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 IN 46923 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
Co-Publishers: Susan Scholl & Joe Moss

Editor: Susan Scholl, editor@carrollcountycomet.com
Ad Director: Joe Moss, comet@carrollcountycomet.com
Editorial Writers: Susan Scholl, Comet Staff

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION RATES in Advance - Per Year
Carroll County, Service People and Counties which border Carroll - $30.00.
All other Indiana counties - $36.00; All other states - $40.00.
Addresses changed for seasonal residences - Add $3.00
Address changes - subs@carrollcountycomet.com

Memberships include:
Hoosier State Press Association
National Newspaper Association
Inland Press Association

Tax reform points are highlighted

Comet staff report

On March 14, the Indiana State Senate passed historic property tax reforms under which most Hoosiers could see an average 27 percent decrease in their property taxes in 2008 and an approximately 38 percent decrease by 2010.

Governor Mitch Daniels signed HEA 1001 last Wednesday.

"Significant, permanent property tax reform in Indiana is long overdue, said Senator Brandt Hershman, co-author of House Bill 1001 and Senate conferee. "The reform package passed will bring our tax code into the 21st century and protect Hoosier taxpayers."

Hershman said property taxes can be decreased further if counties adopt a Local Option Income Tax.

"If a county adopts a one percent LOIT and applies 50 percent of that revenue to homesteads and 50 percent as broad-based property tax relief to all taxpayer groups, the average reduction in homeowners' tax bills would be 53 percent by 2010," Hershamn said.

Components of House Enrolled Act 1001 include:

• Cuts in property taxes - removes $1 billion in school and local government costs from the backs of property taxpayers, including farmers and businesses, while maintaining local control of schools;

• Caps on property taxes - a one percent property tax cap on owner-occupied homes, two percent on other residential and agricultural properties and three percent on businesses will be phased in by 2010. Only local taxpayers, not politicians, can exceed these "circuit breakers" through a voter referendum. Because schools have no other substantial revenue, the bill sets aside $120 million to help them live within the caps and $400 million for economic "rainy days." The phase-in allows time for local government officials to identify and implement new efficiencies. Distressed local governments can appeal to the state for help;

• Controls on government spending - all taxes result from government spending. Property taxes are determined, collected and spent at the local level. Statewide figures show local levies have outpaced inflation by more than two-to-one. To control local government spending, the bill requires voter approval by referenda of all major government construction projects. It closes loopholes used by local governments to increase property taxes and establishes stricter guidelines for school construction. Further, it provides county-level scrutiny of budgets;

• Constitutional guarantee - historically, whenever other taxes have been raised to reduce property taxes, the reductions were temporary. Property taxes returned to previous levels, while other increased taxes remained. To prevent this "creep" in the future, HEA 1001 includes an amendment to Indiana's Constitution that would make the caps permanent. This constitutional amendment will require passage again in 2009 or 2010 by a separately-elected legislature, then approval by Indiana voters; and

• Little Red School House - schools must adhere to stricter guidelines for planning and construction and state-approved school designs will be maintained in a state design bank or repository.

Midwest Memo

by Alan Shultz

Repose

When sleep eludes me there is no greater state or commodity after which I seek.

Sleep, beautiful sleep.

Except, sometime, nodding off is not all that wise of a plan.

I got myself in the doghouse the other day when my wife and I pulled out the income tax file and started to rummage around through a year's worth of receipts. I don't know how that moment coincided with certain unusual atmospheric conditions, but it was as though all the oxygen in the room suddenly vanished. I immediately got to yawning.

My yawns were not subtle, but rather roaring gasps for air. I stretched and moaned until my more disciplined partner protested quite empathically. Actually, an IRS revenue officer couldn't have done a better job of getting my complete attention. I hardly stifled a yawn after that.

But when sleep calls, it calls.

Our Thursday weekly meetings can get pretty dull over at the real estate office where I work. We sit in a circle formed with our chairs in the back of the office and talk about the market conditions and who's buying and who's selling. It can get pretty dull. Add to that topic mix a big jelly donut and a person can get a little too comfortable.

On a recent Thursday I showed up for the meeting. But it seems I could have skipped it because I don't remember much of what was discussed. My friend Gail cornered me after the meeting broke up. Gail is not one to mince words.

"Honey, I would have thrown something at you if I could have," she said poking her finger at me.

The blank look on my face must have registered the fact that I didn't have a clue what she was talking about.

"You were sleeping!"

Oh dear.

Sometimes I attend halfday industry meetings on real estate topics. Sleep is always a challenge at these events. I like to ditch my co-workers at these events and sit with strangers. When you nod off with strangers it's a little less embarrassing.

I go into these meetings knowing that sleep will try to challenge me. I bring a diet soda along to keep me awake. Sometimes I sit forward in the seat as though I'm trying hard to listen.

Mental games can help a little. I open my eyes wide in an expression that usually makes me look frightened or confused. Then I imagine those toothpicks from old cartoons keeping those peepers wide open.

It never works.

I slumber, I drool. Only my neighbor can attest to whether I snore.

Oh my.

But gosh if that same sleep that likes to visit at office meetings and church services and sales seminars, that very same slumber can vanish when the moon is high in the sky and the order of business is official repose.

I find counting sheep does not help bring sleep.

My sheep all carry little 3X5 index cards with things I need to get done or to worry about. I've never cared for those sleep sheep.

When I can't get to sleep I toss, I turn, I rearrange the pillows, pop up and make a note to myself then go back to the toss, the turn, the pillow.

It makes me wonder if any ministers or seminar leaders have ever tried to capitalize on those of us who find sleep sometimes illusive. Imagine it, the midnight, mid-week church service with the overhead lights on dim and the sermon or topic on drone.

Say, you'd only have to wake us when its time to pass the plate.

Zzzzzzzzzzzzz.

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

Blaine M. McLeland was charged with burglary and attempted theft.

Deutsche Bank National Trust filed a complaint to foreclose mortgage against Linda S. Huddleston, Daniel J. Huddleston, Melody S. Huddleston, Brandi Huddleston, Ricky Joe Huddleston and Kyle A. Huddleston.

Wells Fargo Bank filed a complaint to foreclose mortgage against Clinton A. Fletcher, Christie D. Landgrave and State of Indiana.

PHH Mortgage Corporation filed a complaint on note and to foreclose mortgage on real estate against Michael James Port and Lacey Lynn Port.

Vicki White, Howard White and Zachary White filed a complaint for damages against Nationwide Insurance Sales Company LLC.

LVNV Funding LLC filed a complaint against Casey Watson.

Capital One Bank filed a complaint against John R. Shirels.

Discover Bank filed a complaint against Brenda K. Lohrman.

Franklin Bank filed a complaint to foreclose mortgage against Anne Wilson and State of Indiana.

Capital One Bank filed a complaint against William Dill.

Chase Home Finance LLC filed a complaint on note and to foreclose mortgage against Randy L. Barker and Marissa K. Gann.

Lillian A. Smith filed a complaint for damages against Tony Burns, Sheriff, and Carroll County Commissioners.

HSBC Mortgage Services Inc. filed a complaint on note and to foreclose mortgage on real estate against Nathan Steele Best and Kelly Sue Best.

PHH Mortgage Corporation filed a complaint on note and to foreclose mortgage on real estate against Justin Swinney, Samantha Swinney, American General Finance and Barrier Windows.

Dean Overholser, Donna Overholser, Arnold Abbott, Mary Helen Abbott, Don Wesner, Mary Wesner, Wanda Duff and Joyce Sullivan a/k/a Joyce Murray filed a complaint against Mary Alice Barbee individually and d/b/a Premier Tours and Delivery.

Unifund CCR Partners filed a complaint against Jennifer S. Spann.

Palfinger North America filed a complaint on account against Delphi Body Works Inc.

Michael D. Carroll as guardian of the power and estate of Joshua M. Carroll, filed a complaint for damages against Calvin G. Kamps, Tandy Trucking of Michigan Inc. and CAN Enterprises Inc.

Capital One Bank filed a complaint against Reid Sales and Kimberly Sales.

The following were charged with check deception: Christina R. Haberland; Sarah D. Matthews (four counts); Margaret L. Inglis; and Jodiann M. Cornell (eight counts).

Michael G. Zimmerman was charged with battery resulting in bodily injury.

Katrina M. Seekell was charged with driving while suspended.

Austin Monroe Taylor was charged with driving while suspended and failure to stop after accident resulting in non-vehicle damage.

Levi T. Dyer was charged with strangulation and battery resulting in bodily injury.

Jessica A. Olds was charged with operating while intoxicated – endangering a person.

Crispin Ramirez-Flores was charged with operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license.

****

The following were meted a combination of jail time, suspensions, probation and other penalties for convictions related to alcohol or illegal substances: William C. Emmitt, 20, of Delphi, public intoxication; Chaseton H. Hinkle, 19, of Flora, illegal possession of an alcoholic beverage; Jeremy Riggle, 27, of Peru, public intoxication; William S. Goodwin, 52, of Lafayette, operating a vehicle while intoxicated – endangering a person; Jose R. Sosa, 32, of Delphi, operating a vehicle with an ACE of .15 or more and operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license; Cori A. Wendrick, 18, of Monticello, possession of marijuana; Abbie D. Morgenson, 27, of Monticello, public intoxication and disorderly conduct; Sandra S. Spalding, 38, of Brookston, public intoxication; Gregory T. Hall, 18, of Delphi, illegal consumption; and Mark J. Batcheldor, 51, of Monticello, operating while intoxicated – endangering a person.

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.

In the cause of Kathy Eva Dunbar vs. Tricia Thompson, Carroll County Prosecutor, an order rescinding and releasing probationary driver's license and directing issuance of operator's license was granted to Dunbar.

Michael S. Fultz was found to be in arrears in the payment of child support in the amount of $23,335.38.

The following causes were dismissed: Arnett Clinic LLC vs. Estate of John Ayres; Wells Fargo Bank NA vs. Eric S. Miller; Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette Inc. vs. Halvin E. Clements and Rebecca S. Clements; State of Indiana vs. Dustin Terrell; and PHH Mortgage Corporation vs. Johnathon T. Blake.

Richard L. Henry, 24, pled guilty to two counts of burglary. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, six years suspended, and six years supervised probation.

Burkhart Advertising Inc. was granted immediate possession of a billboard located on the property of Klinkhamer Enterprises pursuant to a complaint for replevin and judgment.

Constance Jervis, Phylis Wilson, Wanda Mae Carter and Jo Ann Davis were named executors of the estate of the late Doris M. Washington.

Kenneth L. Flora and Karen S. Mohler were named executors of the estate of the late Evan L. Flora.

Marriage Licenses

C.J. Dwayne Hart, 20, and Ashlie Marie Caldwell, 19, both of Delphi.

Donald Austin Rhine, 26, of Chalmers, and Aundrea Lynn Ferguson, 26, of Flora.

Robert Earl Bogan, 47, and Megan Anne McKinney, 30, both of Monticello.

Steven Todd Hartman, 37, and Kellie Sue Lee, 31, both of Delphi.

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.

Monday, March 31

√ Carroll County Council: 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 1

√ Carroll School Board: 7:30 p.m.

Public Notices appearing in this issue of the Comet:

Comm-Planned Improv.....4B
DCSC-Bonds Prelim 4B
Corwin Estate.....4B
TLSC-Inv To Bid.....4B
Sheriff Sale-Cox 4B
Washington Estate.....4B
Delphi-Mtg Notice 3B
Livestock Eng-Filburn 3B
Livestock Eng-Jones.....4B
IDEM-Overholser.....4B
Summone-Holsinger.....3B
Summons-Sutter.....3B
Hwy Dept. Bidders 3B
Sheriff Sale-Teel.....3B
CCSC-Bidders 3B
CC Redev. Auth 3B
Jervis Estate.....4B
Camden-Jackson Twp Lib ...3B

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.

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.

Urges togetherness and positivity

Upon reading the minutes of last week's Carroll County Council meeting, I have to ask: Did those of you in attendance that night honestly go to the table with a positive frame of mind, intent on working together to find a solution? The reason I ask is because it certainly didn't read as though you did.

It is clear that this county is in need of some viable answers to its current state of affairs. Coming together to finger-point, blame and name call is not only a waste of useful energy, but time as well.

Approaching this with negative attitudes will not bring about good, productive results. It's like being in a dark room and searching for the way out. It's a lot easier to find the door if you turn on the light.

Sandra Prendergast's letter of last week, in my opinion brought light to a dark situation. A change of attitude and a positive coming together of this community is a good start at bringing this county back to its feet.

Rita Johnson
Delphi

Supports increase in CEDIT

Indiana's long property tax binge is finally coming to an end, and we citizens of Carroll County are feeling the hangover. Recent developments show the gravity of our situation…the loss of one ambulance service and two sheriff's deputies are not insignificant; however, this is the cost of progress. Indiana, up until this year, has derived 33.9% of its revenue from property taxes compared to 26.8% nationally. Why is this a bad thing? Think about it for a moment…property taxes are regressive, meaning they are not based on the ability to pay. The exodus of manufacturing jobs from our state, coupled with the disastrous reassessment process has stretched lower and, especially, middle class Hoosier families to the limits financially. Yes, the time has come for Indiana's property tax addiction to subside.

On the other hand, county and municipal governments are faced with the arduous task of bridging the gap. In the short term, it's time to take a good look at ways to cut spending. Take, for example, Deer Creek Park…it is no longer in business as a campground, it never really did much to begin with. If there are private individuals willing to purchase it and release the county of this financial burden…so be it. In the long term, the only way to bring Carroll County out of the fiscal bind we are in is to spur economic development; this would help in two ways:

1. It would bring much needed jobs closer to home, potentially alleviating the cost of commuting to Lafayette or Logansport. This would also help other local businesses in the fact that if people are not traveling as frequently to these out-of-county cities, they are more likely to support local businesses in their purchases.

2. More jobs in Carroll County would spur people to move here, thereby broadening the tax and consumer base, resulting in more tax revenue…something sorely needed in a county whose population is virtually the same as it was in 1980.

The best way to do this is to bring the County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT) rate, currently at .1%, up to the proposed .25%. After doing the math, I discovered that this increase would cost me approximately 98 cents a week. This is a small price to pay for our future.

Finally, an admonition to the elected leaders of Carroll county…if you do increase the CEDIT rate, you must also accept the responsibility of investing this money wisely for the future of all residents; this means that we will not be impressed with more low-wage dairy farm and other agricultural jobs being touted as the fruits of our tax investments. If we are to make true progress, the jobs created must be good wage jobs with a future of growth, otherwise, the CEDIT increase will amount to little more than a Hoosier version of Nero fiddling while Rome burns.

Our future is in our hands, God blesses those who work; time punishes those who bicker and procrastinate. What will our legacy be?

Mike Freeman
Camden

Letters Cont'd. next page

Web poll

Tell us starting Wednesday at our web site, carrollcountycomet.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.

April Fool's Day is Tuesday. Will you be pulling any pranks?

Yes
No
Maybe

Last Weeks results

Do you think Delphi should support two art shows to compensate for the scaled down Jack Sanders Show?

26% Yes. If it takes two shows to showcase everything that was in the show before, so be it.
74% No. The school should determine how big and what to showcase in the show and Tri Kappa should again lend support.
Total responses: 61