

## CARROLL COUNTY COMET

Consolidation of the Delphi Journal-Citizen (Est. 1839) and the Flora Hoosier Democrat (Est. 1897).

Published each Wednesday at 114 East Franklin St., Delphi IN 46923  
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Delphi IN46923 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to Carroll County Comet,  
PO Box 26, Flora IN 46929-0026 USPS 285-840

Published by CARROLL PAPERS, Inc. PO Box 26, Flora IN 46929-0026  
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Editorial Writers: Susan Scholl, Chris Parker

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION RATES in Advance - Per Year  
Carroll County, Service People and Counties which border Carroll - \$27.00.  
All other Indiana counties - \$32.00; All other states - \$35.00.  
Addresses changed for seasonal residences - Add \$3.00  
Address changes - subs@carrollcountycomet.com

Memberships include:



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## Three fixes for American democracy

There are a lot of proposals for reform floating around Washington these days. If we really want to make a difference, though, we need to focus on the three issues that most distort the behavior of our elected officials: money, lobbying, and gerrymandering.

It costs a huge amount of money to run credibly for Congress. This makes it hard for challengers to mount effective campaigns and demands that incumbents spend absurd amounts of their time raising money, rather than focusing on policy-making. Former U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina has proposed a constitutional amendment authorizing Congress to regulate or control spending in federal elections. We are in dire straits, and this idea deserves widespread attention.

Even were we to end the campaign financing arms race, though, special interests with money to spend will still find creative ways to cozy up to legislators. So we must resolve right now to make all lobbying as open and transparent as possible. Lobbyists and special interests should be required regularly to detail what they spend on influencing legislation and how they go about it. And all of this information should be available with a few taps on a keyboard to anyone who wants to look it up.

Finally, our election system is becoming obstructed by redistricting efforts that, in the last two election cycles, made it possible for 98 percent of incumbents to be re-elected. Districts drawn to favor one party over another make it almost impossible for voters to express their opinion about the direction the country is taking, and allow incumbents to behave very differently than if they have to justify their actions to a skeptical audience. It is time for the states to put redistricting in non-partisan hands.

This is a reform moment in Washington, and we should use it to focus on the most important steps we can take to fix our Republic. Get control of spending on elections, enforce complete disclosure of lobbying activities, and end the partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts, and we will have gone a long way toward that goal.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

## Web poll

Each week the *Comet* polls its readers on a different topic. Vote online at [carrollcountycomet.com](http://carrollcountycomet.com) starting each Thursday, and then click the *Comments* link to send us an email voicing your opinion. The best responses will be printed anonymously the following week.

Last Week's Results:  
Should the theft of \$145 from the locker room at DCHS been reported to police?

97%-Yes  
2%-No  
2%-School administrators handled situation properly  
Total responses: 59

## Circuit Court Judge Donald Currie

New filings are from public records available in the Carroll County Clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, Delphi. Other information regarding judgments and marriage dissolutions is gathered from public records found in the clerk's office.

A judgment on default was ordered in Genesis Financial Solutions, Inc. vs. Lynn E. LaBare and Dian L. LaBare. The plaintiff will recover \$3,840.64 plus court costs.

In State of Indiana vs. Ryan D. Hatke, 29, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count II, possession of methamphetamine, and was sentenced to three years, with one and one-half years suspended, and 18 months of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Dale A. Harber, 41, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count VII, possession of chemical reagents or precursors with intent to manufacture.

Sentencing will be held April 12 at 9 a.m.

In State of Indiana vs. Jeffrey A. Vibbert, 24, the defendant pleaded guilty to Counts I-V, burglary; Count VI, theft. He was sentenced to five years for each of Counts I-V and to three years for Count VI, for a total of 28 years. Thirteen years are suspended, and thirteen years of probation are ordered.

In State of Indiana vs. Sonia Deleon, 47, the defendant had earlier pled guilty to Count III, maintaining a common nuisance. She was sentenced to one and one-half years, with one year suspended, and one year of probation.

The following are found to be in arrears of child support: James S. Prater, Dale Bacock, Brian Majors, Russell Gaby, Richard Collins, Brian Hartman, Mark McLeland, Jason Daniels, Chad Gipson and Kenny Kittrell.

In State of Indiana vs. Brian M.

My grandmother was one of many children, enough that I can't give you a definite number. Over the years I met plenty, but certainly not all of her siblings. The meetings were sufficiently sporadic that I never got all the names and the faces put together. There was a definite chill in the air with this particular brood of folks. Even as a kid I could feel the stiffness when certain groups were gathered at the same table. Retrospect suggests many reasons, some reasonable, some silly, but mostly sad, for the distance that separated this particular grouping of brothers and sisters.

If my grandmother had a favorite sister it was most definitely Aunt Betty from South Bend. Grandmother lived in a one room attic apartment in my parents' bungalow. Aunt Betty was the only visitor I ever knew to stay on the hide-a-bed tucked under the pink painted eaves of that one-of-a-kind, miniature domain.

Aunt Betty brought laughter along with her on her visits to our home as though it was something one packed up in the suitcase for a trip. We laughed at the dinner table, we laughed on the back porch. Laughter echoed behind the two ladies as they bid us good night and carefully ascended the narrow steps up to the attic. Laughter was not necessarily the norm for our household and its unfamiliar and unabashed presence made Betty's visits all the more memorable.

In her advancing years, Aunt Betty wore eye-glasses that rivaled anything drawn for the cartoon character Mr. Magoo. The glasses gave her a slightly comical quality that only complimented the jovial air she seemed to envelope.

I don't know when it was that I learned the facts about Aunt Betty's eyesight. As the story went, Aunt Betty had totally lost her sight as a teenager but in later years was healed of her blindness through prayer. And though they didn't much get along, and though there were hurt feelings that stayed hurt and

## Midwest Memo

by Alan Shultz



### Regarding hope

she persevered without complaint. She raised her two daughters alone, from almost the beginning. She made her way in the business world with a sixth grade education.

I see now, that to my Grandmother, her sister Betty represented hope.

And, as I consider my Grandmother's teachings over the years, one consistent lesson stands out: don't mess with hope.

Last week the findings of a \$2.4 million dollar study involving 1,802 heart bypass patients were revealed at Harvard Medical School concerning the healing power of prayer. The study, billed as the largest ever done of its kind, had Catholic monks or believers of other Christian faiths praying for strangers before heart surgery. The study concluded that folks did worse who received prayer.

Well pardon me if I ask for a recount or a rethink of the prayer study.

And pardon me if I resent the lack of outcry from the faith community over this supposedly scientific gibberish.

Shame on somebody. Shame on those who need to tally that which cannot be tallied. And shame on those with the pomposity to mess with hope.

Author H. Jackson Brown writes a cautionary note about hope in his book "Life's Little Instruction Book." Brown cautions the reader to never deprive someone of hope. To paraphrase Brown, "hope may be all that he or she has left."

If Grandma was alive today I know she'd have a spirited take on the folks at Harvard. Recalling her frugal ways, I suspect she'd suggest a refund on the \$2.4 million spent.

skeletons that stayed buried, most of Grandma's brood found religion and made their way to church in their later years for the sole reason of Aunt Betty's healing.

My grandmother, Jeanette Stewart, was a woman I greatly admired. During her lifetime she endured more than her share of hardship and yet

## Campaign Letter guideline

The Carroll County Comet will accept campaign-related letters to the editor for the April 12 and 19 issues. No campaign letters will be published on April 26 unless they are clarification of information from a previous letter. For additional information, see the Comet's letters to the editor policy found below.

## Letters to the Editor

The Comet welcomes letters to the editor responding to articles and events in the news. They must include the author's name, address and telephone number. The letter writer's name and city/town will appear in the paper - no exceptions. Letters must be 400 words or less in length. Please send your letters to: editor@carrollcountycomet.com; Letters to the Editor, Comet, P.O. Box 26, Flora, IN 46929 or P.O. Box 179, Delphi, IN 46923; or fax 574-967-3384 or 765-564-2010. By submitting a letter or opinion article, the author grants the Comet the right to publish, distribute, archive or use the work in print, electronic, on-line or other format.

### TLRS: Why pour wastewater into Rattlesnake Creek?

I have sent e-mails to GRW, the new engineering firm for Twin Lakes Regional Sewer District's Phase III and Phase IIIB, asking about certain aspects of the projects. After my initial contact with the vice president, Mr. Greg Wright, at the Indianapolis office, I was directed to the man in charge, a Mr. Matt Whitaker.

I expressed my concerns about the plan to pour wastewater into the Rattlesnake Creek instead of back into the Twin Lakes. I pointedly asked about environmental impact studies and asked how the decision was arrived at to divert the sewage to a plant located so far away from the lakes. All of these questions have so far gone unanswered.

I now call on the sewage board to answer these questions publicly. Give us the science and economics behind this plan. This board is only a public servant, and as such, must present solid reasons for such long-term, far-reaching decisions. The attitude that it is the board's decision, and is as such the final answer, is no longer acceptable.

I've got a few more questions. What is the failure rate of this system? How many spills have occurred? How long do the grinders function without breakdown? Shall I go on?

Gregory R. Smith  
Jefferson Township

### Ives supports Burns

I support Tony Burns in the race for sheriff of Carroll County. Eighteen years ago when Tony was a young police officer and I was a young prosecutor, we spent many hours talking about police work and the criminal law of Indiana. Tony strives to do a better job and is always ready to consider a better way.

Tony Burns has never sought the spotlight. He has never been one to blow his own horn. However, for more than twenty years he has worked diligently to make Carroll County a safer place.

The sheriff of Carroll County may well hold our county's most important elected position. The sheriff is responsible for the largest, most active police department in the county. The vast majority of major felony cases are investigated by the sheriff's department.

In addition, the sheriff must administer a jail, which now generally holds thirty or more prisoners. The sheriff's department also must handle many

Continued next page

## Marriage Licenses

Bobby J. Foster, 49, and Conny L. Vandersee, 41, both of Delphi.

Jeffrey P. Canen, 44, and Kimberly C. Hitchcock, 40, both of Delphi.

Brad K. German, 47, and Terri A. McLeland, 50, both of Delphi.

### Public Notices appearing in this issue of the Comet:

Shuler-Estate 1312	5B
Hwy Dept.-Bridge 75 1312	5B
Hwy Dept.-Replacement 1312	5B
Hwy Dept.-Not. to Bidders 1312	5B
Weaver-Estate 1312d	5B
Jackson Twp.-Not. to taxpayers 14115B	5B
Alcoholic Beverage-Renewals 1412 5B	5B
Sheriff Sale-Smith(Randle) 1413	5B
Sheriff Sale-Fultz 1413	5B
Sheriff Sale-P&G Smith 1413	6B
Sheriff Sale-Brown 1213	6B
Delaplaine -Estate 1312d	6B

Questions concerning Indiana's Open Door and Public Access Laws may be directed to the state's public access office, at 1-800-228-6013.

## Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Smith

Superior Court judgments are gathered from public records on file in the Carroll County Clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, Delphi.

In State of Indiana vs. the following, the causes were dismissed, Jared J. Pine, Jolene M. Boller, Sandra K. Sterling, Jeffrey Figmaka, Carie L. Jones, Steven L. Newville, Lee W. Skiles, Natane Hill, Jennifer Endress and Valerie Duvall.

Greater Lafayette Health Services vs. Lori M. Graham was dismissed.

In State of Indiana vs. R. Anthony Greeno, 19, the defendant had previously pleaded guilty to Count I, criminal confinement; Counts II, III, and IV, battery resulting in bodily injury; Count V, criminal mischief. He was sentenced to four and one-half years, with two and one-half years suspended, and three years of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Ronald E. Fallowfield, 62, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count II, operating while intoxicated with a prior conviction, and was sentenced to one and one-half years, suspended, with one and one-half years of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. David W. Glasgow, 50, the defendant was found guilty of Count I, possession of marijuana; Count V, possession of paraphernalia. He was sentenced to two years, suspended, and two years of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. David W. Opwonya, 43, the defendant had previously pleaded guilty to Count II, reckless driving, and was sentenced to six months, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Joyce Toney, 49, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count I, operating a vehicle as an habitual traffic offender, and was sentenced to one year, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Tanisha Witt, 27, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count I, driving while suspended. She was sentenced to six months, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Kyle L. Stacy, 25, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count II, possession of marijuana. He was sentenced to one year, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. David W. Glasgow, 50, the defendant was found guilty of Count I, pos-

sessed to one and one-half years, suspended, with one and one-half years of probation.

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In State of Indiana vs. Jesse L. Sink, 20, the defendant had previously pled guilty to Count I, reckless driving and was sentenced to 60 days, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Trudy J. Stetler, 42, the defendant pleaded guilty to Count I, reckless driving. She was sentenced to 30 days, suspended, and one year of probation.

In State of Indiana vs. Gregory J. Highley, 23, Count I, operating while intoxicated, endangering a person. He was sentenced to six months, suspended, and one year of probation.

## Restaurant Inspections

Subway  
Routine inspection: 3/22/06  
Summary of violations:  
No violations noted.