

CARROLL COUNTY COMET

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Memberships include:



Time to let up

Carroll County is in the middle of an uncomfortable and potentially catastrophic financial crisis. Last January, the county council learned there might be a problem with available funds. They wisely appointed a committee of three members – Ann Brown, Steve Ashby and Ron Slavens - to investigate the matter and make recommendations to the group.

Investigate they did. The committee discovered problems and suspected there were issues that should be addressed by the state. Committee chair Brown recommended the council ask for an early Indiana State Board of Accounts audit.

The audit is finished and the tally is in, but the county council cannot afford to let up on the pressure now. To do that would be to relinquish all control of, and any progress made with, county finances.

SBOA results and recommendations must be pursued to reach the goal of financial health. The council's finance committee is the group to ensure progress is made. It is the county entity, recognized by the SBOA, which will be able to steer the county in the desired direction. Failure to correct the situation could result in the county not being allowed to set the 2009 budget – the state would do that instead.

Keep this committee's pressure on, council members. Carroll County will thank you for it in the future

Read the results!

The State Board of Accounts (SBOA) examines the records of the county, along with various departments, and issues a report each year. Exit conferences, where problems and issues are discussed, are conducted with county officials. This year they were held in Carroll County in early September and audit results were made public Oct. 26.

Reports for the county, the treasurer, health department, Emergency Medical Service (ambulance) and commissioners all had problems noted. Some of the reports contained obvious references to previous SBOA reports about the same concerns.

The information reported is about the use of county funds...your tax dollars.

It is important for taxpayers and residents to read them to more fully understand how the county government is managed.

It is also important for county leaders to act on the information provided to them in a timely manner. There exists a pattern of indifference by office holders to remedy issues as evidenced by the last four years' reports. County residents must hold officials accountable for their inactions. To know what those inactions have been....**READ THE RESULTS!!!**

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.

New Filings

Tyson Lawson was charged with driving while suspended and speeding.

Dana R. Grubb was charged with public intoxication.

David L. Kelly was charged with domestic battery and disorderly conduct.

Daniel K. Wethington was charged with driving while suspended, false and fictitious plates, expired plates and operating without financial responsibility.

Rafael Gamboa was charged with illegal consumption.

Robert L. Ingram was charged with intimidation and public intoxication.

Ashley B. Ireland was charged with illegal consumption and visiting a common nuisance.

Christopher G. Manis was charged with possession of marijuana, visiting a common nuisance and open alcoholic beverage container.

Paul Rocha was charged with operating while intoxicated – endangering and battery.

Amanda L. DuVall was charged with driving while suspended.

Rodney E. Madison was charged with operating while intoxicated – endangering and operating with an ACE of .15 percent or more.

Alexandria L. Polley was charged with possession of marijuana, false informing and operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license.

For convictions related to alco-

hol, the following were meted a combination of jail time, with some suspensions, probation with fees, community service, house arrest, participation in a court-approved drug and alcohol program, and suspended and/or probationary driving privileges: Cherie K. Brummett, 45, of Delphi, operating while intoxicated – endangering a person; Joshua R. Sales, 25, of Delphi, operating while intoxicated – endangering a person; Hugo S. Colquehuanca, 43, of Delphi, public intoxication; Nichole M. Johnson, 20, of Kokomo, illegal consumption of an alcoholic beverage; Larry J. Smith, 53, of Logansport, public intoxication; and Erika L. Odore, 20, minor consumption.

Donnie A. Brumbaugh, 43, pled guilty to invasion of privacy. He was sentenced to 180 days in jail, all suspended, and one year supervised probation.

Maxie Zuniga, 20, of Delphi, pled guilty to operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license (two counts). He was sentenced to 60 days in jail, all suspended, and one year supervised probation.

Marriage Licenses

Ronald Coleman Warf, 36, and Kenra Rose Bailey, 22, both of Delphi.

Bryan Lee Burdine, 44, and Lorrie Mae Raines, 36, both of Brookston.

James Oscar Smith Sr., 47, and Melissa Ann Luke, 45, both of Monticello.

Brian Lee Burge, 28, and Lillie Sharon Thome, 37, both of Delphi.

The news of my mother-in-law's death came unexpectedly, a startle on an otherwise uneventful Monday night. These events are rarely expected - this was no exception. Her Monday had been a full one, a good day. I called each of our children and then got in the car to drive back to Delphi.

It rained Monday. As I sped along the highway back home I thought about a rain that fell on two of the ladies in my life so many years ago. As I considered that event, I realized that at that moment I was driving the very path that they took during that hard falling rain.

When Deb and I married, I got the easy end of the in-law arrangement. I think even my own parents would have agreed to that assessment. Deb's folks, Beverly and Jonah Peterson, were welcoming and inclusive. They made few demands on the newlyweds, yet the welcome mat was always out.

One of the sweet bonuses of our marriage was that Beverly and my mother got to pal around together a bit.

One of my mom's favorite

Midwest Memo

by Alan Shultz



Remembering rain

spots in the world was the summer house she and my dad owned in Michigan City. The Peterson's had been guests at that house and on this particular day my mom and Beverly headed off to the beach for a day's outing.

My mom was a capable driver and had made the trip countless times. But from what I recall, this particular rain was a deluge. It was one of those sudden summer downpours when the sky opens up and drivers pull off the road because they can't see.

So the ladies were in my folks' big four-door Buick on the Calumet Expressway and even with the windshield wipers on fast, they faced a wall of water pouring down upon them.

My mother would have been tense, very tense. So would have I.

Not Beverly.

When the story got recounted, and I heard both versions, one theme was consistent. Bev remained calm throughout the event. She told me later that she had been confident in my mom's driving so she wasn't afraid. My mother, in turn, said that Beverly's calm had made my mother feel more confident and the situation less scary.

In the days to come folks will share all kinds of memories of Beverly. She made the best macaroni and cheese known to mankind. She enjoyed a good laugh. She set a beautiful table. I won't claim more than my share of memories. Others are due their turn.

But I will say this, Beverly's calm in the rainstorm, her confidence in my mom's driving, this trait was a quality she expressed easily and generously towards many. Beverly allowed folks to be themselves around her, no pretense, and her easy nature made her companionship a comfortable fit for family and for friends.

She made the job of son-in-law an easy slam dunk.

She will be missed by many. It rained Monday, and it made me remember.

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.

Historical Museum needs secure future

Over the past few years we have made many trips to various libraries, museums and other depositories of historical and family information and artifacts. These visits have been throughout Indiana, in many other states and in two foreign countries. Few libraries and museums rival the collection of family and other genealogical information of the Carroll County Historical Museum.

Although I am not currently a citizen of Carroll County, many of my ancestors are listed with the earliest settlers of the county. I have recently volunteered to help digitize, photograph and prepare a history of the Musselman Cemetery in Jackson Township.

I have held various local, state and national positions in education and government. With that background, I request all county and local elected officials give careful consideration of continued support of the Carroll County Historical Museum and the professional and volunteer personnel. That support can be in many ways, but most importantly, it should be expressed as your personal support of the history and culture of one of Indiana's early settlements.

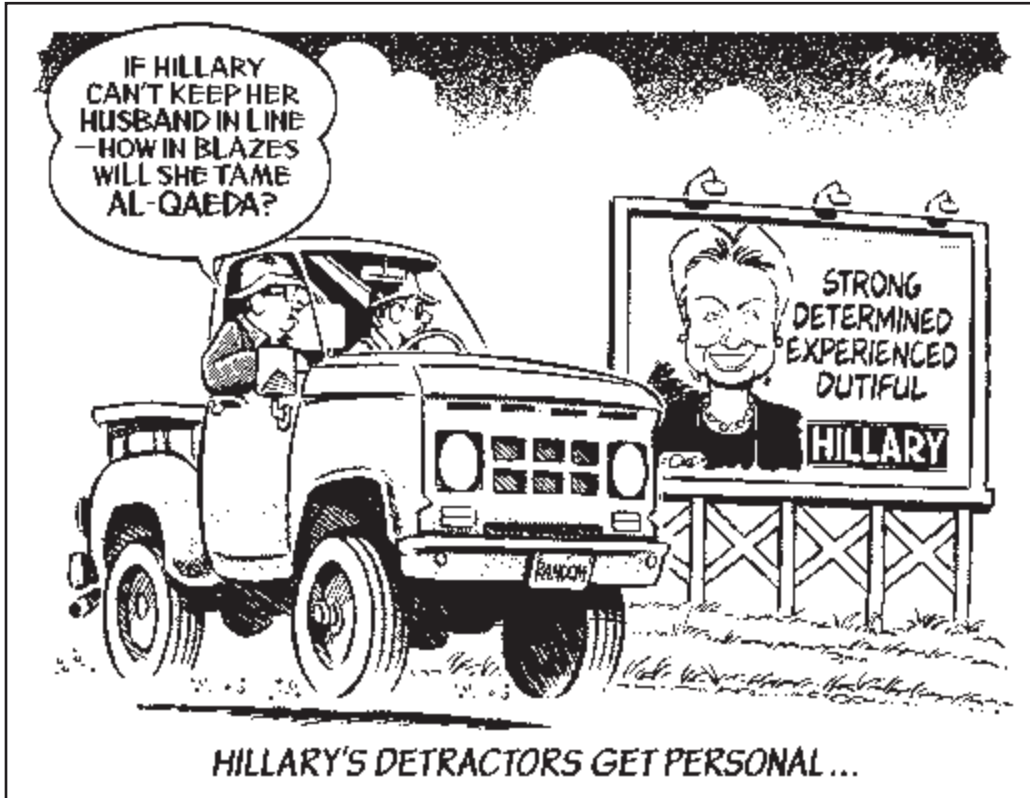
In the end, we are not going to be measured by our financial success, but by how we honor our past, be it people, information or historical documents and articles. I hope all Carroll County citizens will support the Museum in its attempt to build a secure future.

William E. Christopher, PhD
Noblesville

No smoking, please

Please tell me why if Delphi Community High School and Delphi Community Middle School have a "no smoking" policy on school property, why the custodians at the middle school smoke in the electric room all the time. The principal, Mr. De-LaRosa is aware of this. The superintendent has been informed of this. The school board knows of it. Is it going to take a fire to stop this?

P.J. Morgan
Camden



Capital Comments

Why aren't more counties adopting the new local income taxes?

By Larry DeBoer
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Professor of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University

The property tax crisis was upon us. The General Assembly responded by offering counties the option of adopting three new local income taxes, two of which directly reduced property taxes. The new taxes could freeze a large chunk of the property tax levy. They could provide really substantial property tax relief to homeowners or relief to all property taxpayers. The taxes seemed to be just what was needed.

But as of the original deadline, July 31, only eight of 92 counties had adopted. The governor extended the deadline to Sept. 30, then to Dec. 31. Three more adopted, bringing the total to 11. Perhaps more counties will adopt. So far, though, the question is: "Why so few?"

One of the income taxes freezes non-school operating levies, paying for the annual levy increase with an income tax increase instead. But non-school operating levies have been growing less than 6 percent a year since 2000. School debt service levies have grown more than 10 percent a year. The slower-growing levies are frozen, the faster-growing levies are not. Maybe the tax is unpopular because it targets the wrong levies.

The income tax rates for that levy freeze are set by the state's Department of Local Government Finance, based on estimates of how much the non-school operating levy will rise. Apparently the agency used pretty big estimates of levy growth, because the income tax rates came in higher than expected. And, in the first year the income tax rate is doubled, to establish a stabilization fund. That's needed because income taxes aren't as stable as property taxes. Maybe the tax is unpopular because the income tax rates are high.

Another of the income taxes reduces existing property taxes. Tax relief can be distributed to all taxpayers, to homeowners only, or to homeowners and owners of rental property. Some counties would like to divide up the tax relief differently. Some would like to offer relief to homeowners and farm-

ers. Others would like local taxpayers to get relief but not owners of vacation homes. These are not options. Maybe the tax is unpopular because counties can't slice and dice the tax relief as they wish.

In counties that already have the county option income tax, the "COIT council" must make the adoption decision. The COIT council includes the county council and the councils and boards of the cities and towns in the county. Votes are divided up by population. In most COIT counties, a single unit has a majority of the votes. But in 14 counties, no one unit has a majority. A coalition is needed to adopt. Only Montgomery County, among the 11 counties that have adopted so far, needed more than one unit to vote "yes." Maybe the tax is unpopular because coalitions are hard to assemble.

The General Assembly appropriated \$550 million for extra homeowner tax relief in 2007 and 2008. When this money runs out in 2009, homeowner taxes will jump again. Counties could offset this tax hike by adopting tax relief for 2009. Maybe the tax is unpopular because counties are waiting to adopt next year, so the tax relief offsets the homeowner tax hike in 2009.

Will the General Assembly allow the extra homeowner tax relief to expire in 2009? What other changes in tax policy might be made? Local officials are uncertain. It's possible that a more attractive alternative to the local income taxes will be enacted. Perhaps the local income taxes will look like the wrong choice. Maybe the taxes are unpopular because counties are uncertain about what the legislature will do.

Finally, consider the decision we expect our local officials to make. Replacing property taxes with income taxes dollar for dollar will raise taxes for some, reduce taxes for others. Local officials must look some of their constituents in the eye and say, "Your taxes must rise so others can pay less." Maybe the taxes are unpopular because the choices are so hard.

Listing reasons why the new local income taxes are unpopular is not meant to discourage counties from adopting. There are plenty of good reasons to

adopt. But if we know why these taxes aren't popular, maybe we can figure out how to make them more popular.

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.

David Colbert was charged with four counts of child molesting.

The estates of the late Gerald W. Nipple and William Rozhon were admitted, probate wills only.

The following cases were dismissed: Washington Mutual Bank vs. Stacia R. Mooney; Midwest Ag Finance Inc. vs. Brian D. Wise, Beth A. Wise, et al; Regions Bank vs. Mark D. Perdue and Stephanie E. Perdue; State of Indiana vs. Faustino Baradas; and Associates Home Equity Services Inc. vs. Jack Brooks, General Acceptance Corporation and Carroll County Treasurer.

A decree of dissolution was granted between the following:

•Joy Jenkins and Larry Jenkins, with wife's former name of Joy Bennett restored;

Web poll

Tell us starting Wednesday at our web site, carrollcounty-comet.com

Each week the Comet polls its readers on a different topic. Vote online at 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 the following week.

This Thanksgiving what are you least thankful for?

- High gas prices
- War in Iraq
- Toy recalls
- Bosses
- Relatives

Last Weeks results

If expenses are more than income at Carroll Manor, what should be done?

- 55% Reduce the expenses to match income
- 35% Increase income by charging residents more
- 10% Close the facility.
- Total responses: 91
- Reader's comments:

Because the public has a right to know...

In an effort to help our readers understand what government meetings are happening when and where, the Comet will now print upcoming meetings on a weekly basis.

- Wednesday, Nov. 14
- √Commissioners/Council joint meeting: 7 p.m.
- √Burlington Town Council: 7 p.m.
- Monday, Nov. 19
- √Special drainage board meeting for North Central Health Services: 8:30 a.m.
- √Commissioners: 9 a.m.
- Tuesday, Nov. 20
- √County Council: 8 a.m.
- √Comprehensive Land Use Plan Steering Committee: 10 a.m.
- √Carroll School Board: 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov. 21
- √Delphi Board of Works: 5:30 p.m.

Public Notices appearing in this issue of the Comet:

- Clay Twp-Tax Rate.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Sheets.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Northern.....5B
- Medley Sediment.....5B
- Town of Yeoman.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Lucas.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Conde.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Vaughn.....5B
- Raber Adoption.....5B
- 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.