

Best News Coverage Under Deadline Pressure/Category 1

Muncie: public safety Nick Werner The Star Press (Muncie)

Delaware County's Emergency Management director is optimistic the community will weather this week's ice storm better than it did the epic ice storm in 2005.

Even if this week's storm turns out to be meteorologically worse.

"I think the community is more prepared," EMA Director Jason Rogers said. "They educated themselves to their needs and paid attention to personal disaster preparedness. They went out and bought food and generators and have a backup plan."

Rogers added that the "well-oiled machine" of Delaware County's emergency service agencies has only gotten better as well.

As EMA director, Rogers is in charge of leading the local government response to the storm and potential disaster it could create.

The Delaware County EMA on Tuesday morning convened a "situational briefing" for elected officials and representatives from local police, fire, health, street and highway departments.

The same group will meet again at 9 a.m. today to reassess the situation.

In the county's Emergency Operations Center, the 30 or so attendees sat and stood around a conference table as a computer projected radar of the impending storm as it moved through states such as Oklahoma and Missouri.

"We're ready," Muncie street department supervisor Ron Ball said. "We'll stay with it."

The city had 12 plow and salt trucks out Tuesday.

The county highway department had 20 trucks, including at least one in each township.

"We're going to continue to roll that way until it's done," highway supervisor Duke Campbell said.

Muncie Fire Chief Sean Burcham said he had arranged for five, two-man pickup trucks to guard downed power lines so that full-sized fire trucks would not be tied up with that responsibility.

The lull in the storm that lasted much of the business day Tuesday provided some reprieve and allowed for emergency officials to further strengthen their plans.

Mark Slusher, manager of the county's EOC, said he had confirmed 13 possible sites for emergency shelters. He said he would announce them if and when they were activated.

One problem, however, is that in Delaware County, many of the large buildings that would make for good shelters don't have backup power.

The county has identified three properties with backup power. Those properties will be prioritized for nursing homes and evacuees with special needs.

The fairgrounds will serve as a backup shelter for people with pets. The county, Slusher said, had identified more potential sheltering spots than it had in 2005.

"I think we're set up as good as we can be," Slusher said.

Rogers said communication would be key in the next few days.

"If you are going to try to travel, make sure you communicate with your family," Rogers said. "If your plans are to move to a shelter, communicate that with the loved ones who will be looking for you."

Best News Coverage With No Deadline Pressure/Category 2

The trouble with townships Chris Fyall, Michael Malik & Laura Lane The Herald-Times (Bloomington)

Inefficiencies. Family patronage. Incomplete, inconsistent and inaccurate reporting. Money earmarked for the state's poorest citizens sitting in bank accounts instead of being funneled to the people for whom it is intended.

Evidence of all of this can be seen in townships in every corner of Indiana, exposed now on a statewide basis for the first time, thanks to a new law that took effect in 2009 requiring township trustees to file their annual reports electronically.

Together, the reports seem to confirm widely held beliefs about a peculiar and troubled system that is under renewed assault.

In his State of the State speech, Gov. Mitch Daniels said he hopes to eliminate Indiana's most local form of government.

What is most clear from financial documents filed by the townships is that, as a group, trustees operate largely independent fiefdoms without comprehensive oversight. They use local tax dollars to provide fire service and poor relief, but often offer to the public confusing reports on their activities.

A new analysis by *The Herald-Times* of records required of the state's 1,008 townships shows: More than 13 percent of the township trustees – 133 – did not comply with the new state law requiring them to file their annual reports electronically, a failure that by law could require their removal from office.

Moreover, many of the filings are incomplete, inconsistent or inaccurate.

Nearly three out of four trustees used township funds to pay somebody with the same last name as theirs.

Of the 875 townships that filed the financial reports, 666 of them have hired a same-named employee, and 509 of those townships did not file paperwork that would explain what a family member did for the township, as the law requires.

Nearly \$10.2 million was spent on trustee salaries across the state, and another \$2.9 million was spent on employees with a trustee's same last name.

Nepotism is a major problem, according to the governor, who says one in four township employees across the state has the same last name as the township trustee.

Trustees spent \$24.2 million in poor relief administration to deliver \$24.4 million in poor relief. In other words, for every dollar that townships give to the poor, they spend another dollar on direct overhead – poor relief investigators, office space and the like.

Daniels has condemned the townships as sitting on large piles of unused cash while continuing to collect taxes. Some have eight years' worth of cash-on-hand, he said.

Even as Daniels thanks the "good people" serving as trustees, however, he has dismissed their form of government as an antique from a bygone era. "I support the clear and simple recommendation of the Kernan-Shepard Commission that we remove this venerable but obsolete layer of government, and assign what little remains of its duty to elected city and county officials," Daniels said.

Supporters of townships say they offer irreplaceable assistance in tight-knit communities. Trustees who know their communities provide meaningful help quickly, cheaply and with minimum hassle, advocates say.

Still, the governor is hardly alone in his criticism of Indiana's grassroots government.

Most townships suffer from a lack of transparency and accountability, others say.

Marilyn Schultz, a former Indiana state budget director under two different governors and a state legislator who represented Bloomington for 14 years, called it "a scandal" when she heard about the 133 trustees who failed to file the legally required report last year.

"The very idea that we think it's OK for a local elected official not to account for our hard-earned money? That's just not democratic," she said.

Still, there are too many trustees to make enforcement of state law practical, said Schultz, who spent more than a year as the executive director of the anti-township government accountability group MySmartGov.org until stepping down.

"What do you say to a prosecutor who is really busy?" Schultz asked. "He's going to go out and arrest a township trustee because they didn't report their budget of \$25,000?"

Arrests are not unheard of, but they are not common. The Indiana Attorney General's office has filed 11 cases against 10 trustees for egregious abuses since 2006, state data shows.

More basic errors are less likely to be punished. That's in part because of the way townships are regulated.

The Indiana Department of Local Government Finance, for instance, approves township budgets, but it is the State Board of Accounts that checks to see the budgets were followed. Neither state agency has much power to discipline.

"We are a reporting agency," said Chuck Nemeth, supervisor of township audits for the State Board of Accounts. "What happens beyond that is not in our control."

Mary Jane Michalak, director of communications for the DLGF, said trustee accountability primarily comes in the form of elections.

"In many cases, accountability comes down to whether or not the public re-elects (the trustee)," she said. "Does the public care enough to not reelect them, or does the public even have a choice? Does anybody ever run against them?"

Sometimes. Not always.

By many accounts, most of Monroe County's townships are relatively well-run, but many trustees here are elected unopposed. Five of the county's 11 trustees faced no opposition in November's general election.

Advocates of township government say that the system as a whole works well, and that most of the problems with compliance are on the margins.

Debbie Driskell, who is the executive director of the Indiana Township Association, said trustees who fail to file electronic reports might not have computers. "We are talking about very, very small townships," she said.

In some instances, it is the regulators who make mistakes, said Dan Combs, a trustee in Perry Township in Bloomington.

For instance, Combs says he filed a conflict of interest form that disclosed payments he made to his wife in 2009. He has a stamped copy of his filing. No such conflict report exists at the State Board of Accounts.

A similar problem has happened with Combs' filings in previous years, he said. "The state record-keeping is atrocious," Combs said.

"They give out incomplete information that reflects badly on township trustees."

Sometimes even the trustees' reports themselves are confusing, however.

In theory, every township in Indiana receives tax dollars to pay for poor relief, and every township spends that money helping people in need. Trustee reports, however, indicate that the theory does not hold.

The data collected by The Herald-Times shows that 75 townships did not report receiving a dime for poor relief from taxes, and 197 townships did not report distributing any money. There were 36 townships that reported neither.

"Nobody is saying anything like, 'All trustees are crooked.' Nobody is saying that," Schultz said. "But," she said, "the fact that it is so hard to get a look at what is going on in a township from their reports makes us think something is going on that we definitely need to take a good, hard look at."

Best Ongoing News Coverage/Category 3

School didn't report alleged rape

Douglas Walker

The Star Press (Muncie)

When a Central High School student went to the principal's office about noon Tuesday to report she had just been raped in a school restroom, administrators didn't notify police – not even the Muncie Police Department detective working in the school that day as a security officer.

Instead, the 16-year-old girl was asked to provide a written account of the assault, then apparently sat in the office for 2½ hours until a Youth Opportunity Center staff member arrived to take the teen back to that westside facility.

That woman said she wasn't informed of the rape allegation until she arrived at Central to pick up the girl. The YOC employee responded by taking the girl to Ball Memorial Hospital.

At that point, city police finally became involved – about four hours after the girl initially reported she had been assaulted.

A veteran Muncie Police Department detective said Wednesday that the delay had created "too big a chance of losing critical evidence" and could hamper his department's investigation.

"I'm a little upset about the way (school administrators) handled this," said MPD Sgt. Mike Engle. "Actually, I'm a lot upset. They didn't handle this right. You have to error on the side of safety and caution."

Muncie Community Schools Supt. Eric King on Wednesday said the rape allegation had been "vague" in nature.

"There has to be some basis for which to notify the police," he said. "As soon as something happens, though, we notify the appropriate authorities. Sometimes that is within the school district itself.

"Other times, when we have facts that are validated, we are including other authorities."

King might be well-served to discuss that philosophy with a representative of the Delaware County prosecutor's office.

Eric Hoffman, a deputy prosecutor, said Wednesday that he was "extremely uncomfortable with anyone other than a law enforcement agency gathering facts or conducting an investigation into alleged criminal activity."

Hoffman—who acknowledged he had no first-hand knowledge of Tuesday's events at Central – said any person with knowledge that "a juvenile may have been abused" has an "absolute duty under the law" to report the matter to police.

'An extremely serious crime'

According to a police report, the alleged rape victim spoke briefly to city officers at Ball Memorial Hospital late Tuesday afternoon, reporting a male classmate had dragged her into a restroom about noon and assaulted her.

The teen said she had been at lunch when she left the cafeteria for her gym locker to retrieve some lotion, and that her alleged attacker at some point began to follow her.

The girl said the assault occurred in a restroom stall after the boy removed her clothing. She said she managed to escape from her attacker, hurriedly putting her clothes back on before fleeing into a women's restroom.

She said she told a friend about the assault, then went to "the office to report what had happened to the principal," according to a document.

The girl said she was told to write what she called a "one-page thing" about her accusations.

She then described a 150- minute wait in the principal's office until the YOC staffer arrived to pick her up about 2:30 p.m.

MPD Sgt. Engle on Wednesday said his "main problem" with the school's response to the girl's allegations was that "we have officers in the school just to handle things like this." Off-duty police officers work second jobs as security guards at some city schools, including Central.

"Nothing that would have been done (in a routine rape investigation) was done," he added. "(This was) an allegation of an extremely serious crime."

Central's principal, Chris Smith, on Wednesday night said he would defer to Supt. King in responding to questions about Tuesday's events.

King said the school's response to the case was based on "the nature of the incident."

"In this case, they are investigating to determine if there was an incident," King said. "We don't know that for certain yet."

"Our primary situation is the safety of the individual," King said. "We took the safety precautionary steps. That is my understanding."

Deputy Prosecutor Hoffman maintained any time a student makes an allegation that a violent crime has taken place, "the police should be notified."

"School officials should not be conducting an investigation or gathering facts about an alleged crime that happened on school grounds," he said. "Law enforcement detectives are best equipped to conduct a proper and thorough investigation."

Education reporter Michelle Kinsey contributed to this article.

Best General Commentary/Category 4

Jokes aside, Baals worth honoring

Kevin Leininger

Fort Wayne News-Sentinel

The world saw again this week how out-of-control democracy can produce unforeseen and even unwanted results.

The possibility that President Hosni Mubarak's departure might clear the way for radical Islamic rule in Egypt? No, silly. That's nothing compared to the snickering fascination with whether Fort Wayne names its new government center in honor of a certain former mayor.

That's right: the late, great Harry Baals, who began the week as the namesake of an obscure local Internet prank but has, thanks to everybody from radio's Bob and Tom and Rush Limbaugh to TV's Jimmy Kimmel, turned the city into a global punch line almost overnight.

And Baals (pronounced "balls," of course, or there wouldn't be a story) would probably enjoy the joke, although that probably says a lot more about the state of our culture than it does about a man whose record in and out of office deserves recognition, not ridicule.

"He would laugh, but you never heard people making fun of his name in those days," said Walter P. Helmke, who was a young lawyer and son of the city attorney when he delivered an absentee ballot just before the 1954 Republican primary to Baals' room at Parkview Hospital, where he was battling a kidney disease that claimed his life a few days later at age 67.

"(Baals) was very down to earth and was liked by everybody. What upsets me is that some people are saying naming the building for him would 'embarrass' the city. That's not fair," said Helmke, who served two terms as Allen County prosecutor and one term as state senator and is the father of former Mayor Paul Helmke.

And therein lies the irony of what has happened this week because of the city's innocent decision to seek the public's advice before selecting a name for the Renaissance Square building on East Berry Street, which is being renovated into offices for city and county officials.

Deputy Mayor Beth Mal-loy says she never intended to insult Baals and is tired of "coming off like a shrew" for suggesting in news reports that the city would prefer another name despite the fact that, of the more than 35,000 online votes before voting was reported closed this morning, Baals is the runaway leader.

And the fact is that, even though most of those votes have been cast this week by people who know only Baals' name, his accomplishments have earned this four-term mayor far more recognition than honors he has received: a tarnished bronze plaque stuck to a railroad overpass and a little-used street that was renamed in the 1990s because people kept stealing the signs.

For a man whose parents came to Fort Wayne from Toledo aboard a canal boat in 1851, Baals' resume includes a remarkable number of accomplishments that benefit the city to this day. In 1926 - eight years before he was first elected - historian B.J. Griswold included Baals in his book "Builders of Greater Fort Wayne," noting Baals' service as manager at General Electric and as postmaster despite having only a high school education. It was under his leadership that planning for a new post office on Harrison Street began - a building that still houses federal courts and other offices.

His chief accomplishment as mayor was the \$9 million elevation of the Nickel Plate Railroad tracks downtown, which until 1955 created a bottleneck that stifled growth on the north side. But that was hardly his only legacy as mayor, which included re-election in 1938, 1942 and 1951. The city's sewage treatment plant, Johnny Appleseed Park and "Circumurban" highway (Coliseum Boulevard) were all completed or planned during his watch.

Malloy insists her resistance to naming the new building after Baals has nothing to do with his name and everything to do with the position he held. The county will share space in the new building, but as mayor Baals represented only the city.

“But I’ve never had this much fun,” Malloy said. “I’ve been singing ‘I’m just wild about Harry’ all day long.”

As well she should. City officials couldn’t have devised a marketing scheme this effective if they had tried. If they don’t name the building after Baals (and Helmke thinks they should) who will get the honor - the city’s longest-serving mayor?

No way. His name was Bill Hosey. Get it?

When Baals died, The News-Sentinel’s farewell editorial predicted that his imprint would “be permanently enshrined in the city’s history and memory.” If democracy (not to mention simple fairness) means anything, that is exactly what will happen - if not at the new building, somehow, someplace. After all, Baals earned it - just as we, thanks to a week of grade-school laughter at his expense, owe it.

But then, maybe I’m biased. I went to Ball State.

Best Editorial Writer/Category 5

Just ask any vulture

Scott Underwood
The Herald Bulletin
(Anderson)

Vultures – or turkey buzzards as they’re known hereabouts – may be hideous-looking harbingers of doom.

But like most politicians, they’re not really such bad characters. In fact, they’re quite beautiful – the vultures, that is, not the politicians – when beheld from afar.

Look skyward on a windy day and watch them navigate the air currents with astounding avian intuition.

With their long curved wings and uncanny sense of balance, they’re marvels of natural aerodynamic engineering.

Which brings us to the point about their eco-usefulness: Vultures ride the wind on high, often soaring in circular patterns, so that they can sniff out and spy carrion.

They dine on animal carcasses that otherwise would raise a horrible stench all across the countryside.

Road kill, thy name is lunch.

Yes, our bald-headed, red-necked, black-feathered friends provide an invaluable service as nature’s mobile rendering plants. It’s that whole circle of life (and death) thing.

One problem: The bad stuff that goes in isn’t especially pleasant when it comes out.

And some local residents are raising a stink about it. Willing to take only so much crap, they want to uproot roosting vultures.

Anderson City Council sided with the humans, in this case, by recently approving a measure to allow residents to set off fireworks to rid the neighborhood of pests – vultures, in particular.

(And the council, as some taxpayers have pointed out, knows a thing or two about hovering and picking bones clean.)

Although vultures do a job that no one else really wants to do, you probably won’t find a lot of buzzard apologists in these parts. (Yeah, he might have blood all over his face, but he’s really a great guy.) Still, folks ain’t too fired up about the fireworks idea.

They’re worried that some upstanding citizens will go pyro in their all-out war against the vultures – or use the city ordinance as an excuse to cherry bomb the city – and keep the neighbors up all hours. Or worse yet, the fireworkers will accidentally (wink, wink) set someone’s house ablaze in their zeal. Nothing keeps pests away like a raging inferno.

As centuries have passed, man has waged a continuous war to control nature. Human-wildlife encounters can reap unintended consequences – for both man and beast. Just ask Aeschylus, the Greek playwright who died when an eagle (some say a vulture!) mistook his bald pate for a stone and dropped a tortoise on it. Ouch!

So the next time you go to light up an unsuspecting scavenger with an M-80, remember that bird might be somebody’s mother – or, perhaps more importantly, might have eaten somebody’s mother. And to those who successfully rid the neighborhood of vultures, you’ll get your just desserts: Happy entrails to you!

Yes, our bald-headed, red-necked, black-feathered friends provide an invaluable service as nature’s mobile rendering plants. It’s that whole circle of life (and death) thing.

Best Business/Economic News Coverage/Category 6

Timing frustrates newest teachers

Staff

Journal & Courier (Lafayette)

In March 2009, when Larry DuBose was accepted into the Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship program at Purdue University, he was ecstatic.

The program, which aims to fill high-need math and science teaching positions throughout the state, was piloted in Indiana before branching out to other states.

DuBose figured it would provide an opportunity to build on his love of teaching.

Two years later DuBose, who left a job to join the program, is out of work, living out of a suitcase and wondering what went wrong.

“There’s no permanent work and there’s nothing to make me think there will be anytime soon,” DuBose said. “It just feels like they’ve been throwing us under the bus.”

Billed as an innovative answer to a critical shortage of science and math teachers, the program takes college seniors and established professionals in math and science and transplants them into full-time teaching positions in high-demand urban and rural areas.

DuBose was a member of the program’s first cohort, a group of 59 fellows at Purdue University, IUPUI and the University of Indianapolis. Of those 59 original fellows:

- 38, or 64.4 percent, have landed full-time teaching positions, and four remain in part-time positions.
- Nine quit the program.
- Four are in remediation or have been readmitted to the program.
- Four remain unemployed – all four from Purdue’s campus.

Indiana was the first state to pilot the program in 2009 with cohorts at the three universities. In 2010, Ball State University joined the program, bumping the number of fellows in the second cohort to 80.

Fellowship programs will be started in Michigan and Ohio, a move that as recently as Jan. 6 was lauded by President Barack Obama.

Broken promise?

In Indiana, the program’s participants were “a harbinger of the future of teaching and the preparation of teachers in America,” Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, said in 2009.

Gov. Mitch Daniels said the program would see “knowledgeable math and science teachers sped to the classrooms that need them most.”

Jobless program fellows say the Woodrow Wilson Foundation has failed to provide the teaching jobs promised by the program. However, officials with both the foundation and the participating Indiana universities reject the idea that any promise of job placement was made.

“The foundation does not make any promises or guarantees about jobs,” said Beverly Sanford, the foundation’s vice president for communications. “We do our best to facilitate with our partner schools and work with fellows to identify and create opportunities, but we make no promises or guarantee for jobs.”

DuBose has been to 53 job interviews and sent out many more résumés but said he can’t wait any longer.

He wants out. But if he leaves the program and accepts a job outside of teaching, he’ll be responsible for repaying the \$30,000 grant the foundation used to pay for his teaching education. “What we’ve been telling the foundation and Purdue is we’re ready, willing and able to do this, but there’s not work for us, so can you release us from this and let us find other work?” DuBose said. “And they haven’t done that.”

Successes, failures

Not all fellows have struggled in their job search. About 71 percent of the original 59 fellows have landed either full- or parttime employment.

One of those is Katy Hughes, a 2009 Purdue graduate who is now teaching full time as a biology teacher at Frankfort High School.

Hughes applied to the program after seeing an advertisement in a newspaper. Although Hughes said the program did give the impression that jobs were guaranteed, no one could have predicted how the economy would affect school budgets.

“The reason that they said that was based on the economy, and at the time we were all interviewing they weren’t seeing problems with hiring since we were all going to be in math and science teaching jobs,” she said.

“Traditionally, those types of jobs don’t have a lot of trouble.”

Hughes said she was lucky in her job search. She began applying for jobs in May and secured a permanent job position in June.

“It’s been a really positive experience,” Hughes said. “The Woodrow Wilson Fellowship is a great concept, and it’s a great thing to get more science and technology and math teachers into the field.” Fellow Alyce Myers also secured a full-time job, as a biology and earth and space

science teacher at North Judson High School.

Myers, one of the first fellows to secure employment, credited her background in elementary teaching at a private school in Benton County.

“It’s a great opportunity, but if you come out and you gave up a job and don’t have a job now, it’s really tough,” she said.

Myers said she keeps in contact with other members of the cohort, including those without work. “Luckily I did get a job, but there are several people that haven’t. And that’s been all of our concern.”

Gave up job

Before he applied to the program, DuBose was employed as an analyst at Tate & Lyle.

He had enjoyed experiences tutoring at his church, and when he heard of the Woodrow Wilson Fellowships, it seemed like a perfect career change.

“I looked into different programs and this one caught my eye because it had the guarantee of placement,” DuBose said.

He said his experience with the program was initially positive.

Then, as school budgets began to tighten and it became clear the program would not guarantee job placement, anxiety set in.

Jennifer Drake, director of the program at the University of Indianapolis, said there is still a dire need for high-quality math and science teachers.

“What we’ve seen is the dip in the economy did create some problems in terms of placement,” Drake said. “Two years ago, all the fellows would have been placed.”

Jesse Hotelin, another member of Purdue’s first cohort, was working successfully as a technician for a Lafayette exterminator before applying for the fellowship.

“I saw through various promotional material and an information meeting that Indiana was supposedly in desperate need of science teachers,” Hotelin said.

“I only quit my job because there seemed to be little risk involved with this program. I was only told after the program had already begun, after I quit my job and enrolled at Purdue, that neither (the foundation) or Purdue could place me in a permanent position.”

Seeking way out

Hotelin is now working as a technician outside of teaching in order to support himself and his wife, a graduate student at Purdue.

He said he will fight if the foundation tries to recoup its \$30,000 investment in his stalled teaching career.

“We cannot be expected to put our lives on hold for the sake of the program and their oversights and mistakes, especially in this economy, where all jobs are difficult to find,” Hotelin said.

“I believe the responsible thing for (the foundation) to do would be to offer a release of obligations for firstyear fellows because of the unfortunate, unexpected state of the economy.”

John Hill, director of Purdue’s fellowship program, said even with the economic situation, candidates should not lose hope.

“If you’re really good and you’re a quality applicant, people are looking at quality applicants in math and science areas,” Hill said.

“We’re going to produce some high-quality applicants, and they’ll be competitive. They know their stuff. Part of all this is having confidence in yourself and believing.”

DuBose said he sent a letter to the foundation on Nov. 15 requesting removal from the program, but he didn’t get a response.

Sanford, the foundation’s communications vice president, said she has no knowledge of that request. “We do not currently know of anyone who is asking to be removed from or withdrawal from the program,” she said.

Best Short Feature Story/Category 8

Not your average K-9-to-5 job

Brian Blair

The Republic (Columbus)

Miles, the most popular employee in the regional Dora Hotel Co. chain, sometimes runs at breakneck speed through the Hotel Indigo lobby.

He frequently falls asleep with his head resting on the front desk.

And he likes nothing better than to kiss a guest or two right on the lips.

“But he knows his boundaries,” said Hotel Indigo General Manager Cindy Waddle.

Boundaries? What boundaries?

“He knows he’s not allowed in the restaurant at all,” Waddle said. “Though I admit he may get a little excited if he sees a kid in there because he really loves kids.”

The employee can get away with all that because he’s a 16-pound, 3-year-old bichon frise with lamb-soft fur and a heart to match.

OK, the live-in ambassador is paid only in Solid Gold dog food and Alpo Variety Snaps treats. However, he’s as much a part of the hotel staff as front-desk clerks and maids.

He met former President Bill Clinton when the ex-leader visited and stayed in 2008, has schmoozed with executives of every stripe and romped with children from all over.

People ask for him by name.

“There are even local people who come in here just to see him,” said Waddle. “And then there are kids whose parents won’t let them get a dog.

“So they come down here to get their ‘dog fix.’ ”

He boasts his own busi-ness cards and his own email account of miles@dorahotels.com

Chatty notes arrive from youngsters who have stayed at Indigo with their parents and fallen in love with the dog. He gets groomed weekly and showered with toys, gifts and hugs from the youngsters.

“Dear Miles,” reads one email from Bonnie, Hallie and Adeline Dixon. “We wish we could see you more often. We had so much fun visiting you last month.”

Others come from adults.

“Dear Miles: My wife looked at your picture and thinks that you are (no offense!) a Maltipoo.

“I say no way! Could you please set the record straight? An admirer, Barry.”

You want real admirers? Consider those who think nothing of paying \$8 apiece for multiple, miniature, fuzzy likenesses of Miles for their children.

“He has the best job in the world,” said Nicole Carpenter of guest services.

She tossed a Christmas tree toy for him to chase and he went sliding on the wood floor like an overjoyed child. So, what’s that job like, Miles?

“Ruff! Ruff!” he barked.

Actually, truth be told, Waddle held a bag of treats near him to get his attention. But he does everything short of answering journalistic queries.

There’s no question of his value, for example.

“He’s so therapeutic,” said Waddle. “And so social.”

When President Tim Dora proposed the idea of a live-in pooch when Indigo first opened, Waddle grew concerned.

“I was a little nervous, because so many people can have pet allergies,” she said. “And, dealing in customer service, I was worried we would get a lot of complaints.”

She paused and looked at Miles and smiled.

“It has been the total opposite.”

Guests have made him the most frequent mention on customer service cards they complete before leaving. Bichons are considered hypoallergenic, a big plus. They’re also extremely social, kid friendly, and generally not loyal to just one owner.

“That was very important since there would be so many different people taking care of him,” said Waddle.

He likes snoozing in the sun in his bed against the window near the front desk.

“That bed costs more than mine,” said Waddle. “It really was specially made for him.”

The round resting place features on its sides an engraved haiku:

Miles away from home you are, I’ll be your best friend. Please rub my belly.”

Besides daily walks, Miles has escorted co-workers to downtown Neighborfest concerts, to an Indianapolis Colts Fanfest event at Mill Race Park and elsewhere.

He also has hosted dog birthday parties on Indigo’s patio — and presented a card to the hound of honor. Plus, he serves as a celebrity of sorts at the hotel’s Canine Cocktail Nights the fourth Thursday of every month.

“Miles,” said Waddle, “ensures that our guests walk away from here with a memorable experience.”

Best Profile Feature/Category 9

Two of a kind

Jesse Temple

The Star Press (Muncie)

The two old men are seated in their customary chairs at the small wooden roundtable, nestled in the corner of MD's Golf Academy with a deck of cards, making small talk and killing time again.

It is a bitterly cold Friday morning in December, and MD's has just opened its doors for business at 9 a.m. sharp.

As usual, Don Tuttle and Jack Schaubut are already here. Don's maroon Chevy Impala and Jack's burgundy Chevy Cobalt are the first two cars parked in the gravel lot outside the building.

Inside, Jack delicately flicks the cards through his frail hands, shuffling up for the first of many rounds of gin, a pen and sheet of lined paper by his side to keep score.

That today happens to be a Friday is mostly inconsequential. This scene has been playing out each weekday during the winter months for the past dozen years. When the weather conditions in Muncie don't afford for spending time by the golf course, Don and Jack come here now.

"Just something to do," Jack says often. "Killing time."

Don and Jack come to MD's, they say, because they can play cards here in peace and quiet in a venue outside their homes. But they are here for other reasons, too.

Jack is 80 years old, a month shy of his 81st birthday. Don turned 85 in mid-December.

And although they possess a wealth of stories, they speak sparingly during the 2½ hours spent each weekday at MD's, concentrating mostly on the task at hand. They are friends, but they also are fierce competitors.

Don and Jack wager a dollar on each game.

"Of course, you're not supposed to gamble out here, but we don't put no money on the table," says Jack, who does most of the talking between the two. "Public place. I don't think you're allowed to. We don't play for nothing that amounts to much anyhow."

Being here, playing cards and shooting the occasional breeze in the calmness of a winter morning is a luxury they know others their age aren't so fortunate to experience. A larger group of their friends used to gather for card games.

"But some of them died, and the others quit," Jack says, revealing something else about why they're here.

They are here because they still have each other.

Don graduated from high school at the now-defunct Lincoln School in Randolph County in 1944 before enlisting in the Navy and serving three years in the South Pacific.

When he returned home, he spent the next 39 years installing glass for City Glass, until it closed in 1986.

Don finally retired in 1999 after working a stint for Short's Glass.

Jack graduated from Central High School in 1948 and worked 35 years for the fire department in town as a pump operator.

"They dragged him out of there kicking and screaming every time," Don jokes.

Jack retired in 1991 and began spending much of his time at Crestview Golf Club, playing both golf and cards.

The two met years ago — so long ago that they don't even remember exact dates.

"Time goes by," says Jack, swiping a playing card from the face-down stock pile.

They do agree, however, that their first real bonding moments together occurred at Crestview. For nearly 25 years, Don would voluntarily shuttle golf carts there to the first tee, driving them in the wee hours of the morning from the garage so they would be available for members to use.

"I'd get there as early as I could," says Don, wearing a green pullover and a beige Crestview Golf Club beret. "I'd get there right after daylight, about an hour and a half, two hours before they opened up. I'd have the carts up there before they opened up. I did it and got a membership. All the goodies."

Over the years at Crestview, Don and Jack became good friends. Jack was a Crestview member, and the two saw each other often.

In an odd twist, Don and Jack actually had lived on the same block for years — on Ebright Street, on the south side of town. Don has resided there for 59 years now, and Jack for nearly 50 years. But it took those games of cards before they ever really got to know each other.

There was a time when Don and Jack wondered if they'd even have a place to play anymore.

For years, the two joined a group of men in a back room at Crestview, playing gin or tonk or whatever other card game was on the docket for the day.

Eventually, however, they became unwanted guests at Crestview, Jack says, when the golf club underwent new management for a brief period.

“They had told us, ‘You may have to quit,’ ” Jack recalls. “Instead of telling us, they put a note on the table where we play that said, ‘No more cards.’ They wouldn’t even tell us to our face. That was it.”

As luck would have it, Don and Jack found Doug Bishop almost immediately.

Bishop had recently opened MD’s Golf Academy, a driving range and equipment shop in town. He served as Crestview’s assistant golf professional from 1990-97 and saw Don and Jack frequently during those eight years. Don and Jack and a few others soon moved their daily game of cards to Bishop’s place with his blessing. Now, only Don and Jack remain.

“They started coming out regularly, and they’ve been here ever since,” Bishop says. “Those guys are like family to me.”

Neither Don nor Jack spends much money during their stay. Jack pays a dollar for bottled water so he can take his pills every day at 11 a.m. Don helps fill the coffee pots in the morning. Sometimes, the two bring in apples or oranges for those working at MD’s.

“They certainly don’t hurt anything here,” Bishop says. “I’m just glad they have a place to play.”

If there’s one thing that Don has learned over time about his friend, it’s that Jack is a man of complete routine.

Each weekday morning, Jack wakes up at 7 a.m., eats breakfast at Bruner’s Family Restaurant, and drives over to MD’s to play a couple hours of cards with Don.

“He goes by my house at seven minutes after eight every morning,” Don says. “I can set my watch with him. If we keep him from hitting his routine, he gets upset.”

In the afternoon, Jack drives to Bob Evans for two cups of coffee. Then, it’s across the parking lot to Applebee’s for a mug of Bud Light. He doesn’t drink as much these days. Not since the gallbladder surgery and triple-bypass surgery on his heart.

“But I’ve got to get out,” Jack says. “Some day, I may not be able to. I dread that, if I live long enough. As long as I can get out, I’m going to get out for a while, do something.”

Don, meanwhile, returns home after their game of cards and rarely leaves the rest of the day.

“I stay around the house, do my shopping, do my laundry, go over to Crestview a little bit and go home,” Don says.

The highlight of their day, of course, is here at MD’s spending time with each other.

“If he wasn’t there, I’d probably have to just come home,” Jack says. “I wouldn’t have too much to do.”

Don and Jack are tied at 78 apiece in their fifth game of the day. In their version of gin, the loser is the first to reach 100.

They are talking about golf, killing time until the weather warms up so they can swing by Crestview again and enjoy the company of others.

“About two or three years ago is the last time I played,” Don says. “And then the legs gave out on me. I just go over there and shoot the breeze with those guys now.”

Don wins the next two hands easily. Jack’s point total soars above 100 and the game ends. Don leads three games to two.

Jack rises from his chair with a dollar bill in hand, this time for Bishop. He needs that bottle of water behind the counter to take his pills.

He returns a minute later, setting his pills on the table. It is 10 minutes to 11, not quite time for pills and not quite time to go.

Jack collects the cards from the middle of the table, pulls them close and shuffles. He picks up his pen, crosses out the old scores on his sheet of paper and finds some white space to write “Don” and “Jack.”

Another hand, another game awaits.

Best In-Depth Feature or Feature Package/Category 10

**What lies beneath
Mark Bennett
Tribune-Star (Terre Haute)**

Every day, pedestrians walk over perhaps Terre Haute’s greatest lost treasure.

It lies beneath the asphalt, concrete and grass along South Ninth Street, between Poplar and Oak streets.

Most people with firsthand knowledge have long since died. But legends, clues and a 105-year-old blueprint linger.

Mike Rowe is almost certain of one possibility.

And Rowe, who's studied and brewed local beer, has a hunch about another intriguing mystery.

That city block was once filled by the nation's seventh-largest brewery, the Terre Haute Brewing Co.

At its peak, the beer plant produced 46.5 million gallons of Champagne Velvet a year, employed 950 people, and served as the lifeblood of the town in its "Sin City" era before closing in 1958.

Built in the 1880s before refrigeration, the brewery complex included four cavernous beer cellars, designed to store lager in 18½-foot, 75-barrel wooden tanks at the optimum temperature of 52 degrees.

After Prohibition ended and modern cooling systems emerged, the brewery largely abandoned its underground spaces, Rowe said.

He believes those massive cooling cellars are still intact, under sidewalks, parking lots and current buildings.

"I do," Rowe said, grinning. "I absolutely do."

He also suspects those old brewery catacombs might contain a hidden speakeasy from the Prohibition days.

During that period from 1920 to 1933, the federal government banned the manufacture, sale and delivery of alcohol.

Of course, some bars, or speakeasies, operated illegally, selling beer and liquor in clandestine places.

Local legends claim that Chicago gangsters frequented Terre Haute in those days.

Given the city's brewing prominence and its wide-open reputation, it's not a stretch to presume those mobsters came here because the Terre Haute Brewing Co. underground contained a speakeasy.

"That's all speculation," Rowe said, "but it makes a lot of sense."

Subterranean Terre Haute 'unique'

Rowe knows a bit about history, brewing and solving mysteries.

In 1990, while he and his wife, Teri, renovated the block's original brewery building – E. Bleemel Flour and Feed on the north side of Poplar – a guy cleaning out the basement found the long-lost handwritten recipe for Champagne Velvet.

After spending a decade securing trademark rights and experimenting with the mix, Rowe revived CV in 2000.

He restarted the Terre Haute Brewing Co. in a historic brewing building on the west side of Ninth Street, and sold CV from the Tap Room bar on Poplar.

In 2006, Rowe ceased CV production to complete a deal with an Indianapolis-based brewer, Brugge, allowing that firm to make its Belgian-style beers and others in that brewery as the Vigo Brewing Group.

The revival of beermaking in the past decade extends a long Terre Haute brewing history, dating back to 1837.

While some remnants of that past can be seen above ground – the current brewery, the Bleemel building and Stables Steak-house – the prospect of subterranean tunnels, cellars and a hidden bar still fascinates many Hauteans.

Author Douglas Wissing heard those stories while researching his new book "Indiana, One Pint at a Time: A Traveler's Guide to Indiana's Breweries," published by the Indiana Historical Society.

Wissing trekked all over the state, gathering information about its beer-making history. The catacombs below the old Terre Haute brewing district stand out, Wissing said by phone from his home in Bloomington.

"It's unique to my understanding of Indiana's situation," he said.

"One Pint at a Time" devotes a full page to Terre Haute's "lost speakeasy" and the folklore about a hidden barroom, with dusty mirrors and glasses still on the tables, quickly evacuated after a 1920s raid by the authorities.

Rowe interviewed a handful of elderly former Terre Haute Brewing Co. workers in 1990. They described a tunnel that ran along the complex's perimeter, the cellars and the tall redwood casks from the pre-refrigeration days.

"One guy, I remember him telling me he was sure they were still there," Rowe recalled.

Much of the old brewery workers' recollections are shown on a 1905 blueprint of the brewery.

The dimensions of the cellars are breathtaking. The largest measured 74 feet wide by 109 feet long. The ceilings were 20 feet tall to accommodate the 18½-foot casks. The cellar ceilings are 12 feet below the surface of the ground, Rowe said.

"It's amazing," he said of the catacombs' size.

The perimeter tunnel gave workers access to the cellars and the beer pipeline, which fed not only the brewery tanks, but also outlets to nearby

local taverns.

Peeking below

A few people living today have gotten a peek at bits of the brewery's underground.

About a decade ago, a Vectren crew installing a gas line along South Ninth Street discovered a tunnel beneath a sidewalk near the CVS Pharmacy parking lot. Victor Mullen, a veteran gas company worker, went down through the surface hole with a flashlight.

"It was a huge tunnel," said Mullen, now 65.

The crew was told not to trek through the tunnel. But from his entry point, Mullen saw a tunnel shaped like a half-circle, or a Quonset hut, running north and south along Ninth Street. It was 12 to 14 feet wide and 8 feet tall, Mullen estimated, and sturdily built.

"It was well supported right there," he said last week.

Mullen has seen a few underground oddities in his 45 years with the gas company. The catacombs caught his attention.

"I would've loved to have gotten down into those things," he said.

With his flashlight, though, he did spot something curious. About 25 feet down the tunnel, Mullen saw a wooden partition wall blocking its path. It was gray, with a window and a door, both closed.

"Whoever went through that door last, locked it and went out on the other side of the street," Rowe surmised.

What lies behind that wall is anyone's guess.

Rowe got a chance to see a smaller portion of the perimeter tunnel farther south on Ninth Street. When a backhoe accidentally collapsed a section near the sidewalk about eight years ago, exposing the tunnel, Rowe gave the city a copy of his 1905 brewery blueprint. He also briefly toured the short portion of the tunnel. "It was pretty cool," Rowe said. "It was probably the smallest of the whole system."

He saw holders for sconces that would've lit the pathway, and some conduit. But he saw no speakeasy.

The possibilities of a lost speakeasy were bolstered when a similar Prohibitionera underground bar was discovered in Peoria, Ill., with potential funding connections to the Terre Haute brewery, Rowe said. Wissing's new book has rekindled the mystery.

If the city or the State of Indiana could someday revive and develop the catacombs, they could become a tourism attraction, Rowe predicted.

"Can you imagine the attention this community would get if this were [recovered]?" he said.

Best Sports Event Coverage/Category 11

Title completes diver's recovery

Nathan Baird Journal & Courier (Lafayette)

While beginning a painful recovery in the Riley Hospital for Children burn unit last January, Layne Rogers made a request to help pass the time.

He wanted to study dives.

So Harrison's diving coach, J.D. Schaumberg, brought Rogers a library of about 20,000 dives he had compiled while handling video production for Purdue's team.

Just over a year later, Schaumberg held the camera as Rogers produced a thrilling comeback story.

Rogers ran away with the championship at Saturday's state diving finals at IU Natatorium, posting a score of 547.95 that stands as the fourth-highest winning mark in meet history.

"I knew coming in I had a really good shot at winning, but you never know what could happen," Rogers, a junior, said. "You have to focus on whatever's next."

Rogers became Harrison's first male to win a swimming or diving title since Ty Richardson won the 100 breaststroke in 1990. Kelci Bryant won the 2005 girls diving title.

Rogers entered the weekend with the state's top regional score and emerged from Saturday morning's preliminaries and semifinals as the leader. Performing some of the day's most difficult dives, Rogers posted the highest state championship score since 2006.

"Any kid you have, you see the potential and you know where they can go," said Schaumberg, a former state qualifier at Zionsville. "You're just hoping that hard work and that passion from the kid will come out, and they'll hit that potential.

"Getting to sit in the hospital, I said, 'OK, we're going to make a decision right now. You can take this and sit down and feel bad about yourself, or you can take this, work through it – it's going to be really tough – and come out stronger than you were.' "

Rogers emerged from the preliminaries (five dives) leading by 10.4 points. By the end of the semifinals, his lead over second-place Danton Rogers of Bloomington South had grown to 26.4 points. On his penultimate dive in the finals, Rogers attempted one of his favorites: an inward 2 1/2 somersault tuck, with a 3.1 degree of difficulty. The resulting 60.45 effort drew applause from the crowd, though Rogers and Schaumberg say he's scored in the upper 70s with the same dive.

"Something you have to keep in mind is not to get cocky or bored," said Rogers, who prefers to attempt difficult dives. "I was trying to stay calm and relaxed, thinking that if I hit my dives I should be good, but if I miss I'm still all right."

Rogers did not begin diving until his freshman season. He often flipped on trampolines with Conan Hutchison, who dived for Harrison at the time and suggested Rogers try the sport.

In the middle of a solid sophomore season, a grease fire resulted in third-degree burns to Rogers' left hand. He spent the next two weeks in intensive care, with Schaumberg driving back and forth each day to trade hospital shifts with Rogers' parents.

Rogers returned to the pool on the first day he was allowed in late April. In the first week of August, he won championships in one-meter diving and one-meter synchronized diving and was the three-meter runner-up in the 16-year-old division at the AAU Nationals in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"That's about when I thought I had a good chance of doing well here in Indiana at state," said Rogers, who competes with Boiler Diving Academy. "It was a big confidence booster."

A former Harrison football player, Rogers shifted his focus to diving because he enjoyed it so much more than other sports. Schaumberg expects continued improvement.

"It's exciting to see that he's at this level right now, and yet there's so much more," Schaumberg said. "He's just going to blow people out of the water when he hits his potential.

"Talking with him, you can tell that he's not done. He's still focused and moving forward."

Best Sports News or Feature Coverage/ Category 12

Great big red flag

Doug Zaleski

The Star Press (Muncie)

Football is the elephant in the room when it comes to college athletic departments balancing the cost it takes to operate the program with the requirements demanded by Title IX law to ensure male and female athletes are treated with equality.

Football generates more income than any other sport on most college campuses but also racks up more expenses.

That's no different at Ball State, but some of the perks enjoyed by the Cardinals' football program might have played a role in a complaint filed by an unknown person that the university was not compliant in Title IX law. The grievance sparked an investigation that is ongoing.

Here's one scenario from last season that shows how football operates at Ball State and other schools: The Cardinals stayed overnight at a hotel in Noblesville, Ind., before each home game in 2010. The practice is normal for virtually every Division I-A football program in the country, but no other Ball State sports teams are lodged in hotels the night before a home game.

The Cardinals used \$8,375.84 from their 2010 operating budget of \$736,200 to pay for rooms at Cambria Suites on Sept. 1.

The hotel website touts the facility as a "sophisticated and contemporary Indiana hotel" and has "oversized suites with luxurious bedding and upscale amenities" that include two flat-panel LCD televisions, spa-like baths, microwaves and refrigerators, and Wolfgang Puck in-room coffee and Numi organic tea.

The Cardinals also spent \$290 to have Ball State buses transport them from their hotel across busy Highway 238 to the IMAX Theater at Hamilton Town Center Mall. They paid \$504 for the travel party to attend the movie "The Other Guys" on the morning of the season-opening game against Southeast Missouri State.

Ball State spent another \$1,426 to hire two Star of America charter buses to take the 91-member travel party to the game at Scheumann Stadium in Muncie the next day.

On the day of the game, Ball State spent \$4,582 on a 9 a.m. breakfast, 12:15 p.m. lunch and 3:20 p.m. pregame meal.

The total cost of the overnight stay was about \$14,673. Ball State repeated the procedure for its five other home games, bringing the total cost for travel and housing for nights before a home game in 2010 to roughly \$88,000.

Best Sports Columnist/Category 13

Cougars can finally take a knee

**Lynn Houser
The Herald-Times
(Bloomington)**

In football parlance they call it the “victory formation,” that time of the game when your quarterback can take a knee, running out the final seconds of a game in hand.

When North’s Jake Tieken had that honor Friday night, he had tears in his eyes. He was about to be the winning quarterback of North’s first sectional champion in football.

It was an extraordinary scene at Dennis O. Martin Field, with the students rushing the field to envelop a most unlikely sectional winner.

This was a team that won only three regular season games, finished last in its conference and suffered several back-breaking losses along the way.

It’s been that way too long at North, where the football program has suffered through some very lean times. Six times in its 29-year history, it endured winless seasons. From 1979 to ’84, it lost 32 consecutive games.

There was some success under Wayne Nichols in the 1970s and Dick Ranard in the 1980s, but it always seemed like the football gods didn’t favor the Cougars.

And there were times Friday night when it looked as though the gods were up to their old tricks again, especially when running back D’Angelo Roberts uncharacteristically lost three fumbles.

It took a lot of resiliency for the Cougars to overcome that and pull out a 28-21 win over Whiteland.

Displaying as much re-solve as any of them was Tieken, who “played the game of his life,” according to head coach Scott Bless.

Tieken missed only one throw all night, completing 12 of 13 for 133 yards. He rushed for 23 yards on nine carries. But statistics don’t even begin to tell the story.

They talk about a quarter-back “managing” a game, which is sometimes code for “not much of a playmaker.”

But Tieken managed this game like you would expect from a senior quarterback and also made significant plays along the way.

Three of his nine carries resulted in first downs when the defense was in tight, including one carry in the fourth quarter that required a second and third effort.

“I knew we needed 3 yards and thought, ‘Why not 6?’ I was about down and planted my hand and just kept moving,” Tieken said.

Tieken found yet another way to get a first down on fourth-and-short, a hard count drawing Whiteland offsides.

Tieken gave plenty of credit to the offensive line: Evan Crouch, Desmond Gilbert, Matt Tobin, Taylor Bastin, Sam Sheldon and Leo Sonnefield. Incidentally, the line just happens to be coached by his older brother, Josh, a 2006 North grad.

“Our offensive line has made so much progress from the beginning of the season,” Josh said. “They have become Friday night players.”

It was sort of a Tieken family affair Friday night.

“My youngest son is the ball boy, my middle son the quarterback and my oldest the offensive line coach,” said Danny, the Cougars’ offensive coordinator. “It doesn’t get any better than that.”

For the Tieken family to experience this together, well, it was emotional.

Although Danny previously coached at Brown County, Mitchell and Union (Dugger), he had never won a sectional until Friday night.

“My dad has been to sectional finals before and lost them all, so this was for him, and for the whole Cougar nation,” Jake said.

“My dad and I had a moment when the clock was winding down,” Josh said. “He called a heck of a game tonight. I look up to him, and to see him like this is really special to me.”

The defense also showed resolve with timely stops and two takeaways, the last a game-clinching pick by Brayton Deckard on a long pass.

“I was screaming ‘pass’ so loud my voice cracked,” Jake said, who moments later was relishing the honor of taking that knee.

“I started crying before my knee hit the ground,” he said. “Then I saw Brayton Deckard jumping up and down like he was at an amusement park.”

There was a lot of jumping and hugging and back-slapping and high-fiving in the delirious aftermath. There also was time for the usual team prayer, followed by a few choice words by Bless, whose club has come up short in the last two sectional finals.

“The last two years, after this game, we’ve had to tell our seniors goodbye,” Bless said with a voice choked with emotion. “Now we can say, ‘Seniors, go get your trophy.’ ”

