




Muncie-Delaware County, Indiana
Economic Development Alliance

Summer 2021

ALLIANCE



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INSIDE: Greenspaces Continue to Blossom Here



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A WORD

No one knows what the future holds, certainly. But, this edition of Alliance magazine may hold an accurate vision of Delaware County's future workforce.

Industry's insatiable thirst for skilled workers is driving some very innovative local initiatives, which are detailed in subsequent pages.

Take the Muncie Technology and Engineering Network for example. "MTEN," as it is affectionately known brings some very exciting and valuable STEM offerings to the table. Robotics teams are taking root across the county – injecting more healthy doses of



JAY JULIAN

Chief Economic Development Officer, President/CEO

science, technology, engineering and math into local school systems, while Purdue Polytechnic Anderson extends programs and services at Madjax.

Purdue University and Ivy Tech Community College are also underwriting their respective commitments to this community by sharing the cost of a dual credit program at Muncie Central High School. The courses are taught by a Purdue faculty member.

Other programs designed to further develop our local workforce take form in virtual and local, in-person certification courses that can open more doors for work-seeking area residents.

While, Purdue Polytechnic Anderson and MTEN collaborate, educate, and innovate, a Sustainable Muncie endeavor – The Future of Work – is undertaking a fresh and exciting approach to labor pool adaptation.

It's called person-centered workforce development and it takes a holistic approach to creating workers who have a better understanding of their workplace skills and their purpose in the workforce, both of which derive from a more developed and engaged community support network.

Once again, we bring you a series of Hidden Gems in this issue. Three important recreational developments are detailed in the Kitselman Trailhead and Bridge; the John Craddock Wetlands Nature Preserve; and Dutro-Ernst Woods.

These gorgeous, urban establishments of green space and fun are potent testaments to this community's inherently benevolent nature. Our benefactors never fail to give – and give again – of both their time and treasure when our community's recreation and revitalization reveal an opportunity to once again burnish blight and let in the light.

When the dust settles and everyone's done their part, what remains are these beautiful preserves, trailheads and natural areas that add to the community's quality of life in immeasurable ways and commemorate the lives and work of some of Delaware County's finest individuals.

Finally, we bring you three more Homeward Bound folks, two of whom are natives and one a Hoosier transplant. Learn their interesting origins and discover why, like us, they love Muncie-Delaware County so much.

Is it me, or does it feel like we're firing on all cylinders? It sure is an exciting time to live in this community! ♦



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ALLIANCE

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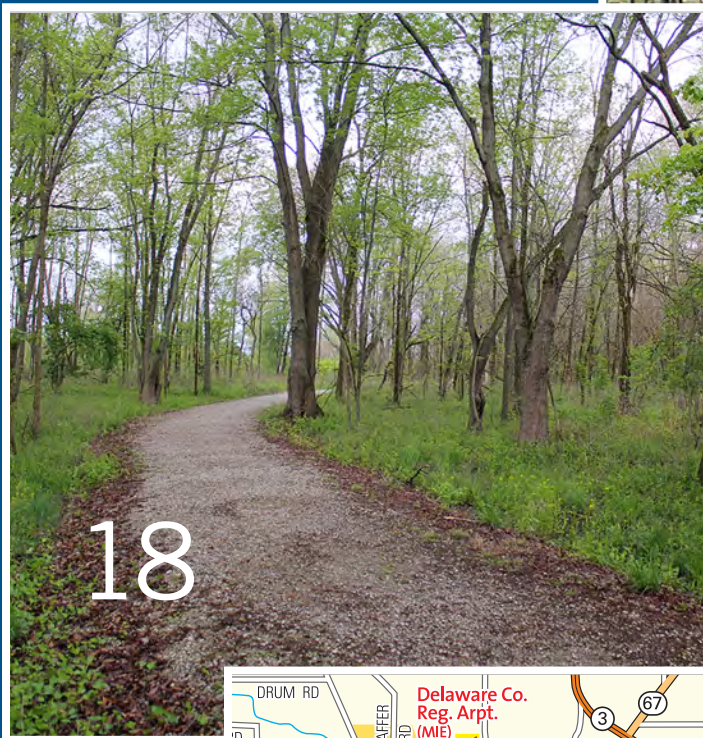
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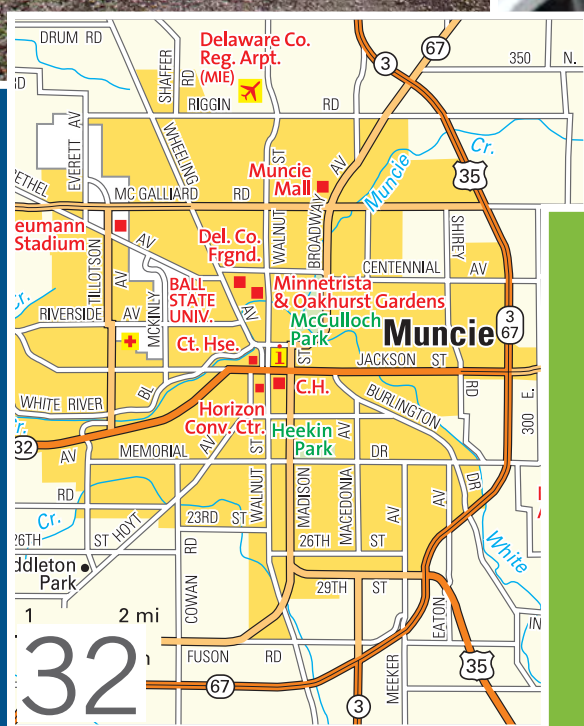
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MPT Muncie - Magna Powertrain Human Resources Manager Sherry Gossett (left) explains to Muncie Central students how different manufacturing processes occur at Magna's Cowan Road plant.

The Future of Work Leans on Holistic Approach in Person-Centered Workforce Development

What does a future workforce look like? In a world where evolving manufacturing techniques intersect with pronounced shortfalls in skilled labor, the character of that workforce seems uncertain at best.

To answer such questions, and frankly, to transcend what has traditionally been offered in terms of workforce development, Sustainable Muncie has undertaken a bold, broad-spectrum effort to not only adapt workers to advanced manufacturing processes, but also create networks that support and stabilize the workforce.

They call it person-centered workforce development, and its holistic approach goes beyond mere mentoring, education, and positive thinking. To

some, this approach might seem a gamble, wagering against the conventional wisdom of simply training workers to do more technology-oriented tasks. But, that's not how Future of Work Coordinator Kyra Zylstra sees it.

"I think that's what makes what we're doing a little bit unique," said Zylstra. "It's not just about jobs; it's about people. And it's about how people prepare for the workforce - through curiosity, through connection and through purpose."

Though some may be skeptical, the initiative hasn't deterred some respected supporters. Purdue University has signed on, via its Purdue Polytechnic Anderson outreach in Muncie. Likewise, Ball State University and the Ball Brothers Foundation have made investments, as have Ivy Tech Community

College, Madjax, Muncie Community Schools, Mursix, MPT Muncie - Magna Powertrain and other local businesses, individuals, and organizations.

The more the merrier isn't just a clever saying in Zylstra's office. It's more like policy – policy driven by painful shortfalls in the region's skilled labor pool.

"We're starting to see automation come in," she said. "Workplace skills are changing. We need workers right now. This isn't news, but employers are struggling to fill positions. To stay competitive in global marketplace, we have to start changing the way we do things and start preparing our workforce for what we're gonna need in five to ten years."

But, STEM education isn't all workers need. Immeasurable in their value to employers, trained, and reliable employees who engage in their occupations require, according to Zylstra, a "Web of Support" that helps not only the individual, but the business where they work, and the community that business calls home.

Muncie's Web of Support: Everybody Succeeds is a program of the Muncie Action Plan administered by the Future of Work. Described as "a local mentoring initiative that uses a relational approach to help youth and adults identify, expand, and strengthen their own support systems," the Web of Support aims to develop workers through every aspect of their working lives: entering the workforce, working, and exiting the workforce.

Zylstra believes that by creating opportunities to collaborate between young, middle-age, and retired workers, all will benefit from the empathy and sharing of information about their respective experiences.

One such program is the Retirees Entrepreneurial Club, an intergenerational group that draws on the strength of its collective experience to support its members as they embark on post-workforce business projects. The group, which also meets at Madjax, also offers networking opportunities and cross-generational partnership opportunities.



"We're trying to change the way we interact with future workers, the way we mentor. It becomes a way of life, signaling that we want to build this network, that we want to help one another."

– Future of Work Coordinator Kyra Zylstra



Such initiatives, said Zylstra, enhance the local workforce's vitality by keeping retired workers involved in creating things, sharing their work experiences, and finding common ground with younger people just entering the jobs market.

"As they enter the workforce and leave the workforce," said Zylstra, "how do we make them as productive and vital as possible? Well, providing a system for connection is one way. Our Web of Support Initiative is another. But, we're also helping establish connections that support youth and adults – a support system that connects employees to workplace. That can produce a better work environment, and help produce workers who are happier in their jobs and who will stay longer. We're trying to change the way we interact with future workers, the way we mentor. It becomes a way of life, signaling that we want to build this network, that we want to help one another."

Ultimately, empathy is at the heart of this endeavor.

As Zylstra said, there is ample data to suggest that happy, reliable workers with career longevity have a few things in common. First, they're likely to have a close friend in a coworker, which results in a more positive workplace attitude. Satisfied workers are also likely to enjoy some sort of workplace support network, reinforcing that their employer actually cares about them as a person – above and beyond the realm of worker productivity, performance, etc.

This approach eschews the decades-old "keep your nose to the grindstone" philosophies in favor of one that places a higher value on the workers' overall human condition, rather than the more narrow view of a given worker's finite output.

Sure, employers are clamoring for skilled workers. But, producing a skilled workforce that can fulfill job requirements, remain engaged, maintain personal satisfaction, and continue to innovate is a trick indeed.

Yet, that's exactly why the Future of Work initiative was launched – to address not only the pressing need

"Satisfied workers are likely to enjoy some sort of workplace support network, reinforcing that their employer actually cares about them as a person – above and beyond the realm of worker productivity, performance, etc."
– Kyra Zylstra

for a 21st century workforce that's equipped with a spectrum of new skills, but also the development of well-rounded, working human beings whose job satisfaction and general condition are elevated by the shared community resources of knowledge, innovation and collaboration.

Future workers who collaborate with current workers or those leaving the workforce will benefit from the knowledge older workers can share. Setting up environments for that collaboration is key to person-centered workforce development. Young people who enter the workplace are less likely to be discouraged by the work environment – if they've had contact with an experienced worker who can tell them what to expect before they get there.

All those experiences, conversations, questions, achievements and relationships combined are what build a support system for a highly-skilled, engaged, and reliable workforce, according Zylstra.

Find out more about person-centered workforce development at www.sustainablemuncie.org. ♦



Toby Olsen, senior technical trainer at Magna Powertrain's Cowan Road plant, tells Muncie Central students about the range of products manufactured at the neighboring Fuson Road facility.



Prior to touring Magna Powertrain's Cowan Road facility, Muncie Central High School students learn what it takes to be an employee at the company, an original equipment manufacturer for America's leading automakers.



Creating Effective Future Workers

Connecting Community with STEM Opportunities, Collaborative Projects, VEX Robotics is Part of Purdue Polytechnic/MTEN's Forward-looking Program

Sustainable Muncie's Madjax operation on East Jackson Street is a veritable hub of innovation, creation and, lately collaboration. Choosing a proactive, rather than reactive approach to workforce development, the nonprofit has launched a unique initiative aimed at improving connectivity between students and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education resources. The long-range objective, of course, is developing well-trained, highly-skilled workers for a future jobs market that, like now, will be in constant flux.

The Muncie Technology and Engineering Network, known as MTEN, is coordinated by Sustainable Muncie's The Future of Work organization, in

cooperation with Purdue Polytechnic Anderson. Their goal is to foster relationships between stakeholders involved in the STEM education-to-workforce pipeline – a conduit whose individual offerings led to these initiatives.



Through the years, as Delaware County's industries have ebbed and flowed, profound changes in workforce needs have washed over local employers. Advanced manufacturing, requiring ever-evolving technology skill sets, is one of this region's stalwart industrial segments. Lately, however, their workforce needs have grown, while the pool of skilled workers has faded.

Realizing this, Sustainable Muncie, employing financial and leadership support from the Ball

Creation Community Innovation Leadership Collaboration

Brothers Foundation, established MTEN via its Future of Work program. Purdue University, which was already actively establishing itself in Delaware County, agreed to lead the Network, extending resources from its relatively new Purdue Polytechnic Anderson facility.

With deft use of social media and an array of interesting events and opportunities, MTEN hopes to not only help produce a more skilled local workforce in coming years, it also wants to create new programming that helps inspire students to pursue STEM-related careers.

For example, MTEN hosts Explorer Workshops for students in grades K-12. The kids get to use 3-D printers, take field trips to local advanced

manufacturing plants, access high school STEM workshops and participate in summer “Maker Clubs.”

Purdue’s dual credit course program at Muncie Central High School features a full-time Purdue faculty member teaching classes. Funding for that position comes from both Purdue and Ivy Tech Community College.

Purdue Polytechnic Anderson, which has an ever-evolving educational space at Madjax, also offers custom workforce training, and the university plans to begin offering virtual and Muncie-based certification classes – all amenities of an energized and stabilized workforce development system.

Kyra Zylstra, coordinator of Sustainable Muncie’s



The Purdue Polytechnic work room at Madjax offers students a space packed with a maximum amount of robotics and other STEM-related learning tools.

Robotics Technology Production Programming Engineering Manufacturing

Future of Work initiative, said students particularly enjoy the field trips to local advanced manufacturers, Progress Rail and Magna Powertrain among them.

“It’s so exciting to go there with students,” Zylstra told Alliance. “They’re big! They’re bright! They’re clean! People are there, working alongside technology. They’re designing. They’re doing engineering. They’re doing production. You can actually see what people are making.”

Zylstra said such field trips are more than just a fun distraction for students; the outings help dispel myths about industrial working conditions. Rust belt communities often fall prey to these misconceptions, she said, because people cling to memories of how things once were, as opposed to current trends.

Another current trend involves robotics and manufacturing automation – a reality some may view with trepidation. However, as Purdue Polytechnic Director Corey Sharp points out, automation won’t displace as many workers as it will employ. That’s why he and Purdue Polytechnic Anderson have been aggressively establishing a VEX Robotics league at Madjax.

"We were able to work with teachers in school districts in Delaware and Madison counties to help them decide what would be the best bet for their schools."

– Kyra Zylstra

The VEX league provides students with a chance to apply STEM principles in an invigorating, competitive atmosphere, in which schools test their robots with various tasks and challenges. Madjax is home to a shared “field”, or the space in which robots perform and compete.

According to Zylstra, the shared field allows schools with fewer resources to still have a place to test their creations. Plus, she said, some schools may hesitate to invest the money necessary to create a full-fledged robotics team. The shared field, she said, not

only gives them a chance to test the program, gauge interest, and gather more information before taking the plunge, it also provides a place for existing teams to convene and work on projects together.

“One thing we like to do is identify gaps in our STEM offerings,” Zylstra said. “We noticed that there were a lot of elementary school robotics teams forming. There were also lots of teams for the older students, doing incredibly advanced stuff. But, what we didn’t have were middle school robotics teams.”

That’s where MTEN was able to step in and help schools make the necessary connections to grow the number of robotics teams at that level.

“We were able to work with teachers in school districts in Delaware and Madison counties to help them decide what would be the best bet for their schools,” Zylstra explained. Ultimately, we decided to support VEX Robotics teams in competitions. We’re able to provide training for teachers, ongoing support for their teams, shared fields to provide easier access for all teams, and mini grants to fund the components they need to launch their teams.”

“These expanding opportunities,” Zylstra continued, “are helping East Central Indiana become a real leader in robotics education.”

A 2017 grant from the Ball Brothers Foundation helped Purdue Polytechnic establish its home at Madjax. The Polytechnic’s expansion into Muncie dovetailed with Indiana’s Next Level Jobs Initiative, the goal of which is ensuring Hoosiers get the training they need for 21st century jobs, including advanced manufacturing.

“This adds depth to our industrial heritage while adjusting for a future of constant innovation in manufacturing,” said Ball Brothers Foundation President and CEO Jud Fisher in 2017. “Purdue brings its expertise to the table in the technology and engineering programming that will be available. The courses Purdue will offer complement existing workforce training programs and provide best-in-class opportunities to young adults. Also, I love the fact that they will work with talented groups like the local robotics clubs.”

For more information, visit www.sustainablemuncie.org. ♦



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Together we can make it possible.



HIDDEN

Gems



WETLANDS

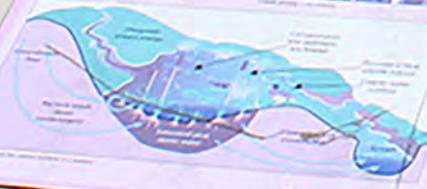
WHAT IS A WETLAND?

A wetland is a land area that is frequently or permanently saturated with water. Wetlands are characterized by the presence of water, the growth of wetland plants, and the presence of wetland animals. Wetlands are important for many reasons, including their ability to filter pollutants from water, provide habitat for wildlife, and store carbon.



THE CRE...

Wetlands are created by the interaction of water and land. They are often found in areas where water is abundant, such as along rivers and streams. Wetlands are also found in areas where water is scarce, such as in the arid Southwest.



NATURAL WETLAND CREATION

Natural wetland creation is the process of restoring a wetland to its original state. This can be done by removing barriers to water flow, such as levees and dikes, and allowing water to flow back into the wetland. Natural wetland creation is an important part of wetland restoration efforts.



Commemorating Muncie's Legendary Water Quality Hero, John Craddock Wetlands Nature Preserve Doesn't Disappoint





It's difficult to imagine today's Muncie without considering the profound impact of just one man: John M. Craddock.

In the 1960s, when Craddock came along as a Ball State University student interested in nature, the community's waterways were suffering greatly.

Unmitigated discharge of toxic waste from Muncie's thriving industrial centers mixed with raw sewage. Over the years, that poisonous combo took its toll on White River and its tributaries. Dozens of fish populations were wiped out, along with insects, aquatic plants and other flora and fauna along and in the river.

Craddock noticed that not only was the waterway polluted within, it was also unsightly, sometimes running brown, green, or even an unnatural yellow or red – a startling sight for a young man who appreciated nature.

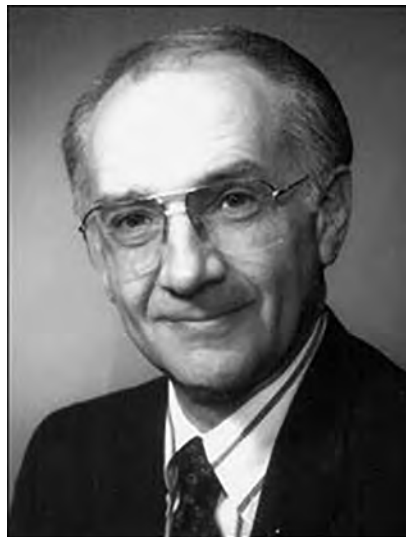
Practically devoid of life, White River was choked with polluted,

industrial sludge as much as three feet thick. Heavy metals and other noxious chemicals seeped into the river or were overtly discharged there. But, factories weren't the only culprits. The river had also become a convenient dumping ground for household waste. Discarded appliances lined its banks and garbage

floated freely or became stuck in the scraggly bits of vegetation that somehow managed to survive there.

As part of a college project, Craddock set up several water monitoring stations along the river, and what he found astonished Muncie. Local newspapers began regularly publishing his findings, and news of the apparent catastrophe led Craddock to lobby the Muncie Sanitary District to create a part-time job for him, which they did. Up to that point, he had financed all his research out of his own pocket.

Craddock's gig eventually grew into a full-time job, and in 1972 he oversaw the creation of today's



John M. Craddock

Bureau of Water Quality, a freestanding and full-staffed department within the Muncie Sanitary District, as well as a beacon of responsible water care locally, nationally, and globally.

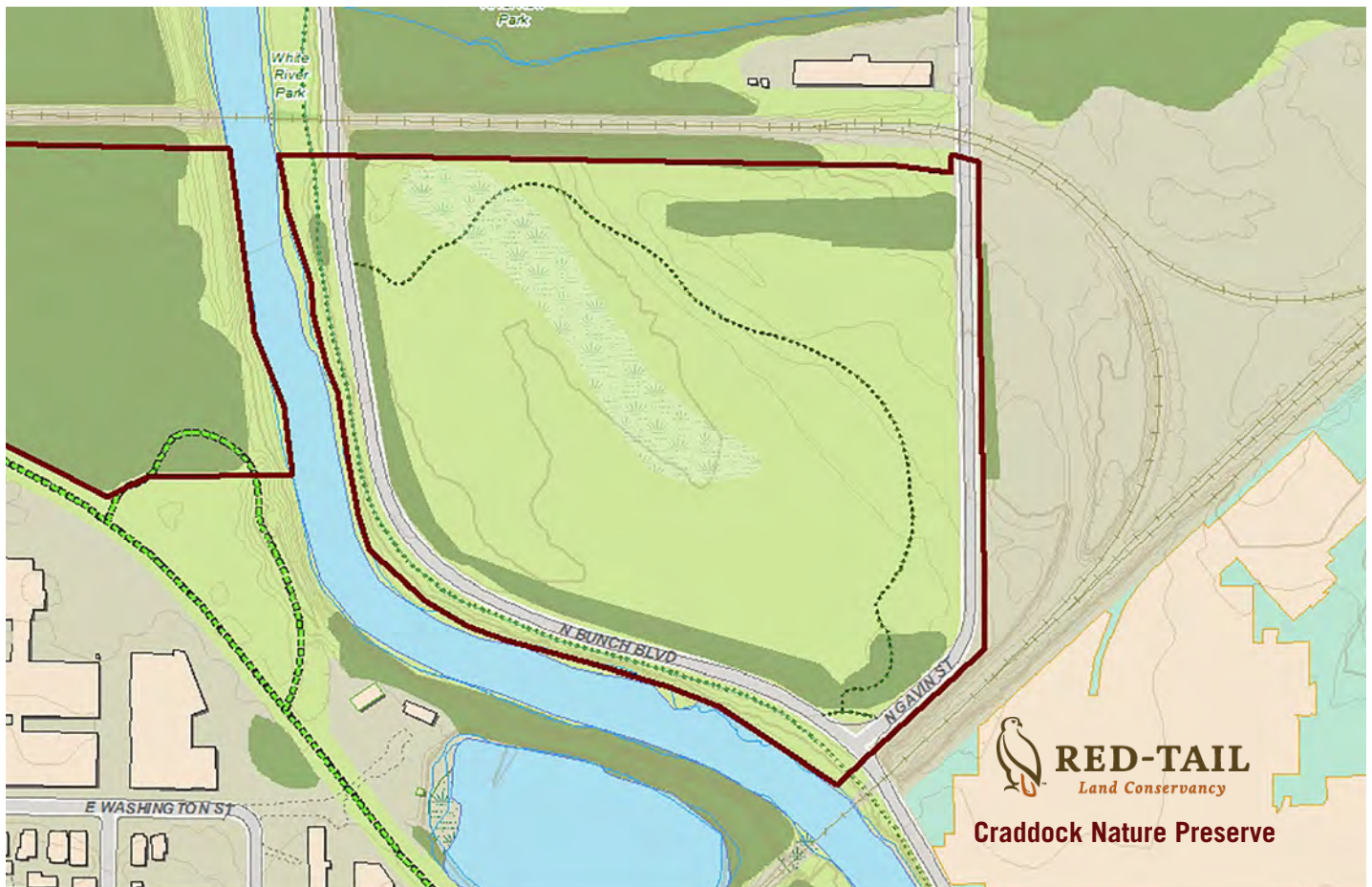
Craddock's work reverberated around the world, but its effects were most evident here. With care and perseverance, Craddock and his crews nursed White River into a gradual rebound. Working with, and not against local businesses, checks on industrial discharge into the river were established. Sanitary and storm sewers were repaired to prevent raw sewage overflows. Water quality monitoring continued.

The efforts bore fruit – literally. Native plants in the river's riparian corridor bounced back heartily, as did fish species, which over the years have grown from a low point of 30 species to more than 60 today. Likewise, insect species have enjoyed a major growth spurt. When Craddock began monitoring, there were



only a few dozen types of bugs crawling and flying around. Today, there are more than 100.

Of course, all of this backstory lays a perfect foundation for the success story that Muncie's water resources have become. The long-retired Craddock, now Director Emeritus of the Sanitary District's Bureau







of Water Quality, is still very much involved in community affairs, helping direct other projects that benefit water quality, including the Kitselman Trailhead.

In fact, his namesake project – the John Craddock Wetland Nature Preserve, is located just north of the Kitselman bridge. The 27-acre, roughly square-shaped plot is notable because of its close proximity to Muncie’s most urban areas. It was a gift to the City of Muncie from the Muncie Sanitary District to commemorate Craddock’s tireless commitment to the cause of cleaner water.

The preserve represents a big achievement for the city as it works to reclaim and restore natural lands within city limits. Featuring ADA accessible trails and boardwalks, the Craddock preserve is also home to an osprey nest. A hiking trail starts near one of two bike racks. A modest parking area, access to the White River Greenway, and interpretative signage are also included.

Craddock told Alliance the 27-acre parcel once belonged to Indiana Steel & Wire and that no toxic waste had ever been dumped there. It remained a wetland, he said, until the early 1970s, when, over a five year period, a local farmer tried chisel plowing the land in an effort to grow corn.

“That wiped out some of those wetlands,” Craddock said. “Back then, no one really said much about it. Of course, that’s all changed now.”

He said when the Craddock preserve was initiated, the land, which features a sloping, 16-foot drop, was fallow. Now, after years of remediation and repair, the segment has three distinct ecosystems: the upper hardwood forest, the prairie, and, in the middle, the wetland.

While the city was gifted the land, Red Tail Conservancy eventually acquired it and turned control over to Cardinal Greenways, according to Craddock. Though the preserve is supported by a fund with The Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware County, Inc., initial financing came from a builder who, Craddock said, had inadvertently wiped out some wetlands in the White River watershed. His penalty, according to law, was being forced to invest in a wetlands reclamation project in the same watershed. Of course, it wound up being the John Craddock Wetland Nature Preserve. That builder’s mistake yielded the seed money that got the project started.

Learn more about this property at www.fortheland.org. ♦



HIDDEN

Genius

***Dutro-Ernst Woods a Place Ruth Dutro
Would've Been Proud to Visit
on Her Many Burriss Field Trips***

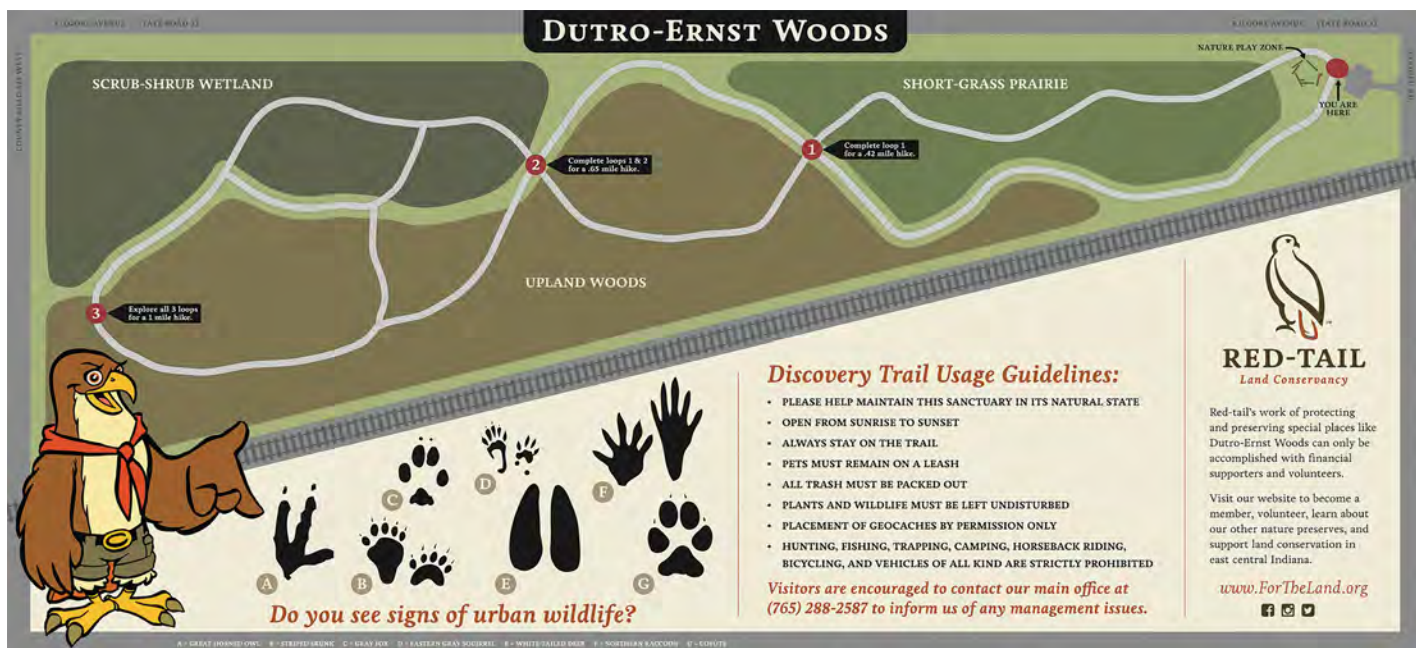


“Whatever Ruth Dutro and her students set out to find, they find with excitement and wonder . . . By a big old tree near a pretty little creek in a Hoosier pasture, Ruth Dutro, biology teacher at Burris School, can unearth more wonders than a safari leader in the Serengeti plains.”

Those are some of the words Nancy Millard wrote in the Muncie Star back in 1972. Millard’s “Much Ado” column appeared beneath a headline that told the whole story in eight words.

“Ruth Dutro is Special to Her Students”





To at least one student – one in thousands whom Dutro likely affected – the teacher’s endearing qualities had enough impact to stimulate a major investment in a Muncie urban greenspace. The beloved Burris biology instructor died at age 88 in 1996. But, the legacy of fondness she left took root in Dutro-Ernst Woods on West Kilgore Avenue.

Located directly across from sprawling Elm Ridge Funeral Home & Memorial Park, the half-wooded/half-prairie preserve brings yet another green enclave to an area formerly bristling with industry and helps beautify Muncie’s western entrance.

But, how the Dutro-Ernst Woods came to be is a story of two Burris alumni who felt a need to memorialize both Dutro and a former business once located there.

It started when Josie Fox, a Muncie native living in California, visited Elm Ridge cemetery. She noticed a

wooded lot across the street, and a sign that said the 16 acres was for sale. Her thoughts turned to Dutro, her former Burris Laboratory School biology teacher.

“I was very impressed with her, not only as a person — she had poise and was just a real genuine person — but she conducted classes in an interesting manner,” Fox told the Muncie Star Press in 2015. “We collected things on field trips and examined them in class. I immediately thought of her when I first noticed the woods in 2009 at a distance. She took pride in recognizing things about nature to share with students.”

Fox and her husband, Geoff, had founded, operated, then sold a popular motorsports clothing company. They wanted to buy the 16-acre parcel and memorialize Dutro – in a place Fox thought would be utterly appropriate: a wooded natural area.

The Foxes did just that. Then they gifted the property to Red-Tail Land Conservancy, which, in turn, worked with the Foxes to purchase the connected 17-acre parcel, owned by another couple, Connecticut residents Augustus and Karen (Ernst) DaSilva. In a bit of serendipity, Karen is also a Burris alumna whose parents for years had owned and operated Ernst Nursery on the same property.

Though Karen hadn’t been one of Dutro’s pupils, she and her husband nevertheless agreed to sell the property at a discount – provided the Ernst Nursery story could be memorialized as well. What resulted from this agreement, steeped in sincere respect and civic benevolence, is a gorgeous, verdant 33-acre natural area, located in the heart of a stagnant former industrial area.

Where smokestacks and chimneys once towered,





150-year-old oak trees now loom over the former Borg-Warner industrial site just east of the Woods. Twelve of the preserve's eastern acres are dedicated to natural prairie, where invasive plants and other non-native intruders have been replaced with naturally-occurring ones. An ADA-accessible, crushed limestone trail intertwines the acreage, running east to west over length property's breadth.

The western half is populated not only with sky-scraping native oaks, but also maples and hickories. The flat, serpentine path, about a mile in length, is interspersed with mounded earth pedestals that offers visitors elevated vantage points for better viewing. Interpretative signage explains the Woods' flora and fauna, and their significance inside an urban landscape.

A public parking area is available near the preserve's entrance (on South Perdieu Road near Kilgore Avenue) on the preserve's far east side, where there is also a natural play area for children.

No motorized vehicles or bicycles are permitted on the property, which Red-Tail Land Conservancy said also serves as an educational venue for local students and offers area residents additional quality of life via



outdoor recreation, bird watching, hiking, etc.

The new natural area surely would've intrigued Ruth Dutro, who was renowned for her field trips, which former students have described as interesting forays into Delaware County's natural areas. Dutro, who also taught at Ball State University, would oversee students' collection of various specimens, which they'd bring back to her Burris classroom for further examination.

Though restoration of the Dutro-Ernst Woods natural habitat is ongoing, the initial efforts are already paying dividends, with a marked resurgence in native plants and animals.

Find out more about Dutro-Ernst Woods at www.fortheland.org. ♦

HIDDEN

Gems



Muncie's industrial era may have faded. But, like green saplings emerging anew in the aftermath of a devastating forest fire, fresh growth seems ever-present on this community's horizon.

On Muncie's east side, where heavy industry once dominated, the brand new Kitselman Trailhead is poised to become the city's bold, new gateway, connecting trails, establishing more greenspace and beautifying the community's eastern entrance.

The crown jewel of this new portal is the historic Albany Bridge, relocated from its original perch

spanning a body of water south of Albany. Designed and fabricated in 1899 by Muncie's own Indiana Bridge Co., the old bridge was replaced with a new one. The original bridge, a historic structure, was disassembled and restored using original schematic drawings discovered in the Ball State University archives.

Once restoration was complete, the bridge was reassembled and placed over White River just south of East Jackson Street, running at a slight southeast/northwest angle. The bridge effectively connects the White River Greenway and the Cardinal Greenway,

Decades in the Making, Kitselman Trailhead and Bridge Symbolize Unprecedented Cooperation, Coordination, and Civility



the fifth and final phase of the White River Greenway's development. The connection signifies a long held goal of connecting the two multi-use trails.

The bridge was renamed to memorialize Muncie civic leaders and community benefactors Harry and Janet Kitselman, who endowed a fund with The Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware County, Inc., which greatly benefited this project.

The Kitselman Trailhead effort – decades in the making – is only the latest in a series of endeavors designed to rebrand Muncie as a more environmentally-conscious town that replaces the

blight of long-gone heavy industry with wetlands, greenspaces, multi-use trails, and other amenities.

The evidence is all around. Like emerald islands strung together near the winding White River, verdant natural areas speckle Muncie's map, offering residents respite, recreation and retreat from an otherwise paved and built-up world.

These accomplishments represent a level of community investment not often seen, drawing on private and public resources alike. Unprecedented cooperation between all parties was celebrated after Marjorie Zeigler, founder of Community



Enhancement Projects Inc., conceived what would become the Kitselman Trailhead back in 1995.

Zeigler pulled together a broad coalition in support of the project, including the City of Muncie, Delaware County Commissioners, and the Muncie Sanitary District. Major funding to build the first and second phases of the project was provided by INDOT, the Ball Brothers Foundation, the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation, the Zeigler Foundation, the White River Greenway Trailblazer Fund and, of course, grants from The Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware County, Inc.'s, Kitselman Fund.

A Philadelphia landscape designer - the award-winning David Rubin - was commissioned to design the site's radical overhaul. Once home to the sprawling Indiana Steel & Wire factory, the area is one of Muncie's Environmental Protection Agency Superfund sites. In addition to environmental remediation and relocating the bridge, some levees had to be raised in order to meet updated federal standards.

Unfazed, Rubin stepped up to the challenges, saying, "The design of the project took advantage of these constraints by carefully shaping the required land form and fill to create unique spaces along the river. Here the ruin and nature are celebrated to create a unique composition that positions Muncie through its industrial history to a new gateway for environmentalism, sustainability, and natural beauty."

According to the Muncie Journal, trail connections and amenities are focused on the east side of the White River. A new bike trail begins at Bunch Boulevard near the John Craddock Wetland Nature Preserve and will pass under the Jackson Street bridge. The trail loops over the former Indiana Steel & Wire employee parking lot area, connecting to the Kitselman Bridge to cross the White River and link directly to the Cardinal Greenway.

Trail users will enjoy ample parking and a pleasant, sloping grassy area that leads down to the river.

"This bridge and trailhead has been decades in the

“This bridge and trailhead has been decades in the making. So many great community leaders sat in meetings for years and years discussing how to create a meaningful entryway into Muncie coming from the east. The idea was to bridge the two greenways, celebrate the river, and build an eastern city gateway using art and recreation.”

– Marta Moody, Cardinal Greenway President

making,” Marta Moody, current Cardinal Greenway President, told the Muncie Journal back in 2019. “So many great community leaders sat in meetings for years and years discussing how to create a meaningful entryway into Muncie coming from the east. The idea was to bridge the two greenways, celebrate the river, and build an eastern city gateway using art and recreation. While a number of these leaders are no longer living, the vision and plans they created to build a city gateway and a trail connector remain in their solid foundations.”

Now, organizers are gearing up for the final phase of the Kitselman Trailhead project – completing the area west of White River, near the Cardinal

Greenway. Angie Pool, Cardinal Greenway President and CEO, said officials are working to secure local funds to satisfy a 20 percent match of federal funds that will finance the trailhead’s completion.

The final construction will include additional trailhead parking, a small grassy area near the river, as well as normal and interpretative signage. Also, the Cardinal Greenway will be realigned to loop under the bridge, instead of across Jackson Street. Phase 3 construction is tentatively slated to begin in late 2023 or early 2024.

While there is still work to be done, the Kitselman Trailhead is open and serving citizens every day. Find out more at www.cardinalgreenways.org. ♦



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Homeward Found

Who they are; what they do; what made them stay



Kim Miller



Rushville
Consolidated
High School
Class of '03

Age: 37

Company & Title: Tribune Showprint Owner/Operator

Hometown: Rushville

High School/Year Graduated: Rushville Consolidated High School 2003

College Attended, Year Graduated: Purdue University, 2008

Family Members: Rob Miller (husband)

Q You grew up in this area. Why did you move back to Muncie-Delaware County?

A While I didn't grow up in Muncie, I did go to Ball State for one year. Rob and I met at Ball State. He stayed and finished his degree and I went to Purdue. When I graduated I moved back here to be with him while he finished his degree. We both decided to stay because we really loved what was happening in Muncie at the time. The arts and music scenes were growing; downtown was really starting to take off; and we had met some really amazing people. We wanted to be part of that.

Q Please describe what makes Muncie-Delaware County schools the right fit for your family.

A While I don't have kids, I do teach one class at the Muncie Area Career Center. Seeing what programs and opportunities the career center has to offer has been really amazing to see. The students and teachers are excited to be there, have hands-on activities, and opportunities to see and work with professionals in the community. This is such an asset to this area. I know many students and parents in the district and hearing about the opportunities and activities that are offered at the different schools is something I am grateful students and families are able to access.

Q In terms of recreation, what are the best local attractions for you, your family and your coworkers/employees?

A I'm not sure there is enough room to list everything. Some of our favorite things to do or go to are going to the Muncie Three Trails Concert Series, First Thursdays, and the many different artist talks that happen. We also enjoy going to the farmers market, the orchid greenhouse, The Civic Theatre, Christy Woods, the planetarium, the Old Washington Street Festival - and that's just the short list. We love to utilize the local parks, take our dogs on walks on the Greenway and stroll through downtown and shop and eat at all the local businesses that are there now.

Q In your opinion, what makes Muncie-Delaware County a great place to live, work and raise a family?

A Muncie is great area to live and work because the community is really strong here. I have met so many incredible people

here that make me want to try hard and do what I can to help build community. There are so many things to do that most of the time we can't do all the things we want. The community is just growing and getting stronger. Each year we are here, more and more activities are happening for the community and that is really exciting to see. That is what makes Muncie a great place to live in.

Personality Quickies

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Early Bird | Night Owl |
| Spicy | Mild |
| Elevator | Stairs |
| Vegetarian/Vegan | Carnivore |
| Dream | Plan |
| Coffee | Tea |
| Diet | Exercise <i>Depends on the day!</i> |
| Read <i>Try to balance all 3!</i> | Watch TV/Surf Internet |
| Talk | Listen |
| Fast | Strong |
| Stay In | Go Out |
| Drive | Walk/Ride Bike |
| Water | Soft Drink |
| Travel Abroad | Close to Home |
| Always Breakfast | Never Breakfast |
| Beer | Wine |
| Do It Now | Put it Off |
| Sit | Stand |
| Grit | Talent |
| Punctual | Tardy |
| Salty | Sweet |



Lathay Pegues



Muncie Central
High School
Class of '93

Age: 46

Company & Title: JohnTom's Barbecue, President/CEO

Hometown: Muncie, IN

High School/Year Graduated: Muncie Central H.S. Class of 1993

Extracurricular Activities/Class Officer: Basketball, Band

College Attended, Year Graduated: Indiana University – Bloomington, 2000

Family Members: Lashea Pegues (wife), 44, Jarrod Pegues (son), 22, Anya Pegues (daughter), 15, Averie Pegues (daughter), 10

Q You grew up in this area. Why did you move back to Muncie-Delaware County?

A When I decided to put my journalism career on hold and try my hand at entrepreneurship, I knew I would need the help of my family. My wife and I had two kids at the time, and a support system was vital to start a new business. After I moved back to Muncie, I had a new appreciation for my hometown. I realized there was a group of hard-working people dedicated to making Muncie and Delaware County a better place to call home.

Q Do you have a memorable teacher or mentor at local schools? If so, please explain what made them special and the impact they had on your life and career.

A Three teachers impacted my life: Anita (Hadley) Kishel, Joe Stokes, and Dennis Biggler, who taught at Washington-Carver Elementary School. Their teaching style and classroom set-up was unusual at the time. They combined 4th and 5th grade students and simultaneously taught us in an "open concept" style setting. The three teachers had one huge classroom with nearly 100 students. It was just a special place that was unlike any other school I had ever seen. Those teachers were definitely extraordinary. They all made me believe I had what it took to be successful.

Q Please describe what makes Muncie-Delaware County schools the right fit for your family.

A My son graduated from Muncie Central High School, where he enjoyed playing for the Bearcat football team. He spent his elementary years at Muncie Community Schools, but went to Burris Laboratory School his junior high years. Once we realized how much he was missing football, we enrolled him at Central to begin his freshman year of high school. That worked for him, and he was able to reunite with some of his friends. My two youngest kids attend Burris, which is a great fit for them.

Q In terms of recreation, what are the best local attractions for you, your family and your coworkers/employees?

A Muncie-Delaware County has a lot to be proud of in terms of family-oriented recreation and attractions. My oldest daughter likes acting and has appeared in several plays at Muncie Civic Theatre. We have enrolled our youngest daughter at Cornerstone Center for the Arts, which she enjoyed. My wife and I enjoy evenings at local eateries, such as Elm Street Brewery, where I play music, and Casa Del Sol. As a family, we also like

visiting Minnetrista Cultural Center. We also enjoy walking all the beautiful trails and paths here.

Q In your opinion, what makes Muncie-Delaware County a great place to live, work and raise a family?

A For those who enjoy a slower-paced lifestyle and value a close-knit community, this area offers that. When I graduated from IU, myself and college friends fantasized about the big city life. But, I don't like traffic jams, long commutes, and unfriendly people. People speak to each other and are friendly here. Plus, we've had no problem finding activities for our kids. The school systems are great, and it is a bonus to have a Division-1 University nearby.

Personality Quickies

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Early Bird | Night Owl <i>Night Owl transitioned to early bird</i> |
| Spicy | Mild |
| Elevator | Stairs <i>Whichever is quickest</i> |
| Vegetarian/Vegan | Carnivore |
| Dream | Plan |
| Coffee | Tea |
| Diet | Exercise <i>They go hand-in-hand</i> |
| Read | Watch TV/Surf Internet |
| Talk | Listen <i>Either, when necessary</i> |
| Fast | Strong |
| Stay In | Go Out |
| Drive | Walk/Ride Bike |
| Water | Soft Drink |
| Travel Abroad | Close to Home |
| Always Breakfast | Never Breakfast |
| Beer | Wine |
| Do It Now | Put it Off |
| Sit | Stand |
| Grit | Talent |
| Punctual <i>Doesn't always happen</i> | Tardy |
| Salty | Sweet |

Homeward Found

Who they are; what they do; what made them stay



Chris Flook



Yorktown High School
Class of '99

Age: 41

Company & Title: Lecturer of Telecommunications, Ball State University

Hometown: Muncie

High School/Year Graduated: Yorktown High School, class of 1999

Extracurricular Activities/Class Officer: President, National Honors Society

College Attended, Year Graduated: Ball State University, 2003 (undergrad), 2007 (grad)

Family Members: Dad - Alan Flook, Mom - Kathie Flook, sisters - Emily Cullen and Erin Schmitt

Q You grew up in this area. Why did you make Muncie-Delaware County your home?

A I never left! I've been fortunate to find both creative and professional opportunities in our great city. In the years after college, there were many times that I made initial plans to move away, but then some new opportunity would emerge that I simply couldn't pass up. The Muncie story for me and my career has always been one of new opportunity.

Q Do you have a memorable teacher or mentor at local schools? If so, please explain what made them special and the impact they had on your life and career.

A I went to St. Mary's through 8th grade and Yorktown High School through high school. In elementary school, Kathleen Lind was a major influence on me and was my teacher in 2nd grade and again in 4th grade. In high school, Sigrid Koehler and Marge Frank were my most influential mentors. Mrs. Lind taught gave me a moral compass, Frau Koehler gave me a worldview, and Mrs. Frank instilled a life-long passion for the arts.

Q Please describe what makes Muncie-Delaware County schools the right fit for your family.

A I don't have any children, so I can't answer the question specifically. However, I know MCS to be an amazing school system that's delivering an amazing level of education.

Q In terms of recreation, what are the best local attractions for you, your family and your coworkers/employees?

A The greenways and park system are the go-to places for me, recreationally. The greenways provide great opportunities to get outdoors - to bike, hike, walk, and run. The White River is our best asset in Muncie and the way the trails connect with the river creates a wonderful network. I don't believe that, as a community, we've fully come to appreciate how great the trails, parks, and river are for us.

Q In your opinion, what makes Muncie-Delaware County a great place to live, work and raise a family?

A Muncie is the place to be if you want opportunities for growth. It's easy to work here, both creatively and professionally, while finding the requisite partners in whatever endeavor is being undertaken. Housing is affordable and we have amazing schools. Our history is fascinating and, time after time, demonstrates a community willing to improve, evolve, and transform into something new.

Personality Quickies

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Early Bird | Night Owl |
| Spicy | Mild |
| Elevator | Stairs |
| Vegetarian/Vegan | Carnivore |
| Dream | Plan |
| Coffee | Tea |
| Diet | Exercise |
| Read | Watch TV/ Surf Internet |
| Talk | Listen |
| Fast | Strong |
| Stay In | Go Out |
| Drive | Walk/ Ride Bike |
| Water | Soft Drink |
| Travel Abroad | Close to Home |
| Always Breakfast | Never Breakfast |
| Beer | Wine |
| Do It Now | Put it Off |
| Sit | Stand |
| Grit | Talent |
| Punctual | Tardy |
| Salty | Sweet |



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