

WARRIOR LEADS COUNTY TEAM

Senior Jessica Huffman named Daily Journal Player of the Year, while athletes from Greenwood, Center Grove and Whiteland named to all-county squad.

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GOP SETTING UP SHOWDOWN?

PAGE A2

DAILY JOURNAL

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THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2006

Johnson County, Indiana

50 cents

WEATHER



Today
Skies: Rain, storms
Temps: High 65; low 44

MAP, PAGE A8

INSIDE

Home Inside & Out

Find out how a southside woman plans to build an environmentally friendly house and how a Queen Anne-era Franklin home is getting a makeover in Your Home Inside & Out.

TODAY

FYI

What's happening? You tell us

The Daily Journal wants to know about and publicize your meetings, events and activities.

Whether you are organizing soccer and softball leagues or school events, putting on a summer festival, classes, health fair or 5K run or conducting meetings for moms, PTOs, gardeners and civic and nonprofit groups, let us know all the details. Or maybe you have volunteer opportunities for area residents.

We will work to get it a new section of the newspaper and Web site called Free Time, a guide to fun and cool events and activities on the southside and in central Indiana.

The best way to get your event publicized is to get the information to us at least three weeks in advance. If you are already planning a big event for spring or summer, let us know now.

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@thejournalnet.com or mail it to Free Time, Daily Journal, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

DEATHS

- Edinburgh
Marilyn R. Ramey, 71
- Franklin
Rosemary Peterson, 81
- Greenwood
Etta Belle Marchetti, 78
- Indianapolis
Gloria S. Borgmann, 78
- Eleanor M. Tucker, 79
- Elsewhere
Betty M. Owens, 84
James Harry Spurgeon, 92

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Franklin taxes to rise up to 12%

Homeowners' bills to jump; city won approval to raise added \$2 million

By JASON MICHAEL WHITE
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Franklin's looming tax hike will make homeowners' overall property tax bills go up 8 to 12 percent this year, according to estimates from the county.

For instance, the owner of a

\$150,000 home in Franklin with a homestead credit and mortgage would see an increase in taxes this year from \$1,861 to \$2,008. A homeowner without the credit and mortgage would pay about \$2,087.

These estimates do not include increases made by the school district, library or other units of

government that tax Franklin homeowners.

A large number of homeowners pay their taxes monthly through their mortgage. Whether banks have been putting enough money back into escrow to cover the increase is unclear, since the state does not have information about tax increases from all gov-

ernment units, such as the school and library.

The first installment of property tax bills are due in May. The second is due in November.

The increase follows more than seven months of effort by city officials to get the state to increase Franklin's tax collecting limit. The Indiana tax commis-

sioner decided this month to let Franklin collect as much as \$2 million a year in additional property taxes based on errors made as early as 2001. The city clerk's office recently discovered the errors.

One city resident questioned

(SEE TAXES, BACK PAGE)

GREENWOOD PARK MALL

Ayres' fate unclear

Department store to remain

Building could be replaced



Macy's



L.S. Ayres

Several stores may replace onetime anchor

The L.S. Ayres store at Greenwood Park Mall may be torn down to make way for smaller stores and restaurants.

Recent plans from Simon Property Group, which owns the mall, showed L.S. Ayres stores being removed at Greenwood Park and Castleton Square malls, said Bill French, a retail broker with Colliers Turley Martin Tucker, a commercial real estate consulting company.

"It appears Ayres stores will be removed and replaced with a number of different retailers, shops and a com-

pletely new configuration," said French, who represents retail tenants and specializes in shopping center leasing sales.

Plans for the space that Greenwood's L.S. Ayres occupies have been discussed since Federated Department Stores announced its buyout of May Department Stores in July.

Federated, which owns Macy's, originally planned to close the Macy's store at Greenwood Park Mall and turn the L.S. Ayres store into a Macy's location.

The company later decided just to

close the L.S. Ayres store, Macy's spokeswoman Marla Shavin said.

Simon representatives met with the Greenwood Planning Department about three weeks ago to talk about tearing down the L.S. Ayres store, planning director Ed Ferguson said. So far, Simon has not requested demolition permits for the site, he said.

Simon spokesman Les Morris would not comment on what the company is considering with the L.S. Ayres space in

(SEE AYRES, PAGE A5)

STORY BY PAIGE E. WASSEL ■ PHOTOS BY SCOTT ROBERSON

Woman critical after apartment fire

A woman was severely burned during a fire at Cambridge Square Apartments in Greenwood early Wednesday morning.



STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON
roberson@thejournalnet.com

Daily Journal staff report

An early-morning fire in Greenwood seriously injured a woman who was smoking while on oxygen, fire officials said.

The fire, reported at 2:30 a.m. Wednesday at 380 Southbridge Circle, Cambridge Square Apartments, was contained to the elderly woman's apartment, Greenwood Fire Lt. Tom Kite said.

The woman suffered burns to her face, arms, chest and legs and was taken to Wishard Memorial Hospital in Indianapolis.

The woman, who is in her mid-60s, was in critical condition Wednesday afternoon, Kite said.

Many residents living in the apartment complex are seniors, 20 of whom had to be evacuated to the clubhouse in wheelchairs because of the fire.

They were returned to their apartments by about 5 a.m., Kite said.

INSIDE

Detailed look at the four proposed east-west routes.

Back Page

County officials are trying to stretch a federal grant as far as it can go.

A county commissioner proposed studying four routes for an east-west corridor across Johnson County. Officials would study each one, decide what area most needs an improved road and narrow the choices, commissioner R.J. McConnell said.

Money to design and study the routes is planned to come from a \$1 million federal transportation grant awarded to the county in November, he said.

The county needs to consider new routes because of potential changes to the route of Interstate 69 and to make sure the county provides a direct route for motorists throughout the county, McConnell said.

The route would take motorists from State Road 37 in the west to Interstate 65 and possibly Interstate 74 in the east.

Proposed routes would:

- Extend Smith Valley Road west and build a bridge across White River to connect to Morgan County. To the east, the road would connect with Rocklane Road and head south to meet County Road 700N.
- Follow County Road 144 and Whiteland Road through most of the county and jog north to reach Shelby County Road 400N, which connects with I-74.
- Take motorists along County Road 144 and State Road 144 to Simon Road, north of Franklin. The road would then jog north

(SEE ROUTES, BACK PAGE)

Meting out justice with teenage twist

By PAIGE E. WASSEL
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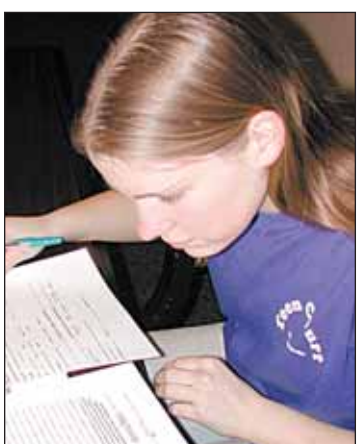
Amber Prochaska rested her fingers on a wooden desk as she stood to address the teenage boy on the stand.

She quoted sections of a police affidavit as she looked the teen in the eye and asked him why he hit another boy his age.

But unlike other attorneys, Prochaska doesn't possess a law degree or wear a three-piece suit.

The 15-year-old student is fulfilling her dream of being a lawyer through Teen Court, an alternative-sentencing program overseen by Indianapolis-based Reach for Youth. Reach for Youth is a nonprofit youth and family

(SEE JUSTICE, PAGE A5)



STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE E. WASSEL

Amber Prochaska, 15, looks over case notes before serving as a prosecutor during a case in Teen Court, an alternative-sentencing program.

Whiteland panel OKs housing, business plan

By MICHAEL W. HOSKINS
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Whiteland planners want brick fronts and two-car garages on homes that would be built on the town's largest remaining tract of farmland.

In exchange, the town's plan commission is in favor of rezoning land that could bring about 255 housing units, banks, stores and offices, an assisted living

center and possibly a big-box retailer to the community.

Not to mention an estimated \$537,000 in tax revenue to Whiteland, according to the developer's attorney.

"This is the nicest plan to hit Whiteland in the past 20 years," said plan commission member Alan Whitaker, who is also on the town council. "It isn't a truck

(SEE PLAN, PAGE A5)