



December 27, 2022



Patty Fisel

(Photo shared with permission from KPC Media.)

Fisel will not seek another term

Patty Fisel, the Mayor of Ligonier since 2008, has announced she will not seek another term in the office. Fisel's announcement came as she has been recovering following treatments for cancer, however her health was not a factor in the decision to retire. Mayor Fisel and her team have accomplished many projects during her tenure. Fisel was recognized as Republican of the Year in 2021 for her constant support and passion. Filing for the 2023 municipal election will be open January 4 through February 3, 2023.

\$1.6M for Noble road improvements

The second round of Indiana's Community Crossings road grants has been announced and three Noble County communities will receive a total of \$1.6 million to complete proposed improvements. Northeast Indiana has been awarded over \$20 million since the program's inception. County roads will see the most improvements with an award of \$1,580,553.84 to the Noble County Highway Department. Two-inch asphalt overlays are planned for portions of CR 600N, CR 900E, and Waits Road. Avilla was successful in their request for \$617,016

to upgrade streets, curbs, and sidewalks in the town. Ligonier will receive \$339,565.88 for street projects planned there.



Avilla

All grant recipients

READI PROGRAM NORTHEAST INDIANA



ADAMS >> ALLEN >> DEKALB >> HUNTINGTON >> KOSCIUSKO >>
LAGRANGE >> NOBLE >> STEUBEN >> WABASH >> WELLS >> WHITLEY

Will Indiana have a READI 2.0?

Twice in recent weeks, encouraging words have been shared regarding the return of Indiana READI in 2023. The \$500 million the state allocated for talent attraction and economic development projects in 2022 has reportedly far exceeded its goals, catalyzing \$4 billion in housing projects alone across the Hoosier state. The goal, according to the state's READI web page, was to attract \$2 billion in local public, private and philanthropic matching funds to propel projects. On November 29, Indiana Secretary of Commerce Brad Chambers expressed his optimism about a second round of READI funding. More recently, Governor Eric Holcomb confirmed to Inside Indiana Business that he is preparing to continue the

momentum seen this year by including a READI "reboot" in the budget he will submit on January 4. Entities interested in seeking READI funding are encouraged to contact Be Noble Inc., the county's local coordinator, for assistance. Be Noble will work to streamline all Noble County proposals in preparation for the program's return in the upcoming year.



[Website](#)

Commercial kitchen will empower disabled individuals

AWS Foundation has awarded a two-year, \$213,055 grant to The Arc Noble County Foundations to create a commercial kitchen in Albion. The kitchen will be designed to support skills development in meal planning, as well as provide workforce development to gain independence and potential employment. The move is part of the Arc's five-year strategic plan to transition services and supports to community-integrated employment. The Arc currently operates the Kendallville CLC Cafe, open Thursdays from 9:30 - 2:30 to serve breakfast and lunch selections to workers and visitors to the Community Learning Center.

Mast out at West Noble

Without explanation, the West Noble School Board relieved superintendent Galen Mast of his duties on December 12. The action was taken during a brief meeting, followed by the hiring of Randy Zimmerly as interim superintendent. Mast will be paid for the remainder of his contract, through June 30. West Noble had recently decided not to renew Mast's contract. Zimmerly retired as superintendent from Westview in 2018 after serving there for 20 years. He has also served as interim superintendent at Smith-Green Community Schools in Whitley County and Fairfield Community Schools in Elkhart County.

New county leaders to begin terms

As the new year begins, so does one new Noble County Commissioner and three new members of the Noble County Council. Gary Timmerman joins Gary Leatherman and Anita Hess as a commissioner. Timmerman will fulfill the term of Dave Dolezal, elected in the mid-terms in November. Dolezal passed away unexpectedly just days



after the November election. Timmerman was subsequently selected by Republic caucus. Max Franklin, Brandan Chordas, and Trey Forbes will fill seats on the County Council formerly occupied by Jerry Jansen, Denise Lemmon, and Bernie Lawson. Jansen chose not to run again after completing 14 years of service. Lawson and Lemmon served for eight years each. The new roster of Noble County government leaders is:

Noble County Commissioners

Gary Timmerman (District 1 - west)
Gary Leatherman (District 2 - central)
Anita Hess (District 3 - east)

Noble County Council

Tom Janes (District 1)
Trey Forbes (District 2)
Brandon Chordas (District 3)
Max Franklin (District 4)
Mary Wysong (At-Large)
Doug Harp (At-Large)
George Bennett (At-Large)



Tax break okayed for local company

Graphic Packaging International, a maker of innovative paper packaging solutions, first came to the Kendallville East Industrial Park in 2016. In support of the company's plan to consolidate warehousing operations into the former LSC Communications building, located nearly adjacent to their existing Kendallville operations, the City of Kendallville has

approved a two-year vacant building deduction. Graphic Packaging will lease the building, vacated by LSC in 2020, from Phoenix Kendallville Industrial Investors LLC.



Albion library adds free and low cost legal help to services

The Noble County Public Library in Albion has added an Indiana Legal Help Kiosk to help local tenants and renters facing eviction. The kiosk provides easy access to Indiana-LegalHelp.org, a program of the Indiana Bar Association, to find housing-related legal info and resources. Users may also print and scan information they find. The kiosk is located in the library's Genealogy Room and may be used during open hours.

[Learn more](#)

SP  TLIGHT
on entrepreneurial ecosystem

T Mobile

Co-working project receives \$25,000

T-Mobile announced Kendallville as one of its latest 25 Hometown Grant recipients. The grant is one of 150 announced so far in the company's five-year, \$25 million initiative to support small towns across America. The check, made out to Historic Downtown Kendallville (HDK), will be used in support of the launch of a co-working space downtown, a collaborative project of Be Noble Inc., HDK, Score of Northeast Indiana, and other local partners. The project is the first major step in the creation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Noble County. The T-Mobile grant is the most recent of three awarded in support of the project thus far. Don Wood Foundation also granted \$25,000, and American Electric Power (AEP) granted \$5,000 recently. Leaders of the project hope to have more information to share in the first quarter of 2023.



Ryan Norden, a senior at East Noble High School, has been named the winner of this year's Lilly Endowment Scholarship. Impressed by Norden's academic and extracurricular achievements, a committee assembled by the Community Foundation of Noble County recommended him to receive the full ride scholarship to an Indiana school of his choice. Reports indicate Norden hopes to attend Notre Dame University to pursue medicine and hopes to return to his hometown to serve as a pediatrician. He credits his involvement in the community and hard work for his achievements and recognized "so many people" in his life that have made such a huge impact.

Black Pine Animal Sanctuary and their peers across the nation, members of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance, are celebrating a major "win" that has been a decade in the making. The Big Cat Public Safety Act passed the Senate on December 6 and now heads to President Joe Biden to be signed into law. The act will ban private possession and private contact, and restricts captive breeding, trade, and exhibiting, of big cats in the U.S. Black Pine and their peers have become experts in safely transporting, rehabilitating, and providing lifetime care

to hundreds of big cats (and other non-domestic animals), the result of largely unregulated roadside zoos, private owners, and entertainment venues over the past 25 years.

The community mourns the passing of retired Noble Superior Court Judge Robert Kirsch. Kirsch, 69, died on December 13 in a head-on vehicle crash in Whitley County. Kirsch served on the bench in Noble County from 2007 to 2022. His departure following a letter of resignation to Governor Eric Holcomb on July 9, 2021. Kirsch

Noble Trails has received the green light to move forward with selling property donated to the nonprofit organization, a move that will help catalyze further development of Noble Trails. Rome City Town Council voted to approve the rezoning of 39 acres, a portion of the former Limberlost Golf Course, which Noble Trails owns, for development of two new homes. The approval came despite an opposing recommendation from the Rome City Planning Commission.



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