



THE WAR IN IRAQ ATTACKS KILL SCORES AROUND IRAQ

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PREP SPORTS SIGNED AND SEALED

Center Grove kicker headed for Ball State.

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DAILY JOURNAL

www.thejournalnet.com

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2007

Johnson County, Indiana

50 cents

WEATHER



Today
Skies: Snow
Temps: High 32; low 11

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INSIDE

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STAFF PHOTO BY JOSHUA MARSHALL

A truck at Center Grove area landscaping company Primary Grounds is ready for the impending snow storm with a bed full of salt.

Weather delays: Delivery of the Daily Journal may be delayed this week due to a winter storm. Visit thejournalnet.com for the latest news.

Ready for the worst

Crews get chance to rest up before attacking snowstorm

By CANDACE BEATY
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF WRITER
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Snowplow drivers and emergency officials took the same approach in the 24 hours before the snow and ice were predicted to hit central Indiana: rest now.

That was the only calm before this winter storm, predicted to hammer the area with snow and ice and be one of the worst in

years, National Weather Service meteorologist John Hendrickson said.

Forecasts have called for up to 10 inches of snow for Johnson County.

On Sunday, residents flocked to grocery stores to stock up on the most basic of needs for parents and children stuck at home: bread, milk, toilet paper and sidewalk salt.

(SEE CREWS, BACK PAGE)

CONTACT US

Send us photos of the snow and ice near your home and give us reports about how the weather is impacting your area of the county. Include a phone number in case we have any questions or want to interview you for a story.

E-mail: newstips@thejournalnet.com

School officials draw heat over classes on cold days

By SARAH LIPPS
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First came the calls from parents who wanted to know if school would be delayed the morning after the Super Bowl.

Franklin Superintendent William Patterson was adamant that class would not start late because of sleepy students.

But frigid temperatures

kept buses from starting, so school was delayed Monday anyway.

Ditto for Tuesday. And Thursday.

Students at public schools in Johnson County missed four to 10 hours of school last week due to delays and early dismissals.

Those hours in the classroom are gone forever.

(SEE SCHOOL, BACK PAGE)

INDIANA COMMERCE CONNECTOR

HOUSE NEXT STOP FOR TOLL ROAD

Local lawmakers split on beltway bill



STAFF PHOTO BY JOSHUA MARSHALL

State Sen. Tom Wyss discusses a proposed bill that would allow the state to build a toll road through central Indiana during a Senate hearing Monday. The bill passed 36-13 and will next head to the Indiana House of Representatives.

By ANNIE GOELLER
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Indiana lawmakers gave key approval Monday to a measure that would allow the governor to build a toll road through six central Indiana counties.

The Indiana Senate gave its OK to a bill that packages the Indiana Commerce Connector and the Illiana Expressway, one of the governor's top priorities.

The bill allows a private company to build, maintain and collect tolls on the two new highways.

The Indiana Commerce Connector

would pass through Johnson County.

Senators approved the bill 36-13. Two local lawmakers, Sen. Richard Bray and Mike Young, approved the bill. The three other senators who represent parts of Johnson County — Brent Waltz, Greg Walker and Patricia Miller — voted against it.

Now, the bill will move on to a House of Representatives committee, likely the roads and transportation committee, before going to the 100-member House.

Several senators who voted for the bill said they were in support of the Illiana Expressway and funding the Interstate 69 extension between Evansville and Indianapolis.

Gov. Mitch Daniels has said that money from the lease of the central Indiana tollway would go to fund construction of I-69.

"We've been trying to get I-69 for years. The people I represent would like us to move forward," said Vaneta Becker, R-Evansville.

The Illiana Expressway also has been needed for more than 25 years, said Sen. Earline Rogers, D-Gary.

Supporters called the measure bold and said the toll roads were the only way to fund I-69 and to construct new roads in Indiana.

(SEE ROAD, BACK PAGE)



Indiana House Speaker Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, said he believes the Indiana Commerce Connector needs more study before it's approved.

Speaker says Indy area doesn't want tollway

By ANNIE GOELLER
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Indiana House Speaker Pat Bauer said he believes the proposed Indiana Commerce Connector needs more study and that the bill will meet resistance from legislators who don't want another toll road in the state.

"You already have one toll road in the north," said Bauer, D-South Bend.

"Central Indiana certainly doesn't want a toll road."

The bill, which would authorize construction and lease of the beltway through Johnson County and a road in northwestern Indiana, gained approval from the Indiana Senate on Monday.

The measure now moves to the House of Representatives.

State representatives will insist on having final approval in any deal the state makes with a private company to build, maintain and collect

tolls on the roads, Bauer said.

"We're going to look at the efficacy of this road, if it's a good deal or a bad deal, and we will insist on having final approval of the deal," he said.

Lingering worries and anger from last year's Major Moves legislation, which authorized allowing a private company to lease the northern Indiana toll road, likely will affect the bill, Bauer said.

(SEE SPEAKER, BACK PAGE)

Edinburgh plastics plant closing; 39 jobs to be lost

By CANDACE BEATY
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An Edinburgh company that manufactures plastic bottles is closing, leaving dozens without jobs.

Captive Plastics in Edinburgh will permanently lay off 39 employees, plant manager Michael Schreiweis said.

The plant, at 2885 W. Bartho-

lowmow County Road 800N, will start laying off employees at the beginning of April and close around the end of May, Schreiweis said.

Employees were notified Feb. 6, he said.

The company decided to close the Edinburgh plant and move its operations to plants in Baltimore and Iowa, Schreiweis said. The decision has nothing to do with a lack of productivity or problems

at the plant, Schreiweis said.

Captive Plastics decided to close the plant because the company expanded recently, and it made sense to close its smallest location, he said. Also, the company's customers are closer to other plants, Schreiweis said.

Captive Plastics bought the plant, formerly Star Container Co., in July 2001. The factory then employed about 50 people.

The 40,000-square-foot building is leased, he said.

Schreiweis will relocate to the plant in Louisville and is trying to persuade some of the employees to go with him, Schreiweis said. Job openings at other Captive Plastics locations are being posted for employees willing to relocate, he said.

The company has a retention plan that would give employees

severance pay if they stay until the plant closes, Schreiweis said.

Employees include machine operators, machine maintenance workers, material handlers and warehouse workers, Schreiweis said.

The plant operated on 12-hour shifts, remaining open 24 hours a day, he said.

(SEE PLANT, BACK PAGE)

County studies traffic routes

Surveyors examining east-west roadways to speed flow of vehicles

By JOSEPH S. PETE
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A four- or five-lane east-west thoroughfare won't run directly from State Road 37 to Interstate 65, but this week workers will start looking at ways to make traffic flow more smoothly across Johnson County.

Surveyors started work Monday on scouting areas for improvements to east-west roads in Johnson County.

They should produce a preliminary map in 45 days, said county commissioner R.J. McConnell. The main enhanced corridor is expected to run from State Road 37 along County Road 144 until Whiteland Road, where it will snake toward I-65.

The county is studying enhanced two-lane roads with expanded shoulders, improved intersections with turn lanes and passing lanes where needed. The surveying firms also will assess the possibility of a new interchange on I-65.

Targeted improvements could push traffic along as well as four or five lanes, said Gary Vandegriff, director of the Johnson County Highway Department.

Surveying crews will examine Stones Crossing Road/Worthsville Road/Clark School Road from State Road 135 to the Shelby County line, County Road 144 from State Road 37 to Whiteland Road and Whiteland Road from County Road 144 to State Road 135 and from the town of Whiteland to I-65.

The county targeted those road segments based on traffic volume coming from residential neighborhoods, Vandegriff said. The likelihood of growth also was considered.

The study, which will be completed in six months, would help set county priorities for road projects, officials said.

"This is something we've been discussing for 25 years," commissioner Tom Kite said. "And we're finally ready to move forward."

(SEE TRAFFIC, BACK PAGE)