

# *Heartland* family

SUMMER 2022 | VOLUME TWO, ISSUE ONE

## A family business

Third generation  
joins Luecke Audio  
Video Appliances

# Schneck Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Proudly Introduces Mako

*Robotic-Arm Assisted  
Joint Replacement*

The Mako SmartRobotics System transforms the way joint replacement surgeries are performed. This advanced technology offers more precision, less soft tissue damage and greater bone preservation than manual techniques.

The benefits of a Mako joint replacement surgery include:

- Personalized surgical plan
- Better implant alignment
- Fewer days in the hospital
- Less pain
- Faster recovery



"With the addition of the Mako, patients have a quicker recovery, less post-operative pain and a quicker return to their active lifestyle, than a traditional joint replacement surgery."

~Dr. Kristopher Williams,  
Schneck Orthopedic Surgeon



Contact Schneck Orthopedics & Sports Medicine to schedule a consultation to see if joint replacement surgery is right for you.

812-524-3311 | [SchneckOrtho.com](http://SchneckOrtho.com)



# contents

SUMMER 2022 | VOLUME TWO, ISSUE ONE

## features

- 4 *A mission to serve*
- 6 *Family business*
- 12 *Restoring downtown*
- 16 *Summer fun for children*
- 18 *Fresh, local food options*

## Heartland family

### PUBLISHER

Bud Hunt  
AIM Media Indiana

### EDITORIAL

#### EDITOR AND SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Keely Spitler

### COPY EDITOR

Lyndsey Wolfe

### CONTRIBUTORS

Barney Quick,  
Jordan Richart, Greg Seiter,  
Tony Vasquez

### ADVERTISING

#### ADVERTISING ART DIRECTOR

Amanda Waltz

### ADVERTISING DESIGN

Erin Caplinger, Mar Carson,  
Ashley Curry, Julie Daiker,  
Kassi Hattabaugh, Josh Meyer,  
Robert Wilson

### ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Tracie Lane

### ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Sally Lawson, Hallie Stuckwisch

### READER SERVICES

#### MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 447  
Seymour, IN 472074

#### ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

(812) 523-7062

### COMMENTS

Have something you would  
like to see in Heartland Family?  
Send your ideas to kspitler@  
aimmediaindiana.com.

©2022 by AIM Media Indiana

All content © 2021 The Tribune. All  
rights reserved. No portion of this  
publication may be reproduced in  
any form without permission from the  
publisher, except as permitted by U.S.  
copyright law.

### ON THE COVER

Joan and Daniel Luecke  
photographed by Tony Vasquez.

**INDIANA FARM  
BUREAU INSURANCE**  
**STOP KNOCKING ON WOOD**



Auto  
Insurance



Home  
Insurance



Life  
Insurance



Renters  
Insurance



Business  
Insurance



Farm & Crop  
Insurance

Jackson County agent, **Jim Hoffman**, has the knowledge to keep you and your family protected. He began his career with Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance in 1998 and has been a consistent qualifier of company-sponsored awards for sales and service.



**Auto • Home • Life  
Business • Annuities • Farm**

**Jim Hoffman**

812-522-8775 • 812-216-6656

310 South Airport Rd,  
Seymour, IN 47274-3335

James.Hoffman@infb.com



# A MISSION TO HELP OTHERS

Growth  
allows  
group to  
better serve  
community

STORY BY  
JORDAN RICHART  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY  
THE ARC OF  
JACKSON COUNTY

Left: Client Jorja O'Neal poses with The Arc of Jackson County Executive Director Melanie O'Neal at Tim Tebow's Night To Shine in February at Seymour Christian Church. // Right: Pictured from left are, board member Kristye Lewis with certified therapy mini pony Flash and Janette Coulter with her son, Billy.

Melanie O'Neal is passionate about helping others and through her role as executive director for The Arc of Jackson County, she is ensured of being able to do so on a daily basis.

The Arc of Jackson County, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was formed in 1960, is an advocacy group for those who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. The chapter, a Jackson County United Way partner that serves people of all ages, also provides family members with resources.

"We had an eight-month-old baby at our open house recently and we even have clients in their 70s," O'Neal said. "We work with a wide variety of ages and a wide range of disabilities. But to be honest, I don't really like the word 'disabilities.' Our clients have a lot of abilities and provide many different levels of love and joy. They just need a little extra care and have some special needs."

Since joining The Arc of Jackson County as Planning Coordinator in January, 2018, O'Neal, who is also employed by Mental

Health America of Jackson County, has helped The Arc grow, both physically and in its ability to serve others.

"Before my position, they didn't have a paid staff member," she said. "The organization was led by a volunteer board. But I think we've been able to make more of an impact in recent times because we have paid staff now working toward common goals."

In addition to O'Neal and Program Facilitator Donna Persinger, The Arc of Jackson County also benefits from voluntary assistance from Seymour High School students who typically receive program credit for their efforts.

"Donna and I are both working for the two agencies with shared payroll dollars and shared work," she said. "It's a great arrangement because sometimes there are families who can utilize service from both agencies."

"With our student volunteers, right now we have two who come in almost every day, depending on their school schedules."

According to O'Neal, consistent funding

has also been a key component in continued growth for The Arc of Jackson County.

“For both agencies I work for, 100% of the funding comes from grants, membership donations and organizational collaborations. It’s all given,” she said. “We work hard to develop and maintain relationships and apply for grants but ultimately, all funding comes through donations.

“We’re operating a business here and it takes money. We have programs and we now have staff. It’s a lot but it’s all covered. That is remarkable to me ... truly unbelievable.”

According to O’Neal, in addition to connecting people to different therapies, The Arc provides referrals to families seeking services, such as Medicaid waivers.

“Melanie goes to the same church I do and after my son was diagnosed with autism, she told me he would qualify for a family needs waiver and put me in touch with the right people,” said Crothersville resident Kendra Knieriem. “I didn’t think we would qualify based on our income but she said none of that matters when it comes to special needs kids.

“Her knowledge is vast.”

O’Neal said waiver misconceptions need to be addressed.

“If a child is under 18, it’s all based on the child’s diagnosis, not the family’s ability to pay for services,” she said. “I know schools and pediatricians are trying to relay that but it’s still misunderstood.”

Despite COVID-related challenges, The Arc of Jackson County has continued to be proactive in its efforts to increase provided services and community awareness. For example, the organization funded the first \$20,000 of an inclusive handicap accessible playground area in Jackson County’s Gaiser Park that officially opened Oct. 1, 2020 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

“In the past, we’ve held an annual awards banquet and even a Spring Fling dance that provided a time for our families to get together and enjoy music and food,” O’Neal said. “This year, our Board members have been putting on skits and reading to children in special education classes to help show healthy ways they can respond to some of the feeling they may be having. That effort also connects us to those classrooms in case there are kids who need us.”

In its new office location at 320 Dupont Drive in Seymour, The Arc also now has adequate storage space for the donated items it receives; things it shares with adult residents who have disabilities and are living in nearby group homes.

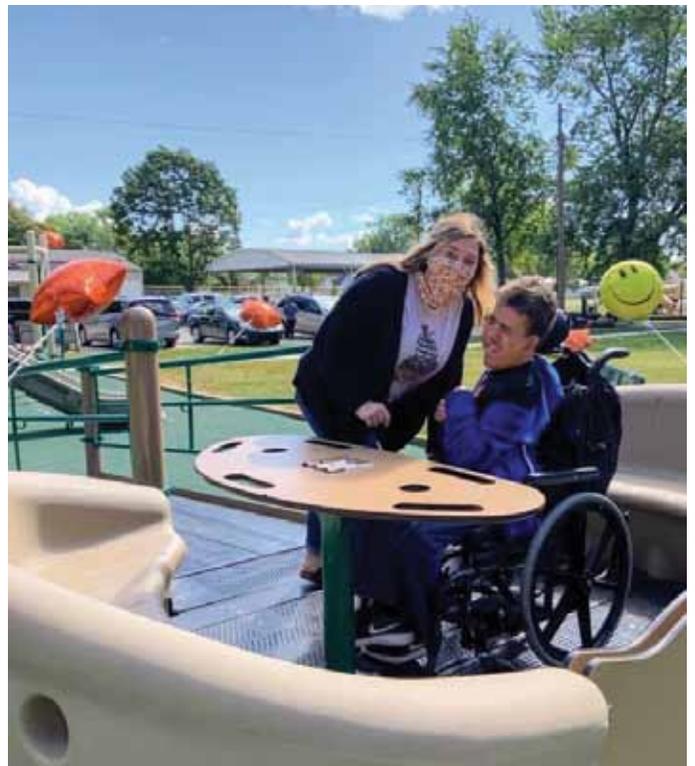
“We try to provide some extra things in life so our clients don’t have to buy those items themselves.”

Knieriem is very appreciative of O’Neal and the many services made available through The Arc of Jackson County.

“The support and all the things they bring to the table is amazing,” she said. “They can help as much or as little as you need.

“When Elijah was diagnosed, I didn’t know who to call or what to do. Melanie went step-by-step with me.

“The Arc is constantly doing something in the community here. I applaud them and all the work they’re doing to help the special needs community.”



**Top:** Pictured from left are, The Arc of Jackson County client Claire Carlson and Jason O’Neal with his daughter Jorja O’Neal. // **Bottom:** Direct Support Professional Jessi Hampton poses with Joel Coomer.



From left: Joan and Daniel Luecke,  
Evelyn and Bob Luecke.



# Generations

## IN BUSINESS

Luecke Audio Video Appliances has served south-central Indiana for 70 years

STORY BY BARNEY QUICK  
PHOTOS BY TONY VASQUEZ AND SUBMITTED BY LUECKE AUDIO VIDEO APPLIANCES

Luecke Audio Video Appliances is now into the third generation of that family guiding its course and serving customers throughout south-central Indiana. The name encapsulates what the Lueckes offer their customer base fairly well, but it really encompasses a range covering products from power protection to cabinets to projection accessories to freezers to wall ovens to air purifiers to cookware. Of course, their showroom sports an abundance of washers, dryers, speakers and big-screen TVs.

The product line and much more has changed since 1952, when Bob and Evelyn Luecke started out in a garage behind their house. The business moved to its current location on Tipton Street in Seymour in 1969. Bob's and Evelyn's daughter Joan was only five years old then, but she was made to feel that moving handfuls of gravel was an important part of the construction process as the new store took shape.

She is now the representative of the next generation at Luecke. Her nephew Daniel Luecke comes from generation number three.

While Joan's been consistently involved through the decades, Daniel started his working life at a Muncie car dealership. His father passed away in 2018 and his aunt and uncle asked him if he wanted to come on board, so he came back to Seymour.

Along with the two of them, the current staff includes three delivery people. Luecke no longer has a service function, as, due to warranties, manufacturers like to handle that themselves.

Joan and Daniel basically divide the two sides of the business between themselves. Joan handles the appliances and Daniel sees to the audio and video portion of the product line.

Among changes Joan has seen through the years is the dwindling of the car audio line. It was big in the early 1980s. At that time, the store was a Radio Shack dealer and sold a lot of hand-held radios.



## *Four Seasons*

Four Seasons is on a 26 acre campus with beautifully appointed apartments and an architecturally important chapel, all on one level. The campus is a wonderful setting for seniors to enjoy a comfortable, fulfilling lifestyle.

As a Life Plan Community, Four Seasons offers independent living, assisted living, short-term rehabilitative stays in our Medicare-certified health center, and long-term skilled nursing care. To make it easy to find an option that suits each resident's needs Four Seasons offers a variety of financial plans including affordable monthly rental options.

Life at Four Seasons includes life enrichment programs, social, cultural and spiritual opportunities.

When a little assistance helps make life more enjoyable, Four Seasons provides a wide range of supportive care and services in the privacy of resident's apartment. Our assisted living program is customized specifically to each resident's needs so he or she pays only for what is needed.

Four Seasons is a financially secure, non-profit community, part of the BHI Senior Living family of communities.

**To learn more about Four Seasons  
or to arrange a visit, please call  
812-372-8481  
[www.fourseasonsretirement.com](http://www.fourseasonsretirement.com)**

**1901 Taylor Road • Columbus, IN 47203**

**A BHI SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY**



IN-35103966



Appliances were added in 2000, starting with the Maytag brand. That arose from Luecke buying out another local appliance retailer, Nichter. KitchenAid and Whirlpool were added later.

Unlike cars, appliance models aren't updated yearly. Particularly since the COVID pandemic, the manufacturers aren't engaging in as much research and development. The emphasis is more on keeping products going to the retailers.

Joan and Daniel stay abreast of changes to their respective industries by attending trade shows, as well as availing themselves of online training.

They speak candidly of availability issues and longer lead times, challenges faced by pretty much all businesses at the ends of supply chains these days.

Along with ordering for the electronics side, Daniel handles advertising and marketing. The store maintains a social media presence and advertises on radio and in newspapers. The customer base extends to Bartholomew, Brown, Jennings and Scott counties.

The business engages in its share of community involvement. It sponsors Little League Baseball, the Firefighters' Golf Scramble and church events.



Pictured from top: The original Luecke building built in 1969. // Construction of the current warehouse. // Electronics for sale are shown.

### LUECKE AUDIO VIDEO APPLIANCES

**Address:** 1255 W. Tipton St.,  
Seymour, IN 47274

**Phone:** 812-522-5123

**Email:** daniel@  
lueckeaudiovideo.com

**Website:**  
lueckeaudiovideo.com

**Hours:**  
» Monday-Friday  
9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
» Saturday 9 a.m.-2 p.m.  
» Sunday CLOSED



Joan's kids, while close with their cousin Daniel, aren't involved with the business. They do live in the area and stop by to visit on a regular basis.

Both Joan and Daniel say that balancing family interaction with business happens seamlessly.

"Not all families work well together, but I think we've found a way," says Joan.

Joan's favorite aspect of the business is helping customers make decisions. Appliances, after all, are a fairly significant investment.

Daniel says his favorite aspect is helping people design home theaters. He's also made updates to the sales floor and generally modernized operations.

The atmosphere at Luecke is welcoming and unhurried. It's a reflection of its owners' approach. In a world full of hustle and bustle, there is a place where one can shop for home essentials at a relaxed pace, which is in keeping with the Luecke family way of doing things.



**Bob Luecke, center, is shown inside Luecke Audio Video.**

2022 already has been a big year for the Christensen family of Seymour.

On Jan. 1, Daniel and Betsy Christensen became owners of Stewart and Hoagland Funeral Home in Scottsburg and changed the name to Christensen-Hoagland Family Funeral Home.

Then in February, they changed the name of their funeral home in Seymour, Woodlawn Family Funeral Centre, to include their family name, Christensen Family Funeral Home.

At both places, including the word “family” was important because it truly is a family business. The Christensens’ sons, Chandler and Hayden, are among the 14 staff members.

“We are not a partnership with an out-of-town funeral home,” Daniel said. “When you walk in Christensen funeral home, you deal with a Christensen. It’s our family serving your family.”

One reason for changing the name of the Seymour funeral home is because the family has been here for more than two years, and the time was right to make it happen.

Daniel recently was named Jackson County’s deputy coroner, he is an ambassador for the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and he’s on the ministry team at The Tabernacle in Seymour.

Plus, their two sons are registered for mortuary school in July.

“We’re here to do a generational blessing,” Daniel said. “It’s just who we are. We’re here. I’m buying plots. We’re not going anywhere. This is our ministry. This is what we do. I shop in our stores. I eat in our restaurants. I go to our churches. This is my town, and that’s really what I want to drive home.”

Daniel and Betsy became owners of Woodlawn on Dec. 1, 2019, and changed the slogan to “Our family

# ‘OUR FAMILY’ SERVING YOUR FAMILY

serving your family.” Woodlawn was started in 2011 by Andy Rumph.

Daniel remodeled the building, including a chapel that seats 225 people and has new state-of-the-art audio and visual equipment, a new second chapel that seats 80, a fellowship hall, a kitchen, a living room area and a children’s playroom. There’s also new carpet and paint and a new awning.

Soon, the awning, signage, website and Facebook page will need the funeral home’s new name. The hearse, however, already had the name changed to Christensen on the back side windows, and a new logo recently was unveiled.

“It’s the same family service, new name,” Daniel said.

The full-service funeral home offers traditional funerals, cremation, pet cremation and headstones. It has a low-cost guarantee and is set up to handle any faith, tradition or culture, and preneeds at other funeral homes are fully transferable. Pastoral care recently was added, offering free grief counseling to families.

One project remaining is adding a banquet hall, which will serve as a gathering room for after-funeral dinners. Daniel plans to have that done this year.

In terms of branching out, Daniel



Daniel & Betsy Christensen - Owners

said he and Betsy were approached by Bill and Barbara Hoagland about six months ago, saying they were ready to retire and would be honored for them to take over their funeral home in Scottsburg.

“We prayed about it, and we were just like, ‘OK, let’s see what happens,’” Daniel said.

On Jan. 1, the Christensens received the keys from the Hoaglands and announced via Facebook they are the new owners of Stewart and Hoagland Funeral Home.

“Founded in 1896, the funeral home has been an icon in Scottsburg for several generations, serving families with dignity and compassion, beginning with the Stewart family and later the Hoagland family,” they wrote. “Over the past two years, it has been a joy to get to know Bill and Barbara Hoagland on a personal

# MILLY FAMILY'

level. We find ourselves extremely honored that they have chosen us to continue the legacy of excellence in Scottsburg and the surrounding area."

Daniel also said in the post that he has been a licensed embalmer funeral director for more than 23 years, Betsy is a third-generation minister, songwriter and worship leader, serves alongside him in the family business and is a translator at Schneck Medical Center in Seymour for the Latino community and Chandler and Hayden both work alongside them.

"We look forward to getting involved in Scottsburg and building lifelong relationships and friendships," Daniel wrote, noting they plan to hold an open house to give people a chance to stop by and say hello.

"We fully understand that we are one of a few funeral homes in the area, and our goal is to stand out with excellence," he said. "Also, we desire for the funeral home to be known as a high-quality, low-cost alternative to our families. In this time that we live, economy

matters. I encourage people to shop. I encourage people to compare prices. Funerals do not have to be expensive to be meaningful."

He also noted the Scottsburg location honors all prearrangements from other funeral homes at face value.

"We will stake our name and reputation on our ability to love and serve people in their most difficult times," Daniel wrote. "Thank you, Scottsburg. We look forward to getting to know you."

Since purchasing the funeral home, Daniel said a new audio and video system was put in, and new carpet and paint are coming next.

They also have found many treasures in the building and included them in a heritage room to honor the six generations of ownership that served before them. That includes a coffin from when they were made at the funeral home and original embalmer's licenses dating back to 1903.

"Dad always taught me 'Pursue your future, but don't forget what brought you there, don't forget your past,'" Daniel said.

Being the seventh-generation ownership of such a historical

funeral home is a huge honor for him and his family, he said.

"I made the previous ownership a commitment that I would always honor the past, that I would always serve people with my whole heart and would treat people equally no matter who they were, that this funeral home would be a ministry to Scott County and be there for families in their most difficult time," he said. "We are enjoying getting ready to remodel the facility while keeping the charm and character of such a vintage location."

It also was important for the Christensens to keep Hoagland in the name to honor the previous owners.

"Christensen funeral home in Seymour has seen continual growth since we've bought it as a result of continuing

to love and serve people, building a name and reputation for who we are, and we are honored to take that same passion for people into Scottsburg," Daniel said. "It has been pretty overwhelming, and we've gotten a fantastic welcome from the community. We have been very thankful for the continued growth of families that have trusted us in their most vulnerable times."

*"What can we do in your hardest moments?"*

*- Betsy Christensen*



**CHRISTENSEN**  
FAMILY FUNERAL HOME

*Formerly Woodlawn Funeral Center*

311 Holiday Square Road, Seymour

**SEYMOUR'S ONLY LOCAL FAMILY-OWNED FUNERAL HOME**  
**SE HABLA ESPANOL**

**DOWNTOWN**  
*Rejuvenation*





## Exciting changes in store for Seymour

STORY BY JORDAN RICHART  
PHOTOS BY TONY VASQUEZ

With a season of events on the calendar this year and the pandemic largely in the rearview mirror, Seymour Main Street feels that 2022 is a great opportunity to refresh and refocus.

“I feel there is a more positive outlook for 2022 compared to the last couple of years even though there are unknowns that remain,” said Bri Roll, executive director of the organization tasked with preserving and promoting downtown Seymour. “We are hoping that translates into a better turnout at local events this year.”

While attendance at the organization’s events hasn’t been bad, it doesn’t appear that it has completely recovered since the 2020 global pandemic started.

Roll said that while the outlook is more positive and the expectation of better attendance is there, it seems the strain of the supply chain is the primary concern of the businesses she advocates for.

“Our businesses downtown overwhelmingly report issues with the supply chain whether it be a restaurant, shop or a business providing services,” she said.

Despite those challenges, Roll said downtown Seymour saw growth of 19 businesses in 2021. That created 43 full- and part-time jobs throughout the downtown.

Another impressive statistic, Roll said, was the \$2.5 million in private investment in downtown buildings. That figure is likely higher, she added.

“That’s just what I was told about and what I’ve been able to track,” she said. “There’s also already been a significant amount of investment going on in the first quarter this year.”

“There has been an increase in demand for space and the lifestyle of being downtown. People are seeking it and this year we plan to add options that will grow downtown. Last year was a year to really listen and learn from the struggle of the last year.”

**BRI ROLL**



In addition, there has been another \$1.5 million in public investment, largely driven by the renovation projects at city hall.

Roll said there are exciting things to come this year in addition to some new businesses that remain in the planning stages and the calendar of events like City Jam, the summer concert series that begins in May.

“There has been an increase in demand for space and the lifestyle of being downtown,” she said. “People

are seeking it and this year we plan to add options that will grow downtown. Last year was a year to really listen and learn from the struggle of the last year.”

There also is some news that will help bring much of the work into focus this year.

Seymour Main Street also will also work with a group for a streetscape project where a firm will suggest comprehensive design guidelines that the organization

and community leaders can work toward.

Roll said after they put the project out for bid and select a group to do the work, it will take about four months to get the plan in order.

The plan also will include future land use plans, zoning resolutions, and what goals and policies will work to help encourage development.

Another exciting opportunity is the transformation workshop the organization will host this year. Seymour Main Street was identified as a pilot community by state Main Street program officials that will help Roll and the board come up with a branding strategy.

“They really help you identify what you’re known for and that may sound a little strange because we are the ones from here and work here,” she said. “But sometimes it is beneficial to get someone from the outside’s perspective to really nail down what it is we can be branded as.”

The two workshops are scheduled for June 14 and 15.



Roll said with the city's history and focus on music, she's hoping that can be an idea to build upon now and in the future.

"It will be interesting to see how they put those things together," she said.

Another focus so far this year was to take care of a few things that will help reach out to the community a little more effectively. A website update is planned and there is a new contact management system that will be used to better track businesses and properties, reach out to volunteers and more.

That may not seem like a major development, but Roll said it will help give clarity to organizing those areas of her and her board's efforts.

Roll said preserving the downtown is something that is important for any community, and with so much going on in Seymour, it is an exciting time for the area.

"The downtown really is the heartbeat of the community," she said. "It gives us a strong identity and makes us different from other communities and what makes this a very special place to live and visit."



**Norma Childers**  
812-374-4250

**Michael Driscoll**  
812-569-5718

**Your Real Estate Experts**  
COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

**CNP Realty Group**  
Making Dreams Come True

Call Today for  
Expert Service.

CNPRealtyGroup.com

Servicing all of  
South Central Indiana



IN-35105435

**TRILOGY**  
HEALTH SERVICES LLC

*Hope blooms here.*

The only thing better than cherishing today is looking forward to what tomorrow will bring. Contact us today at 812-523-6405 to learn more about our Assisted Living services and our limited-time move in specials!



A Trilogy Senior Living Community

ASSISTED LIVING | MEMORY CARE | POST ACUTE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

812-523-6405 | COVEREDBRIDGEHC.COM

IN-35105873



## Pyoca Camp and Retreat Center offers reprieve for youth

STORY BY GREG SEITER  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY  
PYOCA CAMP AND  
RETREAT CENTER

According to IBISWorld analysis, the Summer Camps industry suffered significant setbacks in 2020 due to the temporary closure of many facilities as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Pyoca Camp and Retreat Center in Brownstown was no exception.

“We had to cancel in 2020 and even last summer was quite challenging,” said Rev. Molly DeWitt, program director at Pyoca. “Not all campers had access to vaccines so we had to change our model. That involved things like masking indoors and shifting all meals outside.

“With COVID looking better now, we’re hoping to shift things mostly back to normal but if something changes, we’re very comfortable re-implementing whatever we need to.”

Regardless of the overall procedural format in 2022, DeWitt and Pyoca Executive Director Mike Davis are confident this year’s summer camp experience for children will be one of the facility’s most memorable ever. After all, Pyoca Camp and Retreat

Center is celebrating its 70th year.

Located adjacent to the Jackson-Washington State Forest in southern Indiana, the Presbyterian Church-affiliated camp is currently owned by Whitewater Valley Presbytery. But summertime campers are not required to be affiliated with the church.

“All are welcome to explore, grow, rest and play,” Davis said. “We hold that pretty dear to everything we do.”

With four weeks of Pyoca camps offered to the general public, children in grades two through 12 have multiple date options available to them from mid-June through mid-July.

Activity choices are also plentiful.

“Activity availability is obviously based on age range but we offer things like boating, swimming, hiking, basketball and volleyball,” DeWitt said. “Campers may want to try out our climbing tower or high ropes course. We’re also offering a canoeing program this year.”

Depending on the camp, instructional activities in areas such as

theater, music and fine arts/crafts may also be available.

“As kids grow older, we push them to grow spiritually and communally but we also encourage them to try new activities and experiences,” DeWitt said.

However, in order for that type of growth to be realized, campers must unplug while staying at Pyoca.

“We ask that they come without their electronic devices,” Davis said. “They can go old school and write letters home if they want to and we also have a feature where parents can send emails to campers.”

Pyoca, now a year-round facility, offers both standard summer kids’ camp programming and partner programming during which the facility hosts specialized camps for church and non-profit organizations. However, while Partner Program camps often utilize their own volunteer staff personnel, Pyoca programs are run and fully-staffed by Pyoca and this year, those individuals will also help with the facility’s 70th anniversary activities.

“We’re inviting alumni and folks who have been coming here a long time,” DeWitt said. “We have some board members who were campers here that very first summer back in 1952 and earlier this year, I actually spoke with a gentleman who worked at the camp that year. We’re hoping he can be involved.”

Davis believes Pyoca Camp and Retreat Center offers much more than just the opportunity to enjoy outdoor activities.

“We want this to be a place where campers can unplug and truly feel welcomed in the community we create for



them,” he said. “With everything kids have to deal with through school and social media, this is one place where they can all be accepted.”

DeWitt agrees.

“One of the things that has stuck out to me in the last five years is how important camp is for mental health,” she said. “Kids are aware of how important it is to get away and manage anxiety and depression. So, they know they can come here to build and develop. It’s a very safe place where they can be themselves no matter what they may be dealing with in their personal life or at home.”

DeWitt also understands the relational importance associated with attending summer camp.

“From a social standpoint, it’s really important for kids as they develop and figure out who they are to be able to do so outside of their core family setting. They need to understand what it means to be part of society and community,” she said.

“It’s amazing to see kids who start out as second graders here and to watch them change and grow over the years. We also enjoy watching

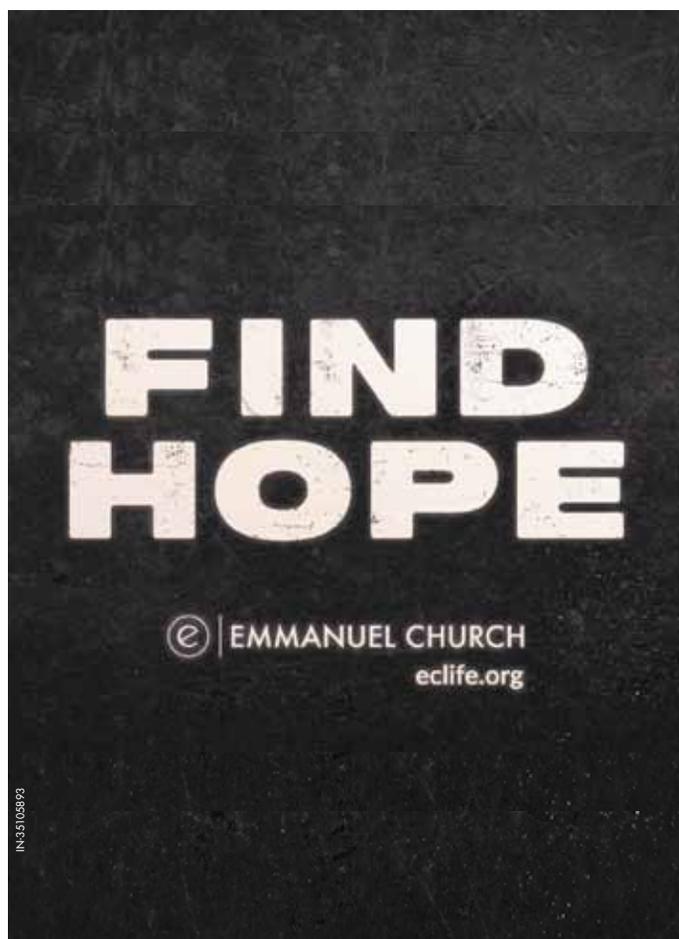
them grow in their faith and spirituality.

“We understand how crucial it is to help build lifelong learners,” DeWitt continued. “Kids need to figure out what faith means to them so in that regard, we see ourselves as a community of faith that kids can identify

with throughout their lives.

“Camp, for us, has always been a generational thing. It’s part of church history but it’s also a part of family history. We take that very seriously.”

More information, including specifics on summer camp registration at Pyoca, can be found at [www.pyoca.org](http://www.pyoca.org).





# Farmers market offers local option

STORY BY JORDAN RICHART | PHOTO FROM ADOBE STOCK

With inflation rising to its highest level in 40 years, consumer costs have soared across pretty much every industry.

Groceries are no exception and have seen some of the steepest increases over the last year as companies battle supply chain issues, labor shortages, the effects of an eastern Europe conflict and more.

Officials with the Seymour Area Farmers Market, which opens its full season Memorial Day weekend, think those price hikes may lead to a little more traffic this year as consumers look to find more affordable and fresh options.

“The advantage of this situation is that people are reevaluating their food sources and asking questions. Market prices aren’t necessarily cheaper than the store but sometimes the prices are close to the same, and occasionally cheaper,” Rachel Root, the new market manager, said. “The freshness, quality and flavor can’t be beat, however.”

Root said it is also important that the community remember the market accepts SNAP benefits and even doubles customers’ dollars.

“That can help those with lower incomes,” she said, adding it can help put more fresh and healthy food in the pantries of those in need of assistance. “With local food, it doesn’t travel as far, so food is picked when ripe, tends to stay fresh much longer in the fridge, and is often produced without pesticides and with the health of the soil and animals as a priority.”

Root started as the new market manager in January and said that the farmers market also is cheaper than much of the fast food options.

There also is the potential that the customer base has grown as Root said that food shortages forced a lot of peo-

ple to turn to the farmers market to get items they wanted.

“I think it definitely draws customers because they want to see what their options are. If grocery prices continue to rise I could see us getting even more customers,” she said. “We can capitalize on that by continuing to educate others on what makes the market different and better than shopping at the grocery stores.”

Consumers may also be looking at what their dollars are buying, Root said. If prices are comparable, customers may choose the market because of the fresh produce they can get.

“The food at the market is, in my opinion, the freshest and healthiest food available in this area,” she said. Having worked in a grocery store before, Root said in many cases produce is shipped from other countries which has an impact on how fresh items are. Plus, supporting the market means you’re supporting local farmers and families. “If you support the market you’re directly paying and developing a relationship with our local farmers. You’re supporting the local economy.”

Liz Brownlee, who owns and operates Nightfall Farm with her husband Nate, has sold at the Seymour Area Farmers Market since 2016. The couple also sells at the Madison Farmers Market, has a subscription service, and sells to a few restaurants and grocery stores.

Brownlee said the farm, which started in 2014, has seen a big increase since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Part of what drove the increased sales was that people were cooking more — but it was also that people felt unsure about whether they would be able to get bacon and eggs and whole

chickens from the grocery,” she said. “It was really neat to see people realize how local food can provide certainty and security, not to mention good flavor.”

Brownlee shared an example from a customer who started buying their chicken after discovering it was not as expensive as he thought it would be.

The man told the couple that he did not like conventional grocery store chicken and found organic chicken in Louisville and Indianapolis to be rather expensive. The man picked up six chickens recently for his family and shared his thoughts with the Brownlees.

“That felt really good, and I do think that rising food costs are playing a role in increased demand for local food, because it’s making people think about what their dollar gets them,” she said.

Root said she has been a customer at the market since 2016 and when she heard the previous manager was retiring, she wanted to jump in and help the market thrive.

This year she plans on making sure the market runs efficiently and making sure the staples remain. She said as a reader, she’d like to explore expanding the book wagon and also wants to focus on educating customers on healthy eating.

The vendors also make the Seymour market special, she said. Root said they do a great job of making sure there is a variety of items of high quality. She said their personality and interactions with customers also goes a long way toward earning a reputation of a friendly market.

“Our vendors really do foster a sense of community and they are some of the most interesting people to talk to,” she said. “The market is my happy place.”

# DON'T MISS A SINGLE EVENT



Email us at [info@jacksoncountyin.com](mailto:info@jacksoncountyin.com) to sign up for our weekly **Guide To The Weekend.**

Our guide includes a weekend schedule of events, list of attractions, dining, shopping, and more.



**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**



[jacksoncountyin.com](http://jacksoncountyin.com)

100 N. Broadway St  
Seymour, IN 47274  
855.524.1914

IN 35103869

# Chosen best mortgage lender in the area. Again.

*Local lenders. Local favorite.*



**Richard Bicknell**

NMLS# 789428

Office: 812.524.4409

Mobile: 812.528.5249

Main Office in Seymour

[RBicknell@JCBank.com](mailto:RBicknell@JCBank.com)

[JCBank.com/Richard](http://JCBank.com/Richard)



**Mary Anne Jordan**

NMLS# 789431

Office: 812.524.4424

Mobile: 812.528.0190

Jackson Park in Seymour

[MJordan@JCBank.com](mailto:MJordan@JCBank.com)

[JCBank.com/MaryAnne](http://JCBank.com/MaryAnne)



**Kyle McCrary**

NMLS# 218731

Office: 812.524.7913

Mobile: 812.569.2304

Seymour and Brownstown

[KMcCrary@JCBank.com](mailto:KMcCrary@JCBank.com)

[JCBank.com/Kyle](http://JCBank.com/Kyle)

*For your next  
pre-qual or purchase,  
refi or renovation...*



*...scan to apply now  
on your phone!*



# JCBank

[JCBank.com/TopLender](http://JCBank.com/TopLender)

Equal Housing Lender. Member FDIC. NMLS# 738802.

\*All applicants subject to loan program underwriting criteria and requirements. Not all applicants will qualify.