



BOOT CAMPERS

Edinburgh football team gets military-style workout
PREP SPORTS A8

Hoop dreams fulfilled in tourney A8

Free Time

A GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES FOR AVAILABLE, FREE OF CHARGE

CHEAP TRAVEL

Show features day lilies

HAVE FUN

This weekend — and beyond
FREE TIME B5-B7

DAILY JOURNAL

dailyjournal.net

THURSDAY, JULY 8, 2010

Johnson County, Indiana

75 cents

WEATHER



Today

Skies: Partly sunny, humid
Temps: High 90; low 72

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BREAST CANCER

Help us tell the story

No one wants to hear this diagnosis: You've got breast cancer.

But nearly everyone has been touched by the disease that knows no socio-economic boundaries.

No doubt, the journey through breast cancer can be life-changing and challenging. There's disbelief, fear, hope and inspiration.

The Daily Journal plans to publish a series of stories about breast cancer.

We want to talk to men and women who are facing the diagnosis, breast cancer survivors, family members — husbands, wives, sisters, brothers and children — who have gone on the journey with a loved one, and nurses and doctors who are on the front lines caring for people with the disease.

The stories can serve to let others know they are not alone and can be life-affirming.

Are you a breast cancer survivor? Do you know a doctor or nurse whose life's work is caring for breast cancer patients? How has breast cancer affected your life?

Let us know so we can tell your story. Call 736-2712 or e-mail newstips@dailyjournal.net.

FREE TIME

Need something to do?

Want to have your own events added to our weekly Free Time listing?

The best way to get your event publicized is to get the information to us at least three weeks in advance.

Make sure to include all pertinent information and a phone number in case we have any questions. Send photographs if possible.

E-mail the information to freetime@dailyjournal.net or mail it to Free Time, Daily Journal, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

DEATHS

Franklin
Mildred Fay McMahon, 86

Nineveh
Velma Robertson, 89

Indianapolis
James Joseph Galt, 72
Thomas L. Richart, 48
James R. Rose, 83
Mondis A. Sandefur Jr., 88
Althene Turner, 81

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C-P maps 3-year facilities plan

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: CAPITAL PROJECTS

Each school district has a capital projects budget that uses property tax money to pay for maintenance, technology and small construction projects such as roof work.

With few exceptions, tax money collected for capital projects cannot be spent for salaries or benefits.

The district could pay for part of a technology employee's salary with capital projects money since, technically, that person's salary is a technology expense.

Following are a few pieces of Clark-Pleasant's proposed three-year capital projects plan:

- Saving \$1.2 million during the next three years to help pay for a new elementary school or building addition when needed. The amount isn't a final goal; the district likely would collect and save money annually until a new school or building addition were built.
- Setting aside \$98,000 a year for purchasing and developing land
- Spending \$200,000 a year for school sports facilities projects and upkeep
- Spending about \$230,000 a year for the continuing rental of portable classrooms at the high school

Officials want to save for new school

By JASON MICHAEL WHITE
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
jwhite@dailyjournal.net

Clark-Pleasant wants to start saving money for a new elementary school or building addition, which could be needed five to 10 years from now.

But school officials question whether they'll actually be able

WHAT'S NEXT

The Clark-Pleasant school board is putting together a three-year plan for maintenance, construction and technology expenses. School board members plan to vote on the plan Aug. 17.

to save the money and still pay for yearly maintenance costs and technology upgrades. If they

have to cut capital projects spending, savings for an elementary school would be one of the first expenses to go.

The school district is planning all the construction, maintenance, technology and equipment needed during the next three years. The plan calls for saving

(SEE PLAN, BACK PAGE)

Book aimed at helping youngsters cope with problems will be ...

TEEN'S LEGACY



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@dailyjournal.net

From left, Portia Shoemaker, 15, Phil Norris, 17, and Kailey Davenport, 16, were among a group of Franklin students who wrote

a book called "Common Ground" in honor of Daniel Mercer. Mercer died in 2006 at age 19 after developing a brain tumor.

Students write book to honor Mercer

By ANNIE GOELLER
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
agoeller@dailyjournal.net

A child is taunted at school or made fun of for having big ears, a stutter or being taller than everyone else.

Or a child is missing a parent due to a death, a divorce or a war overseas.

Timothy, the subject of a book written by Franklin teenagers, can help children learn how to face and overcome these challenges in their lives by showing how he coped.

Timothy, a 12-year-old, copes with a stutter that other children make fun of, a bully who harasses him and the recent death of his mother.

The students who wrote the



A group of Franklin teenagers wrote "Common Ground" in honor of Daniel Mercer.

book picked those challenges because they thought children could best relate to them, said

Kailey Davenport, a soon-to-be junior who was the lead writer.

Three teachers and five students from Franklin schools worked together to write "Common Ground" in honor of Daniel Mercer, who died in 2006 at age 19 after developing a brain tumor.

Their goal was to help teach students how to deal with the everyday challenges they face at home and at school.

Mercer would have liked the idea behind the book because he enjoyed mentoring children, even in the final days of his life in a hospital bed, his father, Jeff Mercer, said.

"This is an extension of what he was all about," said Mercer, who also is the school district's director of business and operations.

Students and teachers began working on the book last year, and now 3,500 copies are being published. The book was paid for with money raised in a golf outing in Daniel Mercer's honor, his father said.

Schools around the county and hospitals will get copies of the book for free, along with others who request them, Mercer said.

Five Franklin Community High School students were picked to write the book, and three teachers edited their writing by fixing grammar, using concise language and eliminating repetition.

Students would brainstorm for ideas and then write individually, with Davenport putting the

(SEE MERCER, BACK PAGE)

"He was a special kid. He left his life so early, and it was just to kind of keep his memory alive."

Lori Self-Gross, middle school English teacher

On Daniel Mercer's life and the purpose of the book written in his honor

Your best-seller overdue at library? Just charge it

By JOSEPH S. PETE
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
jpete@dailyjournal.net

Johnson County residents soon will be able to pay court fees or other government charges with the credit cards they use for many other everyday purchases.

Three more local governments recently accept or plan to accept credit card payments this year. The Johnson County Clerk's Office, the Franklin sanitation business office and the Johnson County Public Library system all want to make it more convenient for residents to pay with plastic.

Convenience comes with a price. Most credit card purchases with local governments have

AT A GLANCE: CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS

More governments are accepting credit card payments after residents asked for the service.

Johnson County Clerk's Office

What: Child support payments, court fees such as for drug programs, court fines and copies of documents such as divorce decrees

How: Online at GovPayNOW.com, at the Johnson County Courthouse or by calling 346-4450

added fees of at least a few dollars, so taxpayers aren't paying the processing costs.

Local governments are trying to catch up with businesses that let customers swipe their cards or pay online, said Sara Reese, finan-

cial manager of the library system.

"People use credit cards all the time, whether at the gas station, at fast food restaurants or paying their monthly bills," she said. "They've come to expect it, and

we're trying to respond to that."

Residents have grown so accustomed to using debit or credit cards that many no longer carry much cash or a checkbook, Reese said. But local governments have

adjusted only gradually to the change.

Residents can pay their property tax bills, rent a shelter house at a Franklin park or pay a speeding ticket in the Greenwood City Court with plastic. But they can't use credit cards for many other routine government transactions, such as getting building permits in either Franklin or Greenwood.

Banks charge local governments a percentage of every transaction to cover processing costs. Most governments, including the Johnson County Treasurer's Office and the

(SEE CHARGE, BACK PAGE)

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(SEE CHARGE, BACK PAGE)

Agencies see calls for help shifting

Many in need no longer seek funds just to get by

By SARAH MICHALOS
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
smichalos@dailyjournal.net

Local churches and assistance agencies are seeing fewer people asking for help to pay rent or utilities.

Instead, ministers are getting requests such as a bus pass to get to a new job or money for new work clothes.

The number of people calling for help has dropped by 50 percent at some churches, which ministers said could be a sign the economic recession is ending.

But other nonprofit agencies still are seeing a growing need as people run out of unemployment. They're asking the community for donations of food, money and time.

Whiteland United Methodist Church used to get five or six requests a week from people who couldn't keep food on the shelves or gas in the tank, Pastor Joe Wyatt said.

Last week, one person called for help. "We have seen a tapering off, and I would like to believe that's a good sign," he said.

Mount Pleasant Christian Church is writing about half as many checks to landlords and utility companies compared with six months ago, congregational care pastor Spence Tuttle said.

Tuttle doesn't closely monitor the number of people the church helps each month, but typically the money he's given to spend is gone within the first week of the month. In June, Tuttle had money left into the third week.

The type of requests also are changing. People no longer need help to make next month's rent or money to pay for utilities to be turned back on.

One woman recently asked for about \$200 to buy a bus pass so

(SEE HELP, PAGE A5)

INSIDE

Take a look at local nonprofits and what donations are needed.

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