

Storytime

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

When she asked the class what they learned, one student answered.

"It doesn't matter what color we are."
"What matters?" Sloop asked. "That we're friends," the students said.

Sloop, whose husband Charles died eight years ago, has two children, a son Bill Scott, who lives in Michigan and a daughter, Linda McQuire of Indianapolis.

Five granddaughters and six great-granddaughters still enjoy Scott's Pink Mouse stories.

Three times every week, Scott dines in Greenwood with her sisters.

"My brother passed away last year, so now it's just the three girls," she said.

In her spare time, Scott enjoys painting with oils.

"Right now, five of my paintings are hanging in different churches," she said.

Scott has also made time to craft tiny pink mice for each of Sloop's 20 students every Christmas for 14 years.

"I've got 100 of them made ahead," Scott said. "When I watch TV, it gives me something to do."

Fifth-grade students often ask to sit in on a final few Pink Mouse stories before they leave the elementary school building, Sloop said.

Older students often ask if Scott still reads to Sloop's class every Friday.

And it isn't unusual for students to hold on to their Pink Mouse gifts from Scott.

Cassandra Pierson, 6, said she knows exactly where her Pink Mouse is.

"It's hanging on my dog's collar," Pierson said. "I put it there because my dog died."

Diavianne Bentley, 6, keeps her Pink Mouse handy on the family coffee table.

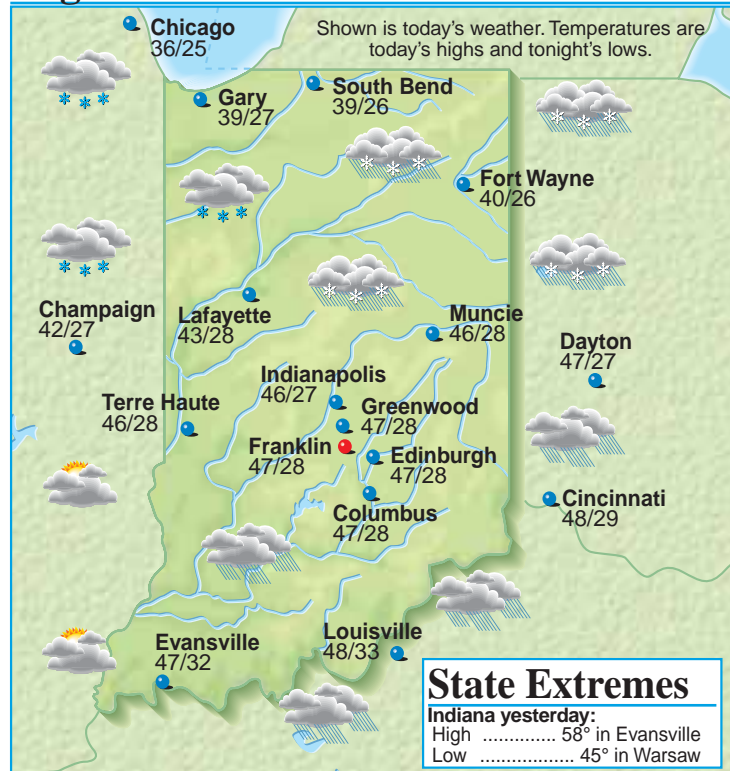
"I make up my own stories about Pink Mouse when I'm at home," Bentley said.

WEATHER

AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Johnson County

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Turning colder; a rain or snow shower.	Sun and clouds.	Mostly cloudy, showers possible; breezy.	Partly sunny and mild.	Mostly cloudy with a shower possible.
45-49 26-30	41-45 31-35	42-46 32-36	45-49 33-37	48-52 25-29

Regional weather



State Extremes

Indiana yesterday:

High	58° in Evansville
Low	45° in Warsaw

Regional summary

Indianapolis/Greenwood: Mostly cloudy and becoming windy and colder today with a rain or snow shower. Mostly cloudy tonight. A mix of clouds and sun tomorrow.
Edinburgh/Franklin: Mostly cloudy and becoming windy and colder today with a rain or snow shower. Mostly cloudy tonight. A mix of clouds and sun tomorrow.

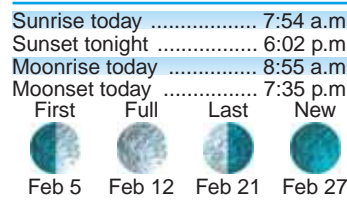
Today in weather history™

The temperature at La Junta, Colo., rose from 5 degrees on the morning of Jan. 30, 1991, to a high of 50 degrees in the afternoon.

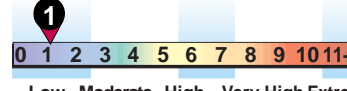
Regional cities

City	Yest. Hi/Lo/W	Tues. Hi/Lo/W	City	Yest. Hi/Lo/W	Tues. Hi/Lo/W
Anderson	55/46/c	41/32/pc	Indianapolis	56/47/sh	45/32/pc
Bloomington	58/49/sh	44/31/pc	Kokomo	56/48/r	41/31/pc
Chicago	50/43/r	38/30/pc	Lafayette	55/48/sh	43/31/pc
Cincinnati	61/48/sh	43/29/pc	Louisville	62/51/sh	46/33/pc
Evansville	58/45/c	48/32/pc	Muncie	56/46/r	40/31/pc
Fort Wayne	53/45/r	36/25/c	South Bend	51/46/r	39/28/pc
Gary	54/44/r	41/31/pc	Terre Haute	54/48/sh	46/30/pc

Sun and moon



AccuWeather UV Index™



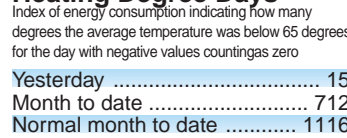
Weather Trivia™

What weather phenomenon is referred to as a bowling ball?
Answer: A downpour from the main jet stream.

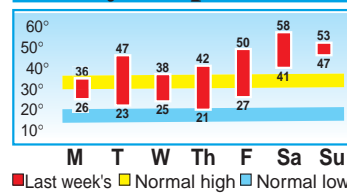
Wind Chill Today



Heating Degree Days



Weekly temperatures



River stages

Fld: flood stage. Stage: in feet at 7 a.m.
Sunday, Chg: change in previous 24 hours.

Station	Fld	Stage	Chg
White River			
Mooresville	9	8.26	-0.01
White River (East Fork)			
Edinburgh	12	4.85	+0.01

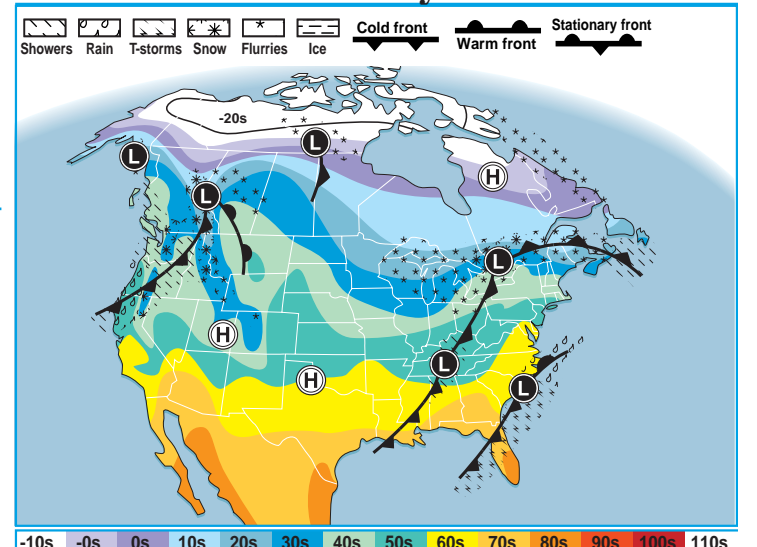
Almanac

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2006
Statistics for Indianapolis through 5 p.m. yesterday.

Temperature	High 53°	Wind	Average dir./speed WSW at 15.8 mph
	Low 47°		Highest speed 26
	Normal high 35°	Humidity	Yesterday's average 84%
	Normal low 19°		Today's average 75%
	Record high 66° in 2002		
	Record low -13° in 1873		

Precipitation
24 hrs. ending 5 p.m. yest. 0.72"
Month to date 3.29"
Normal month to date 2.32"
Year to date 3.29"
Normal year to date 2.32"

National weather today



National cities

City	Yest. Hi/Lo/W	Tues. Hi/Lo/W	City	Yest. Hi/Lo/W	Tues. Hi/Lo/W
Albany, NY	38/24/r	38/26/sn	Houston	80/53/pc	70/54/pc
Atlanta	65/50/sh	55/36/s	Jacksonville	76/48/t	64/35/s
Atlantic City	52/30/r	47/28/r	Kansas City	56/37/pc	54/36/pc
Baltimore	59/32/sh	44/30/r	Las Vegas	61/38/pc	64/42/s
Boston	47/36/r	38/28/sn	Los Angeles	66/48/s	66/50/pc
Buffalo	47/37/r	36/27/sf	Louisville	62/51/sh	46/33/pc
Burlington, VT	38/28/sn	35/22/sf	Memphis	64/53/pc	57/41/s
Champaign	51/46/sh	43/30/pc	Miami	79/68/pc	77/60/pc
Charleston, SC	68/46/t	60/37/s	Milwaukee	48/42/r	37/27/pc
Cheyenne	37/22/i	44/18/pc	Minneapolis	36/32/sf	36/23/pc
Chicago	50/43/r	38/30/pc	Nashville	65/53/pc	53/33/pc
Cleveland	57/46/r	36/28/sf	New Orleans	74/63/c	70/50/s
Columbia, SC	63/46/sh	60/31/s	New York	49/39/r	42/32/r
Columbus, GA	66/53/t	62/38/s	Philadelphia	53/33/r	44/32/r
Dallas	74/35/s	68/51/s	Phoenix	68/42/pc	74/48/s
Denver	45/30/sh	49/21/pc	St. Louis	58/50/pc	51/37/pc
Des Moines	47/37/sh	50/28/pc	Salt Lake City	41/30/sh	40/25/sf
Detroit	52/41/r	37/28/c	San Francisco	58/50/pc	58/49/pc
El Paso	65/41/pc	72/43/s	Seattle	48/40/r	46/41/r
Fairbanks	-24/-36/pc	-26/-34/pc	Tampa	77/61/c	68/44/s
Honolulu	80/67/s	82/66/s	Washington, DC	59/41/sh	46/32/r

Station

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

homes and businesses.

Fire officials have been looking for a location to build a new station and signed a purchase agreement for another piece of land, but have not made much progress. The new land is an option they want to keep open, Bargersville Fire Chief Jim White said.

Negotiations for the land have not begun, but developers and officials have discussed the possibility, White and Compton said.

The station would be included in a proposed plan for the subdivision that would go before the county's commissioners. Once it is approved, negotiations could start for how much the fire department would pay for the site, White said.

LOTTERIES

Here are the winning numbers selected over the weekend:

Indiana

Sunday
Daily Three: 7-2-3.
Daily Four: 0-1-9-0.
Lucky Five: 7-13-21-27-32.

Saturday
Hoosier Lotto: 19-30-31-32-37-38.
Jackpot: \$1.5 million. (No winner. New jackpot: \$2 million.)
Daily Three Midday: 6-3-5.
Daily Three Evening: 2-1-1.
Daily Four Midday: 7-3-8-9.
Daily Four Evening: 4-6-5-8.
Lucky Five Midday: 4-20-24-27-31-33.
Lucky Five Evening: 2-16-27-31-33.

Powerball
14-15-26-28-36. Powerball: 36.
Power Play: 3. Jackpot: \$135 million. (No winner. New jackpot: \$156 million.)

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'Fitting tribute' for Challenger astronauts

NASA officials help families observe 20th anniversary since Challenger explosion

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

The 12 children of the Challenger astronauts were toddlers, teenagers or starting careers as pilots when they gathered with family to watch the shuttle launch just a few miles away on a chilly morning they would never forget.

Seventy-three seconds after launch, the shuttle blew apart into blasts of flame and zigzagging smoke contrails. Seven astronauts died in the explosion, and the images of the shuttle bursting apart were replayed over and over to a shocked nation.

"It's been more than 20 years, and I think about it every day," said Richard Scobee, an Air Force pilot whose father, Dick Scobee, was the shuttle's commander.

Scobee watched as his mother, Dick Scobee's widow, laid a wreath at a memorial honoring fallen astronauts Saturday at Kennedy Space Center.

"Our lives were shattered, but over the years that followed the families persevered with tremendous success," June Scobee Rodgers said. "I believe those parents launched aboard Challenger would be proud of their children."



William Gerstenmaier, NASA associate administrator, and June Scobee Rodgers, widow of Dick Scobee, Challenger's mission commander, place a wreath at the base of the Space Mirror Memorial during a ceremony Saturday.

Rodgers, along with NASA associate administrator Bill Gerstenmaier, laid the wreath at the base of the Space Mirror Memorial, a tall granite-finished wall engraved

with the names of the Challenger astronauts, the seven astronauts killed when space shuttle Columbia disintegrated over Texas in 2003 and the three Apollo 1 astro-

nauts killed in a fire during a 1967 launch pad test.

About 250 people attended the 20th anniversary ceremony to honor Dick Scobee, pilot Mike

Smith, astronauts Ellison Onizuka, Judy Resnik, Ron McNair and Greg Jarvis, and Christa McAuliffe, who was supposed to be the first teacher in space.

The audience included some relatives of the Columbia and Apollo 1 crews, as well as the widows of Challenger astronauts Smith and Onizuka. Supporters stood in line to lay flowers at the side of the monument.

"I have lived around the space program my whole life and it's a fitting tribute for those who made the ultimate sacrifice," said Susan Valek, who works for a Kennedy Space Center contractor.

The investigation into the Challenger accident revealed a space agency more concerned with schedules and public relations than with safety and sound decision-making.

The explosion eventually was blamed on a poorly designed gasket in one of the shuttle's solid fuel boosters which hardened in cold weather. The temperature at Challenger's liftoff was 36 degrees. Engineers for a NASA contractor had protested launching at that temperature, but they were overruled by their managers under perceived pressure from the space agency.

Siblings

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

When their parents divorced, Simmons was 5. He was raised in Franklin by the Newkirks, his mother's adoptive parents. His mother severed ties with the family.

"It grieved them. It hurt them," Simmons said of his grandparents' reaction to his mother's abandonment. "They went ahead and took me, though."

Murray was sent to Tennessee to live with their paternal grandparents.

Once the children were settled into their grandparents' homes, their parents went different directions. And the two families lost track of each other.

In July 1968, Simmons and his grandfather were walking through a wing of Community Hospital South in Indianapolis on their way to visit a relative.

"My grandpa walked by this one room and looked in and said,

"That looks like your mother in there, Kenneth."

They stepped into the room. And Simmons found himself at the bedside of the mother he had not seen for a decade.

"My grandpa told her who I was," Simmons said quietly. "I gave her a hug and told her I loved her."

His mother died three days later, July 12, 1968, Simmons said.

His father worked for a while at the Arvin plant in Franklin, Simmons said. But he rarely came around.

"I think he was bitter at me," Simmons said. "He just wouldn't come and visit like he should."

Simmons graduated in 1970 from Franklin Community High School. He last saw his father in 1972 and later learned of his father's death in 1978.

Every night except one during the final nine weeks of her life, Simmons was with his grandmother. She died in 1981. Two years later, Simmons buried his grandfather.

When his aunt Esther Newkirk died, Murray had some lost mem-

ories in his possession.

"She gave me my mom's Bible, and she gave me pictures of my mom," Simmons said.

Never married and childless, Simmons describes himself as a loner. He has worked 16 years in the housekeeping department of the Indiana Masonic Home in Franklin.

He attends church and has a few friends from there. His life has been a quiet one. He has spent much of it hoping to find his sister.

Four years ago when a member of the Simmons family died in Tennessee, a cousin from the Newkirk side of the family drove south to attend the funeral.

That's when Murray let it be known that she was searching for her brother.

A few days after the funeral, Simmons got the phone call he never expected. His sister was on the other end of the line, chattering fast to make up for lost time.

Paul, her husband of 25 years, is blind. They never had children. She works in the housekeeping department at the School for the Blind in Nashville, Tenn.

And she had been searching for her brother for as many years as he had hoped to find her.

They wanted to see each other as soon as possible.

Because of his physical challenges, Simmons only drives the short distances between his home in Greenwood to his job in Franklin and to church on Sunday on the south side of Indianapolis.

Even if he could drive farther, Simmons knew he probably could not trust his 1989 Chevrolet Cavalier to make it to Tennessee.

The car has 142,000 miles on it. A year went by before Simmons scraped together \$72 for a bus ticket.

He had never left Johnson County before and never traveled alone. But Simmons was determined to make the trip to Tennessee.

To help his sister with grocery costs for his weeklong stay, Simmons packed some canned goods in his duffel bag.

As a gift for her, Simmons took along some of the suncatchers he likes to paint.

In that first moment of reunion,

more than 40 years faded away when Murray looked at Simmons and said, "Bubba, is that you?"

It was an experience he can't find words to describe, Simmons said with a smile.

He goes to the telephone, dials his sister's number by memory and asks her to briefly talk about their reunion.

"My brother means everything to me," Murray said. "I love him all the time as much as I can."

"We lost so much."

They enjoy discovering their many likenesses, Simmons said. Physically, they resemble each other. They eat the same foods.

In fact, when Simmons gave his sister the canned goods, she laughed and showed him the same choices in her pantry.

They both like to shop at Goodwill and Disabled American Veterans stores. They both paint suncatchers.

In November, Murray, who lives on a limited income and also does not drive, bought a bus ticket to visit her brother's home.

For a week, they shopped in their favorite thrift stores.

After preparing dinner together every evening in Simmons' apartment, they played bingo on the floor. He doesn't have a TV. But then again, they had too much to say to each other anyway.

He was thrilled by the surprises his sister brought him, Simmons said. She remembered that he collects cookbooks. That's another similar interest. They both like to cook.

"I love to make lemon pie," Simmons said. "And Ann can make the best dressing I think I ever ate."

He likes to buy little things his sister might need, Simmons said. And Murray does the same for him.

"I love my sister. I love doing things for her."

Finding his sister and getting to know his brother-in-law is definitely a bright spot in his life, Simmons said.

He is patiently saving his money, anticipating his next trip. "I'd really like to try to make it down there when the spring comes," Simmons said with a smile.