

DAILY JOURNAL

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007

Johnson County, Indiana

50 cents

WEATHER



Today
 Skies: Partly sunny
 Temps: High 26; low 4

MAP, PAGE A8

BREAKING NEWS

Homeowner suffers heart attack before garage burns

A Greenwood garage was destroyed by a fire Tuesday afternoon, and the homeowner was taken to the hospital after suffering a heart attack, Greenwood fire officials said. The fire and the heart attack do not appear to be related, and the man did not suffer injuries from the fire, Greenwood Fire Chief Steve Dhondt said. The man's name is not being released until family is notified. He was taken to Community Hospital South in Indianapolis. The fire started at 3:40 p.m. in the first block of Kensington Park Court. Firefighters spent about 30 minutes putting out the blaze, which was fueled by flammable chemicals in the garage, Dhondt said. Firefighters do not know what started the fire, and it is still under investigation, Dhondt said. The owner used the four-car garage to work on and repair vehicles. There was paint, gasoline and propane in the garage, he said. Emergency workers were able to put out the fire before it spread to the home. The garage was a complete loss, Dhondt said.

— Annie Goeller

YOU SHOULD KNOW

GOP event postponed

The Lincoln Day Dinner scheduled for today has been postponed. Johnson County Republican Party officials have not set a new date for the event.

FREE TIME

Publicize your events

The Daily Journal wants to know about and publicize your events and activities. E-mail the information to freetime@thejournalnet.com or mail it to Free Time, Daily Journal, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

DEATHS

- Franklin**
 Frances Fears, 92
 Keith Lynn Wright, 55
- Greenwood**
 Sue Ann Cravens, 57
- Indianapolis**
 Judith Lynn Jones, 48
 Clarence E. "Blondie" Paul, 82
 Paul Eugene Royer, 94
- Elsewhere**
 Elzada Badger, 80

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Snowstorm, ice wallop county

Official: Wind, freezing rain biggest concerns today



ON THE WEB

Find more photos and stories of southside residents coping with winter weather on our Web site.

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Daily Journal staff report

Motorists who venture out this morning should expect blowing and drifting snow across roadways. Johnson County residents are expected to wake up this morning to 2 to 4 more inches of snow in addition to the snow and layer of ice from Tuesday, a National Weather Service meteorologist said. Schools, government offices

and some businesses were closed Tuesday.

At 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, nearly 6 inches of snow had fallen at the Indianapolis International Airport, meteorologist Jason Puma said.

Winds were expected to blow 20 to 30 mph overnight, Puma said.

The county's emergency management director was optimistic Tuesday evening.

"I think we will be in pretty good shape (this) morning,"

Forrest "Tug" Sutton said.

Sutton doesn't expect many closings today. The biggest concerns will be wind and freezing rain causing ice buildup on limbs, he said.

As many as 7,000 homes and businesses were temporarily without power Tuesday afternoon. Most of the outages were in Franklin. The locations are served

(SEE WALLOP, BACK PAGE)



STAFF PHOTO BY JOSHUA MARSHALL
 A snowplow heads south on U.S. 31 near Worthsville Road in Greenwood on Tuesday.

INDIANA COMMERCE CONNECTOR

Officials: Tollway faces rough road in House

Two local legislators not sold on project

By ANNIE GOELLER
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A proposed toll road through six central Indiana counties likely will face resistance in the House of Representatives, local legislators said.

Two lawmakers who represent Johnson County said not enough information is known about the plan.

"If I don't get any more information, I'm not going to be supportive of it," said Rep. David Frizzell, a Republican who represents White River Township.

The House now gets to examine, debate and approve or deny the governor's plan to build the toll road, which would pass through Johnson County.

The bill passed the Senate on Monday and will now move to a House panel before the full 100-member chamber can consider it. The measure has not yet been assigned to a committee but likely would be

(SEE HOUSE, PAGE A2)



STAFF PHOTO BY JOSHUA MARSHALL
 Gary Abell, left, a spokesman for the Indiana Department of Transportation, talks with Sharon McMahon, second from right, about how the Indiana Commerce Connector would affect her property at a public forum about the tollway Monday night at the Franklin Cultural Arts and Recreation Center.

Daniels' plan draws heated comments

By JOSEPH S. PETE
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A lifelong Johnson County resident threatened to move if a toll road is built through farmland in the southern part of the county at a public forum Monday night.

A woman has gathered more than 1,500 signatures opposing the road. A member of the Indiana Farm Bureau promised to hand-deliver the petition to Gov. Mitch Daniels.

Daniels has proposed building a toll road from Interstate 69 near Pendleton south and west around Indianapolis to Interstate 70 near Mooresville.

The 75-mile road would cut across Johnson County, most likely between State Roads 44 and 252.

The tollway would be built by a private consortium, which would operate the road and collect the tolls. The lease payment would be used to finance construction of an I-69 extension between Indianapolis and Evansville.

Johnson County officials heard public comments on the proposed beltway Monday but posed few questions.

No one spoke in favor of the governor's proposal, which the Indiana Senate approved earlier that day.

More than 60 people attended the meeting, breaking into applause after beltway opponents made their points.

County council member Charles Canary, a vocal opponent of the plan, declared that Johnson County residents do not want a toll road.

"Regardless of congestion, which isn't the issue, the bottom line is that selling the connector is to pay for I-69," Canary said. "And that's selling us out."

An Indiana Department of Transportation spokesman made a presentation, calling the toll road a cost-free means

(SEE COMMENTS, PAGE A2)

HOW THEY VOTED

Senators voted 36-13 Monday to pass a bill proposing the Indiana Commerce Connector and the Illiana Expressway. Read how lawmakers representing parts of Johnson County voted at right. Find a complete breakdown of the Senate vote inside.

Page A2

Voted in favor



Richard Bray, R-Martinsville



Michael Young, R-Indianapolis



Patricia Miller, R-Indianapolis

Voted against



Greg Walker, R-Columbus



Brent Waltz, R-Greenwood

County officials drafting letter to oppose Indianapolis beltway

By ANNIE GOELLER
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Seven local officials plan to tell the governor, state legislators and transportation officials they cannot support a proposed toll road based on the information they have.

The Johnson County Council will draft a letter and send it to state lawmakers and other officials, saying where members stand on the issue and listing questions the group has.

Council members vary on their opinions of the project.

Five county council members said they could not support the project with the information they have now. Two others said they had questions and wanted answers before making a decision on where they stand.

The letter will reflect all those opinions and also will raise questions, council member John Price said.

"We need to do something to tell them that our constituents are concerned. At least we've

done something rather than nothing," he said.

Council members decided to draft the letter after a meeting with state officials Monday. About 60 residents attended, and more than 10 told officials they are not in favor of the beltway.

The council's attorney, Phil Wilson, first suggested the council take a stand to represent residents' views to state lawmakers during a public meeting about the toll road in Martinsville last month.

Monday night, council mem-

ber Charles Canary suggested the council make a statement that would take a stand against the project.

Other council members supported the idea, but some said the statement might not be effective since the county has no say in the beltway.

"We can say whatever we want, do whatever we want, but we're not going to have any effect on it," council member Ron West said.

(SEE LETTER, PAGE A2)

Board: Go slow on high school

CG members want to see master plan before borrowing

By SARAH LIPPS
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Center Grove school board members are slowing down the process of demolishing buildings and borrowing money to make way for a renovated and expanded high school.

The school board has asked for an overall master plan for the campus before approving the demolition of an old elementary school, road improvements and giving the OK on designs for the expanded high school.

The physical redesign of Center Grove High School must be based on the new model for teaching students, board member Mark Dietel said.

"I don't see why we have to be in a hurry to (demolish buildings) until we know more of what will drive the programming and curriculum," he said.

But a plan for what that new educational format will be is almost a year away, assistant superintendent Janet Boyle said.

If that means putting the design work, financing and site preparations for the project on hold until the educational planning is done, Dietel and other members said they are willing to wait.

"This is an important process

(SEE BOARD, PAGE A2)

Franklin renovation bids OK'd

By CANDACE BEATY
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Bids for construction to convert the current Franklin Community High School into a seventh-

and eighth-grade center are within the estimated budget for the project.

Construction could start next month.

The school board accepted project bids Monday totaling \$25.8 million. The remodeling project's budget was to remain less than \$33 million.

The bids cover material and labor for the project, district maintenance supervisor Bill Doty said.

The additional \$7.2 million of the budget will be used for architect fees, permits and leased equipment, Doty said.

Close to 50,000 square feet will

(SEE BIDS, PAGE A5)

ON THE WEB

A look at the bids the school board accepted to convert the current Franklin Community High School into a seventh- and eighth-grade building.

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