



The Navigator

CHARTING A COURSE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

www.navigatormagazine.com | (618) 445.2355 375.7502 | Volume 23-150, Number 37-20

WS quilters make mass for hospitals, area residents

BY T.J. HUG
Of the Navigator

One group of West Salem quilters is stepping up to help their community in the fight against Novel Coronavirus.

A group of six quilters in West Salem have been making protective masks from tight-woven 100 percent cotton flannel for multiple hospitals since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, they're offering to make masks for area residents as well.

The quilters are no strangers to donating to their community. In the past, they've donated quilts to the West Salem Parent Teacher Organization An-

See MASKS on page 5A

COVID-19 Impacting Local Agriculture

BY LEN WELLS
Of the Navigator

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting virtually every segment of the economy. Local farming operations have not been spared. "The most obvious impact on agriculture is being seen in the markets for grain and livestock," said Doug Anderson, Manager of the White County Farm Bureau. "Oil prices have dropped well below \$20 per barrel. Ethanol prices typically track with oil prices, so the price of ethanol has also dropped. Ethanol plants may be shutting down and that would be a huge market loss locally for corn because of the ethanol plant in Mount Vernon, Indiana."

See IMPACT on page 5A

Country Home Processing opens for business

BY AMY WINTER
Of the Navigator

Country Home Processing opened its doors for the first time in late March, just as coronavirus was gaining a foothold in the United States. But new owners weren't going to let a virus stop them.

Previously known as Farmers' Packing, the newly christened Country Home Processing has been a staple in Edwards County for the past 13 years. In February, the Bodnar, Kelsey and Vallette families purchased and revitalized the business.

They spent several weeks to complete all needed upgrades and remodeling throughout the plant, as well as securing the proper licensure and hiring staff.

See OPENS on page 5A

Buy the Barrel

The posted price for a barrel of Illinois Basin crude oil stood at \$16.75 as of Tuesday up \$3.50 from the last posted price, according to Countrymark Cooperative.



7 53182 13603 5



The mother-daughter duo of Ronika and Emma Gill cruise down Main Street Albion Friday evening as part of the Albion Cruise. Members of the community took to the city streets to express solidarity and fellowship during Governor J.B. Pritzker's stay-at-home order. Photo by T.J. Hug.

RPI offers 'pay what you can' plan to patients

BY AMY WINTER
Of the Navigator

One local business is meeting the challenge of COVID-19 with two-pronged attack.

The Albion branch of the Rehabilitation and Performance Institute, along with sister branches in Owensboro, Ky.; Hancock County, Ky.; Mount Vernon, Ind. and Newburgh, Ind. have all shifted towards telehealth during the current crisis affecting all walks of business and healthcare.

They're also doing so with negotiable rates for those who may struggle to pay the standard bill for services.

They take pride in the fact that they will continue to help others and hopefully inspire other small businesses to do the same.

"With that being said, we plan to offer telehealth services on a "pay what you can" payment plan," Craig Phifer,

See PAY on page 5A

Coronavirus creeps into Wabash, Richland Counties

BY LEN WELLS
Of the Navigator

As of Monday, April 6, no positive cases of COVID-19 had been recorded in White or Edwards County. However, area health departments are starting to confirm cases in adjoining counties.

The Wabash County Health Department in Mount Carmel was notified Saturday, April 4 of a Wabash County resident who tested positive for COVID-19. Officials with the

health department stated the individual was tested in an outpatient setting and followed all protocols of self-quarantine with all of their immediate family since being tested. Officials added that the patient and family members are "doing well".

The Wabash County Health Department is now investigating who may have been in close contact with the patient before being diagnosed. As a result of the investigation, other individuals may be placed on home quarantine if they are determined to have had signif-

icant exposure. "Such individuals may not be symptomatic, but are quarantined for a period of time, which allows symptoms to develop and pass without posing risk to others," said a spokesman for the Wabash County Health Department. "If you are contacted by public health officials, please respond appropriately."

Richland County also saw its first confirmed case of COVID-19 on Monday, per the Richland County RB and Health Office. Edwards County has tested 14 individuals for the virus, with 10 testing

negative and four tests pending, according to the Edwards County Health Office.

One COVID-19 positive case had previously been reported in Saline County and one in Gallatin County. The Saline County case involved 49-year-old man who traveled out of the country for work. Health officials noted that patient was "at home and doing well". No details were immediately available for the

See VIRUS on page 5A

Edwards, Wabash County Police nab Wisconsin car theft suspect

BY LEN WELLS
Of the Navigator

A police chase that started in the Peoria, Illinois ended Friday in Edwards county. After leading police on a chase that covered more than 200 miles, Justin G. Kuehl, 43 of Baraboo, Wisconsin is behind bars on multiple charges including auto theft.

Edwards County Sheriff Darby Boewe said Kuehl

entered Edwards County from Richland County traveling on Illinois Route 130 with two Richland County Sheriff's Deputies in pursuit. Edwards County Sheriff's Deputies Harvey Fenton and Gary Ivy joined the pursuit in northern Edwards County along with a West Salem police officer.

As the pursuit continued southbound at speeds in excess of 90 mph, Wabash County K-9 Deputy Keagan Bogard heard the radio traffic about the chase and drove into Albi-



JUSTIN G. KUEHL

on, deploying stop sticks at the intersection of Routes 130 and 15. "Kuehl drove over the stop sticks and punctured some of the tires on the vehicle," said Sheriff Darby Boewe. "The Wabash County unit and two Albion police officers joined the pursuit with the other units as Kuehl continued to head south on 130 with some

See PURSUIT on page 5A

Edwards County EMS Board sees 5 new appointments from county commissioners

BY T.J. HUG
Of the Navigator

After seeing all seven of its board members resign, the Edwards County EMS Board of Directors now has seen five of its seats filled.

The Edwards County Board of Commissioners appointed Matt St. Ledger, Kent Reid, Danny Iverson, Harold Alka and Bruce Longbons to the EMS board by a 2-0 vote, with St. Ledger, a commissioner on the board, abstaining. The new board will need to take

certain actions before the county can sign a contract turning over operation of its ambulance service to Wabash General Hospital, according to one member of the county board.

"That contract has not been signed yet," said Davis Messman, Chairman of the County Board. "There are certain things that must be done by the EMS in order for us to move forward with signing that contract

"And the task for the board that we've appointed today is to carry out those things."

Earlier in the meeting, the

chairman addressed the final actions of the previous EMS board during their March meeting.

"It appears that at the end of the meeting, under new business, the motion was made to deed back the Moravian Church parking lot," said Messman. "I think once we install a new board, they'll have to follow up on that."

Messman also noted that the EMS board voted to dissolve its corporation by a 3-2 vote, as well as taking another action.

"And a motion for the EMS tax dollars to be returned to

the tax payers was made by Alex Bond and seconded by Nancy Cowling," he explained. "I'm not sure what that is."

"I'm assuming they're returning it back to the county."

While only five of the seven members of the board, Seth Fearn; Travis Sharp; Debbie Haycraft; Alex Bond; and Nancy Cowling, resigned at the previous EMS meeting, the remaining two board members also submitted letters of resignation to the county.

See APPOINT on page 5A

COMING SOON
Horizon Healthcare Garmi Medical Clinic

FAIRFIELD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
 EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

HORIZON HEALTHCARE