

# Sue, Geraldine, Bryan, Bryan, billiards, etc.

By **BILL HASTINGS**  
Of the Gazette Staff

To whom it may concern

## FRIDAY'S HEADLINERS —

A week of news in capsule review, beginning with:

"Indiana, Pa.'s Ambassadors" surfaced again Thursday when the annual Bob O'Connor Public Service Award honoring the late Pittsburgh mayor was presented to the Rev. Sue Hutchins at the Pittsburgh Athletic Club.

The Rev. Hutchins is a United Methodist Church minister who serves as pastor of Hilltop and Shannon Castle United Methodist churches.

The Indiana, Pa., connection? Hutchins is a daughter of Doris and the late Bill Hutchins, of Indiana, and a 1974 graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She continued her postgraduate studies at Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C.

The Pittsburgh pastor was honored for her community service contributions — principally the Hilltop Health Ministries project that provides health benefits to residents in Pittsburgh's Allentown section who are uninsured.

## SHES' NO. 1 —

■ ... Jillian Boden, a 2007 Indiana High School alumna, is another one of our academic hometown success stories.

A daughter of Peggy and Rob Boden, of Indiana, and a granddaughter of Agnes Altemus, also of Indiana, Jillian was recently named "Freshman of the Year" by the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences at Rutgers University.

According to announcement, the award was based on "academic excellence, leadership and community service."

## OTHER NEWSMAKERS —

■ Another icon of the silver screen will be showcased when Jimmy Stewart Museum officials celebrate what would have been the famous actor's 100th birthday with a weeklong observance, beginning May 18.

The museum will present its Harvey Award posthumously to actress Grace Kelly at its May 24 program

■ U.S. Rep. John Murtha, D-John-

stown, will have Republican opposition on the November general election ballots after all.

Primary-election write-in candidate William Russell, a Cambria City Republican, has officially drawn sufficient write-ins, including various spellings, to qualify for the November ballots, county election officials have ruled.

According to state procedures, people staging write-in campaigns for Congress at primary elections need at least 1,000 votes (Russell amassed 1,489) to win a party's nomination.

Murtha's 12th District includes part of Indiana County.

## CONDOLENCES —

The recent obituary columns involved some well-known people, including:

■ ... Geraldine Wilkins, 79, the first woman to serve as a district justice in Indiana County, having been elected to the position in 1970 and serving until her retirement in 1994.

Ms. Wilkins was also honored in 1992 by members of the Indiana unit of the American Association of University Women, who named her one of the area's "notable women."

## SAVING THE GAS —

"Save the gas and let us do the driving," is one of themes of Shelocta entrepreneur Bryan Millikens' new business, "Dine In Delivery," that recently opened with little fanfare.

Dine In Delivery, in a nutshell, offers its telephone and Web site customers home-delivery of dinners from any of its 16 participating restaurants — dining spots that represent virtually all of the cuisines available in the Indiana and eastern Armstrong County areas.

The ordering, pickup and delivery processes are coordinated by Millikens: You make the order via phone or Web site and he (or his staff) obtains the dinners and delivers them to your home. Prices, menus and other details are available on his Web site or by telephone.

Millikens, originally of South Bend, Ind., is not new to Indiana and Armstrong counties, having resided for a number of years in the Shelocta area, where he has been involved in the delivery and service industries, most recently

## INSIDE INDIANA



**BILL HASTINGS**

Indiana Fuel.

Dine In Delivery's Web site is [milkensdinein.com](http://milkensdinein.com), and it also can be reached by calling (724) 427-4974.

## GOLF & REVITALIZATION —

Indiana American Legion Post 141 is gearing its attention to a "revitalization" project that may produce upgrades of both its physical home in downtown Indiana and its role in community and regional veterans' circles. "Stepped-up" activity, educational programs and physical improvements (i.e., operational changes at its home) are among the areas currently under discussion.

The local Legion, however, needs no introduction to community service. The post annually sponsors Indiana's downtown Veterans Day parade, is a key participant in the local Memorial Day observance and is active in other patriotic events.

The lid-lifter for the "revitalization" project is scheduled Saturday, May 24, when post members hold a fun event, a golf scramble at the Meadow Lane course, beginning at 1 p.m. with a shotgun start and offering generous prizes. Golf will be followed by dinner, an awards program and dancing to the music of the The Rising Suns.

Interested golfers should call Tammy at (724) 465-5121 or pick up a registration form at the Legion before May 14.

## BILLIARDS, ANYONE? —

If not golf, you may be interested in the 2008 Indiana County Q-Stick Challenge that begins at 1 p.m. Sunday at the Lucky Break billiards parlor in downtown Indiana.

Proceeds will benefit the Teddy Bear

Fund Drive.

Many of the area's better pocket billiards players have reportedly chalked up their cues for what promises to be a competitive tournament.

Lending their support to the event have been state Sen. Don White, state Rep. Dave Reed and county commissioner Rodney Ruddock. The tournament committee includes Ken "Jake" Watkins, Helen Bartek, Gary Nolan, Mark Bertig and Rod Greczek, all of whom are hoping the 2008 fundraiser will top last year's mark of \$2,000.

## UPDATE —

Residents in what is known as the Shannock Valley attendance area are reminded that the Shannock Valley Veterans Memorial project is in progress and continues to need local support.

Sponsored by the Rural Valley American Legion in partnership with the Sagamore VFW post, the project is in the midst of a fundraising effort that will provide the area with a permanent veterans memorial at the Shannock Valley Recreation Park.

The project involves the sale of personalized memorial bricks that will be used to construct a memorial wall honoring all Shannock Valley military veterans who lost their lives in the nation's armed conflicts.

Project coordinators Mike and Mary Koma, Rural Valley, also point out that personalized bricks with the names of all Shannock Valley military veterans who served at any time in the Armed Forces will be installed on the floor of the memorial.

Residents interested in purchasing bricks should contact Mike or Mary Koma at (724) 783-6191. The project's tentative deadline is Jan. 1.

## CLASS DISTINCTION —

Members of Indiana High's class of 2008 are putting together their 20th-year reunion with some high-tech aid — principally a Web site, [www.ihs88myevent.com](http://www.ihs88myevent.com), and an e-mail address, [ihs88@comcast.net](mailto:ihs88@comcast.net).

"With those two resources, missing classmates have been located and much reminiscing has been fostered," says reunion chairman Ann Kozusko Kuhn, who adds another dimension to the pur-

suit of missing classmates — her phone number, which is (412) 465-3037.

The reunion will be held over the July 4 weekend, featuring an informal gathering on July 4 after the fireworks at the Coney Upstairs, a family picnic at Blue Spruce Park near Ernest on July 5, and a cocktail reception later that evening at the Coney Upstairs.

**YOUR UPCOMING** calendar includes the Indiana High School After-Prom Committee's annual Grand March that will be held at 4:15 p.m. Friday, May 9, at the senior high school auditorium, where 150 couples in formal finery will be showcased.

The couples will also be featured on stage for photo-snapping by families and friends.

The after-prom committee will collect a \$2 admission fee from the audience as a fundraiser for future prom events. The public invited, the committee points out.

## IN SICK BAY —

Richard "Dick" Keith of Cherry Tree, the former Green Township resident, a retired Coca-Cola delivery coordinator and longtime president of the Green Township Community Association, sponsor of the annual Cookport Fair.

"Dick," as he is known throughout western Pennsylvania harvest-fair circles, is convalescing from a series of mini-strokes and is stepping down as fair-association president.

He will be succeeded by vice president Van Smith.

## SHOP TALK AT SIX —

Indiana stylist Kristen Baltzer has joined the staff of Ellen Kay's (Josie and Deb) Hair Salon near the juncture of Warren and Ben Franklin roads. ... Gasoline prices at local pumps are hovering at the \$3.59-a-gallon level, up from \$2.84 at this time last year. ... Please don't bet on it: Big Brown may be the horse to watch in tomorrow's Kentucky Derby. ... Willie, our ex-shoeshine boy, says disagreement is easy to analyze. Anytime you question two people on the same subject, you'll get three opinions.

*Good Evening!*



**TOM PEEL**/Gazette

**WELCOME TO INDIANA** annually presents Image Awards to recognize appearance enhancement projects by property owners. Award recipients Thursday were, left to right, Paula Cummings, owner of Heritage House Suites, 209 S. Sixth St., winner in the historic restoration category; Mike Ciocca, representing S&T Bank, winner in the commercial improvement category for the bank's new headquarters at 800 Philadelphia St.; and Cinda and Larry Krouk, winners in the residential improvement category for their home at 206 N. Sixth St. Jennifer Gonda-English, right, a WTI director, presented the awards.

## Architect unveils proposal for project along Wayne Ave.

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If all parties involved agree on the plans, preliminary work on the welcome site might begin this summer, Moore said.

With the coming of the KCAC and supporting development, Harley predicts that Wayne Avenue will be a center of attention.

"We will see that change in the next 10 to 20 years to be the main focus of Indiana," he said. "It's a huge opportunity. ... We will see 10-story hotels there. We will see research centers there."

Harley also advocated the planting of more trees along Indiana's streets as another way to slow vehicle traffic and make the borough safer for pedestrians.

"We've allowed the automobile to control the design" of communities, Harley said. "Pedestrians attract more pedestrians. ... The more feet we have on the street, the safer it will be."

His longer-range proposal for Wayne Avenue is to transform it into a boulevard with two lanes of travel in each direction and a tree-covered median where there is now a center turning lane.

In her report to the membership, Nancy Bierwerth, WTI's co-president, said the group's six community greeting signs continue to generate pride and enthusiasm in Indiana. This year the phrase "Home of IUP" has been added to five of the signs, and the group's sign and flower



**THOMAS HARLEY**/Submitted graphic

**WELCOME TO INDIANA'S** next beautification project may be at the intersection of Wayne and Carter avenues, between the Mack Park racetrack, right, and the future site of the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex, shown in blue to the left.

display at the East Pike entrance to Indiana won a Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Award, one of 75 presented in the state.

Some of WTI's goals for this year are to continue working with Indiana's Shade Tree Commission on tree purchases and plantings; to implement plans for corridor enhancement along Route 422, Old Route 119 and Oakland Avenue; to support efforts to eliminate abandoned vehicles and unlicensed junkyards; and to support landscaping in commercial parking areas.

WTI was formed as a nonprofit

organization in 1989 and based on the premise that a pleasing appearance is essential to maintaining and building a healthy local economy.

The organization relies on the support and guidance of volunteers, community leaders and donors, and on Thursday received a \$1,000 contribution from the Indiana Wal-Mart. Other notable support this year, according to Bierwerth, came from the county commissioners, Indiana Borough, IUP, Downtown Indiana, and the Evergreen and Indiana garden clubs.

## Ondo miners to receive new benefits package

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coverage, and provide a \$30 monthly fuel adjustment, a 50-cent-an-hour raise, and bonuses for members of the mine rescue team.

The company also rolled out an appreciation bonus program that awards financial bonuses based on hours worked, including overtime, in a lump sum twice a year.

The new benefits and perks are worth more than a \$3-an-hour raise, Porco said.

"Alpha recognizes that the biggest asset we have is people, and it's our employees that allow us to be successful," he told a group of miners during a company-wide announcement.

Alpha operates 58 mines and 10 preparation plants in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and Pennsylvania and has more than 3,600 employees.

"The industry in general is doing really well. It's very healthy at this point despite all of the regulations we're having to deal with," Porco said. "The big driver has been exporting materials. The U.S. is exporting a lot more in 2008 than in 2007 and 2006."

The company's "sweet spot," he said, is in the Atlantic market, which includes South America and Europe. Exports are also seeing a new market in the Eastern Bloc of countries like Ukraine.

"We're proud. It's really the dedication and hard work of guys like this in the room," Porco said.

Mine Superintendent Kim Shick said that the Ondo Extension Mine generally has little to no turnover, which he attributes to the way everyone works together.

"Everybody does their part here. If you look at our accident



**MIKE WALKER**/Gazette

**MINERS FROM** the Ondo Extension Mine in Brush Valley listened to a presentation on a new benefits/retention package for employees of Alpha Natural Resources Inc., the mine's parent company. Pictured are, from left, Rick Weinzierl, manager of human resources at AMFIRE Mining Co., and miner Jeremy Neese.

and injury rate, it's very good. It all has to do with the people that work here. They care," he said. "They work good with other people. That's why we're the safest mine. Safety is No. 1."

Mike Warfield, a miner from St. Boniface, agreed that a major part job satisfaction is the quality of people doing it, and the safety at the mine. He has been at Ondo for five years, and said that in his 35 years of mining experience, he's never worked for a company that has offered share options.

In general, though, he said companies are trying to be better employers.

"Things are getting better," he said. "The big thing is a lot of guys travel pretty far to get here. That's why a lot of people are

going to different mines — it's just a little bit closer."

Warfield also said that it helps that the employees will no longer have to pay out of pocket for their health care. The raise also helps.

"That's a big boost right there. Most people are pretty young and they have families. It's hard," he said.

Another employee, Michel "Frenchy" Gresko, of Vintondale, agreed, and said that the gas reimbursement would be helpful. He travels 30 miles one way to get to the mine.

"I love it. I never had anything like this. It's great," he said. "You get money for coming to work. It ain't much, they have to make money off of it, but they're helping."

## Details emerge of tax relief for county property owners

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"I am equally committed to ensuring that this year's property-tax cut is not swallowed up by next year's school tax hike," Rendell said.

Slot machines were legalized

in 2004 on the promise of tax cuts, and revenues helped expand a property tax and rent rebate program last year for low-income seniors.

The property-tax cuts will apply to eligible home and farm

owners outside Philadelphia. In Philadelphia, residents will see a 5.7 percent reduction in the city's wage tax rate in 2009, while suburbanites who work in the city will see a 5 percent drop in the wage tax rate they pay.