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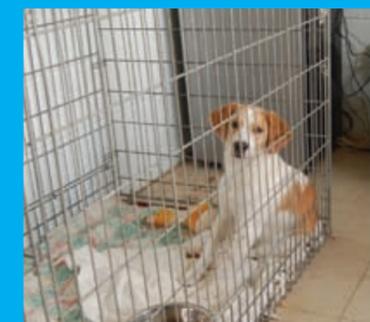


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Supplement to The News Times March 31, 2008



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Tiger Cubs from Hartford City Scout Pack #500 visited the Hartford City Fire Department and learned about safety, tried on gear and checked out the pole.



Front left to right: Jim Elliott and Josh Cutshaw
Back left to right: Dave Hamilton, Mike Bailey and Kelly Gentis

Hartford City Fire Department gets grants, new fire truck and new chief

By Tami Roach
NT Education Editor
newstimes@insightbb.com

Grants have allowed the Hartford City Fire Department to update equipment during the past year.

The department has received grants from the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation for various operations and safety equipment and new pagers. It received \$4,000 that paid for

pagers that alert firefighters of calls and addresses of fires.

Also received from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency was an award of \$59,003 for the purpose replacing turnout gear.

New Fire Chief Bret Murray credited receipt of the grants to the former chief, Ron Parrott. "These grants were possible through the efforts and on behalf of former Chief Parrott. He is

the one who did the paperwork and filed for the grant. Due to his efforts these grants were made possible," stated Chief Murray.

A new fire truck also was purchased in 2007 through the combined efforts of all township trustees including Licking, Jackson, Washington, and Shamrock Lakes townships and the Hartford City Volunteer Fire Department. Everyone paid a percentage of the \$200,000 cost of the new 2007 tanker.

The new truck will carry 3,000 gallons of water and pumps 750 gallons of water per minute. The 1973 tanker pumped only 500 gallons of water per minute.

According to Parrott, "The biggest benefit of replacing the old truck, that had over 250,000 miles on it, is a safety issue. The new truck is a lot more dependable, a lot safer to drive to the scene of a fire, and will ensure continued fire protection for the community and the firefighters."

The Hartford City Fire Department does many things to help the community including the Christmas Toy Drive, collecting for "Jerry's Kids" for MDA, and visiting the area schools with fire prevention programs and tips.



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Pastor Don Paden

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Attic Window employees were presented a check by members of the Trinity United Methodist Church (from the left) Dewight Rea, Pastor Phil Abram, Gene Woolard, Tim Robison, Connie Parker, Mary Robison, Marie Williams, Mel Sicks, Dick Smith, Norm Farnum, and Johnny Amos.

Charity Auction proceeds help local residents

Members of the Trinity United Methodist Church presented Marie Williams, director of Family Services for the Muncie Mission, and Mel Sicks, Hartford City Attic Window store manager, with a check in the amount of 1,690.64 on Friday, Nov. 30. The money was 40 percent of the church's

proceeds from its Charity Auction. The funds will benefit Blackford County residents in need.

The Attic Window is sponsored by the Muncie Mission. Williams assesses residents' needs and disburses money or needed items. Trinity's Pastor, Phil Abram, said, "We should do what we can to take

care of our own residents in need if possible.

"We thank God for the Attic Window and Muncie Mission who give away at least \$2,000 per month for people in need.

"Without them many people would go without any kind of help or assistance."

Dax Norton: A year of positive enthusiasm, energy and progress for Blackford County

By Dax Norton
*Executive Director
Blackford County Economic
Development Corporation*

I have been the Executive Director of the Blackford County Economic Development Corporation for one year now and what a year it has been!

I would call it the year of the rise of Enthusiasm and Energy for the industrial base, the citizens and the Economic Development Corporation of the county. 2007 was a very positive and progressive year for economic development in Blackford County.

Our existing industrial base was enthusiastic and energetic

with investment and expansion plans in 2007. Many of our major employers invested millions of dollars for equipment and facility upgrades and a few of our employers added jobs in 2007.

We are blessed to have a diverse and loyal industrial employer base in Blackford County and should be very grateful that these facilities have done what is necessary to grow and thrive in our current national economic situation.

Every county in the state of Indiana has issues and problems that need to be addressed and remedied. The citizens of Blackford County were enthu-

siastic, energetic and proactive in 2007 and joined existing or formed new groups to solve some of the community's problems. We should all be grateful to those citizens who sacrificed their time in 2007 and joined 4 Blackford County, One Book, the Leadership Academy, Blackford County Beautification Committee, Blackford County Demolition Coalition, United Way and the many other groups that helped support the long term vision for the growth and well being of the community.

The Blackford County Economic Development Corporation would not be successful without the assistance

of the industrial base, citizens and local elected officials. 2007 was the year that the corporation became enthusiastic and energetic about creating a long term and sustainable economic strategy for Blackford County.

I am excited about the prospects for economic progress in 2008 and beyond in Blackford County. The Energy and Enthusiasm that grew stronger in 2007 will assist all of us as we work to ensure that Blackford County remains strong during these tough economic times. I believe that Energy and Enthusiasm will give us a competitive advantage over other areas of our state and nation and we should all work



Dax Norton

hard to ensure that all of our progressive and proactive efforts are sustained and continue to grow. *Let's Grow!*

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Central States announces plans for \$170 million expansion

A \$170 million dollar expansion which will create 35 permanent jobs and 200 temporary construction jobs for up to two years, was announced by Central States Enterprises, Montpelier, on March 3.

The 35 new jobs will have an average wage between \$13 and \$18 per hour, depending on skill level, according to Greg Roy, general manager of Central States Enterprises.

The company is hoping to complete a major expansion which could include an ethanol plant. However, the plans have been modified from plans originally announced about a year ago.

"The original plan has been modified because if we do build this plan, the energy source will be a bio-mass boiler which burns corn stalks, tree trimmings and wood chips. Because of the change in energy we are going to use, it requires another four acres to house all the chips," he said.

The expansion is multiple projects, according to Dax Norton, executive director of Blackford

County Economic Development Corp. "Nothing is set 100 percent in stone," he advised. "They have a lot of things on their plate."

At this point, the company is asking for a rail expansion in order to get more product into the current facility, Norton said. The projects could include everything from possible bio-fuels to more grain storage. "They are trying to get ready for future expansion," he noted.

The use of bio-mass will allow the company to provide its own electricity with waste products.

The expansion plans also could be helpful in luring new companies to the industrial park, not only in spin off effects from seeing major investment across the street but also in possibly supplying electricity, Norton noted.

The projected investment, said Roy, will be about six times what is in the plant currently. In addition, the plant is paying about \$200,000 in property taxes, he said.

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Hartford City Revitalization Program focuses on downtown historic district

By Ted Leas
Hartford City Revitalization Program officer

The members of the board of the Hartford City Revitalization Program are concentrating on efforts to improve the appearance of the downtown historic district. Over the past two years, our group has purchased banners, flower containers, park benches and trash receptacles to help give a uniform look to the district.

Current plans include the purchase of an additional set of banners for the spring and the planting of flowers.

Our group is also working to

provide community events to bring people into the downtown district for social gatherings. Events planned are the Car and Motorcycle Show on May 10. We will also start up our annual Farmer's Market on the east side of the square beginning on May 16. In the late fall, we will again sponsor the Halloween parade for the children of our community. In December we will host a community Christmas celebration for all to enjoy.

We have been able to obtain an official Historic District designation for a large part of the downtown area, which will allow building owners to receive tax credits

for improvements made to many buildings within the district.

We are currently in communication with the Center for Historic Preservation to seek ideas for helping our local business/building owners with façade improvement plans.

We have been a close partner with the City of Hartford City and will continue to do all we can to improve the appearance of our overall community.

Anyone interested in helping with this effort is encouraged to contact one of the current officers, including Bill McGriff, Rob Sisson, Brenda McAtee, or Ted Leas.

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Blackford Greenway taking a different track

A change in the availability of the abandoned railroad track through Blackford County has caused the Blackford Greenway group to re-think future options. The railroad company has taken their right-of-way off the table, so what began as a rails-

to-trails effort in 2004 will now take a different track. The board began to meet again in August 2007 after some downtime.

Since then, the group has stenciled about a 10-mile bike path onto county roads between Hartford City and Montpelier. Signs

have been ordered and will be installed this spring.

After hearing from several consultants and engineers recently, the board has decided not to seek federal funding but instead will try to raise about \$200,000 locally for a safe asphalt path between Hartford City and the high school. The path would be available to walkers, runners and bicyclists.

According to board president Fred Hoffman, three property owners have agreed to sell or lease property for Phase 1, which is the high school route. Future options will look at two possible projects on the southeast and southwest areas of Hartford City. A gravel path from Fireman's Park in Montpelier also is in the works.

Greenway board members are selling memberships and looking at other ways to raise money.

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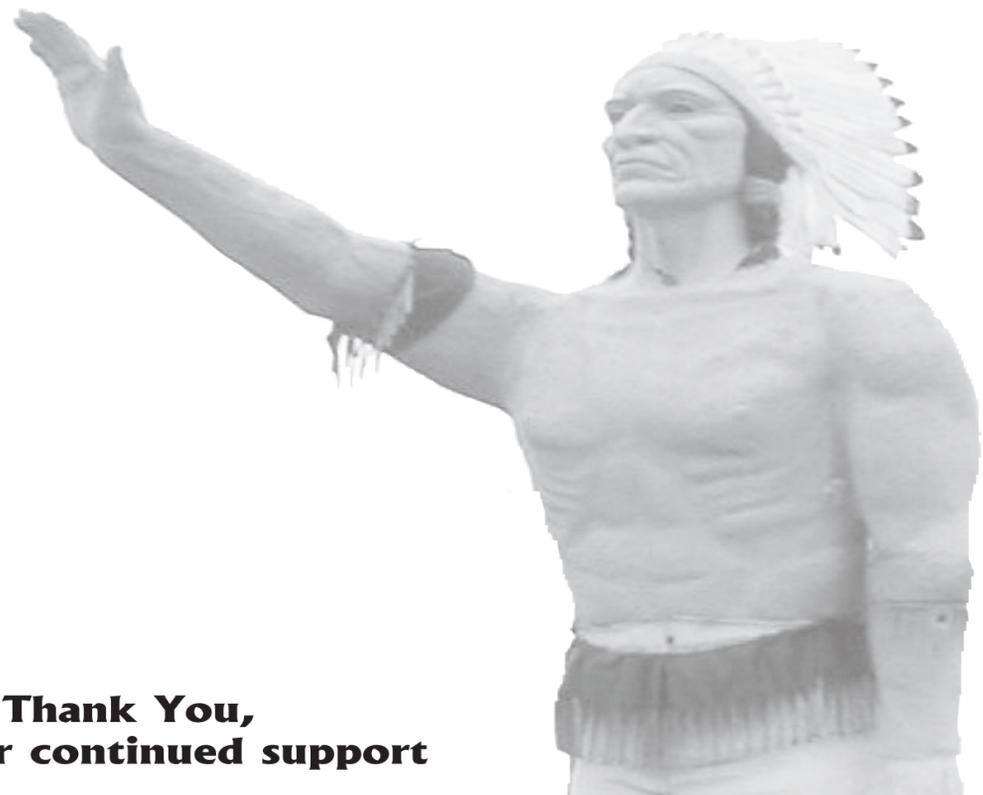
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Sheriff's office continues youth programs, cooperative effort among county's units

By John A. Lancaster
Blackford County Sheriff

At the Blackford County Sheriff's Office we strive to develop and enhance the safety for the citizens our county, "Working Together To Protect Our Future."

In the past year we have continued programs for our youth. These programs include the D.A.R.E. program implemented in the school system. The Blackford County Sheriff's Office, Hartford City and Montpelier Police Departments continue to provide youths the opportunity to participate in our Law Enforcement Camp, where the camper is shown many

aspects of the local, state and federal law enforcement careers.

A cooperative effort between the county's law enforcement agencies in August 2007 held the first Annual D.A.R.E. Fair. The Haunted Woods continues annually; both of these D.A.R.E. events have proven to be very popular and are continued. They are fund raisers for the D.A.R.E. program.

TRIAD and Project Lifesaver (first in the state) are two of our programs that continue to be supported in our county. These programs serve our seniors and special needs community.

In conjunction with the school system, we continue to have the Tip Line program. This program



Sheriff John Lancaster

The Tip Line, 765-348-4400, is answered by our dispatchers and the information received is directed to the proper agency.

In conjunction with Hazardous Waste Day, the Sheriff's Office

allows individuals to report any activity they believe is a cause for concern. The Sex Offender Watch System in our county has also recently been implemented. This system provides information more readily to Blackford County citizens when offenders are living in their area. To view the Sex Offender Watch System go to the county's web site at www.blackfordcounty.com. This

and other county law enforcement agencies will collect expired and unused prescription and non-prescription drugs at the advertised drop off locations. These projects, at various locations in our community, allow residents to bring in their expired and unused medications. This aids in the proper disposal of the medications.

The Neighbor Watch Program is being launched in the Shamrock Lakes, Mohee, Millgrove and Roll areas of Blackford County.

The Blackford County Sheriff's Office conducts public speaking events for various church groups, school functions and other service organizations within Blackford County.

In closing, I would like to thank the citizens of Blackford County for the dedication you have to our county. None of these programs would be possible without everyone WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE, in Blackford County.

Working Together to Protect Our Future

- COMMUNITY POLICING EFFORTS CONTINUED
- A TRIAD PROGRAM WHICH NETWORKS LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SENIOR CITIZENS TO REDUCE VICTIMIZATION
- CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO BLACKFORD COUNTY YOUTHS AND SCHOOLS
- RELENTLESSNESS PURSUIT OF A DRUG-FREE COUNTY
- ALL PATROL VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS
- D.A.R.E
- PROJECT LIFESAVER



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Lieutenant - Jeff C. Sones	Dispatch - Julie Rourke
Corporal - Glenn A. Oliver	Reserve Rd - Al Johnson
Deputy - Travis Laurence	Reserve Rd - Aaron Thompson
Deputy - Jonathan Jinks	Reserve Rd - Chad Blakely
Deputy - Tony Scaggs	Reserve Rd - Scott Blakely
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Jailer - James Heflin	PT Dispatch - Ron Kreischer
Jailer - Nick Parrott	PT Dispatcher - Scott Craig
Jailer - Tyler Hunt	Intern - Ethan Cox
Jailer - Brian Lee Cansler	Administrative - Deanna Hammond
Chief Dispatcher - Susan Rourke	Program Coord. - Melissa Lancaste
Assistant Dispatcher - Kevin Conley	Kitchen - Gloria Mahan
Dispatcher - Laura Riggs	Maintenance - Gene Henderson



Jeffrey A. Keplinger
Chief Deputy

Rex A. White
Jail Sergeant

Susan Rourke
Chief Dispatcher



Deanna Hammond
Administrative Assistant

Office of The Sheriff of Blackford County
John A. Lancaster Sheriff

EMERGENCY 911 AND SCHOOL TIP LINE 765-348-4400



Blackford County Schools

One County, One School, One Spirit

Bright, shiny, 'protected' smiles will be provided to Blackford County Schools students as part of the Seal Indiana program.

Students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade will have the opportunity to participate in the innovative wellness program offered by BCS in a partnership with the Indiana University School of Dentistry. Dental clinics will set up at Southside Elementary on April 15, Northside Elementary School on April 16, and at Montpelier School on April 17.

Treatment will include comprehensive dental examinations, dental sealants, and fluoride varnish treatment. Children will also receive a toothbrush and brushing instructions.

A dental sealant is a plastic material applied to the chewing surface of back teeth where decay occurs most often. Sealants protect teeth from plaque and acid that causes decay. The treatment is comfortable and no anesthetic is required. The fluoride varnish treatment provides added protection against decay for all teeth.

Parent permission forms will be sent home with students. For families with Medicaid/Hoosier Healthwise, the entire cost of the preventative dental treatment is covered. A sliding fee scale, based on family income,

and a cap on services is available for those without insurance. "However, no child will be refused care, and grants are available for families unable to pay," explains Dr. Karen M. Yoder, Seal Indiana program director. For information about grants, please call Mrs. Tonia Mahan, school nurse for Blackford County Schools, 348-7560 ext. 2126; or Seal Indiana 317-278-0750.

"Good dental health is an important part of our wellness program," explained Dr. Jerry Chabot, superintendent of Blackford County Schools. "I hope students and parents will take advantage of this program."

The Seal Indiana program is staffed by faculty and staff from the Indiana University School of Dentistry, assisted by senior dental students who serve as clinicians and also provide dental education in the classrooms. Since its inception in March 2003, Seal Indian has provided care to over 14,000 children and placed over 21000 sealants at more than 500 Indiana schools, Head Starts, community health centers, and shelters for the homeless and victims of domestic violence.



Indiana University School of Dentistry Mobile Dental Sealant Program

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"Yes, I'm a nurse, but I'm a mom first."

Brenda Benter, mom, RN

My daughter was recently hospitalized at Bluffton Regional. Courtney has stayed at several other hospitals, but the experience at Bluffton Regional surpassed any of the others. The staff always made us feel like we were the only family in the unit. Their positive attitude and compassion made such a difference.

While I am greatly pleased at the level of care given to my daughter, I am not surprised by it. You see, I am a nurse at Bluffton Regional. And every day I strive to make sure that I treat patients and their families the same way my family was treated. My philosophy as a caregiver is to provide quality, compassionate care to every patient I encounter. And as a mom, that's exactly how I want my family to be treated.

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Facelift

Bil's Foods, Hartford City, got a new paint job last fall. Tim Morris (pictured at right) is an independent contractor who did the work on the grocery store.

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Helping Hands grew out of one person's need for clothes

By Charles Stepp
NT Correspondent

Like many new businesses or inventions or agencies, it began with a need; the perception of a need. In this case, Bev Rathburn knew a person who needed clothes. She organized the people of her church (Olive Branch Church on Old 22 in Blackford County) and they collected gently used clothes to help the person in need.

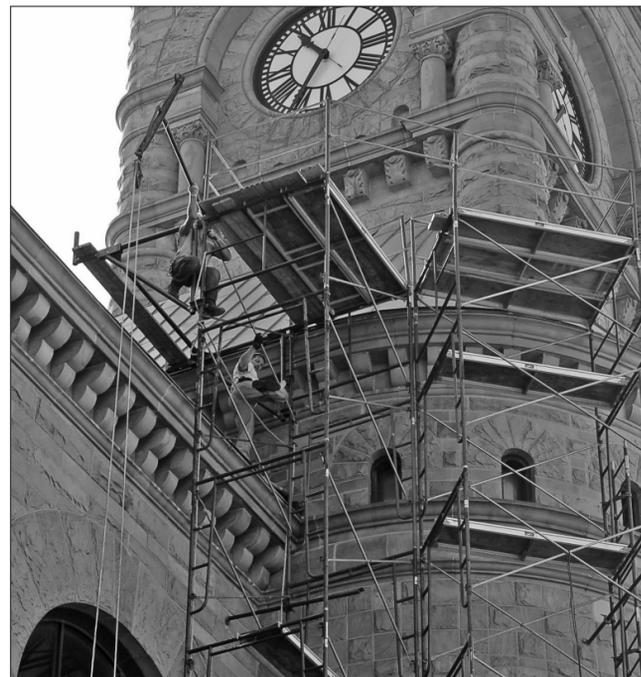
And after they helped that person they gathered more clothes and helped more people and so Helping Hands Clothing Ministry was born.

Since those humble beginnings the ministry outgrew the church and moved into the old license branch in Montpelier. Before long it outgrew that location. It has since moved into the big, white house at 132 East Huntington St., where it can be found today, serving the people of Blackford County and beyond.

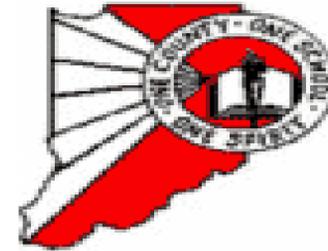
Helping Hands is run by a group of dedicated volunteers who sort through the clothes and separate them by size and gender before hanging them up for display to give away. There's no charge for anything in the store and it is open for anyone to use.

Of course, there are bills to be paid. To cover rent and utilities Helping Hands accepts donations from patrons and businesses. There are weekly and monthly sponsors in the community who make it their mission to see that the work of Helping Hands goes on. Occasionally, if there are extra donations, volunteers will go to department store sales and purchase new items to add to their ever changing inventory.

The Helping Hands Center is open Tuesday 1- 3 p.m., Thursday 6-8 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to noon.



In addition to energy saving projects and remodeling of courtroom facilities, work at the courthouse included repairs on the roof during the past year.



Blackford County Schools

One County, One School, One Spirit

Bio of Ben Mikaelson



Author Ben Mikaelson is winner of the International Reading Association Award and the Western Writer's Golden Spur Award. His novels have been nominated to and have won many State Readers Choice awards.

These novels include *Rescue Josh McGuire*, *Sparrow Hawk Red*, *Stranded Countdown*, *Petey*, *Touching Spirit Bear*, *Red Midnight*, *Tree Girl* and *Ghost of Spirit Bear*. His novels *Rescue Josh McGuire*, *Petey*, and *Touching Spirit Bear* have been optioned for screen production.

Ben's articles and photos appear in numerous magazines around the world. He has also been featured on national TV with Jack Hanna's "Animal Adventures."

Ben is known for his in-depth research and the magical world he creates. His research has included flying to the North Pole, going undercover with narcotics agents, living with the homeless in Mexico and the Massai in Africa, riding a horse across the United States from Minnesota to Oregon, boating the length of the Mississippi River, driving overland from Montana to the tip of South America (the Terra Del Fuego), over 1000 parachute jumps and racing sled dogs in northern Minnesota.

Blackford County Schools welcomes award-winning author Ben Mikaelson for a visit as part of the One Book, One Community literacy program.

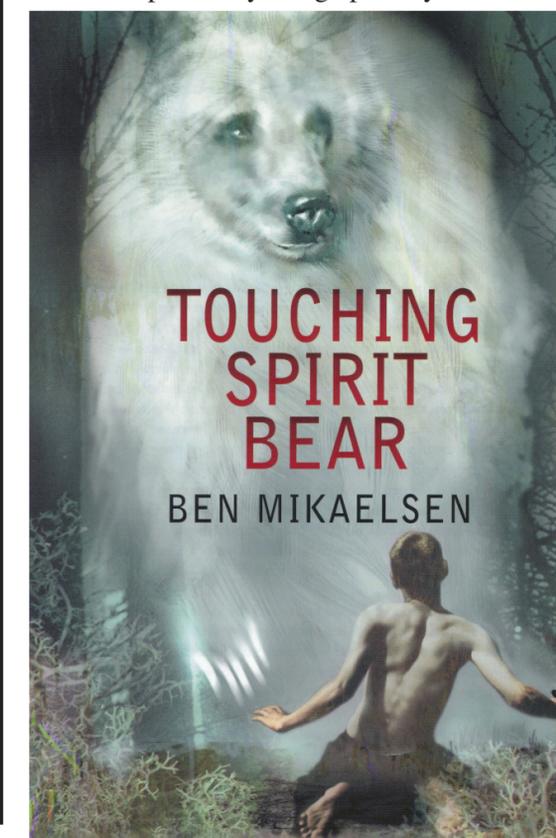
Mikaelson, the author of *Touching Spirit Bear*, will discuss his book during special seminars at each of the Blackford County schools April 28, 29, 30, and May 1, along with a community presentation on April 30 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Placid Conference Center.

Touching Spirit Bear is a coming-of-age story about a juvenile delinquent's metamorphosis into a caring, thinking individual.

Mikaelson will discuss *Touching Spirit Bear*, along with other age-appropriate topics, during his seminars in Blackford County Schools. During the programs, geared for students in grades 5-12, Mikaelson will touch on subjects such as "How to Tell Your Own Story," "Writing is Storytelling," and "Becoming the Author of Your Own Life."

Mikaelson, who describes himself as having terrible problems with English, spelling, and grammar as a youngster, encourages students through his seminar to work on the mechanics of writing and understand that "writing is storytelling!"

As part of the One Book, One Community program, over 1500 copies of *Touching Spirit Bear* will be provided to students in grades 5-12 in Blackford County Schools. After Mikaelson's presentations, students will have the opportunity to have their book personally autographed by the author.



"Ben will visit all of our schools and share his love of writing and reading. I hope our students, teachers, and parents enjoy his presentation," says Dr. Jerry Chabot, Superintendent of Blackford County Schools and a member of the One Book, One Community committee.

Funding for Mikaelson's visit and the *Touching Spirit Bear* book distribution has been made possible through an \$18,000 grant from the 4-Blackford County Community Initiative to encourage literacy in Blackford County.

Last year, best-selling author John Grogan visited Blackford County Schools to discuss his novel *Marley and Me*.



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Superintendent reviews progress, future challenges for Blackford County Schools

By Dr. Jerry Chabot
Superintendent
Blackford County Schools

Blackford County Schools has experienced progress and success in a host of areas over the past six years. However, there are still many challenges in providing quality education for our community.

Our language arts ISTEP scores have grown 11 percent over the past six years, exceeding the growth rate by the state of Indiana. We realize work still needs to be accomplished in the area of language arts. The critical area of third grade reading scores is the baseline for future success of our students.

We have also experienced success in the area of math instruction. Our growth rate has been 14 percent over the last six years compared with the state rate of 8 percent. In several grade levels, we exceed the state pass rate in the area of math.

Primary education has been a major focus over the last six years. Through our partnership with Head Start, the program is on campus at both Southside and Montpelier. In addition, we

are in our third year of implementation of the full-day kindergarten model. Our teachers are implementing the best practice of Four Blocks literacy.

The ever-changing area of technology is evident in Blackford County Schools. Parents have access to grades, attendance, and other data through the Internet and our K-12 Planet platform. Blackford High School teachers are utilizing Smart Board technology in a host of classrooms, while a distance learning lab housed at Blackford High School offers a variety of educational experiences for students in elementary and middle school.

Recently, we have improved facilities at Blackford High School by a partial renovation of the building in the areas of science, library, locker rooms, cafeteria, pool, and JROTC.

During these difficult financial times, we have been prudent with providing cash balances in all of our funds in a time of state cuts and local tax revenue delays.

Our teachers are focusing on student growth through the utilization of two new assessment

measures. The NWEA grade-level assessments help teachers monitor student growth, along with recently-developed 10 question quizzes administered at the end of the each grade period.

Curriculum guides, aligned with the state standards and benchmarks, have been developed in all subject areas. These have been refined into curriculum maps for each grading period.

Innovative programs at Blackford High School have been developed. Project Lead the Way provides engineering skills for our students. The JROTC program provides leadership, citizenship, and teamwork experiences for our students.

Finally, we are in our first year in an agriculture cooperative, where our students can attend an agriculture class at a partner high school.

It is important for our students' overall health that we implement our approved wellness policy in emphasizing exercise and nutrition. A state-of-the-art modern fitness center was recently completed at Blackford High School.

We appreciate the hard work of our teaching staff and the collaborative relationship that we enjoy with our teachers' organization as we work through a variety of discussion topics and master contract language. Teachers have grown in their knowledge and understanding of our students, parents, and community through our corporation-wide Ruby Payne Understanding Poverty staff development model. Teachers have also gained skills in Six Traits Writing, non-violent crisis intervention, and ethical absolutes.

Evaluation systems have been developed for administrators, teachers and classified staff.

Most of our school buildings have extensive extra-curricular activities. Recently, we have



Dr. Gerald Chabot, superintendent

encouraged academic team competitions in all schools.

The board of education has taken steps in the area of leadership. John Payne, president of the board of education, is an Indiana School Boards Association state leader. New school board members are provided with training and orientation materials. The board of education has developed a strategic plan with goal action plans for our administrative staff.

Part of our school curriculum is in the area of fine arts. We have been very pleased with our award-winning high school drama department and its annual presentations of quality entertainment. Complementing this is our Artist in Residence program, in which recognized, professional artists have visited Blackford County Schools.

We recognize the importance of community through a number of valuable partnerships. The YMCA offers after-school programming. Kids Hope USA provides mentoring and tutoring for elementary students. We have cooperated with the

One Book, One Community literacy program for our county. Imagination Library provides developmentally sound books to pre-school students in Blackford County. In addition, we have provided extensive counseling services with Meridian Services. Blackford County Schools also hosts the Blackford County Leadership Academy.

Students, teachers, and parents can be proud of the overall accomplishments in this last six years, but need to be aware there are pending challenges for our school corporation in the future.

First, we need to continue to grow in the area of literacy and language arts across all grade levels.

Second, we must work to improve our high school graduation rate, insuring that all students leave their high school experience with the probability of success.

Finally, our school and community needs to address the challenge of teen pregnancy. With community focus and support, these challenges can be met.



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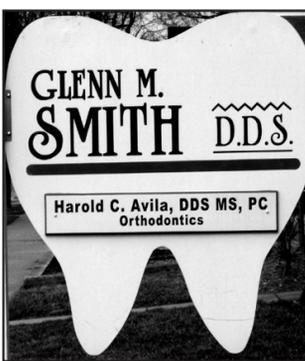


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Hartford City becomes corporate home to new broadband services company

By Tami Roach
NT Education Editor
newstimes@insightbb.com

Cue Connex, LLC moved its corporate headquarters to Hartford City in 2007 and has named Hartford City native Laurie Byall as the Chief Executive Officer. Cue Connex is partnering with municipalities to bring broadband services to rural communities throughout the Midwest.

The company has made presentations across Indiana and expanded into Ohio in this year. Access to high-speed broadband means the community is connected to all the information and communications technology the world has to offer.

Byall said she got involved with Cue Connex because it is "taking Hartford City and all of Blackford County back to the way it used to be by building forward to where it needs to be."

The company is proposing to use the latest fiber and wireless broadband technology, basic municipal services such as law enforcement, fire and ambulance services are empowered with mobile live video feeds and quick access to critical, real-time data. Automatic meter reading for water and electric meters will help bring safety, conservation and cost savings to the local utility company. The need to protect local water sources through remote video and sensor network becomes a reality through the Cue Network infrastructure.

Businesses, hospitals, schools and homes in the community would have access to always-on, high speed internet connectivity, too. Wireless broadband will deliver Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) advanced telephone service and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) would give the community choices.

President of Cue Connex, David Weddell, commented,

"Television, internet and telephone services all over a quality carrier-class network infrastructure is the future of communications."

Weddell is originally from North Judson. He started in the wireless industry in Tampa, Fla. in 1996 with GTE Wireless,

which is now Verizon. Weddell also stated, "I would like to find some way of honoring Sen. David Ford for his encouragement of technology in Blackford County and the entire state of Indiana."

The business model of Cue Connex will bring jobs and

opportunity to Blackford as well as a positive economic impact to local government through a public/private partnership, he said.

Cue Connex will open a retail location to provide a variety of communication services such as cellular telephone, computers and the accessories to take care

of local residents' communication needs. Cue Connex looks forward to a bright future with its home in Hartford City.

For more information contact the company at info@cueconnex.com, at www.cueconnex.com or at 877-645-7983. "Take your Cue.....get connected."

Citizens form Tri-County Helping Hands



Tri-County Helping Hands is a group of caring community members who reach out to those in need in Blackford, Jay and Wells counties, including (from the left) Karen Hartman, Martha Weaver, Jim and Donna Davis, Judy Padgett and Aleena Davis.

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4Blackford County group sets up committees to improve appearance of Blackford County

By Don Goetz
4 Blackford County

4 Blackford County developed action plans in early 2006 to improve the quality of life in the county. Two important parts of that plan involved an "Image and Beautification" committee and a "Community Development" committee. Included in the latter committee was the responsibility to provide a Leadership Academy to train new community leaders.

One section of the Image and Beautification action plan was to identify property that was not well maintained and created eyesores throughout the county.

A sub committee identified eyesores along the entrances to

the county, to Montpelier, to Hartford City, and in the downtown areas in both cities.

The owners were determined and photos were taken to provide a record of the properties. The owners of deficient properties were notified and requested to provide an action plan for improvement.

Some owners responded positively. Improvements included repainting the exterior wall of a building in Hartford City, re-roofing and re-siding an old church on SR 26, and replacing a broken glass façade on a Hartford City building.

In an overall highway/sidewalk improvement project in Hartford City, crumbling sidewalks around the county

courthouse were replaced. In Montpelier merchants created a new mural in the downtown area to enhance its unique character.

Concurrent with these efforts, the first Leadership Academy participants were challenged to define projects and act on them. The winning project involved convincing owners of unusable, undesirable buildings to demolish them. The project leaders were successful in having two old houses demolished by the owner.

The Image sub-committee and the project participants combined to form the Blackford Demolition Coalition. Ridding the county of blighted property continues to be the coalition goal. The committee works

cooperatively towards this goal with the property owners, city officials, county officials and other groups within 4 Blackford County.

There has been considerable progress in the last 12 months in razing unusable property. There have been at least six residences and two commercial structures either demolished or in the process of being demolished.

Also, through the cooperation of Hartford City, two properties were purchased and the buildings on them will be demolished in 2008. There are ten properties that involve blighted structures targeted for action through cooperation of the county and the city. Another 12 properties with structures that need to be

demolished have been identified. The Coalition has received much support from the "Hartford City News-Times" in publicizing their goals and plans. Through this cooperative effort, we sense that more and more residents are becoming aware of the need to eliminate blight. The enthusiasm to demolish or renovate is growing and progress should increase year by year.

The success of this group has been possible because the citizens of the county are determined to make the community a more desirable place to live. This involves the owners of property, the county residents, and the governing bodies of Blackford County, Montpelier, and Hartford City.

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Hartford City sees gradual progress

By Robyn Rogers
NT Managing Editor

The past 12 months have seen progress, but not without some problems, in Hartford City. In a year with one late tax draw, times have been tough. Problems the mayor had hoped could be addressed were pushed forward on the calendar.

Real progress was obvious, however, when volunteers stepped forward. Greg Bonewit, deputy chief of the police department, volunteered to write grants. Others on the force volunteered to paint police cars. From the community, dozens of volunteers gave up their weekends to do some cleaning up. One of those volunteers, Justin George, was seated on the Hartford City Council, as were two more community-minded residents, Bill Hess and Jimmy Lytle.

In November, besides bringing new blood to the council, voters decided Mayor Dennis Whitesell should progress with his plans and programs. He was returned for a second term. And though the mayor expects a year much like last in terms of budgeting and tax draws, he sees more progress on the horizon.

"One of the things I think is crucial to understand is that our problems are not just local to Hartford City," Whitesell said recently. "They are the same problems all of east central Indiana is having."

Pothole-laden streets and alleys that are worse may not go away anytime soon. Streets that need re-paved probably won't be, with the exception of the state's SR 26 widening project slated for this year.

Another big project that's been on the back burner is the separation of storm and sanitary sewers. Though the city has been talking with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management about elimination of combined sewer overflow (CSO) problems, not a lot of progress has been made. Whitesell's hope is that the city can identify some matching dollars yet this year.

Yet preventing that kind of pollution (the kind that happens almost every time it rains) will require millions of dollars in capital investment.

"We're trying to be proactive, and looking at identifying a project this year," Whitesell said. He added that Hartford City is positioned to be very competitive for grant dollars because of the high number of CSOs. (There are 17.)

The mayor said he will sit down with Waine Ritenour and the city's engineering firm in this spring to begin identifying a project.

Whitesell had praise also for the water department, which has been putting measures in place to help prevent water main breaks. The city replaced a main west of town from Wabash Avenue to the city limits two years ago that has helped a lot.

"We got McDonald Street

paved; that was progress," Whitesell said.

Not everything wrong in the city requires money to fix. Citizens can help by doing simple things, like picking up litter or placing their own gravel in potholes in their alley.

"I'm convinced that attitudes are changing. Deterioration is stopping and we're now seeing progress," Whitesell said.

People have already expressed interest in the lot on the Courthouse Square that will be vacant once demolition of the old Spurgeon's building is complete.

The mayor lauded the downtown revitalization group and said he hopes to begin looking at the parking situation there in the coming months.

"Local government is getting to be more and more of getting creative with financing," Mayor Whitesell said.

Montpelier industrial park offering Shovel Ready status

By Charles Stepp
NT Correspondent

Baldwin Industrial Park sits on 55 acres of land at the corner of County Road 400 East and State Road 18 on Montpelier's west side. Completed in June 2007, the park sits waiting for a tenant with the promise of jobs and growth for the city. Just 14 miles east of Interstate 69 and 35 miles west of Interstate 75, Montpelier has planned well and built an attractive site.

Montpelier Mayor Jim

McPherson explains the park is considered "Shovel Ready."

That means environmental studies have been completed and require no further action. Electric, water, sewer and storm drain utilities have been extended to the site and the gas company has agreed to extend its line to the park once we have a tenant. "This puts all state and local permits on a fast track and will shave months off that process." The Indiana Shovel Ready program is administered by the Indiana

Finance Authority, which certifies sites in Indiana as ready for development.

However, the industrial park has one of 36 Shovel Ready sites in the state with 19 more to come on-line in the near future so the competition with other communities is fierce. In addition, the state's designation of the I-69 Corridor through nearby Madison and Grant counties draws attention away from Montpelier's site, offering companies state guaranteed tax breaks to build along the corridor.

There has been discussion regarding the need to construct a shell building on site as a means to lure prospective tenants to the park. At the February City Council meeting Blackford County Economic Development Corporation Director Dax Norton noted that in his view "it is incredibly important to get a shell building out there." He advocated a 50,000 square foot building on the parcel closest to State Road 18 as a means to make the site even more attractive.

Funding for such a building is problematic as neither the city nor the county have the funds in their budgets to cover construction costs. The last time the city erected a shell building it took almost 10 years to find a tenant (Smith Consulting). However, there is no denying having a building would draw more interest in the park and Norton told the council work on trying to find a way to get a shell building up would be his No 1 task this year.

In the meantime there has been and continues to be interest in the site from various companies. The projected expansion of the Central States Enterprises facility across the road to the east brings the hope that it could have synergies that would make the industrial park more attractive. "If we can get one building there will be more to follow," said Mayor McPherson.

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Tony King started in the trade at age 14, now owns business

By Charles Stepp
NT Correspondent

When Tony King got a job at age 14 he had no idea that 28 years later he'd be in the same business. And as fate, hard work, and determination would have it, today he's the owner of King Williams Supermarket at 118 E. High St. in Montpelier.

At 14 Tony was hired by Buck and Virgil Ledbetter to work in their slaughterhouse and learn the meat cutting trade. Soon he was working at their grocery and meat locker plus operating their smokehouse in Gaston. He was gaining valuable experience but the Ledbetter's decided it was time to close the business. That's when fate stepped in.

The Blizzard of 1978 shut down the city. Streets and roads were closed. People couldn't get out to get food and supplies and they needed help. However, military vehicles from the armory in Hartford City were available and Tony was among the volunteers who jumped in to help. Using the armory's trucks plus local snowmobiles Tony delivered supplies from Williams Super Valu Grocery to those who could not get out.

Within a short time he had a second job - working for the Williams' grocery. He worked for both Ledbetter's and Williams until Ledbetter's closed and then worked full time for the Williams' family until one day he got the opportunity to purchase the business.

Today the King Williams Supermarket features a full service meat locker in addition to groceries and related goods.

In addition, the market

features a smoke room that can handle up to five hundred pounds of meat at a time. The smoke room produces meats for the supermarket plus individual customers.

"We'll smoke anything anybody brings us," says King. "So far this winter we've butchered and smoked hogs, cows, elk, antelope, and goats." Besides the standard cuts of meat the store also produces its own bratwurst and Canadian bacon and supplies meat and groceries to area restaurants and vendors plus some stores outside the city.

Of course, King's business is subject to the whims of the economy. However, he hasn't

put all his eggs in one basket. In addition to the supermarket King notes that he has three other businesses.

He also manages the warehouse and moves equipment for Gripco Fasteners, operates King's Lawn Service which mows grass in the summer and plows snow in the winter, and has a tree trimming service.

And in his "spare time" he likes to build motors. With all this you'd think the owner of King Williams Supermarket wouldn't have much time to see his family but you'd be wrong. It's a family business and wife Michelle and son Chad work right along side him.

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Future plans include making community inviting to new businesses, retain old

By Doug Smith
BC2 Committee Chairman

This committee which was started about seven months ago has seen great progress in such a small amount of time. It's hard to imagine where we would be if it weren't for the faithful volunteers who put all of their efforts into what some might call an "Idealistic and Naive" endeavor. Our goal, although a challenge, is simply to make this county an inviting community to potential businesses, to retain current citizens and entice future residents to our hospitable and humble community.

As a committee consisting of about 15 members and many volunteers, we have compiled a short list of events and projects

we would like to tackle in the months to come. These are some of the projects we are looking forward to accomplishing.

1. **Curb Painting**-Yellow striping on the corners of all curbs.

2. **April 1st Trash Haul**- We will be working with residents of the community to help haul trash where it may be difficult for elderly or indigent residents to properly dispose of appliances or trash.

3. **Work with the Parks Dept.**- Helping to beautify and do landscaping. Help build the upcoming BMX bike course in the Lions Club Park.

4. **Continued Cleanup of the Railway Corridor**-The viaducts on Jefferson and Monroe Streets are being renovated to

open walking trails that lead to the Lions Club Park.

5. **Fundraising**- We will be selling ready-to-be-planted Blue Spruce and Noble Fir trees at many locations in conjunction with Arbor Day for \$7.00 which will be April 25th

6. **4-H Fair information Booth**- We will present at the 4-H fair merchants tent this year to promote beautification and to field questions or concerns from members of our community.

These are just a few of the projects on tap for this year. If you would like to make a suggestion or have a question, please feel free to write us at bc2committee@yahoo.com or call Chairman, Doug Smith at 348-8990

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Deb and Mitch Coffel have been owners of Coffel's Family Market since March of 1998.



The store has been located at 580 S. Main St., Montpelier, for approximately 35 years,



Thomas Spencer (above), an 82 year old retiree, cuts meat along with owner Mitch Coffel and Jim Cotrel.

Coffel's Family Market celebrates ten year mark

By Tami Roach
NT Education Editor
newstimes@insightbb.com

Deb and Mitch Coffel have been owners of Coffel's Family Market since March of 1998, making this March their ten year anniversary. They purchased the store, which has been located at 580 S. Main St., Montpelier, for approximately 35 years, from Bill Smith.

This store is truly the epitome of a family owned business. Deb's parents, Charles and Frances Gillenwater, help extensively at the store. Charles helps every day with unloading trucks, he does much of the produce section, and is a salad maker in the deli. Frances also helps three or four days a week with salads and works in the deli. She had to cut down her time helping after having hip surgery, but is involved

in her daughter's family business as much as she possible.

"We do special orders deli trays. We can mix and match trays however the customer wants them. We have no set prices on these trays because the customer can put whatever they want on the trays and the prices will vary with the size and the content," Deb said.

Coffel's employs 25 people, including three full-time workers and a varied number of part-time employees.

They cut their own meat and customer Sonny Carnes advises, "They have the best meat around and the best prices." Owner Mitch Coffel cuts meat along with Thomas Spencer, an 82 year old retiree from Scott's Grocery, and the newly hired Jim Cotrel, a butcher from the former Hank's Grocery in Marion.

"Tom can work circles around

Mitch," Deb noted.

This small town business not only caters to its hometown customers, it also helps keep people in their hometown working.

"I love doing this, but a family business can get overwhelming at times," said Deb. She does all the ordering, hiring, books and scheduling, just to name a few of her duties.

Starting at the end of April until mid-June Coffel's also will have a greenhouse offering everything for lawn and garden, including bulk seed, bedding plants, vegetables, flowers, hanging baskets and lawn and garden tools and accessories.

Deb stated, "It went over really well last year so we are going to offer these items again. I don't think anyone else in town really offers much in lawn and garden."

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- Paint strippers / thinner
- Adhesives
- Non-conforming chemical waste / unknowns (Bring information on past use, if possible.)
- Fuels / gasoline / kerosene (see below)
- Automotive fluids
- Oils and oil filters
- *Car wax / polishes
- *Solvents
- *Other toxic solids
- *Aerosols
- *Car / other batteries
- *Asbestos
- *Tires (4 auto, 2 truck, 2 farm - fees for extra tires)

From the yard:

- Pesticides / herbicides
- Fertilizers
- *Pool chemicals

Appliance:

- *Refrigerators / Freezers
- *Air conditioners
- *Dehumidifiers
- *Washers / dryers
- *Furnaces / water heaters
- *Dishwashers
- *Microwave ovens

From the House:

- Smoke detectors
- *Computers : monitors, CPUs, keyboards, printers
- *Photo chemicals
- *Fluorescent tubes PCB ballets
- *Household batteries
- *Acids and bases
- *Chlorine Bleach
- *Cleaning agents
- *Expired Medicine accepted

What Not To Bring

- *Trash
- *Radioactive waste
- *Propane tanks
- *Fire extinguishers
- *Biological hazards
- *Infectious waste
- *Bulky items, like furniture
- *Commercial waste
- *Industrial waste
- *Ammunition
- *Fireworks
- *Explosives
- *Televisions or entertainment electronics

**Blackford County High School
Blackford County Residents Only**

\$25 for TV's and Plug-in Appliances

Limits on Flammable liquids/pesticides/herbicides: up to 100 lbs are free, \$1 for each additional pound.
Limits on auto tires: more than 4, \$1.50/each, Truck tires: more than 2, \$2.50/each: tractor tires: more than 2, \$15/each extra.

For Questions - (765) 348-5011

Recyclables are accepted at the Blackford County Transfer Station Mon-Fri 8am-4pm

Blackford Community Hospital growing as valuable local asset

By Neil Gifford
Manager, PR/Marketing
Cardinal Health System

Blackford Community Hospital has been serving the community from its new facility for more than three years. One word can summarize the first three years for BCH in its new home.

Growth.

"We have seen growth in nearly every area of the hospital in terms of services provided," said Steve West, President and CEO, Blackford Community Hospital. "Support from Cardinal Health System has allowed us to expand the types of services we offer and to increase our capacity to serve in other areas where there was a demand."

One example of that growth can be found in the sleep lab.

The sleep lab opened at BCH in March of 2006. In the first six months, the sleep lab saw approximately 40 patients. Today the sleep lab has been opened at BCH for two years and in the last six months, more than 80 patients have been seen.

The sleep lab at BCH specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders. Patients typically are monitored throughout the evening with sensors that evaluate 16 different body functions. The rooms are fit with room darkening shades, individual temperature controls and noise reduction barriers to encourage sleep.

But the growth of services isn't limited to just the sleep lab. Overall since July of 2007, the inpatient volume at BCH is up 13 percent. Outpatient volume has seen similar increases as

well, while outpatient surgeries have increased 50 percent from the same point last year.

West credits the physicians and employees with making BCH the best it can be.

"People are beginning to discover that they don't have to get in the car and drive across the state to receive top quality healthcare," he said. "Why drive one or two hours when you can receive the same level of quality tests and physician care just minutes from your home?"

Through its specialty clinic, BCH offers the community access to care and treatment from highly qualified, board certified physicians in more than 15 different specialties.

In the last year, BCH began offering a pain clinic through the specialty clinic, located in the hospital, offering medical

and interventional pain management. These services are tailored to individual needs and include initial evaluation and treatment of a variety of pain syndromes.

The 45,000 square foot Blackford Community Hospital has built to meet the changing healthcare needs of the community.

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Blackford Community Hospital

www.blackfordcommunityhospital.org

Affiliate of Cardinal Health System

Behind the Scenes

Working for the residents of Hartford City



City Hall



Board of Works



Police Department



Fire Department

Working for You

Water Works Department

Front row: Joe Pennington, Kevin Hall and Ron Thomas
Back row: Jeremy Huffman and Chad Speidel

Wastewater Treatment Dept.

Waine Ritenour - Sewage Supervisor
Gene Meadows
Nicole Fortner
Gregg Jones
Steve Farling
Rick Rice
Jerry Wyatt
Travis Williamson

Dept. of Public Works

Allen Bell - Street Commissioner
Bill Bacon
Jeffrey Thomas
Dewayne Maddox
Mark Cooper
Eli Coulter
Steve Howard
Jerry Shady
Bill West Jr
Chad Sullivan
Brian Stimpson
Bret Mahan

Police Department

Matt Felver - Police Chief
Greg Bonewit
Bill Meyer
Doug Beckley
Scott Mealey
Stephen Hurd
Billy Owens
Mark McKissack
Dustin Tarr
Adam Lamotte
Sam Tarleton
Brady Ricks

Police Department Cont.

Erik Hawk
Sheila Murrell - Secretary
Denise Bacon - Ordinance
Nikki Grider-Office
Dago - Police Dog

Fire Department

Bret Murray - Fire Chief
Ron Parrott
Joe Ervin
Ron Kreisler
Rick Sluder
Clifton Rinker
Rob Hess

City Hall

Janet Gilland - City Clerk Treasurer
Christy Terhune - Deputy Clerk
Treasurer
Susy Tobey - Payroll Clerk
Carolyn Beckley - Utility Clerk
Misty Teer - Mayor's Secretary
Dennis Whitesell - Mayor
Dave Bennett - Re-Development
Director
Susie McDonald-Janitor

Board of Works

Pat Dee
Dennis Whitesell
Scott Confer

City Council

Scott Confer - District 1
Dustin George - District 2
Jimmy Lytle - District 3
Bill Hess - District 4
John Adams - At-Large

Mayor

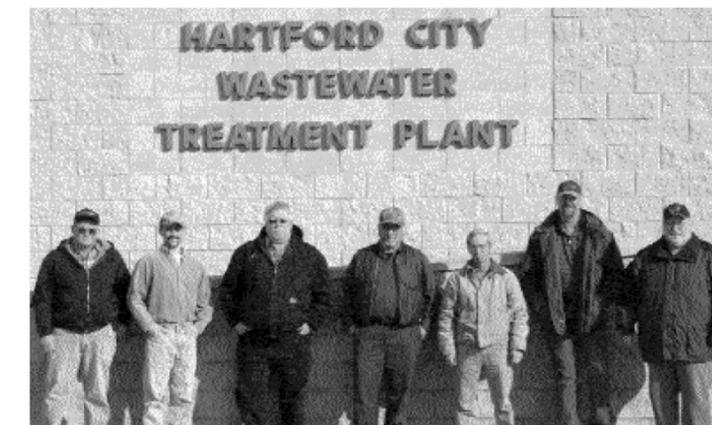
Dennis Whitesell



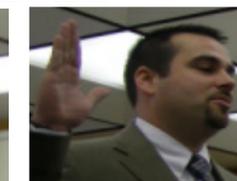
Water Works Department



Street Department



Wastewater Treatment Plant



City Council