recall, no one was or is allowed access beyond the third floor ever except for the janitorial staff and repairmen who work on the old clock or do repairs on things like leaky windows. Still, the fourth floor is filled with hundreds of signatures, including signatures on the courthouse bell.

A few months ago, the clock tower in the courthouse started having lighting issues, so facilities manager Cory Taylor went up there for the first time.

Taylor noted he was "blown away" when he saw hundreds of signatures on the support structures that hold the stained-glass windows and the tower clock.

"It's pretty amazing," Taylor said. "I was really surprised so many people had been up here because this amount of signatures is pretty shocking, and I'm going to guess most people don't know the signatures are even here."

Taylor, who considers himself a bit of a history buff, pointed out many signatures with dates from the early 1900s before spotting a signature by a Thomas Carter, Morristown, signed in 1896.

"There are probably over 200 signatures here by the dome, and there are way more up by the clock," Taylor said. "Every inch of the board up there is covered in names, but it just makes you wonder what in the heck was everyone doing up here?"

Former Hancock County Judge Richard Culver has a good idea how the names, including his own, ended up on the fourth floor.

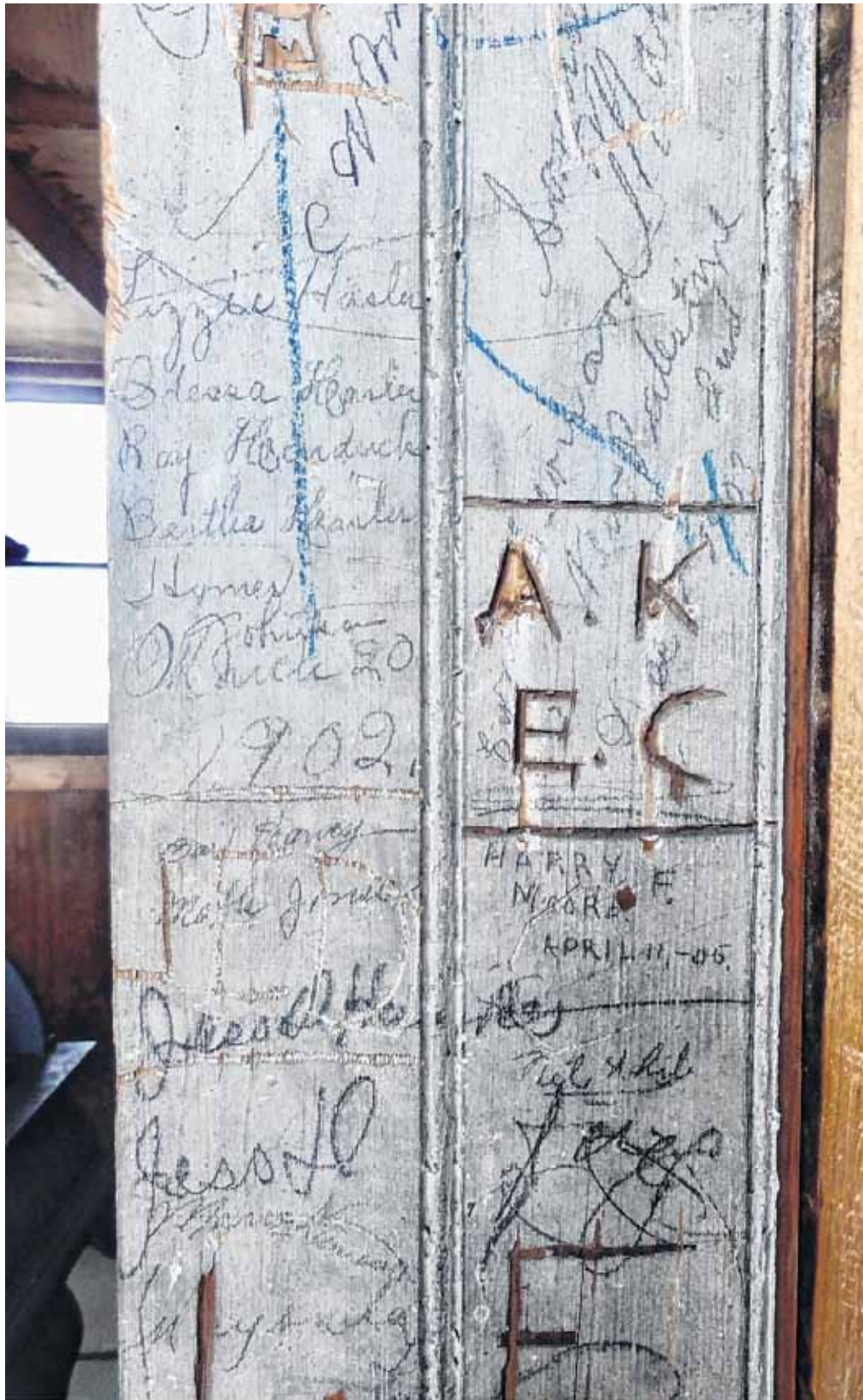
"I think I went up there in the early 80s and signed my name around the bell," Culver said. "It used to be part of a long-standing tradition."

While there are many signatures not connected to the tradition on the fourth

**Lincoln Square Pancake House**  
35147467

**Pride Investment Partners**  
35147472

Cory Taylor, Facilities Manager at the Hancock County Courthouse, looks for signatures.



Signatures are found further up in the tower bell area. Submitted by Hancock County Historical Society

floor, such as signatures from contractors and people who happen to somehow get up there, Culver noted most of the names signed are from lawyers after they won their first jury trial in Hancock County.

“There was an old tradition that has since died now, but the previous lawyers who won a jury trial would sneak up into the clock tower and sign their names,” Culver said. “I waited until I had my turn and I snuck up there also.”

Culver noted it was a tradition well known among the lawyers who tried cases in the county, but was also kept quiet.

“I thought it was one of those ‘silent secret’ things all the lawyers knew about but never talked about,” he said.

However, when Culver got closer to the end of his local career, another lawyer, who was slightly older had never heard about the tradition and hadn’t signed his name.

“I took him up there so he could,” Culver said. “His name was Roger Reason.”

Culver noted that the fourth floor, which is technically the attic, is kind of dangerous, yet he climbed up to the bell area on rickety, old steps to sign his name on the highest point.

“I remember thinking back then the staircase was going to come unbolted at any time,” Culver said.

Current county judges say they’ve heard about the signatures, but not all of them have signed their names or knew too much about the past tradition.

“My name is up there, but that’s only because I was in

the elevator one day and I saw a guy put in a large key to go up there so I went with him,” Judge Dan Marshall said.

Marshall noted that was years ago, and he can’t recall exactly where he signed his name.

“I probably haven’t been in the attic in 20 years,” he said. “I had heard the story that lawyers signed their name after their first trial victory, but no one I know ever did that. They just signed when they happened to be in the attic.”

Michael Kester, president of Hancock County Historical Society, said he went to the fourth floor of the courthouse in 2019 to pick up the old clock hands that were being replaced as he wanted the artifacts in the local museum. He too was surprised to see the many signatures

which he noted are mostly from the early 1900s.

“I think some of those signatures were from workers who may have started the trend,” Kester said. “I think what surprised me was how far back the signatures went, and in my mind I thought, ‘Well, the security at the top of the courthouse was not what it is now days.’”

Kester believes, but can’t confirm, the courthouse may have long ago been a tourist stop where people came and went as they pleased.

“I say that because some of those signatures are from families who were from different states who have signed their names and state,” Kester said.

“So you can imagine they were rolling through town and the courthouse was a place to see, so stopping to see the

clockwork may have been a thing back in the day.”

When Kester was on the fourth floor, he found a name of a friend who had added his signature and that friend wasn’t an attorney, Kester said.

The Greenfield Courthouse Square Historic District is a special place and the Hancock County Courthouse is a large reason why.

Local historian Bridgette Jones noted the cornerstone for the courthouse was laid on September 22, 1896. The courthouse stands at 181 feet and 6 inches tall. It is of two architectural styles — Romanesque and French Gothic.

“The massiveness of its walls, the heaviness of its structure and the roundness of its arches depict the Romanesque style,” Jones said. “The

Allen, Wellman, McNew, Harvey, LLP  
35147362

Bradley UMC  
35147290





Pictured from top: Signatures are found further up in the tower bell area. **Submitted by Hancock County Historical Society** // Cory Taylor, Facilities Manager at the Hancock County Courthouse, looks for signatures.

details on the elevation in the pointed crowning of the arches, the verticality of the openings, the countless figures and stained glass depict a French Gothic style.”

Jones shared information on how a fire broke out once in the courthouse in 1940 and smoke poured out of the central tower.

“The auto license bureau and the offices for the county welfare board were charred in the fire,” she said.

While the records of those two agencies were ruined, little of the massive limestone structure was damaged. The solid structure of the courthouse, Jones noted, led it to

be designated as a fallout shelter in 1962. As a result, the basement had provisions for nuclear war survival stored there.

As for the signatures, Jones says the county courthouse isn’t the only iconic structure in the state to have them.

“There are signatures inside the dome of the Indiana State Capitol building too,” she said.

Regardless the reason for the signatures, Culver, who is still working as the prosecutor for Henry County, said he loves going into older courthouses with older courtrooms, particularly ones with a great, even hidden, history. He feels the Hancock

County Courthouse is one of those special places with many historical secrets.

That includes the hidden portrait of Dyer, who has since passed, but was instrumental in helping people find sobriety in the county. It seems Culver felt Dyer deserved a special tribute, so he hung a portrait of Dyer, making his photo the only one hanging in the courthouse that isn’t a current or former judge.

“The picture is in the courthouse, but I will not disclose where it is,” Culver said. “It will only be found some day if they tear the courthouse down.”

**Bradford Builders**  
35147370

**Woodland Group**  
35147371



Greenfield Parks director Ellen Kuker takes a ride around Depot Street Park on one of the bikes offered through a new bike share program created by a Leadership Hancock County team.

# Bike town

Greenfield launches bike share program in local parks

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER

[sswift@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:sswift@greenfieldreporter.com)

GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on April 28.*

No bike trailer? No problem.

A new bike share program will soon get underway in Greenfield, where 10 white bicycles will be available to use for free — from dawn to dusk — starting within the week of May 1.

The bike share program — managed by the Greenfield Parks Department — was created by a Leadership Hancock County team, which took on the program as their required project for this year's leadership class.

Hilary Engleking, Danielle Nylund, Hart Summeier and Rev. Merlyn Winters not only designed the program through a bike share

CommuniCare Health Services-GREENFIELD, INDIANA  
35147212

The Landing  
35147436



Clockwise from top: Street commissioner Tyler Rankins, left, and Greenfield parks assistant director Skye Mackenzie chat April 24 at the ribbon cutting for the city's new bike share program. // Greenfield mayor Chuck Fewell addresses the crowd. // Bikes will be available at three city parks — Brandywine, Riley and Depot Street — starting sometime next week.

vendor, but also did the fundraising to make the program a reality.

“Thank you for your hard work in executing this plan. We really appreciate the effort you put into this project,” said Greenfield parks director Ellen Kuker before a crowd of about 30 people gathered for the ribbon cutting at Depot Street Park on Tuesday, April 25.

Standing by a row of shiny white bikes, Kuker gave the leadership team credit for conceptualizing the bike share program and bringing it to fruition.

“It was their vision. It was their planning. It was them going out knocking on doors raising money. They did the research to make sure we aligned ourselves with a reputable company, Dynamic Bicycles, which has been great to work with,” said Kuker, who also thanked the sponsors who funded the program.

## AT A GLANCE

The free Greenfield Parks bike share program will be available for public use starting sometime within the week of May 1.

Bikes are stationed at three parks throughout the city:

—Brandywine Park (900 Davis Road)

—Depot Street Park (251 Depot St.)

—Riley Park, at the Splash Pad adjacent to the Kathy Dowling Aquatics Center (280 Apple St.)

Bikes can be accessed by downloading a digital app called On Bike Share, then typing in the system name: Greenfield Parks & Recreation. Users must first read a waiver and enter a credit card, which won't be charged so long as the bike is returned.

To check out a bike:

1. Open the On Bike Share app.
2. Press Available Bikes and wait for bikes to load.
3. Press Rent for the bike you want to use.
4. Bike will electronically unlock from the rack.
5. Inspect bike prior to ride. Report any issues in app.

To return a bike:

1. Dock the bike to the pin on the rack. Confirm bike is securely locked to rack.
2. Rental will end automatically.

**Cardinal Elements, Inc.**  
35147393

**Costa's Grill**  
35147397

The Greenfield Bike Share program features 10 bikes placed at three city parks — four in Depot Street Park, four in Brandywine Park and two in Riley Park at the Splash Pad adjacent to the Kathy Dowling Aquatics Center.

The program works through a digital app which riders can use to check out a bike.

Users must first enter a credit card number, although users won't be charged so long as the bikes are returned to one of the three designated bike racks.

"That ensures that people return the bikes rather than leave them lying around town," said Greenfield park board president Deby Low.

Once a credit card number is entered, the app will allow a user to unlock a bike and take it from park to park. Two of the parks — Brandywine and Davis — are connected by the Brandywine

Connector and the Pennsy Trail, while Riley Park is accessible by sidewalk from the Pennsy Trail.

While most users will likely ride the bikes within the parks, Greenfield mayor Chuck Fewell hopes riders will also use them to explore other nearby amenities like the shops and restaurants downtown.

Fewell said the bike share program is yet another great amenity for the community, in a county which strives to promote health and wellness opportunities for residents and guests.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a program of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, ranked Hancock County as the fourth healthiest county in the state this year, up 15 spots since the Hancock ranked the 19th healthiest county in the state in 2013.

Nancy Davis, president of the

Hancock Health Foundation, said sponsoring the bike share program was a no-brainer for the local hospital.

"I think we like to give a little bit of extra attention to something that can make Hancock County a healthier community, and this bike share program certainly can do that," she said. "It makes it easier for our friends and families to get out and do something healthy, which is really great."

Low thinks the bike share program is a great addition to the city's park system.

"The way it's set up, you could even cross-train by riding a bike from one park to the next, then walking or running back. I can't wait to see it being put to use," she said.

Each bike station can accommodate twice the number of bikes starting out at each location, which makes it easier for users to find space to return bikes at

any of the three locations. Parks staff will relocate bikes during their morning trash runs if any racks become overcrowded.

Winters, a leadership team member who moved to Greenfield from Columbus, Ohio two years ago, is happy to see such a public-friendly amenity being offered in a city the size of Greenfield.

"I don't remember seeing anything like this when I lived in Columbus, so to have this here is really great. I can't wait to see the impact it will have," she said.

The Greenfield Parks Dept. held a ribbon cutting for the city's new bike share program on April 24. Bikes will be available at three city parks — Brandywine, Riley and Depot Street — starting sometime next week.



Addison, Wayne - Auctioneer  
35147358

Broadway Diner 1/8H  
35147715

Sugar Creek Brickhouse  
35147486

AR Marketing - Fresh Encounter  
35147416

T J's Chimney Service  
35147314

House Ads - DR  
35147332



# A strong finish

Hancock Flat 50 finishes with more than 700 people registered

## GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Aug. 29.*

As the clock struck eight, hundreds of riders pushed off the ground and onto their pedals as they started the seventh annual Hancock Flat 50 bike ride.

What once started in 2016, with a year break due to COVID, has grown bigger each year.

Joel Hungate, director for Hancock Wellbeing, has been on the Hancock Flat 50 steering committee for three years and said the event is only getting bigger and better with more than 10 states represented and 774 registrants — not including day of registration.

“We continue to try to out-think the scale of the event and continue to create more and more activities for everybody and their families,” Hungate said. “And that includes Flat 50 Friday... Food, music and fun in the Living Alley, plus expanding what we do for the race and after the race.”

Hosted by Health365, the ride offered two routes for cyclists — a 50-mile and a 25-mile with stops along the way for snacks, drinks and the opportunity for a restroom break.

Peter Watson ate a quick sandwich at a stop before finishing the rest of the 50-mile ride.

By Lacey Watt  
DAILY REPORTER

[lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:lwatt@greenfieldreporter.com)

Over 700 cyclists convened in Greenfield for the Hancock Flat 50 bike ride on Aug. 26..

Sweet Shop  
35147445

Madison Millwork 1/4V  
35147714

Better Business Bureau  
35147366



Clockwise from left: A cyclist awaits the start of the Hancock Flat 50 bike ride. // Cyclists speed through the streets of Greenfield. // Over 700 cyclists convened in Greenfield for the Hancock Flat 50 bike ride.

For his friend's 66th birthday, they decided to participate in the Hancock Flat 50, which was comparably easier than other rides he had done before. A recent ride, Watson mentioned, was across the state of Iowa, which was more than 500 miles and "epic climbing."

Cathy Gardner mentioned she has been cycling for more than 40 years and also participated in a long-distance bike ride across Iowa. After hearing about Hancock Flat 50, Gardner thought it would be a good way to get back on the bike.

"Riding in general, you get to see places in detail that you don't get to see when you're going in the car," Gardner said. "I noticed that going down 40, looking at houses I've never paid any attention to when driving. That's the benefit of being on the bike and slowing down and calming down."

Back at the tents, Jillian Collins volunteered to help with registration

**PRELIMINARY RESULTS**

**50 mile ride**

- First place:** Josh Drake, 1:57:24
- Second place:** Gregory Nemeth, 1:57:24
- Third place:** Matt Tanner, 1:57:24

**25 mile ride**

- First place:** Anna Stanley, 1:07:58
- Second place:** Rick Stanley, 1:07:59
- Third place:** John Adams, 1:09:29

and merch because her boyfriend was participating in the race.

"I think it's great for people to get out and enjoy community events but also be healthy and exercise," Collins said.

Next to the registration and merch tent in the alley was a recovery table by Hancock Health Wellness Center, the Snowy Bus selling snow cones, a Wooden Bear beer tent, Penny Lane photo bus and

more vendors. Once riders were finished, they were able to take their food ticket and choose from options that included pizza, sandwiches and more. While eating, people were able to listen to live music by Project 19 located in the middle of Living Alley.

Plans for next year's event are already underway, with the ride planned for Saturday, Aug. 24.

As far as tips for community members who want to get involved in next year's event, many riders shared the advice of starting out slow and that, no matter the age or body type, anyone can do it.

David Stevenson, who started cycling approximately nine months ago for health benefits, said that the 25-mile ride was the longest ride he and his wife have ever done. Stevenson's advice to someone who is thinking about picking up cycling is simple.

"Just start."

Jane Pauley Community Health Center  
35147461

Jack's Donuts of Greenfield  
35147459

Penny's Florist Home Decor & Monuments  
35147470

Fountaintown Gas Co., Inc.  
35147448



Brandt Walden works at his family's farm in Wilkinon on July 10. A former Eastern Hancock student, Walden chose to be a farrier, which is not a common job. He's a former 4-H participant who thought he would end up being in the rodeo.

# Forging his way

County farrier crafts handmade shoes

By Kristy Deer  
DAILY REPORTER  
[kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:kdeer@greenfieldreporter.com)

Wells Nursery  
35147480

Medicap Pharmacy  
35147209

Crown Pointe Senior Living Community  
35147319



**HANCOCK COUNTY**

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on July 21.*

The twists and turns of life landed Brandt Walden exactly where he is supposed to be — making a living taking care of horse hooves.

While Walden, 21, Wilkinson,

had visions of becoming a rodeo champ one day, he instead became one of the county's top farriers — a specialist in equine hoof care, including trimming and balancing of horses' hooves and the placing of shoes on horses' hooves.

Brandt Walden puts a shoe on his own horse at his family's farm in Wilkinson. In the foreground are some of the tools he uses for his craft.

"I never would have thought I was going to be a farrier in a million years," Walden said. "I went to college on a rodeo scholarship as a team roper."

Instead of trying to rope animals while hanging on for dear life atop a bronco, Walden works on the other end of the horse, taking special care to make sure horse hooves are fitted correctly.

A former 10-year Hancock County 4-H Fair member who showed swine and steer, Walden took off for college in Northeastern Oklahoma after graduating from Eastern Hancock High School in 2020.

"When I got there I quickly realized college was not for me, but I ended up learning and seeing a few things when I was out there," Walden said.

For starters, Walden noticed the shoe work on the horses was not done correctly from his view.

"It was so bad, just not up to par," he said. "So, I figured what little I had learned from a farrier I had worked with here in Indiana would help me do a better job."

Walden started working on horses from the college rodeo team, including his own horse named Kat, and quickly realized he was pretty good at it.

"I wasn't trained in anything, but I knew a lot about horses," Walden said.

After finishing up his first year of college, Walden started educating

himself on becoming a farrier and even took specialized classes.

"If I'm going to do something, I'm going to do it all the way or not at all," Walden said.

By 2021 the idea of owning his own business and working with horses was becoming a reality. He went to the Heartland Horseshoeing School in Lamar, Missouri for more education on the craft.

"It's funny because I ended up about 45 minutes from where I was in college in Oklahoma, but just in a different state," he said with a laugh.

Walden said getting into farrier school was not easy and that it usually takes three to four years after applying to be accepted. However, he caught a break and called a couple days before classes started in 2021 and got in.

"People come from all over the world to get into that school so I got really lucky," he said. "A guy from overseas backed out and they happened to have an opening."

After seven months of training, Walden came back to Indiana in October of 2022 and started the Brandt Walden Farrier Service, CJF.



Brandt Walden's certificates from his years learning his craft.

Ivy Tech Community College - Anderson  
35147365

House Ads - DR  
35147331





Brandt Walden works on a horse shoe.

“I pretty much just went to shoeing after I got my certifications,” Walden said.

With a workshop he created on the family farm and the ability to travel where he needs to work to help horses, Walden is a busy man.

“As far as certified journeymen go, there are only 11 of us in the whole state,” Walden said. “Business is going really good because things blew up pretty fast.”

On average, Walden works four full days a week, but he noted four full days of farrier work can feel like a

months’ worth of work due to the hard labor.

“You gotta be in shape. That’s for sure,” Walden said. “The vast majority of the horses’ shoes I do, I build handmade while the majority of horses get manufactured shoes.”

The work includes trimming the foot, like humans do with fingernails and toenails; plus he noted every horse foot is different.

“I want things to be balanced for the horse because you don’t want your horse wearing high heels all the time,” he said. “You want a shoe that is

natural and the other thing, they grow out of them too.”

Walden noted there are a million different options and tools when it comes to forging horseshoes, and each horse deserves their own unique set of shoes.

“It’s an art. That’s for sure,” Walden said. “Watching a horse walk is a big part of assessing them.”

Walden sees horses he works on every six weeks to trim the shoes to make sure the horse has a smooth trot.

“Shoes can last anywhere from six months to two years depending on the type of the shoe you make,” Walden said. “I can tell you handmade shoes last a lot longer and fit better than ones that are manufactured.”

Farriers are true craftsmen, Walden said.

“You’ve got to have a passion for it because if you’re doing this just for the money, it would be a miserable job,” he said. “I’d rather go the extra mile and spend the extra time and end up with a better job on the horse even if it takes a little more time.”

Walden charges \$50 per shoe and noted it is money well spent as taking care of a horse’s foot is one of the most important things a horse owner can do.

“The foot and the diet, those are the two things,” Walden said.

When he’s not fitting, forging and putting on shoes, Walden likes to compete in farrier competitions which include, novice, intermediate and pro

classes in the World Championship Blacksmiths.

“The competitions are all over the place, and I’ll be taking part in some of those competitions in the future,” Walden said.

The love of horses is what first got Walden into the horse hoof business, but it’s the love of hard work and finding the right fit for each horse that keeps him pounding away.

That includes working with an anvil — a heavy steel or iron block with a flat top, concave sides, and typically a pointed end, on which metal can be hammered and shaped.

“The one I have at home weighs about 200 pounds and it’s a great piece of equipment,” Walden said.

Having the proper tools is key for every farrier to be able to pound the metal so they can make the right kind of shoes for the horses, which means



Brandt Walden, a former Eastern Hancock student, is a farrier.

Walden also needs a forge, a type of hearth used for heating metals.

With multiple hammers and pounding devices, Walden said he’s always learning something about the tools of the trade.

In the end though, the reward comes

when he’s got a happy horse.

“It’s a wonderful feeling when it’s all done seeing the horse walk and feel good in a proper pair of shoes,” Walden said. “It’s a tangible thing I can see and to know I made the shoes with my hands.”

**Meals on Wheels of Hancock County**  
35147468

**Zig-Zag Corner Quilts 1/4V**  
35147706

**Wal-mart GSS-NA**  
35147207



Fortville Elementary 4th grader Emily Schank poses in front of a gingerbread village she helped create along with her classmates based on Fortville businesses.

# Tasty town

Fortville fourth-graders create sweet replica of their town

By Shelley Swift  
DAILY REPORTER

[sswift@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:sswift@greenfieldreporter.com)

## FORTVILLE

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Dec. 17.*

Downtown Fortville never looked so sweet. Fourth graders at Fortville Elementary School have once again created a “gingerbread” version of the quaint little town, with graham cracker replicas of the stores along Broadway and Main streets and a model train running through the center of town.

It even has the town’s iconic pink elephant statue sporting sunglasses and the tall white water tower with Fortville in big black letters across the front.

While not exactly to scale, teacher Lydgia Palmer said the size and layout of the

St. Michael Catholic School  
35147324

Elwood Staffing - Greenfield  
35147323



Fortville Elementary students help create a giant gingerbread village based on Fortville businesses.

buildings are meant to represent the actual layout downtown.

This is the fifth year the school has participated in the project, which is part of a global STEAM-inspired initiative which challenges students around the world to create graham-cracker versions of their cities and towns.

STEAM is a teaching concept which stands for science, technology, engineering, art and math.

Palmer said the gingerbread challenge incorporates all those concepts into one fun project, shared by students around the world.

On Wednesday, Dec. 14, the Fortville students shared their creation via a Zoom call with students in a Kansas classroom, who in turn shared their own gingerbread town.

Earlier this week, parents and downtown business owners stopped by Fortville Elementary to see the village for themselves.

Nine-year-old Emily Schank proudly showed off the model storefronts she helped create — the Time & Again gift shop and Studio 309 art studio on the south end of town.

Her favorite parts were the blue frosting drapes on the gift shop, and

the tiny framed sign of Buddy the Elf in the studio's front window.

"Our strategy was to make everything to be as flat as possible so it would be easier to ice," Schank explained, pointing out the graham cracker shutters on the windows.

When her team ran low on black licorice for the studio's roof, they improvised by cutting each piece in half longways to make it go farther, and went around the classroom seeking out black licorice from other students.

Palmer said the students not only had a blast building the village, they learned plenty in the process.

"It's such a fun project that they learn without even realizing it," she said.

The learning incorporates all the elements of STEAM, said Palmer.

For science, the students design circuit boards to light up the village. For technology, they create slides showcasing all they learned about their individual buildings.

The art element was perhaps the most fun, as students worked methodically to adorn their businesses in plenty of icing and an assortment of candy and cereal.

They learned engineering through the planning and building process, which incorporated math by having students figure out the area and perimeter of each building, calculating how many graham crackers it would

take to build each one to scale.

The students took great pride in the level of detail, coloring their icing to match the color of each building, and adding color copies of the signage in each one. One student pointed out that the toothpicks on the front of the Foxgarden building in a crisscross pattern were there to replicate the historic building's brick facade.

One building boasted a roof made of Cinnamon Toast cereal, while another featured two chimneys made from stacks of Starburst candies. Skittles, gumdrops and peppermint candies adorned the outer walls while furniture fashioned from candy and crackers were placed inside.

Local business owner Mike Staton was impressed by the level of detail when he stopped by the display earlier this week.

"This is really impressive," he said, as he checked out the replica of his business, Seal's Funeral Home, which he's owned for 20 years.

Along with other downtown business owners, Staton stopped by the school to speak with students before their village-building began. It was a great way to connect with students and help them put faces with the names behind local businesses they see every day, he said.

Town planner Adam Zaklikowski also stopped by, teaching the students about city planning and development.

"I definitely learned a lot about the

businesses and people in Fortville," said Schank, who frequently walks from her home into town.

After learning about local business, students were divided into groups of two to four to study and build a particular building. Each group was required to write a research paper and create a slideshow sharing what they learned.

Then, it was time to build. While most groups were assigned businesses, others were tasked with creating local parks or each of the schools in their school system.

Once complete, all the creations

were displayed within the common area shared by the fourth-grade classes at the school, where it will remain through the start of Christmas Break on Dec. 16.

While the display is too delicate to transport for public display, Palmer said it brings plenty of joy to students each year.

"When you think about it, what are you going to remember from school when you grow up? Building a gingerbread version of your town is probably right up there," she said. "The kids really love doing it, and it gets bigger and bigger each year."



Fortville Elementary students help create a giant gingerbread village based on Fortville businesses.

**Greenfield Area Chamber of Commerce**  
1/8H

35147707

**Trinity Park Church**  
35147478

**ICAP/Head Start**  
35147322

**Moore's Repair**  
35147325

## SCHOOLS

**New Palestine High School**  
4485 S. Victory Drive  
New Palestine, IN 46163 317-861-4417  
Jim Voelz, principal  
jvoelz@newpal.k12.in.us

**New Palestine Junior High School**  
2279 S. County Road 600W  
New Palestine, IN 46163 317-861-4487  
Jessica Neill, principal  
jneill@newpal.k12.in.us

**New Palestine Intermediate School**  
5613 W. County Road 200S  
New Palestine, IN 46163 317-861-3267  
Vincent Meo, principal  
vmeo@newpal.k12.in.us

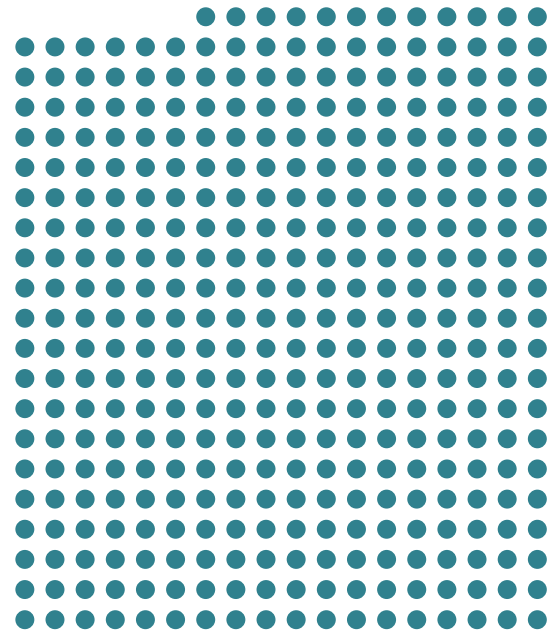
**Brandywine Elementary**  
413 E. County Road 400S  
Greenfield, IN 46140  
317-462-7396  
Austin Theobald, principal  
atheobald@newpal.k12.in.us

**New Palestine Elementary**  
4801 S. County Road 500W  
New Palestine, IN 46163 317-861-5287  
Kayleigh Fosnow, principal  
kfosnow@newpal.k12.in.us

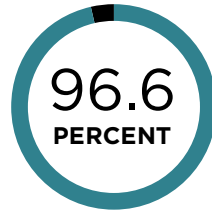
**Sugar Creek Elementary**  
2337 S. County Road 600W  
New Palestine, IN 46163  
317-861-6747  
Jan Kehrt, principal  
jkehrt@newpal.k12.in.us

# SOUTHERN HANCOCK

P.O. BOX 508 • NEW PALESTINE 46163 • 317.861.4463



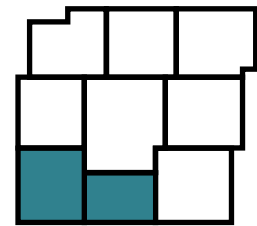
**2022-2023 ENROLLMENT: 3,721** • Represents 10 students



**2022-2023 GRADUATION RATE**

# A

**2022-2023 ACCOUNTABILITY GRADE**



## THE DISTRICT

Children in Sugar Creek and Brandywine townships attend Southern Hancock schools.

### ADMINISTRATION

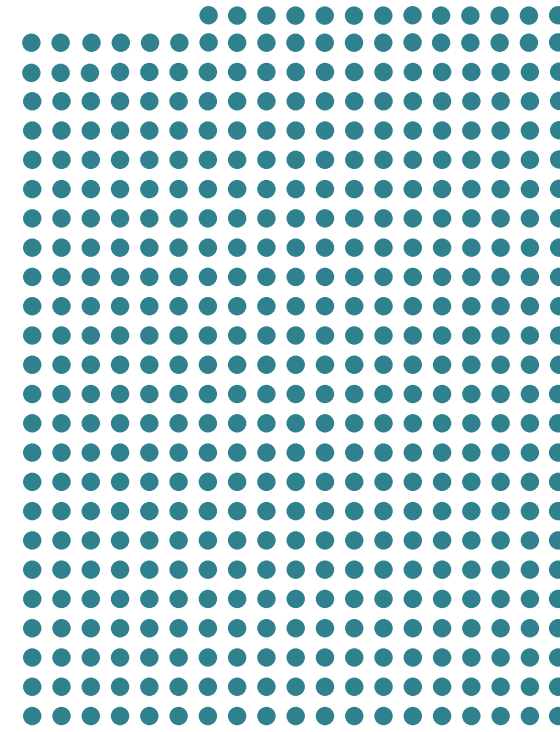
**SUPERINTENDENT: Lisa Lantrip**  
llantrip@newpal.k12.in.us | 317-861-4463, ext. 117  
**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT: Robert Yoder**  
byoder@newpal.k12.in.us | 317-861-4463, ext. 111  
**DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION: Miles Hercamp**  
mhercamp@newpal.k12.in.us | 217-861-4463, ext. 118

### SCHOOL BOARD

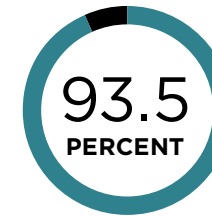
Matt Ackerman, Brian McKinney, Laura Haeberle, Jon Hooker, Dan Walker

# MT. VERNON

1806 W. STATE ROAD 234 • FORTVILLE 46040 317.485.3100



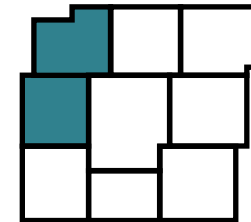
**2022-2023 ENROLLMENT: 4,677** • Represents 10 students



**2021-2022 GRADUATION RATE**

# A

**2021-2022 ACCOUNTABILITY GRADE**



## THE DISTRICT

Children in Buck Creek and Vernon townships attend Mt. Vernon schools.

### ADMINISTRATION

**SUPERINTENDENT: Jack Parker**  
jack.parker@mvcsc.k12.in.us | 317-485-3100  
**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT: Chris Smedley**  
chris.smedley@mvcsc.k12.in.us | 317-485-3100 ext. 5104  
**DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM: Scott Shipley**  
scott.shipley@mvcsc.k12.in.us | 317-485-3100 ext. 2158  
**DIRECTOR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION: Scott Shipley**

### SCHOOL BOARD

Kellie Freeman, Tony May, Shannon Walls, Chad Gray, Phil Edwards

## SCHOOLS

**Mt. Vernon High School**  
8112 N. County Road 200 W.  
Fortville, IN 46040  
317-485-3131  
Brooke Tharp, principal  
brooke.tharp@mvcsc.k12.in.us

**Mt. Vernon Middle School**  
1862 W. State Road 234  
Fortville, IN 46040  
317-485-3160  
Lori Katz, principal  
lori.katz@mvcsc.k12.in.us

**Fortville Elementary**  
8414 N. County Road 200W  
Fortville, IN 46040  
317-485-3180  
Vince Edwards  
vince.edwards@mvcsc.k12.in.us

**McCordsville Elementary**  
7177 N. County Road 600W  
McCordsville, IN 46055  
317-336-7760  
Stephanie Miller, principal  
stephanie.miller@mvcsc.k12.in.us

**Mt. Comfort Elementary**  
5694 W. County Road 300 N  
Greenfield, IN 46140  
317-894-7667  
Donald Turner, principal  
donnie.turner@mvcsc.k12.in.us

**Mini-Marauder Preschool**  
1806 W. State Road 234  
Fortville IN 46040  
317-485-3100  
Hunter Eineman, Mini-Marauder Preschool Coordinator  
hunter.eineman@mvcsc.k12.in.us

Shepherd Insurance, Inc.  
35147475

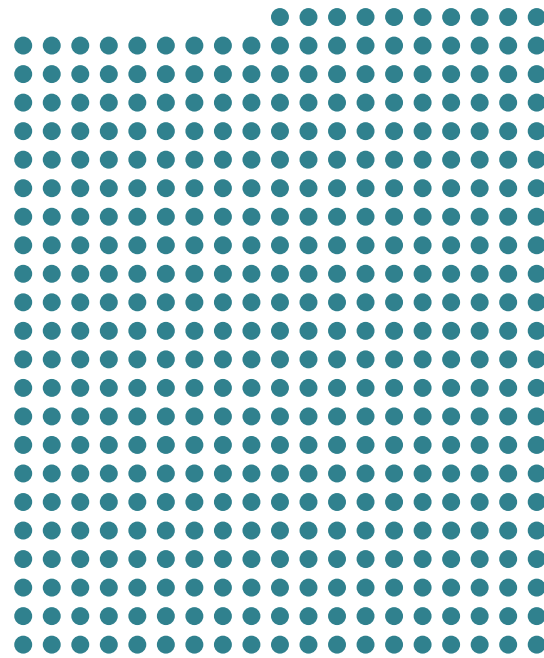
Team Image  
35147477

Denver's Garage Pizza and Brew  
35147244

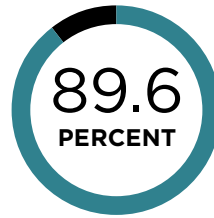
McCordsville Family Dentistry  
35147361

# GREENFIELD-CENTRAL

110 W. NORTH ST. • GREENFIELD 46140 • 317-462-4434



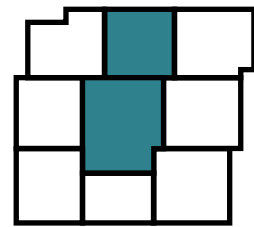
**2022-2023 ENROLLMENT:** 4,282 • Represents 10 students



**2022-2023 GRADUATION RATE**

# B

**2022-2023 ACCOUNTABILITY GRADE**



## THE DISTRICT

Children in Center and Green townships attend Greenfield-Central schools.

### ADMINISTRATION

**SUPERINTENDENT:** Harold Olin  
holin@gcsc.k12.in.us | 317-462-4434

**DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION:**

**Mr. Devon Marine** | dmarine@gcsc.k12.in.us

**DIRECTOR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION:**

**Mr. Scott Kern** | skern@gcsc.k12.in.us

### SCHOOL BOARD

Dan Brown, Hillary Close,  
Dr. Lori Wean,  
John Rihm, Clark Smith

## SCHOOLS

### Greenfield-Central High School

810 N. Broadway St.  
Greenfield, IN 46140 317-462-9211  
Jason Cary, principal  
jcary@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Greenfield Central Junior High School

1440 N. Franklin St.  
Greenfield, IN 46140 317-477-4616  
Jim Bever, principal  
jbever@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Greenfield Intermediate

204 W. Park Ave.  
Greenfield, IN 46140 317-462-6827  
Devon Marine, principal  
dmarine@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Maxwell Intermediate

102 N. Main St., Maxwell, IN 46140  
317-326-3121  
Jobie Whitaker, principal  
jwhitaker@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Eden Elementary

8185 N. State Road 9  
Greenfield, IN 46140 317-326-3117  
Melia Hammons, principal  
mhammons@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Harris Elementary

200 W. Park Ave., Greenfield, IN  
46140 317-467-6731  
Sarah Greulich, principal  
sgreulich@gcsc.k12.in.us

### J.B. Stephens Elementary

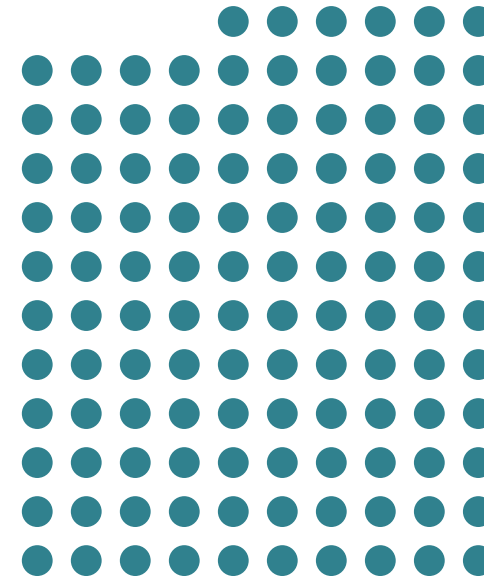
1331 N. Blue Road  
Greenfield, IN 46140 317-462-4491  
Shane Bryant, principal  
shbryant@gcsc.k12.in.us

### Weston Elementary

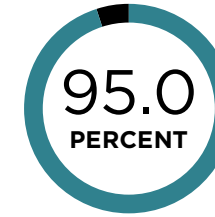
140 Polk St., Greenfield, IN 46140  
317-462-1492  
Meg Welch, principal  
mwelch@gcsc.k12.in.us

# EASTERN HANCOCK

10370 E. CR 250N • CHARLOTTESVILLE 46117 • 317.936.5444



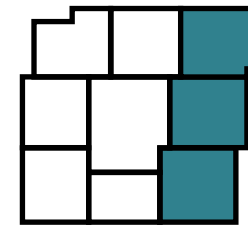
**2022-2023 ENROLLMENT:** 1,169 • Represents 10 students



**2022-2023 GRADUATION RATE**

# A

**2022-2023 ACCOUNTABILITY GRADE**



## THE DISTRICT

Children in Blue River, Brown and Jackson townships attend Eastern Hancock schools.

### ADMINISTRATION

**SUPERINTENDENT:**  
**George Philhower**  
gphilhower@easternhancock.org  
317-936-5444

### SCHOOL BOARD

Steve Brock, James R.  
Jackson Jr., Scott Johnson,  
Tammy Settergren, Tammy  
Stunda

## SCHOOLS

### Eastern Hancock High School

10320 E. County Road  
250N,  
Charlottesville, IN 46117  
317-936-5595  
or 317-467-0095  
Adam Barton, principal  
abarton@easternhancock.org

### Eastern Hancock Middle School

10380 E. County Road  
250 N, Charlottesville,  
IN 46117  
317-936-5324  
Adam Barton, principal  
abarton@easternhancock.org

### Eastern Hancock Elementary

10450 E. County Road  
250N, Charlottesville,  
IN 46117  
317-936-5829  
Amanda Pyle, principal  
apyle@easternhancock.org

Swindell Farm Equipment, LLC  
35147437

Cynthia's Hallmark  
35147439

Biggs Automotive  
35147373

Mitchell-Fleming Printing  
35147408



# Connecting steps

Walkers meet near local church, trek downtown together

By Anne Durham Smith  
DAILY REPORTER  
annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com

Several times a week, a group gathers at Main and Pennsylvania streets to spend an hour walking. A fast-paced ensemble of, from left, Ann Vail, Julie Rogers, T.J. Banes and Shelley Rogers wound along several paths in Park Cemetery during an afternoon walk on Nov. 7.

## GREENFIELD

One grabs a nearby post to steady herself as she stretches, bending a knee and clutching the foot lifted up behind her.

It's a Monday afternoon, and a few more people have pulled into the parking lot south of Bradley United Methodist Church. Gathering on the sidewalk, several look at

their wrists and set times.

Julie Rogers sets her watch for 30 minutes. When the clock reaches that mark, she'll know it's time to turn this group around and start making their way back toward the church.

Rogers started gathering a group to walk downtown

Greenfield four and a half years ago, when she retired.

"I wanted a way to connect, just a connection between our church and the community," she said. There are such connections, she said, but "We didn't have anything like this."

Rogers has worked out regularly for years and strongly recommends exercise, for mental health benefits as well as physical ones, she said. A walking group seemed like something doable for a wide range of ages and abilities.

With that range of abilities in mind, she decided early on to set a time and not a distance for the walks. If they walked the hour, even if the distance traveled was shorter sometimes, she'd call it a win.

Kathy McCorkle had been walking occasionally with a neighbor but decided to also show up to step out with the Greenfield Walkabouts, as Rogers dubbed them, for the Tuesday and Thursday morning walks. (The group also walks Monday and Wednesday afternoons.)

"It's really good fellowship, and I've gotten to know the ladies better than I did before," McCorkle said. "I think I get as much out of it that way as the actual physical activity."

McCorkle said she's also gotten to know the city better. Sometimes the group walks the sidewalks of nearby

## STEP BY STEP

Walkers set out from the parking lot at the southwest corner of Main and Pennsylvania streets in downtown Greenfield. Walks begin at 4:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, and at 9 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Anyone is welcome to show up for a walk.

Walks continue as much as possible through the winter. If there's a low temperature but some sun and a manageable wind chill, for example, the group might still walk.

The group has a "Greenfield Walkabouts" page on Facebook.

neighborhoods. Sometimes it walks on the Pennsy Trail, often seeing backs of buildings and guessing at what they might be. "You could see areas that you can't really see when you're driving," she said.

Walkers have gone as far west along the trail as Labcorp near Main Street and Meridian Road, and as far east as Morristown Pike, then walking south on the Brandywine Connector Trail to Brandywine Park. Other times they've gone south on State Street and wound through Park Cemetery. Or they've walked north to Mary Moore Outdoor Education Center, near the intersection of Franklin Street and McKenzie Road, and walked the center's trails.

"We've seen all sorts of birds, flora and fauna in the city," said another

walker, Sue True.

Like McCorkle, True started walking with the group at its inception. She's found it to be even more fulfilling than she anticipated, and she has lost about 15 pounds.

"We're called by God, as Christians, to be good stewards," she said. "We can't be good stewards of the earth and God's people if we aren't also good stewards of our bodies."

While many of the walkers attend Bradley together, not all of them do, and the group welcomes anyone who would like to join the walks. Men, women and accompanying children or grandchildren of adult walkers have all been part of the walks over the years.

"I would love to have more people in the community come out," Rogers said, "and at least try it."

Greenfield Beverage Company  
35147414

Wolf Law Office  
35147430

Bell Mortuary & Crematory  
35147410

Frosty Boy Drive-In  
35147412



# 'On fire for the Lord'

## Kingdom Word congregation fills chapel with exuberant praise

By Anne Durham Smith  
DAILY REPORTER

[annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com)

The stained-glass windows of The Garden Chapel provide a backdrop during a service of Kingdom Word Outreach Ministries in Greenfield. The congregation began renting the chapel, which continues to offer wedding and event venue services, in January. Services are at 1 p.m. Sundays with Bible study at 7 p.m. Tuesdays.

### GREENFIELD

The belted words of a Psalm resound among the wooden pews, filling the white chapel with sound.

"The Lord is my light and salvation / whom shall I fear / of whom shall I be afraid?"

Three singers sway rhythmically up front as they sing out lyrics based on Psalm 27 in the Bible. The congregation joins in as the line is repeated. At the east end of the stage a small band meshes with the voices, the drummer punctuating beats and the organist's fingers scurrying over the keys with animation.

It's Sunday afternoon, and the congregation of Kingdom Word Outreach Ministries has gathered for worship in downtown Greenfield.

"At the Kingdom we also love to praise the name of the Lord," the lead singer says. "We love to give him a good dance, we love to give him a good shout. If you don't mind ... put your hands together while we praise the Name."

There will be a lot of clapping during this service, not only for keeping beat during the singing, but also for expressing agreement during the sermon.

Deep into the Feb. 26 sermon, the speaker quotes a passage in the Gospel of Luke in which Jesus says he's calling not the righteous but sinners. He talks about being a clinic people visit as opposed to a hospital where the sick find healing.

"Tell it! Tell it!" comes a call from someone listening. Later in the sermon, several women stand up, gripping the pew in front of them and leaning forward, nodding. Sometimes the organ also springs back into action with an air of emphatic endorsement as well.

Kingdom Word began renting space in The Garden Chapel, a wedding and event venue at 226 W. North St., in January. The congregation's services are at 1 p.m. Sundays.

Morgan Thomas, owner of The Garden Chapel, continues to operate the chapel but said she had decided to give up Sundays for weddings so she could attend church herself and spend time with her family. She said she'd been praying about how God would use the chapel and began to reach out to churches.

Attorneys Title Agency of Indiana, LLC  
35147246

Hancock Economic Development  
Council  
35147292

Armstrong Garage Doors  
35147413

All Pets Go to Heaven Cemetery  
35147411



Congregation members take part during a service at Kingdom Word Outreach Ministries in Greenfield.

“The moment I spoke to Kingdom Word Outreach Ministries, I knew they were the ones. They were on fire for the Lord, and just genuine people ready to do outreach in our community,” she wrote in an email. “... So yes, I am also doing weddings, receptions, and events on the other days of the week! The only difference now, is that God is able to SHINE a little brighter through this little chapel. Our community has already been so welcoming of them ... this will be a blessing to our growing community!”

Before moving to Greenfield, Kingdom Word shared a building in Indianapolis with another church, a little north of the Interstate 70/Interstate 65 north split.

“My desire was for God to give

us our own location ... Lo and behold, God just connected the dots,” said the church’s pastor, Bishop Alexander Wortham. “It was a great blessing.”

Kingdom Word is an independent, non-denominational church, Wortham said. He has ties, though, to the Church of the Living God, which has headquarters in Indianapolis.

“We worship, we praise, we shout, we speak in tongues,” Wortham said. “Our church is a power-packed Pentecostal movement.”

Church of the Living God leaders visited Greenfield on Feb. 26 for a dedication service. They count nearly 50 churches with such ties in more than a dozen states — in addition to several overseas.

“I hope to see more people added to the Body of Christ,” Bishop Dr. Calvin Wortham said after the Greenfield

service. It was his first dedication service as general overseer, and he preached the sermon for the service, in which he used the clinic vs. hospital analogy. “I look forward to coming back and seeing the growth.”

Daniella Phillips joined Kingdom Word about a year ago after being a “loyal visitor” for a while.

“Then they welcomed my family, and I didn’t feel like just a number,” she said. “They actually took an interest in including my kids into the church, and that was what sold me. It’s really like a big family.”

Wortham said about 14 new members have joined the church since January. He said he and his wife, Lakeisha, have met people and struck up conversations as they’ve run errands in town, and some of them have come to a service.

Wortham has also felt welcomed by

fellow pastors in town, meeting many at the local ministerial association and being invited to speak at a Greater Greenfield Body Builders gathering focused on evangelism today (March 11) at Curry’s Chapel Church.

“We’re trying to do a lot of things in Greenfield. I know my goal is to really get out in the community. I know it’s a culture shock for a lot of people, you know, with us being a predominantly African American church,” he said. “But I think it gives people an opportunity to say, ‘Hey, let’s fellowship’ ... I’m excited to see some of the (local) pastors come today and fellowshiped with us. That was encouraging.

“We’re excited to be a part of the community. ... I’m excited for this new season and to see what God has in store.”

Fletcher Dental  
35147421

Hatoway Insurance Partners  
35147406

Gentle Dentist - American Family Dental Group  
35147424

Talitha Koum Womens Recovery House LTD  
35147423





# ‘Still praying together’

Mt. Lebanon congregation to mark 175 years

## GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on June 10.*

Julian Nicholson could look at the sheet music, transpose it and keep going, making the organ sing.

Jesse Konkle taught Sunday School for years. A carpenter by trade, he built a pulpit, a cross and other furnishings for his church — then felt uncomfortable when fellow church members dedicated a stained glass window in his honor.

Myron Applegate remembers these and other faithful people who’ve been part of Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church through the years. Sunday, the congregation will mark 175 years

of ministry with musical guests, cake and ice cream.

“My earliest memories of life started there, I think,” said Applegate, the church’s lay leader.

Applegate remembers there was an outhouse outside the church when he was a very young boy, before the church added an annex with fellowship hall, indoor restrooms and kitchen to its building in 1959.

But more than structural changes, he remembers people through the years who did their part in the church’s work and set an example. The Montrose sisters, Beverly and Rosalind, kept up with church history

Hancock Co. Public Library  
35147433

Eastern Hancock Community Schools  
Corp./L  
35147429



Linda Virt, a member at Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church, admires the Worship Hall during a recent visit. The church is celebrating its 175th anniversary.

and accounting. Flora Jean Arthur was a faithful pianist for many years.

Robert Truitt was a longtime lay leader who recruited people for different tasks and roles, “and if we wanted to change something, he’d say, ‘We’d better think about that biblically,’” Applegate recalls.

Nicholson and Konkle “had humble hearts,” he said. “They did not want to be in the spotlight for anything, but they were important to the church.”

Yet the story of Mt. Lebanon does not start with that group of people or the building in which they have gathered. It begins with pioneers who arrived in Brandywine Township around the 1830s and cleared land and began farming, and/or brought their trades knowledge and started businesses. Some of their names are visible in two cemeteries flanking the church; the earliest burials appear to have been in the 1850s. The cemeteries are separate organizations from the church, Applegate said, but various families of the

## CELEBRATING 175 YEARS

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church will celebrate its 175th anniversary on June 11, and the community is invited. The Victorious Trio will lead a service at 10:30 a.m.

At 6:30 p.m., Fred Powers will lead a hymn sing. Powers was part of the Melody Masters that for many years would play hymn sing concerts at local churches and the Hancock County 4-H Fair.

After the hymn sing, cake and ice cream will be served.

church are among the people buried there: Millbourn, Andis, Low, Richardson, Pope, Smith and others.

Mill operator James Smith welcomed a circuit-riding minister, Thomas Shipp, when he came to the township and proposed starting a church. According to a

book of church history, “Mount Lebanon: A Frontier Faith,” a revival meeting in a nearby home yielded a group of 16 who organized Mt. Lebanon Methodist Protestant Church in 1848. Smith offered land for the first building, a log structure that stood in what’s now the cemetery south of the present building.

The log structure burned in 1858, and services continued in area school houses until a brick structure was built at 3447 S. State Road 9, south of Greenfield, in 1882.

This is the building Applegate began attending as a boy. This is the building where young people grew into pastors, and missionaries and future church leaders. The church history book includes a list of ministers and missionaries sent out from Mt. Lebanon.

This is the building where people worked to expand and improve the space. Young people sold sloppy joes at local auctions and apple dumplings at the Riley Festival to raise money for some of the

stained glass windows. The church added on in 1959 and 1982.

This is the building where a congregation gathered for homemade doughnuts and one-act plays on New Year’s Eve, where children carefully recited their rehearsed parts for Christmas programs and children’s day programs. “We were scared to death to get up before the church,” Marie DeShong writes in the church history book, “but people always said we were good.”

This is the building where present-day members gather crutches, wheelchairs and medical supplies to provide to those who need them. It’s where they organize electronics recycling days to allow people to properly dispose of computers, TVs and other electronics. It where they exit, under Konkle’s hand-made wooden “Depart to serve” sign, to go



This is how Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church looked from the south before a 1959 addition to the building. Submitted photo

out and volunteer at the local hospital, or homeless shelter, or food pantry.

This is the building where the congregation has prayed together through the decades. Both Applegate and another longtime member, Linda Virt, mentioned prayerfulness as a foremost characteristic of the church. An anniversary banner outside notes the

congregation is “Celebrating 175 years and still praying together!”

The prayers continue as the church looks back on 175 years and celebrates with music, cake and ice cream.

“We just want to have a good time that we’ve been there 175 years,” Applegate said. “We pray that we’ll have more years to come.”

Moondrops Distillery 1/2H  
35147716



Twinstunts motorcycle stunt team performs at the 2022 Greenfield Bike Fest. They'll be among the performers at this year's event, too, set for July 8. Submitted photo

# On a roll

## Greenfield Bike Fest hopes to build on first year's success

By Anne Durham Smith  
DAILY REPORTER  
annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com

### GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on June 24.*

When several groups partnered on a motorcycle event on the east side of Greenfield last summer, they weren't sure how many the new event would draw.

The answer was plenty — an estimated 600 festivalgoers, so many that organizers paved a larger area and planned for a larger sequel.

The second annual Greenfield Bike Fest is set for 5 p.m. July 8. Greenfield Motorcycle Riders, Greenfield Music Store and Evangel Church organize the event, which takes place in the parking lot at Evangel Church, 1221 E. Main St.

"The first year was just a huge crowd. We actually didn't have enough parking," said Jody Ballenger, a leader of the motorcycle club and pastor of the church. "This year we almost doubled everything. We built a new parking lot just for Bike Fest."

The large lot in back will become an arena, bordered

### BIKER CHURCH

Greenfield Bike Fest at 5 p.m. July 8 is a not-overtly-spiritual but family-friendly event. Anyone is welcome. A rider from Ride4Life motorcycle stunt team will talk about his Christian faith journey at some point during the event.

That same rider will speak in worship at Evangel Church on July 9. The church is dubbing that day's theme "Biker Church." The service begins at 10:15 a.m.

by hay bales and flanked by bleachers. Last year a motorcycle stunt team performed; this year there will be two.

The increase Ballenger spoke of also applies to entertainment. Christian Terry, who appeared on "American Idol," is back this year, and two other musical acts have been added. So have some Frontier Elite Wrestling matches.

A children's area will feature bounce houses such as an obstacle course, "ax" throwing

with a Velcro-tipped ax, and a basketball blowup. A large Connect Four-style game will be available to play.

Ice cream and caramel corn vendors will be selling refreshments near the children's area. Twenty-seven vendors total will be set up for those who want to browse items for sale.

Greenfield Bike Fest concludes with a fireworks show.

There's no admission charge, though people can buy food and other items from vendors. But those who go will see motorcycle stunts by Twinstunts and Ride4Life, along with wrestling, music and fireworks, for free.

Ballenger said that's a big part of the event: free family-friendly fun. Many private donations and some business sponsorships provide the funds to put on the event.

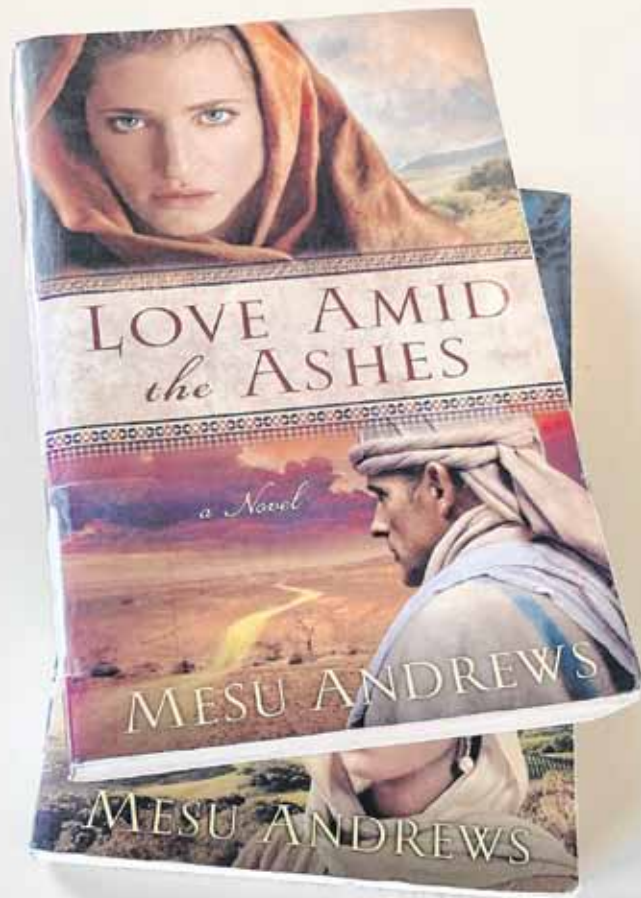
"I know that right now it just seems like times are tough and things are super expensive," he said. "I wanted to be able to provide free entertainment."

HRM Insurance - Hammons, Robertson & McClarnon  
35147415

Sprinkle & Ashley, CPA, LLC  
35147420

Helfrich Law Offices  
35147321

Hampton Inn - Greenfield  
35147320



# Faith-filled fiction

County native draws inspiration, for life, novels, from Bible

By Anne Durham Smith  
DAILY REPORTER  
annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com

Hancock County native Mesu Andrews has written more than a dozen novels inspired by people of the Bible. "Love Amid the Ashes" won a Christian Book Award from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association.

## GREENFIELD

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on July 22.*

**M**esu Andrews, an award-winning author from Hancock County, will be back in town and visit with readers at a local event next week.

She'll be at New Hope Church of the Nazarene from 4-6 p.m. Tuesday. Readers can learn how she does research, find out about her upcoming releases and hear her own personal story.

Mesu Cooley grew up east of Greenfield, attending Charlottesville Elementary School in the years before the Charlottesville and Wilkinson elementaries merged into Eastern Hancock Elementary.

She participated in 4-H, earning ribbons in categories such as foods, home furnishings and personality improvement. She showed some early interest in writing, such as entering the Riley Festival's poetry contest when she was in elementary school. A poem submitted for the 1974 festival was published with other contest entries in

the Daily Reporter.

She was an honor roll student at Eastern Hancock High School, where she graduated in 1982.

She tells readers on her website that she had at one point rejected God, but "was rescued by an old high school friend, who discovered and shared Jesus with me."

The classmate was Roy Andrews, whom she had known since third grade. They married in 1984 and have two grown daughters, married with families of their own.

Roy later became a pastor and then a Bible college professor. Along the way Mesu developed a fruitful speaking and teaching ministry, but chronic illness later forced her to slow her pace.

"God never wastes our suffering," she writes on her website, "and it was during those long hours, days, and weeks in bed that my passion for biblical novels awakened."

The journey of writing historical fiction has been prolific, yielding more than a dozen novels, and has earned recognition. With her novel "Love Amid the Ashes," which examines the life of Job through the eyes of a family member, she won the 2012

award for Best New Author during the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association's annual Christian Book Awards.

In 2018, her novel "Isaiah's Daughter" won a Christy Award in the Historical Fiction category. Last month, her newest release, "Feast or Famine," made the ECPA's fiction bestseller list.

The Andrews live in North Carolina now but come back to Hancock County several times a year to visit family.

Typically they're so busy with those reunions, "We seldom connect with friends still in the community," Mesu Andrews wrote in an email to the Daily Reporter. "So, I was thrilled when Karen Campbell, of the Nameless

Creek Literary Club, reached out and offered to host the event at New Hope for anyone interested in hearing more about my books, how I got published, or how I keep biblical TRUTH central within a historical novel.

"Tuesday will be really casual with lots of Q&A. I can't wait!"

New Hope Church is the Nazarene is east of Greenfield on U.S. 40, in the Stringtown area. The address is 52 N. County Road 500E, Greenfield.

For more information regarding the author event or church, call Pastor Todd Reynolds at (765) 561-7850. To find more information about Mesu Andrews, visit her website at mesuandrews.com.

Mental Health Partners of Hancock County  
35147426

Post Net  
35147471

Arrowhead Golf Course  
35147364

Hope House  
35147428



The Comfort House is west of the church building at 2265 W. U.S. 40 in the Philadelphia community west of Greenfield. **Submitted photo**

# ‘WHERE HEALING CAN HAPPEN’

## Church remodels former parsonage into emergency housing

By Anne Durham Smith  
DAILY REPORTER  
[annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com](mailto:annesmith@greenfieldreporter.com)

### PHILADELPHIA

*This story was originally published in The Daily Reporter on Aug. 19.*

When a fire tore through a section of Greenfield Crossing Apartments in October, the 16 families displaced found temporary shelter with relatives or at Park Chapel Christian Church.

There was an outpouring of clothes, toys, restaurant gift cards, etc., to help displaced families in the days following that fire.

But it can take months, at minimum, for a family to be able to return to its home following a fire, flood, tornado or other disaster. Where does a family live in the meantime?



Janet Fannin writes on the newly installed drywall of the Comfort House. She was one of nearly 50 parishioners of Mt. Comfort Church who, in June, wrote Bible verses, prayers and other words of blessing and encouragement throughout the building. **Submitted photo**

That’s the idea behind the Comfort House, a former parsonage that Mt. Comfort Church has remodeled into space for two families on its Philadelphia campus at 2265 W. U.S. 40. The church will soon have a ribbon-cutting and open house for the facility, where the community can see the space.

“We want to create a safe and comfortable place where healing can happen,” said Ethan Maple,

lead pastor of Mt. Comfort Church.

Hancock County Commissioners awarded a grant of nearly \$249,375 in American Rescue Plan Act funds toward the remodeling of the more than 2,800 square feet in the former parsonage.

“Through the ARPA grant application process, emergency shelter and housing were identified as high-priority needs

Smith Insurance  
35147418

Faith Baptist Church - Greenfield  
35147425

Kemper CPA Group  
35147252

Mt. Comfort Animal Hospital  
35147282



Cabinets and appliances have been newly installed in one of the Comfort House's kitchens. Submitted photo

for our county,” wrote Katie Ottinger, community investment and grants officer for the Community Foundation of Hancock County. The foundation worked with county commissioners in the process of awarding the portion of ARPA funds the county set aside for non-profit organizations.

“We believe The Comfort House will help fill a gap in our community for families who are displaced from their homes, often due to circumstances beyond their control,” Ottinger continued in an email to the Daily Reporter. “Mt. Comfort Church has worked tirelessly to make this vision come to fruition, and the Community Foundation commends the church’s leadership for stepping up and responding to this need.”

Sarah House, a support navigator with Hancock Health Connection Center, wrote in an email, “We are excited to see this resource become available for families in Hancock County as the need for transitional housing and shelter has continued to grow. We look forward to learning more about the Comfort House and how their plan can serve the community.”

For months, people of the congregation and hired contractors have

### SEE THE HOUSE

A community open house for the Comfort House is planned for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 9 at 2265 W. U.S. 40, Greenfield, with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11:15 a.m. A free lunch from Smokin’ Barrel BBQ will be served, and there will be tours of the house. You can learn more about the house and how to support the project at <https://www.mtcomfortchurch.com/the-comfort-house/>.

worked to restructure the 1960s-built former parsonage. Crews have moved walls, reclaimed a garage as living space, and rebuilt from the studs out with fresh insulation, drywall, paint and furnishings.

A number of businesses have offered donations and/or discounts in some piece of the process. A plaque in the finished building’s entryway will list them.

“We want those guests to know: ‘Your community is here supporting you, not just Mt. Comfort Church,’” Maple said.

In decades past, it was common for churches to have a house nearby; it was where the pastor’s family lived and was among benefits attached to the job.

That practice has become less common, often phased out over time as churches instead offered a housing allowance or simply considered housing cost when setting a salary.

Churches in Philadelphia and Mt. Comfort merged effective Jan. 1, 2021. Maple is pastor of that united church, which has a 9 a.m. service in Philadelphia and a 10:45 a.m. service in Mt. Comfort, so there was no pastor in Philadelphia needing housing. Maple said the building had not been inhabited for about 10 years and was simply used for storage.

The remodeled building now has a common entrance with access to a laundry room. That entry hallway also branches off toward an eastern apartment and a western one. Both have a kitchen, dining/living space, a bathroom, and two bedrooms — one with bunks, the other with a queen-size bed.

Creators of the Comfort House hope an enclosed, family-oriented space will meet needs for families who’ve already experienced loss.

“To be able to come into the Comfort House,” Maple said, “and have a space and a home that is designated for you as a family to spread out and live and heal and kind of recover — that’s what we want to see.”



# YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY STARTS HERE

## ancock Wellness Center



[www.HancockWellness.org](http://www.HancockWellness.org)



**RE/MAX**  
Realty Group



**Voted BEST Real Estate Agency 3 Years Running!**  
**Jeff Clark Voted BEST Realtor 2 Years Running!**



**Mark Dudley/Owner**  
317-315-2300  
Mark Dudley Team



**Sue Mize/Owner**  
317-315-2288



**Nick Spegal**  
317-315-2295



**Michelle Collings**  
317-315-2315



**Jill Collins**  
317-315-2277



**Sue Miller**  
317-315-2308



**Phil Olson**  
317-315-2289



**Steve Sanford**  
317-315-2267



**Sharon Smith**  
317-315-2284



**Debbie & Bill  
Yozipovich  
The Yo Team**  
317-315-2273



**Lance Hollan**  
317-315-2279



**Sharon Muncy**  
317-315-2275



**Kathy Roberts**  
317-315-2285



**Linda Cox**  
317-315-2282  
Linda Cox Team



**Diane Sheets**  
317-315-2276  
Linda Cox Team



**Jeff Clark**  
317-315-2281  
Mark Dudley Team



**Mark Meier**  
317-313-3031  
Mark Dudley Team



**Sandy Alender**  
Team Coordinator  
Mark Dudley Team

[realtygroupgreenfield.com](http://realtygroupgreenfield.com)

**1797 N State Street • Greenfield | 317-462-5533**



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

DUDLEY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT  
the Mark Dudley Group