

INDIANA

PRESERVATION

MARCH/APRIL 2021



INDIANA LANDMARKS

Post Taste

Appreciating historic
post office murals

GYM CLASS

Basketball landmarks
on the rebound

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Saving Brookville's
Valley House



In Praise of Progress

“PROGRESS MAY HAVE BEEN all right once, but it went on too long.” There may have been a time when Ogden Nash’s witty quip characterized the historic preservation movement. Such is no longer the case. If the last year has taught us anything, it’s that change and progress are not only inevitable, they are imperative. That holds true for historic preservation, if it is to remain relevant.

One obvious and dramatic change can be found in the way we gather. Virtually all of our meetings now are, well, virtual. While we sorely miss the in-person contact, we now regularly interact with colleagues across the state and nation, eliminating travel time and expense. This week, for instance, members of our affiliate council of local preservation organizations assembled in Zoom conferences that were well attended and no less substantive than if we had met in person.

More importantly, we seek changes in the way the historic preservation movement addresses our shared heritage. Looking back, we recognize how much we need to examine the motivations for choosing what we have preserved and how those places are interpreted. Looking forward, we must seek ways to broaden the scope of what we preserve, hastening the arc of change that now celebrates not only high-style landmarks of affluence but places that reflect the wonderful diversity of our land. In so doing we will connect with new generations of preservationists and ensure that our work remains relevant.

We speak of historic preservation as a movement. That, of course, suggests motion—and, hopefully, *forward* motion, otherwise known as progress.



Marsh Davis, President

On the Cover

A detail from *Hay Making* by Marguerite Zorach in Monticello’s post office, one of 37 murals created statewide through a New Deal-era program. Learn more on pp. 4-5. PHOTO BY LEE LEWELLEN



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STARTERS

Respect for Rustic

SPANNING OVER 15,000 acres, Brown County State Park qualifies as the state’s largest historic district after its addition to the National Register of Historic Places in December. The area’s spectacular natural views attracted artists at the turn of the twentieth century, drawing even more visitors after it became the Brown County State Game Preserve in 1924. In the 1930s, Civilian Conservation Corps crews helped define the park’s architecture, creating gatehouses and shelters in the park rustic style—even shaping its trails and lakes. Indiana Landmarks staff authored the nomination, partnering with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and supported by local preservation group Peaceful Valley Heritage.



PAIGE WASSEL



©BOTTLEWORKS HOTEL

Auction to the Rescue!

Though we can’t gather in person for our annual Rescue Party this spring, you can still help us save endangered places by bidding in online auctions this April. Items up for bid will include exclusive overnight packages at two of the state’s most celebrated restored destinations: West Baden Springs Hotel and the recently opened Bottleworks Hotel, located in Indianapolis’s historic Coca-Cola bottling plant. Both packages feature extras including private tours, dining, entertainment, and more. Learn more on p.19.

37

Indiana post offices received murals through the federal Section of Painting and Sculpture from 1936 to 1942. Read about how the New Deal program left its mark on post offices around the state on pp. 4-5.



Culver post office

LEE LEWELLEN



Lake, Indiana, centers around Solon Robinson, the city's founder, and Chief Mewonitoc, the eponym of Robinson's 1867 novel on his interactions with Native Americans in northwest Indiana. In Alexandria's post office, Roland Schweinsburg's *The Sleighing Party* includes James Whitcomb Riley's "Raggedy Man."

Pay to artists ranged from \$600 to \$1,000 for work that could take up to a year. By December 1942, as the program neared its end, the Section had spent about \$1.8 million (an estimated \$30 million today) on 1,047 murals and 268 sculptures nationwide.

Post office murals often depict archetypical Americans, fictional characters, and real local people. Installed in 1938, Jessie Hull Mayer's *The Arrival of the Mail in Culver* (below) references the nearby military academy, farming community, and lakeside recreation. PHOTO BY LEE LEWELLEN

Powell contacted local preservation nonprofit Saving Historic Orange County (SHOC), which solicited permission from the postal service's federal preservation officer to pursue the mural's conservation. The group raised \$5,000 in grants and private donations to hire Parma Conservation of Chicago to clean the mural, revealing its rich original colors. SHOC used the opportunity to raise public awareness, inviting area art teachers to bring their students to observe the conservators at work and commissioning a plaque for the post office explaining the mural's origins. The artist's son and his wife came to the plaque dedication and donated one of Rost's drawings, which now hangs in the local library. The group also borrowed a traveling exhibit on post office murals by the Indiana Historical Society for display in the post office lobby.

Not long after the Monticello Post Office received Indiana's last mural in November 1942, the federal government's public

New Deal Leaves Stamp on Local Post Offices

MOST PEOPLE GO TO THE POST OFFICE TO MAIL a package or pick up a book of stamps, but lucky patrons may also have a chance to stop and admire a beautiful piece of art. If your post office was built in the 1930s and 1940s, the next time you step into the lobby, look up. You may be in for a treat!

During the Depression, the federal government sought to put people to work through a number of initiatives as part of the New Deal, including funding for public art projects.

In 1934, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr.,

established the Section of Painting and Sculpture, aimed at decorating public buildings, enriching the cultural experience of Americans, and offering financial relief for unemployed artists. Reasoning that most people visited post offices, the Section focused on commissioning murals and sculptures at post offices across the country. Two years later, Indiana received its first post office murals, a pair painted by Henrik Martin Mayer in Lafayette.

In order to promote high-quality art, the Section selected artists via state, regional, and national competitions, asking them to submit proposals that reflected the host community, even encouraging artists to interview residents and postmasters for inspiration.

Though some artists failed to win the competition they entered, they were invited to create murals for smaller buildings, often in the same general region. After Indianapolis artist Jessie Hull Mayer lost the contest to create murals for the Lafayette post office (her husband submitted the winning entry), she was commissioned to paint a mural in the Culver post office. Completed in 1938, *The Arrival of the Mail in Culver* depicts students from Culver's military academy looking at their letters. Mayer went on to create murals for post offices in Jasper, LaGrange, and Canton, Missouri.

Post office murals often depicted archetypes of Americans (farmers, laborers, pioneers, etc.), real people from the community or region, fictional characters, or some combination of the three. Crown Point's post office mural by George Melville Smith, *From Such Beginnings Sprang the County of*

A Depression-era federal program commissioned murals and sculptures for new post offices, creating public art still on display around Indiana. In 2012, concerned citizens led an effort to clean *Rural Mail Carrier* in Paoli's 1937 post office (above). Indiana's last mural was installed in Monticello's post office (left) in 1942. PHOTOS BY LEE LEWELLEN



Originally, 37 Indiana post offices received murals through the Section's program; 36 remain today, according to a survey completed in 1995. Though murals have been lost to demolition or deterioration around the U.S., in Indiana appreciation of these public artworks has spurred conservation efforts.

In 2012, Paoli resident and former University of Pittsburgh art professor Edward Powell noticed the poor condition of the town's post office mural *Rural Mail Carrier*, painted in 1939 by Richmond native Tom Rost. The mural had been cleaned in the 1980s but ensuing years of cigarette smoke and dirt left it darkened and grimy.

art program came to an end. In 1943, as the nation's industrial focus shifted to the war effort, the construction of new post offices and associated funding for murals came to a halt.

For further reading, check out *The Living New Deal*, livingnewdeal.org, an online project documenting the impact of New Deal programs, or *A Simple and Vital Design: The Story of the Indiana Post Office Murals* by John C. Carlisle.

— Adapted from an article by Brad Miller, director of Indiana Landmarks' Northwest Field Office in Gary.





Bringing Back Brookville's Valley House

FOR MORE THAN 160 YEARS, THE VALLEY

House Hotel has anchored a commercial block on Brookville's Main Street across from the Franklin County Courthouse. Once a popular overnight stop for passengers traveling between Indianapolis and Cincinnati, the long-vacant hotel earned notoriety in recent decades for its state of disrepair. Last year marked a turnaround for the site and the surrounding block, revitalized and reopened as Valley House Flats, an \$11 million development and the first project in the state completed using Opportunity Zone funding.

Much of the block including the Valley House dates to 1852, built after a devastating downtown fire destroyed the previous buildings and adjacent county courthouse. Opened in December 1852, the hotel became a hub for traveling business leaders, government officials, and dignitaries, with author and General Lew Wallace, Indianapolis Mayor Charles Bookwalter, and presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan among its famous guests.

By the time it closed in the 1970s, the Valley House reportedly claimed status as Indiana's oldest continuously operating hotel. In 1991, however, blighted by two decades of vacancy

Last October marked the opening of Valley House Flats, an \$11 million development that repurposed six historic commercial buildings as affordable and market-rate apartments for seniors. The project rescued the 1852 Valley House Hotel, a long-empty landmark Franklin County Citizens for Historic Preservation and community leaders had worked for decades to save.

PHOTO © VALLEY HOUSE FLATS

and neglect, the hotel earned a spot on Indiana Landmarks' inaugural 10 Most Endangered list. A Connersville businessman bought the building, but his plans for its reuse never materialized. Stalled developments in the intervening years left the hotel foundering.

Looking for a solution to save the landmark, town leaders and business owners reached out in 2014 to Bruce Rippe, a developer with experience adapting historic buildings and creating affordable housing in other small towns. The proposed development aimed to save the Valley House and renovate six historic commercial buildings on the block as a mix of affordable and market-rate apartments for seniors. At ground level, plans called for retail and other amenities,

including installing a new restaurant and renovating an existing pharmacy at the block's north end.

"You couldn't ask for a better location in a downtown area, with plenty of places to walk and shop within walking distance, which makes this kind of housing attractive to people who want to age in place," notes Rippe.

Fortuitously, floor levels across the buildings lined up within six inches, making it possible to create connecting hallways that could be accessed by a shared elevator. Workers preserved historic architectural elements, including a grand staircase in the former hotel, pressed-metal ceilings, tile, and original woodwork and floors. At street level, the historic storefronts received a facelift, exposing long-hidden cast-iron columns and a prismatic glass transom with an art glass insert. Low-Income Housing Tax Credits from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Agency and federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits as well as developer equity allowed the



At street level, storefronts received a facelift. On one historic façade, workers removed later additions to reveal long-hidden architectural elements, including original cast-iron columns and a prismatic glass transom.

PHOTOS © RATIO

Interior spaces incorporate original features, including pressed-metal ceilings and tile (below, left). The state's first completed project to use Opportunity Zone funding, the Valley House Flats development also leveraged a mix of state low-income housing tax credits, federal historic preservation tax credits, and developer equity.

PHOTO © VALLEY HOUSE FLATS



affordable housing construction to proceed, but financing difficulties put development of the market-rate apartments on hold.

"In small towns like this, where there haven't been any new apartments built in 40 years, lenders are apprehensive because of the absorption rate of apartments and overall ability to achieve market rate rents. There's just no data to support it," says Rippe.

Around the same time, the State designated Brookville as an Opportunity Zone. Created through the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts of 2017, opportunity zones encourage private investment in rural and low-income communities by deferring federal taxes on capital gains invested in designated areas. Indiana currently has 156 opportunity zones.

In 2018, long-time Brookville residents Mick and Jenny Wilz sold Sur-Seal Gasket, a family business Mick's father founded in Cincinnati, and were incurring capital gains as a result. They began exploring how investing in Brookville's Opportunity Zone could benefit the community and liked the idea of helping the Valley House—a landmark whose fate they had both been concerned about over the years. Their contribution through the Opportunity Zone program allowed the development of the market-rate apartments to proceed.

"This gave us the opportunity to really help the community and get to see our money being used, when it would just go to taxes if we didn't find a project like this," says Jenny.

The experience encouraged the couple to make other opportunity zone investments, acquiring Whitewater Publications, publisher of the local newspaper located in another historic building on Main Street, and supporting the development of a new area hotel.

Valley House Flats held its grand opening in October 2020, and by early 2021, 34 out of its 47 apartments had been leased.

"In a time of pandemic, when people aren't feeling very positive, there was so much positivity here last year with the Valley House," adds Mick.



HISTORIC GYM-PACT

Designed by Fermo Spencer Cannon in 1928 to seat 15,000, Butler University's Hinkle Fieldhouse served for years as host venue for the state's single-class high school basketball championship. Today, the National Historic Landmark is revered by many as a basketball cathedral.

PHOTO © BUTLER UNIVERSITY

“The possibilities of basketball as seen there were a revelation to me.”

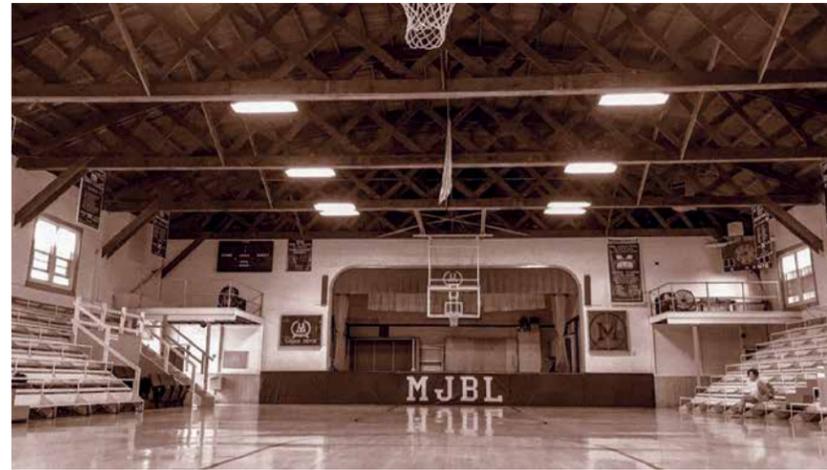
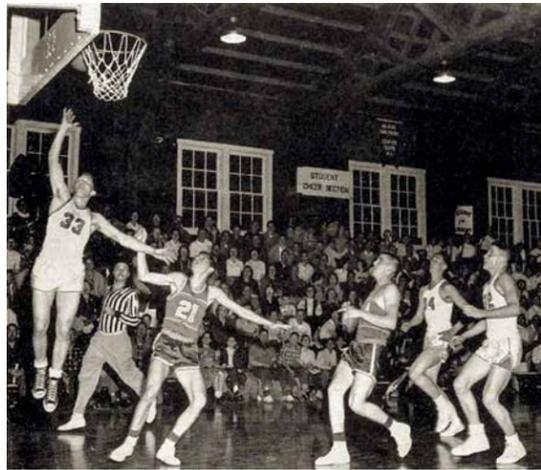
After a visit to Indiana for the state's high school finals in 1925, even Dr. James Naismith, inventor of the game, expressed amazement at Hoosiers' embrace of basketball. So, it may be no surprise the NCAA announced in January that the entire Division 1 men's 2021 basketball tournament would be played in Indiana.

A number of the state's iconic historic gyms will take center stage hosting the tournament, including Purdue University's Mackey Arena (1967), Indiana University's Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall (1971), the Indiana Farmers Coliseum (1938) at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, and—perhaps the granddaddy of them all—Butler University's Hinkle Fieldhouse (1928), a National Historic Landmark.

Outside of these great landmarks, historic gyms both large and small can still be found in almost every corner of the state. Indiana's first high school state basketball tournament took place in 1911, and the ensuing decades saw a flurry of gym construction as communities built home courts for teams hoping to make it to the state championship.

Eventually, school consolidation and construction of newer facilities left many small-town arenas empty and idle. Marshall County's 1928 gym in Bourbon was the latest casualty, demolished last year after the Triton Community School Corporation said it could no longer support the old gym's upkeep. In Converse, local advocates are still searching for a use that would give the 1926 Bordermen Gym new purpose.

Elsewhere around the state, communities have rallied to preserve their gyms, adapting them to new uses, or reviving them as true temples to “Hoosier Hysteria.”



XX WINNING GAME PLAN XXXXXXXXXXXX

In Indiana, few landmarks stir as much local sentiment as historic gyms. They serve as symbols of local identity, the focus of hometown pride, and the backdrop for generations of memories. As schools grow and consolidate, however, many of these local landmarks end up as second-string players, replaced by larger gyms with more modern amenities. When historic gyms lost their original purpose, communities in Mooresville, Jasper, Lebanon, and New Harmony rallied for their preservation.

In December, Mooresville celebrated the 100th anniversary of its historic Mooresville Gymnasium, marking the landmark's long history within the community. Dedicated in 1920, the gym became Morgan County's first facility built specifically for basketball. On the condition they would be repaid and with the promise of free passes to home games in the first year, Mooresville residents and businesses made \$100 loans to the school's athletic association, raising \$23,000 to build the new gymnasium. The

Communities around Indiana have preserved historic gyms, sometimes adapting them to new uses. The 1920 Mooresville Gymnasium (above) hosts a junior basketball league and occasional school functions, while Lebanon's 1931 Memory Hall (below) is used by residents of the adjoining apartment complex. PHOTOS © MOORESVILLE SCHOOLS (ABOVE), KURTIS CRABTREE (BELOW)

school's boys basketball team helped dig its basement and transport gravel for the concrete foundation.

The gym served the high school until 1959, when the school corporation built a new high school and gym. It continued to use the old gym for junior high team games and elementary school physical education classes. In 1996, as the aging gym began to fall into disrepair, locals formed a committee to save the building, raising donations and securing a \$77,150 grant from Lilly Endowment for much-needed renovations.

Today, Mooresville Gymnasium is part of a campus of historic buildings, including the 1861 high school (known as the Academy) and 1936 Newby Memorial Elementary School.

Still owned by the school, it's primarily used as a gym for the Mooresville Junior Basketball League and occasional school functions.

In 1939, the Public Works Administration helped fund construction of Jasper High School's yellow brick gym for \$100,000. In 1984, school leaders rechristened it the Cabby O'Neill Gym to honor Coach Leo "Cabby" O'Neill, who steered the Wildcats to win the state championship in 1949. After the high school moved out for newer facilities in 1977, the Art Deco landmark became home court for Jasper's middle school.

When the school board considered demolishing the gym in 2009, the Dubois County Historic Preservation Committee and a friends group, with Indiana



In 2009, concerned citizens rallied to save Jasper's threatened Cabby O'Neill Gym (above), rehabbed as an events venue. New Harmony's Ribeyre Gym (below) also found new use hosting events.

PHOTOS BY GREG SEKULA (ABOVE), LEE LEWELLEN, THE PROGRESSIVE IMAGE (BELOW)

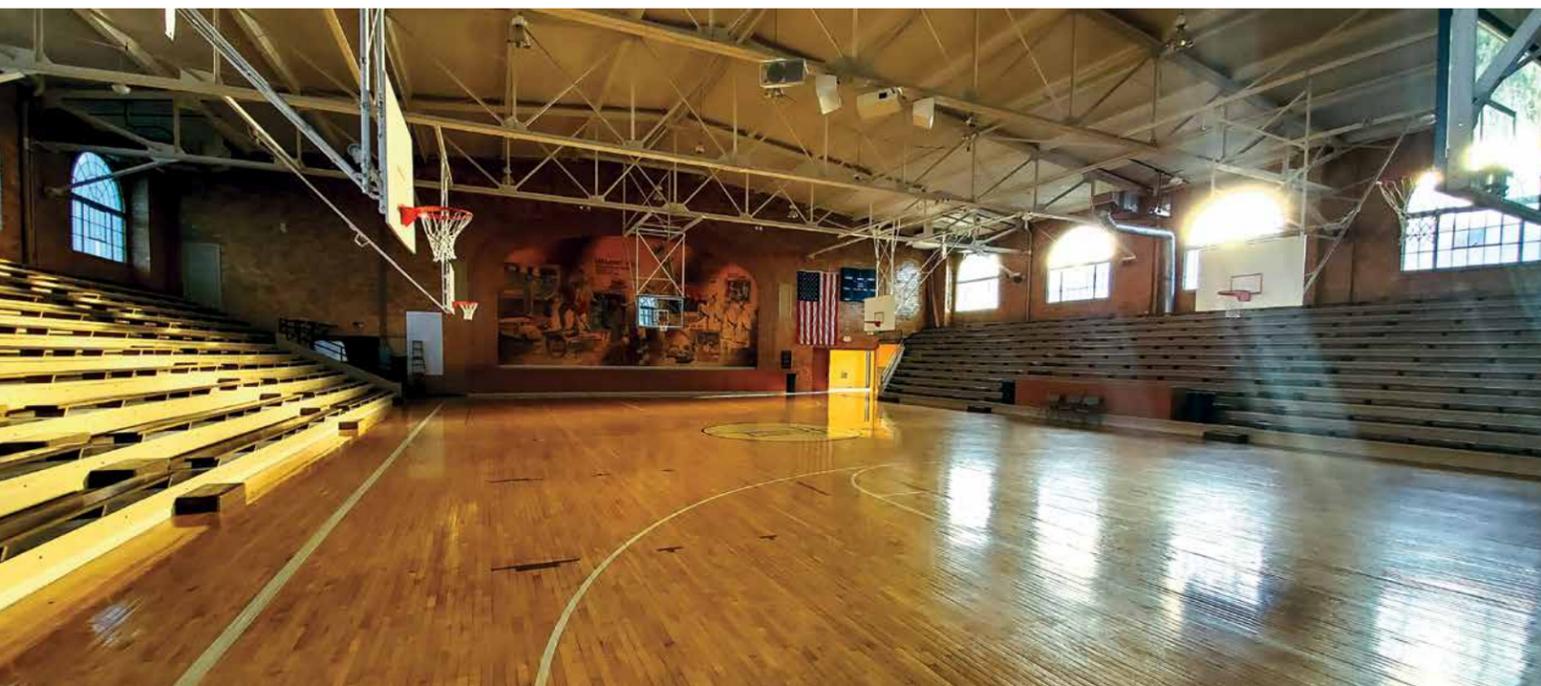
Landmarks' support, successfully appealed for its preservation. The initiative raised funds for the gym's renovation, including a new roof, heating, plumbing, and electrical work.

The victory proved fortuitous in 2011, when the roof collapsed at the newer high school gym, making the Cabby O'Neill Gym the high school team's home court once again for two seasons. Today, the gym hosts community and school events year-round, even the occasional Wildcats game.

Long before it had its moment in the spotlight as a stand-in for the Jasper gym in Hoosiers, Lebanon High School's 1931 gym starred locally as the home court of the Tigers and venue for several sectional tourneys. After the high school moved to newer facilities in 1968, the City bought the gym for use by its recreation department and the local YMCA.

In the '90s, city leaders sought a new use for the deteriorating gym and neighboring historic high school, repurposed as apartments for seniors. Now part of a luxury apartment complex, The Flats of Lebanon, Memory Hall serves as a fitness center for residents and rental space for private events. Where the stage used to be, a mural commemorates the gym's history, including former player Rick "the Rocket" Mount, who played for Lebanon from 1962-1966 and became the first high school athlete featured on the cover of Sports Illustrated.

In southwest Indiana, New Harmony's 1924 Ribeyre Gymnasium became another Indiana gym to gain fame on film, featured in the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own*. Today, following a dedicated student and community-led initiative to repurpose the building, it's The Ribeyre Center, the town's largest events venue. Faced with a decaying building, New Harmony students formed the Ribeyre Gymnasium Restoration Group (RGRG) in 2001. The group raised over \$1 million to restore and update the gym. Used for weddings, banquets, conferences, and festivals, the center's business took a hit in 2020. "We were going fantastic until COVID hit," says Rick Johnson, a former New Harmony teacher and RGRG board member. "Hopefully things will pick up this year, because we still have improvements on our to-do list for this awesome building!"





attracts upwards of 60,000 visitors from all over the U.S. and beyond. But 2020 was anything but normal, as the pandemic forced the facility to cancel most of its in-person events. The lost revenue put a dent in its

In a typical year, thousands of visitors flock to the Hoosier Gym to watch all-star games, shoot baskets, and look at sports and movie memorabilia in the gym's museum. PHOTOS © THE HOOSIER GYM

bottom line, which relies on income from games and souvenir purchases. To help recoup some of the lost income, the Indiana Broadcasters Association partnered with drive-in theaters in Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute to host screenings of *Hoosiers*, raising around \$15,000.

2021 marks a major anniversary year for the site, as the gym turns 100, *Hoosiers* turns 35, and the neighboring Knightstown Academy turns 145. Volunteers are planning several events to mark the occasion, including a block party and parade on May 22 that will include the Hickory Huskers bus from the movie. All events depend on current recommendations concerning gatherings. Stay updated by visiting hoosiergym2021.com and thehoosiergym.com.

XXXXXX IT'S ICONIC XXXXXXXX

When it comes to cementing Indiana's basketball reputation, the state owes a debt to the 1986 movie *Hoosiers*. Inspired by the events leading to the 1954 state championship game between tiny Milan and powerhouse Muncie, the movie filmed on location in historic gyms, downtowns, and churches around Indiana. Its most iconic venue, Knightstown's Hoosier Gym, remains a mecca for fans of the film and game.

Before it gained national recognition, the gym sparked local pride as home to the Knightstown Panthers. Before constructing the gym in 1921, Knightstown Community School held basketball games in a hall above the town drugstore and in a church basement. After the school system built a new high school and gym in 1966, it shuttered the old gym. It sat mostly empty for nearly 20 years, until location scouts for *Hoosiers* chose the site to stand in as home gym for the fictional Hickory Huskers.

Recast as a community center and museum featuring memorabilia from the film and area sports teams, the non-profit

Indiana's 1921 Knightstown Gymnasium gained widespread fame as the home gym for the fictional Hickory Huskers in the 1986 film *Hoosiers*. The starring role gave new purpose to the landmark, restored as a museum and events center. Volunteers are planning several events to mark the gym's 100th anniversary this year.

PHOTO BY MIKE FENDER

Hoosier Gym regularly hosts basketball exhibitions, including the popular Hoosiers Reunion All-Star Classic, where teams of top athletes from around the state play as a Hickory Husker or Terhune Tiger.

"People are drawn here because of the movie, then they get here and understand this is a really neat old building," says Events Coordinator Bob Garner, who played as a senior in 1966 with the last Knightstown basketball team to use the building. "And of course, everyone wants to shoot a basket."

Going into 2020, the gym was in better shape than ever, with a new roof, windows and other repairs funded by a \$500,000 grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs.

In a normal year, the gym hosts more than 80 basketball games and



Original Inspiration

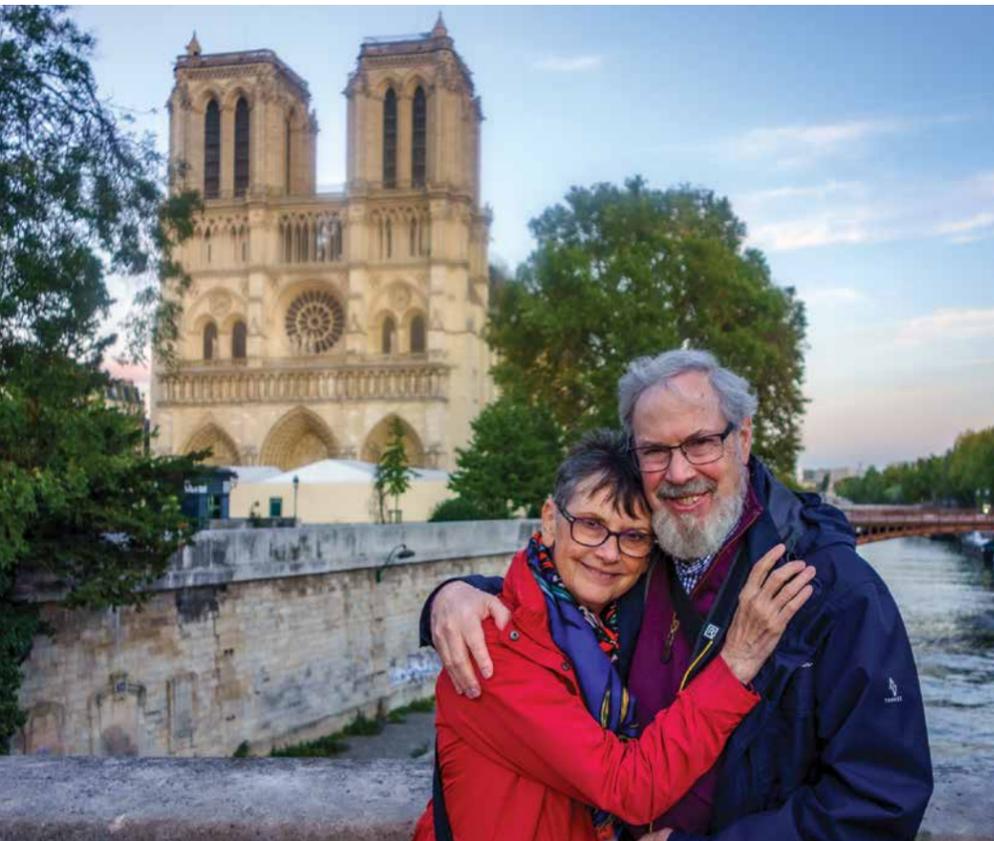
RISING ABOVE THE TOWN OF Milan, population approx. 2,040, a water tower proclaiming "State Champs 1954" celebrates the community's claim to fame. The tower commemorates Milan High School's basketball team, which famously beat Muncie Central 32-30 with a buzzer-beating shot to win the state championship at Butler Fieldhouse in 1954. Dubbed the Milan Miracle, the match-up drew David and Goliath comparisons (Milan High School's enrollment was 161 compared to Muncie's 1,662) and inspired the 1986 film *Hoosiers*.

The tower was built in 1924 to provide fire protection for the Milan Furniture

Company. Last painted in 1969, its lettering was nearly unreadable by 2017, when the Town of Milan secured donations and a \$28,452 grant from Rising Sun Regional Foundation to make repairs, install new lighting, and repaint the iconic tower black with white lettering.

Drive to see it for yourself and make plans to visit the Milan '54 Hoosiers Museum, located in the former State Bank of Milan on Carr Street. The first floor offers a treasure trove of memorabilia connected to the 1954 team, as well as movie props and uniforms from *Hoosiers*. The museum's hours are Wednesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., with groups by appointment. Learn more at milan54.org or by calling 812-654-2772.

PHOTOS BY JARRAD HOLBROOK (ABOVE, LEFT), © MILAN '54 HOOSIERS MUSEUM (LEFT)



Tomorrow in the Indiana Dunes and the “Pagoda House,” a John Lloyd Wright design in Long Beach. Jim’s father, Bloomington architect William Strain, took Jim on consults around the state.

The couple met while attending Indiana University in the ’60s and moved to Indianapolis when Jim took a job as an attorney. Cheryl connected with Indiana Landmarks while volunteering with the Junior League of Indianapolis, helping to lead tours in the Lockerbie Square and Old Northside neighborhoods, where Indiana Landmarks was partnering with other non-profits to encourage investment.

In 2004, a desire to live near downtown prompted them to hire Axis Architecture to build a house on a vacant lot in the Old Northside, working with the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission to make sure it fit in with its Victorian neighbors. The open design includes spaces dedicated



Love for Design Draws Supporters

INDIANAPOLIS RESIDENTS

Jim and Cheryl Strain reveal a life-long appreciation of good design in the variety of houses they’ve owned: a Craftsman house at 45th Street and Broadway, a Tudor Revival in Golden Hill, and two Contemporary designs—one by architect Carolyn Goode in Williams Creek and one they commissioned in the Old Northside. Their love of architecture of all eras and styles inspired them to become members of Indiana Landmarks.

Both credit their families for fostering a preservation ethic. Growing up in Michigan City, Cheryl recalls going on Sunday drives to look at interesting buildings, including the House of

Indianapolis residents Cheryl and Jim Strain (above, on a 2019 trip to Paris, France) credit a lifelong appreciation of architecture for inspiring them to become members of Indiana Landmarks. A love of good design prompted them to live in architecturally significant homes, including a Contemporary design (right) in the Old Northside neighborhood.

PHOTOS © THE STRAINS (ABOVE), BRENDAN CRONIN (RIGHT)



to their interests: a spacious kitchen where Cheryl can experiment with new recipes and a darkroom where Jim can develop film and prints of places he’s photographed (historic churches around Indiana and throughout Europe remain a favorite subject). The couple opened their home as part of the Old Northside’s Candlelight Tour when Indianapolis hosted the National Preservation Conference in 2013.

The Strains say they support Indiana Landmarks because they’ve seen its impact—from restoring the Central Avenue Methodist Church just down the street from their home to engineering the comeback of the West Baden Springs Hotel in southern Indiana. The couple took their kids to see the grand hotel in its “before” state, and returned last year as extras when the restored hotel provided the backdrop for filming the

In 2004, the Strains hired Axis Architecture to design a home (above and right) that complemented its Victorian neighbors while catering to their interests in cooking and photography, including a courtyard where they relax and entertain. They opened their home for the Old Northside’s Candlelight Tour when Indianapolis hosted the National Preservation Conference in 2013.

PHOTOS BY JIM STRAIN

movie adaptation of *So Cold the River*, where their son worked on the production crew. “That particular place keeps coming back in our family memories,” says Cheryl. “All our children have become interested in architecture and art as well.”

Indiana Landmarks’ mission to save meaningful places resonates with the Strains. “When you look at the places on Indiana Landmarks’ most endangered list, there’s a history there, and to just discard these places is a shame,” notes Cheryl. “These places define us,” adds Jim. “The work you are doing is important and it shows.”





Finding Their Haven

FOR BRIAN AND AARON

Blight, rescuing things that are neglected or unwanted is a way of life. The couple previously renovated a vintage cottage in South Bend, rescuing a discarded slate roof from a nearby school renovation for installation on their home. As founder of Heartland Small Animal Rescue, Aaron works to find loving families for pets in need. Now, as new owners of the Haven Hubbard House in New Carlisle, she and Brian are bringing their enthusiasm to one of the area's most historic properties.

The couple spotted the house for sale via a Facebook post in 2019. Intrigued by the property's low asking price—just \$35,000—and its stunning original woodwork, the Blights reached out to Indiana Landmarks. Brian had become acquainted with the organization while working for the general contractor that renovated

Aaron and Brian Blight (below, with canine companion Eleanor) purchased New Carlisle's Haven Hubbard House (above) from Indiana Landmarks late last year, drawn by the home's original woodwork, parquet floors, built-ins, and other historic details. PHOTOS BY TODD ZEIGER

New Carlisle's Old Republic, a former entry on our 10 Most Endangered list.

Brian and Aaron closed on Haven Hubbard House just before Christmas and immediately jumped into action. Brian's experience as project manager for CORE Construction will guide the restoration. "I come from a long line of carpenters, and I still have their old toolboxes, including a tool chest from my great-grandfather," says Brian. "The woodwork and details inside of the home fit well with that heritage and were part of what drew me to the property."



"We're very excited to dig into the work ahead," adds Aaron. "We love the home's intricate features from the woodwork inside and out to the stained glass in the attic dormer windows."

Haven Hubbard's grandfather built the stately brick home around 1860 as the centerpiece of a sprawling farm, adding the distinctive solarium and other Queen Anne features during an 1890s remodel. In 1916, Haven's widow Armenia donated the 750-acre farm and nineteenth-century homestead to the Evangelical Church, with enough money to build the Haven Hubbard Memorial Old People's Home.

Today, Greencroft Communities operates a modern retirement facility on the property. The historic house had been vacant for nearly a decade, however, when our local affiliate, Historic New Carlisle, raised concerns about its future. The group facilitated discussions with Greencroft and helped clean out the house before it went on the market.

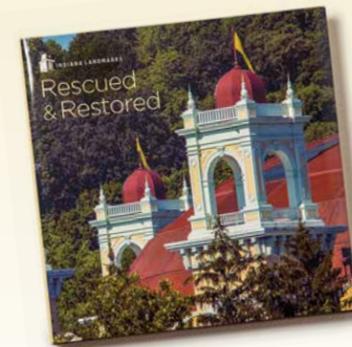
Indiana Landmarks negotiated an agreement with Greencroft's board to sell the house, using an option to buy the property. We sold it to the Blights with covenants protecting the exterior as well as interior details, including the stunning original woodwork and built-ins, fireplaces and exquisite parquet floors.

"We couldn't have made this save without Greencroft's commitment," says Todd Zeiger, director of Indiana Landmarks' Northern Regional Office. "The happy ending is payoff for years of conversations and legal work aimed at getting the house into the hands of people who will bring new life to it."

Everyone loves a good comeback story

Indiana Landmarks Rescued & Restored shares turnaround tales of more than 50 landmarks saved across the state and restored to new uses, with dramatic before-and-after photographs illustrating their revival. Have you purchased your copy yet?

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207 Hanover Avenue

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C.1905 standout with special elements throughout, including staircase with built-in bench, art glass windows, pocket doors, fireplaces, and window seat with storage. 2,400 square feet plus full attic. Ohio River access. Recent improvements include new roof, art glass repair, and interior refinishing. Inquire for price.

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541 South Lake Street, Gary

Co-working office space for rent in historic building along Lake Street. The available space is 121 square feet. with two built-in desks, shelving, and access to a shared conference area, office kitchen, and bathroom. Utilities included as well as high speed internet. \$350 per month with a minimum one-year lease.

Brad Miller
219-947-2657
bmiller@indianalandmarks.org

WHAT WE'RE SAVING NOW



Banking on a Turnaround

GROWING UP IN GRIFFITH, BREANNE STOVER had always been captivated by the brick and stone-trimmed building on a prominent corner at Main and Broad streets. So when a for sale sign went up in front of the property in 2017, Breanne and her husband, Edward, moved quickly to buy it, embarking on a two-and-a-half-year rehabilitation to transform the Colonial Revival-style building into an events center.

Built in 1920 as Griffith State Bank, the structure served a number of uses over the years, most recently as a sign maker's studio. Even in its diminished state, the bank attracted attention with its barrel-vaulted ceiling, Palladian window, stone lintels, and terrazzo floor. By the time the Stovers bought it, water infiltration from a leaking roof had caused significant damage to the bank's walls and ceiling. They installed a new slate roof and reskimmed every inch of the water-damaged plaster. To turn the old bank vault into a bathroom for the facility, workers cored through 21 inches of concrete to add plumbing and electrical access. As a maintenance and restoration contractor based in Chicago, Edward brought hands-on experience to the project.

Throughout the rehabilitation, people stopped by to share memories of the building and thank the Stovers for their work.

Breanne and Edward Stover spent two-and-a-half years adapting the 1920 Griffith State Bank (below) into The Bankquet, an events center that opened in July 2020.

PHOTOS © THE BANKQUET (ABOVE), BRAD MILLER (BELOW)



"Most people remember the building from its days as an ice cream and soda shop or when it was a library," says Breanne. "It's a really cute building with a lot of personality."

Indiana Landmarks staff offered technical advice and a grant to help nominate the building to the National Register of Historic Places. Dubbed "The Bankquet," the events center opened in July 2020.

"It was rewarding seeing it come to fruition and rescuing something from neglect and turning it around into something that enhances the community," says Edward. "I think it brings a lot of happiness to those whose families have been here for generations to see it saved. Being able to resurrect it really gives us a sense of community pride."

The Stovers hope to host an event to celebrate the bank's 100th anniversary this spring. Learn more about The Bankquet and see additional photos at thebankquethall.com.

Tours & Events



Newport Hill Climb

Visit indianalandmarks.org/tours-events to RSVP and receive information on upcoming events

Talking Track: Indiana's Racing Heritage

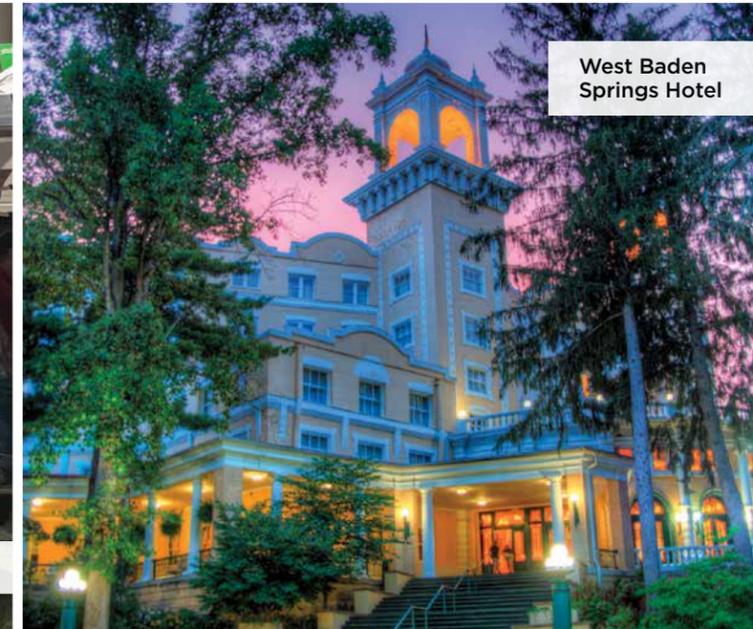
April 8

Join Mark Eutsler, co-founder of Indiana Racing Memorial Association (IRMA), for a virtual talk highlighting the history of motorsports across the Hoosier state. Founded in 2013, IRMA memorializes the people, places and events of Indiana's racing heritage through installation of permanent historic markers. To date, the group has dedicated 48 markers, commemorating sites including the Stutz Motor Company, Wabash Clay Company, and the Newport Hill Climb. Free with RSVP. 7-8 p.m.

Rescue Party Auction

Help rescue endangered landmarks by participating in our online Auction to the Rescue! Bid on a variety of items in a silent auction beginning April 19, and on Thursday, April 29, join Indiana Landmarks' President Marsh Davis online for a live auction featuring exclusive experiences and overnight stays (see p.3). All proceeds support Indiana Landmarks' work to save meaningful places. Watch our website for more information.

PHOTOS © INDIANA RACING MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION (ABOVE, LEFT), DAVE DECARO (ABOVE, RIGHT)



West Baden Springs Hotel

INDIANAPOLIS CITY MARKET CATACOMBS TOURS

Join a guided tour of the remains of Tomlinson Hall, hidden beneath the Indianapolis City Market. In 2021, tours begin on the market's mezzanine and include a brief history of the building's development. Tours offered on Mar. 19, 22, 24, 26, 29, and 31 and Apr. 2, at 11:40 a.m., noon, 12:20, 12:40, 1, and 1:20 p.m. Advance ticket required. \$12/general admission, \$6/child (age 6-11), \$10/member; free for children ages 5 and under.

NOTE: Tour schedule is subject to change pending safety directives and health concerns.

FRENCH LICK & WEST BADEN SPRINGS TOURS

Ongoing tours for overnight guests:

West Baden Springs Hotel

Wednesday-Saturday, 2 & 4 p.m.

French Lick Springs Hotel

Wednesday-Saturday, noon
Tours depart from our Landmarks Emporium shops in the hotels. Discount for members on tours and in shops. Reservations recommended. 812-936-5870, swoodward@indianalandmarks.org.

NOTE: All tours are open only to overnight guests of French Lick Resort, subject to the historic hotels being open to the public. Check our website for current status and ticket info

Help Indiana Landmarks achieve even more by:

- Renewing your membership
- Making a donation in addition to membership
- Including Indiana Landmarks in your estate plans

For more information talk to Sharon Gamble, **800-450-4534** or visit indianalandmarks.org

BRIEFLY NOTED



JOSHUA BIGGS

IN THE JANUARY/FEBRUARY ISSUE of our member magazine, some sharp-eyed readers correctly pointed out that we used a photo of Indianapolis's Admiral Apartments with a caption identifying the building as the Drake Apartments. Located along Meridian Street, both landmarks are fantastic examples of grand apartment buildings built during a multi-family housing boom in Indianapolis in the 1920s. When demolition loomed for the Drake in 2019, Indiana Landmarks joined preservation advocates and city leaders to lend support for its preservation. The Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission voted to protect the building as a local landmark, and we continue to keep an eye on the property. We sincerely apologize for the mix-up. We won't even use 2020 as an excuse.

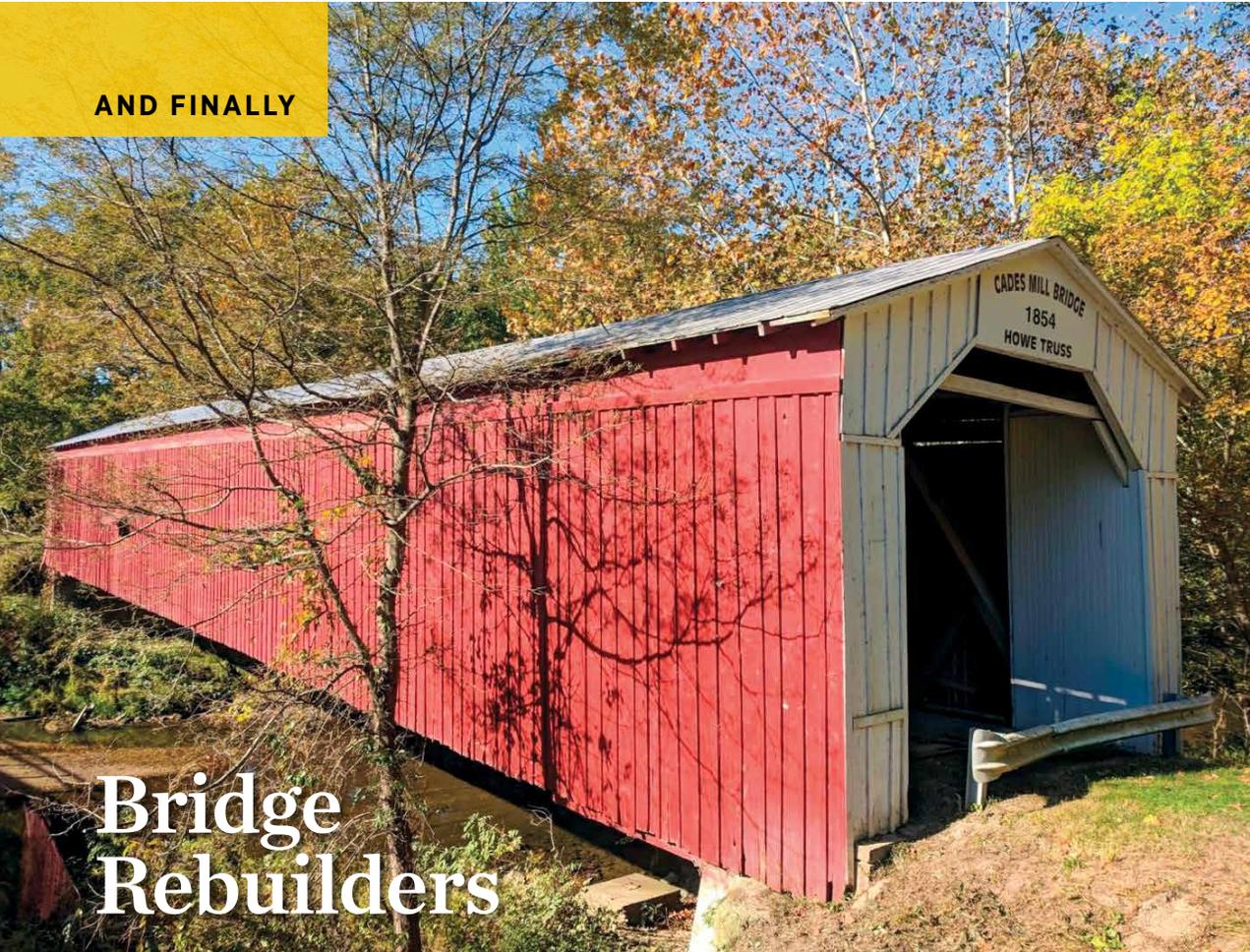


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AND FINALLY



Bridge Rebuilders

The Fountain County Art Council is leading a campaign to rehabilitate the 1854 Cades Mill Covered Bridge, the state's oldest covered span still in its original location. Indiana Landmarks awarded a \$3,500 grant for a structural analysis to help guide repairs. PHOTO BY EMILY ECKARDT

BUILT IN 1854 TO SPAN COAL CREEK NEAR Veedersburg, Cades Mill Covered Bridge holds distinction as Indiana's oldest covered bridge still in its original location. One of only three covered bridges in the county, it serves pedestrian traffic today, closed to vehicles when the adjacent modern bridge was constructed.

In recent years, shifting abutments and a broken truss caused by flooding gave the Cades Mill bridge a noticeable lean, inspiring the Fountain County Art Council (FCAC) to launch a \$405,000 initiative to rehabilitate the span. FCAC members

hope to restore the bridge as a regional attraction—a place to host small events and engage covered bridge enthusiasts.

Workers made emergency repairs in 2019 to stabilize the span and halt further damage. A \$3,500 Efroymsen Family Endangered Places grant from Indiana Landmarks will help fund a structural analysis and construction plans. Donations to the project can be sent to the Western Indiana Community Foundation, Covered Bridge Fund, P.O. Box 175, Covington, Indiana, 47932.