

May

May 2

Franklin College and Partnership for a Healthier Johnson County lit 1,600 candles in front of the county courthouse to kick off the nationally recognized Cover the Uninsured Week to educate people about health insurance. The candles represented county residents who didn't have health insurance.

Hannah Streeval, 18, a senior at Edinburg Community High School, and Tim Six, 18, a senior at Greenwood Community High School, were awarded full four-year scholarships as Johnson County Community Foundation 2005 Lilly Endowment Community Scholars. Streeval planned to attend Anderson University, and Six planned to attend Purdue University.

May 3

The Franklin father convicted of smothering his 7-month-old son was trying to get his three-year-old conviction thrown out. Ronald Shanabarger's public defender challenged the murder conviction and asked a judge to reconsider the sentence.

A 13-month-old Haitian boy was headed for life-saving surgery in Indianapolis thanks to Chapel Hill United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. Elson Armouse had a tumor on his gums so large that he had to be fed with a syringe.

May 4

Franklin and Greenwood city council members lost a chance to gain sales-tax revenue and lower property-tax bills without taking a vote. Franklin and Greenwood, unlike several major municipalities around Marion County, did not have the option of imposing a 1 percent restaurant tax, according to the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns.

The man accused of pulling a gun on an Internal Revenue Service agent in Greenwood would not face federal charges. John L. Plemons, 62, of Beech Grove did face two Johnson County charges of criminal recklessness and pointing a deadly firearm, both Class D felonies. Each carried a penalty of six months to three years in prison. His trial was scheduled for July.

May 5

County commissioners and Johnson Memorial Hospital were negotiating a contract to determine how much taxpayers would pay for jail inmates' health care.

The plan to build a kindergarten center in Franklin would require some of the district's youngest children to have the longest bus rides of any students.

May 6

City council member Ron Bates wanted voters to decide whether Greenwood would seek to alter its state status to second class, which would change some of the city's government structure and allow it to more easily borrow money.

A student at Indian Creek High School was awarded a scholarship in honor of Kate Comiskey, the 24-year-old teacher who was killed in a car accident in November 2004. Indian Creek senior Jordan Schaaf, a student in one of Comiskey's classes, was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship.

May 7-8

Fourteen people were chosen to determine whether two Johnson County residents were guilty of a crime for favoring prayer over medical treatment and were responsible for their infant daughter's death. The trial was for DeWayne and Maleta Schmidt, who each faced a charge of reckless homicide for not seeking medical attention for their daughter in August 2003.

County council member Ron West wanted to create a board that would control where some residents would get their sewer services. Greenwood and Bargersville had battled for nearly six years over hundreds of new sewer customers in White River Township. The board would create a master plan for sewer services so subdivisions are not left without sewers.

May 9

A Nineveh woman who was held in the Johnson County jail died after falling from an upper bunk in her cell. MiEstrella C. "Misty" Morning, 42, was found dead in a cell bed, about 14 hours after jail officers said she fell after trying to get down from the top bunk. An autopsy performed in Indianapolis showed Morning's death was accidental and caused by internal abdominal injuries.

Center Grove school district explored opening an alternative high school in the basement of the new White River Township government center for students who faced expulsion.

May 10

Homebuilders who constructed new houses in Johnson County could pay an extra \$50 for business-development services to fund Johnson County Development Corp. if commissioners approved the increase. Johnson County was paying about \$25,000 a year to the development corporation. Commissioners said that wasn't enough to do the work necessary to attract new businesses.

A 1-year-old boy secured only by a lap belt was hanging upside down in the front passenger seat of a van after a collision southwest of Trafalgar. The baby, Jason Paro Jr., was taken by helicopter to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis after the GMC Safari driven by Paro's father, Jason Paro, crashed head-on with a Lincoln Towncar driven by Charles Blake.

May 11

Crisis-line coordinator Karen Geaben had spent the past 15 years on duty 24 hours a day helping children in need. As home-host coordinator for Johnson County's Safe Place program, the soon-to-be retiree had made referrals to counseling, listened to people vent about family situations and given children a safe place to go.

May 12

Three Franklin teachers faced possibly losing their jobs. Superintendent William Patterson said administrators were trying to make sure the number of teachers was based on the number of students in each area and was not a cost-cutting measure. Officials hoped to use money from the layoffs to hire at least two new staff members for other positions.

Greenwood Police Chief Joe Pitcher was reviewing the department's special teams and programs. In April he decided to close and sell the department's DNA lab. More recently, he had decided to give the department's dive-team equipment to the fire department, which had its own 15-member water-rescue team.

May 13

Dewayne and Maleta Schmidt were convicted of reckless homicide in the August 2003 death of their newborn daughter. After deliberating for more than six hours, a jury decided the parents committed a crime when they refused medical treatment and instead chose prayer to heal their sick newborn.

May 14-15

Franklin Mayor Norman P. Blankenship Jr. died of complications from a brain tumor. He was diagnosed with cancer in December 2003.

May 16

A 19-year-old man was shot outside Greek's Pizzeria in Greenwood. Police found 2 ounces of marijuana in the victim's pants pocket, and investigators suspected the shooting happened because the man stole drugs from the pizzeria owner. The owner, Robert M. Kutruff of Franklin, was arrested on charges of attempted murder and dealing marijuana.

Jody Gilman, a custodian at Franklin Community High School, was earning her diploma at the school while working. For a couple of hours each day, she took classes with other students and was on track to earn her diploma in 2007.

May 17

Eric S. Jett of Franklin told police he was frustrated with his infant son's crying when he threw him onto a bed, knocking him unconscious, and that he heard the baby's ribs pop when he squeezed him. Doctors discovered that the 3-month-old had 18 rib fractures, two leg bone fractures and two head injuries. Jett was charged with three counts of battery resulting in serious bodily injury.

Arvin Meritor had a potential buyer for its Franklin plant that had closed in September 2004. A real estate agent working with the potential buyer said the nearly 540,000-square-foot building could be divided into space for five or six tenants.

May 18

The funeral procession for Franklin Mayor Norman P. Blankenship Jr. passed through the downtown area. Blankenship's casket was carried in an antique fire truck.

May 19

Advanced Placement courses helped area students receive college credit while they were in high school. The classes allowed teachers added flexibility to do more in-depth, creative projects in class, some educators said.

May 20

Costumed fans stood in lines wrapped around theatres to watch "Star Wars Episode III — Revenge of the Sith" just after midnight.

Tornado warnings forced two school systems to hold children until the warning was lifted at 3:45 p.m. Edinburg and Nineveh-Hensley-Jackson students waited in hallways for nearly an hour after school was dismissed before being allowed to go home. There were no confirmed tornadoes in the county.

May 21-22

Indiana's decision to adopt daylight-saving time in 2006 brought mixed reactions in the county. Some thought the change would allow more daylight time for recreation and save money on electric bills. Others worried that night-based busi-

nesses such as movie theaters and clubs would suffer.

An autopsy failed to determine how a Greenwood woman died. The Marion County Coroner's Office said Sherry A. Fox, 54, had been beaten and had overdosed on prescription medication, both shortly before her death, but the autopsy was unclear as to which directly caused her death. A grand jury to consider whether her husband, Jeffrey M. Fox, should be charged with his wife's death was postponed.

May 23

Three roads in Johnson County were turned back to gravel because of a lack of funding. Highway department director Don Sanders said the roads would likely stay gravel for at least six months until more funding was acquired. Residents worried about the safety of the gravel roads.

Christa Edwards, a senior at Greenwood Community High School, prepared to graduate with perfect attendance throughout her 13 years in school. She credited a good immune system and encouraging parents to helping her attend more than 2,300 days of school without a sick day.

May 24

Center Grove senior Eric Botkins, 18, designed the first flag for White River Township. The flag was chosen by the township trustee and advisory board and hung at the township's new government center.

A year after a Bloomington house fire killed three Center Grove graduates, investigators still were trying to determine the cause. Jacob Surface, Joseph Alexander and Nick Habicht died as a result of the May 22, 2004 fire. A fourth man and fellow Center Grove graduate, Paul Dayment, was the sole survivor. The four roommates attended Indiana University.

May 25

Attorneys representing a Greenwood mother accused of stabbing her newborn daughter considered an insanity defense. A mental-health expert hired by the defense said Tiffany Norton suffered from a mental illness caused by her pregnancy and could not realize her actions were wrong. Norton was accused of stabbing her daughter with a steak knife five times less than an hour after she was born.

Center Grove school officials were working with Daktronic, a visual communications firm, to secure sponsors for a large scoreboard and visual display system. The school system still did not have enough sponsors for the scoreboard to be up in time for football season. Sponsors would pay \$15,000 a year for five years in exchange for advertising on the board.

May 26

A funding shortage of more than \$2 billion at the Indiana Department of Transportation threatened to delay or cancel of construction projects in Johnson County. Two major projects in the county would have added travel lanes to State Road 135 and Interstate 65. State and local legislators were asked to rank road projects in order of importance.

A Greenwood strip mall seriously damaged by an electrical fire in November 2004 was being rebuilt. Construction workers were laying roof tiles and putting up drywall in the VistaRun shopping center at Emerson Avenue and Main Street.

May 27

A Clark-Pleasant elementary school was the first school construction project in the state to be approved under new state guidelines. State officials asked school leaders to report how much money is left over out of the \$20 million budget and explain how that money would be used to reduce the cost of future construction projects.

May 28-29

Center Grove High School senior Charles Owen "Corky" McCormick IV was found dead in his bedroom the morning before graduation. Police did not suspect foul play but didn't know yet how he died. Detectives were investigating what happened to McCormick leading up to his death, including a concert he attended with friends the night before.

May 30

The names of Paul M. Heltzel and Brian D. Hazelgrove were added to the war memorial outside the Johnson County Courthouse in Franklin. Both men were killed in Iraq and are among more than 160 county residents killed in combat since World War I.

May 31

After quitting school 70 years ago, 86-year-old Willie Burton earned a high school diploma. Debbie Pogue, a GED teacher for 20 years, said Burton was the oldest person she knew who had taken the course and passed the test. "Everyone in the class looked up to him and saw him as an inspiration," Pogue said.

June

June 1

A jury ruled that a New Whiteland man did not murder his girlfriend but did contribute to her death. Nathan Dalton was convicted of criminal recklessness with a deadly weapon in the death of Jilena Hinds. Hinds was found dead on a couch in the couple's trailer with a patterned impression and marks on her face in February 2004.

June 2

Franklin and Greenwood skateboarders used the cities' skate parks to practice tricks. Franklin had recently decided not to allow bikes since they damaged ramps. Greenwood had recently decided not to lock the park at night since people were cutting through the fence and going in anyway.

June 3

Six Franklin City Council members and the city's clerk-treasurer put their support behind council member Steve Houglund to replace Mayor Norman P. Blankenship, who died in May. A Republican caucus was scheduled to select the successor.

June 4-5

One of the biggest drug busts in recent Indianapolis history ended with a police chase through Greenwood. Officers seized 45 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated \$4.5 million. The FBI arrested three Indianapolis residents.

June 6

Developer G. Brizendine and Associates asked the county for permission to build two subdivisions in the White River Township area. The subdivisions would bring more than 400 new homes near State Road 135.

A Center Grove teenager ran his own successful lawn-care business. Brock Beeson, 17, began mowing lawns in fifth grade and had earned enough money to buy two riding mowers, a trim mower, a trailer to haul the equipment and a truck with "Beeson Lawn Care" printed on the doors.

June 7

About 100 Johnson County residents were members of an online group called Freecycle. Members advertised and gave away items they no longer needed and received free items from other users. Area residents gave and received items including computers, a carpet shampooer, a walker and blue jeans.

June 8

Center Grove School Corp. began planning an alternative school for freshmen and sophomores. About 30 students per semester were expected to take classes through the alternative school beginning in January.

June 9

Summer school classes were mainly limited to remedial courses in Johnson County schools. While schools used to offer enrichment classes, only students who were in danger of not passing the ISTEP test could take classes at most locations due to changes in state funding.

June 10

About 150 people attended the Republican caucus to choose Franklin's new mayor. After four rounds of votes, county auditor Brenda Jones-Matthews was selected to be Franklin's first female mayor, replacing Mayor Norman P. Blankenship Jr., who died in May.

Indiana Child Protective Services began investigating the death of a week-old Martinsville baby born to Louis and Patricia Leeman. The baby had been born two months premature at the Leemans' home. They called police when the baby had trouble breathing, but medical workers were unable to

revive her. The Leemans belong to a church that favors faith and prayer rather than medical care.

June 11-12

Brenda Jones-Matthews began her first day as Franklin's mayor. **A man bound a Needham Township resident with duct tape** outside his home, stole 25 guns and led police on a multi-county car chase. Officers later found weapons scattered on roads used during the pursuit and found several guns in the trunk of the man's abandoned car.

June 13

After considering more than 30 locations in seven years, an animal shelter committee recommended building on a site near the wastewater treatment plant on State Street in Franklin.

June 14

Johnson County Health Department considered new rules requiring regular inspections of tattoo parlors. The inspections would enforce state laws on sterilization of equipment and certification of tattoo artists.

June 15

Franklin school board voted to begin an all-day kindergarten program at Union Elementary School in the fall. Parents who wanted their children to go to school all day had the option of paying \$300 a month for the program.

June 16

White River Township Fire Department officials discussed starting their own ambulance service. Private company Rural/Metro Ambulance of Indianapolis had previously covered the area.

June 17

Ronald Shanabarger lost his second appeal to have his 2002 murder conviction reconsidered. Shanabarger was convicted of smothering his 7-month-old son to death with plastic wrap and was sentenced to 49 years in prison.

Greenwood police investigated money missing from Greenwood United Methodist Church. A church member discovered that money had been stolen several times in the past several years.

June 18-19

A 15-month-old boy from Haiti arrived in Indianapolis for surgery to remove a large tumor growing from his gums. Members of Chapel Hill United Methodist Church had been working about six months to bring the boy to Riley Hospital for Children after some members met him on a mission trip.

A Greenwood man was found dead in his pool. A roommate found 41-year-old Kenneth Keller at the bottom of their inground pool.

June 20

Center Grove officials studied how a Lafayette school gathered enough private donations to pay for a \$9 million athletic stadium and a \$7 million performing arts center. Center Grove Superintendent Candace Milhoun-Baer said she would like to see people and organizations underwriting programs such as an alternative school, fine arts opportunities and a community theater.

June 21

A Carmel-based education group decided not to build a charter school in Greenwood because too few people expressed interest, the school's director said. About four people went to a public hearing for the proposed school in May. The group decided to build the school near Noblesville, where more interest was expressed and the existing charter school had a waiting list.

nesses such as movie theaters and clubs would suffer.

June 22

At least four suspected drug dealers turned themselves in to police because of a wave of recent drug arrests. The sheriff's office had arrested 20 people and had warrants for 10 more suspected drug dealers and users.

June 23

The county council voted for a 1 percent fee on restaurant meals to help pay for a new stadium and expanded convention center in Indianapolis. Fifty percent of the money raised would stay in Johnson County.

Parents and preschool-age children in the Nineveh-Hensley-Jackson School Corp. worked together to help the kids learn letters, numbers and how to tie their shoes at a series of kindergarten-readiness workshops. The five-week program helped future students learn social skills and reading preparedness.

June 24

A Greenwood man claimed that Judge Craig Lawson, who died earlier in the year, had defrauded him of \$50,000. The claim accused Lawson of illegally keeping settlement proceeds that should have been paid to the man as part of an injury case.

June 25-26

About 150 people were hired to work at Camp Atterbury through a \$3 million Department of Defense grant. The people worked as role players to simulate Iraqi citizens on the battlefield.

A Brownsburg security guard was arrested for sexual battery and impersonating a public servant. Shaun C. Campbell was accused of equipping his Ford Crown Victoria with red and blue flashing lights; siren; laptop computer; police scanner; and radar equipment and illegally searching a White River Township woman.

Police arrested a woman accused of breaking into nearly 30 central Indiana churches, including six in Franklin and one in Whiteland.

June 27

Johnson County Community Corrections changed its system for tracking criminals on house arrest and work release. The old devices alerted police when a person left their authorized area. The new equipment would track movement with Global Position Satellites so that officers could know exactly where the person was.

About 30,000 people attended Greenwood's Freedom Festival. Events included a car show, children's parade, barbecue competition and fireworks.

June 28

Employees at Lear Corp. in Edinburg waited to see if they would lose their jobs after the company announced a restructuring plan that would eliminate up to 7,700 jobs nationwide.

June 29

A popular bingo game at the Franklin Wal-Mart was suspended because of a possible state violation. The game was stopped at all stores due to concerns about state laws that make games of chance illegal.

June 30

The Greenwood parks board voted unanimously to sell a \$1.935 million bond to purchase 72 acres on Averitt Road. Part of the land was planned to be used for a water park.

A lightning strike started a fire that damaged a Greenwood apartment building and left residents of eight apartments homeless. No one was injured in the blaze. While searching the building at Polo Run Apartments, firefighters found 10 marijuana plants and a marijuana-growing operation in one apartment. The resident was arrested.

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