



DAILY JOURNAL

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2009

Johnson County, Indiana

50 cents

WEATHER



Today
Skies: Intermittent clouds
Temps: High 42; low 35

MAP, PAGE A8

AT THE STATEHOUSE

Senate OKs teen driving bill

The state Senate has approved a bill that would ban most teen drivers from using cell phones and impose other restrictions on young people behind the wheel.

The Senate voted 43-6 for the bill Thursday and sent it to the House for consideration.

Under the bill, teen drivers with learner's permits would be required to log 50 hours of supervised driving experience before getting a driver's license. And drivers younger than 18 would be banned from using cell phones or other handheld communication devices while behind the wheel.

TELL YOUR STORY

Got any tips for Cupid?

Valentine's Day is fast approaching, a time when romance rules and love is in the air — or not.

The Daily Journal is looking for people who have their own take on the holiday.

Send your ideas and stories to rtrares@dailyjournal.net. The best and most original will be part of a Feb. 14 package in the Accent section.

Survivors share memories

No one wants to hear this diagnosis: You've got cancer. But nearly everyone has been touched by the disease that knows no socioeconomic boundaries.

The Daily Journal plans to tell the stories of people who have faced all types of cancer for an upcoming special section.

Are you a cancer survivor? Let us know so we can tell your story. Call 736-2712 or e-mail newstips@dailyjournal.net.

WEB EXTRA

Get the early edition

For a sneak preview of what stories reporters are working on, sign up for the Daily Journal e-mail news update. You can subscribe by sending an e-mail to newsupdate@dailyjournal.net. Put "subscribe" in the subject line.

DEATHS

Franklin

Catherine S. Followell, 76
Avert Gerald Roy, 81

Greenwood

Don Joins Craighead, 81
Esther Elaine Sayles, 75

Indianapolis

Charles P. Baker, 56
Eugene McElhaney 63
Anthony Santana, infant

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STAFF PHOTO BY KATY YEISER

Sophomores Thomas Struchen and Haley Ault go over geometry lessons during class at Franklin Community High School on Thursday.

State loosens school rules

Teachers don't have to stick to textbooks; students can skip some classes

By KATY YEISER
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
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Parents take notice: Your child might be carrying a lighter book bag soon.

The Indiana Board of Education has repealed several education requirements, including requiring teachers to have a textbook in class.

The new state schools chief says the move will give teachers the flexibility they need to be creative

Inside: Bill would make schools teach financial responsibility. **Back Page**

in addressing student learning.

Other changes include repealing the required number of minutes students need to be in classrooms each week.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett, who heads the board, said Wednesday that the changes are a first step

toward eliminating unnecessary requirements that handcuff schools. "Teachers and principals have repeatedly expressed to me their frustration with regulations that prevent them from delivering the best possible instruction to their students," Bennett said in a news release.

The superintendent of public school instruction took away several requirements to give school officials more local control. Some of the changes include:

- Letting teachers bypass textbooks for alternative learning tools, such as Internet sources and instructional software
- Letting principals waive the requirement for students to complete physical education
- Repealing the requirement for students to attend high school for seven semesters
- Waiving the requirement for each student to have 250 minutes of

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"We need to measure success by what students are actually learning, not by how many minutes they're sitting in a particular class each week."

Tony Bennett, Indiana school superintendent on relaxing some state educational regulations

"It can be crushing to lose a job. But you can only spend one week in the fetal position, and then you have to get up, get dressed, get out there and talk to as many people as you can."

Jenny Jacobs
Franklin resident on losing her job

POSITION WANTED

[Losing a job poses hardships. Finding a new one is a challenging job all by itself.]



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@dailyjournal.net

Franklin resident Steve Zeilinga uses his computer to look for a job at his Franklin home. Zeilinga has been unemployed for months after Hovair relocated to southern Indiana.

Agencies can sift through applicants for firms

By JOSEPH S. PETE
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After 23 years in the Marsh corporate office, Franklin resident Gail Wood lost her job as a marketing manager during a round of downsizing. She served as financial manager of a church but had to leave to take care of her ill husband.

Now she's trying to find work at a time when businesses are contracting instead of hiring. Wood has scattered her résumé across the Internet, worked with placement agencies and applied for several positions, including as an administrative assistant.

Wood and other job seekers have been bombarding staffing agencies at a time when job openings are scarce.

Hundreds of people have applied for some openings, and many job seekers are willing to take steep cuts from their previous pay just to keep up with bills, staffing agency owners said.

More white-collar workers are tying to get placed, and businesses sometimes fill two openings with one new hire. Companies that don't traditionally hire through staffing agencies, such as insurance firms, have sought their help to sift through mountains of résumés when they do need to fill a position.

Compared with two years ago, three times more job seekers are coming to the Franklin office of Divine Staffing, which is trying to fill half as many jobs, owner Betty Haworth said.

"When Arvin closed, that was hard; but we were able to place most of the people quickly," she said. "But this is much worse. This rippled out, and this affects everyone."

Large manufacturers no longer are hiring temporary workers, Haworth said. Companies that have openings can pick and choose among a long list of potential candidates.

Jenny Jacobs of Franklin found an office job through Divine last week, six months

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Credit to steady housing market?

Real-estate industry hopes tax break will turn things around

By ALAN ZIBEL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For Gail Robinson, a real estate agent in Connecticut who has seen her business limp along since the stock market plummeted last year, it was the best news in ages.

With Congress considering a new tax credit intended to turn around the battered housing market, she hopes lawmakers have found the long-awaited silver bullet. She was busy Thursday sending out about 200 e-mails to potential clients about federal plans to give buyers a subsidy of up to \$15,000 for all home purchases.

"My whole firm is excited about it," Robinson said. "It could bring in a whole new set of buyers." The new credit, approved by the Senate on Wednesday night, works like this: Buyers would get 10 percent of the purchase price of any home, up to \$15,000, applied to their tax bill.

Consumers would be allowed to spread out the credit over two years, making it possible for those who pay less than \$15,000 in taxes to benefit. Anyone who buys a home within a year of the bill's signature would qualify. To deter speculators, buyers must occupy the house as their main residence for at least two years.

But the tax incentive is likely to be more helpful to buyers in less expensive markets, said Christopher Thornberg, an economist with Beacon Economics in Los Angeles. "Unfortunately, in the places that are most hard-hit, like California, it's going to have less of an impact," he said.

Sen. Johnny Isakson, a Georgia Republican and former real estate agent, introduced the new tax credit that's estimated to cost the government nearly \$19 billion as part of President Barack Obama's economic stimulus package. It's modeled after a similar measure in the mid-1970s.

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Count on census to hire scores of temporary workers

By MAGEN KRITSCH
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The U.S. Census Bureau will be hiring Johnson County residents to conduct the 2010 census.

Full- and part-time jobs will be available to residents who apply to be census takers, crew leaders, crew leader assistants and recruiting leaders in the census.

The census bureau is adding 5,700 jobs in central and southern

TO APPLY: For an employment application for jobs with the U.S. Census Bureau, call (866) 861-2010 or go online to 2010censusjobs.gov.

Indiana to perform the census.

The census is a population count that takes place every 10 years and is used to gather economic and population information in the country and is used to apportion congressional representation.

Jobs will be available to Johnson

County residents in four job categories, said Muriel Jackson, spokeswoman for the U.S. Census Bureau.

Applications for the jobs are being accepted now; however, most people hired won't begin work until around April, Jackson said.

Workers are needed in April to walk door to door and update address lists for the census.

Other workers will be hired on an ongoing basis over the next year and a half as stages of the census progress, Jackson said.

Crew leaders and other management positions will oversee the census takers who go door to door. All the jobs pay \$12.50 an hour to \$14 an hour. None of the jobs comes with benefits, Jackson said.

All appointments are on an eight-week basis. Employees' work appointments may be renewed until May 2010.

Applicants must pass a 30-minute employment test on reading maps, basic math and organizational skills, according to a news

release from the bureau. Jackson stressed that the bureau will hire workers at every skill and education level.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, be at least 18 years of age, have a valid Social Security number and pass a skills test and background check.

To apply, call the U.S. Census Bureau's toll-free number at (866) 861-2010 or visit 2010censusjobs.gov. A practice skills test can be found on the Web site.