



Weekly news from Noble County's west side including Ligonier, Cromwell, Wawaka, Kimmell and the West Noble school district

## Ligonier open to launching downtown revitalization effort

**BY JOE MCQUEEN**

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**LIGONIER** — The city of Ligonier has made strides to sell the remaining land at its industrial park for new businesses to move in, highlighting the city's efforts to expand.

Unlike its neighboring city to the east, Kendallville, downtown hasn't been a recent focus.

But Mayor Patty Fisel doesn't mind if that changes in the near future.

Downtown Ligonier contains some empty storefronts and buildings along Cavin Street with only a handful of local businesses occupying them.

Fisel said the city has made some efforts to do revitalization through the city's façade grant program, which provides funds to local business owners to do projects on their storefront or building such as putting in new windows.

"We've had our 50/50 program for quite some time now that businesses can apply for," she said. "Many of them learned how easy it was to leverage funds for projects."

The city's Redevelopment Commission has another façade grant available and has gotten the word out to business owners about it.

She said Ligonier hasn't



JOE MCQUEEN

This view of downtown Ligonier looks south on Cavin Street. Some buildings have benefited from façade grants.

focused much on downtown revitalization because they have been very busy with selling and annexing property in other parts of the city, including the industrial park, and have put lots of time into attracting industry to the city.

Companies like Forest River RV decided to purchase additional land at the park, getting an additional 65 acres to host its service center and manufacturing areas.

Another local businessman, Dan Stuckman, opened a new waste transfer station in November at the property as well.

Fisel said the industrial park has about 10 acres remaining that is available for someone to purchase. That's occupied a lot of the city's focus.

"We really don't have a lot of time to spend on it," she said. "We also don't have the

money that cities like Kendallville have."

She argues that Ligonier doesn't have enough people to qualify for grants like the PreservINg Main Street grant the state Office of Community and Rural Affairs awarded to Kendallville this year to do downtown revitalization.

The city has a meeting planned with a representative from OCRA on Jan. 6 to discuss whether Ligonier

could qualify for a Main Street grant.

Ligonier doesn't have an active Main Street organization and has no paid staff at its chamber of commerce. She said they have lost most of the volunteers who were involved with them and they need to have the money to pay someone to do it.

"Most places have paid people to do the job," she said. "Things like this I often

do myself since I don't have a secretary to help me with it."

She believes these tasks are not a simple thing to do and that the city is making progress towards revitalization.

She hopes the city can get an outside grant within the next two years and have a paid person to handle the responsibilities for grant applications.

Fisel hopes to motivate local business owners who own buildings in the downtown area to be more responsible for them.

"They think they don't have to worry about the rest of the building or retail area," she said. "Others don't care to make improvements."

She points to the recent façade grant awarded to the property on 212 S. Cavin St. that received thousands to put in new windows. She hopes this effort motivates others in the city to do the same.

"I have talked with different groups around the city and they want revitalization to happen," she said. "They want to be involved in the process."

Fisel said she wants the downtown area to be revitalized as much as anyone else and has worked for a long time for it to happen.



CONTRIBUTED

### Lions build ramp as service

The Ligonier Lions Club recently built a wheelchair ramp for Merrit Kyle of Ligonier as a service project. Some of the Lions who worked on the project are club president Kent Saggars, left, Lion Brian Rasler, center, and Lion Gary Stover at right.



CONTRIBUTED

These runners were winners in the Team Schlem 5K and 1 Mile races, held Dec. 18 at West Noble Primary School. In the front row are, from left, Valerie Schafer, Senior Master; Yvette Rojas, Female Overall; Kristina Petkova, overall 1 mile winner; Petrana Petkova, Master; and Connie Gordon, Grand Master. In the back row, from left, are Brian Shepherd, Grand Master; Grant Flora, Male Overall winner; Isaac Campos, overall winner, 1 Mile; Mike Flora, Master winner; and Ruben Falcon, Senior Master.

## Ligonier races honor late coach's memory

**BY FROM STAFF REPORT**

**LIGONIER** — The Team Schlem 5K and 1 Mile races took place Dec. 18 at West Noble Primary School in memory of West Noble teacher and coach Charles Schlemmer.

Schlemmer was killed by a drunk driver in August 2019 while on a bicycle training ride. The races were established to benefit the Schlemmer family and remember the coach. Here are the results:

### Team Schlem 5K

**Male Overall winner:** Grant Flora, 00:16:19.72

**Female Overall:** Yvette Rojas, 00:18:10.70

**Male Master:** Mike Flora, 00:17:41.41

**Female Master:** Petrana Petkova, 00:20:13.22

**Male Grand Master:** Brian Shepherd, 00:17:56.48

**Female Grand Master:** Connie Gordon, 00:27:45.67

**Male Senior Master:** Ruben Falcon, 00:21:24.26

**Female Senior Master:** Valerie

Schaefer, 00:36:32.13

**Female 12 and Younger:** Alayna Bruckner, 00:21:00.43; Alivia Bruckner.

**Male 13-19:** Nathan Mast, 00:19:35.31; Nathan Troxel

**Male 20-29:** Abraham Longoria, 00:17:14.46; Aaron Mast and Austin Jameson.

**Male 30-39:** Elias Rojas, 00:17:38.94; Jeff Wysong and Ty Alles.

**Female 30-39:** Stephanie Burkholder, 00:21:32.39; Laura Shearer and Angie Bontrager.

**Male 40-49:** Frank Pizana, 00:17:49.03; Timothy Bruckner and Todd Brown.

**Female 40-49:** Angela Bruckner, 00:26:30.36; Andrea Eggleston and Sandra Tom.

**Male 50-59:** Rogelio Pena, 00:23:44.41

**Male 60 and Older:** White Wolf Kelly, 00:32:41.37; Mike Schlemmer

**Female 60 and older:** Morning Sun Kelly, 00:45:11.25; Cyndi Schlemmer

### Team Schlem 1 Mile Race

Isaac Campos was the overall male winner with a time of 00:05:03.88, followed by Isaiah Lowe and Isaac Silva. Other male runners were Deon Bartlett, Xavier Hofmeister, Caleb Petersen, Grayson Ruch, River Bieberich, Daniel Trinklein, Alonso Murrilo, Colton Kline, Braxten Kurtz, Xadrian Hofmeister, Isaac Flora, Micah Lowe, Nolan Troxel, Isaac Kline, Preston Ruch, Xavi Hofmeister, Liam Kurtz, Ellis Blotkamp, Xzedus Hofmeister, Phillip Wyson, Zach Vandertuin, Tyler Pfernere, Isaac Sheeley, JJ Hardesty and Joey Jacobs.

Kristina Petkova was the overall female winner in the 1 Mile with a time of 00:06:11.65, followed by Maryana Troxel and Monet Bieberich. Other female runners were Adelle Replogle, Kayla Replogle, Remington Yoder, Lucy Replogle, Brittany Blotkamp, Laura Shearer, Reese Blotkamp, Angie Bontrager, Christy Hofmeister, Joanna Hess, Cait Schlemmer, Konnar Jameson, Kayla Peterson, Madeline Sheeley and Mary Willis.

### Meetings & Activities

Jan. 6 — Cromwell park board, 6 p.m.; festival committee, 6:30 p.m., town hall.

Jan. 11 — West Noble school board, reorganization meeting, 7 p.m., Central Office.

Jan. 18 — Cromwell town council, 5:30 p.m., town hall.

Jan. 25 — West Noble school board, 7 p.m., Central Office.

### February

Feb. 3 — Cromwell park board, 6 p.m.; festival committee, 6:30 p.m., town

hall.

Feb. 8 — West Noble school board, 7 p.m., Central Office.

Feb. 22 — West Noble school board, 7 p.m., Central Office.

### March

March 3 — Cromwell park board, 6 p.m.; festival committee, 6:30 p.m., town hall.

March 8 — West Noble school board, 7 p.m., Central Office.

March 22 — West Noble school board, 7 p.m., Central Office.

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