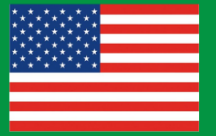


March 2024  
Vol. 24 Issue 9

# The Write Stuff

The Whiting-Robertsdale Monthly Magazine Delivered to Your Door



## Join Us for the Whiting Easter Parade!

by Jenn Gunter Peddycord

The Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce will be holding its annual **Easter Parade** on **Saturday, March 23rd** at **2pm**. The Parade will travel along 119th Street from Indianapolis Blvd. to Whiting City Hall. This festive parade features floats, bands, our friend the Easter Bunny, local community groups, and plenty of Easter spirit.



At the end of the parade, we hold Easter themed contests, and contestants get to walk or ride in the parade. Create your own unique Easter bonnet and enter the **Annual Bonnet Contest** sponsored by **Baran Funeral Home**. Winners will be selected from each age category. Adults and children welcome.

We will also have contests for **golf carts** and **bikes decorated for Easter**, as well as **pets** dressed in their Easter best (must be leashed and walked by owner during the parade). Wear your bonnet, bring your golf cart/bike or your pet to the parade on March 23rd. Line up is at 1:30pm by the YMCA (Community Center). Immediately following the parade will be the contests in front of City Hall.

There will be awards for the winners of each of the bonnet contest age categories, the winner of the golf cart decorating contest, the bike decorating contest, and for the most Easter-ready pet. **Marty Dybel** from Baran Funeral Home will host the Bonnet Contest and **Jenn Gunter Peddycord** from the Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce will host the other contests. For more information, contact the Chamber at **219-659-0292**.

## Photos with the Easter Bunny & Peeps Projects!

The W/R Chamber has more Easter fun in store! Get your photo taken with the Easter Bunny the morning of the parade, **March 23rd** from **9am-1pm** at **Memory Makers** photo studio (**1530 119th Street**). Appointments can be made by contacting Memory Makers at **800-935-2744** or by sending and email to [info@photosbymemorymakers.com](mailto:info@photosbymemorymakers.com).



Stretch your creativity and get your hands on some marshmallow-y peeps to enter the **Annual Peeps Diorama Contest!** Use pop-culture scenes, your favorite book, iconic art, etc. to create a fun and unique display. Enter the contest by bringing your finished project to the Chamber (**1417 119th Street**) by **March 16th**. Projects will be put on display and **voting** will be from **Monday, March 18th** until **4pm March 23rd**. Winners will be selected by popular vote from each age category (**Adults, Teens 13-17, and Kids 12 and under**), and will be announced on **Monday, March 25th**. Whether you are a seasoned artist, or a sugar-marshmallow novice, we invite you to give this sticky sweet contest a try!

## Hop On Out to Oil City Stadium!

by Adi Cruz

The Whiting Parks and Recreation Department will host the **City's Annual Easter Goodies Hunt** on **Saturday, March 23rd**.

This year we have moved the location from the Whiting Little League Complex to **Oil City Stadium** at **1700 119th Street**. Open to families residing in the **46394**-zip code, **ages 1-12**. The hunt will start at **12pm**. **Remember to bring a basket or bag for the treats!** A prize will be handed out to the children on a first come, first served basis. This is a **FREE** event.

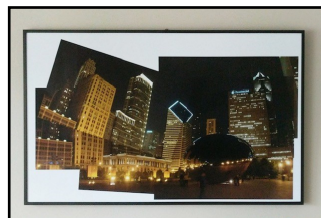


For more information, contact the **Whiting Parks Department** at **219-659-0860**.

## An Art Show of Simple Distractions at Studio 659

by Nicholas P. Decker

The hectic, fast paced, unpredictability of the everyday can get to be too much. **Studio 659** hosts **Nicholas P. Decker** in his first one-man art show. Why is the show called "Simple Distractions?"



I think that art can be intimidating to people sometimes. "I just don't understand it." "It looks like my kid could paint that." I want art to be approachable, fun, silly, and exciting. Art doesn't have to be high brow or hoity-toity.

When viewing these pieces my only hope is that it ignites some sort of emotion or response. Does one of my paintings make you feel cozy and relaxed? Does my photo remind you of that memorable vacation you took? Did you chuckle to yourself when you looked at a picture?

That's all I want out of the art I make. While I selfishly make all these pieces for me, with my own stories and messages behind them, my ultimate goal is to also make it approachable for the viewer. My hopes are that they make you feel, think, or react in a way that you didn't expect.

Or maybe you pop in, walk along the hardwood floor of the studio, and your mind quiets down a bit. As your eyes dart across my 20+ pieces around the gallery, you forget about the daily stressors, and you're finally able to take a deep and calming breath. Hence, "Simple Distractions." The show will open at **Studio 659** on **March 8th** from **7pm** to **9pm** and will run until **April 5th**.

**Congratulations Mascot Hall of Fame!**

Voted USA Today's #1 Pop Culture Museum!

USA TODAY 100 READERS' CHOICE 2024

See Full Story on Page 14!

## Catch Yourself a Leprechaun!

Please join us on **Saturday, March 16th** at **Studio 659** to make **leprechaun catchers**. The event is sponsored by **Arts Alive**. The activity is **free**. A fun-filled activity for kids and families. Supplies will be provided. The craft will be from **11am-1:30pm**.



## Open Mic Night is Back!

**Arts Alive** is excited to announce that **Jim Murzyn and Friends** will be taking over **Studio 659** monthly to showcase local talents. If you dance, tell jokes, write poetry or stories, juggle, sing, dance or play an instrument come and join us. **Sign up** starts at **6pm** and **performances** are from **7-9pm** on **Wednesday, March 13th** and **April 10th**. We will be at **Studio 659, 1413 119th Street, Whiting**.



Weather permitting, we will be **outdoors** at **Sheridan Plaza** on a monthly basis on **Wednesdays, May 8th, June 12th, July 10th, August 14th, September 11th, and October 9th** from **7-9pm** with **sign ups** at **6pm**.

If the weather does not cooperate, it will be held rain or shine or cold, as we will head indoors to **Studio 659**. If you have any questions, please contact **Patti** at **219-427-4288** for more information.

## Easter Craft

On **Saturday, March 23rd**, **Arts Alive** will be having a **kids' craft** from **10:30am-1pm** at **Studio 659** located at **1413 119th Street, Whiting**. Both boys and girls can come make an Easter hat, which they can then wear in the **Easter Parade**. Kids can then go **line up** by **YMCA** at **1** for the parade and at **2pm** the parade starts. Please join us for a fun filled day.



## Pop-Up Market Coming to Cruise Night!

**Arts Alive** is excited to announce that our **Pop-Up Market** will now be a part of **Whiting Cruise Nights**. We will be next to **City Hall** on **119th and Oliver Street**, from **5-9pm** on **Wednesdays, May 15th, June 19th, July 17th, August 21st, September 18th, and October 16th**.

We will have a variety of vendors from candles, jewelry, wreaths, crochet items, baked goods, photography, and more! Please check us out or if you are interested in being a part of the market contact [artsaliveinwhiting@gmail.com](mailto:artsaliveinwhiting@gmail.com) or call **219-427-4288** for more information.

Also, stay tuned for **Arts Alive Pop-Up Summer Market** on **Saturdays, June 1st** through **August 31st, 8am-2pm**.

# Table of Contents

Whiting Easter Parade, Photos with the Easter Bunny & Peeps Projects!, Hop on Out to Oil City Stadium, An Art Show of Simple Distractions at Studio 659, Catch Yourself a Leprechaun, Open Mic Night is Back!, Easter Craft, Pop-Up Market Coming to Cruise Night! ..... 1

A Letter from the Mayor ..... 2

Whiting, IN Inducted into Cravers Hall of Fame, Upcoming Events at Whiting Public Library, A Little Birdie Told Me, MHOF Members-Only Easter Egg Hunt ..... 4

WR Installation Dinner Photos & Longevity Awards .... 6

WR Installation Dinner Award Winners ..... 7

Oiler Spills, Show & Tell Night at Museum, Whiting Fire Dept. Announces Participation with the Home Fire Campaign, Triduum ..... 8

American Legion Posts, Good Friday Interdenominational Prayer Service, Golden Gatherings, Seniors Unite at the Mascot Hall of Fame ..... 9

Local View ..... 10

CCSJ Hosts Annual Humanities Festival, LARC and WREN, WR Historical Society Field Trip to Community Center, The Easter Vigil, Triduum Morning Prayer, The Challenge Is On!, Good Friday Services, Upcoming Events from the North Township Trustee's Office ..... 11

Meet Our Members, MHOF Takes the Gold..... 14

1st District News, Beauty Will Save Whiting, IN, Whiting Elks News ..... 15

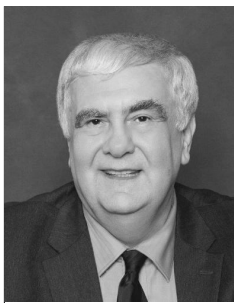
Koch's Choice, Writers Connect Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary ..... 17

WRite Stuff Activity Page ..... 19

Code Enforcement, Emma Lani Massage Therapy Announces Annual Couples Massage Class, Time to Thrive ..... 20

Paws Here!, New Woodshop 'HankArt' is Open for Business ..... 22

Crime Watch ..... 23



## A Letter from the Mayor

by Mayor Steve Spebar, Whiting

Hello Everyone,

As I write this article, we are experiencing temperatures in the 50's. So far so good as far as a mild winter. Hopefully that continues.

On Thursday, February 1st, an incident occurred at the BP Refinery causing the plant to be evacuated. In cases such as this, correct information and communication are essential. The City of Whiting is pleased to announce our partnership with **Smart911.com**. Smart911.com is an Alert System that residents can subscribe to which allows an individual to opt into various notifications including those for Lake County (non-emergency, as this event was deemed). In addition, the City can send out special alerts for such things as street closures, boil alerts, community events, parades and other information. You can choose which alerts to receive and how to receive these alerts. They can be sent to you via e-mail, a voice message to your cell or landline, or as a text to your mobile device.

IN THE EVENT OF A DECLARED EMERGENCY (I.E. EVACUATION, SHELTER IN PLACE, ETC.) THE LAKE COUNTY EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM AND RAVE WOULD PROVIDE AN ALERT ON EVERYONE'S CELL PHONE IN THE DESIGNATED AREA AS WELL AS CALLING LANDLINES WHETHER YOU ARE OR ARE NOT SIGNED UP FOR SMART911 NOTIFICATIONS.

There is no cost to subscribe to the Smart911.com service. I encourage all of our residents to participate in this program to be better informed of non-emergency situations and upcoming City events.

On Friday February 2nd, I had the pleasure of attending a fundraiser for our Historical Society. The event was held at the Knights of Columbus and attended by approximately 175 people. It was a night of fun with the proceeds going to a very worthy cause. My compliments to **Marty Dybel** who helped organize the fundraiser along with numerous members of the Historical Society. My hope is that this can become an annual event. The enthusiasm surrounding our Historical Society is growing, which bodes well for the future. Work this year will include the demolition of the structure at 1610 119th Street, cleaning and grading the empty lot so an addition can be constructed to the recently remodeled building at 1606 119th Street.

Our **Easter Egg Hunt** and **Easter Parade** will be on **Saturday, March 23rd**. Come on out and enjoy! Look for more details in this issue of the *WRite Stuff*.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL MERCHANTS!

I can be reached at [mayorsteve@whitingindiana.com](mailto:mayorsteve@whitingindiana.com)

Till next month,

Mayor  
*Steve Spebar*

### Quote of the Month

*"The most certain sign of wisdom is cheerfulness."*  
- Michel de Montaigne

### 2024 Board of Directors

#### Directors

Tami Aldrin  
Donna Cafferata  
Kevin Clark  
Donna Dabertin  
Norb Dudzik  
Don Erminger  
Jesse Hunt  
Montserrat Inglada  
Lisa Kmak  
Martina Krstic  
Brian Lowry  
Ron Lubas  
Tom Markovich  
Jason Miller  
Amyra Muhammad  
Fr. Jayababu Nuthulapati  
Carolyn Sarvanidis  
Nancy Stolman  
Fr. Andrew Summerson  
Mandy Vargo  
Jim Wiseman

#### Executive Committee

President  
John Sopo

#### Vice Presidents

Tom Dabertin  
Diana Del Rio  
Linda Gajewski  
Jean Wilkening

Past President  
Nancy Stolman

Secretary/Treasurer  
Allison Ferconio



The Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce publishes the *WRite Stuff* Newspaper. As such, it may choose to reject any article, advertisement, photo or submission for any reason. Concerns about the policy may be directed to the *WRite Stuff* Oversight Committee.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the publication at the time of printing. The advertisers and the publisher shall not be liable for damages arising out of errors or omissions.

#### PUBLISHER

WR Chamber of Commerce  
wrchamber@wrchamber.com  
219-659-0292

#### WRite Stuff Editor

Elliot Bibat  
writestuff@wrchamber.com  
219-659-0292

Credits & Editorial Info

The Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the **City of Whiting**, the **City of Hammond**, and **Notre Dame Federal Credit Union** for their generous support of *The WRite Stuff* newspaper.



**NANCY STOLMAN**  
**RE/MAX Realty Associates**



#### WHY RE/MAX?

National Brand Recognition  
Cutting Edge Technology & Relocation Support

#### WHY NANCY STOLMAN??

A Top Listing Agent in the Whiting/ Robertsdale Area for 25+ years  
Skilled Full Time Real Estate Professional Providing Excellent Customer Service

**WE'RE NOT LIKE THE OTHERS,  
AND NEITHER ARE YOU!**

CALL TODAY FOR THE EXPERIENCE YOU NEED  
AND THE CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE YOU DESERVE



**NANCY STOLMAN**

219.689.5235 (mobile)  
nancystolman@remax.net







***Wishing You  
A Most Blessed Easter***



*Martin A. Dybel  
Henry J. Blake  
David Cunningham  
Funeral Directors*

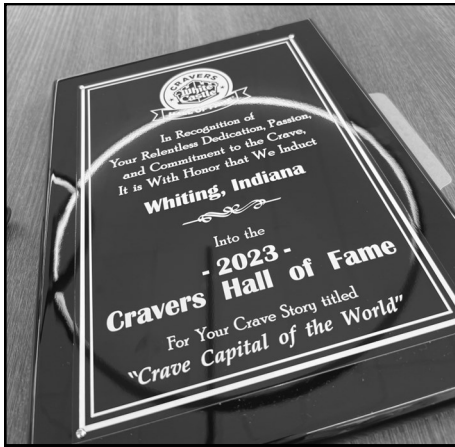
*Traditional Services, Cremation Services, Pre-Planned Funeral Arrangements  
1235 - 119th Street*

*219-659-4400*

## Whiting, IN Inducted into Cravers Hall of Fame

by Sarah Creel

Congratulations to **Whiting, IN** for being the first town to be inducted into the **Cravers Hall of Fame**. **White Castle** will be celebrating with the whole community in **March (date to be determined)** as they give out free sliders and other fun stuff. Stay tuned for more information on that celebration coming soon!



## A Little Birdie Told Me...

by Lynn Haynes

Have you heard the latest? **Whiting Robertsdale Environmental Neighbors (WREN)** is a grassroots group dedicated to environmental and sustainability concerns. What does that mean? Simply put, sustainability means “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

We are inviting Whiting-Robertsdale community members to get involved with clean ups, recycling, planting trees, planting native gardens, composting etc. The list of projects is endless, but we need everyone to help out! Our meetings are held at the **Whiting YMCA** on the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm**. Please join us to learn how you can make a difference in your community and for the future!



## Upcoming Events at Whiting Public Library

by Tony Borgo

### Crayon Jewelry - March 2nd at 2pm

Learn how to turn crayons into beautiful artistic jewelry. This melted crayon project will be held at the Whiting Public Library on **Saturday, March 2nd at 2pm**. Space is limited for this free adult program. Please call the Whiting Public Library at **219-659-0269 x125** or email at [tony@whiting.lib.in.us](mailto:tony@whiting.lib.in.us) to reserve your spot.



### Real Reels

The Whiting Public Library continues to show critically acclaimed documentaries throughout the year. This month's titles are: ***Trouble the Water* - March 7th, *Three Minutes* - March 14th, *Obit* - March 21st, and *Wrestle* - March 28th**. Showings are at **2:30pm**.

### Travels with Tony - March 9th at 2pm

Embark on an adventure with the latest edition of *Travels with Tony*. The Whiting Public Library invites patrons to join **Tony Borgo** on a captivating journey to explore the vibrant cultural tapestry of Minneapolis-Saint Paul. The journey will take place on **Saturday, March 9th at 2pm**. During this trip you will experience millionaires, mansions and one really big mall.

### How'd They Do That? - March 16th at 2pm

Have you ever wondered how Hollywood is able to capture your favorite moments? If so, you won't want to miss “How'd They Do That?” at the Whiting Public Library on **Saturday, March 16th at 2pm**. **Annette Bochenek** will take you on a journey through some of Tinseltown's most iconic movie scenes and explain how they were accomplished.

### Princess Di: Gone but Still Kicking! - March 23rd at 2pm

**Jillann Gabrielle** returns to the Whiting Public Library on **Saturday, March 23rd at 2pm** to present her one-woman show “Princess Di: Gone but Still Kicking.” This original solo musical is based on the life of Princess Diana. As a spirit haunting Kensington Palace, Diana spins her story and comments on all things royal.

### The Kennedys in Chicago - March 30th at 2pm

The flash of light that was the Kennedy political dynasty is associated with Boston, New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Surprisingly, the city of Chicago's DNA can be found throughout this fascinating family's history. Join **Clarence Goodman** at the Whiting Public Library on **Saturday, March 30th at 2pm** to learn more.

### The Berlin Wall - April 6th at 2pm

Historian **Jim Gibbons** will present the story of The Berlin Wall at the Whiting Public Library on **Saturday, April 6th at 2pm**. On June 24, 1948 Russia divided Berlin with a blockade. On August 12-13, 1961, a wall suddenly appeared in Berlin. Whole families were cut off from communicating with or seeing each other. Gibbons will show how the struggles of time affected not only the people of Berlin but the world as well.



**Home Office Now Open!**  
**1806 Lake Ave. Whiting, IN 46394**  
*by appointment only*

**\$10 Off First Massage In Office**  
**\$20 Off First Mobile Massage**

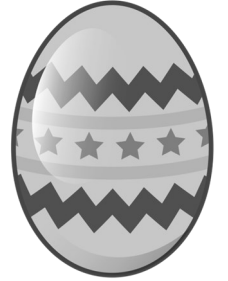
*EmmaLaniMassageTherapy.com*  
*EmmaLaniMT@Gmail.com (219) 370-6312*

*Office Massage Starting at \$90 Mobile Massages Starting at \$140*

## Exclusive Members-Only Easter Egg Hunt Promises Fun for the Whole Family

by Valarie Reyes, MHOF Special Event Coordinator

Excitement is in the air as the Mascot Hall of Fame gears up for its exclusive **Members-Only Easter Egg Hunt** on **March 29th**, from **6:30pm to 8:30pm**. This highly anticipated event guarantees an evening of fun and festivities for the entire family.



Members of the Mascot Hall of Fame are in for a treat as they gather for an evening of Easter-themed activities and entertainment. The Easter Egg Hunt, open only to members, offers a unique opportunity for families to come together and create lasting memories in a lively and engaging atmosphere.

From toddlers to grandparents, everyone is invited to participate in the hunt for colorful Easter eggs and candy hidden throughout the Mascot Hall of Fame. Children will delight in the thrill of searching for eggs while parents and grandparents enjoy the joyous laughter and excitement of their little ones. Additionally, there will be an adult egg hunt featuring special prizes to add an extra layer of excitement for our 21 and over members.

But the Easter Egg Hunt is just the beginning of the fun. Families can also look forward to a variety of Easter-themed games, crafts, and activities that promise to keep everyone entertained throughout the evening. There's something for everyone to enjoy.

In addition to the Easter festivities, members will have full access to the Mascot Hall of Fame's interactive exhibits and attractions, ensuring a night filled with laughter, learning, and adventure.

For families looking to become members and join in the Easter fun, membership options are available on the Mascot Hall of Fame website or at the museum's front desk. Membership not only grants access to exclusive events like the Easter Egg Hunt but also provides year-round benefits, including free admission, discounts on merchandise, and invitations to special events.

Don't miss out on this egg-citing opportunity to celebrate Easter with the whole family. Mark your calendars for March 29th and join us at the Mascot Hall of Fame for a Members-Only Easter Egg Hunt that promises fun, laughter, and memories to last a lifetime.

## Communal Penance Service

by Margaret Saliga

The **Whiting/Robertsdale Catholic Community** will celebrate the **Sacrament of Penance** on **Tuesday, March 26th at 7pm** at **St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**.

Shared scripture readings, prayerful music, and an encouraging homily inspire the participants to be reconciled, accepting God's merciful forgiveness and reaching out to others with the same generous mercy. You are encouraged to mark your calendars and plan to attend. The spiritual benefits are eternal.



The Whiting Robertsdale Catholic Community Invites You to  
**SHOW UP FOR JESUS!**

This Lent, consider how you can make the upcoming forty days a time of true conversion that lasts well beyond Easter!

**Alpha registration**

SJB Church office 219-659-0023  
[www.stjohnbap.org/alpha](http://www.stjohnbap.org/alpha)

**Lenten Fish Fries**

St. John Panel Room  
 Fridays, Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22 4-8 pm

**Ash Wednesday Masses February 14**

SJB 7:00 & 8:30 am, 7:00 pm

**Daily Morning Masses**

SJB –M-F, Rosary 6:25 am, Mass 7:00 am  
 Divine Mercy Chaplet SJB 7:30am  
 Tuesdays - 8:30 am School Mass

**Sunday Masses**

Saturday Vigil, 4:30 pm – St. Adalbert  
 Sundays 8:00 & 10:30 am - St. John

**Confessions**

Daily after 7:00 am mass,  
 Saturdays, 3:00 pm SJB Centennial Room, Back of church  
**Communal Penance Service SJB Tues. Mar. 26, 7:00 pm**

**Stations of the Cross ~ weekly**

SA, Sun. 1:00 pm; SJB, Tues. 1:00 pm; SJB Fri. 7:00 pm



**Easter Triduum, March 28, 29, 30**

Morning Prayer ~ SJB 7:00 am

Holy Thursday, Mass of the Lord's Supper ~ SJB 7:00 pm

Good Friday, Interdenominational Prayer Service

Pentecostal Church of God, 12 noon

Good Friday ~ Solemn Liturgy ~ SA, 3:00 pm

Student led Living Stations of the Cross, SJB, 7:00 pm

Holy Saturday, Easter Basket Blessing, SJB, 2:00 pm

Easter Vigil ~ SJB, 8:00p.m.

Easter Sunday ~ SJB, Masses at 8:00 & 10:30 am

Divine Mercy Sunday, April 7, 3:00 pm SA

# Worship

# & Music

## Lenten Reflections Concert Series

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
 119thSt. & Lincoln Avenue, Whiting  
 Sundays 2/18-3/17, 4:00 pm  
*All concerts are free,  
 a free-will offering will be taken up.  
 Parking aplenty!*

Sponsored by the



1235-119<sup>th</sup> St., Whiting, IN 46394 (219) 659-4400

[churchpsrishopoffice@stjohnbap.org](mailto:churchpsrishopoffice@stjohnbap.org)  
[www.stjohnbap.org](http://www.stjohnbap.org) 219 659-0023

St. Adalbert's (SA)  
 1340 121stSt., Whiting, Indiana



Tres Belles



February 25<sup>th</sup>  
**Adam G &  
 Friends**



March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Michigan City  
 Festival Orchestra  
 Chamber Ensemble



March 10<sup>th</sup>  
 Whiting Park  
 Festival Orchestra  
 Chamber Ensemble



W/ Soprano  
 Sharon  
 Quattrin



March 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Tajci



# The Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce's 101st Installation Dinner: *Mardi Gras... With a WR Twist!*



Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. swearing in the 2024 Chamber Board of Directors.



Alex Akers providing the evening with some classic jazz hits.



Fr. Andrew Summerson leading the live auction.



Guests at the event perusing the festive display of raffle baskets.



Mayor Steve Spebar swearing in the 2024 Chamber Executive Board of Directors.



The Whiting High School Band and other colorful characters gather before marching in the surprise parade during the event.

## 2024 Longevity Awards

The following businesses and organizations were given awards in honor of their longevity and service to the community at the Whiting -Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce's 101st Installation Dinner held on February 9th, 2024

**The Standard Taproom - 5 years**

**Insight Garden - 20 years**

**The Junkyard T-Shirt Shop - 20 years**

**Michelle's Dance Center - 40 years**

**Memory Makers, Inc. - 75 years**

**Whiting Robertsdale Boat Club - 70 years**

**Whiting Refinery Federal Credit Union - 90 years**

**St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church - 125 Years**

## Thank You, Installation Dinner Sponsors and Donors!

80/20 Fitness by Crystal  
Abbott's Printing  
Allison Ferconio  
Amyra Muhammad, Whiting Community Pharmacy  
Brian Lowry, Calumet College of St. Joseph  
Calumet Painting & Restoration  
Calumet Bakery  
Councilman Mark Kalwinski  
Carol Jacobson  
Carolyn Sarvanidis, Region Signs Inc.  
Center Lounge & Restaurant  
Chicago White Sox  
City of Hammond, Mayor Thomas M McDermott Jr.  
City of Whiting, Mayor Steve Spebar  
Diamond Pet Services  
Diana Del Rio  
Don and Denise Erminger  
Donna Cafferata, Centier Bank  
Donna Dabertin  
Dora Hotel Company  
Dynasty Banquets  
Emma Lani Massage Therapy  
Fourwinds Casino  
Fr. Andrew Summerson, St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church  
Fr. Jay Nuthulapati, Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
Gomez Family Eye Care  
Hammond Port Authority  
Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana  
Herrera's Towing  
Horseshoe Casino  
Hyman's Ace Hardware  
Jason Miller, The Standard Taproom  
Jean Wilkening, Faith Baptist Church  
Jesse Hunt, Notre Dame Federal Credit Union  
Jim Wiseman, Reith-Riley Construction  
John Sopo, Winey Beach Café  
Kevin Clark, Bulldog Brewing Co.

Kevin Coleman  
Lakefront Nutrition & Fitness  
Linda Gajewski  
Lisa Kmak Attorney at Law  
Lost Marsh Golf Course  
Lynn's Doggie Spa  
Mandy Vargo  
Marty Dybel  
Mascot Hall of Fame  
Michelle's Dance Center  
Montserrat Inglada, Whiting Public Library  
Nancy Stolman, RE/Max Realty  
Naturally Jacks  
Norb Dudzik  
Northwest Indiana Oilmen Baseball  
Peoples Bank  
Rogers Roofing  
Ron Lubas, L&S Electric  
School City of Whiting  
Shawn Turpin  
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
State Senator Lonnie Randolph  
Strack & Van Til  
Tami Aldrin, The Dance Connection  
Tech Credit Union  
The Junkyard T-Shirt Shop  
Thompson Hotels  
Tom Dabertin  
Tom Markovich  
Whiting Family YMCA  
Whiting Lions Club  
Whiting/Robertsdale Historical Society  
WhoaZone at Whihala Beach



## Milan Kruszynski: Citizen of the Year

by Tom Dabertin

Each year, the Whiting - Robertsdale community selects a person who distinguished themselves as a community leader, one who stands out for their unselfish involvement, volunteerism, public service, and commitment to improve our community's quality of life. Known as the **Carl A. Binhammer Award**, the designation serves as the community's citizen of the year award. Although presented at the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner, the award is chosen by a committee of past recipients.



Those previously recognized as winners of this prestigious honor include: **Marty Dybel, Chuck Kosalko, Tom Dabertin**, (the late) **Darlene Beerling**, (the late) **Bob Strisko**, (the late) **Mariane Magro**, (the late) **Mary Skavara**, (the late) **Jack Jaros, Rick Massoels**, (the late) **"Lady" Elaine Gering**, (the late) **Leonard Hoyda, Karen Edge**, (the late) **Joanne Jancosek, Paul DePoy**, (the late) **Ann Pasko Devoy, Raymond Zubeck, Karen Holmes, Andrew Dybel, Damian Bondi, Carol Jacobson, Paul J. Kuss**, and **Jeannie Wilkening**.

This year's Carl A. Binhammer Award recipient is **Milan Kruszynski**, a lifelong resident of Whiting-Robertsdale, married to Carolyn (Betustak), and the father of three: Kyle, Katie, and Sara. Milan is a proud graduate of Immaculate Conception School and Clark High School; he earned his undergraduate degree at Illinois College. He is a very active member of the community, serving in a variety of roles and capacities as a volunteer, and is someone always willing to give back to his community:

- A faithful and active member of Immaculate Conception Church for many years.
- An active volunteer at St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish - past member of the Finance Committee and has served the church and school by volunteering thousands of hours in multiple roles over the years.
- Past Board member of the Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce.
- Past coach at Clark High School, St. John the Baptist, and Robertsdale Little League instructing and teaching the youth of our community.
- A regular volunteer for Pierogi Fest, Wickedly Whiting, and numerous other events in Whiting-Robertsdale.
- Annually assists with the Whiting 4th of July Parade.
- Fills in for Santa for the Whiting Christmas Parade (for more than 25 years), for the Elks, St. John Rosary, Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce, and many other gatherings.
- Was the first Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce Public Servant Award Recipient
- Current Treasurer for the Whiting Knights of Columbus, a position he has held for more than a decade, while also handling a host of other duties within the organization, as well as serving as Treasurer of the Whiting Columbian Club.

Milan also makes an impact on the community's quality of life as the Director of the Hammond Port Authority, a position that he has held for 19 years, and has worked for the City of Hammond for more than 40 years. He has been described as a true blessing to our community; someone always willing to help, volunteer, or assist wherever there is need.

Congratulations Milan Kruszynski, you have earned this award!

## Joe Franko: Public Servant of the Year

by Tom Dabertin

As it has done for more than a decade, the Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce celebrated the contributions of employees of local government in the Cities of Whiting and Hammond at its annual dinner on February 9th. The **Public Servant of the Year Award** recognizes the efforts of individuals who work for local government to make a difference and as a result make our community what it is. This year's recipient is **Joe Franko**, Assistant Superintendent of Parks for the City of Whiting.



Joe, a lifelong resident of Whiting Robertsdale, is known as a go-to kind of person, assisting in multiple ways. He puts in countless hours to make sure Whiting Park and Whihala Beach areas are beautiful places to enjoy and visit. To Joe, the job is not done until he has helped someone or something in some way. Whether it's a small or big ask of him, he will always get it done. The work he performs supports events such as Pierogi Fest, the Sheridan Avenue Concerts, Wickedly Whiting, 4th of July Fireworks, Symphonies in the Park, Empanada Fest, and baseball games at the City's little league fields and Oil City Stadium. Joe is a behind-the-scenes type of guy who does not seek recognition, but hopefully with this award, the community will have a better appreciation of the difference that Joe Franko makes day in and day out in making sure events are successful, and that the lakefront and parks are enjoyable places to visit.

Prior winners of the award include **Milan Kruszynski, Chuck Kosalko, Steve Spebar** (while serving as Streets Superintendent), **Mark Harbin, Harold Rogers, Jason Donovan**, the late **Stan Dostatni, Norb Dudzik**, and **Jeff Smith**. Each of these individuals has demonstrated the ideals of public service: hard work and dedication; often doing their job without receiving the credit they deserve. Because of the passion and commitment they exhibit toward their jobs, our community is a great place to live and visit and has a great future in what it can become.

## Kim Fentress: Educator of the Year

by Tom Dabertin

Quality education is a component to the present health of our community, and key to our future. It is why the Chamber annually selects and honors an **Educator of the Year**. Past winners of this award include, **Patricia Hasse** of St. John the Baptist, and **Jeremy Long, Jeff Cain, Dan Nichols, Patrick Pecher, Scot Allen, Melissa Yurechko**, and **Connie Thomas**, all of Whiting Schools, and **Ed Klapak** of Clark Middle and High School. Those past winners distinguished themselves with students and colleagues alike.



This year's award goes to **Kim Fentress**, a teacher at Whiting Middle School, 7th and 8th Grade Math Teacher. Erin-Nolan Higgins, principal of Whiting Middle School, describes Ms. Fentress as: "Whiting Middle School's resident hallway DJ, who likes to bring out her personality through song and encourage positive behavior. Often you will find students and teachers starting their day dancing thanks to Ms. Fentress' tunes."

Kim earned her bachelor's degree from Indiana University Northwest in 1993, a master's degree in 2001, and began her career with Whiting Schools in 1995. She is licensed in math, science, and psychology for middle and high school levels. Kim brings accountability to her students by providing multiple opportunities to engage in meaningful practice. Having also been a high school math teacher, she knows what is necessary to prepare students for the next level. As school-wide co-team leader, Kim is known to support colleagues, whether it is developing brainstorming ideas, coordinating an event, or learning how to use a new program. She is known as someone both students and teachers can depend upon; a strong and determined educator who understands that each minute is valuable in a child's development. She has held a number of extra-curricular positions with the district, and is described as a natural leader and organizer, but also someone with a good sense of humor.

Kim loves dogs, enjoys camping, and listening to music. It is said that Kim can teach anyone, and she has even put those skills to work spending the last few months training her new dachshund puppy Jack.

## Oiler Spills: School City of Whiting News

by Cynthia Scroggins, Superintendent

Embrace the season of renewal as we welcome spring! Warmer days and sunshine will be coming allowing students more time to enjoy the outdoors. As a reminder, Spring Break will take place from March 25th to April 1st. Classes resume on Tuesday, April 2nd. We hope our families find time to rest, relax and have some fun during this time off.

SCW students and staff will be gearing up for the annual ILEARN testing after Spring Break. Students grades 3rd-8th will be participating in ILEARN testing beginning April 15th. The testing window is open until May 10th. The ILEARN test is used by the state to determine students' academic progress toward meeting grade level standards. Please encourage your child during testing and ensure they are in school on time and well rested to help them perform their best. Our 2nd and 3rd grade students will participate in IREAD3 testing on March 5th and 6th. The IREAD test is used to identify students who are proficient in reading and those that need extra reading support. 3rd grade students who do not pass the IREAD must attend summer school and will have the opportunity to retake the test at the end of the summer school program enabling them to continue onto 4th grade.

Our Nathan Hale kindergarteners recently celebrated the 100th day of kindergarten. Students had a wonderful time creating their 100th day projects to share with their classmates and teachers. Teachers planned special activities for the students to help celebrate the first 100 days of school. It is exciting to see the growth that our students have made and will continue to make for the remainder of the school year.

The SCW will be holding **two Preschool and Kindergarten registration events** for the 24/25 school year. The first one will take place on **March**



**21st; 9-11:15am and 12:15-2:30pm.** Our second event will take place on **May 3rd.** Children must be 4 years old by August 1st to be eligible to enroll in preschool for next fall. Children must be 5 years old by August 1st to enroll in kindergarten. Getting your child enrolled early will secure your preschool spot for next year. Please contact the Nathan Hale office for more information on preschool and kindergarten enrollment for next year.

As a reminder, the SCW non-resident student enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year is now open. New non-resident student spots are available in grades kindergarten through 9th grade. Application packets for nonresident enrollment are available at the central office and on the SCW website. The deadline to return applications is **March 22nd.** If the number of applications exceeds the number of available spots at each grade level a lottery will be conducted at the regular April school board meeting. Questions pertaining to nonresident enrollment can be answered by calling the central office at **219-659-0656.** Parents can find additional information regarding the process by visiting the district website at <https://www.whiting.k12.in.us>.

Remember to check our school website for important updates and announcements. Thank you for the support you continue to give to the School City of Whiting students!



## Show & Tell Night at Museum

by Gayle Faulkner Kosalko

Once again it's time for the popular Show & Tell evening at the Historical Society. The meeting will be held at 5pm so those of you who work during the day, can also attend! Feel free to bring anything you have that's old, or interesting, or part of your family history and share your stories about it with us. You'll find that every "story" leads to another person's "story" and the meeting is truly fun.

**Show and Tell Night** will be held on **Thursday, March 21st at 5pm** at the new **History Center Museum, 1606 – 119th Street** (just across from the parking lot of the Baptist Church). There'll be refreshments, new and old friends, and it's all free.

## Whiting Fire Dept. Announces Participation with the Home Fire Campaign

by Don Harbin, Fire Chief

The **Whiting Fire Department** is proud to announce its participation in the **Home Fire Campaign** launched by the **American Red Cross**, which aims to prevent fire related-deaths and injuries while making the homes in our community safer. The Home Fire Campaign consists of the installation of 10-year life lithium battery smoke alarms and providing residents with home fire safety information, including how to create an escape plan. The goal of the Whiting Fire Department and the American Red Cross is to provide these items free of charge to all Whiting residents who request this service.

The American Red Cross phone number to begin the process is **1-888-684-1441.** Once the initial call is made the resident will then receive a call back with a scheduled installation date and time to be completed by the Whiting Fire Department. Due to limited installation dates, the Home Fire Campaign will be rolled out to the city on a block-by-block basis, with eventually the entire City of Whiting having an opportunity to participate in the program. Businesses or large-scale property managed buildings are not eligible to participate in the program.

The program is now open to all Whiting residents on the blocks of **Fischrupp Ave., John St., Fred St., 121st St., Steiber St., Schrage Ave., White Oak Ave.,** and the **2600 block of Birch Ave.** and will work its way through the entire city. Residents will be notified when their street is available to schedule the service. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Whiting Fire Department at **219-659-1069.**



## Triduum by Margaret Saliga

Holy Week begins March 24th with the Palm Sunday remembrance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and ends on March 31st, Easter Sunday in celebration of Jesus' Resurrection. This is the most solemn and glorious week in Christianity, for it celebrates the great gift of Salvation: the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ - the Paschal Mystery.

The word Triduum comes from the Latin (tris- "three"; dies - "days") and climaxes the Holy Week observance during several days, from sundown on Holy Thursday to sundown on Easter Sunday. The liturgies of these sacred days involve the mystery of God's plan to save fallen humanity through the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the God-man. This wondrous mystery is remembered as one profound event, which extends over the final days of Holy Week.

For Christians throughout the world, Holy Week and the Easter Season are the most important time in the liturgical year. Together Christians celebrate God's generous, merciful love for all humanity.

The W/R Catholic community will celebrate the **Holy Thursday liturgy of the Lord's Supper** on **March 28th, 7pm** at **St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.** This begins the time of profound remembrance, as we enter the sacred Triduum to pray the profound mysteries of our faith.

On the night before he died, Jesus washed the apostles feet and then ate a final meal with them as he commissioned them: "Do this in remembrance of me." Following Jesus' example, our priests recommit themselves to faithful service, as they symbolically wash the feet of church members. Then the faithful partake in the Eucharistic banquet, thereby fulfilling Jesus' command to "Eat my flesh and drink my blood."

Following the mass, all are invited to spend the remainder of the evening praying and keeping watch, at church or at home. In the garden of Gethsemene, the apostles all fell asleep. We do well to keep watch and pray for the needs of our families, our community and our world.

Good Friday, March 29th commemorates the day Jesus brought salvation through his horrific crucifixion. Holy Saturday, March 30th reverences Jesus' burial in the tomb, which was followed by his glorious resurrection from the dead.

Jesus is the victor over death. Our sadness gives way to resurrection joy as we sing our Easter Alleluias and proclaim Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen! Because He lives, we too will live eternally.



## American Legion Posts by Harry P. Triplett

First and foremost, let's set the clocks ahead on March 10th so we can all stay out later. Thanks to all who enjoyed the Super Bowl at the Post. Hope your team won! First, we will have our extra lean **Corned Beef Dinner** on **Thursday, March 7th** from **4pm-7pm**. That's a meal that will appeal! Then, our buttered, crispy **Fish Dinner** will be on **Friday, March 29th** from **4pm-7pm**. Come out and enjoy our sweet environment. Looking forward to April, our old-fashioned **Country Breakfast** will start your day from **9am-12pm**.

The Post has hall rental so you can keep your party in town. Give us a call at **219-659-0215** for more information on our festive hall. Wishing the best of the month, come in and enjoy our hospitality. We are open for new members and friends. 'Till next month!

## Good Friday Interdenominational Prayer Service

by Margaret Saliga

You are invited to join with the various religious denominations of our W/R faith community for an hour of prayer from **12pm-1pm** on **Friday, March 29th**. This year's service is hosted by the **Pentecostal Church of God, House of Hope, 119th Street & Stanton Avenue**. Prayerful song, Sacred Scripture, and an inspiring message of God's abundant love, poured out for us through Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, will bless the noontime gathering.

The Community Choir under the direction of Mr. **Brian Marciniak** will offer **pre-service music at 11:45am**. Those wishing to sing with the choir should arrive at **11am** for a brief rehearsal. Everyone is most welcome. Questions? Call **Margaret Saliga** at **219-659-4138**.

## Golden Gatherings: Seniors Unite at the Mascot Hall of Fame

by Valarie Reyes, MHOF Special Event Coordinator

Lake County seniors looking for a vibrant atmosphere and engaging activities need look no further than the Mascot Hall of Fame. **Every Wednesday**, the young at heart are invited to join in the festivities of Senior Wednesdays, an initiative designed to foster socialization, learning, and activity among senior citizens.

From **9am** until **2pm**, seniors can immerse themselves in a diverse array of activities tailored to their interests and well-being. Dance classes, meditation sessions, exercise routines, card games, DIY projects, and informative classes are just some of the scheduled events of the year. It's a chance for seniors to not only enjoy themselves but also to acquire new skills and stay active in a welcoming environment.

The Mascot Hall of Fame's Senior Wednesdays wouldn't be possible without the generous grant and support of the **Legacy Foundation**. Their commitment to enhancing the lives of all people in Lake County is commendable, and this partnership underscores a shared dedication to providing meaningful experiences to the senior community.

March is Wellness Month, with a special focus on promoting health and well-being among seniors. Each Wednesday in March kicks off with a coffee hour at 9am, followed by an invigorating exercise session and a variety of enriching activities or classes.

### Here's a sneak peek at the exciting lineup for March:

**March 6th** - 10am - Meditation and Sound Bath by Loving Kindness Yoga & Meditation (\$)

**March 13th** - 11am - DIY Essential Oil Candle

**March 20th** - 11am - Mandala Dot Art

**March 27th** - 11am - Bingo

To participate, seniors are required to register for activities and classes one week in advance by calling **219-354-8814**.

For Lake County seniors seeking camaraderie, enrichment, and fun, Senior Wednesdays at the Mascot Hall of Fame offer an unbeatable experience. Come join in the excitement and discover the joys of staying young at heart!



## MARCH CALENDAR

### On-Going Activities

**Tony's Trivia Night**  
6pm - Fourth Tuesday of month  
Whiting Library

**Sacred Heart Thrift Shop**  
Tuesdays & Thursdays - 10am to 1pm  
Sacred Heart School

**Yoga at the Library**  
Saturday mornings at 10am  
Begins Jan. 6th

**WR Historical Museum**  
1610 119th Street  
Open Sundays from Noon-4pm

**New Life Soup Fellowship**  
Every Tuesday, Noon-2pm  
October-April

**Pulaski Park Senior Center**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
9am-3pm

**Studio 659**  
"Simple Distractions" - March 8th-April 9th  
Open Thursdays and Fridays 4-7pm  
Saturdays 10am-2pm

**Mascot Hall of Fame**  
Free Day FriYAY!  
First Friday of the Month, 10am-5pm  
Senior Center  
every Wednesday - 9am-3pm  
Exercise program at 10am

**46394 Food Pantry**  
1717 LaPorte Avenue (Sacred Heart)  
1st & 3rd Friday, 8:30am-2pm

**Faith Baptist Church**  
Bible Study  
Tuesdays at 5:30pm  
Coat Room Donations  
Tuesdays 9am - 1pm  
Wednesdays 9am-3pm

**St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**  
Friday Fish Fries 4-8pm  
February 16th - March 29th  
Alpha Tuesdays 6:15-8pm  
February 6th -April 23rd

### COMING IN MARCH

- Mar 1 Free Day FriYAY! - 10am-5pm - Mascot Hall of Fame  
Eucharistic Adoration - 2pm-6pm - St. John the Baptist Church  
Stations of the Cross - 7pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 2 Easter Eggstravaganza - 10am-2pm - Whiting Public Library  
Crayon Jewelry - 2pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 3 Stations of the Cross - 1pm - St. Adalbert Church  
Lenten Concert - 4pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 5 Writers Connect - 6:30pm-8pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 6 Stations of the Cross - 1pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 7 Real Reels: *Trouble in the Water* -2:30pm - Whiting Public Library  
Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner - 4pm-7pm - American Legion
- Mar 8 Homeschool Hangout - 10am-2pm - Mascot Hall of Fame  
Stations of the Cross - 7pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 9 Travels with Tony - 2pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 10 Stations of the Cross - 1pm - St. Adalbert Church  
Lenten Concert - 4pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 13 Stations of the Cross - 1pm - St. John the Baptist Church  
Open Mic Night - 7pm-9pm (signup at 6pm) - Studio 659
- Mar 14 Real Reels: *Three Minutes* - 2:30pm - Whiting Public Library  
Crime Watch - 6:30pm - Calumet College, Room 200
- Mar 15 Stations of the Cross - 7pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 16 Deadline to Enter Peeps Project Contest!  
Leprechaun Catcher Craft - 11am-1:30pm - Studio 659  
How'd They Do That? - 2pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 17 Stations of the Cross - 1pm - St. Adalbert Church
- Mar 19 Writers Connect - 6:30pm-8pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 21 Pre K & Kindergarten Registration - 9am-11:15am - SCW  
Pre K & Kindergarten Registration - 12:15pm-2:30pm - SCW  
Real Reels: *Obit* - 2:30pm - Whiting Public Library  
Show and Tell Night - 5pm - New WR History Center Museum
- Mar 23 Photos with the Easter Bunny - 9am-1pm - Memory Makers  
Kids' Easter Craft - 10:30am-1pm - Studio 659  
Annual Easter Goodies Hunt - 12pm - Oil City Stadium  
Whiting Easter Parade - 2pm - Downtown Whiting  
Princess Di: Gone But Still Kicking! - 2pm - Whiting Public Library
- Mar 26 Communal Penance Service - 7pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 28 Triduum Morning Prayer - 7am - St. John the Baptist Church  
Real Reels: *Wrestle* - 2:30pm - Whiting Public Library  
Mass of the Lord's Supper - 7pm - St. John the Baptist Church
- Mar 29 Triduum Morning Prayer - 7am - St. John the Baptist Church  
Int. Good Friday Service - 12pm - Pentecostal Church of God  
Passion of the Lord - 3pm - St. Adalbert Church  
Fish Dinner - 4pm-7pm - American Legion Post 80  
Members Only Easter Egg Hunt - 6:30pm-8:30pm - MHOF  
Student-Led Stations of the Cross - 7pm - St. John the Baptist
- Mar 30 Triduum Morning Prayer - 7am - St. John the Baptist Church  
Easter Basket Blessing - 2pm - St. John the Baptist Church  
The Kennedys in Chicago - 2pm - Whiting Public Library  
Easter Vigil - 8pm - St. John the Baptist Church

Mar 31 Easter Sunday Mass - 8am & 10:30am - St. John the Baptist  
If you have an event or activity to list, please contact [writestuff@wrchamber.com](mailto:writestuff@wrchamber.com)  
or call the Chamber at 219-659-0292.

The APRIL edition of *The WRite Stuff* will be delivered at the beginning of APRIL 2024.

DEADLINE for the April edition is FRIDAY, March 15th, 2024

Note, we **DO NOT** accept PDF's or flyers



## LOCAL VIEW

by Tom Dabertin

### The Year of the Volunteer?

Historically, Whiting Robertsdale could bank on its level of volunteerism. It may not have been the wealthiest community in the nation, the smartest (although we certainly have our share of know-it-alls), the prettiest, the cleanest (we continue to have a litter problem), but one of the more unique aspects of living here is that we had a lot of people who were willing to give their time. Those volunteers were what made our community what it is, and the envy of many others. But that isn't quite the case any longer, and that could be a huge loss for the community, its identity, and its future.

Our community is dependent on volunteers: our churches, schools, fraternal organizations, and events like Pierogi Fest, the Easter Parade, Wickedly Whiting, the Kris Kringle Market, Studio 659, the concerts on Sheridan, the cleanups, flower giveaways, and much more all occur because of volunteers. Those events and activities are what define us, but all those activities are only possible due to volunteers, and most of those activities largely draw from the same small group of individuals. Even this newspaper is largely written by a group of volunteers.

I think many forget the importance and impact that volunteerism has on our quality of life, so let me give you just one example. Everyone loves to talk about Pierogi Fest, which has put our community on the map more than any other event. People come from throughout the United States and even abroad to partake in the fun. However, to make Pierogi Fest a success, we have to fill more than 650 volunteer positions, each working about 4 hours. Giving up 4 hours once a year is a pretty reasonable ask, and no, you do not have to be a member of the Chamber of Commerce either.

Yes, we all have other things to do, and your time is valuable but so is mine and those that currently volunteer. An even bigger challenge is that those of us who volunteer are getting older, while our events continue to grow in size and popularity. That translates into needing a lot of additional help.

There are 12,000 people in Whiting Robertsdale, and another 3,000 in North Hammond. If we want to continue to enjoy our unique quality of life, then we need more people to step up and help out by volunteering. Just imagine what we could do if everyone donated 4 hours a year to different community causes: the sound of the church choirs, the fun that our events would provide, not to mention the fun everyone would have being part of those events and the community! On the other hand, imagine what it would be like if there were no choirs, no concerts, no festivals, parades, art programs, and events. I know it sounds a bit dire, but our community would be like the many others that wish they were Whiting-Robertsdale.

If you would like to help out, please call the Chamber at 219-659-0292 or any other not-for-profit, or church in the community. I can assure you; they will be happy to hear from you.

Note: Tune in to The Morning Call with Tom Dabertin on Wednesday mornings from 6-9 AM on WJOB 1230 AM, 104.7 FM, and on the TuneIn app, and JedTv.

Precision Decorating

**Eduardo Pena**  
Property Solutions

**Complete Demolition**  
Framing-Drywall-Electrical  
Plumbing-Carpentry-Painting

Penaspresiondecorating@gmail.com  
**312.287.2911**

Mascot Hall of Fame  
Children's Museum

# Senior

## Wednesdays






Thanks to our sponsors, The Legacy Foundation, Seniors can join us weekly on Wednesdays! Start the morning off with a 9AM coffee hour, followed by energizing exercises at 10AM.

Crafts, speakers, activities, and outings await, ensuring every week is an adventure!

**For More Info Call: 219.354.8814**



**The Mascot Hall of Fame - 1851 Front Street, Whiting, IN 46394**

# FEET HURT?

Face Mask  
OPTIONAL

Free Initial  
Consultation!

**MOST FOOT PROBLEMS CAN BE  
CORRECTED IN OUR OFFICE**

## WHITING FOOT & ANKLE CENTER

**Dr. Michael Schwartzman**  
1104 119th St. Whiting, IN  
219-659-3338



## CCSJ Hosts Annual Humanities Festival



Calumet College of St. Joseph will host its annual Humanities Festival from **March 20th-23rd, 2024**. The event celebrates the role Philosophy, the Arts, Religion, Literature, and History play in living a meaningful life. The theme of this year's festival is "**Journeys**." Sessions open to the public include a keynote address by **Dr. Larry McClellan** about the Underground Railroad sites in the Calumet Region, a Women's History Month Panel featuring CCSJ president **Dr. Amy McCormack**, and the student production of "Emotional Baggage," a wordless play that focuses on non-verbal storytelling through mask and movement.

For more information, contact **Mark Casello** ([mcassello@ccsj.edu](mailto:mcassello@ccsj.edu)) or **Brian Lowry** ([blowry@ccsj.edu](mailto:blowry@ccsj.edu)).

## LARC and WREN –Two “Birds” of a Feather Working Together for the Better

by Tom Markovich

A new “bird” has landed in Whiting/Robertsdale: **WREN** (an acronym for Whiting Robertsdale Environmental Neighbors). Together with the Chamber's LARC (the Litter Awareness and Remediation Committee), WREN will help to raise environmental awareness and involvement of Whiting and Robertsdale residents and will take action to bring positive, visible results to our lakefront community. The synergies of the two groups working together in the areas of community clean-up and resident involvement will be unique. We have only just begun.

Lynn Haynes' article elsewhere in this newspaper introduces WREN and its first project: the NexTrex Challenge. Three plastic collection bins will be placed at these 3 locations in the community: Whiting Library Children's entrance, Whiting City Hall entrance, and Stracks.

The challenge is to collect 1000 pounds of plastic, including bottle caps, over a year's time. If we meet the challenge, we can win a bench made from the recycled plastic which will be placed somewhere in the community, a location that will be decided on when the contest is over.

All plastic must be clean, dry, and free of food residue. Plastic grocery bags, bread bags, bubble wrap, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, ice bags, plastic shipping envelopes, Ziploc and other food storage bags including cereal storage bags, bottled water case overwrap, salt bags plastic wrap and stretch film, wood pellet bags and produce bags are acceptable,

A list of acceptable caps and lids is too lengthy to include here; to keep it simple, however, know that we'll collect any plastic lids. We will sort them after they're received. Please ask family, friends, and your favorite local businesses to save plastic as well as plastic caps from bottles and containers. It will take all of us working together to achieve this very worthy goal.

In the next article we'll have information about the upcoming Earth Day clean-up efforts. Keep your eyes open and get involved. There's so much that each of us can do to make Whiting Robertsdale the best it can be. Thank you for stepping up to the challenge. Until next time.

## WR Historical Society Field Trip to Community Center

by Rebecca Haynes

Whiting's famous **Community Center**, now home to the YMCA, is one of the most important buildings in the city's history. It has been home to major meetings during the Standard Oil era, hosted countless events, parades, and programs, and stands strongly in the memory of many generations of Whiting residents. Come celebrate the 101st year of the Community Center with the Whiting-Robertsdale Historical Society. Our field trip on **Sunday, April 21st** will take guests through the building with our team of volunteers telling stories and providing information along the way. Tickets for the event will go on sale in March. We hope you are able to join us.



For more information please contact **Rebecca Haynes** at [haynes.wrhs@gmail.com](mailto:haynes.wrhs@gmail.com).

## The Easter Vigil

by Margaret Saliga

As darkness falls on Holy Saturday evening, the Universal Church anticipates the celebration of Jesus' triumph over death. The **W/R Catholic Community** will celebrate the **Holy Saturday Easter Vigil at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church on March 30th at 8pm**. On that night the Church gathers outside the church's main entrance to witness the blessing of the new fire, which is symbolic of Christ our light. The Paschal Candle is lit with the “new fire” and processed into the dark church, symbolic of the empty tomb. One by one candles are lit from the paschal Candle, symbolizing the Light of Christ shared by all.

The Easter Vigil, filled with rich symbolism, is truly the most important liturgy of the entire Church year. You are invited to participate (in church or virtually online) in this triumphal celebration of the Paschal Mystery, Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, and the gift of eternal life freely offered to all.

FYI: All SJB Holy Week liturgies will be livestreamed. Go to [stjohnbap.org](http://stjohnbap.org) and follow the prompts.

## Triduum Morning Prayer

by Margaret Saliga

**Morning Prayer** according to the Liturgy of the Hours will be prayed at **St. John the Baptist Catholic Church on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday at 7am (March 28th, 29th, and 30th)**. This sharing of sacred scripture and psalms dates back to the early Church and has continued to be prayed throughout the Universal Church for almost 20 centuries.

You are invited to join in the solemnity of our High Holy Days by participating in Morning Prayer and the many prayer opportunities offered during the sacred Triduum. All are welcome.



## The Challenge Is On!

by Lynn Haynes

Do you think our community can collect **1,000 pounds of plastic bags and film in 12 months**? WREN (Whiting-Robertsdale Environmental Neighbors) is challenging our community members to meet this goal. The NexTrex Challenge provides a recycling solution for plastic film packaging that keeps thousands of pounds of waste out of landfills by recycling them into eco-friendly outdoor products. If we collect 1000 pounds by February 2025, Trex will supply us with a bench made out of Trex material.

Here is how it works, WREN has placed collection bins at these 3 locations in the community: Whiting Library Children's entrance, Whiting City Hall entrance, and Stracks. All you have to do is save plastic grocery bags and film and place it in the bins provided. Here are the materials we are collecting: **grocery bags, bread bags, bubble wrap, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, ice bags, plastic shipping envelopes, Ziploc and other food storage bags, cereal bags, case overwrap, salt bags, plastic wrap or stretch film, wood pellet bags, and produce bags.**

## Good Friday Services

by Margaret Saliga

In the Catholic tradition, the **Good Friday Celebration of the Lord's Passion** will be at **St. Adalbert Church at 3pm on March 29th**.



The **Student-Led Stations of the Cross** are at **7pm Friday, March 29th**. All are welcome. The Stations will be live-streamed and accessed at: [stjohnbap.org](http://stjohnbap.org).

## Upcoming Events from The North Township Trustee's Office

The **North Township Trustee's Office** is one of the largest of the State of Indiana's 1,008 Townships. It is a government agency serving the communities of **East Chicago, Hammond, Highland, Munster, Whiting, and Griffith**. Its primary function is to provide assistance to those in need. This is done through an extensive application process making sure you receive the assistance you need. Assistance is provided for food, household/personal items, emergency disaster relief, rental/mortgage, utilities, clothing, medical expenses, funeral/burial and/or cremation.

Watch for numerous events coming up in the Spring. Events are family friendly and community engagement is encouraged. Here a list of what's coming up:

**Veterans Coffee Social - March 12th, April 9th, May 14th, 9am - 11am** at the Wicker Memorial Park Clubhouse

**Senior Citizen Luncheon - March 13th, April 10th, May 8th, 10am - 1:30pm** at the Wicker Memorial Park Social Center

**Senior Citizen Four Winds Casino Bus Trip - March 19th, April 16th, May 21st, 8:30am - 4pm**

**Senior Citizen Easter Bingo - March 21st, Noon - 3pm** at the Wicker Memorial Park Social Center

**Easter Egg Hunt - March 23rd, 10:30am - Noon** at Wicker Memorial Park



NOTRE DAME  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

# A Safer Way to Save.

Make your money work for you and start earning.



GET STARTED AT

[NotreDameFCU.com/CD](http://NotreDameFCU.com/CD)

\*APY is Annual Percentage Yield. Offer may change at any time. Insured by NCUA.





# WE ANSWER TO YOU!

Unlike a traditional bank owned by stockholders, Notre Dame FCU is owned by its Members.

**WHEN YOU JOIN NOTRE DAME FCU, YOU BECOME AN OWNER.**

As a not-for-profit, we reinvest our earnings in our Member/Owners and the communities where you live, work, and play.

**THAT'S THE CREDIT UNION DIFFERENCE.**



**NOTRE DAME**  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Certain restrictions apply. Offer may change at any time. Insured by NCUA



## Meet our Members

### Arts Alive! Presents Studio 659

by Elliot Bibat

Whiting-Robertsdale is a community with an extensive track record of supporting the arts. Whether you're seeing a show at the Marian Theatre Guild, or listening to a concert performed by the Whiting Park Festival Orchestra on a warm summer evening, the arts have long been an important part of its traditions and culture. Since its formation in 1998, Arts Alive! has been another invaluable resource for the arts and arts education in Whiting-Robertsdale, providing the community with activities, classes, concerts, and exhibits in its commitment to promote and preserve the arts.

"We are all about keeping music and art developing in the community," Arts Alive's president **Jean Wilkening** said, "We have to keep art going. There could be a kid out there who does so poorly in school, who hates school, and if they get to play an instrument or develop an art, it could change their life."

Arts Alive! and Studio 659 have been offering plenty of opportunities for the community members to view local artwork, listen to local musicians, and participate in creating artwork of their own. The studio holds different art classes for all ages, currently offering a Kids' Painting Class, Adult Dance Classes, and an Adult Crochet Class. Additionally, Studio 659 also hosts many different art exhibits throughout the year, each with its own theme, with artwork submitted by local artists from throughout Northwest Indiana, Chicago, and beyond.

Jean spoke about the studio's current art exhibit as of this writing, titled "Catharsis," which is centered around different artists' portrayals of mental health and its path to destigmatization. The exhibit closed on February 29th and a new exhibit titled "Simple Distractions," featuring artwork by artist Nicholas P. Decker, is set to take its place on March 8th.



"Our monthly shows get nice crowds, they really do," Jean said, "Our February show called 'Catharsis' is about mental health. We have all sorts of booklets in the studio right now that people can come and get to learn more about the suicide hotline, and that's all possible because of this show."

Arts Alive! and Studio 659 are also bringing back Open Mic Nights, where members of the community are invited to share their talents, whether it's music, poetry, comedy, or other performative mediums. This year, Arts Alive! plans to hold Open Mic Nights outdoors at the Sheridan Stage during the warmer months.

Jean was also excited to share some news about this year's Summer Sheridan Concert Series, a popular summertime event in Downtown Whiting organized by Arts Alive! All featured acts for this year's series have been selected and include local bands such as Stern Approval, Visions of Santana, and Jessi & The Fizz. The full list and concert dates will be announced in the coming months.

"We have nine concerts coming up," Jean said, "and we're well booked. There's nine different shows starting June 7th all the way to August 30th. There'll be some soft rock, acoustic, a Latin band, all different kinds! It's a nice variety this year. We're also having bands at Sheridan Plaza for Whiting Dining Alfresco, which I'm really excited about."

The arts are truly alive and well in the Whiting-Robertsdale community thanks to Arts Alive! and Studio 659. They have so much going on this year that it's impossible to fit it all into a single article. Arts Alive! submits articles to the *WRite Stuff* regularly, and there's plenty of information from them to read about in this month's edition. They are also very active on social media through **Studio 659's Facebook page** and regularly post about upcoming kids' crafts, classes, exhibits, open mic nights, and more! Studio 659 is located at **1413 - 119th Street** and is open **Thursdays and Fridays from 4pm-7pm** and on **Saturdays from 10am-2pm**. They can be reached via direct message on Studio 659's Facebook page and by calling **219-659-8828**.



Create. Exhibit. Inspire.

## Mascot Hall of Fame Takes the Gold as USA Today's #1 Pop Culture Museum!

by Valarie Reyes, MHOFF Special Event Coordinator

The Mascot Hall of Fame has soared to victory, clinching the prestigious title of **USA Today's Top Pop Culture Museum** in the nation, solidifying its status as the ultimate destination for interactive fun and sports mascot-themed adventures! This incredible feat marks a momentous occasion not only for the beloved mascots but also for the dedicated team behind the scenes who work tirelessly to bring joy and laughter to visitors from all corners of the globe.



Nestled in the heart of whimsy and wonder, the MHOFF stands as a beacon of joy for children and adults alike, offering a captivating journey through the wacky world of sports mascots. From the moment visitors step through the doors, they are welcomed by oversized heads of hall of fame mascots suspended from the ceiling, a vibrant display of colors that instantly sparks joy, laughter, and limitless imagination.

With interactive STEAM exhibits around every corner, the Mascot Hall of Fame transforms learning into an adventure. From testing your skills at the T-Shirt Shooter to designing your own mascot audition video, every activity sparks creativity and curiosity in young minds.

"Our museum is all about bringing joy and inspiration to children through the magic of mascots," said **Paige Grabinski**, Special Event Coordinator at the Mascot Hall of Fame. "We're thrilled to be recognized as the top pop culture museum in the nation! It's really a compliment to the hard work and passion of our amazing staff, who are committed to making every visit unforgettable for every guest."

As confetti rains down and cheers echo, the Mascot Hall of Fame stands tall as a testament to the power of imagination and the boundless possibilities of play. So why not plan your next adventure with us? Whether it's a family outing, a birthday bash or a special occasion to celebrate with friends. Why not elevate your experience by renting out our vibrant 3rd floor, the Furitorium, for an experience that's sure to be unforgettable. Come on out and join us for a day filled with endless memories at the Mascot Hall of Fame!

The Mascot Hall of Fame is located at **1851 Front Street** in Whiting, IN. For more information, we can be reached at **219-354-8814**. To stay up to date on all of our upcoming events, visit our website at [mascothalloffame.com](http://mascothalloffame.com).



**Meals made easy!**

**Strack & Van Til**  
food market

**Seafood Steamables**

**Ready in 6-7 Minutes!**

**Cooks in the Bag!**

Made In-Store





## 1ST DISTRICT NEWS

by Mark Kalwinski - Hammond Councilman

Hello everyone. Today's column focuses on environmental issues of concern in the 1st District.

Cargill needs to be a better neighbor. In January, residents had no immediate response to calls about the loud humming noise that occurred over a 6-hour period during the night. If they are community partners, they need to respond to complaints effectively. When residents call, there should be a process in place to investigate within the plant and/or have their security or management go into the neighborhood to recognize how they are affecting the quality of life.

Further examples of inadequate responses to resident concerns occurred when tanks at the BP refinery leaked and released toxic vapors, and when BP experienced a power outage. Residents saw flare stacks sending flames into the air, black smoke trailing into the distance, and felt the ground shaking. North Hammond residents watched as the black and grey smoke in the Northeast suddenly shifted in their direction because of a wind shift. Residents wondered what was in that smoke and haze. BP's communication with the community was lacking and needs to be remedied.

I was one of several concerned citizens, city officials, and environmental groups who were locked out of E.C. Central High School when the meeting to address the BP refinery air permit renewal was abruptly cancelled. The meeting was rescheduled to take place at Calumet College.

## Beauty Will Save Whiting, Indiana: Support Whiting's Historic Art and Architecture

by Fr. Andrew Summerson

Have you ever seen a painting so beautiful you couldn't stop looking at it? The painting is not moving, but it moves you! Beauty doesn't just attract, it can also transform. As Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote, "Beauty will save the world."



Whiting boasts striking beauty in some of its churches, including St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church on Clark Street. The founders had the intuition that beauty has a summoning power. Consider St. Mary's architecture: The current building dates to 1917 and was designed by architect and St. Mary's sixth pastor, Fr. Michael Corbeau (Korba). The large dome ceiling supported by pendants is modeled after the renowned sixth-century Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, today Istanbul. It was the largest church worldwide for almost 1,000 years and the reference point for architectural excellence. When Michelangelo was charged with the design of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, he looked for examples of perfection and based his design on Hagia Sophia.



Odlikav feels the interior of his parish. St. Mary Byzantine Church is his best work. Note the detail and fine brush work. The painter contends that in order to really paint well, you have to feel your subject as well as see it. (Calumet Day Photos)

*Al Odlikav's painting and comments on St. Mary's featured in a local newspaper. (Source: Whiting-Robertsdale Historical Society)*

In the early 20th century, it was uncommon for Eastern churches in the United States to pay such attention to architectural history, so St. Mary's architecture is unusual for this period.

The church interior offers a vast canvas. For many years, St. Mary's ceiling and walls featured dramatic, baroque images of the glorious mysteries of the Rosary. These paintings accompanied and inspired many, including St. Mary's parishioner and painter Al Odlikav, dubbed "the Norman Rockwell of Whiting." He considered his finest work to be his paintings of the church interior.

In 2012-13, St. Mary's repainted its interior to incorporate traditional Byzantine iconography to match its architecture inspired by Hagia Sophia.

What remains from the original design are the

stained glass windows, dating to the first half of the 20th century. They feature saints and scenes from the New Testament. The time has come to preserve these historic windows and ensure they are around for a long time. This process, which will involve installing protective glazing and interior venting and repairing window frames, will keep our windows watertight and temperature-resistant and hedge against future corrosion. The new glazing will also expose our windows to the outside for passersby to appreciate.

Residents also need more information about 3-141st Street from the developer and the city. I have asked for reports and plans and although I have attended several meetings, I still don't have a firm grip on the plans to remediate and develop that site. This is a concern because the environmental history there is fraught with issues and past operations have adversely impacted the residential, industrial and recreational resources that surround the site. I will keep on top of this planned development so history does not repeat itself.

Former Clark HS Athletic Field infrastructure is moving along and the generally mild winter has been much appreciated by the construction crews. The new Fire Station #2 is progressing - steel framework is up and exterior block walls are being erected.

February 9th was the deadline for candidates to file for the May primary. Please exercise your right to vote. April 8th is the deadline to register to vote, and in-person voting begins April 9th. If you are interested, the list of candidates is available on the county website: <https://lakecounty.in.gov/departments/voters/election-candidates/>

As many of you know, we recently lost a pastor, servant and shepherd. Rev. Stanley Dominik died on February 5th. He faithfully served the Gary Diocese at several parishes, including Sacred Heart and his home parish of St. Adalbert, and he taught at Bishop Noll for many years. May he rest in peace.

To support this important preservation project, we are inaugurating our "Searcher for the Lost Gala," on **Saturday, April 13th, 6 pm-10 pm, at The Lost Marsh.**

Supporting this initiative is easy: You can join us on April 13 for a fine meal, live entertainment, and dynamic stories about St. Mary's we are sure you will love. You can also participate in the silent auction and place an ad and or a congratulatory message in our program book. Other sponsorship opportunities are forthcoming.

We will be joined by a special guest, **Bishop Robert Pipta** of Parma, as well as other church and civic leaders, who will add to the significance of our event. However, at the heart of the evening is celebration—a celebration of faith and of being a part of the Whiting-Robertsdale community for 125 years. So, I hope to see you at our gala April 13th!

Tickets are available at [www.stmarywhiting.org/gala](http://www.stmarywhiting.org/gala). For table sponsorships and ad inquiries, email at [stmarywhiting@parma.org](mailto:stmarywhiting@parma.org) or call (219) 765-1316.

## Whiting Elks News by Mike Borgetti

The Elks will continue our **Friday Fish Fries** through **March 29th, 2024**. The menu will include your choice of lake perch, walleye, or shrimp along with the sides. You may also choose to select combos with two or all three of the main entrees. Dinners will be served from 5-8 pm.



On **Saturday, May 18th**, the Whiting Elks will be hosting the return of **Teresa Rose, The Firehouse Medium**. Doors will open at **6pm** with the event beginning at **7:30pm**. All profits for this event will be donated to the Indiana Elks Cancer Research Fund. Call **219-484-0229** to make reservations or for additional information.

On **Saturday, April 27th, 2024** put on your blue suede shoes and join us for "**The Essence of Elvis**" Show featuring **Curt Lechner**. Curt Lechner has been performing "The Essence Of Elvis" Show since 2002 The show will run from **7pm-9:30pm**. Call **219-484-0229** to make reservations or for additional information



**Spring  
is Here!**  
**NOW IS THE  
TIME TO  
SCHEDULE  
YOUR HOME  
PROJECTS!**



 **Calumet Painting  
& Restoration**

Custom, Interior & Exterior Painting  
Kitchen Cabinet Refinishing  
Drywall & Plaster Repair  
Light Remodeling • Epoxy Coating & Flooring  
All Exterior Repairs: Siding, Stucco & Masonry



**Serenity**  
Bath  Showers

Custom Bath or Shower  
Installed in as  
Little as a Day.

**CALL 219-844-7501 TODAY FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATE**

**0% INTEREST OR LOW MONTHLY PAYMENTS AVAILABLE.**

**NOW HIRING: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SALES ASSOCIATE, EXPERIENCED  
PAINTERS AND CARPENTERS. Apply online at [calumetpainting.com](http://calumetpainting.com).**



Earn up to  
**5.00% APY\***  
with a Connect  
Savings Account

**Centier.com/Connect • 1-888-CENTIER**

\*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. APY for Connect Savings is accurate as of 9/1/2023. If 50 or more qualified debit card transactions post per statement cycle, earn 5.00% APY. If 18 - 49 qualified debit card transactions post per statement cycle, earn 3.00% APY, less than 18 qualified debit card transactions results in entire savings balance earn 0.05% APY. Connect Checking requires \$50 to open; direct deposit or e-Statements or \$100 minimum daily balance is required to avoid a \$2 monthly fee. Connect Savings requires \$100 to open. Fees could reduce account earnings. If qualifications are not met, Connect Checking converts to a Centier Checking and Connect Savings converts to Statement Savings. ATM transactions do not count as qualified debit card transactions. Bank is not responsible for merchant settlement delays. Rates are subject to change without notice. Other terms and conditions of those accounts will apply. Member FDIC.



## KOCH'S CHOICE

by Al Koch

### Holding Hands



One of the most important lessons we learn is to hold hands. Anyone who's been to kindergarten knows the rule by heart: "When you go out, hold hands and stick together." During the school year, we see this rule practiced many times as groups of small children walk along with their hands joined together. Like links in a joyous chain, they enrich us with their laughter. But for those of us who didn't go to kindergarten, we learned the hand-holding rule just the same. Mom taught us.

Early on, he was told to always hold his mother's hand, especially when crossing streets and stepping up and down curbs. Because of his questionable coordination, his mom held his hand to support and steady his stumble-prone feet. Whenever they went shopping in Chicago, he'd hold her hand tightly for both comfort and security, as he feared becoming lost in such a big city so far from home. He liked holding his mom's hand. Her touch engendered assurance. And even in winter, with his woolen mittens firmly grasping her gloved hand, he felt protected and safe.

Then, in what seemed like a short time, the day came when he no longer needed to hold his mother's hand. Now when they went shopping, he

walked proudly by himself, alongside his mom like a grown-up. His mother was pleased with her son's self-reliance and confidence. She smiled to herself; he had learned well.

Once he started third grade, he would not hold hands again until adolescence. When he did, it wouldn't involve his mom or a fear of being lost. What fostered his renewed interest in handholding was an affair of the heart. Now when he held hands, delicious new feelings made their presence known. Even in winter, with her thick woolen mittens gently grasping his gloved hand, he felt her touch. Before long, he was holding hands on a steady basis with one young lady. They shared a mutual affection for each other, and their relationship grew stronger still. More than fifty years later, they continue to hold hands.

When they became parents, they, too, taught their children to hold hands, a prerequisite for crossing streets, stepping up and down curbs, and going shopping. Every time a child's mother or father takes them by the hand, they instill a sense of belonging. Such guardianship reinforces the child's worth, strengthens the parental bond, and nourishes the family. Holding hands is therapy for the body, spirit, and soul. Fringe benefits.

He had helped his mother ever since his father had passed away in 1965. As she was now past 80 with troublesome vision, he took her shopping for groceries and other things. He was aware how she held his hand as they crossed streets and stepped

up and down curbs. He was there to steady and support her, and she welcomed his touch.

He took her hand, carefully guiding her across icy sidewalks and snowy streets. She held his hand tightly, for both comfort and safety. Sometimes she held his arm for added balance. Now it was he who gave her assurance and protection. The pupil had become the teacher. On the day she suffered her fatal stroke, he held her hand for the last time.

Some things in life come full circle, reflecting both sameness and change. So, it is with holding hands. In the beginning, one hand is strong, the other hesitant, uncertain. One hand guides, the other dependent. During adolescence and many years thereafter, joined hands become one, sharing strength and confidence from which lifetimes are built. As the circle begins to close, one hand is assuring, protective, the other is frail, fragile, unsteady, and tentative. Yet when joined together—when linked as one—an extraordinary transformation occurs. The joined hands convey commitment, a wordless promise of guardianship. Holding hands engenders holding hearts. Regardless of one's age, holding hands begins as a lesson, then shared as a gift, becomes a treasure, and blossoms into a living bouquet of heartfelt love.

Over the course of her life, his mom taught him many lessons. One of the most important was to hold hands.

## Writers Connect Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary

by Elliot Bibat

On the first and third Tuesdays of each month, the writers of **Writers Connect** meet at the Whiting Public Library to share their writing and discuss their work. Some of them bring poems, others bring short stories, journal entries, essays, or scripts. What began a year ago as a paid writing class at Studio 659 evolved into a weekly meeting of these writers to talk about what inspires their writing and to learn more about the process from one another.

"I always wanted to have a writing class or a writing group in Whiting. So when I went to people and asked, I pictured more of a structured setting. But what developed was so much richer," said **Deb Salinas**, who organizes and leads the Writers Connect meetings, "We gathered so many talented poets, storytellers, screenwriters, and novelists, some beginners and some with published work, and what we've learned from each other is so much richer than what we could learn in any classroom, and I think we inspire each other."

Writers Connect is comprised of writers from varying walks of life, from college students to retirees, so the writers are able to convey very diverse points of view when sharing their work. One writer, **Amie Bernard**, said that Writers Connect has helped her branch out from the things she typically writes about and expanded her horizons by urging her to look inward when writing.

"When I came to this group, I started out being what I call an 'urban landscape poet' because I pretty much wrote about Whiting and the refinery and the tank farms," Amie said, "but once I got exposed to everybody else's style's, stream of consciousness in particular, I found myself doing that and it's opened up a lot of doors for me, breaking those barriers that I put on myself. I can't tell you the last time I wrote an urban landscape poem."

**Dave Sandrick**, who started out as the instructor of the class, now attends as a fellow writer and expanded on the topic of looking inward.

"I always appreciate what people pull from within, who they are and what they're wrestling with, our demons of the past or our past mistakes, our past triumphs," Dave said, "The pain and the hurt and the rawness is what sticks around. Writing helps us process that again and it may take ten writings. Who knows?"



*The writers of Writers Connect, December 2023.*

"I really enjoy the different genres that come up in this group," said **Donna Strabavy**, another writer who regularly attends meetings with her poems, "I like everybody's different points of view and different writings with poetry and stories and plays and skits. It gives everybody a chance to get some inspiration from everyone else."

In a typical Writers Connect meeting, attendees are encouraged to share a piece of writing they've worked on over the two weeks since their last session. There's no pressure to share if they don't wish to, if they have nothing prepared, or if they feel what they're working on isn't ready yet. With what writing is shared, discussions are led without judgement. Other writers express what they like about the piece, offer constructive feedback, and often share experiences they may have had that relate to the subject matter of the writing.

"I think it's really helped because improvised speaking, letting everything out at once, may not be exactly what you feel," **Matthew Mota**, one of the group's younger writers, expressed, "When you're able to write it out and look at it, add a little structure to it, and really examine your own words, that's what brings out your own thoughts. That's what I've really enjoyed about this group - putting my thoughts out with more of a refined structure to it, in a structure where I can look at it and say 'Now *that's* what I was trying to get across.'"

The next meetings of Writers Connect will be held at the **Whiting Public Library** on **March 5th** and **March 19th** from **6:30pm to 8pm**. Interested in joining? Feel free to stop by! Perhaps you'll discover that you also have a writing or knack for writing. Questions? Contact **Deb Salinas** at [dsalinason@astound.net](mailto:dsalinason@astound.net).





# HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION AT NO COST!\*

\*Through the Indiana School Choice Scholarship

## 100% IRead 3 pass rate 2023



## 99% of Northwest Indiana Families Qualify!



Your Path. Your Connection. Our Journey.



# The Write Stuff Activity Page!



F C L O V E R Q G G R P J S R  
 R F R Q S B O T H E O B L N L  
 L U C K L P O M H K B A P E O  
 R Q E G L E R N Q M Z S A R T  
 R E T A S V P I N Y V K R A Z  
 U S D R S A E R N E Y E A I G  
 S H X E N T N G E G T T D N B  
 C A I Z T U E G G C T J E B O  
 J M I B A T G R R S H I Y O E  
 J R H Y C Z O Z F E U A M W G  
 R O F V I V L K W B E G U E T  
 E C U Q M B D M P T U N B N G  
 N K W V I F N S D U N N G W U  
 G O O D F R I D A Y B A N K J  
 P R Z F L M O U Z K O J V Y I

springtime	leprechaun	Good Friday	eggs
shamrock	rainbow	basket	luck
Easter	bonnet	clover	gold
parade	green	bunny	

## St. John Panel Room

119th Street & Lincoln Avenue, Whiting

# Lenten Fish Fry



Feb. 16, 23; Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22

4:00pm to 8:00pm

Made to order Lake Perch, Shrimp, Walleye Pike, Cod, Salad Bar, Dessert

*Eat In or Carry Out!*

"Come for the fish, stay for the Stations!"  
(Stations of the Cross at 7pm in church)

For Information call (219) 659-0023



Your path. Your connection. Our journey.



Whiting Public Library Children's Department &  
The Friends of Whiting Public Library Present:

# EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA



PICTURES  
WITH THE  
EASTER BUNNY!  
11A-12P &  
1P-2P



Saturday, March 2

10am - 2pm

1735 Oliver St. Whiting, IN

Whiting Public  
Library





## Whiting Code Enforcement

by Harry Peterson, Enforcement Officer

A sometimes-overlooked part of Code Enforcement but a very important part of city services is garbage collection. Garbage and recycling collection is an integral part of providing city services to keep our city clean and healthy. There are a couple of city ordinances related to garbage that could result in a violation or fine if noncompliance occurs.

**WMC 8-108:** Garbage in receptacles.

**WMC 8-112:** Bagging of garbage. It shall be unlawful for any individual to dispose of any garbage in any can or receptacle without such garbage being bagged and tied or sealed.

**WMC 8-131:** Importing of waste. It shall be illegal for any person, business, or entity to import or contract to import waste materials of any type, including garbage, refuse, construction, and demolition.

If you have construction materials such as wood, drywall, flooring, dirt, rocks, etc. do not place these items in the garbage tote. Place them in plastic construction bags and place the bags next to the garbage tote for pickup. If you have larger items, please place them neatly behind your property for pickup. Nails must be removed for workers safety.

The general rule is each single-family house should have one garbage tote and one recycle tote. Multi-unit buildings would have more. If a larger family requests an additional tote, the Public Works Dept. will try and fulfill the request. We have seen over the last couple of years an increase in tote requests bordering on the ridiculous. We understand that disposal methods have changed with online ordering and home delivery creating a large amount of recycle material. Please breakdown your boxes and neatly place them behind your garbage totes for pickup. If you have a large amount of accumulated cardboard or garbage before your normal pickup day, call our Public Works office and our workers will be happy to pick up the material. Garbage totes are not storage containers that are for personal use in your basement or garage. If you have garbage or recycling totes that you don't use, please call **Whiting Public Works** at **219-659-1219** for pickup. If the Public Works Department workers find totes that week after week are not used, the totes will be returned to the Public Works facility. This not only saves the taxpayers money; it also greatly improves the appearance of our alleys. Please help our Street Department workers by doing your part to keep Whiting clean, safe and a great place to live

## Emma Lani Massage Therapy Announces Annual Couples Massage Class by Emma Bufalini

Emma Lani Massage Therapy is proud to announce our **Annual Couples Massage Class** for 2024! This year we will be recording the class and releasing it on video so you can learn the art of relaxation and connection from the comfort of your own home.



With step-by-step guidance from expert massage therapist **Emma Bufalini** this class is perfect for beginners. This class covers techniques to soothe stress as well as body mechanics that help you feel good while massaging your partner. This class will be free for all to access on **March 30th**. You can access the video or join the mailing list to know when it comes out at [EmmaLaniMassageTherapy.com/CouplesClass](https://www.EmmaLaniMassageTherapy.com/CouplesClass)

## Time to Thrive by Margaret Saliga

March is upon us. Our daily lives are enriched by additional sunlight, warmer temps, and bird song everywhere. Our many miles of Whiting/Robertsdale trails beckon us to engage in healthy walks and precious time to rest our lives from the constant clutter of voices, sights and sounds vying for our attention. Nature calls us to be refreshed by her promise of rebirth and renewal. Budding trees reassure us of her promise.

Besides the sunny outdoors, a variety of lovely spaces within our community churches beckon us as well. Come gather for Sunday and weekday worship with the faithful of our many denominations. Additional events like Bible Study, Eucharistic Adoration, the Stations of the Cross help to inspire those seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus throughout the Lenten season.


The St. John Church free Lenten Reflection Concert Series at 4pm each Sunday offers melody and harmony to our entire community and beyond. Friends, families, and new-comers from throughout Northwest Indiana and nearby Illinois come to be inspired. Each Sunday concert offers a unique musical experience.

The ashes we received on our heads at the onset of this holy season are reminders of our mortality. Our time on earth is short, while eternity is forever. The 40 Lenten days present us with precious time to ready our hearts for our eternal home.

Lent 2024 presents an opportune time to turn to Jesus and allow His grace to penetrate the deepest parts of our lives.

Dismiss outside distractions and quiet your inner spirit. Invite Jesus to visit with you. Listen to His encouragement. He longs to tell you of His love for you. Will you stop and listen?

It is in the quiet of our hearts that Jesus restores us, bringing His peace, His hope, His love.

**Lisa A. Kmak** 

Attorney at Law

- Wills
- Probate
- Estates
- Trusts
- Power of Attorney

1022 - 119th Street  
Whiting, IN 46394  
219-659-1355  
Fax: 219-655-4001  
KmakLAK2@aol.com



## Vaccine at Home for All Medicare Patients!

# Rite Care Pharmacy

- FLU, PNEUMONIA, SHINGLES, TDAP, HEPATITIS B, RSV AND COVID
- WE OFFER FREE MEDICATION DELIVERY!
- WE ACCEPT ALL INSURANCES INCLUDING CARESOURCE, ANTHEM, MIDWISE AND MANY MORE!

**2075 Indianapolis Boulevard  
Whiting, IN 46394**

**219-655-5028**





# Our "Oilers" Have an Offer for You!



*Oilers Class of '86*

**John F. Wilkening**  
Senior Vice President, Chief Banking Officer

**Michael Evanich**  
Business Development Officer

*Friends since '73*



The  
**BETTER  
OPTION**  
for your  
deposits!

CD Rate Special

**5.12%**  
APY

11-Month Term\*

Earn a high yield by opening this Certificate of Deposit (CD)  
with money you transfer from other financial institutions.

Voted #1 Best  
Credit Union!



Visit any Tech CU branch or call us at 800-276-8324  
[www.techcu.org](http://www.techcu.org)

Calumet City  
Cedar Lake

Crown Point  
East Chicago

Gary  
La Porte

Lowell  
Merrillville

Orland Park  
Valparaiso (2)

\*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Minimum \$10,000 new money to open. Transfers between Tech CU accounts do not qualify. Penalty imposed for early withdrawal. Principal and interest transfer to Money Market Savings at end of term. This offer may end or change without notice.





**PAWS Here!** by Nancy Sparano

Last month was the best month! Hobart Humane Society helped us out and took 16 kittens and 4 adult cats from us. They adopt out much quicker than we do and we are very grateful for their help. Unfortunately, they did not have room for any dogs. We have dogs that have been here for way too long. Please spread the word about Whiting Animal Shelter and help find these dogs and cats their forever home. We can't do this alone.

**Thickie Minaj** – 17.5 pounds of fun! She was found hiding behind garbage cans in the rain and cold. This smart girl walked right into the carrier. She was already spayed and well fed - where are her owners?

**Floyd** – Pretty Boy Floyd is a sweetheart. His “finder” moved and could not take Floyd. He said he was a stray cat but let him in his house and fed him for months. If you feed and house a cat it becomes yours.

**Daisy & Karma** – Daisy and Karma are mother and daughter and we would like to keep them together since they are very bonded. We share an office and I enjoy watching the two beauties play. They get along so well.

**Hearty** – Hearty is Daisy’s sister and they have very similar personalities. Both like to eat their wet food with their paws – very lady like. Hearty loves to be petted and loves Fancy Feast wet food even more.

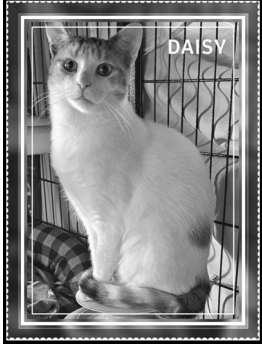
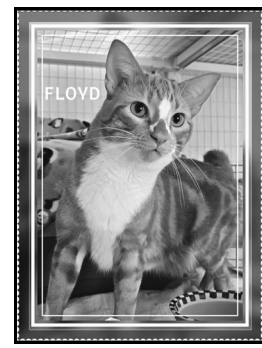
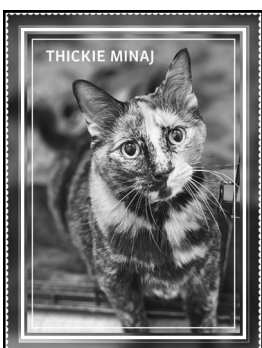
**Regis** – He is such a handsome cat with those baby blue eyes. Regis is a bit quirky. He wants attention yet doesn’t quite trust us. He loves to play with toys and really enjoys having us play with him.

**Matt, Millie and Charcoal** – We’ve been working on socializing these siblings and they are coming along nicely. All it takes is a little patience. It’s very rewarding watching them become friendly and social.

**Toffee** - Isn't she a beauty? She is a lovely dog who has been waiting a long time for a home of her own. Thank you, Every Paw Photography for the beautiful picture!

**Shayna** - She's a petite sweetie! Shayna was found as a stray and never claimed. How can you not want such a sweet girl? She’s had her first dog training session and did very well.

**Thelma** – Thelma is eager to please. She loves going for walks and enjoys being around people. She is doing very well learning commands. Another smart pup!

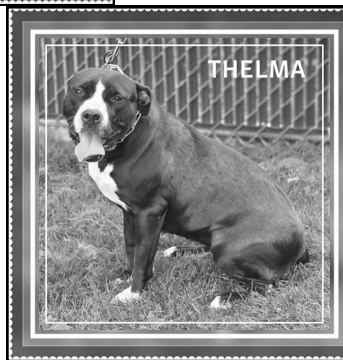
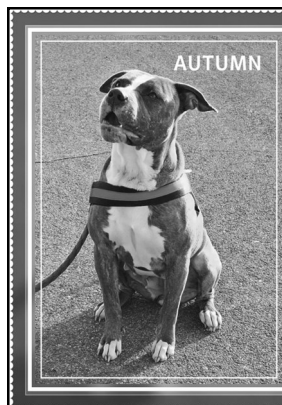
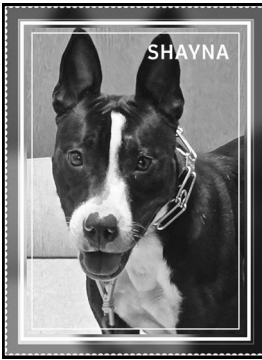
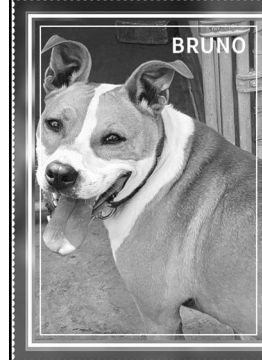
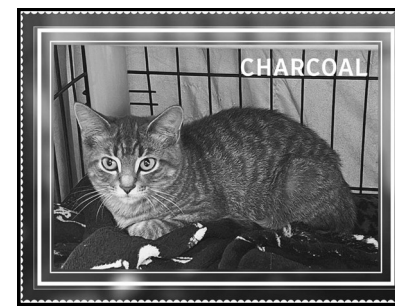
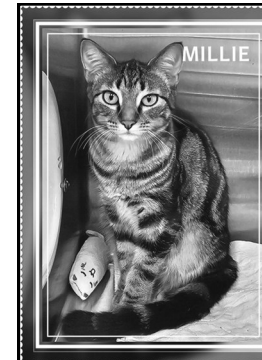
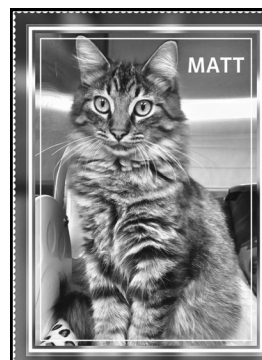
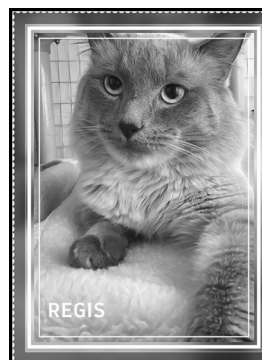


**Bruno** – Bruno has been at the shelter for several years. If anyone needs a break, it would be him. Bruno just needs a chance. Life hasn’t been very fair to him and he deserves some happiness. Please help Bruno.

**Autumn** – Autumn has come a long way. She was very fearful and showed signs of being abused. Autumn is more confident and so happy to see new faces. Please make an appointment and come meet Autumn and the rest of the crew.

The shelter needs cat food (Fancy Feast and Friskies wet food, and Purina One dry food), clumping litter, unscented non clumping litter for kittens, dog food (Purina One wet & dry food), cat & dog treats, indestructible dog toys, cat toys, laundry detergent, bleach, Odoban, and paper towels.

We are scheduling appointments with an approved application. You can request an adoption application via Facebook – the Whiting Animal Shelter page, via email: [nsparano@whitingindiana.com](mailto:nsparano@whitingindiana.com), or leave a message on the answering machine – 219-473-4646.



**New Woodshop ‘HankArt’ is Open for Business!**

**Hank Tolhuizen** is pleased to announce that his woodshop is open for business, serving Hammond, Whiting, and the Chicagoland area. Currently offering planters in anticipation of spring, Mr. Tolhuizen's company, **HankArt**, will be offering custom furniture and small items.



"I've wanted to go out on my own for a long time now," says Tolhuizen. "I'm documenting the process on my YouTube channel. It'll be a fun journey, and I want to share it."

From the HankArt YouTube channel description: "HankArt is a project of Hank Tolhuizen, producing videos and other media about art, making, productivity, and life. Join me as I experiment with woodworking, drawing and painting, quilting, and other creative endeavors. Learn from my failures, and let my successes inspire your own." Mr. Tolhuizen can be found on Instagram at [@hankart\\_makes](https://www.instagram.com/hankart_makes).

**HANDY MAN / JOBBER**  
**HOME + LANDSCAPE + PROPERTY**  
 Deck-Fence-Gate Powerwash-Paint  
 Build-Repair  
**DIY Project Jobber**  
 Certified Master Gardener Professional Tree & Shrub Pruning  
**Improvements+Solutions+Maintenance**  
 Quality On-Time Service to Whiting & Surrounding Areas  
**DAVE 303 - 807-1229**



## Whiting/Robertsdale Crime Watch: 02-08-2024

by Bonnie Henry

**Mayra Reynoso – Deportation Officer for Homeland Security:** Spoke about the duties of a deportation officer versus misconceptions the community has about the job. They arrest criminal individuals who are then placed into immigration proceedings where a judge determines whether they can remain in the country or not. If the judge rules against the individual they are escorted back to their home country. Homeland Security also assists at the border. Explained the difference from individuals that are already here illegally waiting for their opportunity to obtain status in the US and Asylum seekers (they fear prosecution or harm from their home country). Asylum seekers have to be interviewed for credible fear but the immigration judge makes that determination. Discussed sanctuary cities not assisting or releasing convicted criminals into our custody.

**Nancy Machuca – Cline Avenue Bridge:** Came to talk about the drive and save with the community rewards program. By enrolling in this free program, you can take the Cline Avenue Bridge for a 60% discounted rate. Only 2 axle vehicles with transponder (either an I-pass or E-ZPass) will qualify. The website to get started is [clineavnetolls.com/Web/toll\\_discount](http://clineavnetolls.com/Web/toll_discount). Once your registration is confirmed, the discount starts with your third trip across the bridge. Every 90 days you are required to make two crossings at regular price to maintain program eligibility. Machuca will be available at the next meeting for anyone who wants to take advantage of this program. For more information, email [clineavenuebridge-rewards@unitedbridgepartners.com](mailto:clineavenuebridge-rewards@unitedbridgepartners.com).

**Captain Tom Strabavy – HPD: One Auto Theft.** 01-19-24 in the 1900 block of Warwick. A 2006 Ford F250 with a plow was stolen sometime between 10:30pm and 3am.

**Two General Assignment Cases/Administrative Alerts:** (1) 01-14-24 at 2:05pm, 1440 Indianapolis Blvd. (Mobil Gas.) Intimidation. Clerk stated he was threatened by a B/M whom he previously had a road rage incident with, and that a gun was implied by the unnamed suspect. (2) 01-19-24 3:40am. Horseshoe Casino - 777 Casino Center Drive. Theft from vehicle, occurred. Victim stated suspects took an Apple iPad Mini, A Milwaukee impact driver and four batteries from his vehicle. Through video surveillance, a plate of the suspect vehicle was obtained. The suspects were then tracked through the casino floor where they provided their players' cards to the craps table. Suspects, therefore have been identified. And charges are forthcoming. SeeClickFixes are nearly caught up for Robertsdale area. North Hammond will be done shortly. Franklin Elementary will be hosting a Career Day on Thursday, March 7th from 9am until 3pm. HPD will be represented.

**Lieutenant Jeff Allard – WPD: Domestic Battery.** 01-12-24 in the 1500 block of 119th. Officers were dispatched reference to a disturbance. Upon arrival, officers met with a male who refused to let officers speak to the female. Officers saw the female in the apartment and she had fresh visible injuries. Officers had to force their way past the male to speak with the female, and determined to place the male under arrest. The male resisted arrest and had to be subdued using chemical spray. **Intimidation.** 01-15-24 at LaPalma Restaurant. Officers responded reference report of threat to store owner and wife. Customer became irate after owner refused customer's demand to lower price of some food. Subject had left the business prior to arrival, but was later identified and trespassed from the business.

**Attempted Auto Theft.** 01-28-24 in the 1400 block of Fischrupp. Complainant reported finding her rear passenger window busted out and her steering column busted. Complainant had recently had an anti-theft device installed that was recommended by the manufacturer. **Agency Assist.** 01-28-24 at Olympia Lanes in Hammond. Officers responded to a report of shots fired in the bowling alley and a large fight in progress. WPD officers arrived on the scene and while trying to diffuse the situation, one officer was pushed by a subject who was then detained and was charged with to Law Enforcement.

**Mark Harbin** gave Code Enforcement Stats in Harry's absence. Inspections Conducted: 8, Violations Issued: 5, OAHB Summons: 4.

**Don Harbin – Whiting Fire Chief** - The City of Whiting is pleased to announce its partnership with Smart911.com. Smart911.com is an alert system that residents can subscribe to which will allow an individual to opt into various notifications including those for Lake County. In addition, the City can send out special alerts for such things as street closures, boil alerts, community events, parades, and other information. These notifications can be sent either to your email or as a text to your mobile device.

**Shawn Turpin – City Councilman-at-large:** He spoke about a new group that just started in our community called WREN. (Whiting-Robertsdale Environmental Neighbors). They will be inviting community members to get involved with clean ups, recycling, planting trees, planting native gardens, composting, etc.

The next Crime Watch meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 14th at 6:30pm**, at **Calumet College, Room 200**.







**Erie Insurance®**


Forbes 2022  
AMERICA'S  
BEST INSURANCE  
COMPANIES  
POWERED BY EXETER

Call or email us today!  
We have solutions for *all* your insurance needs!

### Insurance Solutions

**Jim Kozak**  
Auto • Home • Business • Life  
1333 119th Street  
Whiting, IN 46394  
219-659-2886 / 219-765-1178  
[jkozak@insurancesolutions659.com](mailto:jkozak@insurancesolutions659.com)

<b>AUTO</b> 	<b>LIFE</b> 
<b>HOME</b> 	<b>HEALTH</b> 

**ALVIN DEMPSEY**  
Agent  
24 Hours Good Neighbor Service  
1110 119th St Whiting,  
STATE FARM INSURANCE COMPANIES  
Home Offices: Bloomington, Illinois  
**State Farm** Bus.: (219) 659-2111  


**Matthew D.**  
**CONSTRUCTION**

**SINCE 1987**

**SIDING, ROOFING, WINDOWS,  
DECKS, DOORS & MORE!**

1017-119th St.  
Whiting, IN

**219 • 805 • 3752**

LICENSED & INSURED  
GUARANTEED & BONDED





# TOP **Maternity Care**

St. Catherine Hospital is one of only six hospitals in Indiana to be recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a high performing hospital for maternity care.

Community Healthcare System®  
**St. Catherine Hospital**  
[COMHS.org/baby](https://COMHS.org/baby)

