2016 Montgomery County Indiana

By Dave Peach

Hello to those who happen to read this in 2116. I am confident that Indiana is still the great state that it is today. I am also confident that Montgomery County remains a great place to live. What you will see over the next few pages are events that brought us together. Some for fun. Some for education. Some tragic. Some incredible.

Before we get the year of 2016 I will start with a brief personal introduction. I am Dave Peach the General Manager of the radio stations here in Crawfordsville. WCDQ is a Country Station, WIMC is Classic Rock (I will never know if the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Eagles and others that we hear everyday will still be be played 100 years from now). and WCVL is Classic Hits. We provide daily news, weather and sports mixed with music 24 hours a day. At this time we operate out of a building at 1757 North 175 West. I have lived in Indiana for just about all of my 55 years (born in 1961). We did live in Virginia for 2 ½ years. I am a Hoosier and have lived in several different cities in this state. I arrived with my wife Annette and son Matthew in Crawfordsville in 2007.

I want to acknowledge that the Journal Review Newspaper is the source of the information in this recap of 2016. We work with the Journal Review here at the radio station so I don’t think they will mind. I was able to attend, cover and participate in many of the stories and events that I will chronicle for you so I was able to provide some insight on those. Time to turn back the back 100 years to 2016…well actually we will start at…

2015 at the end

The big news in Crawfordsville in 2015 was the day the city became a Stellar Designated community. 2016 is the beginning of the work associated with getting the projects planned. Fruition of all the projects will come another year. The projects include Trails for Bikes and walkers, a “Pocket Park” on Pike Street (the location of a historic fire in Downtown Crawfordsville in 2007), renovation of the Ben Hur Building and historic Whitlock Neighborhood and “Fusion 54” which is a building that will house several community organizations under one roof in a high profile location on U.S 231. Stellar designation is something the City vied for several times in the first term of Mayor Todd Barton and won on August 17th, 2015 in an announcement made at the Indiana State Fair which was carried live on WIMC.

Another big story of 2015 that I will highlight is the hiring of city’s first female firefighter, Abigal Yates. I had a chance to interview the 26 year old Indiana University grad and found her to be inspiring. Her first day on the job was November 4, 2015.

Now on to what happened in Montgomery County in 2016

**ELECTION 2016**

Donald Trump Junior makes a visit to Covington on April 28. He did some turkey hunting and also did some campaigning for his father. Trump Jr. met with the media at the Beef House. The Indiana Primary Election was held on May 3rd. John Frey won the Republican Commissioner Primary Race for District One. The Republican Presidential Primary went to Donald Trump. Hilary Clinton won on the Democratic side.

As you know Donald Trump was eventually elected and became the 45th President of the United States. Along the way he chose Indiana Governor Mike Pence to be his running mate. Pence became the sixth US Vice-President from Indiana. What made the election even more interesting is that Mike Pence endorsed Republican Rival Ted Cruz in the Indiana Primary on April 29. It was a shocker and it denied Hillary Clinton from becoming the first Woman President in US History.

When Trump picked Pence as his running mate the Indiana Republicans had to chose a new candidate for Governor. Lieutenant Governor Eric Holcomb won the nomination. Holcomb easily beat Democratic Challenger John Gregg in the general election.

Early voting in the Primary set records in Montgomery County. Early voting is becoming more and more popular. In the General Election early voting was the norm.

October 11th – The last day to register to vote

Early voted started October 12th. Residents are urged to vote early and avoid lines on Election Day.

On November 8th the polls were opened for the final time. Donald Trump won big in Indiana and with his pull at the top of ticket lead a clean sweep of every state office for the Republicans. Trumps election as President was one of the biggest upsets in US History. It was a shocker and it denied Hillary Clinton from becoming the first Woman President in US History. I will say that I attended High School with Mike Pence at Columbus North High School. We still talk from time to time. I am not sure when we might talk again with his new office.

Here are the winners in the General Election 2016

President and Vice President of the United States- Donald J. Trump and Micheal R. Pence (R)

United States Senator- Todd Young (R)

Governor and Lieutenant Governor- Erin Holcomb and Suzanne Crouch (R)

Attorney General – Curtis Hill (R)

Superintendent of Public Instruction – Jennifer McCormick (R)

US Representative in Congress 4th District- Todd Rokita (R)

State Represenative District 41- Tim Brown (R)

\*\*State Representative District 13- Sharon Negele (R) (This district has three voting precincts in Montgomery County)

Judge of the Circuit Court- Harry Siamas (R)

Clerk of the Circuit Court – Karyn D. Douglas (R)

County Recorder- Jennifer Bently (R)

County Coronor- Darren Forman (R)

County Surveyor- Tom Cummins (R)

County Commissioner District 1- John Frey (R)

Country Commissioner District 3- Phillip W. Bane (R)

County Council Member At-Large- Gary Booth, Terry Hockersmith and Greg Morrison

Statewide 58 percent of the state’s 4.8 million voters cast a ballot in the 2016 General Election. Here in Montgomery we were above that average at 63.6 percent. Of the total 15,741 votes cast in Montgomery County 8,911 of them were early votes.

January - A new restaurant comes to town. It is called Wings Etc and features of course chicken wings and other fare. Numerous televisions are available to watch sports and other events. The restaurant is located inside the Quality Inn which is located near the intersection of 231 and I-74

Candidates for the Election begin to file. Two County Commissioner positions and the three County Council at-large seats are up for grabs. This year’s election will feature new voting machines and voting centers. The voting machines will replace paper ballots. Instead of precincts voters will choose from any of five voting centers to cast a ballot

A sober living program called Halfway Home opens. We have a drug problem in this county. Halfway Home provides a 180 Day rehabilitation program for women.

Youth Service Bureau celebrates 45 years of serving.

The Montgomery County Health Department announces a syringe disposal program. Proper disposal of used syringes was identified as an immediate need in the Montgomery County Health Profile.

Educators want ISTEP and other standardized tests to end. Crawfordsville School Superintendent Scott Bowling said, “We do not believe this year’s ISTEP results measure the success or failure of our students, teachers, or schools.” The test has long been criticized. UPDATE- Governor Mike Pence signed two ISTEP bills on Thursday January 21 relieving schools and teachers from accountability measurements tied to the 2015 ISTEP test.

Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health- Crawfordsville announces renovations that will total 15.3 million dollars. The projects will include a new emergency room.

For the third consecutive year the Great Lakes Valley Conference Swimming and Diving Championships will return to Crawfordsville. This is a great event for the city. The Crawfordsville Aquatic Center at CHS is an excellent facility. Hotels are packed and restaurants love the extra business. The event will be in February. I will be the MC of the Kick-off Dinner. Volunteers will get a free t-shirt!

Crawfordsville Main Street’s Annual Membership Meeting featured an update on Stellar. The goal of the organization is to revitalize and preserve the beauty and character of downtown Crawfordsville. That is seen as directly in line with the Stellar goals.

The Montgomery United Fund for You makes a final push for the goal of $450,000. I am on the Board of Directors of MUFFY and I am happy to report that our we did hit the goal!

Sports - On Janaury 7th North Montgomery defeated Southmont 40-38 in Girls Basketball. Coach Ryan Nuppnau’s team claims the County Championship with the win….Over in Indianapolis Colts Coach Chuck Pagano signs a contract extension after going 8-8 in an injury plagued year. …North Montgomery Senior Alex Parsons announces that he will play football at the University of Indianapolis. I have enjoyed watching him play. He is a tremendous competitor.

February- The Fourth Annual State of the Community event was held at the Connie Meek Auditorium at Crawfordsville High School on Tuesday February 2, 2016. Mayor Todd Barton, County Commissioner Phil Bane, Indiana West Advantage Director Kristen Clary and Deputy Director Zach Churney gave their thoughts. Intergovernmental cooperation was given as the key of the success that came in 2015. The Culver Hospital, Ben Hur Building, the courthouse parking lot and County Road 200 South were just a few of the projects that received benefit from the cooperative effort between City and County. Job opportunities are increasing but we need people to fill the positions. We in process of making the community more attractive to millennials. It is estimated that in 2030, approximately 75 percent of the workforce will be made of millennials. Mayor Barton said, “As we enter 2016, we must not focus on the past…we must remain squarely focused on the future to ensure the success we’ve begin is fully realized. And I have absolutely no doubts that- collectively- we will succeed in doing that needs to be done.”….

Also held on February 2nd was the 74th Annual Meeting of the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District. Cain Homelike Farms was honored as the Conservationist of the Year. Terry Cain thanked the younger generation of his family for staying involved in their Darlington area farming operation. The meeting was held at the Crawfordsville Public Library

Fire Station 2 will get a rebuild next to their current location. Second Baptist Church which is adjacent to the station will move. Board of Works gave approval of the demolition of the Church

Southmont High School uses a 3-D Printer to break the record for their annual CO2 car launch competition. Junior Ford Lynch’s care set the record by going 405 feet.

State School Superintendent Glenda Ritz visited the North Montgomery School District on February 12, 2016.

North Montgomery Students are rallying around Sam Jackman. Jackman is a student at North and is battling Leukemia. Fellow student Abbey Woodard is put together a bone marrow and blood drive at the school in support of those like Sam who need a bone marrow transplant. A benefit for Sam was held at the Darlington Community Center. It should also be noted that Sam helped with the coin flip at Lucas Oil Stadium for the Colts v Pittsburgh Football game. The community and the entire state supported Sam all year.

Wednesday February 10th was the first day of the Great Lakes Valley Conference Swim meet hosted by the City of Crawfordsville and Crawfordsville High School.

The Crawfordsville High School Dance Team is headed to Disney World to compete. They started the competition on February 11, 2016.

Southmont High School Principal Kevin Stewart will retire at the end of the school year. He has been in the school system for four decades. He will be replaced by Mike Tricker effective July 1, 2016.

Dari-Licous reopens on Febraury 10th. They have a brand new building to show off to the public!

The Youth Service Bureau will once again raise money by pairing up local dancers and local celebrities by twos. Billed as “Dancing with the Montgomery County Stars” this event has become the social event of the year! The line-up of dancers was announced February 20th. The event will be May 21st.

Team Tobor advances to the Super Regional by advancing at the Indiana First Tech Challenge. Tobor won the state championship last year. The team is preparing to take on the world for the First Tech Challenge World Championship April 27-30 in St. Louis, MO. They will compete against teams from 11 different countries.

Kristen Clary resigns as the Executive Director of Indiana West Advantage. She served three years and is headed to an identical position in Putnam County.

Wednesday February 17, 2016- A very sad story unfolded. It started in Boone County, then moved to Montgomery County before ending in Marion County. That morning Lucious “Lu” Hamilton, a Wabash College Employee, killed his niece, Katherine Giehl and her son Raymond at their home. Surveillance cameras in the home helped confirm it was Hamilton. He left the home, went to Wabash College and checked out a work van. Police tracked him to the Hilton Hotel and Suites in Indianapolis. As authorities were at his hotel door they heard two gunshots. They found Lu Hamilton dead of self-inflicted gunshot wounds. A money squabble regarding a family trust was determined to be the motivation for the killings. At one point during the day Wabash College was on lockdown. There was never a danger because Hamilton was not there at that point. I covered the story on the radio. News helicopters from Indianapolis circled the campus for several hours that afternoon.

We mentioned the fundraiser for the Youth Service Bureau. Another fundraiser was the Polar Plunge fort the Special Olympics. This raised $7200 locally and was held at Wabash College on February 13th.

There was a major fire on February 19th in the nearby town of Marshall, Indiana which is in Park County. It was at FutureX Industry. Firefighters from 40 departments battled the blaze. No injuries.

On February 22nd at around 9 am a car crashed into the CVS on US 231. A clerk was behind the counter near the entrance at the time of the crash, but she was not injured. The driver also escaped injury.

We did get a snow on February 24th but not enough to close schools. In fact we did not have any school days cancelled this winter. Fast forward to the end of 2016 and we can see that were no school days lost to weather in all of 2016. That is the first year I can remember that being the case. If you liked snow 2016 was not your year!

From February 23rd through 27th we celebrated FFA Week. Southmont and North Montgomery have very active chapters. Crawfordsville does not have an FFA Chapter. Students drive their tractors to work, hold fundraisers and cook breakfast for teachers to celebrate!

Sports- Girls Basketball Sectional-

Feb 2nd Lebanon defeated Crawfordsville 71-37. Paige Schueren scored 20 points in the loss.

February 3rd- Western Boone 70 North Montgomery 33. Cheyenne Warren lead the way for the Chargers with 14 points.

February 5th – Southmont also loses their first tournament game dropping a 53-39 decision to Cascade. Leading the Lady Mounties was Reagan Case with 10 points.

Tony Thomas resigned as Crawfordsville Girls Basketball Coach on February 7th.

Nationally the Denver Broncos won Super Bowl 50 with a 24-10 win over Carolina. Former Colt’s Quarterback Peyton Manning wins his second Super Bowl but Denver’s defense was the star. Manning would eventually announce his retirement in March. The Colts would later announce they will retire his Jersey Number 18 and build a statue outside Lucas Oil Stadium where the Colts play.

March – The Lane Place hosted an exhibit to celebrate Indiana’s Bicentennial. Each room of the house featured a different topic relating to Montgomery County’s history. In the dining room there was an old cookbook on display turned to a recipe from Joanna (Elston) Lane. Spread across the bed in Helen Lane’s room was a quilt featuring the names of members from the Union Chapel United Brethern Church. Members paid 10 cents to have their names embroidered onto it.

A Community Health Summit was held March 15th. The goal was to get people involved and to broaden people’s awareness about who provides different types of health services. Mayor Todd Barton talked about how the Stellar Designation related to health and Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health- Crawfordsville’s Chief Operating Office Terry Klein spoke about expansion of the emergency room. Officials were thrilled with the turnout.

The City Easter Egg Hunt was held on March 19th. The event is organized by the Crawfordsville Parks and Recreation and was sponsored by Nucor Steel. It was held at the Lew Wallace Study and Museum. The event has always been free and open to children ages fourth grade and younger.

Indiana West Advantage announced that Tom Utley the Board President would assume the position of Interim-director. He is replacing Kristen Clary who stepped down in February.

Always a sure sign of spring is the Master Gardeners Flower and Garden Show. The event was held on March 19th at the Montgomery County 4-H Fairgrounds. Also Saturday the Carnegie Library celebrated Pi Day. This event focuses on mathematics and physics. Attendees receive a free piece of pie at the conclusion of their visit.

Okay here is another sure sign of spring- High School Musicals. Crawfordsville performed Beauty and the Beast. The Beauty was Lanie Rogers and the Beast was Sam Ross. The musical is based on the 1991 Disney film of the same name.

North Montgomery students performed How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying. Andrew Samuelson played J. Pierpont Finch.

In March an organization meeting is held for the Downtown’s Farmers Market. The market is held every Saturday on Pike Street west of US 231. 25 to 35 vendors participate,

High School Basketball Sectionals for the Boys were held the first week of March. Crawfordsville lost to Western Boone 51-46. Cameron Harris scored 23 to lead the Athenians. North Montgomery lost in overtime to Frankfort 73-68. Caleb Randolph had 27 for the Chargers. Southmont missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer that would have pulled out a victory in the 49-47 loss to Monrovia. Cam Chadd led the Mounties with 21 points.

College Basketball sees plenty of teams from Indiana in the NCAA Tournament. Purdue loses in the first round in Double Overtime to Little Rock. Butler advances to the second round with a win over Texas Tech. The Bulldogs lost to Virginia in the second round. Indiana Advanced to the Sweet 16 with a memorable win against arch rival Kentucky. The Hoosiers bow out at the hands of the North Carolina. Notre Dame makes the Elite 8.

Wabash Head Football Coach Eric Raeburn leaves the school for Savannah State. He led the Little Giants to five appearances in the Division 3 playoffs and seven straight Monon Bell wins! Replacing Raeburn will be Don Morel. Morel was the offensive coordinator of the Little Giants.

The Journal Review named North Montgomery’s Caleb Randolph the Boys Basketball Player of the Year.

Wabash Graduate Chris Denari, the voice of the Indiana Pacers in the NBA was inducted to the Indiana Sportswriters and Sportscasters Hall of Fame.

Denari played on the 81-82 National Championship team at Wabash. He started his career in Sportscasting in 1982.

APRIL

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. People are encouraged to wear blue and plant pinwheels to raise awareness of the problem. According to the Youth Service Bureau it is a time for the community to step back, look at what’s going on around them and lead what they can do to help.

Sheraya Smith from North Montgomery High School earned the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a girl can earn in Girl Scouting.

Southmont FFA advanced to the National Land Judging Contest. They earned the spot by winning first place in the state soils competition. The team of Callie Leclercq, Cassidy Leclercq, Drake Davis and Holly Shaver will be flying out to Oklahoma to compete. FFA Advisor Gary Mosbaugh said the team will practice for two days before the day of the competition.

2016 saw the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500. Even though the first race was held in 2011 the 100th came in 2016 because there were no races during World War II. On April 11th a two-seater Indy Car gave rides through the streets of Crawfordsville. Among those getting in the car were Wabash College President Greg Hess.

The Relay for Life was held April 16th. This annual event is a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. More than 80 walkers participated in the event that was held at the Girls and Boys Club. Survivor Lap, Luminaria Ceremony to honor those who lost their battle with cancer and musical entertainment and a dunk tank were included in the activities. The event started in 1988.

The Indiana Municipal Power Authority announced it was starting its second solar park in Montgomery County. This one will be in Waynetown. The new solar power generating facility will consist of 1008 solar panels on 1.5 acre and will be located on 2.5 acres on the northwest corner of town along State Road 25 North. The output is estimated to be 250 kilowatts of AC.

The Southmont Winter Guard competed in the Winter Guard World Championships in Dayton, Ohio. They are called the Southmont Winds. The groups show is called “All Aboard” and is all about trains! The director is Brian Bartlett.

The Farmer’s Market started on April 23rd! The location is Pike Street.

An issue that is increasing in awareness in 2016 is Human Trafficking. Around the world 27 million men, women and children are victims. Anita Byers, Director of the Family Crisis Shelter in Crawfordsville, says that they have serviced victims here in Montgomery County. Human Trafficking occurs when people are recruited to work or provide services through the use of force, fraud or coercion, and it includes labor and sex trafficking. It is the fasted growing and second-largest criminal industry in the world, generating roughly 150 billion worldwide.

The annual March of Dimes Walk/Run was held on April 24th. Kristie Cox’s family is the Ambassador Family. Her daughter Darcie was born healthy despite a difficult pregnancy for Kristie. The event raises funds to make sure all babies are born healthy.

On April 30th the court for the Strawberry Festival was crowned.

Queen- Lauren McClaskey

1st Runner-Up – Tiffany Ellington

2nd Runner-Up – Kitty Daron

Prince- Jackson Miles

Princess- Emma Scobee

Miss Congeniality – Haydn Allen

Mental Attitude Award- Kaleigh Sharp

MAY

On May 4th the Crawfordsville/ Montgomery Chamber of Commerce held their annual dinner. Crawfordsville Mayor Todd Barton was the keynote speaker and he spoke about the Stellar Designation. He encouraged attendees to help solve the community’s problems. One of the goals is to attract more millennials. Barton also said the city needs more professionals to live in the area.

National Day of Prayer was held on the Courthouse on May 5th.

On May 15th Wabash College graduated 196 men at their 178th commencement ceremony. President Greg Hess said, “Be assured, gentlemen, that your Wabash education has provided you with the simple gifts you need to find your way into your new tomorrows; to make good and to do good; to find meaning and purpose in life and to celebrate it. Not just to be men, but to be good men.”

That beautiful spring day greeted the “Stroll for Strays” at the Lew Wallace Study. This is a benefit for the Animal Welfare League. Activities included a Frisbee Dog Show, a water filled pool with balls and toys and a cat walk on an outside bannister enjoyed by only one feline by the name of Sebastian.

Walnut Elementary 6th graders created an app for an iPAD called “Prompt Me”. The app provides a platform for delivering persuasive and creative writing prompts for elementary school classrooms.

Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health unveiled new 3-D mammogram technology. The 3D mammography uses low doses X-Rays to create a three- dimensional image of the breast. Patients will notice virtually nothing different but the multi-layered image will find more cancer.

May 21st was the day the Dancing with the Montgomery County Stars. The group dance which included this years participants and alums from past years featured a Beach Boy’s theme. Jade Perry and Lora Clore were the winning couple.

On May 23rd a groundbreaking was held for the new emergency room at Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health Crawfordsville. Along with the usual roster of officials including Mayor Todd Barton the hospital had students from Rainbow and Rhymes Preschool participate with little shovels!

High School Commencements were held on Friday May 28th at Crawfordsville and Saturday May 29th Southmont and North Montgomery.

Crawfordsville Police Department purchases new body cameras for the patrol division.

The Crawfordsville Baseball team ranked 3rd in the state lost in the IHSAA Sectional Semi-Finals. They came out on the short end of a 6-4 score at the hands of Western Boone.

Crawfordsville has a new resident who has a high profile job for the Indianapolis 500. Bob Jenkins is a public address announcer for the race. Jenkins is past voice of the Indy 500 on Television and Radio. He was also the longtime NASCAR Announcer on ESPN. Jenkins has been living in Crawfordsville for about a year. His voice is absolutely magnificent!

A new addition to the Crawfordsville Public Library is a statue of a bison. It is part of the Bison-Tennial celebration. This is sponsored by the Indiana Bicentennial Celebration.

June

North Montgomery hires a new Boys head basketball coach. Eric Danforth will take over for Joel Grindle who resigned two weeks ago after six years on the job.

Indianapolis Colts Quarterback Andrew Luck signed the richest deal in NFL History. The six year deal is worth $140 million dollars. Luck missed 9 games last year to his shoulder, ribs and kidneys.

Muhammad Ali, prize fighter and civil rights activist, died in June. He was buried in Louisville, Kentucky. He was perhaps the top athlete of the 20th century. For what it is worth I would put him at number one but I did not get to see the athletes before 1970 such as Babe Ruth, Jim Thorpe and Jesse Owens.

The Indiana Pacers of the NBA hire a new head coach. Nate McMillan will take over. Frank Vogel was not retained as head coach after his contract ended.

Tom Utley resigned from the Montgomery County Council. He will become the Executive Director of the Crawfordsville/Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Executive Director of Indiana West Advantage.

Projects to beautify the Courthouse were approved by the County Commissioners. The landscape around the new parking lot will be finished and approval was given for a resident to paint the two cannons on the southwest corner of the building.

The public is invited to submit names for the pocket park at the corner of Pike and Washington Street. The eventually winner is “Pike Place”.

Torchbearers were named for the Bicentennial Relay that will be in Montgomery County on October 13th. Those selected as Montgomery County torchbearers are: Christine Amidon, Phil Bane, Bryce Barton, Todd Barton, Beth Binch, Private William Bratton (posthumous), Jane Christophersen, Bob Cox for the Journal Review, Bill Doemel, Suzi Gephart, David Hadley, S. David Long, Pat McDowell, Melissa Patton, Dale Petrie, William Placher (posthumous), Jack Reimondo, William Rossok, Jonathan Schronce and General Lew Wallace (posthumous)

One of the biggest events of the year is the Strawberry Festival held at the Lane Place in Downtown Crawfordsville. In 2016 this was held June 10-12. 292,320 were sold. Each ticket represents 50 cents. The tickets are taken to the individual vendor booths for food or attractions. Entertainment included Country Star John Conlee, the Motown Experience and local acts such as Kasey Burton, Cap Quirk and Dance by Deborah. There are car shows and athletic events which include Softball, Tennis and a 5K Run/Walk.

Crawfordsville Officials took a ride to Lafayette for Indiana Train Day Celebration. The train departed from Indianapolis before stopping in Crawfordsville and then proceeded to Lafayette. Amtrak and Iowa Pacific Officials were also on hand.

The League of Women Voters presented Kathleen Steel with the “Making Democracy Work” award. The award goes to someone who keeps Montgomery County a strong, vibrant place to live and has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to making democracy work.

On June 18th the first “Out of the Darkness” walk was held in Crawfordsville. The event sought to prevent suicide by raising awareness. 220 walkers participated.

The Montgomery County Community Foundation celebrated their 25th anniversary. They have awarded over 17 million dollars to date.

The Crawfordsville City council accepted a 3.8 million dollar bid package for construction of the new fire station on East Main Street.

Charges were filed against Steven Allen Filley resulting from the death of his 5-month-old son Conner. Conner died as a result of “multiple blunt force trauma”. Fast Forward to October where Filley received a 30 year sentence in the Indiana Department of Corrections. The 26 year-old plead guilty to one count of aggravated battery. As part of the plea agreement Filley admitted that the physical abuse he inflicted on his son, Conner, on June 7th ultimately led to the child’s death.

On June 30th 52 adults received their Indiana High School Equivalency Diplomas.

JULY

Every year during July we gather for the Montgomery County 4-H Fair. Here is this year’s Court:

Queen- Rachel Ellington

1st Runner-up- Jennifer Guard

Second Runner-up – Jaclyn LeJeune

Miss Congeniality – Kaitli Chadd

Princess – Tiffany Ellington (Rachel’s Sister)

Princess 1st Runner-up- Caroline McClaskey

Rachel Ellington was also awarded the Elaine Chambers Mental Attitude Award

Llamas, Cows, Sheep, Pigs, Dogs, Cats, Rabbits, Horses, Chickens, Ducks and other animals are showed.

There are musical acts and something called an Excavator Rodeo!

The Summer of 2016 nationally was one of racial unrest stemming from a string of police actions that resulted in the deaths of young African Americans. These sparked protests in the cities where the incidents occurred and across the country. Police officers soon became targets and some were killed themselves. Our country seeks a solution but the answer eludes us.

On a much lighter note the Summer of 2016 also produced one of the most incredible phenomenons ever. Pokémon Go got everybody in an augmented reality chasing Pokémons using their cell phones. People were walking all around town. Downtown Crawfordsville saw a big increase of foot traffic. By fall the fade…faded.

In Sports, Southmont’s Brittany Barrett was named the female track and field athlete of the year. Southmont’s Brooks Long was named the Boy’s Track and Field Athlete of the year.

Sharing the honors for baseball player of the year are Baylee Adams of North Montgomery and Trent Johnson from Crawfordsville.

Softball Player of the Year is Sydney Casteel. She is a division one prospect who has verbally committed to play at Louisiana Tech.

Larry Getts takes over as Head Coach of the Crawfordsville Football team. He is a no nonsense coach who has turned around two programs and will now try to do the same for the Athenians.

July 4th sees celebrations in Crawfordsville and New Richmond. Both feature entertainment and major fireworks! At Milligan Park there was a disc golf tournament. In New Richmond they had numerous things to see and do including a man who used a chainsaw to make wood carvings and a fire eater.

On Tuesday July 5th The City of Crawfordsville and Crawfordsville Fire Department break ground on Fire Station Number 2. After talking about it for years everybody says it is good to see the beginning of the work.

About 20 students attended the MocoRobo Camp. The youngsters worked on Lego Robots.

AUGUST

National Night Out was held on August 1st. Milligan Park is filled with activities for the kids. Police, Sheriff, Crawfordsville Fire and numerous organizations set up fun activities and displays for families. Everything is free!

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall was at the Lane Place from August 12th through 14th. There were several ceremonies associated with the display. The main one being a Welcome Home Parade where a total of 88 veterans were honored. Visitors laid flowers near loved ones’ names and made rubbings of names just like at the actual Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, DC. Tears flowed as families remembered sons and daughters who lost their lives in the war.

Over 300 children attended the Cowboy Camp hosted by Calvary Baptist Church.

The Southmont Royal Mountie Band finished 17th at the State Fair Band Day competition. They were less than one point from making the Sweet 16.

The name of the Pocket Park on the corner of Pike and Washington will be know as Pike Place. Four people suggested the name. Monte Thompson (who owns Thompson Insurance which is located next to the future park), Lou Watkins, Pat Sosbe and Elizabeth Justice.

In a related story the Montgomery County Community Foundation continued to celebrate its 25th anniversary with a presentation of $100,000 to help with the construction of “Pike Place”. The presentation was made during “Lunch on the Plaza” at the Marie Canine Plaza.

Wabash College mourned the loss of a student who died in a plane crash. Among the six people killed in the small plane crash in Fredericksburg, VA were 19 year-old Wabash Sophomore Luke Joseph Borinstein, his mom Lisa and sister Emma.

The TASTE of Montgomery County was held on August 27th at the General Lew Wallace Study and Museum. Treats from area restaurants and caterers are the featured items. Along with the great food and drink there is music on the grounds all day and evening. 2016 marked the 10th TASTE.

On the same day as the TASTE the Ironman National Motocross event took place at Ironman Raceway. This year the facility this year opened an 86 foot coverage bridge for spectators to enter. I was at the ribbon cutting for the bridge. They asked us to the first to sign our names on the bridge. They encourage fans to sign away!

To get ready for the Ironman National Mainstreet organized a “Finish Line Festival” with activities and food for those in town for the races. Downtown Crawfordsville was the site of the celebration

Always popular – The Ladoga Lions Club Fish Fry. It’s a three day event with food, entertainment and a fireworks show on one of the nights. This is the 76th year for the event.

There was a new movie that understandably got some attention in Montgomery County. Ben-Hur did not do much at the box office nationally but locals enjoyed seeing the movie inspired by General Lew Wallace’s 1880 best selling classic. Two other movies told the story. One in 1925 and the other 1959 with legendary movie star Charlton Heston playing Ben-Hur.

The Class of 2020 at Wabash College were welcomed at the annual “Ringing In” Ceremony in Pioneer Chapel. The bell used by President Greg Hess was the same one that belonged to Wabash’s first educator Caleb Mills. There are 226 men in the class.

August marks the start of the High School Football season.

The Crawfordsville Ivy Tech Campus gets a visit from Ivy Tech President Sue Ellspermann. The Former Lieutenant Governor of Indiana is in her first year as President. There are 400 students at the local Ivy Tech campus.

On Wednesday August 24th we had a tornado that went through Linnsburg, Mace and other parts of Southern Montgomery County. There was major damage to many homes. There was a minor injury. The following day Indiana Governor and Vice Presidential Candidate Mike Pence, Lt. Governor Eric Holcomb, US Senator Joe Donnelly and US Congressman Todd Rokita were in the area looking at the damage and pledging support from the State and Federal Government. I had a chance to interview the Governor on the radio. A community relief effort was set up through MUFFY.

Southmont High School becomes one of the first schools in the state to offer a computer science curriculum.

SEPTEMBER

Every September the Community comes together to help a child suffering from a life threatening illness at the J.D. Taylor Golf Scramble. J.D. Taylor was diagnosed with a brain tumor at age 9 and died at age 13 in 2009. He died the day before the first ever J.D. Taylor Golf Scramble. That event was organized by friends of the family to raise money for his medical expenses. The Taylor Family decided to keep the event going and each year they choose a family who needs support. I have covered most of these events and I can tell you the financial part of the event is big but the emotional lift is equally important. This year the event raised money to help 7-year-old Addi Leslie. Addi was diagnosed with a brain tumor in 2014. I had a chance to interview the family. Addi is a kid but also a courageous fighter.

Football took center stage on September 2nd with a pair of games that will go down as the best of the season. At Southmont the Mounties spotted the North Montgomery Chargers 24 in the second quarter. Incredibly the Mounties scored 28 unanswered in route to a 41-31 victory. Kyle Nunemaker rushed for 197 yards and ran for two TD’s in the scintillating comeback. At Crawfordsville A.J. Johnson stopped the Western Boone Stars rushing attempt on a two point conversion with 37.3 seconds left to preserve a 28-27 win.

Keeping with the theme on Saturday September 3rd the Wabash Little Giants captured an OT Thriller at over Albion. Tyler Downing provided the winning score with a one-yard TD. Conner Rice hit Oliver Page on an 8-yard TD pass to force the extra session.

No County Football Champion in 2016. Crawfordsville defeated Southmont and North Montgomery defeated Crawfordsville. All thre county schools get a win against one of their county rivals.

On September 9th 7500 participants crawled through extreme conditions at the Warrior Dash at Ironman Raceway. The course is laid out by Tom Shaver at the facilities that host the Ironman National Motocross event and the Ironman.

On Monday September 12th our local hospital changed their name. It will hence be none as Franciscan Health Crawfordsville. The Mishawaka-based Franciscan Alliance will now be know as Franciscan Health. Each city they are located will fill out the name of that facility. They are located in 14 cities. 12 in Indiana and 2 in Illinois.

20 years in the making the city of New Ross opened a new fire station on Saturday September 10th. The 5,800 square foot facility has five bay doors and can house 9 large pieces of firefighting apparatus. The money raised for the facility came from numerous fundraisers like the annual fish fry. Funds also came from the Montgomery County Community Foundation.

Waynetown Indiana once again welcomed the public to the Waynetown Fish Fry September 15-17. There were rides for the kids, music and the William Barton Day Parade which was held on Saturday. Rob Durrett dresses up and portrays William Bratton in the community at big events. One of the few interviews that I have done that could play without having to update it! There was also a baby contest!

On September 24th the the future home of Pike Place Park and the Farmer’s Market hosted the Harvest Hoopla which celebrated the State’s Bicentennial. There was a great turnout.

On September 17th Franciscan Health Crawfordsville hosted Community Day. Activities, educational opportunities and free food brought a good crowd to the facility.

For the 44th straight year the Men of Wabash go Door to Door throughout Crawfordsville to raise money for the Montgomery United Fund for You.

It is called the Wabash/MUFFY Residential Drive.

MUFFY also raised money as local law enforcement officers and firefighters

met on the softball diamond on Saturday September 24th!

Homecoming Courts- Southmont Kelly Tucker and Charlie Bullerdick,

North Montgomery – Scout Groves and Andrew Brown, Crawfordsville- Queen Cali Saunders- No King Listed at Cville.

The St. Bernard Bazaar celebrated their 150th event in the bicentennial year of 2016. Funds raised go to the church and local non-profits, FISH Food Pantry, Habitat for Humanity, HUB Ministries and the Crawfordsville Rotary Club’s efforts in Haiti.

OCTOBER

15 percent of Crawfordsville High School students are Hispanic or Latino. The students are fluent in English but many of their families are not. The school held an outreach called Hispanic Parents Night. It was part of College Go Week to explain higher education opportunities. The entire night was presented in Spanish, thanks to the Director of Admissions for Ivy Tech Lafayette, Ivan Hernandez.

Girls Soccer Sectional – Western Boone ends Crawfordsville’s season with a 6-0 win. North Montgomery advances with a 2-1 overtime victory over Greencastle.

Boys Soccer Sectional - Crawfordsville defeats North Montgomery 5-1. Southmont’s season ends with a 3-2 loss to Western Boone. Crawfordsville wins the Sectional in a double Overtime match 2-1 over Western Boone. Jesus Acosta scored the game winning goal.

 On October 13th 20 torch bearers representing Montgomery County will carry the torch through Crawfordsville. Every county in Indiana will have the torch and famous citizens who have contributed to the state’s history will carry it. Mayor Todd Barton was the first to take the torch. The former fireman got on a fire truck to start the relay. Before he took the torch there were musical numbers from High School Bands. There were speeches. All local fourth graders were on hand for the kickoff that was held on the courthouse steps.

As part of the Bicentennial Celebration on October 13th a “Tree of Hope” was planted on the lawn of the Lane Place. The tree is an Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry Tree. Montgomery County Community Foundation funded the tree planting. Sue Lucas of Sustainable Initiatives of Montgomery County helped in the planting along with Steve Frees of the Montgomery County Historical Society, Crawfordsville Mayor Todd Barton, MCHS Member Mike Barton, Montgomery County Commissioner Jim Fulwider, Lane Place Curator Barry Norton and Montgomery County Visitors and Convention Bureau Director Heather Shirk.

Also on October 13th Crawfordsville High School student Tommy Edwards died in a two vehicle accident. He was a player on the Baseball team a French Club member.

The annual Chapel Sing took place on October 6th . Members of the Class of 2020 at Wabash were tested on their knowledge of the words to “Old Wabash”, one of the oldest fight songs in the nation. It was held once again in front of Pioneer Chapel.

There are many runs in our community but only one that features costumes! The Funky Five K benefits the Youth Service Bureau. Brian Bartlett won the adult category with a Pirate Get up. Other participants wore multi-colored wigs, camouflage and tutus.

Indiana West Advantage suffers a blow when the County Council decides to cut funding from $75,000 to $50,000. Subsequent days would turn even worse for the organization. In early 2017 the City of Crawfordsville announced they would cut all funding to IWA and replace it with a five-member panel made up of elected officials. Officials feel the City and County should take over economic development efforts.

The North Montgomery High School Marching Band performed at Disney World during fall break.

For a scary good time the Rotary Jail hosted its Haunted Jail for two weekends. It is not for the faint of heart!

High School Football Sectional First Round games were played on Friday October 21st. North Montgomery defeated Crawfordsville and Southmon lost to Monrovia. North Montgomery would lose in round two to Twin Lakes.

The 22nd annual Amsoil Ironman was held Oct 29th and October 30th at Ironman Raceway.

A time honored tradition was held Monday October 24th when local 8th graders participated in the Realty Store. The event is sponsored by the Indiana Business and Professional Women. The students are given a profession based on their GPA. Then they pay taxes, buy a car, get insurance and pay rent. They may even have to get a second job. Some get a speeding ticket! I have participated in this event for several years. I think I have sold over 100 vehicles!

On October 25th Nucor Steel gave an award to Indiana US Senator Joe Donnelly. He is now a Man of Steel because of he is a great advocate for the steel industry. Nucor Vice President and General Manager Jeff Powers presented the award.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. On October 29th the community participants in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk which begins at Wabash College at Hollett Little Giant Stadium. Businesses are lending a hand with a “Paint the Town Pink” day with downtown merchants donating a portion of their proceeds to Strides. I was the MC of the event. Highlights of the event include a salute to survivors and a personal account from a woman who has fought a personal battle with breast cancer.

Another emphasis in October is National Red Ribbon Week. During this week people are encouraged to wear Red Ribbons to promote a drug free life.

October also has Halloween. On October 31st the City of Crawfordsville set 5 pm to 8 pm as a time for Trick-or-Treaters.

NOVEMBER

Nucor Donated 17,000 to purchase and train a new K-9 service Dog for the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Department. The two current K-9 Units are expected to retire very soon.

But what there’s more….Another K-9 Unit will be replaced! The source of the funding is from the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation. He the Quarterback of the Pittsburgh Steelers. It was a $10,000 gift.

On Sunday November 6th nearly every truck that Montgomery County Highway Department uses was lost in a huge fire. The damage was estimated at 3 million dollars. The cause of the blaze was never determined. The fire was put down very quickly but not before several explosions that were heard all around the city. Counties in the area have offered vehicles to help during this time. There is not expected to be any drop off of service due to the loss. Officially the vehicles lost were 13 tandem trucks, two service trucks, mowers, chainsaws, hand tools and the 180 by 80 metal building.

Veterans were honored in downtown Crawfordsville on the 11th. The gathering was held at the Marie Canine Plaza.

The Wabash College football season ended on a sour note with a 37-34 loss to DePauw in the Monon Bell Classic. Wabash took the lead with 2:06 left in the game when Conner Rice hint Oliver Page on a 20 yard pass. DePauw QB Matt Hunt answered with a 13-yard TD strike to his brother Andy to provide the winning score. It was the 123rd Monon Bell Classic. The Wabash streak of 7 Bell wins in a row ends and the Little Giants quest for a conference title and a post season tournament berth went away with the loss.

Saturday November 26th was the night for Downtown Party Night. Thousands of people gather starting at around 5 pm. There is the lighting of the Community Christmas Tree, music and Carolers and stores open late. The Vanity Singers perform and there are carriage rides! Always making a special appearance is Santa Claus. This is a great event to kickoff the Christmas Season! It is always held the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

The North Montgomery Football team celebrated the 20th anniversary of it’s second straight football championship in 1996. It was a thriller 37-34 over Fort Wayne Luers.

Sam Jackman the North Montgomery High School Student who is battling cancer returned to the basketball court. He started for the Chargers JV in a game played in Speedway. It was a busy month for Sam. On Thanksgiving he was on the field helping the coin flip before the Colts-Steelers game at Lucas Oil Stadium.

A ribbon cutting for a new Solar Park was held in Waynetown. Representatives of Waynetown, Waynetown Utilities and Indiana Munciple Power Agency were on hand to christen the facility that contains 1008 solar panels and is generating 250 kilowatts of electricity which is being used in the town. The investment is about $700,000.

Sydney Casteel of Southmont makes it official and signs with Louisiana Tech to play softball. As a freshman she was a big part of a tournament run that ended with loss by one run in the state title game. She is also an excellent student and could have gone to any number of schools. Her father is Montgomery County Sheriff Mark Casteel.

In November local residents got a look at the Historic Whitlock Place formerly Culver Union Hospital. The building now houses 56 apartments.

On November 14th Holocaust Survivor Eva Kor spoke at Wabash College. It was an overflow crowd at Baxter Hall. The 82-year-old Romanian held the attention of the audience and told her story of horror which ended up being a story of grace and forgiveness. Kor survived Auschwitz. Her family was separated but being a twin the Germans did keep her and her twin sister together. They had to undergo cruel medical tests including experimental drugs that almost killed her.

November 17th will go down as one of the most tragic days in this or any other year. The crime unimaginable. In the small town of Darlington a mother, Brandi Worley, stabbed her two children before daybreak. She also stabbed herself. She then called 911 and matter of factor said, “I just stabbed myself and killed my two children.” Dead were Tyler Worley age 7 and his younger sister Charlee age 3. The children’s father Jason was asleep in the basement when the murders occurred. The incident occurred one day after Jason filed for divorce in Montgomery Superior Court 2. Brandi Worley was charged with two counts of murder in Montgomery Circuit Court Friday November 18th.

DECEMBER

The stories surrounding the double murder of two children in Darlington continue. Brandi Worley confessed to the killings when she called 911. The dispatcher was Kyle Procter. Proctor was praised for his handling of the call.

A YouTube start helped raise money for the father of Tyler and Charlee Philip DeFranco has 4.9 million subscribers. He promoted a GoFundMe Page for his fan Jason Worley on his video blog. The page was startled by Worley’s boss and has raised over $51,000 at this writing.

There were a scheduled 84 units in the Annual Downtown Crawfordsville Christmas Parade sponsored by the Crawfordsville Montfgomery County Chamber of Commerce. This year’s theme was “An Olden Christmas”. The Southmont Marching Band, Youth Groups, Businesses, Royalty (Strawberry Festival, 4-H Fair and others), Churches, Law Enforcement and Fire Departments, Animals and of course Santa Claus all marched down Main Street. I have to report that the weather for the event was in a word miserable. It rained the whole parade. You can prepare and dress accordingly for cold and snow but the rain is another matter. The parade went on as scheduled despite the soggy conditions. I had the honor or providing the narration along with Laura Clore.

Cam Chadd had 21 points in Southmont’s 72-46 win over North Montgomery in Boy’s Basketball. The Mounties defense was strong and did not allow a Charger point until 2:43 to go in the first quarter.

Macy Zachary from Southmont was named the Girls Soccer player of the year by the Journal Review. Zachary scored 40 goals and lead the Lady Mounties to a county title.

Freshman Madison Fry won the Montgomery County Cross Country meet. Adding to that was being named the Journal Review Girls Cross County Runner of the year. For the Boys the award went to

Crawfordsville Boys Basketball is off to their best start since 2009. They defeated North Montgomery 66-45. James Gineris Scored 19 points in the victory that raised the Athenians record to 4-1.

In Girls Basketball North Montgomery beat Crawfordsville 48-28. Caroline McClaskey scored 18 in the Charger win.

The County now has replaced all the vehicles lost in the November fire. We now have a fleet ready for winter. Nearby counties have loaned vehicles until the insurance claims are worked out and permanent replacement vehicles arrive.

The Montgomery County Highway Department has an interim director. Current Director Rod Jenkins suffered a stroke and has been hospitalized. Jeremy Phillips will be the interim director.

There was a significant ice event on December 16th. Yours truly was on Interstate 74 during the worst of it. We were out of town and driving back to Crawfordsville. We witnessed numerous cars sliding off the road. There were numerous accidents that night. The ice continued into Saturday and Sunday but not nearly as bad as Friday Night. Authorities reported 25 vehicle crashes on Friday and Saturday. Fortunately no one was injured in the mishaps.

Football player of the year in the area was Wade Bentley of Fountain Central. The 5-10 175 Pound QB passed for 2,256 yards and 37 touchdowns and ran for 1,285 yards and 15 scores. He played defense too and finished with 85 tackles.

And as 2016 comes to a close the winners of the General Election in November take their oath of office. They do so on Friday December 30th.