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FRIDAY

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Kendallville, Indiana

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East Noble chooses new middle school math curriculum

BY SHERYL PRENTICE
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KENDALLVILLE — East Noble School board members adopted EdGems Wednesday night as the new mathematics curriculum for middle school students for the 2022-23 school year.

The action came after a Powerpoint presentation from assistant superintendent Becca Lamon that detailed the process the textbook adoption committee used to make their recommendation.

Lamon said the committee investigated five math programs with the goal of increasing engagement of students and teachers with the subject matter. The options were narrowed to three, which were then tested with pilot lessons on reviewing past material and teaching new concepts. Teachers and students then shared feedback on the pros and cons of each program.

Eighteen parents were invited to join the selection committee, but none participated in the process.

The committee, participating teachers and students all liked Ed Gems for the curriculum's real-life approach to teaching and using math skills in action projects. Teachers also liked how the workbooks could be customized for individual classes, Lamon said.

In other action, textbook rental fees will remain the same for the next school year on the recommendation of Chief Finance and Operations Officer Brian Leitch. Student handbooks for all East Noble school buildings were approved for the next school year without comment.

The board accepted the lone bid of \$137,600 from Project Design & Piping for the kitchen air conditioning project at Rome City Elementary School. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funds will be used to pay for the upgrade project.

In other business, the board approved these personnel changes;

Resignations: Sydney Hahn, third-grade teacher at North Side Elementary; Cody Freels, Project Lead the Way teacher at East Noble Middle School; Angela Ratliff, eighth-grade teacher at the middle school; Taryn Fugate, instructional assistant at

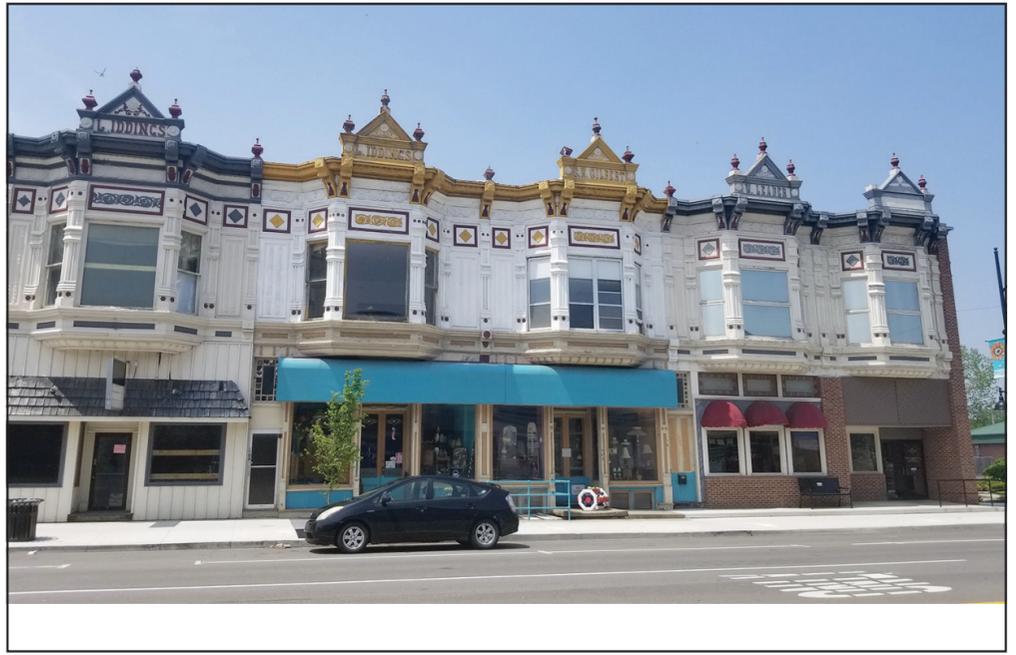
Rome City Elementary School; Jordan Haynes, instructional assistant at the middle school; Amy Anders, instructional assistant at Wayne Center Elementary School; Cassandra Vanderpool, instructional assistant at Avilla Elementary School; Dab Cosentino as a transportation driver; Kelly Dodson as a bus route driver; and Alek Kintz, instructional assistant at the middle school, effective May 9.

Extracurricular resignations: Erin Opper, science fair sponsor at South Side Elementary, effective at the end of the 2021-22 school year; Matt Bennett, head boys track coach at the middle school, effective at the end of the 2021-22 school year.

Retirement: Phyllis Perkins, instructional assistant at the middle school, effective at the end of the 2021-22 school year, 22 years of service.

Reassignments: Malisa Speicher from ELL teacher at Rome City Elementary School to fourth grade teacher at South Side Elementary School, effective at the beginning of the 2022-23; Kelsey Smith from fifth grade teacher at Rome City to fifth grade teacher at Avilla, effective at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year. Matt Stinson's title is changed to Student Services Director, effective July 1.

New Hires: Joantha Smith as Project Lead the Way teacher at the middle school; Dunia Campos as Spanish teacher at East Noble High School; Hanna Mason as a fifth-grade teacher at North Side Elementary School; Alissa Risedoprh as music teacher at Wayne Center and Rome City elementary schools; Joel Pippenger as physical education and health teacher at the middle school; Caitlin Melcher as eighth-grade math teacher at the middle school; Kim McKibben as an instructional assistant at Rome City Elementary School; Destiny Dice as part-time school nurse at Rome City Elementary School; Melissa Hardin, Cheri Maag, Jenn Roberts, Jordyn Tribolet and Melissa Spencer as summer school teachers at North Side Elementary, effective June 1 through June 17; and Angela Prest as a route driver, effective May 23.



STEVE GARBACZ

Buildings at 105-109 N. Main St., part of the historic Iddings-Gilbert-Leader-Anderson block in downtown Kendallville, will be part of the city's \$2 million PresERVING Main Street facade grant. The bid package for the work has been delayed as the city continues to work with the state.

Filing extension

Kendallville getting more time to pull together \$2 million project

BY MATT GETTS
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KENDALLVILLE — When you're talking \$2 million worth of improvements, that's a lot of 'i' dotting a 't' crossing.

During Tuesday's Kendallville City Council meeting, the city's grant facilitator told the council she would be delaying the formal construction application to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs for the city's \$2 million PresERVING Main Street facade project.

That state pilot grant program, run through OCRA, was funded with the intent of encouraging revitalization and restoration of historic downtowns. Part of the requirement of that grant was that the city establish a historic preservation commission, a regulatory board that is tasked with reviewing construction plans to ensure that changes being made to buildings keep the historical character of the downtown, not just for the grant but for the future as well.

Consultant and grant facilitator Shannon McLeod said the scope of the program led to a myriad of details which need to be addressed. Not addressing them now would only cause delays down the road.

She said it would be better to submit an application with all of those details provided — including commitments from the affected building owners who have to come up with 15% of the cost of the project, or approximately \$283,000.

Kendallville put together designs and cost estimates for its first 10 buildings to be considered as part of the grant.

If money is available, the city has five more buildings that could be considered for funding, too.

The project did get some good news as architectural fees, originally estimated to cost

\$191,000 against the grant's total funding, would only be in the \$50,000 range.

The extra money? "That's going to go over into the construction," McLeod said.

McLeod said she would be formally requesting an extension on the application with a final due date of July 30. McLeod said she would be shooting for an early July bid submission.

The application delay is not expected to significantly delay the bidding process, McLeod said, which may be pushed back from September to October. Construction could begin with interior work on some buildings this winter, which is aligned with the previous timetable.

Councilman Regan Ford said McLeod's expertise in wading through the grant paperwork has been invaluable.

"Your experience has been a huge dividend," Ford said.

The 10 buildings being considered by the city include:

- Jeny's Tacos — 215 S. Main St.
- Kropp Insurance — 217 S. Main St.
- 100 Main — 100 S. Main St.
- The Strand Theatre — 221 S. Main St.
- Rudy's/Love Me Two Times on Main — 105-109 N. Main St.
- Hosler Realty — 106 S. Main St.
- Treehouse Realty — 129 S. Main St.
- Kendallville Auto Parts — 101 S. Main St.
- Relaxation Station — 101 N. Main St.
- Former post office — 119 W. Mitchell St.

According to McLeod, the bidding process will be broken into five different projects, with buildings requiring like-work — such as masonry intensive or involving multiple window replace-

ment — paired up. Kendallville's historic district is narrowly defined to the downtown with a few exceptions.

How much can actually be done will depend on bids. McLeod said many projects she is aware of are coming in 30-40% over original estimates.

Five more buildings could be considered if money is available after the first 10. McLeod said Thursday that if there is enough to bid additional buildings, they would likely be in a second, separate package possibly put out to contractors in spring. Those next five up include:

- Inspiration Ministries — 112 S. Main St.
- Bargain Shoppe — 109-111 S. Main St.
- Carla's 5 Buck Antiques — 128 S. Main St.
- The Pure Dream — 121 S. Main St.
- Picture This in Print — 124 S. Main St.

Also at Tuesday's meeting: Kendallville Fire Chief Jeremy McKinley reported his department had 75 callouts in April, including responding to 48 medical calls, eight fire-related calls and one grass fire.

Kendallville Police Chief Lance Waters reported that his officers had responded to 1,171 calls for service in April, an average of 38 per day. The total calls for service for the month were down 12% from the three-year average. During the month, officers filed 53 drug charges, 18 of which were methamphetamine-related. There were 57 criminal investigations initiate, up 20 from the three-year average.

Kendallville officers issued 23 traffic citations and handed out 238 warnings.

The city's code enforcement officer issued nine written warnings for rubbish and four junk vehicle warnings.

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Coffee shop brewing up change

BY MATT GETTS
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ALBION — It's been quite the year — even by first-year business standards — at the Fox Den, Albion's coffee shop located just to the east of Orange Street on East Main Street.

Owner Amy Leedy had planned to hire a manager — instead, she quit her full-time job of 16 years last August and took over operations at the coffee shop herself.

"My vision was to not be here full-time," she said. "I was going to have a manager

run things. (But) I love this. Who's going to love this place any more than I do? Who would care for it and take care of it more than I would?"

In December, she bought out her former partner and has become the sole proprietor.

"It's solely on your shoulders," she says. "If I build it, will it come?"

So far so good. "It's increased slowly," Leedy says of her revenues. "It's given us a chance to



MATT GETTS

The Fox Den's Kiya Tichenor prepares a brew for a customer at the Albion coffeehouse.

SEE COFFEE, PAGE A6

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