



Celebrate St. Patrick's Day

Irish Soda Bread popular choice for this time of year.

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Basketball players honored at banquet

Two Lancers received all-Mid-Hoosier Conference honors.

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THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 23, 2006

Edinburgh Courier

DAILY JOURNAL publication

FREE

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"Our whole constitutional heritage rebels at the thought of giving government the power to control men's minds."

— Thurgood Marshall

WHAT'S UP?

Grow your business in your community

Tim Cooney from Advantage One Color Lab will speak on "Structured Networking," how to grow your business within your own community, at today's Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce meeting. The brown-bag lunch meeting will be at 11:30 a.m. at Timbergate Golf Course.

The meeting is open to all.
Info: edinburghcoc@yahoo.com or 526-3189.

Cemetery cleanup

Rest Haven Cemetery is conducting a cleanup of winter flowers. All winter decorations, deteriorated artificial flowers and their containers and/or anything that is fixed in the ground will be removed on April 1. Those wishing to pick up these items should do so before then.

Scouts to pick up food bags Saturday

Edinburgh Boy Scouts and Pack 209 will retrieve the Scouting for Food bags on Saturday, 9-10 a.m. The bags were left at homes last weekend. Please place bags outside your door 30 minutes before pick up. All the items collected will go to Edinburgh food pantries.
Information: 526-5840.

Class of 1996 seeking to contact graduates

Organizers of the May 20 high school reunion want to contact members of Edinburgh Community High School's Class of 1996. If you are part of that class or know someone who was, call Janice (Henderson) Reese at (317) 738-2621. Reunion activities are being planned in conjunction with the school alumni banquet, which will honor the 40-year graduates.

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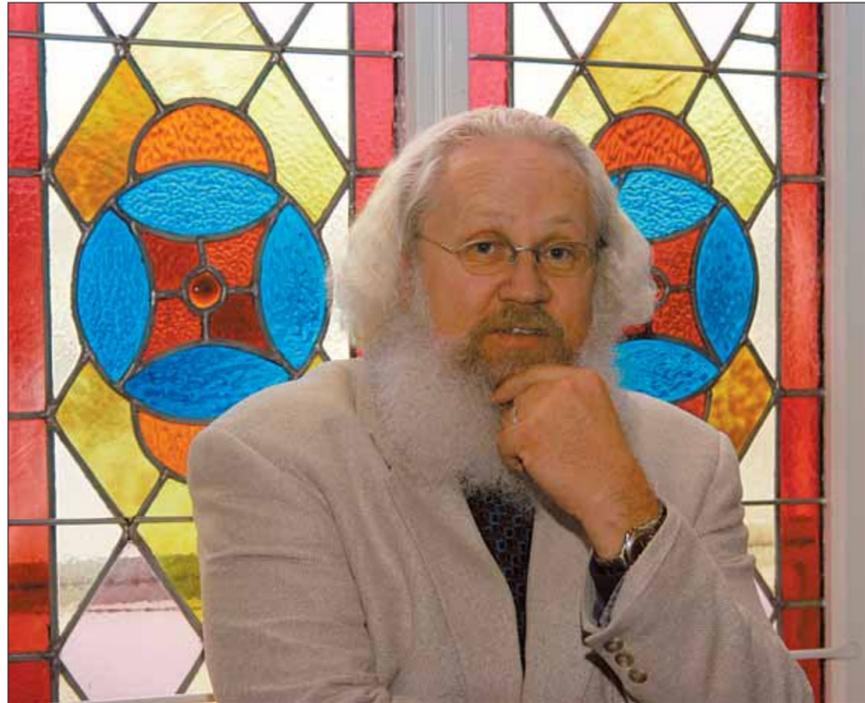


PHOTO BY CORRESPONDENT DON MEYER

Rev. Byron Fritz, pastor of the Edinburgh United Methodist Church the past 11 years, is involved in a multitude of good causes. His wife Carol is a pastor in Beech Grove.

God's Servant

Edinburgh pastor serves community in many ways

By
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

When people are asked to describe Rev. Byron Fritz, many will answer "Santa Claus." Even Fritz will tell strangers to look for Santa Claus when they meet him.

THE FRITZ FILE

Name: Rev. Byron Fritz

Age: 51

Job: Pastor, Edinburgh United Methodist Church

Residence: Beech Grove

Birthplace: Spurgeon, Ind.

Spouse: Carol, who is head pastor of Beech Grove United Methodist Church

Children: Jacob, 23, and Lori, 19

Favorite book: "Like A Mighty Wind" by Mel Tari

Favorite musician: Bill Gaither

Favorite biblical character: Peter. "He put his foot in his mouth sometimes."

Favorite movie: "Bruce Almighty."

"There's a powerful quote where Bruce talks to God and says 'I want her to love me but I have to honor free will.'"

And Morgan Freeman says, "Welcome to my world."

Hobbies: Reading

tacles, and a white beard with bushy side tufts.

In addition to resembling the famous Christmas character and jam-band musician, Fritz stands out also for his extensive community involvement. The thick, black day planner he carries is

proof.

For 11 years, he has commuted from his Beech Grove home to Edinburgh United Methodist Church, where he is pastor. In 2000, a new building was added that doubled the size of the church, which sits two blocks from the high school, and allowed it to hold more community functions, like an annual breakfast for the high school's seniors the morning of graduation rehearsal and an eighth-grade luncheon.

"We know they're getting ready to begin a new time in their lives ... and want to let them know we're here if they need someone to talk to," he said.

Fritz is also a leader with Boy Scout Troop 209 and is on the United Way of Johnson County board of directors.

Character counts

"He has a very high character. He is very committed to serving his community and his congregation," said Nancy Lohr Plake, the executive director of the local United Way. "I know he works long and hard hours and really, really tries to be available for his congregation and the community."

Fritz is also a chairman for Marriage Investors, an agency recently birthed from United Way that aims to decrease family breakdown by directing to-be or currently married couples to local agencies and churches that provide counseling.

He cites issues such as finances, parenting, communication and job stress as factors that unthread marriages.

"Johnson County has one of the highest divorce rates in the state. We said,

"We need to start an agency that would deal with these factors," he explained. "Most couples have no premarital counseling ... I think 80 percent have no counseling."

"If you have the knowledge to stand on as a foundation, you can deal with a lot of these issues."

Fritz is also president of the

Edinburgh Ministerial Association, spiritual director of Columbus Community Chrysalis, a retreat program for high school students, and a volunteer director of Camp Rivervale, a creative arts camp in Mitchell sponsored by the South Indiana United Methodist Church.

Though he does everything from recruit volunteer counselors to conduct evening worship services, the reverend is beloved at Camp Rivervale for his spontaneous portrayal of biblical characters.

"He dresses up in costume and, in the evening, in the fire circle, he'll walk up — as Isaiah, for example — do his rendition and simply walk away," said Ian Hall, the camp's associate council director for outdoor ministries. "He definitely has an infectious personality. The story-telling is part of that and he has a willingness to listen to people."

"He has a very caring demeanor; I think. Selfless is a good word to use."

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"Selfless is a good word to use. He puts people first."

Ian Hall
Camp Rivervale

Leadership class seeks students

DAILY JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

An organization that provides leadership training and fosters creative community development, problem-solving and involvement is accepting applications for its next class.

Leadership Johnson County is recruiting students for the Class of 2007. A goal of the group is to develop informed and involved individuals who work together to make the community better.

Participants develop their individual leadership style, learn about the social and political issues facing the county, practice community problem solving, and prepare for leadership and trusteeship roles in the community.

A key element of the class is mastering the art of collaboration.

The program began in 1995. Classes each year include 23 to 30 members.

Classes are made up of representatives from diverse areas of Johnson County, including business, agriculture, government and social services.

Past participants, including farmers, teachers, bankers, health-care professionals and social workers, have used the class to share ideas and learn about the county.

The monthly meetings, besides offering seminars on leadership and personal and professional development, include discussions on issues important to Johnson County.

For instance, past classes have toured the county's sewage treatment facilities, met educators and elected officials, and learned about taxes and the area's history.

Class members also form teams and engage in projects to help the community.

Any resident of Johnson County may apply to participate

SEE LEADERS, PAGE 5

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What: Leadership Johnson County Class of 2007. The nonprofit organization promotes involvement in creative community problem-solving and develops informed and involved individuals working to make the community better.

Who can apply: Any resident of Johnson County may apply. Nonresidents can apply provided they have worked or have been active in Johnson County for at least two years immediately before the time of application.

Requirements for graduation: Participate in an opening retreat on Sept. 8 and 9; complete a community field project; attend classes and graduation.

Tuition: \$900. Scholarships available.

Applications: Contact Tandy Shuck, program director, at 738-8264 or at tshuck@franklincollege.edu to get an application for the program or a scholarship. They must be delivered or postmarked no later than April 7.

Questions: Contact Shuck or Bonnie Pribush, director of education, at 738-8279.

Iwo Jima survivor tells the tale of '36 days of hell'

By Amy May
COURIER STAFF WRITER

Some things are impossible to forget. Crawling over the bodies of your dead or dying comrades under heavy gunfire as you make your way up the side of a volcano on a tiny Pacific island would fit into that category.

There are some things the nation should never forget, like the 6,821 U.S. Marines who died in early 1945 in the Battle of Iwo Jima, according to one veteran of the battle.

Frank Walker, 81, a former Marine from Brownstown, fought in that battle. He joined the Marines right out of high school, was trained as a cook and a flamethrower operator for the 5th

"History cannot speak to us if we sugarcoat the details. Our society has a habit of forgetting the agony of war."

Frank Walker
Iwo Jima survivor

Division, 28th Regiment, 2nd Battalion Headquarters Company.

Now, he's sharing his story in hopes that other people will know and remember Iwo Jima. He was a guest speaker at the Edinburgh Wright-Hageman Public Library on March 8, speaking to about 30 people. Most of the attendees were men who fought in World War II, but a few younger people

and high school students attended, as well. Walker will speak again at the Bartholomew County Public Library on March 28 at 7 p.m.

"I'm here to allow the public to become more aware of perhaps the worst battle in U.S. history. History cannot speak to us if we sugarcoat the details," he said. "Our society has a habit of forgetting the agony of war."

Walker never talked about the battle until recently.

He said about a year ago, he attended a commemorative ceremony aboard the U.S.S. Iwo Jima, an amphibious transport ship.

"Iwo Jima is not a place to forget. It should go in our history books," he said. "I realized I'd better crawl out of my shell and

SEE SURVIVOR, PAGE 5



COURIER STAFF PHOTO BY AMY MAY
Frank Walker, right, stands with Owen Field Jr., of Shelbyville. Both men survived the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II. Walker, who gave a presentation in Edinburgh on the battle, was a Marine. Field, who attended the presentation, was a Navy Corpsman.