

Looking Back



90 years ago

• George H. Kirkwood, of Owosso, Michigan, is the new manager of the local Morris 5 & 10 Cent to \$1.00 store in Kendallville, succeeding Kenneth Bisel, who was transferred to the Morris store at Van Wert, Ohio. Mr. Kirkwood is moving into the residence on South State Street, formerly occupied by Mr. Bisel and family.

THE NEWS SUN

25 years ago

• Noble Hawk Golf Links opened for play recently after two years of planning and construction. The 18-hole golf course is nestled in rolling hills and a wooded area south of Kendallville on Ind. 3. Tim Dykstra is the director of golf and a golf pro. Golf fees for the year are \$600 for a single membership and \$900 for a couple.

THE STAR

25 years ago

• Dana Corp. of Toledo, Ohio announced the sale of its Auburn plant to Eaton Corp. of Cleveland, Ohio for \$180 million. The Auburn plant makes clutches for medium and heavy duty trucks. In turn for the sale of the clutch division, Dana Corp. announced they will be purchasing the axle and brake business from Eaton for \$287 million.

THE HERALD REPUBLICAN

25 years ago

• The Stroh community will forever remember Laura Halsey after a stone monument is erected in her honor at the Stroh Volunteer Fire Department. Halsey, formerly an EMT, was one of three people killed in a head-on wreck on U.S. 20 in December while on an ambulance run. She was driving the ambulance.

Letters

We welcome letters to the editor.

All letters must be submitted with the author's signature, address and daytime telephone number.

We reserve the right to reject or edit letters on the basis of libel, poor taste or repetition.

Currently, our offices are open Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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Our View

DeKalb County should consider vehicle taxes

You get what you pay for.

That old maxim applies to county roads, too.

In today's edition, we have a story taking a look at the inventory of gravel roads in our four-county area. While Noble County is an unusual outlier for rural counties, with under 10% of its total mileage as gravel, DeKalb County has the highest in the local area at close to 40%.

The DeKalb County Commissioners heard complaints earlier this year from residents who called their gravel road "unbearable to live on" in dry conditions due to the amount of dust being kicked up.

The commissioners stepped in it by first offering to give the squeaky wheel some extra oil — or in this case, dust-suppressing calcium chloride treatments — then when the highway department phones started blowing up from the many other residents who wanted the same special treatment, they opted to give more to everyone.

The highway superintendent noted that gravel roads and dust are the No. 1 complaint he hears. He's also hamstrung to work within the budget he has, which doesn't leave much wiggle room for things like extra dust control, extra maintenance or turning gravel roads to paved ones.

But when you look around the region and see the other counties with more miles of pavement, it's not a far leap to connect the disparity to the fact that those counties also have local vehicle taxes to help boost their road funding.

Without local vehicle taxes paid at registration, counties are solely reliant on money distributed from state gas tax revenue, a pot which has been shrinking over time and that the state has been keeping more of for itself — partly as a not-so-subtle effort to push counties into a corner to make up the difference themselves.

We recognize that thought spending and taxation are like poison in DeKalb County. It's the reason why the county doesn't have a new jail it needs and why it's now dragging feet on a highway garage it needs too.

Add roads in and it raises the question, are residents being served well or not by this inflexible hard line against spending?

Some might argue that Noble County, a comparable peer right next door, taxes too much. But Noble County has 9% gravel roads, decent pavement on most others and has the money to leverage for annual \$1 million Community Crossings grants and multi-million federal aid grants for big reconstruction projects, bridge replacements and safety improvements.

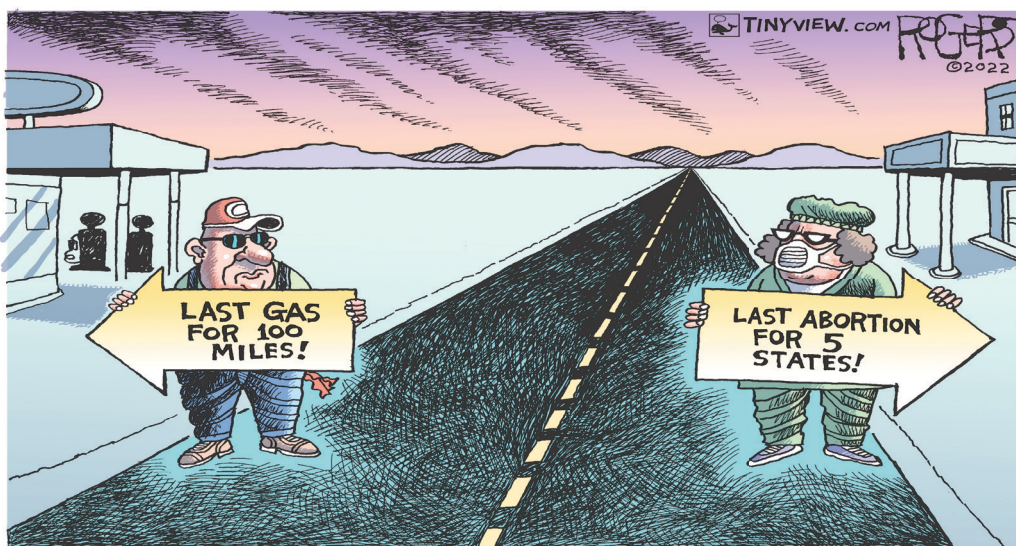
Noble County's been converting gravel to pavement and still has the money to stay on top of maintenance for its region-highest, mostly paved 813 miles of road. That's not an accident or coincidence. Noble County Council members, while also conservative, recognize the importance of good roads and have paved the way to collect the funds needed to get them.

Better roads serve business. Better roads serve residents. Better roads will make the county more attractive to residential and commercial growth sprawling from Allen County.

You get what you pay for, and, right now, DeKalb County generates no local dollars for its roads.

We suggest county leaders start exploring the options to change that, by reviewing local vehicle taxes in an effort to improve their road inventory and better serve their residents.

OUR VIEW is written on a rotating basis by Andy Barrand, Michael Marturello and Steve Garbacz.



Letter

Gun ownership is a constitutional right

To the Editor:

Gun ownership is a constitutional right for law-abiding citizens.

The Second Amendment is not concerned with hunting, like the left claims.

Colonials needed guns to defend themselves against foreign and domestic enemies. Our founders wanted future generations to be equipped to defend themselves against oppressive governments, too.

Stricter gun control legislation is being discussed by Congress following the Uvalde incident.

History teaches us totalitarian governments confiscate guns first. Gun ownership deters totalitarian aspirations.

Gun ownership deters crime, too. Homicide rates in crime-ridden Brazil dropped 34% after officials loosened gun ownership laws.

Biden's initial focus was confiscating "assault rifles" like the AR15. Recently, he indicated a desire to seize 9mm handguns, too.

Police departments issue both. Civilians adopt similar standards. This makes sense. Both want to be as well-armed as the criminal.

AR15s and 9mm handguns are popular, reliable firearms. Lights and optics can be added due to modular design. These additions allow illumination and precise shots, reducing unintended casualties. Recoil is mild (unlike shotguns) and stocks are adjustable to accommodate smaller family members like women and teenagers. Intimidating large capacity "evil black rifles" prepare defenders for multiple intruders.

Police officers cannot be everywhere all the time. The able-bodied, sound-minded citizen should prepare to defend self, family and community.

Gun ownership is a non-negotiable in our constitutional republic. Alternative solutions to deter school shootings must be considered.

Think about the Uvalde incident. The resource officer wasn't present to repel the shooter. Other school employees were unarmed. The shooter gained access through an unlocked door. Police failed to neutralize the shooter rapidly.

Schools need to be hardened with dependable security systems and competent staffing. Well-trained, armed school employees should be trained. Local police need better training.

Most of all, this nation needs a biblical worldview discouraging purposeless, evil behavior. Fathers need to be involved with sons,

raising them to be defenders, not predators or passive observers.

Instead, Biden wants to confiscate guns from law-abiding citizens.

Why? Biden is strongly influenced by woke allies.

• The woke vilify police as racist oppressors. They don't want increased presence in schools.

• The woke (including teacher unions) don't want armed, well-trained volunteer school employees.

• The woke attack nuclear families. Fathers raising sons as defenders sounds too much like "patriarchy" and "toxic masculinity". Radical feminists in their ranks want to cultivate passive, hypersensitive, emasculated men.

• The woke don't respect the biblical worldview. Scripture is used to empower their oppressors (white, heterosexual, cisgender, Christian men).

• The woke don't respect the Constitution. The Constitution is used to empower their oppressors.

Predators will always find ways to acquire guns or other means to harm the innocent. They don't respect laws.

In "progressive" cities like NYC, woke governments fail to protect citizens. Armed citizens will cause some predators to think twice.

Democrat politicians like Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton and the Obamas falsely accuse the Republican Party of endangering democracy, while they plot to deprive American citizens of explicit constitutional rights like gun ownership. This is classical gaslighting.

Examples of recent infringements:

• Department of Homeland Security propaganda ministry called the 'Disinformation Governance Board' led by Nina Jankowicz, promoter of the Steele dossier hoax

• Kamala Harris' task force to censor online speech (another propaganda ministry)

• Department of Justice intimidation of parents attending school board meetings speaking against woke indoctrination

• Department of Agriculture withholding of nutrition assistance funds to needy students attending schools not complying with gender ideology, like allowing biologically advantaged boys to compete in girls' sports

For conservative news items you won't see on leftist national media, check out my Twitter feed (@conservonews).

Robert Sparkman
Rome City

The Dobbs decision and Mike Pence

INDIANAPOLIS — June 24, 2022, should have been the political holy grail for Mike Pence. It was the day he had long strived for, the day Roe v. Wade was consigned to the "ash heap of history."

"Today, life won. By overturning Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court of the United States has given the American people a new beginning for life and I commend the Justices in the majority for having the courage of their convictions," Pence said shortly after the Supreme Court issued its ruling on the Dobbs case. "By returning the question of abortion to the states and to the people, this Supreme Court has righted a historic wrong and reaffirmed the right of the American people to govern themselves at the state level in a manner consistent with their values and aspirations. Now that Roe v. Wade has been consigned to the ash heap of history, a new arena in the cause of life has emerged and it is incumbent on all who cherish the sanctity of life to resolve that we take the defense of the unborn and the support for women in crisis pregnancy centers to every state in America."

Pence's campaign PAC Advancing American Freedom quickly released a video saying that for pro-life Americans "today is one many thought they would never see" while adding, "His cause is our cause." It pointed out he was the first Republican in Congress to propose "defunding Planned Parenthood," he cast a pivotal tie-breaking vote in the Senate as vice

president, and as governor of Indiana, signed every pro-life bill he was presented.

"And in the White House, Mike Pence provided the guidance and advice to the president to select Justices Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett, three of the five votes making this incredible moment possible," it continues. "Lives will be saved."

"For Mike Pence, the mission is still the same: Foster the sanctity of life," the video said.

Donald Trump's reaction was more muted, saying, that "God made the decision," then later Friday calling the Dobbs decision the "biggest WIN for LIFE in a generation" and "only made possible because I delivered everything as promised."

But the former Indiana governor and American vice president found himself in a political no-man's land at the precise time of his most profound political achievement. A recent 2024 presidential poll in New Hampshire had Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis leading Donald Trump by 2%, while Pence stood far back at a mere 9%. A CAPS/ Harvard Poll had Trump leading with 57% while 11% backed Pence. A Reuters/Ipsos Poll had Trump leading

Pence 54-8%. These polls were taken before the bombshell testimony heard on the U.S. House Jan. 6 Select Committee that has implicated Trump in inspiring the U.S. Capitol insurrection, with Trump supporters chanting "Hang Mike Pence."

While some Republicans seeking the 2024 presidential nomination are treading lightly on the issue, opting for what one consultant told the Washington Post "the safest place for Republicans is to say, 'Send it to the states,' Pence is advocating for a national abortion ban. "We must not rest and must not relent until the sanctity of life is restored to the center of American law in every state in the land," Pence tweeted last week. He tweeted out, "Apply to host Vice President Mike Pence on your campus this fall."

I was startled when I asked a leading Hoosier pro-life advocate several weeks ago about whether Pence would reap political credit in a 2024 presidential race if Roe were overturned. The reaction was one of ambivalence. This person observed what many in Indiana have said about Pence, which is that he appears to have forgotten his roots and has moved on to the national stage. Indiana Right to Life and affiliates in Northeast Indiana also issued statements of joy at the ruling, but none mentioned the role Mike Pence had played.

I've asked a number of members of Congress and key Indiana GOP political operatives this question:

Could Mike Pence beat Donald Trump in a 2024 Indiana presidential primary? Not one said yes.

Pence swoops in for fundraisers and an occasional endorsement, the most conspicuous was for Indiana Senate District 14 candidate Ron Turpin, who was subsequently blown out 52-38% by Tyler Johnson in that Fort Wayne area seat in last May's primary. Pence is scheduled to keynote a coming prominent NE Indiana political event this fall.

At this point in time, Pence is in a GOP purgatory as he begins to build his campaign. He has been praised by congressional Democrats for standing up to Trump on Jan. 6, 2021, but is seen as a deserter by the Trump base, and as a toady bootlicker by anti-Trump Republicans, independents and Democrats. As the New York Times Maggie Habermann and Reid Epstein observed, "The whipsaw of images creates an uncertain foundation for a potential presidential campaign, for which Mr. Pence has been laying the groundwork."

Memo to Mike Pence: You've forgotten the peeps who propelled your Washington career.

The columnist is publisher of Howey Politics Indiana at www.howeypolitics.com. Find him on Facebook and Twitter @hwypol.

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