



GROUP IN SEARCH OF CANINE PERFORMERS

LIFE & TIMES, C1



Shenandoah rally falls just short in semifinal

SPORTS, B1

INSIDE

Authorities give few clues to why Army vet gunned down women

COUPONS

Up to \$110.43 inside

SUNDAY

THB TheHeraldBulletin.com

MARCH 11, 2018

\$2.00

Incentives could convince Mounds Mall businesses to stay

Howard County offered \$5,000 grants to pay rents for a year

BY KEN DE LA BASTIDE
THE HERALD BULLETIN

KOKOMO — With the expected closing of the Mounds Mall on April 1, there will be a number of businesses either looking for a new location in Anderson or deciding to close.

Local economic development officials are hopeful that those businesses will choose to remain in Anderson with several vacant storefronts available in the downtown area and at local shopping centers.

Facing a similar situation, the Howard County Commissioners for



Greg Winkler



John Richwine

five years used economic development income revenues to offer incentives for businesses to either start up or relocate in Kokomo, Greentown or Russiaville. As of Friday there were some — but not many — vacant storefronts in downtown Kokomo. The central Indiana city over the past few years has con-

structed a new YMCA, a parking garage with high-end apartments on the top level and numerous downtown housing projects.

The program which offered a one-time grant of \$5,000 to pay rent ended this year. The commissioners decided to invest \$150,000 per year for 10 to 15 years toward the development of a downtown Kokomo hotel and convention center.

Jim Papacek, a member of the Howard County Council and a mem-

ber of the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance which oversaw the county funding, said from 2013 through 2017 a total of 24 businesses received grants. He said 18 are still operating.

“It was very successful in getting businesses in our downtown storefronts,” he said. “It accomplished what we were hoping.”

Madison County Commissioner

See **MOUNDS** on A2

STAYING PUT

AU graduates often continue to call Anderson home

BY REBECCA R. BIBBS
THE HERALD BULLETIN



Alumni close-up

The Herald Bulletin and AU students, working with the university's public relations agency, Fifth Street Communications, give us a glimpse into the lives of recent AU graduates who have elected to continue to make Anderson their home following graduation.

See other graduates on **A4, A5**

ANDERSON — Erin Smith is only a sophomore majoring in public relations at Anderson University, but she already is working on her first project: talking up the good life available to people who choose to settle in Anderson.

“It’s a great first project for me for sure,” she said. “It’s definitely something that I’m passionate about.”

Smith admits many of her high school classmates couldn’t wait to get out of town to attend Ball State University in Muncie or Indiana University in Bloomington. Many are likely to contribute further to a local brain drain by seeking employment elsewhere.

Smith, 20, also considered attending those universities.

“But then I started investigating Anderson University a little bit more, and kind of fell in love with the campus,” she said.

Many alumni from other states and communities, such as retired Judge Dennis Carroll and AU historian Merle Sturge, were drawn to the offerings of the century-old university and made the decision to remain in

Anderson University sophomore, and Anderson native, Erin Smith is committed in trying to stay in the Anderson area after graduation.

See **GRADS** on A4



Gun background check system riddled with imperfections

BY MARTHA BELLISLE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE — Recent mass shootings have spurred Congress to try to improve the nation's gun background check system that has failed on numerous occasions to keep weapons out of the hands of dangerous people.

The problem with the legislation, experts say, is that it only works if federal agencies, the military, states, courts and local law enforcement do a better job of sharing information with the background check system — and they have a poor track record in doing so. Some of the nation's most horrific mass shootings have revealed major

holes in the database reporting system, including massacres at Virginia Tech in 2007 and at a Texas church last year.

Despite the failures, many states still aren't meeting key benchmarks with their background check reporting that enable them to receive federal grants similar to what's being proposed in the current legislation.

“It’s a completely haphazard system — sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn’t,” said Georgetown University law professor Larry Gostin. “When you’re talking about school chil-

dren’s lives, rolling the dice isn’t good enough.”

In theory, the FBI’s background check database, tapped by gun dealers during a sale, should have a definitive list of people who are prohibited from having guns — people who have been convicted of crimes, committed to mental institutions, received dishonorable discharges or are addicted to drugs.

But in practice, the database is incomplete.

See **GUNS** on A2

INSIDE » Justice Department proposes banning rapid-fire bump stocks.

See **Page A8**



The Associated Press

In this **October 2014**, file photo, Dana Pattie, left, kneels at a block-long fence at Marysville-Pilchuck High School memorializing a shooting there last week as a couple walks past in Marysville, Wash.



INDEX: Weather | C8 Classifieds | D1 Life & Times | C1 Dear Abby, Horoscope | C4 Local & State | A3 Obituaries | A6 Nation & World | A8

Page designer: Autumn Ricketts

Stoops
BUICK | GMC
4055 W. CLARA LN, MUNCIE | 288-1903
STOOPSAUTO.COM

2017 BUICK LACROSSE EXPERIENCE THE NEW BUICK
\$10,000 BELOW MSRP
*Must qualify for GMS, see dealer for complete details. Take delivery by 3/31/18.

Recent AU graduates find their niches in Madison County

Hoosier business and government leaders have long lamented the state's "brain drain," the exodus of those who've earned higher-education degrees from Indiana colleges and universities. According to a U.S. Census report released in 2016 based on 2014 data, Indiana tied for last in

net loss of students who had earned advanced degrees in-state. While the problem remains in Madison County and across Indiana, the recent Anderson University graduates profiled on this page are representative of those who have chosen to remain in

the Madison County area. This report is a collaboration between The Herald Bulletin and AU students working with the university's public relations agency, Fifth Street Communications.



Guided by God, sisters find home at Madison Park

BY MARIA NEATHERY

While they attended Anderson University, sisters Ally West and Anna Hodge felt their passion for worship grow. West, who graduated from AU in 2009, went into college assuming she would study music business. Instead God led her to study public relations with a minor in religion. Hodge double majored in art and English and graduated in 2010. Drawing from personal trials, they formed a ministry band called "Alanna Story" to share their love of Christ through stories and songs. "We find ourselves here today only because of Him; that's the honest truth," West said. As their journey began, the two sisters never thought they would come back to Madison County or back to the Church of God where they grew up. But after they were asked to step in as interim worship leaders for Madison Park



Submitted photo

Church, they ended up staying through Madison Park's transition from one pastor to another. West and Hodge both believe their ministry is about the Lord moving through magnificent ways in people's lives. "It is a joy to partner with God and to see what He is doing," West explained. "Being connected in the local church is where we really see our passions fleshed out." Maria Neathery, a junior from Greenwood, is majoring in public relations and minoring in event planning and music business.

Sisters and Anderson University alums, Ally West, in 2009, and Anna Hodge, in 2010, formed Alanna Story.

Weatherly gets 'Bizzy' and catches a 'Vibe'

BY ALEC BROWN

After starting apparel company Bizzy Life in 2011 while in high school, Robert Weatherly is accustomed to a busy routine. Now, fresh off attaining his master's degree, Weatherly is looking to make his mark on the music business. After high school, Weatherly brought Bizzy Life, a street-wear clothing line collaboration with musical artists, with him to Anderson University. "College was experimentation on what would and wouldn't work," he said. "Now I'm in a place where I can bring my vision to fruition and expand." Weatherly grew up in New Jersey but was drawn to AU by family connections in Anderson. After receiving a degree in entertainment and music business in 2016, Weatherly



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Robert Weatherly earned his MBA from Anderson University in 2017 and is the founder of Bizzy Life. He decided to stay in Madison County and earned an MBA from AU last year. While in the MBA program, he interned with a tech start-up company, Vibenomics, which provides in-store messages and music for businesses such as Stacked Pickle, a sport-and-wings restaurant in Plainfield. Weatherly is now a full-time customer experience manager for Vibenomics. Alec Brown, a junior from Greenwood, is majoring in public relations and minoring in global business.

Stayer couldn't stay away from true home

BY LINDSEY HRINOWICH

After graduating from Anderson University in 2007 with a degree in social work, Kristin Stayer returned to her home state of Pennsylvania to pursue a graduate degree in urban studies at Eastern University. A year later, she returned to Madison County. "It was the right timing in my life, and I've been here ever since," she said. "My whole life has changed completely, in a great way." Now the executive director of the community center at Park Place Church of God, Stayer strives to establish a welcoming place for the community to connect. A local farmer's market has been pivotal. "We've been able to give it a permanent home, and it has allowed us to be creative about the ways we open up our space," Stayer explained. Stayer and her husband, Eric, are committed to the community in other ways, as well. They have adopted three brothers through Safe Fami-



Submitted photo

Kristin Stayer, a 2007 Anderson University graduate, is the executive director of the Community Center at Park Place Church of God. lies in Madison County. "It really has been our plan A of having children. It's definitely a counter-cultural thing to do; it's different, wonderful and crazy," she said. Lindsey Hrinowich, a junior from Anderson, is majoring in public relations and minoring in marketing.

From here to Haiti, George seeks to serve

BY WES DAVIDSON

Some people's passions take them to faraway lands; others see opportunity in nearby, familiar places. The passions of 2015 Anderson University grad Watson George have taken him to both. Watson started the non-profit Beyond Me Initiative with his wife, Madisyn. Together, the two impact the lives of countless people in Haiti, all while remaining in Madison County. Watson and Madisyn connected naturally. Both had been adopted from Haiti by American families. After Haiti was struck by a devastating earthquake in 2010, Watson led a team of students there to provide assistance. He also sought to reconnect with his biological family. The trip changed his life and provided the inspiration for Beyond Me. Headquartered in Pendleton, the organization has rebuilt Haitian schools and homes and provided clean water. Beyond Me seeks to



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Watson George, a 2015 graduate of Anderson University, started a non-profit organization called Beyond Me Initiative, along with his wife, Madisyn. end poverty in Haiti by creating jobs and economic opportunity. Watson and Madisyn have benefited from Anderson Now, an AU initiative that helps recent graduates manage student debt and start businesses. Wes Davidson, a junior from Saint-Etienne, France, is majoring in communications and minoring in Christian ministry, history and marketing.

GRADS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

Anderson after graduation. In fact, Smith said, her own decision to remain in the community for college was solidified after talking to alumni she met who had made the decision to remain in Anderson. As she plans her life after college, Smith is considering following in their footsteps and remaining in the community where she was born and raised. "I'm probably biased because it is home, but I think it is a unique community," she said. "I feel a lot of potential to the community. I know it has gone through a hard time recently." Smith said it's important for her to invest in the rebuilding and growth of Anderson. "I see beauty in pieces, and I want to find ways to put that back together," she said.

Her deep loyalty to the city also is a reason why she is encouraging her classmates to remain after they graduate. "Anderson is a unique, wonderful city that can definitely grow and be home to many incredible people and ideas," she said. Though they try to keep track of alumni individually, AU officials don't keep track of where they live collectively. However, Scott Tilley, director of Alumni Engagement, said about 235 of the traditional undergraduate students and 65 adult students enrolled at the university are from Madison County. Several companies around town, including Element 212 and Community Hospital, have been known to employ graduates of AU. Element 212 made a video available on Facebook about its employees who are AU graduates, and Community Hospital has brought atten-

tion to this through billboard advertising. "And, we also have some alums who have taken advantage of the AndersonNow grant, which encourages new start-up businesses in Madison County," Tilley said. Katie Mitchell, director of AU's Center for Career and Calling, said anecdotally, she can confirm many job-seeking students who come to her office express a desire to remain in Anderson. "Many do want to stay in the area, if an opportunity arises, but I don't have specific percentages," she said. Though the university does not break down the percentages by county, Mitchell said about 78 percent of AU graduates remain in Indiana. AU students are seeking a stable income in comparison to cost of living, a variety of things to do outside of work, ways to impact their community and



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Anderson University sophomore, Erin Smith is committed in trying to stay in the Anderson area after graduation. jobs or companies that make a difference, she said. "I think it's extremely important for students to be more aware of the ways that the city of Anderson does meet those criteria," she said. "Having

local businesses on campus, in classrooms, and involved in university partnerships are some easy ways to do that. Getting students off campus and in to the community is key." Anderson University appreciates opportunities to partner with local businesses that allow students to connect with internships, part-time jobs and full-time work opportunities, Mitchell said. "Our office specifically would love to see more local businesses take advantage of our students in creating internship opportunities to help students develop professionally, gain experience, see the various industries represented within the region, and get invested in the local community," she said. "Often times students are not even aware of the wonderful organizations right here in the city that offer full-time positions, but we would love to bridge that gap and get more local businesses involved on our university job board and in our on-campus recruiting efforts, career fairs, and within the classroom settings teaching or presenting on relevant topics."



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Phil Larson, a 2007 graduate of Anderson University, does music production and composition for The Story Shop.

Music, disc golf and community drive Larson

BY LIAM CRAYS

Through his musical and collaborative talents, Phil Larson is deeply involved in Madison County. He's working for Pendleton-based video production company The Story Shop, further developing his high school interest in music production and composition. "The fact that I could do this thing that I loved full-time alongside other people who believed in me was too good to pass up," said Larson,

who graduated from Anderson University in 2007 with a degree in music business. Larson is making a difference in the community in other ways, as well. He worked with local businesses and organizations to raise money and other resources to establish a disc golf course at Edgewater Park in Anderson. The course opened in November. "This has been a great project uniting the local government with their citizens, and everyone has learned to cooperate

and accomplish something awesome for the good of our community," Larson said. Meanwhile, Larson has been developing his music career. His creations, licensed through AudioJungle.net, appeal to video production companies and marketing firms worldwide. He recently custom-scored music for reality TV shows produced and released in Malaysia. **Liam Crays**, a junior from Indianapolis, is majoring in public relations.



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Kirby Gilliam, a 2010 Anderson University graduate, created PlainSong Music Services.

Gilliam hits right notes for music therapy

BY TESSA WILLIAMS

Kirby Gilliam is using her passion for music to help others. After graduating from Anderson University in 2010, Gilliam taught music at a high school for a few years. "I had a lot of kids who were coming to me with issues that were not the scope of a music educator," said Gilliam, who became a certified music therapist. She created PlainSong Music Services in August 2016 to provide music therapy and

adapted music lessons. The decision to stay in Anderson was a simple one for Gilliam. She was raised in the city and has her family nearby. Beyond personal connections, Gilliam wanted to be a part of the growth of Anderson. "I see a benefit of Anderson, and I see a resurgence of business and life and people doing really cool things," Gilliam said. The Anderson Now program helped Gilliam create her business through financial aid, monthly workshops

and other resources. "You're learning from highly valued resources to make sure that your business succeeds," Gilliam explained. She's working now to become more involved in the community. "There are a lot of people that can benefit, and my goal is to reach out and help as many people as I can," said Gilliam. **Tessa Williams**, a senior from Indianapolis, is majoring in public relations and minoring in nonprofit leadership.



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Crystal Kennedy received her MBA in 2013 from Anderson University and is now the president of Rangeline Community Center.

Love for seniors, roots keep Kennedy in county

BY FAITH SAYLES

Crystal Kennedy see her job as more than just a job. As a social worker in low-income subsidized housing for seniors, she ensures their daily needs are met and that they're safe in their homes. And, as service coordinator for the Rangeline Community Center, Kennedy pushes to provide better senior services in Madison County. Alongside these jobs, she operates a non-emergency medical transportation com-

pany that provides "quality, safe and affordable medical transportation for many of my residents in the hospice and apartment settings." "You must love what you do, and love who you do it for, to find success," said Kennedy, who graduated from Anderson University with her bachelor's degree in family science in 2008 and received her MBA in 2013. Kennedy worked in mental health services during her undergraduate years. She knew the experience would

open career opportunities. Before graduating from AU, Kennedy had roots in Madison County, and her husband worked here, too. The Anderson Now program, which provides student loan repayment assistance for those establishing businesses in Anderson, was key to her decision to site her company in Madison County. **Faith Sayles**, a senior from North Carolina, is double-majoring in dance business and writing.

Clayton helps clients make happy homes

BY FAITH MIDDLETON

Just five years after graduating from Anderson University with a degree in business, Bethany Clayton runs Your Happy Home Solutions in Anderson. "I started attracting cleaning clients in 2013 and had a regular, rotating schedule by the end of the year," said Clayton, who was trained as a professional closet designer at The Container Store. "Slowly, I started organizing for some of my cleaning clients and loved it. In 2014, I created Your Happy Home Solutions for cleaning, organizing and making woodworking pieces for both organizational purposes and home décor." Her passion for the field stems from a desire to help people feel comfortable and at ease. Clayton has benefited from the Anderson Now program, which offers student loan repayment assistance for Indiana college graduates who start businesses in Anderson. Clayton started her business here with the changing economic landscape in mind. "I believe Anderson is on the rise, and I am thrilled to be part of it," she said. "I am



John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin

Bethany Clayton, a 2012 graduate of Anderson University, created Your Happy Home Solutions, LLC in 2014.

so excited to see the changes and growth that have happened. I am excited to see a rebirth of sorts in Anderson."

Faith Middleton, a senior from Champaign, Illinois, is majoring in public relations and minoring in entrepreneurship.

Brady Reed, a 2016 graduate of Anderson University, owns Majestic Lawn Care & Landscape LLC.

John P. Cleary | The Herald Bulletin



Reed stays put after working his way through undergrad

BY KATIE FRAZER

Brady Reed started his Madison County business, Majestic Lawn Care & Landscape, in high school and worked feverishly to keep it running through college. Reed, who graduated from AU with a degree in business management in 2016, literally worked his way through college. He balanced his class load with 40-100 hours a week operating Majestic, while also

working as an intramural referee and at the physical plant on campus. Reed credits growing up in Anderson for his ability to balance so many responsibilities while being a full-time student. His already-established clientele made it easier for him to run Majestic Lawn Care and Landscape. In 2017, Reed joined AU's Anderson Now program, which offers graduates of Indiana universities up to

\$25,000 in loan repayment if they start or relocate a business in Anderson. "This program has been a huge blessing to my wife and I in helping contribute to our loan repayments, especially as we will be welcoming our first child into the world this late fall." **Katie Frazer**, a junior from Anderson University, is majoring in marketing and public relations.