

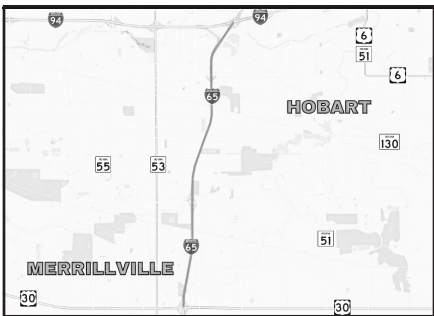
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Motorists are urged to be prepared for overnight lane closures along a busy local stretch of Interstate 65 beginning Sunday. PROVIDED

I-65 to undergo lane closures

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Motorists are urged to be prepared for overnight lane closures along a busy local stretch of Interstate 65 beginning Sunday. The area of highway being impacted by the repair work is between U.S. 30 north to Interstate 94,

according to the Indiana Department of Transportation. The closures will occur between 7 p.m. and 4 a.m. Sunday through Thursday for approximately three weeks, INDOT said. “Motorists should be alert for work crews and changing traffic patterns,” according to INDOT.

MONDAY LOTTERIES

INDIANA	Lucky Day Lotto—Evening:
Daily 3—Midday: 0-5-8, SB: 7	Not available
Daily 3—Evening: Not available	Lotto jackpot: \$7.85 million
Daily 4—Midday: 3-9-7-8, SB: 7	MICHIGAN
Daily 4—Evening: Not available	Midday Daily 3: 1-6-7
Cash 5: Not available	Midday Daily 4: 8-6-9-5
Cash 4 Life: 8-25-33-38-46, CB: 2	Daily 3: 5-2-7
Quick Draw—Midday: 3-6-8-16-17-20-22-29-35-41-42-46-47-56-61-63-64-69-75-77, BE: 42	Daily 4: 6-2-0-9
Quick Draw—Evening: Not available	Fantasy 5: 7-9-14-15-30
Hoosier Lotto jackpot: \$18.7 million	Keno: 7-8-10-16-17-18-23-24-25-27-34-36-40-42-45-48-53-56-57-64-73-80
ILLINOIS	Lotto 47 jackpot: \$3.65 million
Pick 3—Midday: 7-0-5, Fireball: 6	POWERBALL:
Pick 3—Evening: Not available	Not available
Pick 4—Midday: 6-1-5-7, Fireball: 5	MEGA MILLIONS
Pick 4—Evening: Not available	Friday's game: 6-7-24-44-54
Lucky Day Lotto—Midday: 1-16-25-29-35	Mega Ball: 13
	Megaplier: 4
	Current jackpot: \$358 million

THE TIMES
MEDIA COMPANY

IDENTIFICATION
The Times (USPS: 629960), a Lee Enterprises Newspaper, is published daily except: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas at 601 45TH ST, MUNSTER, IN 46321. Periodicals Postage Paid at Hammond, IN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to 500 E 3RD ST, DAVENPORT, IA 52801.

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MOLLY DEVORE, FILE, THE TIMES

The lawsuit also takes aim at the commission's lease agreement with Maya Energy, a Merrillville-based company with plans to turn a lot on West 35th Avenue in Gary into a waste recycling plant.

Gary resident sues commission for Open Door violations

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A Gary resident is suing the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission over alleged violations of transparency rules, the eligibility of two of the body's members, and the commission's ongoing relationship with the company behind a controversial planned waste recycling facility in Gary.

Created by the Indiana State Legislature in 1980, the commission funds and oversees flood control efforts and other public works projects in an area of Lake County stretching from the Illinois state line to Martin Luther King Drive in Gary. Its nine members are appointed by Indiana's governor.

In the lawsuit, filed in Lake County Superior Court on Thursday, Gary resident Gary Lee alleges that the commission violated Indiana's Open Door Law, which mandates that governing bodies of government agencies allow members of the public to attend and record their meetings. According to the filing, the commission's members regularly meet in private before their monthly public meetings.

While the Open Door Law allows governing bodies to meet in private "executive sessions" for certain purposes — for instance, to discuss pending litigation — Lee's suit alleges that the commission "discusses subjects in these private meetings that are subjects not eligible for discussion in an executive

session." Lee said he first started attending the commission's meetings as part of an effort to ensure the body maintained a drainage ditch on his property that it managed through an easement agreement. He is represented in his lawsuit by Michael Zoeller, an attorney with the Conservation Law Center. "There's nothing that I see that these guys are doing that's nefarious," Lee said, "but they should be open and transparent because they're a non-elected public body."

The lawsuit further claims that two of the commission's members, William Baker and Tom Wichlinski, are ineligible for membership because of their roles as president of the Munster Plan Commission and secretary of Griffith's Board of Zoning Appeals, respectively. The filing cites an Indiana statute which provides that a member of the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission "may not be an employee or elected official of a city, town, or county governmental unit."

Baker receives a stipend for his Plan Commission role, Munster Interim Town Manager Trisha Abbott told The Times. She declined to address the question of whether Baker is an employee to determine commission eligibility, citing a lack of legal expertise.

The town of Griffith did not respond to a request for comment.

The lawsuit also takes

aim at the commission's lease agreement with Maya Energy, a Merrillville-based company with plans to turn a lot on West 35th Avenue in Gary into a waste recycling plant. Plans for the facility, which would turn household waste into a burnable feedstock for industrial purposes, have met with delays and opposition from environmental advocates and city leaders.

Citing an Indiana statute concerning the commission's purpose, Lee's filing argues that the commission's lease agreement with Maya Energy "does not 'promote the general health and welfare of citizens of Indiana,' nor does it 'provide for the creation, development, maintenance, administration, and operation of park, recreation, marina, flood control and other public works projects, including levees.'"

The lawsuit asks the court to "declare that the Commission's license agreement with Maya Energy, LLC is void as an exercise of power beyond the scope of the Commission's authority."

Dan Repay, who serves as the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission executive director, wrote in an email to The Times on Monday that he was not aware of the lawsuit and planned to consult with the commission's attorney. Court records show that the defendants had not yet been served notice of the proceedings on Monday.

Maya Energy president Jim Ventura declined to comment.

Northern Ind. judge or lawyer sought to fill court opening

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Judge Terry Crone, a South Bend native, is planning to retire this autumn after spending 20 years as a judge on the Indiana Court of Appeals — creating an opening for a legal practitioner based specifically in northern Indiana to take his place.

Crone serves the 3rd Appellate District, which means his successor must come from Northwest Indiana, or any of the 20 northern tier Indiana counties.

To that end, the Indiana Judicial Nominating Commission is soliciting applications through Sept. 12 from experienced Hoosier lawyers and judges from northern Indiana interested in serving as a judge on the state's appellate bench.

Applicants are required to provide detailed back-



Crone

ground information, writing samples, references and educational transcripts to be considered for the judicial post.

The nominating commission, led by Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush, also plans to interview each applicant in October, and ultimately will recommend three candidates to the governor.

Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb then will have 60 days to decide which potential judge to put on the Court of Appeals for a two-year term.

Hoosiers will vote at a subsequent general election on whether the new judge should be retained for 10 more years.

Fifteen judges serve on

Indiana's appellate court. They're organized into three-judge panels to hear and decide cases appealed from trial courts throughout the state.

Crone is the second appellate judge to announce his retirement this year.

Judge Patricia Riley, a Rensselaer native and former superior court judge in Northwest Indiana's Jasper County, announced in March her plans to step down after 30 years on the Court of Appeals.

Last month, the nominating commission recommended to the governor Porter Circuit Judge Mary DeBoer, Lake Superior Judge Stephen Scheele and St. Joseph Superior Judge Stephanie Steele to fill the Riley vacancy after considering eight applicants for the post.

Holcomb is poised to announce Riley's successor in late September.

BRIEFS

Chicago residents nabbed for marijuana in Portage

PORTAGE — One of three Chicago residents nabbed during a traffic stop with more than 10 ounces of commercially packaged marijuana from neighboring Michigan, reportedly told officers, "he was just grabbing some weed and going home," according to the arrest report.

A Portage police officer said around 3:30 p.m. Thursday he spotted a white 2004 Monte Carlo driving recklessly westbound on U.S. 20 and pulled it over at the Lake-Porter County Line Road.

The officer reported smelling marijuana at the vehicle, but the driver, Anthony Samuels, 43, said there was nothing illegal inside the car.

Police said they searched the vehicle and discovered several bags labeled King of Budz Cannabis Company. The bags reportedly contained about 10.5 ounces of loose marijuana and 23 THC cartridges.

King of Budz is a chain of commercial marijuana stores in Michigan where the drug is legal.

The legalization of marijuana in the neighboring states of Michigan, Illinois and Ohio has left police across Northwest Indiana to grapple with an influx of commercial and particularly potent pot products being driven in and through the Region.

Samuels was arrested, along with passengers Susie Edwards, 37, and George Walls Jr., 25, police said.

"Ms. Edwards advised they all wanted to smoke 'weed' and they all pitched in to purchase the marijuana," according to police.

Samuels admitted to having purchased the marijuana in Michigan and said it was all his and he was just going home.

All three from the vehicle face a misdemeanor charge of possessing marijuana, police said.

Reports of capsized boat triggers emergency response

MICHIGAN CITY — Emergency responders confronted a fierce thunderstorm Monday morning while responding to an unconfirmed report of a capsized boat offshore from the Mount Baldy property of the Indiana Dunes National Park, an official said.

The boat in distress was reported in Lake Michigan, but officials arrived as a heavy rainfall struck the area to discover there was no problem, according to Indiana Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officer Tyler Brock.

"A concerned citizen called about a boat that was heading for it from Michigan City, but that boat turned around and made it safely back to shore," he said.

The DNR was assisted in the call by rangers from the park services and officers with the U.S. Coast Guard, Brock said.

—Bob Kasarda, The Times

Sheriff denies claims of gun violence at Lake County Fair

LAKE COUNTY — The Lake County Sheriff's Department has been made aware of a social media post indicating there has been gun violence at the Lake County Fair, which is untrue, officials said.

"We'd like to stress that the information circulated was false," Sheriff Oscar Martinez Jr. said. "At no time was the public in danger."

No additional information is available.

—Grace Opinker, The Times