



# TALKING POINT

President Obama lays out his plans for health care reform. **Inside/A2**

# SO FAR, SO GOOD FOR BRAVES

Indian Creek's move to Class 3A hasn't proved difficult

# CUBS PREPARE FOR GAME ON THE BIG STAGE

**PREP BLITZ**  
WEEKLY PREVIEW  
SPORTS/A8-A9

# DAILY JOURNAL

dailyjournal.net

Johnson County, Indiana

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

75 cents

## WEATHER



Today

Skies: Morning fog, some sun  
Temps: High 84; low 54

MAP, PAGE A12



## FREE TIME

Need something to do?

Find out what's happening on the southside, **Pages B5-B7**. Want to have your own events added to Free Time? The best way to get your event publicized is to get the information to us at least three weeks in advance. 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@dailyjournal.net](mailto:freetime@dailyjournal.net) or mail it to Free Time, Daily Journal, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

## WEB EXTRAS

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For a sneak preview of what stories reporters are working on, sign up for the Daily Journal e-mail news update.



The daily e-mail keeps you up-to-date about what is going on in Franklin, the Center Grove area, Greenwood and central Indiana.

We will alert you to breaking news, tell you about stories we are planning and let you in on what is going on in the newsroom.

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## Check out our photos

Visit the slideshow section of [dailyjournal.net](http://dailyjournal.net) to see photos from local events.

## See for yourself

Recent additions to our Web Extra section include letters and reports on the Greenwood-White River Township merger and local prep sports schedules.

Visit [dailyjournal.net](http://dailyjournal.net) and select "Web extras" to find even more.

## DEATHS

### Franklin

Ruth E. Campbell, 80

### Greenwood

Julia L. Hopkins, 72

Beth Ann McLeod, 50

### Indianapolis

Effie Marie Guffey, 87

### Nineveh

Danny Ray Stroup, 56

### Elsewhere

Jeffery Ray Blythe, 19

Augusta Frances Massey, 89

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# Uncovering area's hidden homeless

By ANNIE GOELLER  
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A teenager slept on a friend's couch for weeks after she was kicked out of her home.

Other teens slept in parks or in their cars after becoming homeless but still got up every day and went to school.

These are the stories an Illinois woman has learned while traveling the country and interviewing teens to document their experi-

ences with homelessness.

And Diane Nilan and local helping agencies say Johnson County teens have similar stories.

Nilan spoke to local educators, counselors and charity workers about what she has learned over the past four years of traveling the nation. Her hope is to raise awareness about



NILAN

homelessness and help communities find ways to deal with the issue.

"It can happen to people like me, people like you and certainly people in our community that we rub shoulders with every day," she said.

The group that brought her to Johnson County, Kids in Crisis Intervention Team, already knows about homelessness because it regularly works with local teens who have been kicked out or left home and need a place to stay.

But group members hope that Nilan's visit will help them come

together to do more to address the issue, said Katie Schlafer, executive director of Youth Connections, who worked with others to arrange Nilan's visit.

Nilan's appearance was the fourth meeting of the group since it formed, and organizers hoped the event would attract new people and the community would learn more about their goals, Schlafer said.

"We don't have the answers yet. We may not have them soon. But we know there are needs that aren't met," Schlafer said.

Nilan also has experience building community resources, something the group hoped to learn from, said Angie Freeman, community outreach coordinator for Franklin schools, who also worked to bring Nilan here.

Their hope is to organize and apply for a federal grant next year to help pay for services needed in the county, such as a youth shelter or transitional living program, Schlafer said.

(SEE HOMELESS, PAGE A5)

Unique train promoting new Disney film charms crowd in Bargersville.

# REEL-Y MAGICAL



Above: Visitors walk alongside Disney's "A Christmas Carol" train Wednesday in Bargersville. Below: Inside the train were costumes from the film and items from the Charles Dickens Museum in London. The train was in town to promote the film. **MORE PHOTOS/PAGE A7**

## Disney train rolls into county, entertaining thousands

Bargersville is the smallest town on the train tour promoting Disney's "A Christmas Carol."

But it may go down as the best-attended stop of the trip.

Thousands of people flocked to downtown Bargersville to be part of the festivities Wednesday, waiting in lines that lasted as long as six hours.

That matched the largest single-day wait time so far on the tour, set in Los Angeles in May, said Disney spokeswoman Nicole Rivelli.

"This will absolutely be one of the largest crowds we've had so far," she said.

Attendance figures were not available Wednesday, Rivelli said.

The four-car train, decked out with images from the movie and filled with film props, costumes and activities, is part of a 40-city tour to promote the movie's release in November. Bargersville was the only Indiana stop and joined major cities like Chicago, Phoenix and Seattle.

Even before the exhibits opened at 9 a.m., a line formed. First, it stretched the length of the train. By noon, the wait was almost three hours and increased as the afternoon went on.

STORY BY  
RYAN TRARES

PHOTOS BY  
SCOTT ROBERSON



The weather, while clear of rain, wasn't always conducive for long lines. What had started as a cool and foggy morning morphed into a sunny and hot summer afternoon.

Fidgety children and tired adults slowly made their way to the entrance of the train.

Ashley Pettit of Sheridan brought her 2-year-old daughter, Jasmine, to the event around 9:30 a.m. They stepped inside the exhibit after noon.

"It was hot and exhausting, but it was worth it in the end," Pettit said as she and Jasmine exited the train with smiles on their faces. "The costumes and pictures were great."

The exhibit consisted of two main parts. The train was a wealth of film memorabilia. Display cases of items from the Charles Dickens Museum in London featured the writer's pen and inkwell, as well as first-edition copies of "A Christmas Carol."

Video screens showed interviews with stars Jim Carrey, Gary Oldman and Colin Firth and director Robert Zemeckis.

The highlight of the tour came in the last car. A series of video cameras and touch screens allowed guests to use their own

(SEE MAGICAL, PAGE A7)

# Office fighting for child support

## Prosecutor seeks deadbeat parents

By SARAH MICHALOS  
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One man owes his children more than \$23,000 in overdue child support.

Another parent has racked up nearly \$50,000 in unpaid support.

A third is behind more than \$15,000, and the mother of his children said he hadn't paid a cent to them since the summer of 2006.

All three parents face at least one felony charge for skipping out on the court-ordered child support intended to help pay for their children's food, clothing and housing.

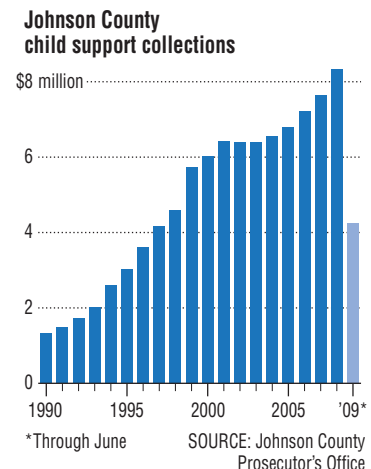
The Johnson County Prosecutor's Office has been more aggressively filing cases against parents with overdue child support payments, in a time when the custodial parents often are in desperate need for the money in a down-trodden economy, deputy prosecutor Lori Lampert said.

They're also filing cases as felonies if smaller payments are more than three months overdue, instead of waiting until the person is behind several thousand dollars, she said.

And the investigator who works to find parents and make sure they're arrested is whittling down a list of about 25 priority cases, including one man who owes more than \$100,000.

After a charge is filed against a parent, Maryjo Lykins starts her search. She uses social networking sites and contacts utility companies to find out where

(SEE SUPPORT, BACK PAGE)



# Three events scheduled to mark Sept. 11 anniversary

## IF YOU GO

### Honor firefighters and police officers

When: 11 a.m. Friday  
Where: Franklin Community Middle School auditorium, 625 Grizzly Cub Drive  
Why: Students will serve cookies to Franklin police officers and firefighters, and a short ceremony will be conducted.

### National Day of Service and Remembrance

When: Noon Friday  
Where: Atrium of the Napolitan Student Center on the Franklin College campus  
Why: The event is for a community-

wide observance of the National Day of Service and Remembrance. Speakers will include Franklin Mayor Fred Paris, Franklin College President James "Jay" Moseley and college student service leaders. The event will promote volunteerism throughout the next year.

### Cry Out America

When: Noon Friday  
Where: Johnson County Courthouse lawn, downtown Franklin  
Why: A national event that aims to have people gather on every county courthouse lawn to pray and hear scripture. The event is being supported by local churches. Visit [awakeningamerica.us](http://awakeningamerica.us) for more information.

By SARAH MICHALOS  
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The public is invited to gather at the Johnson County Courthouse on Friday for prayer and scripture reading as a new way to remember the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The first-time event aims to bring people together at county courthouse lawns across the country for one hour each year, according to local organizer Wayne Murray, pastor of Grace Assembly of God in New Whiteland.

In another part of the city, stu-

dents at Franklin Community Middle School will hand out cookies to the city's firefighters and police officers and participate in a Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony.

Franklin College and the city of Franklin are hosting a joint event Friday to promote volunteerism.

Local events scheduled for the eighth anniversary of Sept. 11 are a way to remember the nearly 3,000 people who died during the attacks and to thank local emergency personnel for the work they do, organizers said.

Murray is helping to coordinate an event called Cry Out America,

and the goal is to have an observance of Sept. 11 at every county courthouse in America, he said. People who attend can pray and listen to scripture reading, he said.

Another event with the potential to become an annual occurrence is a day of service and remembrance at Franklin Community Middle School, put on by eighth-grade students.

Each year, students plan and complete a service project for the community, and this year they wanted to honor police officers and

(SEE EVENTS, BACK PAGE)

# ● Homeless

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

"We know what's not here, but I don't know if that's what we need," she said.

The biggest need of most communities is to show residents and leaders that homelessness is an issue that must be addressed, Nilan said.

A common myth in many communities is that there are no homeless people locally, she said.

"Invisible homelessness is in every single community. You have it here," she said.

The homeless families she finds are mostly local, not people who have come to a community from a larger city, another misconception, she said.

"We don't like to say that because it's a bad mark on our community, but they are our people," she said.

Nilan started her project four years ago when she sold her home, bought a recreational vehicle and started touring the nation.

Her inspiration came when she was working with legislators in

Illinois to implement a law that would allow homeless children to continue going to their schools, even if they were staying somewhere out of the district.

She found that persuading school officials and state legislators was easiest when they heard about homeless students' lives directly from the children.

Through that work, Nilan realized that after 20 years of working in homeless shelters and nonprofit agencies, even she was ignorant of what teens face when they become homeless, such as where they will sleep, get their next meal and shower and where they will find a place to study and focus on their homework.

"People just don't understand homeless kids," she said.

So, she set out across the country. What she found shocked her: Homelessness is everywhere.

In her 24 years in social work, she is seeing more homeless people now than ever before. But communities like Johnson County can and have found ways to address the issue, she said.

"I don't pretend to think it's easy," she said.

Her suggestions included a strong mentoring program for teens, mak-

ing sure the people working with teens are nonjudgmental so they will build trust and creating alternatives for teens who get into trouble, such as a safe place to stay and spend time with their peers.

Nilan did not interview local teens but found the opportunity to start a new project during her visit to Johnson County.

That project, Learning Curve Express, is aimed at changing the federal government's definition of homeless people to include people staying with friends or relatives, living in hotels and motels and staying at certain shelters, all of which currently are not included in the definition, she said.

She met with a local family who lost their home and have been living in cramped conditions in a mobile home with another family. Nilan interviewed the mother of the family about the struggles they have faced. She plans to send a video to U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, who represents the area where the family lives, she said.

Her hope is to confront lawmakers with real stories so they will know more about local families in the areas they represent and consider making changes that would help them, she said.