



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

APR
2024

The Hoosier experience of 1974 Tornado Super Outbreak

On April 3, 1974, the largest tornado outbreak of the 20th century hit 13 states, including Indiana, and became known as the 1974 Super Outbreak. Twenty-one of the 148 tornadoes occurred in Indiana, including one that traveled more than 100 miles on the ground. Federal disaster areas were declared in more than a third of the state.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of these devastating storms, and IDHS is commemorating the widespread disaster with an [interactive story map](#) telling the stories of the tornadoes and those who lived through them.

Using a mix of maps, photos, videos and newspaper articles, the story map shares details about all 21 tornadoes in Indiana. It also features personal stories and photos submitted by Hoosiers, and the project provides background information on the meteorological conditions that formed the outbreak.

Also included are National Weather Service changes that came after the event, documentaries about the day and 50th anniversary commemorations.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Homeland Security



Explore and share this Indiana history project >

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The Torch is published monthly by the Indiana State Personnel Department and is available online at on.in.gov/TheTorch.

Got a story?

Submit your story ideas to: spdcommunications@spd.in.gov

X



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Employee spotlight: Jordan Teske-Harrison

Across Indiana, state employees are hard at work making a difference for Hoosiers through their public service. One of those state employees is Jordan Teske-Harrison, Director for the Indiana Commission for Women and we're pleased to highlight her in our spotlight this month.

Teske-Harrison knew from a young age that she wanted to give back. From completing service projects in Guatemala with her high school Spanish class to landing an internship in Spain with an Islamic Community Center to working as the Senior Adult Education Instructor at the Marion County Sheriff's Office, she's no stranger to public service.

Now in her role as the Director for the Indiana Commission for Women (one of the five cultural commissions within the Indiana Civil Rights Commission), she's constantly asking herself "how can we really move the needle and how do we do that effectively?" She's been the Director since August of 2021 and has helped lead the bipartisan organization

in its support of groups and initiatives including:

- The Latinas Welding Group that both offers job placement and welding training for marginalized groups.
- The Power Up! Youth Symposium where students across Indianapolis plan and present on service projects that will support their local communities.
- The first Doula Program with Indiana Women's Prisons and the Breann Leath Maternal Child Health Unit that support incarcerated individuals who are pregnant.
- Advocacy for the prevention of HPV and cervical cancer.
- Their annual International Women's Day event that offers an opportunity for networking, thought-provoking discussion and more.



Director for the Indiana Commission for Women,
Jordan Teske-Harrison.

Every day, Teske-Harrison and the rest of the commission work to "address the needs and concerns of Indiana women and also celebrate their contributions." You can read more about some of their other events and programs [here](#). We're happy to celebrate exceptional state employees like Teske-Harrison and look forward to seeing what else she and the Indiana Commission for Women accomplish!

Asian American Alliance Pillar Award

The Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) is delighted to announce that our Executive Director, Gregory L. Wilson, Sr. has received the esteemed Asian American Alliance Pillar Award!

This award is a testament to Greg's exceptional leadership, dedication and contributions to ICRC and the Asian American community. We invite you to join us in congratulating Greg on this well-deserved recognition.



Congratulations, Greg!

State of Indiana employee finds therapy in basketball after Parkinson's diagnosis

March Madness may be coming to an end, but for state employee Bill McCleery, basketball is more than just a game.

It's therapy. And the season doesn't end in March; it's year-round.

In February 2022, Bill was diagnosed with Parkinson's—a degenerative muscle disease that affects approximately 1 million Americans. But instead of shutting down, Bill started moving.

Before his diagnosis, Bill had always been moderately active, playing basketball and bicycling. But by his own admission, “before the diagnosis, I had become a little bit complacent. And then the Parkinson's sort of gave me a jolt and made me realize that I needed to do everything possible to stay active.”

There's a saying among people with Parkinson's: “The more you keep moving, the more you'll be ABLE to keep moving.” While the adage applies to everyone, it is especially true for those with Parkinson's disease.

The condition often leads to muscle rigidity, impaired balance and slowed movement, creating a vicious cycle in which movement decreases as it becomes more difficult—which then worsens the very symptoms that movement helps alleviate. Regular exercise is vital to combating the progression of Parkinson's disease and can improve flexibility, strength, and coordination.

Bill's diagnosis came after he began

experiencing persistent cramping in his left foot in late 2020. He was still in his late 40s. As he sought answers, he also developed increasing difficulty walking. When a group of friends resumed playing basketball in 2021 after a COVID-related layoff, he was forced to decline an invitation to rejoin the games.

After finally getting diagnosed by a movement-disorder specialist—and starting a regimen of the Parkinson's drug carbidopa-levodopa—his cramps largely resolved and his walking returned to mostly normal. So Bill contacted his old basketball group and began playing again.

Now he generally plays twice a week—at a school on the Eastside of Indianapolis most Sunday nights and at a Greenfield gym mid-week.

Although Bill lives with various Parkinson's symptoms such as muscle rigidity and involuntary movements called dyskinesia, he says they seem to disappear when he's playing basketball.

“I'm really thankful to be able to play again,” Bill said. “I know it won't last forever. I mean, life itself doesn't last forever. But for now, it's great to be able to run around the court and get great exercise. And it's more than just basketball. It's fellowship and friendship. It's therapy.”

He said that rather than just prolong his playing days, he's actually trying to improve each week.

“I'm determined to start making my layoffs someday,” he laughed. “I'm working on that. Sometimes I get



Bill McCleery

lucky and shoot OK, but I miss a lot of close-up shots when I try to drive inside.”

Bill's determination on the court extends to other aspects of his life. He expressed gratitude to his employer at the State of Indiana, the Office of Attorney General Todd Rokita, with providing a culture of flexibility that enables Bill to stay productive while managing his disease. Working as a speechwriter at the state provides not only income and health insurance but also a sense of purpose that drives him forward. It's a reminder that his condition does not define him.

Beyond exercise, Bill finds encouragement from his family—including his wife, Amy, and their three daughters. He also draws

[Read the full article on Employee Central >](#)

DNR honors outstanding employees

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves recently presented awards to employees who provided outstanding contributions to conservation, mentoring and teamwork during the previous year.

Award winners were Tiffany Dunkel, Joe Caudell, Mary Hayes, Fred Phillips, Bob Bell, Andrew Reuter and the 2024 Annual Conference Planning team.



Dunkel, office manager for Pigeon River Fish & Wildlife Area (FWA), was awarded the Conservation Cornerstone Award. This honor recognizes a support staff member's excellence in advancing programs within their division. Dunkel's dedication to her duties and outstanding customer service has helped make Pigeon River FWA a hub for outdoor recreation in the local community.

Caudell, the deer biologist, received the Conservation Champion Award, which recognizes employees who have made outstanding contributions to conservation. Caudell developed two new innovative products that transformed the Division of Fish & Wildlife's deer management practices for 2023.

Hayes, the public engagement supervisor, received the Mentor of the Year Award, which recognizes an exceptional ability to mentor others. Hayes' thoughtful leadership empowers her team to be bold ambassadors for Indiana's conservation efforts.

The team that produced the 2024 Annual Conference for the divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves received the Director's Team of the Year award, which recognizes a team's significant contribution to conservation. Led by Bell, Hayes and Reuter, the team programmed a robust two-day conference that centered around increased learning, networking and engagement opportunities. Team members consisted of Kacey Alexander, Tom Bacula, Jennifer Boyce, Alexandra Hicks, Alexander Ingersoll, Janetta Kelly, Jessica Merklung, Laura Minzes, Derek Nimetz, Anna Smithey, Rachel Van Voorhis, Savanna Vaughn and Danielle Williams.

Phillips, a recently retired veterinarian, received the Budd Denneman Partners in Conservation Excellence award to honor his outstanding conservation efforts in the Division of Fish & Wildlife's gray fox research. Phillips' partnership was key to the project, as he gave Indiana DNR, the Wildlife Ecology Institute and Luther College the resources and hands-on support they needed to provide specialized training for field technicians, process fox carcasses, collect samples and determine causes of mortality. He served as the in-state veterinarian for DNR and delayed his retirement by one year to align with the end of the project.

The divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Nature Preserves also recognized employees for their years of service:

40 years: Tom Arthur, Jeff Malwitz, Dave Meuninck

25 years: Josh Griffin

10 years: Kacey Alexander, Nicholas Echterling, Julie Gressley, Tim Pettifor, Joseph Simon

35 years: Robert Greene, Earl Nading

20 years: Denise Brazel, Matthew Bredeweg, Randy Brindza, Debbie King

5 years: Jake Adams, Kenneth Ford, Phillip Kacmar, Emily McCallen, Bethany Rust, Seth Sanders, Kevin Shettle, Zachary Voyles, Kenneth Wetzel

30 years: Brad Feaster, Ray Shepard, Debbie Walter

15 years: Sandy Clark-Kolaks, Amy Kearns, Donna Monroe

This news release is taken from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, to view this release and additional news releases, please visit dnr.IN.gov.

SECC Coordinators and Torchbearers honored at reception

The State Employees' Community Campaign has raised millions of dollars for charity over the years and it wouldn't be possible without the dedication of employees statewide. Two groups in particular had a big hand in the success of the 2023 campaign—the campaign Coordinators and Torchbearers. Torchbearers are state employees that gave \$1,000 or more to charity during the campaign and their generous contributions demonstrate their strong commitment to supporting their community. Campaign Coordinators put in countless hours managing events and fundraising opportunities for their agencies and encouraging employees to donate to the causes they care about. Without their work behind the scenes, SECC would not be possible.

To thank both groups for their commitment to SECC, they were honored at a reception in the Indiana State Library last month. And when asked about their involvement with SECC, this is what a few of them had to say:

“The great thing about working for the State of Indiana is that you're constantly aware that you're impacting lives in a very direct way. Involvement in SECC amplifies that sense of community engagement.

Every hour of my workday is a reminder that I'm also working for my community and for an organization I deeply believe in.” (Richard Propes, 2023 Torchbearer).

“I support Riley Hospital as my mother had Polio and spent a year at Riley in the 1930s. She was able to receive treatment that wouldn't have been available otherwise. My daughter is currently an RN in the Cardiac Stepdown Unit at Riley. I am able to see the important part they play in the health and wellbeing of their patients. There are so many opportunities to support a cause that has meaning in your life.” (Jennifer Haselwander, 2023 Torchbearer)

“My family having been the beneficiary of the generosity and kindness of others during my wife's battle with terminal breast cancer. I fully embrace giving of one's time, treasure and talents when possible.” (John (Jay) Erickson, 2023 Torchbearer)

“I joined INDOT's SECC efforts in 2023 to lend a hand with our weekly newsletter. It was a fun chance to make connections with other SECC Coordinators across the state and serve as an informal representative for my division within the agency. It was rewarding and humbling to

see state employees' benevolence and generosity in action as the weekly giving numbers grew week by week.” (Mary Margaret Moffett, 2023 Coordinator from the Indiana Department of Transportation)

“It was amazing to see what we were able to accomplish with just internal efforts. Our agency leadership and co-workers were very generous, which allowed us to provide donations to various nonprofits/charities. It was a great feeling to see what we were able to help facilitate! For those thinking about being a coordinator next year, it is worth the time and effort.” (Amanda Shipman, 2023 Coordinator from the Indiana Department of Insurance)

“As an SECC coordinator, I love seeing increased involvement in activities each year. We are proud to have had the greatest number of new donors in 2023 as well!” (Melissa Hook, 2023 Coordinator from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles)

We can't express our gratitude enough for our Torchbearers, Coordinators and all the other state employees that help make SECC possible. We look forward to hosting another successful campaign in 2024.



Stone co-authors CDC report linking *Salmonella* infections to melons

Public health has many moving parts, and a collaborative effort among multiple Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) divisions as well as local health departments and others brought that important teamwork into focus during a melon-linked *salmonella* outbreak.

Senior enteric epidemiologist Nicole Stone is one of the authors of [Notes from the Field: Rapidly linking an outbreak of salmonella typhimurium infections to domestically grown cantaloupes through early collaboration – United States, 2022](#) which was highlighted Feb. 8 via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

The report details a 2020 outbreak of salmonella associated with melons and how [whole genome sequencing](#) (WGS) played an important role in linking a 2022 outbreak of *salmonella* typhimurium to contaminated cantaloupes. The report outlines how the process is making a positive difference in public health practice.

“WGS-based surveillance, combined with rapid collection of epidemiologic data by state and local agencies, can be used to reduce the time to outbreak detection and response,” the report summary states.

Stone discussed the collaboration and highlighted the work of individuals and teams who were integral throughout the foodborne illness outbreak.

“This work highlights our important relationships and ongoing

coordination with our [Food Protection Division](#), local health department staff (Environmental Health staff and public health nurses), our student investigation team at IDOH (IN-SEIT), and our federal and other state partners,” she said. “It’s truly a collaborative effort.”

The Food Protection Division’s Rapid Response Team, led by Kris Gasperic, had what Stone called “a very important role in this response.”

“They are one of our most vital assets to identify where potentially contaminated foods are coming from, where they are going, and how to get them off shelves when there are recalls,” Stone explained.

[IDOH Laboratory](#) teams are vital as well.

“The IDOH Enteric and Parasitology Laboratory team led by Melissa Hindenlang is also essential to this work as we cannot confirm these types of outbreaks and their sources without the ability to conduct whole genome sequencing of the clinical (stool) specimens that are collected when people get sick with foodborne illnesses such as salmonellosis,” Stone said. “The IDOH Food Microbiology Laboratory led by Rachelle Unrau also plays an important role so that we can test foods for these pathogens when we are able to collect and sample suspected food items.”

State Epidemiologist Eric Hawkins lauded Stone’s work noting



Nicole Stone, MPH

the report is indicative of the importance of multiple teams working together for the betterment of public health.

“The article highlights an example of the great work that our team does while utilizing whole genome sequencing (WGS) for improving infectious disease surveillance,” Hawkins said. “This is also a great example of the importance of collaboration with Dr. [Lixia] Liu’s team at the state laboratory and our federal partners.”

At the heart of it all is making sure food is safe.

“There are a lot of moving pieces,” Stone said, “[such as] our partners at IDOH, LHDs, other states, and CDC, FDA, USDA (and many other agencies) that are all collaborating to keep our food safe and healthy for all Hoosiers.”

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Health

Enjoy eclipse festivities at the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

On April 8, Indiana will be in the total solar eclipse's path of totality for the first time in 155 years. In honor of this once-in-a-lifetime occasion, the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites are hosting celebrations of astronomical proportions across the state! Get a sneak peek of the festivities and learn more at IndianaMuseum.org/Eclipse.

Total Solar Eclipse Celebration at the Indiana State Museum

Space explorers of all ages will enjoy a day full of excitement and educational experiences at the Total Solar Eclipse Celebration! From 10 a.m.-7 p.m., the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis will host live demonstrations, science experiments, collaborative art projects, eclipse-themed activities, fun fact stations, live DJ entertainment and more.

Inside the museum, visitors will discover the science of earth and space with immersive programming supported by the Simons Foundation, including hands-on activities like eclipse-themed creative wellness and a solar system model, as well as sensory experiences, including kinetic sand and shadow play. Families can also chat with a geologist and learn how to harness the sun's energy with a solar oven.

Outside, attendees can launch stomp rockets and create a special woodworking project with the museum's friends from Woodshop on Wheels. And for the astronomy lovers, a physicist from Indiana University-Indianapolis will answer

questions about the universe as visitors look into space through a telescope.

As totality approaches at 3:06 p.m., attendees can find a spot on the front lawn to view the eclipse or enjoy a live stream in the indoor comfort of the IMAX® theater or the museum's auditorium and great hall. Afterwards, the museum will stay open late for visitors to explore the naturalist lab and three floors of galleries where they can see a real moon rock and other amazing objects.

To ensure everyone enjoys a safe and memorable eclipse experience, visitors will receive a free pair of solar viewing glasses, while supplies last, then learn how to safely view this rare celestial phenomenon. Younger visitors can also get creative and decorate their own eclipse masks. Additional viewing glasses will be available for purchase at the Indiana Store along with eclipse-themed merchandise.

The Total Solar Eclipse Celebration is free for members and included with general admission, which is \$20 for adults, \$14 for youth (ages 3-17) and \$18 for seniors.

Total Solar Eclipse at [Angel Mounds](#)

Experience the total solar eclipse at a site specifically designed to align with the sun and moon! From 12:30-3:30 p.m. CST, Angel Mounds State Historic Site in Evansville will host an exciting eclipse experience featuring an excellent view of the eclipse and educational encounters on the cultural connections between the

site and celestial events.

At 1 p.m., visitors will learn how and why the people of the Middle Mississippian culture engineered the mounds centuries ago, and what their design has to do with the eclipse. Following the eclipse, this presentation will be given again.

Eclipse viewing glasses will be available for spectators while supplies last. Admission will cost \$5 per adult, \$4 per senior and \$3 per youth (ages 3-17). Members enjoy a 25% discount on admission.

Total Solar Eclipse at [New Harmony](#)

Encounter the total solar eclipse with prime viewing spots and activities for the whole family at New Harmony State Historic Site. From noon-3:30 p.m. CST, visitors will make their own pocket solar system, create a horizontal sundial and more leading up to the eclipse. Eclipse viewing glasses will be available for purchase while supplies last at this free celebration.

Total Solar Eclipse at [T.C. Steele](#)

Take in the total solar eclipse from artist T.C. Steele's scenic hilltop home in Brown County. From 1-4:30 p.m., T.C. Steele State Historic Site will celebrate this momentous occasion with walk-up activities for families, including an outdoor stomp rocket station, space-themed sensory bins, solar system puzzles and an orbital model of the sun, Earth and moon to explore.

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Total solar eclipse: Top 6 safety and preparedness tips

In just a matter of days, people across the state will be pausing to take a look at the sky to witness the total solar eclipse.

It truly is a once-in-a-lifetime event. On average, a total solar eclipse occurs on a given spot on the planet only once about every 375 years. Portions of Indiana will not be in the path of totality for a total solar eclipse again until 2099.

Indiana is within a one-day drive from 70% of the country's population, making the Hoosier state a target destination. Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to travel to Indiana for the eclipse, if they are not here already.

Here are the Top 6 safety and preparedness tips you need to know:

1. Never look at the eclipse without the proper eclipse glasses.
2. Be prepared for extreme traffic jams.
 - a. Check INDOT [TrafficWise/511in.org](https://www.in.gov/indot/trafficwise/511in.org) to plan your route and monitor traffic conditions.
3. Fill up your gas tank and put some food and drinks in a cooler.
4. Watch for pedestrians, especially along secondary roads.
5. Travel with any medications you may need for 24 hours.
6. Check with your supervisor for work expectations on the day of the eclipse.

Find more preparedness and safety tips on eclipse2024.in.gov.

Be sure to enjoy the spectacle!

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Homeland Security



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Enjoy eclipse festivities at the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

Admission costs \$15 per adult and \$8 per youth (ages 3-17), with a 25% discount for members. Attendees will receive a pair of eclipse viewing glasses.

Eclipse Day Crafts at Whitewater Canal

Get crafty before the eclipse at Whitewater Canal State Historic Site in Metamora! Young space enthusiasts ages 3-10 are invited to make eclipse-themed crafts leading up to the total solar eclipse at the site's Grist Mill from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This fun-filled day will include stellar experiences like spinning model eclipse demonstrations, a corona coloring activity and more. No registration is required for this free event.

Article submitted by Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

Artwork by Eihi Yoshinaga (Indiana Department of Health)



Be aware of farm equipment on roads as planting season approaches

Planting season is quickly approaching for Indiana's 94,000 farmers. With the warm weather and sunshine, Hoosier motorists will also see more large, slow-moving farm equipment traveling Indiana's rural roads and highways.

The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#), [Indiana Department of Homeland Security](#), [Indiana Department of Transportation](#), [Indiana State Police](#) and [Hoosier Ag Today](#) want to encourage motorists to slow down, be alert and be patient on roadways this spring.

While the term "farm equipment" encompasses a wide range of vehicles, the most common types motorists will encounter during planting season include sprayers, tractors pulling planters or tillage

equipment, and large trucks hauling agricultural products. These vehicles are wide, sometimes taking up most of the road, and often travel at speeds no greater than 25 mph.

The following list includes several safety tips for motorists approaching large farm equipment:

- Farmers will pull over when they are able to let motorists pass, but it may take time for them to get to a safe place to do so.
- Be patient. Farm equipment is wide, sometimes taking up most of the road.
- Be careful when passing. Do not pass in a designated "No Passing Zone" or within 100 feet of any intersection, railroad grade crossing, bridge, elevation structure or tunnel.
- Do not try to pass slow-moving

farm equipment on the left without ensuring that the farmer driving is not planning a left turn. It may appear that the driver is pulling over to allow a pass when the farmer is actually preparing to turn. You will drive right into its path, endangering yourself and the farmer.

- Avoid tailgating, as some farm equipment might have to make sudden stops along the road.
- Allow plenty of time to get to a destination, be aware of alternate routes and avoid distractions.

Article submitted by Indiana State Department of Agriculture

[Click here to learn more >](#)



WHAT'S IN

CHECK OUT SPRING EVENTS IN INDIANA

Spring is here and the outdoors are calling! Don't miss out on the excitement. From scenic hikes to vibrant festivals, start planning your spring adventures today!

[START YOUR SPRING PLANNING HERE](#)

Spring Into Fun
IN INDIANA

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Every April, the Department of Child Services (DCS) raises awareness and connects families to resources during National Child Abuse Prevention Month. You might notice blue pinwheels in lawns and around community businesses this month. Those pinwheels serve as an uplifting reminder of childhood and the bright futures all children deserve. In April — and throughout the year — DCS works hard to provide resources and support so that Hoosier families and children can thrive.

Throughout April, DCS will share resources, photos and videos focused on prevention via [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [YouTube](#). DCS local offices and partners also will host special events focused on education and prevention. To view the statewide Child Abuse Prevention Month calendar of events, click [here](#).

DCS encourages all individuals and organizations to play a role in making Indiana a safer place for children and families. Here are some of the many ways you can help raise awareness and support your community:

- Know and save the DCS hotline number in your contacts: 800-800-5556
- Attend a Child Abuse Prevention Month event in your community
- Purchase a [‘Kids First’ Indiana License plate](#)
- Get involved with [Prevent Child Abuse Indiana \(PCAIN\)](#)
- Learn about [safe sleep](#)
- Refer parents to [Healthy Families Indiana](#)
- Donate to the [Indiana Diaper Bank](#)
- Tell families about [Family Resource Centers \(FRCs\)](#)
- Connect families to other resources:
 - Moms Helpline: 1-844-MCH-MOMS
 - Indiana’s resource and support line: 211
 - Suicide and crisis lifeline: 988
- Consider becoming a foster parent! Learn more at [IndianaFosterCare.org](#)

[Click here for more resources and ways to help with prevention efforts >](#)

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Child Services



#CAPM24IN

Child Abuse Prevention Month



**BUILDING
A HOPEFUL
FUTURE,
TOGETHER**

I-69 Finish Line beam signing

Gov. Eric J. Holcomb and INDOT Commissioner Mike Smith recently joined members of the I-69 Finish Line project team to ceremoniously sign one of the final steel bridge girders to be hung as the new I-69/I-465 system interchange takes shape on the southwest side of Indianapolis. The entire I-69 Finish Line corridor is on track to open by the end of 2024. For more information, visit [I69FinishLine.com](https://www.69finishline.com) or follow I-69 Finish Line on [Facebook](#), [X](#) or [Instagram](#).

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Transportation

[Read the full news release from the event >](#)



Governor Eric J. Holcomb ceremoniously signs one of the final steel beams of I-69.



INDOT Commissioner Mike Smith signs the beam at the ceremony.



Group photo at the I-69 beam signing ceremony.

April is Records and Information Management Month

April is Records and Information Management Month and the Indiana Archives and Records Administration invites you to celebrate good recordkeeping! Do you want to learn more about how to manage your records? Want to learn more about best practices and how to be a good records steward? Join the IARA Records and Information Management Team for two webinars during April!

- April 5, 10 - 11:30 a.m.: Electronic Records & County/Local Government Offices: What You Need to Know! [Learn more and register](#). (This webinar is geared towards County/Local offices, but all are welcome!)
- April 23, 10 - 11:30 a.m.: Responsible Records Destruction for State of Indiana Agencies. [Learn more and register](#).

Interested in keeping up with records and information management news beyond April? [Check out our monthly meeting and bulletin for State employees](#). Want to attend a monthly meeting? Let us know at rmd@iara.in.gov.

Article submitted by Indiana Archives and Records Administration

Market value: WIC's eFMNP improving access to healthy farmers' market goods

Like the growers and planters who make up Indiana's burgeoning farmers market scene, the work of the Indiana Department of Health's (IDOH) [Women, Infants and Children](#) (WIC) Commodities Program is never truly done.

It's a year-round task where much of the important work takes place behind the scenes.

Commodities Program manager Legita Wilson and her small team plant the seeds of their own successful season in fall and winter, working to help improve access to the cornucopia of healthy farmers' market foods. Through their work they open new avenues for Hoosiers to make better food choices.

There's an app for that

Wilson heads up WIC's Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) and the Electronic Farmers Market Nutrition Program (eFMNP), the last of which serves as an electronic replacement for FMNP checks and is becoming a go-to payment method for WIC recipients.

Eligible WIC and senior recipients can utilize the eFMNP to make electronic purchases with WIC-approved farmers that meet certain requirements, such as growing more than half of the produce they sell in a given season, attending a virtual training and having an actively supported smart device, among other requirements.

The program works through dual smartphone applications that interface in tandem to complete the payment process. Merchants use a

program called TotiPay Go while WIC and SFMNP recipients utilize the MyMarketLink app. The cost of the items to be purchased is entered in the smart devices or a code or QR code may be used or scanned. The transaction is then completed electronically, just as it would be through other WIC benefit redemption means.

Growing season

Though it's simple in concept, getting to this point has taken time and about as much effort and teamwork as goes into a successful harvest.

The first seeds were planted when Wilson applied and received approval for two American Rescue Plan grants — one each for FMNP (\$336,016) and SFMNP (\$488,914). Various WIC division teams collaborated with Commodities while Purdue Extension and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service assisted as well.

The project kicked off in December 2022 and was followed in the spring by the first farmer enrollment event, which brought multiple merchants onboard the nascent program. The spring and summer of 2023 were testing grounds as local agencies were able to access



Indiana Department of Health WIC Commodities Program manager Legita Wilson (center) is leading a program that is helping make farmers' market wares more easily accessible to WIC recipients. The eFMNP program had its formal kick-off last summer. Seen here with Wilson are Joseph Ryan (left) and Yvette Robinson (right).

the eFMNP production system and pilot programs in Gary and Muncie preceded the statewide rollout in August. Feedback was collected from local agencies who were also asked to respond to surveys alongside program recipients.

Busy winter

The 2024 outlook for eFMNP was bright despite much of the planning and organization for the summer season taking place under Indiana's famously gray winter skies.

Following the successful launch last August, Wilson said her team was excited for the new year even as it would bring challenges and a calendar packed with events.

The process of enrolling more farmers is being facilitated through a nine-county, nine-meeting series of recruitment and training events between March 5 and May 23.

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It's the perfect time to schedule your annual physical

If you haven't already started scheduling your preventive care visits for this year, it's the perfect time to start. For employees on the State Employee Health Plan, many of these preventive care visits will earn you Wellness Rewards that you can redeem through the ActiveHealth portal. But in addition to these rewards, preventive care visits can give you essential knowledge to take care of your health, give you peace of mind and save you money. For example, did you know that:

- Of the millions of Americans that have [diabetes](#), approximately 1 in 5 don't know that they have diabetes and 1 in 8 don't know that they have prediabetes.
- Only half of the over 90 million adults in the United States that are at [high risk for vision loss](#) visited an eye doctor in the last year. A comprehensive eye exam can help to detect [over 250 serious health conditions](#), including cancer.
- A [study](#) conducted by the Mayo Clinic found that patients with pre-existing conditions like diabetes and coronary artery disease saved hundreds of dollars annually on their medical plans when they visited the dentist at least once per year.
- Increasing colorectal screening prevalence to 80% in the United States could help to [reduce deaths](#) related to colorectal cancer by over 30% by the year 2030.
- For women age 50 to 74, [screening for breast cancer](#) every two years (when compared to no screening)

reduces breast cancer deaths by over 25%.

- It's estimated that by the year 2030, the [Hepatitis B vaccine](#) could help save approximately 14 million lives and the Measles vaccine could save approximately 19 million lives worldwide.

Not sure where to start? The annual physical is a great way to kick off your preventive care appointments. During an annual physical, your healthcare provider will check some key health indicators by collecting measurements such as blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar levels and family history. These measurements provide valuable information about your current health and can help identify potential health risks. And not only are annual physicals always covered 100%* by the health plan for eligible employees and their spouses, but you can also earn \$200 in Wellness Rewards for completing the appointment and submitting the required form. See the full steps below:

1. Schedule an appointment with your Primary Care Provider for your Annual Physical with lab work. If you don't have a Primary Care Provider, you can find one by logging in to [anthem.com](#) or through the Sydney Health mobile app and selecting Find Care.
2. Print the Annual Physical Results form and fill in Section 1. Bring the form to your appointment and have your doctor complete Section 2.
3. You are responsible for



submitting your completed form. Follow instructions on the form to submit it via fax or upload it. Please note, it can take up to 4 weeks for the forms to be processed and you will receive a confirmation email that your form has been submitted. Your form is considered processed when the ActiveHealth portal Rewards Center shows the activity as complete.

4. Results must be visible in the ActiveHealth portal by December 31, 2024, to earn the gift card.

[Visit the ActiveHealth Portal >](#)

*If non-preventive care is provided at the same time as the annual physical, there could be out-of-pocket costs.

Tell us about your experience with preventive care in this brief, anonymous survey.

[Take the survey >](#)

Run the State 5K & Hike Series returns in 2024 with five events



Invest In Your Health and our partners at Anthem and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources are excited to host the **2024 Run the State 5K and Hike series** for state employees and family members.

The 2024 series features four 5K events and one hike at state parks across Indiana on select Saturday mornings this summer. Employees and their family members are invited to attend these morning events and spend the rest of the day enjoying the parks.

Registration

Registration is now open for all five events with the links below. There is no cost to register, but participants are required to pay \$7 per vehicle at the gate for state park entrance.

You may register for more than one event; however, there are registration limits for each park.

Sign up with your family members and make the commitment to get out and get moving!

2024 Run the State Series Schedule

- **April 20:** [5K at Indiana Dunes State Park](#)
- **June 8:** [Hike at Spring Mill State Park](#)
- **June 22:** [5K at Clifty Falls State Park](#)
- **July 13:** [5K at Fort Harrison State Park](#)
- **August 10:** [5K at Ouabache State Park](#)

Stay tuned to the [Run the State 5K & Hike Series webpage](#) on the Invest in Your Health website for updates.



State employees get their steps in for the Team Challenge

The March Team Challenge concluded on Monday, March 25 and 1571 participants signed up statewide—an increase of 348 from last year's March challenge! The challenge goal for each participant was to complete 10,000 steps and 15 active minutes and the participants tracked a total of 129,177,656 steps and 326,827 active minutes. Compared to the March challenge last year, the total number of steps increased by 27.9% and the active minutes increased by 25.4%. Great work! Staying physically active can boost your mood, help to prevent diseases like cancer and diabetes, strengthen bones and muscles, and more.

The dozens of teams that participated across State of Indiana agencies were also competing for the second challenge bonus of the year. The agencies with the highest percentage of participation in the

challenge earned an extra \$25 in Wellness Rewards for employees that are enrolled in the state employee health plan and actively participated in the challenge by logging steps and/or minutes. The winners of the challenge bonus are:

- Mastodon (3,000+ employees): The Department of Child Services with 5.9% participation
- Bison (500 – 2,999 employees): The Department of Environmental Management with 10.8% participation
- Cardinal (100 – 499 employees): The Indiana Public Retirement System with 26.6% participation
- Firefly (fewer than 100 employees): The Archives & Records Administration with 45.8% participation



All employees enrolled in the state employee health plan that actively participated in the challenge by logging steps and/or active minutes also earned \$10 in Wellness Rewards. Find other activities you can complete to earn Wellness Rewards on the ActiveHealth website.

[Login to ActiveHealth >](#)

Virtual EAP Info Session on April 15

Optum is hosting a virtual Employee Assistance Program (EAP) overview session from 2-3 p.m. on Monday, April 15 via Microsoft Teams. This session is open to all employees and is a great opportunity to learn more about the EAP program and ask questions.

During the session, Optum will provide an overview of the EAP program, including the services offered and how to access them. They will also give a demo of the EAP website, liveandworkwell.com, where employees can find a variety of resources and support. There will also be time for questions.

- Monday, April 15, 2 to 3 p.m. [Click here to join the meeting](#)



[Learn more about Optum EAP >](#)

2024 Virtual Fair Housing Panel

Please join the Indiana Civil Rights Commission's (ICRC) 2024 Virtual Fair Housing Panel featuring panelists from Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction from Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA).

By attending this panel, the audience will gain insights into the multifaceted legal challenges tenants and landlords face, the specific housing requirements for individuals with criminal records, and effective resources available for unhoused persons.

The panel is designed to offer professional development and accessible resources to diverse stakeholders, professionals and the wider community. Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit is available for this virtual panel. This event is free and open to the public!

Follow @INCIVILRIGHTS on social media and scan the QR Code now to secure your spot for this informative and engaging panel discussion.

[#FairHousingForALL](#)

Article submitted by Indiana Civil Rights Commission



INDIANA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
FAIR HOUSING PANEL

SCAN ME

April 25, 2024

ICRC
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Indiana BMV night with the Komets on April 6

Are you looking for some fun and excitement? Look no further than the Fort Wayne Komets Hockey team! The Indiana BMV will be sponsoring a night with the Komets on Saturday, April 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne.

The Fort Wayne Komets faceoff against their in-state rivals the Indy Fuel — it's sure to be a great match. As a special thank you to all Hoosiers, [click here](#) to access discounted general admission tickets for the event. Please note, parking is not included with the purchase of these tickets.



FORT WAYNE KOMETS
vs. INDY FUEL

IT'S BMV NIGHT!

April 6 at 7:30 PM
Allen County War Memorial Coliseum

[Click here for discounted tickets >](#)

Tax Day is just around the corner

The deadline to file your 2023 individual income tax returns, pay your first quarterly estimated tax payment (if required), or make any additional tax payments due to the IRS and DOR is **Monday, April 15**.

How to pay

You can pay any state taxes owed through [INTIME](#). This customer portal also allows taxpayers to access their tax information, pay state income taxes and send secure messages directly to DOR customer service representatives.

Customers cannot file their individual income tax returns using INTIME.

DOR's INTIME Tax Center has more information.

Need more time?

Don't panic. If you need an extension for **only** your Indiana individual income taxes, file Form IT-9 (2023 Application for Extension of Time to File) through INTIME **by April 15**. You do not need to file an extension request if you have already been given one by the IRS.

If you receive an extension of time to file, you have until Oct. 15 to submit your federal tax return and until Nov. 15 to submit your Indiana tax return.

The extension allows additional time to file but is **not an extension of time to pay**. If you pay 90% of taxes owed by April 15 and the rest by Nov. 15, DOR will waive any [penalties](#). Interest will accrue on the unpaid amount if you pay less than 90% of what is owed by April 15.

Visit the [Extension of Time to File webpage](#) for more information on filing and payment deadlines.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Revenue

Electronics Collection Event at Indiana Government Center

When: Wednesday, April 17
Time: 8 a.m. - noon
Location: Robert D. Orr Plaza

The use of electronics has grown substantially over the past two decades, resulting in electronic waste (e-waste) becoming one of the fastest growing waste streams in Indiana. Electronics contain hazardous materials such as lead, cadmium and mercury which are harmful to human health and the environment. If electronics are not handled properly at the end of their life cycle, these toxic materials can find their way into Indiana's water, soil or air—potentially causing detrimental impacts to human health and the environment. To help keep electronics out of

landfills, IDEM is partnering with Technology Recyclers to host an e-waste collection event at the Indiana Government Center. The collection event will be open to all state employees and will be held at Robert Orr Plaza. State employees can drive or walk their unwanted electronic items to Robert Orr Plaza where staff from Technology Recyclers will collect these items.

IDEM Indiana Department of Environmental Management

Drive up or walk your unwanted electronics to Robert Orr Plaza.

INDIANA E-Cycle

If you have a question about an item you do not see on this list, please contact us at E-Cycle@idem.IN.gov

ELECTRONICS Collection Event!

Where: **ROBERT ORR PLAZA**

Indiana State Employees ~ WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Please click on this [flyer](#) for a complete listing of items accepted at the event. For additional questions, email E-Cycle@idem.IN.gov.

Don't be an "A Negative", be an "O Positive"

Indiana Veterans' Home Blood Drive was held on March 12, 2024, in the MacArthur Auditorium. Angela Cooper, IVH RN/QAPI Director, coordinated with Versiti Blood Centers to host this event.

There was a line of generous IVH staff patiently waiting while Versiti was setting up and more people arrived on the day of the blood drive than signed up. It was an overwhelming and amazing turnout. The staff members of the Indiana Veterans' Home donated their time and blood to save lives for those in need in our community. Versiti also had an intern who was learning the role and had never done plasma before that came with their group and IVH had an employee step up and donate plasma.

Angela stated "I got the idea to have a blood drive here because of my sister-in-law Sharon. She has been very ill since her husband passed in August. She was hospitalized twice and was given 5 units of blood.

She was a QMA here for 15 years and was on my unit when I started employment at IVH. I wanted to honor the people who gave blood to save her life even though they did not know her—To say thank you to them and help others in our community. I later found out that an ADON's husband, who was very ill for many months about a year ago, also received 5 units of blood. I chose to work with Versiti because they assured me the blood donated would go to our local hospitals. We collected 20 units of whole blood, 4 units of red blood cells and 1 plasma donation. Their goal was 15 units, my goal was 20 units and look what we did!! Staff were already asking when our next drive is!"

Way to go, IVH Staff! Heroes saving lives in our community!

Article submitted by Indiana Veterans' Home

Managing your 2024 professional goals

Now that 2024 goals have been assigned, it's the perfect time to start tackling them—having clear expectations helps you to achieve success and highlight your skills and abilities. If you are unsure about the expectations assigned to you, remember the SMART acronym for effective goals. Ask about the specifics, how success will be measured, what knowledge and skills can help, how it aligns with the team's mission and when progress will be measured. [Attend an instructor-led training](#) about [Measuring Progress & Utilizing Feedback](#) to create a plan for success this year!



Artwork by Manju Suryanarayanan
(Indiana State Board of Accounts)



Indiana Professional Licensing Agency teams with the Drug Enforcement Administration and Local Partners for National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

On Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Hoosiers will have another opportunity to drop off unneeded and expired medications during the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) next National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The Indiana Professional Licensing Agency (IPLA) and the Indiana Board of Pharmacy are proud to partner with the DEA in this effort and will sponsor seven (7) collection site locations across the state of Indiana. IPLA staff, along with local law enforcement partners, will be present at each of these sponsored collection site locations to help collect tablets, capsules, patches and other solid forms of prescription drugs. Collection sites will not accept syringes, sharps and illicit drugs. Liquid products, such as cough syrup, should remain sealed in their original container. The cap must be tightly sealed to prevent leakage.



For more than a decade, the DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day has provided Americans with a free, safe and convenient opportunity to clean out their medicine cabinets of unneeded medications and take an active part in preventing potential drug abuse and misuse in their communities. The Take Back Day also helps ensure that medications will be disposed of in the safest and most responsible way, as alternative methods of disposal, such as throwing away or flushing, pose potential health and environmental hazards. Since its inception, the Take Back Day has removed 8,950 tons of medication from circulation.

Below are the designated collection site locations which will be sponsored by the IPLA and the Indiana Board of Pharmacy, along with local law enforcement partners. The DEA and its local partners also sponsor close to 5,000 local collection site locations nationwide. For more information and to find a convenient collection site location near you, please visit dea.gov/takebackday.

COLLECTION SITE LOCATIONS SPONSORED BY THE IPLA:

**North Vernon Fire Department
(Special Time: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.)**
2000 North Madison Avenue
North Vernon, Indiana 47265
Local Partner(s): Jennings County Health Department and North Vernon City Police

Community Cancer Center North
7979 N Shadeland Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46250
Local Partner(s): Community Hospital Police

Tell City Fire Department
702 12th Street
Tell City IN 47586
Local Partner(s): Tell City Police Department

Community Hospital Anderson
1515 N. Madison Avenue
Anderson, IN 46011
Local Partner(s): Community Hospital Anderson Police

Community Hospital South
1402 E County Line Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
Local Partner(s): Community Hospital Police

Methodist Hospitals – Southlake Campus
8701 Broadway
Merrillville, IN 46410
Local Partner(s): Lake County Sheriff's Department

Parkview Whitley Hospital
1260 East State Road 205
Columbia City, IN 46725
Local Partner(s): Parkview Police

On the Road Again: Work zone safety

It is a long-running joke that Indiana should change its state flower to the orange construction barrel. As sure as spring brings drizzling rain, greening grass and blooming flowers, it also harkens the beginning of roadway construction season. The scopes and durations of these projects vary greatly, with some taking only a few hours and others lasting several years.

Work zones are areas of roadways where construction, maintenance or utility work activities are taking place. Often, work zones involve a detour, lane closure or pause from the normal flow of traffic which causes confusion and frustration to drivers. Failures to set up work zones properly can lead to accidents and even fatalities. Nationally, there are more than 600 work-related fatalities and 40,000 injuries each year related to crashes in work zones.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for setting up work zones, but employers must ensure appropriate traffic controls are developed,

implemented, and installed properly at all work zones. Work zones must be marked by signage alerting drivers to the upcoming hazard. Some work zones may also include other traffic control devices such as barriers, channeling or transition devices, vehicles with strobe lights, arrow boards and flaggers.

Employer's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that appropriate traffic controls are developed, implemented and installed at all work zones;
- Training workers in the traffic control plans developed and on the requirements of proper traffic control devices, including flagging operations;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the temporary traffic control on a regular basis and updating and monitoring work zone setup and changes throughout the course of the work;
- Ensuring reverse signal alarms are in operating condition on all equipment within a work zone;
- Providing proper PPE to all employees including the correct

high visibility clothing for the roadway involved

Employees can do their part by doing the following:

- Wear high-visibility safety apparel anytime they are exposed to vehicle traffic
- Be aware of moving equipment within a work zone and never operate equipment without making positive visual contact with workers on foot near the equipment
- Perform pre-shift inspections on equipment and set parking brakes when leaving equipment unattended
- Wear seat belts when operating equipment and report any deficiencies in the temporary traffic control setup they observe
- Be cognizant of moving traffic and construction equipment in and through a work zone.

Motorists must use caution when approaching and driving through a work zone. Wear your seat/safety belts. Avoid using cell phones and other mobile devices while driving, and never text-and-drive. Do not tailgate. Allow extra time for travel and expect delays. Plan alternative routes of travel in known work zone areas. Watch for signage, anticipate lane shifts and merge early.

As the orange barrels begin to sprout in the coming months, please keep safety in mind.

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Labor



Register for upcoming Indiana Manager Central workshops

INSPD's Indiana Manager Central program includes a monthly newsletter, website and workshop series covering topics such as hiring, performance management, professional development and more. Several upcoming workshops are highlighted below that are intended to support managers and aspiring managers. Check out the workshops and register with the links in each description:

Fostering Allyship (Wednesday, April 10 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.): Participants will aim to better understand gender identity—including definitions, common misconceptions and more. They will also engage in productive dialogues related to pronouns and gender identity. Register for the [in-person](#) or [virtual](#) workshop.

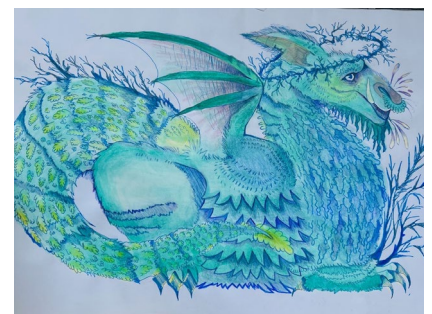
Setting Expectations (Wednesday, April 10 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.): Participants will work to identify the difference and relationship between goals and

competencies, create SMART goals, learn how to use goal cascading and calibration to ensure alignment, identify and create a success measure, and more. Register for the [in-person](#) or [virtual](#) workshop.

Navigating Compensation as a Hiring Manager (Tuesday, April 16 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.): Participants will aim to understand the policies and procedures related to compensation, identify factors that impact compensation decisions and more. Register for the [in-person](#) or [virtual](#) workshop.

Improving Poor Performance with Intervention (Tuesday, April 16 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.): Participants will work to learn about the intention and importance of early performance intervention, identify when to intervene, determine appropriate tools and approaches, and more. Register for the [in-person](#) or [virtual](#) workshop.

Artwork by Madison, submitted by Jill Shoemaker (Indiana Department of Workforce Development)



INDIANA
MANAGER
CENTRAL



Indiana State
Personnel Department

ILEA polar plunge participation

The Indiana Law Enforcement Academy class 232, participated in the Special Olympics Polar Plunge at Eagle Creek Park in Indianapolis on February 29.

The ILEA has a traditioned relationship with Special Olympics—the world’s largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities that provide year-round training and activities to 5 million participants and Unified Sports partners in 172 countries. The class raised over \$20,000 for the Special Olympics.



ILEA Special Olympics Polar Plunge participants.

Indiana Management Performance Hub invites you to the 7th annual Data Day

Come celebrate MPH’s collaborative and innovative approach to fostering a culture of collaboration and data-driven decision making between state agencies and key trusted partners. **Data Day 2024 is set for Wednesday, May 29** (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) at the Conference Center & Auditorium at the Indiana Government Center in downtown Indianapolis.

The statewide data community is invited to join the celebration and learn more about how data continues to play an increasingly important role in state government. [Registration is now open for Data](#)

[Day 2024](#), as well as the call for presentations for our concurrent breakout sessions.

Call for Presentations

We’re looking for presenters to talk about how your agency is using data to inform policy, solve problems and create innovative solutions. [Submit your presentation using this link.](#)

Host an Information Booth at Data Day

In addition to the live presentations, we're also offering state agencies and partner organizations the opportunity to host informational booths in the conference center to



showcase their innovative, data-centered projects and network. [Click here for the Information Booth form.](#)

Article submitted by Indiana Management Performance Hub

April 6, 2024

Historic Oxen Demonstration at The Farm at Prophetstown | Prophetstown State Park

Double M Farms will be bringing their team of oxen to give demonstrations of how farmers in the 1920s tended to their fields with antique farm implements. Come to learn from the past and see how oxen are still useful to small farms in the 21st century.

[More Information >](#)

Hands on Habitat Volunteer Day | Willow Slough Fish & Wildlife Area

At this event volunteers can help clean up a newly acquired 172.5-acre parcel that adjoins Willow Slough FWA.

[More Information >](#)

April 20, 2024

5K Hellbender Hustle/Woodrat Walk | O'Bannon Woods State Park

O'Bannon Woods State Park Resource Field Day and Open House, featuring the "Hellbender Hustle 5k run and Woodrat Walk" Fun for the whole family!

[More Information >](#)

Earth Day Fun | Harmonie State Park

Stop by the OEP located behind the Nature Center between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. CT for some Earth Day/Arbor Day Fun! We'll have earth-friendly stations to create new things from old, our version of upcycling!

[More Information >](#)

Amphibian Adventure Event | Potato Creek State Park

Join us for a day of Amphibian Adventures including The Music of the Mating Call, salamander bandana craft, live salamander and frog meet and greet and an amphibian night hike!

[More Information >](#)

Beginner Beach Glass Wire- Wrapping Workshop | Indiana Dunes State Park

Learn the art of wire-wrapping and make your own beach glass jewelry during this workshop. This is a great way to make a handmade gift for Mother's Day.

[More Information >](#)

April 20, 21, 27 & 28, 2024

Mansfield Village Mushroom Festival | Raccoon State Recreation Area

The Historic Mansfield Roller Mill will be participating in Mansfield Village's annual Mushroom Festival. The festival will have the auction, vendors and a car show on Sunday April 28. The Mill will be open for unguided tours and the historian will be on site to answer questions and demonstrate some of the working equipment

[More Information >](#)

April 21, 2024

Earth Day Park Clean Up | Versailles State Park

Is volunteering on your New Year's Resolution list or just wondering how you can give back? Well come on out and help us remove one of our very pesky invasive plants, garlic mustard. Discover how to

identify this invasive species and how it is hurting our ecosystem then we'll proceed to pull as many as we can. We will also pick up any trash that we come across.

[More Information >](#)

April 25, 2024

Bob Ross Painting Workshop | Mounds State Park

Inspired by Bob Ross' love of the outdoors, Indiana State Parks is partnering with Certified Bob Ross Instructor Chris Taylor as part of Indiana's Run For The Trees with Bob Ross fundraising event.

[More Information >](#)

April 26-28, 2024

39th Annual Wildflower Foray | Brown County State Park

Join us for the 39th Annual Spring Wildflower Foray!

[More Information >](#)

April 27, 2024

Bob Ross Painting Workshop | Fort Harrison State Park

Inspired by Bob Ross' love of the outdoors, Indiana State Parks is partnering with Certified Bob Ross Instructor Chris Taylor as part of Indiana's Run For The Trees with Bob Ross fundraising event.

[More Information >](#)

[View all DNR
eclipse events >](#)

[View all DNR
special events >](#)

This Month WITH



April 7, 2024

Space Pioneers | Lanier Mansion State Historic Site

In honor of the upcoming total solar eclipse, the Lanier Mansion is going to SPACE! Learn how astronauts live on the International Space Station and speculate how future humans must prepare to explore the solar system.

[More Information >](#)

April 13, 2024

The Last Battle of the Civil War | Corydon Capitol State Historic Site

The surrender at the Appomattox Court House in April 1865 ended the Civil War. This battle was the end of the Civil War for Robert E. Lee and his army. Join us to learn about the battle, the surrender and the Indiana units who fought to bring an end to a war that tore a nation apart.

[More Information >](#)

April 17, 2024

Vanished Indiana Animals | Levi & Catharine Coffin State Historic Site

Long ago, mastodons and giant sloths used to roam Indiana, but did you know even in Levi Coffin's time in this state was much wilder than it is today? Join Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Senior Curator of Biology, Damon Lowe to learn about wolves, bobcats, passenger pigeons and other fascinating creatures that shared our state with its earliest settlers.

[More Information >](#)

April 19, 2024

Meet the Architects: Guidon | Indiana State Museum

Sustainable Architecture + Engineering: Guidon improves lives and empowers people through dynamic and collaborative architecture, engineering and design. Based in Indianapolis, they are a Service-Disabled-Veteran-Owned Business.

[More Information >](#)

April 26-28, 2024

39th Annual Wildflower Foray | T.C. Steele State Historic Site

Experience nature and flowers through many hikes and a variety of programs during this three-day, co-operative event throughout Brown County. Celebrate natural history and learn about environmental concerns relating to the area while venturing out on wildflower and birding walks, taking a wetland hike, exploring nature photography and so much more. Hikes and programs are held at T.C. Steele State Historic Site on established trails and on other nearby natural areas.

[More Information >](#)

April 27, 2024

Block Party | Indiana State Museum

Gather your friends and family and join us for special games, art and building challenges using everyone's favorite brick! Take time to explore the [Towers of Tomorrow with LEGO® Bricks](#) exhibit, then meet local artists and clubs to spark your creativity and discover something new.

[More Information >](#)

Arts of the Earth Day | T.C. Steele State Historic Site

Welcome spring during a self-guided walk through the gardens and grounds. Meet artists at work around the site, plus discover our famous daffodils and spring flowers throughout the gardens. Also, enjoy a stone carving demonstration by limestone carver Sidney Bolam.

[More Information >](#)

Creatures of the Night | Limberlost State Historic Site

Experience nature at night! Explore the pothole wetland on Veronica's Trail with nighttime dip-netting, then use a digital microscope to see what was found. Try to spy the glowing eyes of real and not-so-real forest animals and explore "mystery boxes" to see if you can guess what's inside through touch only. The evening ends around the campfires, listening with bionic ears and experiencing night vision.

[More Information >](#)

Stay and Play | Indiana State Museum

Join us for a self-led play experience in Firefly Landing where young children and their caregivers participate in open-ended play and family learning. These two-hour sessions provide a space to explore a variety of tools and activities while also building connections with other families.

[More Information >](#)

[View all Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites events >](#)

New discount supports affordable educational opportunities

Indiana State University is offering a new educational discount to State of Indiana employees. The discount is 15% off their in-state tuition rate for all their online and on-campus programs for both undergraduate and graduate programs. Employees will also have their enrollment deposit waived and enjoy an expedited admissions process and review of their credit transfers. View [this flyer](#) for more information on how to apply.

Eligible State of Indiana employees can enjoy up to \$5,250 in education reimbursement per year. If you've been wanting to add to your credentials, learn more about your field, set yourself apart for a promotion or just want to get back in the classroom, there's no better time to start.



INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

[Learn more about the education reimbursement policy here >](#)

Maximize your tuition benefits with Western Governors University

WGU is now enrolling for June 1 start dates! Your state tuition benefits can cover up to 70% of your WGU program, plus State of Indiana employees receive a 5% tuition discount and have access to hundreds of scholarships. Learn more about our scholarships [HERE](#).



WGU offers bachelor's and master's degrees in IT, Business, Healthcare and Teaching.

To enroll or learn more about WGU's programs, contact Lindsay Taylor at lindsay.taylor@wgu.edu.

Tell your favorite businesses about our discount program

Businesses throughout Indiana offer [discounts](#) for state employees and INSPD is always looking for more to add to our resource page. If there's a business in your community that you think would be interested in offering a discount to State of Indiana employees, you can tell them to contact SPDCommunications@spd.in.gov to inquire about being included with our other discounts.

continued from page 12

Market value: WIC's eFMNP improving access to healthy farmers' market goods

It will feature stops in Danville, Indianapolis, Richmond, South Bend, Fort Wayne, Lafayette, Crown Point, Evansville and Bloomington. The goal is to introduce the program to merchants in those communities and bring more farmers into the eFMNP fold, thereby allowing even more Hoosiers to utilize their eFMNP benefits in a quick and easy way.

Wilson, who joined IDOH after a 22-year career in the IT field, said she's wanted to see the eFMNP program come to Indiana since at least 2019. Now that it's here, she's dreaming big but setting attainable goals.

"We had 35 actively participating farmers last year," she said. "My

stated goal for this year is to double the number of farmers participating in eFMNP."

Wilson called the program "a huge paradigm shift for everyone involved," including farmers, local agencies, and eFMNP recipients, though she believes it's perhaps as close to a "win-win" situation as one might hope.

"We're putting money into the pockets of the people who grow our food and providing fresh, locally grown produce to our benefit recipients," she said.

Wilson emphasized the effort is one that requires a great deal of

teamwork and that's among the most satisfying parts of her work.

"I really enjoy helping to enable other entities to collaborate because I'm just one person," she said noting that she looks for commonalities between a given groups' mission as the foundation for seeking to bring teams together.

"Creating collaboration – that's something I really like to do," she said. "I enjoy the variety of my job. There's always something else to work on."

Article submitted by Indiana Department of Health



INDIANA UNCLAIMED RETURNS
\$1 MILLION

IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY TO HOOSIERS EVERY WEEK

SEARCH NOW FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES!

START MY SEARCH



April 2024: Tips for well-being

Try healthy eating, not dieting

Most of us don't like to start a diet. Diets seem strict and unlikely to help us lose weight. It can be hard to stick to them for very long. Why bother?

Try healthy eating instead. Make small, gradual changes instead of drastic ones. There's no list of foods that are totally off limits. Healthy eating may help you manage your weight and lower your risk for some health conditions.*

To start, keep a food journal for one week. Jot down what you eat each day. Notice your eating habits and choices.

Think about small, simple changes you could make to eat healthier, like these:

Before: Dinner side dish is a baked potato with butter and shredded cheese. **Change:** Swap it for a baked sweet potato with olive oil and herbs.

Before: At work, you snack on cookies and a regular soda from the vending machine. **Change:** Stash apples or small packets of almonds to work, so you have a healthy snack on hand. Grab cold water or sugar-free seltzer from the vending machine.**

Just a few tweaks to your normal routine can help you eat healthier and feel better.*

Wellness Webinar: Ditch the diet mentality***

Eating healthy is a big part of your well-being. Join our webinar to learn a little about trendy eating plans and a lot about lifelong healthy eating strategies.

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 10:00 AM | 12:30 PM | 4:30 PM, ET



Save your spot

* FOR HEALTHY EATING SOURCE: Mayo Clinic, "11 tips for healthier eating habits." Updated Aug. 7, 2023. Available at <https://mcpres.mayoclinic.org/nutrition-fitness/11-tips-for-healthier-eating-habits/>. Accessed Feb. 13, 2024.

** FOR HEALTHY EATING SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control, "Rethink your drink." Updated June 7, 2022. Available at https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html. Accessed Feb. 13, 2024.

*** The wellness webinar classes are not offered in Spanish.

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