LIVING **JULY 2023**

LUKE MCGINNIS LEADS MUNSTER HIGH SCHOOL CHOIRS TO INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE







MUNSTE

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PUBLICATION TEAM

Publisher: Jody Rogers Lazar Content Coordinator: Lindsay Conner Designer: Glenn Chandler Contributing Photographer: Maria Rosa Photography, 219-301-2430

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PUBLICATION

Contact: Jody Rogers Lazar Email: jlazar@bestversionmedia.com Phone: 219-873-4736

TO SUBMIT CONTENT

Contact: Lindsay Conner Email: lconner@bestversionmedia.com

FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS:

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Bringing People Together

Best Version Media



Contact me with ideas and suggestions at ilazar@bestversion media.com



Lindsay Conner, Content Coordinator

Dear Neighbors,

The sunny season has hit Munster, and we are ready to splash our way into summer fun! We are thrilled to bring you the July issue of Munster Living, filled with fun summer events that will awaken your sense of adventure and lead to unforgettable family memories. Flip to the Calendar on page 14 for all the details!

In the pages of this month's issue, we introduce you to Munster High School Choir Director Luke McGinnis, who led a group of students to perform this summer at the prestigious Salzburg Choral Festival in Austria. This honor is typically reserved for professional and semi-professional choirs, so hats off to these talented singers! Also inside, we get to celebrate Munster schools and read about some of this year's educational grant recipients. And with National Ice Cream Day happening this month, we bet you're gonna be in the mood for something sweet. Cool off on those hot summer days with our top local ice creameries around town!

We're always eager to hear your input on who should be featured in our future issues. Don't hesitate to connect with Content Coordinator Lindsay Conner at lconner@bestversionmedia.com, and share your nominations for a family you'd like to see featured on these pages.

HAPPY SUMMER!

Jody Rogers Lazar Publisher

EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS





DENTAL EXPERT Dr. Ringo Leung Leung Family Dental 1644 45th Ave., Munster, IN 219-924-2860 leungfamilydental@gmail.com www.leungfamilydental.com



SENIOR LIVING INDUSTRY EXPERT Rosanne Ro Loughmiller Hartsfield Village 219-934-0750 www.hartsfieldvillage.com



HOSPICE CARE EXPERT Faun Brown, Executive Director Heart to Heart Hospice 574-855-4475 fbrown@htohh.com www.htohh.com



FLOORING EXPERT Mark Bouquet, Jr. Creative Carpet & Flooring 2315 45th St., Highland, IN 888-910-6585 info@creativecarpetinc.com www.creativecarpetinc.com



REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY EXPERT Laura & Manny Hernandez Team Hernandez-Realty Executives Laura@thsells.com 219-613-3567 www THsells com



ORTHOPEDIC SPECIALISTS EXPERTS **Bone & Joint Specialists** 219-795-3360 www.orthopedicdoctors.com

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TRENDING

CIVIC MONDAYS CONCERTS SERIES

pend your Monday nights soaking up the sounds of local music at its finest! From 6 to 8pm, you can stop by the Centennial Park Amphitheater's North Lot stage for this FREE music series sponsored by the Munster Civic Foundation and hosted by Munster Parks & Recreation. Visit munster.org for more information.

UPCOMING SHOWS INCLUDE:

- JULY 17: Midwest Dueling Pianos
- JULY 24: Mr. Funnyman
- JULY 31: NWI Symphony
- AUGUST 7: Steepwater
- · AUGUST 14: Together
- · AUGUST 21: Sway Chicago
- · AUGUST 28: Strawdawg



WEALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM By Lindsay Conner

UMMERTIME IS SYNONYMOUS WITH ICE CREAM. With National Ice Cream Day just around the corner on July 16, it's time to scope out the local joints that are dishing out the coolest treats to satisfy your cravings!

THE SWEET TOOTH

227 1/2 Ridge Rd., Munster — (219) 301-5062

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11am-9pm, Sun. 1-9pm

This candy store sells hand-dipped ice cream cones in flavors like Anniversary Cake, Blueberry Muffin, and Tiramisu. Mmmm! You can also get a delicious ice cream float (and pick out your own soda). Where else in town can you find Giant Pixy Stix and all the classic candies you loved as a kid?

BASKIN-ROBBINS

8235 Calumet Ave., Munster — (219) 836-8525

Hours: Open 24 hours

Shop for donuts, coffee, and ice cream all under

one roof. Grab a scoop of one of Baskin-Robbins's classic flavors like Mint Chocolate Chip, Jamoca Almond Fudge, or Nutty Coconut on a cone or order a shake for the road.

JODI'S ITALIAN ICE FACTORY - HAMMOND

7322 Calumet Ave, Hammond — (219) 803-2240

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 11am-8pm, Fri.-Sat. 11am-9pm, Sun. 11am-6pm

While it's not technically ice cream, this dairy-free alternative is ultra-tasty! Try flavors like Swedish Fish, Mango, Pina Colada, and Chocolate served up alongside delicious Italian hoagies.

DARI-VILLE

917 Sheffield Ave, Dyer — (219) 440-8020

Hours: Sun.-Fri. 2-9pm, Sat. 3-9pm When it's summertime, this local froyo and ice cream joint sells cones, slushies, floats, sundaes, and more. Many customers have been frequenting this place since childhood because it's such good ice cream for a fair price!

CRAVE WAFFLE SHOP

831 Joliet St, Dyer — (219) 515-2788

Hours: Daily 11am-10pm

Serving up creative frozen treats like ice cream tacos and deluxe bubble waffle sundaes, this ice cream shop will satisfy all your tastiest dreams. Try the milkshakes and bubble juice for a treat you can easily take on the go!





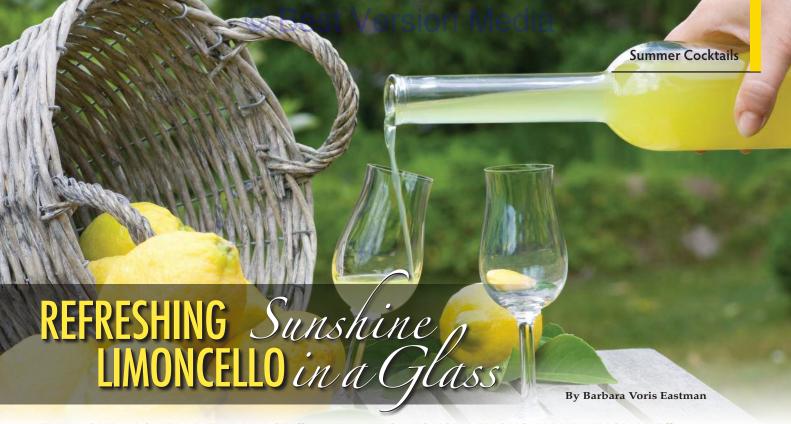












EVERYONE HAS HEARD THE ADAGE: "WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS, MAKE LEMONADE."

Lemonade is great, but why not make your own limoncello? Actually, you can do both since homemade limoncello requires only the lemon rinds.

Limoncello is a refreshing Italian liqueur originating in southern Italy, most likely along the Amalfi coast. It is made with fresh lemon peels soaked in Everclear (*grain alcohol*) and sweetened with simple syrup. It takes only a few minutes to assemble, but the lemon peels need to macerate in the alcohol for several weeks. Limoncello is served very cold, usually after dinner, and it may be enjoyed alone or as an ingredient in a refreshing cocktail.

LIMONCELLO

- 10 lemons (organic preferred)
- 1 750 ml bottle of Everclear grain alcohol (150 proof or higher)
- 21/2 c. sugar
- 31/2 c. water

METHOD: Organic lemons are preferred because they are typically not waxed and will infuse the alcohol more efficiently. Gently wash the lemons using a vegetable brush. Dry them with a clean towel and peel them carefully, avoiding the pith (the white layer beneath the rind, which often tastes bitter). Place the peels in a large mason jar (or any jar with a tight-fitting lid), and pour the vodka or grain alcohol over the peels. Seal the jar and store in a cool, dry place for four weeks. The longer you let the peels steep in the liquid, the stronger the lemon taste.

After four weeks of infusion, pour the liquid and peels into a strainer and discard the peels. Make a simple syrup by placing the sugar and water over medium heat and stirring until the sugar is completely dissolved. Cool completely. Using the simple syrup, sweeten to taste. Store the limoncello in the refrigerator or freezer and serve it very cold. Garnish with a lemon twist or slice.

LIMONCELLO LEMON DROP MARTINI

- 2 oz. limoncello
- 1 oz vodka
- ½ oz. fresh lemon juice

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice and pour in the above ingredients. Shake and serve. Rub a lemon wedge around the rim of a martini glass and dip into granulated sugar. Pour the cocktail into the glass and garnish with a lemon twist or slice.

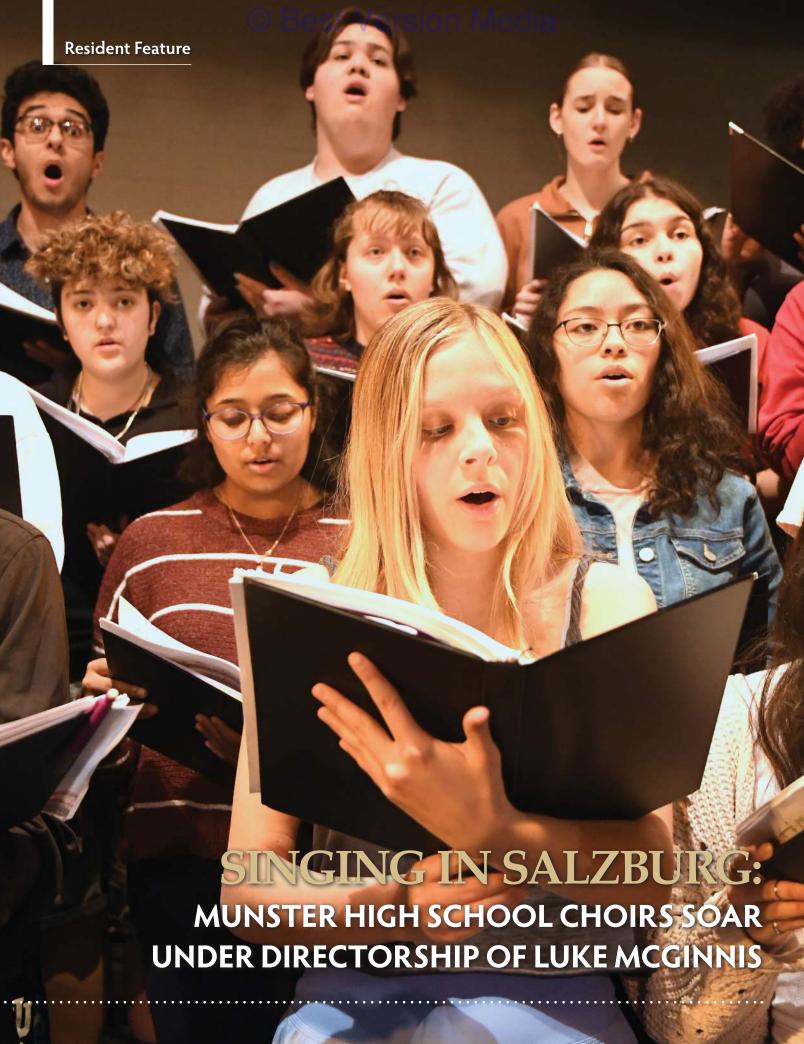
LIMONCELLO SPRITZER

- 2 oz. limoncello
- 3 oz. Prosecco
- Club soda

Pour homemade limoncello and prosecco over ice in a large wine glass, and top off with club soda. Garnish with a lemon twist or slice.

NOTE: Many recipes are available on the internet for limoncello, some of which call for 100-proof vodka vs. Everclear. There are tons of cocktail recipes using limoncello if you'd rather not drink it straight (*the traditional way*). Don't be fooled by its sweet lemony taste. Limoncello has a high alcohol content, so sip it slowly.





unster High School vocal music students performed at the prestigious Salzburg Choral Festival in Austria this summer—an invitation usually reserved for professional and semiprofessional choirs! Choir Director Luke McGinnis couldn't be more proud of his vocalists for receiving the coveted invitation, which he says speaks to the high level of their work.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, McGinnis led his students through virtual choirs that resulted in Munster Choir's first album, Through the Valley (2021). Composers Frank Ticheli and Dan Forrest took note of the unprecedented hard work and tenacity of the students. In their words, the virtual choirs were "simply beautiful," and "unlike any other high school choir in the United States." Their recommendation to concert organizers in Europe helped them earn their

official invitation as one of the first high school choirs in over a decade to take part in the 2023 International Festival! "With the trust the students had in me, themselves, and each other during the tumultuous virtual choir year of 2020-2021, this incredible experience was born and made possible," McGinnis says.

McGinnis recently wrapped up his third year as the Vocal Music Teacher at Munster High School. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Valparaiso University and a Master of Educational Leadership from the American College of Education.

Reflecting on his journey, McGinnis shares, "I had been aware of the strong choral tradition at Munster High School well before I started working there. During my seventh semester at Valparaiso, I was paired with former Munster High School Choir Director Andrew Robinson for my student teaching semester from August to December 2019. I was beyond fortunate to work with and learn from him as I worked with the four curricular choirs and piano classes. It was an incredibly rich and fulfilling student teaching practicum and knew that I wanted to work in a district like Munster. Lo and behold, the opportunity to step into that exact role arose when Mr. Robinson stepped down in the summer of 2020 to pursue a D.M.A. at the University of Iowa. I have been fortunate to lead the ensembles and program since!"

In collaboration with the Munster Education Foundation (MEF), in celebration of their 30th anniversary, McGinnis commissioned an entirely new work for Munster Choirs to perform. A generous grant from MEF underwrote the entire cost for this yearlong collaborative experience of working with composer Zac Flasch. "This grant gave all 150 of our students, whether they were traveling to Salzburg or not, the opportunity to work with a composer and be the first to ever perform this work," McGinnis explains. "Music is a living art form, so what better way than commissioning new music crafted to the artistic specifications of our current students and tailored to meet the strengths of our ensembles?"



Initially, students were intrigued by the new work, but they didn't fully understand the scope of the project until a few months in, McGinnis explains. "We started the first week of school discussing texts that could be used, musical ideas that would want to be incorporated, and the chance to bring a piece of music to life for the first time. Students soon began to have pride that a piece was written specifically for their voices and came to the realization that musicians around the world that perform this piece will always look to Munster as the example."

After thoughtful discussions on the theme

of "coming together," composer Zac Flasch and McGinnis approved a text from Kahlil Gibran's "On Marriage." This poetic excerpt beautifully portrays the qualities of love shared between two individuals, but extends beyond marriage and resonates with the deep connection among singers.

"We presented the World Premiere of 'spaces in your togetherness' on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, to a packed audience of over seven hundred," McGinnis says. "Not only was it a triumphant experience bringing the piece to life, but it was also a deeply emotional experience for all after months of work." The choir is proud to present additional performances in Salzburg and Vienna, visiting both the Salzburg Dom and the Minoritenkirche, one of Vienna's largest and oldest venues built in 1224.

McGinnis watched in awe as 104 students performed classical choral works alongside a

> symphony orchestra. While on tour, they worked under the direction of Dr. Edith Copley, Director of Choral Studies at Northern Arizona University and former President of the American Choral Directors Association. Additionally, they had the honor of being conducted by János Czifra, Domkapellmeister of the Dom and successor to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, for Mozart's "Coronation Mass" (Mass in C Major, K317), accompanied by the Salzburger Dom Orchestra. Their headlining performance on July 3 in Vienna was the icing on the cake.

Performing at the Salzburg Choral Festival has quite literally opened the door wide for more exciting experiences, which haven't been announced quite yet. "We are just beyond grateful for a supportive community and the unwavering support of the Munster Education Foundation," McGinnis says. "Please follow along on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook as we make updates in realtime! Our handles for all accounts are @MunsterChoirs and we'd love to continue to gain more exposure for the hard work of our students during this historic performance tour"

By Lindsay Conner Photos by Sarah-Anne Lanman

KNOW A NOTABLE NEIGHBOR?

Do you know a neighbor who has a story to share? Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues!

Contact us at lconner@bestversionmedia.com

COMPASSIONATE HOSPICE CARE FROM CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANTS

By Cheryl Spaans, Director of Training and Development for Heart to Heart Hospice







ospice, as you may know, is a philosophy of care meant to help patients with advanced diseases stay in the place they call home as their health continues to decline. This type of care is provided to those with a life-limiting illness and a prognosis of about six months or less. Speak with your doctor or a hospice representative if you have additional questions about hospice eligibility.

Once a person is in hospice, a care team with members specially trained to help keep a patient comfortable will provide intermittent care wherever the patient calls 'home.' A key member of the care team is the Certified Nursing Assistant. They provide compassionate care that helps the patient to stay in the place they call home, making visits based on the plan of care tailored to the patient's needs.

One CNA who has been in hospice for over seven years said, "I chose hospice because I'm passionate about working with those who cannot help themselves. What I love most about hospice is the unconditional care I can give to families and patients during their time of need."

CNAs are passionate and professional, with the skills, wisdom, and kindness to bring much-needed support and personal care to their terminally ill patients. These are some of the ways they help patients:

- Dressing and grooming
- Bathing or showering
- · Feeding patient
- · Assisting with oral care and personal hygiene
- · Helping with care of foley catheters
- Turning/repositioning bedbound patients
- Helping patients with transfers from bed to chair or chair to bed, or walking

- Performing light housekeeping duties, like cleaning or changing bed linens
- Helping to identify changes in a patient's condition
- · Assisting with skincare
- Helping with delivery and pick up of equipment and supplies
- · Assistance with toileting or incontinence
- Sitting with patients and talking with or reading to them
- · Helping with patient/family education and support
- Communicating with patients, family, and friends with compassion
- Providing care to help prevent unnecessary hospitalizations
- Collaboration with other members of the care team
- Running occasional errands for/with patients (ex: grocery store)
- End-of-life care and comfort
- Tasks as indicated on the patient's Care Plan

A hospice home health aide is a covered service under the Medicare Hospice Benefit. These team members cannot provide nursing care, but they are vital to the well-being of the hospice patient! To have this kind of care in the place you call home if coping with an advanced illness, contact your physician or your local hospice agency.

Hospice is for people who have learned from doctors that they are not expected to recover from a serious condition. Hospice focuses on easing pain and helping families prepare for the end of life, with the Certified Nursing Assistants having an important role in bringing comfort care to patients and practical support to both patients and their families. For individualized care that focuses on meeting the end-of-life needs of patients and their families, consider hospice for compassionate care and support.

Heart to Heart Hospice | www.HtoHH.com | 574-855-4475

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Heart to Heart Hospice enhances the quality of life for patients with advanced illness, so they can focus on living well in the place they call home.

Let us help your loved one by managing their pain and symptoms, providing medications, equipment, and supplies related to their terminal diagnosis, and by providing the emotional, spiritual and practical support that each family member needs at this time. We are dedicated to making a difference each day, enabling creation of positive memories and finding peace knowing you and your loved one have support at the end of life's journey.

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htohh.com

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GRANTING SUCCESS: MUNSTER EDUCATION FOUNDATION EMPOWERS SCHOOLS

By Lindsay Conner | Photos provided by Munster Education Foundation

ince 1992, Munster Education Foundation (MEF) has funded innovative and experiential learning in the School Town of Munster through partnerships with educators, parents, businesses, and the greater community. They were proud to award a recordsetting amount of funds for grants — an impressive \$105,633 during the 2022-23 school year!



Drum circles promote social-emotional learning at Elliott Elementary School

Wilbur Wright Middle School Robotics team

"Before this past school year, MEF provided between \$20,000 to \$40,000 in grants each year," explains Tricia Shelton, MEF President. "In 2022, in honor of the foundation's 30th anniversary and thanks to a generous alumni donation in addition to continued community support, MEF board members were able to budget for \$120,000 in grants!" Through May

2023, MEF has awarded more than \$105,633 in grants to Munster schools, with 13,314 "touches," or the number of students impacted by the grants.

Donations to this nonprofit organization come from individuals, businesses, and community groups. In

addition to support from donations, MEF also hosts many events to raise money for grants, including Jeans & Jerseys, an annual Holiday Lights decorating contest, and the Honor an Educator program. For more information, visit munstereducationfoundation.org/events.

Grants are awarded monthly to Munster schools, teachers, and co-curricular programs. Any educator may request a grant, including teachers, aides, administrators, parents, and community members. Projects include foundational academics to whole-child supports, professional development, and co-curricular enhancements. "These can take place at the classroom level, grade level, school level, or even district-wide," Shelton explains. "We're already making big plans for the 2023-2024 school year, with a goal of awarding \$120,000 in the year

ahead as well." For more information, visit munstereducationfoundation.org/grants.



Munster High School's INcubator lab team goes to State

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

This school year, MEF began to fund Project Lead the Way within Munster elementary schools, beginning with second- and fifth-grade students. This program will ultimately empower students to choose their own hands-on STEM projects to advance critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Colleen Bergren, Assistant

Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the School Town of Munster, anticipates that with continued funding, Project Lead the Way could be expanded to middle school and high school students. "This would be a game changer for our district, setting School Town of Munster apart from other high-performing school districts statewide," Bergren says.

OTHER GRANTS FUNDED DURING THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR INCLUDE:

- A \$4,500 grant for the Munster High School Choirs to commission a new work by American composer Zac Flasch, "spaces in our togetherness," for the choirs to perform during the 2023 Salzburg Choral Festival, June 27-July 4, 2023
- More than \$9,000 in grants to support robotic teams at the middle school, high school, and elementary schools

- A more than \$13,000 grant to purchase electronic balance scales for the Munster High School science department
- \$3,600 in grants that will help students at the elementary and secondary levels advance their skills in math and language arts with individualized instruction
- About \$3,500 in grants for student leadership development programs at two elementary schools
- A \$1,350 grant for supplies for student entrepreneurs to build prototypes in the Munster High School Incubator.edu lab
- Nearly \$675 in grants to support social-emotional learning drum circles at Elliott Elementary School
- And many more.

To find out more please visit the MEF website at mustereducationfoundation.org/donate.





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A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO KEEPING INDOOR

PLANTS By Lily Marks

e know plants can help pull together the design aesthetics of your home décor. But did you know that bringing the outdoors inside can help boost your health and well-being? Studies show that the presence of house plants can help improve air quality, reduce stress, and improve mental focus!

In case you are still developing your "green thumb," we're sharing some tips from Indiana plant store owners Pearl and Jacqueline Smith, a mother-daughter duo who know firsthand how enjoyable it can be to cultivate an indoor oasis.

The three basic needs of any plant are air, light, and water. "When you first start getting into plants, it's trial and error," Pearl says. "Especially if you are a new plant caretaker, it is normal for it to take a little time before you really know the needs of your plant."

LIGHT If someone comes into the store looking for a new plant, Jacqueline first asks them what kind of lighting they have. "Some plants can live in a low light environment, and some need to be in high light," she explains. "Since you can't change the lighting in your house, this is a good first step in determining what type of plant is best for you."

AIR It is important to make sure that the environment your plant is in has good air circulation as well. "Plants grow at their best when they have fresh air," Jacqueline says. She recommends trying to keep cold drafts off of your plants as well.

WATER Watering needs vary from plant to plant, so it's important to research your plant's watering needs.

"The worst thing you can do to a plant is over-water it because it will get root rot," Jacqueline says. Mushy leaves, a rotten smell, and yellow and black spots on the leaves are all signs that your plant is suffering from root rot. "Once you get root rot, since it's a disease, you've pretty much lost the plant."

A general rule of thumb for knowing if your plant needs water is to put your finger about 1-to-2 inches into the soil. If the soil is dry, your plant needs water, and if the soil is moist, then it doesn't. If you have a hard time telling if the soil is moist or not, you can purchase a moisture meter to help guide you.

If you are looking to get into plants for the first time, Pearl and Jacqueline recommend starting out with a pothos or succulent plant. They do not need that much attention, so it is a good way to get into the habit of your new hobby!







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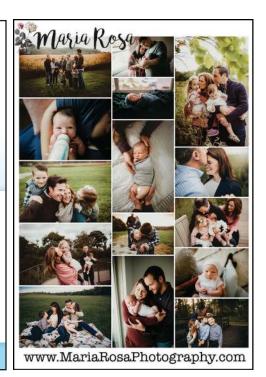
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CALENDAR = JULY/AUG 20

Sat., July 15

REGION EATS FOOD FESTIVAL

@Munster Town Hall

Indulge in the savory tastes of the region's restaurants and food trucks. Purchases can be made directly from the vendors. Musical entertainment will be provided throughout the event!

Time: 3-7pm | Cost: FREE, parking \$2/hr or \$5/day tinyurl.com/cys4tueh

Sun., July 23

MELLENCOUGAR

@Munster Town Hall

Mellencougar is made up of a group of musicians from the Midwest with an appreciation for the danceable poetry of John Mellencamp. Drive in, walk up, or bike over. Bring your chairs and blankets. This free concert series is sponsored by Peoples Bank.

Time: 6:30-8pm | Cost: FREE | munster.org

Sun., July 23

SHARON OWENS AS

BARBRA STREISAND

@Theatre at the Center

Direct from her Las Vegas run of "Legends in Concert," Sharon Owens takes the stage singing iconic songs. For an additional \$30, enjoy a pre-show meal in the ballroom, presented by Trama Catering. Doors open at 12:30 pm, with meal served at 1pm.

Time: 3pm | Cost: \$40 | theatreatthecenter.com

Tues., Aug. 1

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT COMMUNITY PARADE

@8600-8800 blocks of Columbia Ave.

You are invited to this year's parade which will include first responders, emergency vehicles, veterans, current military members, school groups, safety mascots, and community service organizations.

Time: 4:30pm | Cost: FREE | munster.org

Tues., Aug. 1

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME **CELEBRATION**

@Munster Community Pool

Find out why this event consistently ranked as one of the top National Night Out events in the U.S. Scheduled activities include swimming, games, door prizes, K-9 demos, a helicopter landing, many booth participants, special guests, The Magic of John Measner, emergency vehicle displays, student performances, food, safety mascots, giveaways, a blood drive, and fireworks!

Time: 5-8:30pm | Cost: FREE | munster.org

Sun., Aug. 6

RICKY LINDY & THE WILD ONES

@Centennial Park Amphiteather

Rick Lindy has a voice as big as Texas. Rick Lindy & The Wild Ones offers high energy that captivates audiences of all ages. Drive in, walk up, or bike over. Bring your chairs and blankets. This free concert series is sponsored by Peoples

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10402 Sandy Ln	3	2.5	2,318	\$565,000
1425 E St. Andrews Dr	4	2.75	3,486	\$569,900
10216 Windfield Dr	4	4	2,874	\$650,000
1009 Perthshire Ln	5	5	5,417	\$899,000
10330 Hampshire Ct	5	3.5	5,316	\$999,000
10313 Cherrywood Ln	5	4	5,677	\$1,190,000
1218 La Forestiere Ct	5	6	7,211	\$1,198,999
1508 Park West Cir	4	3.5	5,066	\$1,410,000

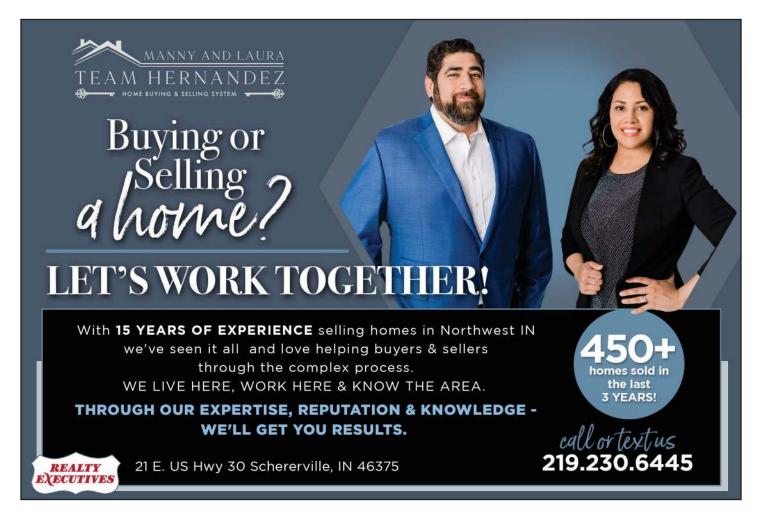
ACTIVE UNDER CONTRACT

10099 Margo Ln	5	4	4,100	\$629,900
10232 Paddington Crescent	5	4.5	5,579	\$950,000
10314 Applewood Ct	5	4.5	6,057	\$1,199,000
924 Killarney Dr	5	5	8,964	\$1,370,000

PENDING

Address	Bed	Bath	Sq Ft	List Price
1417 Brookside Dr #D2	2	2	1,392	\$199,900
1419 Somerset Dr	4	2.5	3,690	\$635,000
10001 New Devon St	4	2.5	3,836	\$655,000
10200 New Devon St	4	2.5	3,128	\$730,000
643 Killarney Dr	5	5.5	6,597	\$789,000
SOLD				
7812 Mount St	4	2	1,550	\$241,000
846 Boxwood Dr	3	3	2,703	\$370,000
1153 Tamarack Pl	3	3	3,176	\$444,000
1315 Cedar Crest Dr	4	2.5	2,586	\$455,000
10229 Oxford Pl	3	3	2,081	\$490,000
10147 Margo Ln	3	2.5	2,560	\$522,000
1325 Brandywine Dr	4	2.5	3,200	\$580,000
1103 Boxwood Dr	4	4	3,963	\$592,000
1828 Somerset Dr	4	3.5	3,233	\$650,000
949 Waterville Ct	5	5	4,935	\$924,500

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