

Weather

Sunny and pleasant today with a high of 73 and a low of 50. More sun Wednesday. Page A7

LaGrange Officials OK Mongo tourist venture Page A7

Noble County Heated discussions fill commissioners meeting Page A2



NHL Playoffs Penguins take opener Page B1

THE NEWS SUN

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GOOD MORNING



KARLY TEARNEY

Big boa

Morgan Metroff, 4, left, and Alex Chilenski, 5, get to hold Betsy, a boa constrictor, Monday evening during Silly Safari with Alligator Aaron at the Fremont Public Library during a family program about interesting animals.

Today is deadline for disaster relief in Noble County

ALBION — Today is the deadline for Noble County property owners to register for disaster relief with the Federal Emergency Management Agency mobile disaster recovery center.

The center opened Friday at the Albion Fire Department, 210 Fire State Drive, Albion, and will be open today from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Applicants can meet face-to-face with FEMA disaster recovery specialists, Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Small Business Administration and other agencies who provide recovery information.

Residents and business owners will have until June 22 to seek disaster relief, but after today must apply calling 1-800-521-FEMA or the SBA at 1-800-659-2955. Online registration is also available through FEMA at www.disasterassistance.gov. and www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance.

Kelsey Fogle benefit set for Saturday

BRIMFIELD — A pancake and sausage breakfast benefit for Kelsey Fogle will be from 7-10 a.m. Saturday at the Brimfield United Methodist Church in Brimfield.

The Brimfield/Rome City Lions Club is sponsoring the event with all free will donations going to help the Fogle family with training and traveling expenses for Kelsey Fogle's specially-trained autism service dog. Fogle suffers from multiple disabilities, including autism.

The family recently raised \$11,000 to purchase the dog for Kelsey from 4 Paws.

Info

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Caucus date set in LaGrange

GOP vote for Boots' replacement to be held May 27

BY TIFFANY YODER tiffany@kpcnews.net

LAGRANGE — The race is on to fill the vacancy left by the passing of former LaGrange County Commissioner Roger Boots.

Bob Murphy, chairman of the LaGrange County Republican

Central Committee, set the date for a caucus to elect Boots' replacement for Wednesday, May 27. The caucus will be held beginning at 7 p.m. at the Lakeland High School Media Center.

All Republican committee members in LaGrange County will be eligible to vote.

"We do things a little bit different here in LaGrange County," Murphy said, noting that though commissioners each represent one of three districts in the county, voting is not restricted to that district. "The whole county

votes."

As of Monday afternoon, the list of candidates who have filed for the post include County Councilman Larry Miller, Joe Clark, Phil Tripi, Harold Gingerich and Peter Cook. Potential candidates must be registered voters residing within the south district of LaGrange County.

Prospective candidates for the election must file their declarations of candidacy by 7 p.m. on Sunday, 72 hours prior to the caucus. Candidates may pick up

the forms to file from Murphy or the county clerk's office, though forms must be submitted to Murphy.

The southern district of LaGrange County consists of Clearspring, Eden, Johnson South, Milford East and Milford West precincts.

Boots died in April after being re-elected in November. Whoever the caucus chooses to fill his seat will serve until Dec. 31, 2012. The new commissioner will receive a biweekly salary of \$783.96, a total of \$20,382.96.

Cash offer

Indiana educators to be rewarded for largest increases in graduation rates

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — High schools that achieve the biggest graduation rate increases between now and next spring could receive up to \$20,000 — money that would be split among each school's principal and select staff members.

State Superintendent Tony Bennett said Monday the goal of the new program is to push public high schools to find the most innovative ways to graduate more students by encouraging would-be dropouts to stick with their studies and get their diplomas.

Under the program, 10 high schools with at least 300 students will get \$20,000 each. Two other schools with enrollments under 300 will receive \$10,000 each.

The 12 schools getting the money will be those that demonstrate the largest increases in their graduation rates between the current 2008-09 school year and the 2009-10 school year.

Rules for rubbish

Kendallville may require garbage containers

KENDALLVILLE — Residents will be required to use garbage containers for garbage pickup and may be given only two days to remove accumulated rubbish or garbage after receiving a warning from the city, according to proposed revisions to the city's solid waste ordinance.

City Council tonight will consider a first reading of the

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Worldwide Attention



DENNIS NARTKER

East Noble Boomerang Backpack coordinator Mark Cockroft explains the backpack program during a Web video seminar "Webinar" last

week at the Northeast Indiana Four-County Vocational Cooperative's Dowling Street campus in Kendallville.

East Noble's Boomerang Backpack program goes to World Wide Web

BY DENNIS NARTKER dennisn@kpcnews.net

KENDALLVILLE — Educators from around the country tuned in to the Internet Thursday for a seminar on East Noble's Boomerang Backpack pilot program that provides nutritious food on weekends to qualified elementary students.

East Noble High School teacher and Boomerang Backpack coordinator Mark Cockroft gave a 35-minute video and Powerpoint presentation about the program on the Web at the Northeast Indiana Four-County Vocational Cooperative's Kyle Smith provided the technical assistance.

Following the presentation, Cockroft responded to questions from educators watching the presentation.

Cockroft said he chose to do the offering on the Internet after receiving an "amazing number of e-mails and responses" to an April 21 NBC Nightly News Making a Difference piece about the

Boomerang Backpack pilot program. An NBC Nightly News reporter and producer camera operator were in Kendallville on April 8-9 to report on the program.

"Initially, I probably received 100 e-mails from teachers around the country asking for information about Boomerang Backpack," said Cockroft. "The (Internet program) allows me to talk to a lot of different people at the same time."

Boomerang Backpack started after Cockroft learned that 50 to 60 percent of East Noble students received free or reduced-priced lunches based on their family's low income, and at South Side Elementary School the figure was as high as 70 percent.

Along with the 18 percent unemployment rate in Noble County, reports of layoffs and plant closings in Kendallville, and East Noble food service employees telling him students were coming to school hungry, Cockroft came up with a way of providing nutritious food on weekends to students receiving

free or reduced-price lunches. He secured assistance from Kraft Foods in Kendallville, approval from the East Noble School Board of Trustees and support from South Side Elementary School principal Jim Nixon.

Qualified South Side Elementary School students — and a few weeks later qualified Rome City Elementary School students — received backpacks with food provided by Kraft or purchased with donations. The backpacks are distributed on Fridays and returned on Mondays.

East Noble High School students in the school's professional internship program and East Noble High School special needs students assist with the shopping for food, backing and delivering the backpacks. "It's important to involve high school students so they can see what's going on in their community," said Cockroft.

Educators tuning in asked Cockroft about reaction from students not receiving backpacks, if the program could operate

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FILE PHOTO

In November 2007, Butler Mayor Floyd "Butch" Coburn makes a phone call to deliver news of his re-election victory. His wife, Dozzy, left, and his "second mom," Marceline Davis of Auburn, congratulate him.

'Everybody's grandpa'

Butler mourns Mayor Coburn

BY JEFF JONES jeffj@kpcnews.net

BUTLER — News of Mayor Floyd "Butch" Coburn's death spread quickly through the Butler community, after he died in a motorcycle accident Sunday afternoon near Pioneer, Ohio.

Monday morning, flags flew at half-mast in front of Butler City Hall and the Butler Police Department.

A somber mood prevailed at the Butler Eat 'N Haus restaurant, a popular destination for Coburn, 64, his family and friends.

"The mayor's table," a round table in the corner of the smoking section was situated so Coburn and his wife, Dozzy, could see and greet everyone who patronized the restaurant, according to waitress Lisa Langford.

On some occasions, restaurant staff members put together three tables to accommodate everyone who wanted to sit with Coburn.

"We just decided one day (to get a round table), because Butch's table kept getting bigger and bigger," Langford explained.

It wasn't unusual for as many as 12 people to sit around the table at once. From 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. each morning, up to 20 people may have taken turns sitting at the

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