



Muncie-Delaware County, Indiana
Economic Development Alliance

Winter 2022

ALLIANCE



Muncie's Downtown Revitalization Ramps Up

Three New Developments Underscore Progress

INSIDE: *The Oliver Building, Civic Green Bolster Yorktown Economic Hub*



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A WORD

I like watching the planning process work.

To me, it's fascinating and satisfying to watch as seeds sprout – particularly when the planting of those seeds has been so carefully planned.

As we detail in this issue of Alliance, the evidence of successful community cultivation is all around Delaware County, in varying degrees and in so many shades of indelible color. Decades-old mainstay attractions in the county's smaller, century-old towns compliment newer commercial developments in Muncie. Combined, these deeply-rooted, but growing fibers weave a sturdy material.



JAY JULIAN

Chief Economic Development Officer, President/CEO

Colorful, diverse and, above all, resilient, the fabric of Delaware County is the cloth we all wear every single day we get to call this place home.

This issue tackles the new growth first. These pages detail three interesting developments in downtown Muncie.

The first involves the restoration of the Patterson building. Now known as Patterson Block Muncie, the stately 21,000-square-foot structure now houses Pink Leaf: A Learning Company and a handful of woman-owned business that are as clever as they are diverse. Pink Leaf is a community outreach operation whose primary function is helping young

people become self-sufficient – particularly those engaged in Indiana's foster care system.

But, there's much more to Pink Leaf than that. Read on and find out.

A new venture, at recently relocated Accutech, has everyone buzzing. Accutech President Adam Unger's great take on philanthropy is manifesting itself in a 10,000-square-foot entertainment center beneath its downtown headquarters, the former Sears building. On that structure's first floor – sheathed in impressive floor-to-ceiling glass windows – will be The Clubhouse at Accutech, featuring a full-service restaurant, high-end digital golf simulators, and a bunch of activities for kids.

The Clubhouse won't open until next year, but it's sure to be another outstanding addition to the downtown area.

Dale Basham knows how good that location can be. The interim Executive Director of the Muncie Visitors Bureau, Basham is now working out of the Bureau's new downtown location, directly across from Canan Commons. Once located on Muncie's far south side, the Visitors Bureau is now enjoying a fresh jolt of visitors and attention as visibility in the heart of downtown bears long overdue fruit.

This Alliance also provides small glimpses of some of the county's smaller incorporated towns, showcasing some attractions and points of interest. Likewise, our "Hidden Gems" section shines a welcoming light on two subjects, both of which inject color and history into our communities.

Of course, no issue of this magazine would be complete without our popular Homeward Found section. This time, we query two delightful ladies with whom many of you are very familiar. Do those high school senior pictures ever get old? I think not!

And finally, as most of you know, this is my last issue of Alliance. I am retiring in early 2022. My thanks to all of you for allowing me the privilege of serving as your Chamber president these past 12 years. Enjoy this issue of Alliance!



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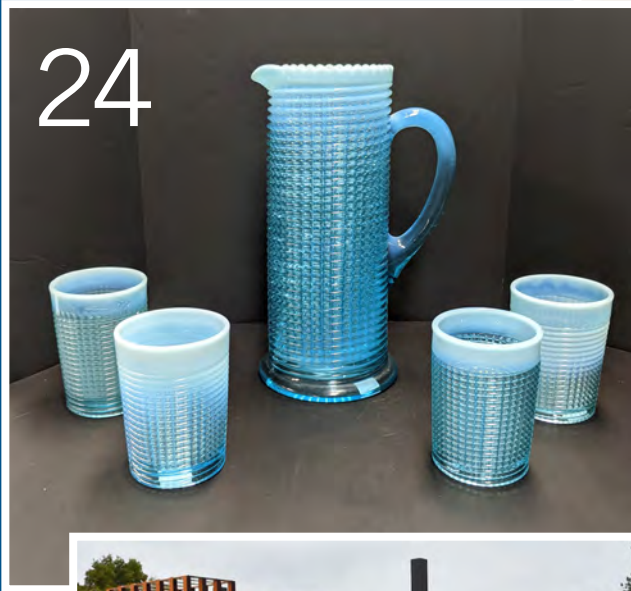
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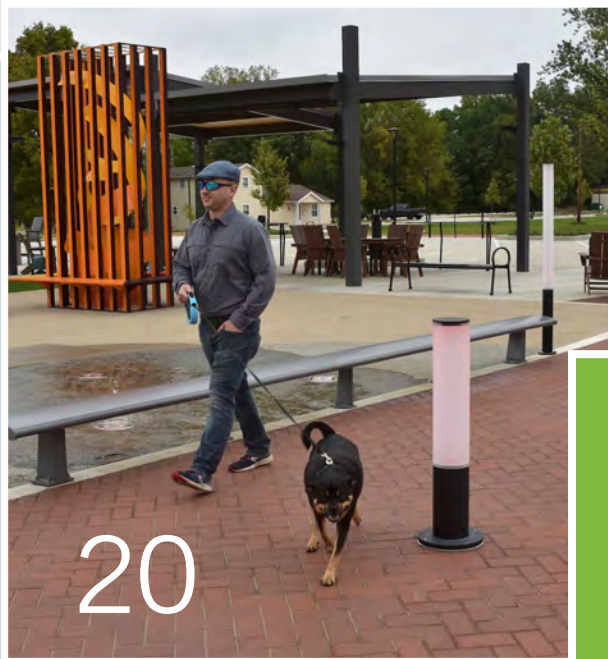
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On the Cover

A symbol of downtown Muncie's ongoing revitalization, Patterson Block Muncie is home to both businesses and educational endeavors.

Features



The historic Patterson Block at the corner of Main and Walnut Streets in downtown Muncie, is owned by Kimberly Ferguson, and is home of Pink Leaf, a Learning Company. (Photos by Richard Sitler)

Downtown Muncie Revitalization Surges with Addition of Pink Leaf: A Learning Company, The Clubhouse at Accutech, and Timely Relocation of Muncie-Delaware County Visitors Bureau

New downtown developments continue to add vitality to Muncie's heart.

The Muncie-Delaware County Visitors Bureau's move to South Walnut Street joins an recreational facility at Accutech, and Patterson Block Muncie, a new community learning center with untold potential that's successfully breathing new life into a stately old downtown building.

Built in 1876 by Arthur Patterson, the Patterson building's 21,000 square feet have been almost completely renovated and are now owned by Ball State graduate Kimberly Ferguson, a local real estate investor who's active in several area nonprofit organizations.

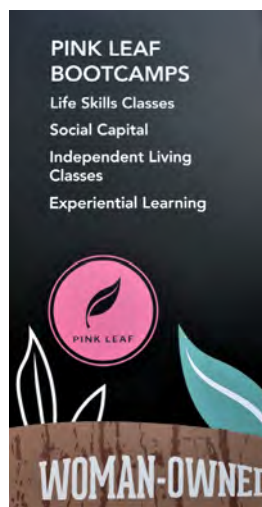
Ferguson, a wife and mother of two young children, is also owner of the Patterson building's primary tenant, Pink Leaf: A Learning Company, whose mission is to

"cultivate personal and community growth through experiential learning and enriching opportunities to forge new pathways to success."

Patterson Block Muncie hosted a grand opening on Aug. 5, welcoming the public to tour the modern work, retail, and learning spaces inside. While Pink Leaf programs occupy some of the Patterson, another portion is reserved for a few tenants – women-owned businesses that include Debbie's Handmade Soap, Sea Salt & Cinnamon, Bloom & Be: Therapy and Education Services, Runaround Soup, and Danielle's Bistro. City Hope Fellowship and Adopt-a-Hive also call the Patterson home.

Pink Leaf is an interesting part of the Patterson building's contents. Ferguson's

Pink Leaf: A Learning Company, oversees the Patterson Block.



company is aimed at helping people become self-sufficient in a rapidly changing world, where resources are sometimes limited or nonexistent.

Jen Cavalcanti, Pink Leaf's Director of Operations, said Patterson Block Muncie is really a cleverly disguised philanthropic organization that operates as a for-profit business. "We've been in business for 10 years doing experiential learning classes in Muncie," she told Alliance. "Until we relocated to the Patterson building, we were operating out of a small cottage in central Muncie. We didn't really have a public space, and so people didn't know we were around."

But, Pink Leaf was there, helping young people and adults become more self-sufficient by offering life skills classes like fundamental car maintenance, basic cooking, and home maintenance.

"We're definitely on a social mission," Cavalcanti said. "Kimberly is really passionate about giving back to community and she knows the value of her property tax dollars going back into the community when it was really needed."

It's that kind of civic-mindedness that identifies Pink Leaf as a true community partner.

A prime example of this community outreach effort is Pink Leaf's brand new commercial kitchen, featuring all the modern amenities. Coupled with the kitchen, which can be rented by private individuals or used as culinary instruction space, is Pink Leaf's roster of certification courses which are taught there. Among them is ServSafe, the restaurant and food service industry's nationally recognized and accredited food safety training program.

Together, The Commercial Kitchen by Pink Leaf and Pink Leaf's own ServSafe certification program can help residents acquire jobs in the food service industry, or



Jen Cavalcanti, director of operations at Pink Leaf: A Learning Company, stands in front of artwork in the Pink Leaf's facility in the Patterson Block building. The artwork is actually a painted door from Pink Leaf's previous home.

enhance the qualifications of entrepreneurs looking to start catering businesses, restaurants, or food trucks.

The Commercial Kitchen also serves as a culinary arts classroom for the general public. Classes aren't free, but a variety of cooking classes are available, including "Soups & Stocks", "Thanksgiving Sides", "Thanksgiving Desserts", and more. Knitting and sewing classes are also available, with no class costing more than \$75.

Other certifications classes include CPR/AED and First Aid.

Pink Leaf is also active in the local foster care community, contracting with the Indiana Department of Child Services (IDCS) to administer the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Youth Outcomes Survey and disburse incentives.

"These surveys are completed by cohorts of older youth in foster care at ages 17, 19, and 21, to gather data about how they are doing in regard to education, housing, finances, family, and employment," the Pink Leaf website says. "The NYTD Crew at Pink Leaf comes alongside these young adults from ages 17-21, connecting them with support by way of resources, community, events and opportunities to share how their story interacts with previous data from the NYTD Youth Outcomes Surveys."

Pink Leaf "Bootcamps", services contracted through IDCS, are another educational tool the company uses to



Chef Shawn of Danielle's Bistro is shown with a funnel cake. Danielle's Bistro is located in the Patterson Block in downtown Muncie.



Danielle Jernigan of Danielle's Bistro puts whipped cream on funnel cake. Danielle's Bistro is located in the Patterson Block building at 108 S. Walnut St. in Muncie.

help people become more self-sufficient.

“Bootcamps are two- to five-day hands-on learning classes where participants practice new skills, explore potential career paths, build confidence, and create lifelong networks of peers, experts and prominent community members,” information from the company said, “All Pink Leaf bootcamps have the ultimate goal of equipping young adults for successful and sustainable independent living and employment.”

Taught by local experts in their respective fields, bootcamps, which serve as the trunk of Pink Leaf operations, range from culinary arts, building trades and car maintenance, to computer coding, life skills, kitchen basics, and of course, ServSafe.

Cavalcanti reflected on her job at Pink Leaf and chuckled. “It’s so refreshing to be part of a company that lives by its mission – taking care of people, helping people move upward to the next level of their life. I don’t think that’s very common in today’s work places, so it’s a real gem.

The Clubhouse at Accutech

Another developing downtown story is the relocation of Accutech’s headquarters. The trust and investment software developer made its move in March, purchasing the old Sears building in the 100 block of South Walnut Street and bringing its entire operation, along with 130 employees.

But, when Accutech President Adam Unger saw all the new building’s massive, ground-floor display windows, he knew his private philanthropic vision for Muncie would eventually succeed.

“I’ve always had a different vision of philanthropy that I wanted Accutech to carry out for Muncie,” Unger told Alliance. “My idea of philanthropy is more entrepreneurial in nature. I envisioned a project that could create jobs, enhance the quality of life for residents, and help instill pride in the community.”

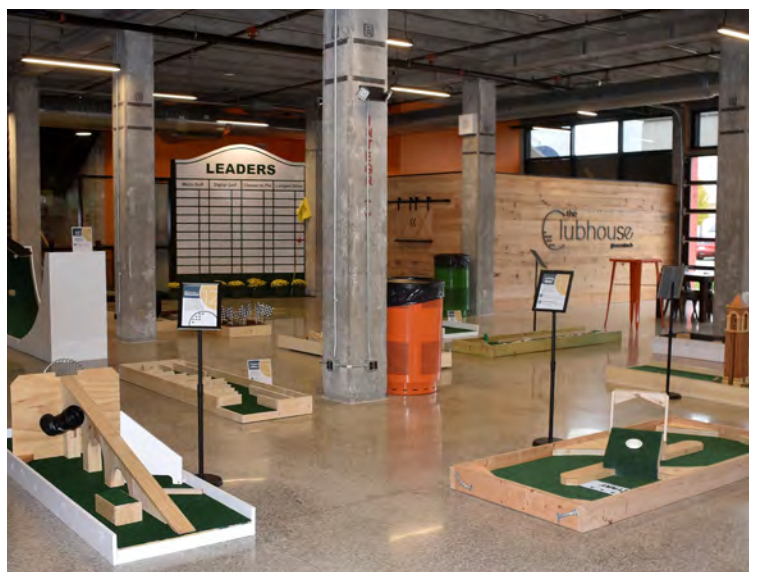
Though the community got a brief sneak peek during Ironman weekend, Unger’s brainchild – The Clubhouse at Accutech - is still in a fetal stage.

A new business set to open in the second quarter of next year, it encompasses all 10,000 square feet of the ground floor. Divided into thirds, The Clubhouse will be one-third full-service restaurant, one-third high-end digital golf simulators, and one-third micro golf, featuring miniature, putt-putt-style holes designed and built by Accutech staff.

“We’re really trying to create a space where you can enjoy great food, have some fun, and enjoy the great atmosphere downtown. Our place has lots of windows and we’ll have outdoor seating. Our goal



The Clubhouse @accutech has a golf theme.



is to really give people another great reason to come downtown,” Unger said.

Though still months from opening its doors, The Clubhouse at Accutech hosted a brief sneak peek during early October’s Ironman weekend. Unger said Accutech employees and volunteers got all the games up and running for a four-hour walk-through and test drive.

“That was kind of our soft launch,” Unger laughed. “We got some really great feedback, and it was a big

success from that perspective. We had a lot of locals asking questions, getting excited, spreading the word. For us, it’s all geared toward our philanthropic vision of creating jobs, improving the quality of life, and instilling pride in our city.”

Founded in 1987, Accutech provides innovative wealth management solutions through market-leading software and operations services, providing clients with operations specialists, software functionality, software support, daily processing, and more.

Visitors Bureau Relocates Downtown

A major uptick in personal visits and merchandise sales at the newly relocated Muncie-Delaware County Visitors Bureau has everyone – including Interim Executive Director Dale Basham – smiling.

Once located on Muncie’s south side, the Visitors Bureau has since moved to 421 S. Walnut St., Suite 100 – directly across from Canan Commons – a downtown hub of activity.

“The location change has been everything,” Basham, who was hired in June, told Alliance. “we hear and tell stories every day about visitors that didn’t get the same kind of attention before. I’m a people person. I enjoy meeting and greeting people, taking pictures, and gathering stories. It’s amazing what you can learn about your own hometown when you listen to people visiting from outside.”

Basham said the retirement of the Visitors Bureau’s former executive director spurred the location change, and eyed as a fresh start in a new, more centrally-located space. Once housed in its own building, the welcoming center now has a storefront. But, as Basham said, location is everything.



“Our employees are upbeat and forward thinking,” he said. “We have so many more customers! We’ve taken on a more aggressive social media campaign, and that’s helping drive a lot more foot traffic to us. Our retail sales show it. It’s amazing how much action we have in downtown Muncie. It’s exciting for me to have this opportunity to shine a spotlight on Muncie!”

The Visitors Bureau sells a variety of Muncie-related souvenirs and memorabilia, including Garfield and Bob Ross Experience items.

For more information, visit www.visitmuncie.org.



Muncie Delaware County Visitors Bureau interim executive director Dale Basham is shown with a certain famous cat at the Visitors Bureau on South Walnut Street in Muncie.



The Muncie Delaware County Visitors Bureau relocated to 421 S. Walnut Street.

Albany Eateries, Wedding Venue Bring Visitors

Albany sits in the northeast corner of Delaware County, its eastern portion inching into Randolph County's northwestern corner. State Road 28 shoots through the town's southern half and State Road 67 splits off toward Jay County and Portland.

In its earliest years since its founding in 1833, Albany didn't have much of a commercial base. But, it was the second largest town next to Muncie in Delaware County.

In the late 1800s, however, an Ohio glass company, having exhausted its natural gas supply in the Buckeye State, relocated its operation to Albany. The Model Flint Glass Company produced a variety of tableware before closing down around 1902.

A few years after that, a short-lived car manufacturing business was initiated. From 1907-1908, the Albany Runabout, a small passenger car, was produced there.

Today, there still isn't much industry. Yet, there are brilliant flashes of entrepreneurship that help invigorate the community. Two eateries are of particular note.

Pete's Bar & Grill (formerly Pete's Duck Inn), 721 W. Walnut St. (S.R. 67), has a great reputation for excellent food and a popular catering operation. At first, Pete's menu might seem pretty basic. But, a further stroll reveals a bevy of interesting entrees. Filet Mignon, Grilled Maple Bacon Salmon, barbecue and a short roster of good steaks





compliment typical offerings like burgers, chicken strips, and salads.

Just down the street, Dairy Dream, 805 W. Walnut St., is a decades-old Albany staple, family-owned since 1953. Almost every small town has a spot like Dairy Dream, serving ice cream, sandwiches, hot dogs and a plethora of other treats.

“We specialize in a wide variety of ice cream treats and food items, including our famous secret recipe Sloppy Joes, Cotton Candy Mt. Dew, Pig’s Dinners, and in-house smoked pulled pork sandwiches,” the Dairy Dream website says. “Other favorites include our mouth-watering homemade root beer, ice cream blitzes, and so much more.”

Dairy Dream’s food and beverages won top honors at Taste of Muncie in the mid-2000s.

On Albany’s far southeast side, is a recent addition to the community, The Wedding Factory. Launched by a wife-and-husband team with dreams of having their own wedding venue, The Wedding Factory took root in the old McCormick Brothers factory building – a revitalization of an aging structure in a quiet part of town.

The large facility – completely overhauled with elegance in mind, can be rented in parts or as a whole. The year-round venue features an elevator, bride and groom suites, sound system, dance floors, a kids’ area, modern bathrooms, and ample parking.





Giant Splash Pad, New Municipal Building, Playground Underscore Daleville Progress

White River makes up Daleville's northwestern border and a trio of roadways slice through the town's center. Situated in the far southwestern corner of the county, Daleville carries the river on its shoulders and ushers traffic through its heart.

Major arteries are pathways to health for living, breathing things like people and towns. Such an influx of nutrients and commerce often leads to growth. Aside from attracting industrial enterprises with an eye for the convenience of I-69 and S.R. 67, Daleville has some eye-catching recreational opportunities for both residents and non-residents.

Canoe Country on White River has been serving outdoors enthusiasts for years, launching water-bound explorers from its riverside enclave, then retrieving the paddlers downstream hours later. The canoe outfitter has made a splash in Daleville

for years. But, it's nothing like the town's most recent deluge of fun.

The community's Town Hall Park, 8019 S. Walnut St., features a sprawling children's splash pad – said to be the largest such facility in central Indiana. Opened in 2017, the park cost \$4.2 million and includes two dry playgrounds, the splash pad (free and open to anyone), restrooms, concessions, shade canopies, storm water planters, a paved walking trail that follows a stream, and new parking areas. Three thousand people can fit in the accompanying performance pavilion and event area where concerts, a farmers market, and movies take place.

Other changes aimed at streamlining, updating and beautifying central Daleville are also underway. Resurfacing of S.R. 32 between I-69

and Walnut Street was recently completed, according to Town Council President Adam Jones.

The 32/Walnut St. intersection, of which the town owns three corners, is currently the subject of much activity. Nearing completion is the town's new administrative/police building, a 16,000-square-foot, \$4 million project.

Jones said the town will also have a couple of solar arrays – one on top of the new building and another near the water plant – to offset the town's utility costs.

"We've taken our American Rescue Plan funding and applied it to some of our recurring expenses, instead of one-time purchases," Jones told Alliance.



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Home of the Indiana Gas Boom, Eaton Maintains Pride in Its Public Library and the Enduring Mississinewa River

Eaton started with a boom, rather than a bang.

The small town northeast of Muncie incorporated in 1873, and just three years later a discovery of natural gas there triggered the Indiana Gas Boom. Plentiful natural gas fueled economic vitality for years, drawing people like the Ball brothers, among others, who helped light the fires of local industry.

Yes, tiny Eaton is where it all got started. But the gas discovery's effects on the community were marginal at best. Skip ahead 20 years and the gas boom's blue flames had waned.

Eaton, however, endured, prospering little by little over the years, putting down strong roots on the banks of the Mississinewa River.

The river's source is not far to the east, in Darke County, Ohio, where it springs, rather unceremoniously, from farm drainage ditches. From there White river flows westward, through Randolph and Delaware counties, eventually dumping into the Wabash River, whose source, interestingly, is just two miles away from the Mississinewa's source.

Over the years, a number of rustic, picturesque bridges have spanned the river at Eaton. Riverside parks and other recreational have come and gone, but the river remains a good fishery and wildlife area.

A variety of mills populated the Mississinewa's banks over the years. The first mill was set up for corn only, but was later expanded to include wheat. Another mill produced linseed oil in large enough quantities to require shipping downstream to Peru.

In town, Eaton Public Library is a welcoming

amenity for residents. In fact, anyone living in East Central Indiana can use the library, a nonprofit organization which operates on limited funding, donations and volunteer help. Open seven days a week with a variety of membership packages, the library has an active Facebook page and has a summer reading program for children in grades K-5. The library's online catalog can be found at www.eaton.biblionix.com/catalog/.

Eaton's library had a number of temporary homes over the years, the most recent being in rooms at Eaton American Legion. In 1995, library supporters conducted a fundraising campaign to buy a lot on

Harris Street where a stand-alone library could be built.

More fundraising led to the construction of Eaton's first stand-alone library building at 100 W. Harris St., expanding its usable area from 150 square feet to 2,800 square feet. The new facility opened in 2001.

According to a timeline of the Eaton library's history, a grant from the Build Indiana Fund and monies from the Herbert Hamilton estate, a portion of which was disbursed through the Community Foundation of Muncie-Delaware County, funded construction of the new facility and paid for furnishings and books. Additional donations paid for computers for patrons to use and collection management/circulation software. Engraved bricks, sold as a fundraiser and placed along the library's front sidewalk, contributed to fundraising efforts.



Photo courtesy Minnetrista Heritage Collection



Barking Cow Ice Cream, Lions Club Fairgrounds, Greenway Instill Lots of Family Fun at Gaston

Early on, Gaston was known as New Corner. Then people called it Snag Town for a while. In the late 1800s the community's residents signed a petition and sent it to Washington, D.C.; they wanted to change the town's name to Gas Center. The paperwork apparently languished in the Capitol, and during that time yet another name was proposed: Gaston.

The new name coincided with the installation of the town's first railroad spur.

A small outpost of less than a thousand people in Delaware County's northwest corner, Gaston is home to a popular community gathering spot, The Barking Cow, an ice cream shop with a world of whimsical flavors. Among the frozen delicacies are Butter Beer, Blueberry Sugar Cream Pie, Dirty Banana, Everything Reese, Cinnamon Toast, and Peanut Butter Fluff, to name just a few.

The Barking Cow has expanded to Muncie, as well, with a new location 118 S. Walnut St. serving up the same great flavors, plus restaurant food.

Gaston is also home to a fairgrounds area on

which the Gaston Lions Club hosts an annual August carnival. Ag Days is another Lions Club events that sees truck pulls, classic cars, and tractor shows. A fundraising golf outing accompanies the event.

The northernmost point of continuous paved Cardinal Greenway trail is located at Gaston. A trailhead with an open-air shelter and parking is located at South Broad Street.





Prairie Creek Reservoir

Selma's Nearby Natural Areas Some of Delaware County's Finest

Due east of Muncie, perched on S.R. 32 East, is the small hamlet of Selma, another of Delaware County incorporated towns containing less than a thousand people.

An annual tradition in this tiny burg is the Selma Lions Club's annual Bluebird Days festival. Homemade meals, live music, a queen contest, carnival rides and a host of other events and activities await residents at this annual end-of-summer extravaganza.

South of town lies a mecca for lovers of water, sun, nature, and fun. Prairie Creek Reservoir offers Selma residents a nearby respite from our hectic world.

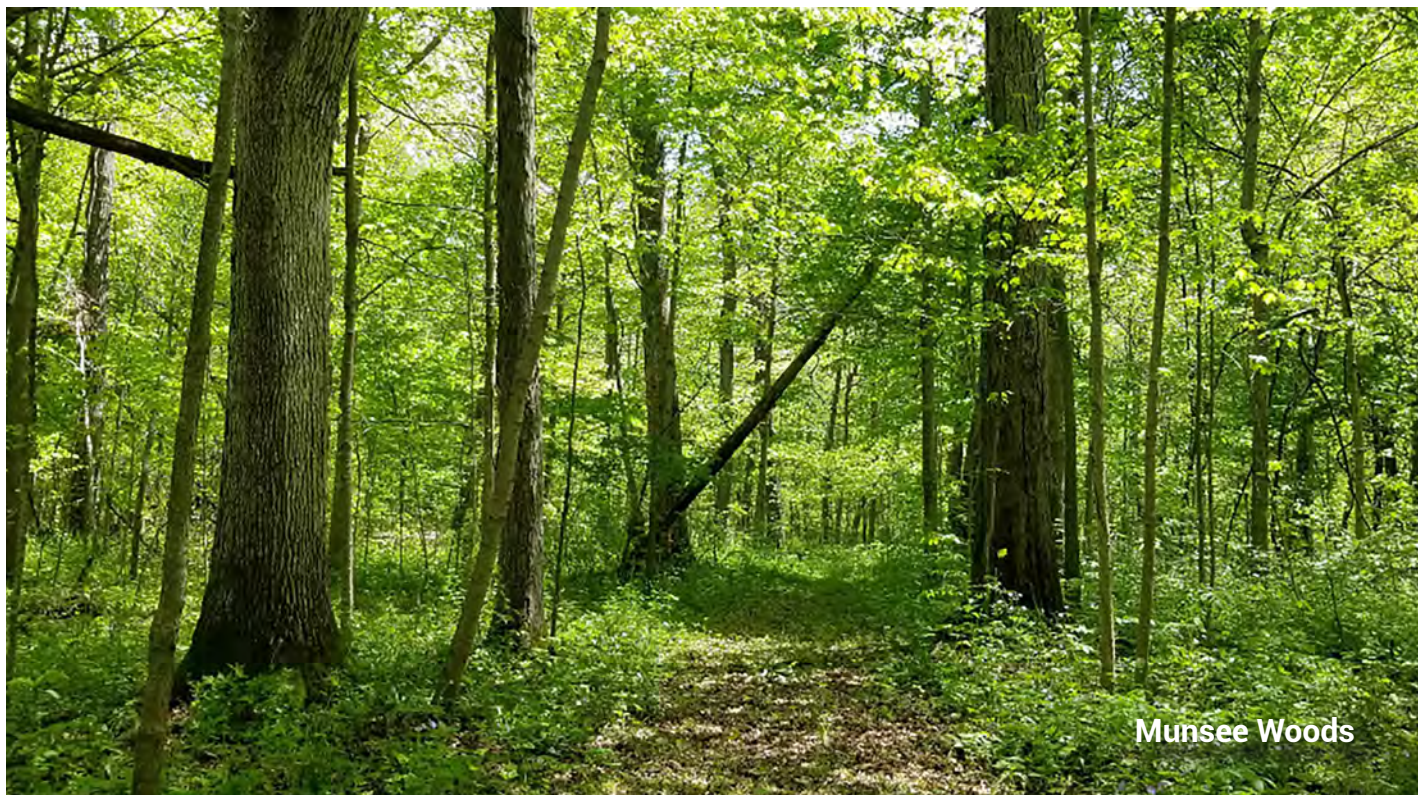
The reservoir and park area boasts 3.3 miles of aquatic recreation and more than 750 land acres of natural landscape.

"We offer numerous activities for you, friends and family to enjoy," the City of Muncie, which owns the reservoir, says on its website. "Some of the wide array of activities we offer include boating,

swimming, fishing, camping, hiking/biking trails, ATV trails, and horseback riding trails. Prairie Creek also hosts several spectacular events, such as triathlons, concerts, festivals, and family reunions. We have rentable shelters and overnight cabins."

Just west of the reservoir is another outdoor recreation opportunity for Selma residents. Munsee Woods, formerly known as Camp Munsee, offers 47 acres of intact upland forest. Though closed to the public for much of the year, special visitation arrangements can be made.

The purpose of restricting public access is to give the area more time to return to its natural state. For nearly 70 years Camp Munsee served as a camp for girls interested in nature. It was equipped for overnight stays and had an abundance of amenities aimed at teaching outdoor skills. The camp's remnants have all been removed. Red-Tail Land Conservancy, which owns and manages the property, hopes limited visitation will help return the area to its natural state.



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A Plan Taking Shape

Civic Green, The Oliver Building Major Components of Yorktown's Ambitious Downtown Redevelopment Plan

Oliver Hampton Smith would surely be proud.

Looking down on Yorktown, the community platted by the Indiana statesman and attorney back in 1837, Smith might be surprised at its progress.

Award-winning schools, clean parks and streets, and viable jobs have attracted hundreds of families and others looking to live and work in such a place.

Town Manager Pete Olson, a leader who oozes enthusiasm for the community he serves, said the formula for such positive growth is very basic – enhance the quality of life for Yorktown residents while stimulating economic vitality.

A big part of the town's downtown redevelopment plan hinges on that simple concept.

Civic Green, a newly constructed town park, is a key ingredient in downtown revitalization. According to Olson, the newly opened town park, located just west of Yorktown Town Hall, is but one piece of a puzzle that, when completed, will create a vibrant picture of economic vitality and community "aggregation."

Olson uses the world aggregation intentionally, because Yorktown leaders aren't seeking a place for mere congregation. They want aggregation – a mixing of clusters, of generations and backgrounds – not just a gathering.

Civic Green, with its small splash pad, covered pavilions and live concert area, hopes to be the community focal point to which other amenities are added. Some, like adjacent Morrow's Meadow – a sprawling, wooded green space on White River's banks, are already present. Others, like the eminent Oliver apartment building, are still in the works.

Among many other feathers in its cap, Yorktown last year attracted a \$6 million commercial investment from Rebar Development to build and operate, in a public/private partnership, The Oliver, a three-story mixed-use structure near the Civic Green.

Rooted in a location-specific TIF district that benefits both Rebar and Yorktown, The Oliver, named for Oliver Hampton Smith, should be completed by year's end.

"Located across the newly completed Civic Green from Yorktown Town Hall, The Oliver overlooks Morrow's Meadow and reconstructed Canal Street," Rebar's website says. "The project includes 26 modern apartment homes on the top two floors and more than 8,000 square feet of commercial and amenity space on the first floor. Plans for the development include a restaurant with outdoor seating, unique, all-inclusive retail and office studios,

(continued on page 22)



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and a surface parking lot for residents and tenants.”

The Oliver and Civic Green help check a lot of boxes on the city’s ambitious, visionary downtown redevelopment plan. Yorktown hopes ventures like The Oliver will help revitalize the downtown area by presenting residents with modern housing coupled with retail goods and services, plus the community space and activity area offered by Civic Green, Morrow’s Meadow, and local schools.

“When we started the whole process, we were doing a lot of visioning,” said Yorktown Town Manager Pete Olson. “We wanted a social and economic hub. If we did that, we felt (downtown) could become a multi-generational area because of its proximity to Yorktown schools. We wanted to create a congregational/aggregational point and the goal is to foster the social part of it in hopes that it becomes an economic hub.”

Olson gave an example of how things might work when all the puzzle pieces are in place. He said over the summer, Yorktown struck a deal with the Fort Wayne Children’s Museum to host short science presentations for children on Thursday mornings at Civic Green.

Next year, he explained, when The Oliver is complete, kids and their parents who attend such

presentations will be able to maybe get ice cream afterward, or have lunch with grandma and grandpa at a restaurant inside the new building.

“Everyone’s happy when there’s a place where kids are laughing and smiling,” Olson told Alliance. “People want to hang around. And that’s what we’re aiming for – a place for people to socialize and help create economic vitality.”

In the end, he said, that’s what Yorktown leaders want – economic vitality that betters local quality of life.

“We don’t view quality of life and economic development differently,” Olson explained. “It has to enhance quality of life for it to be good economic development. We want to be able to look at our citizens and say we’ve made quality of life a key component, a primary ingredient. Our parks, our trails, this downtown area ... all of this is very important to have - not just for the businesses to enjoy, but for the average citizen to enjoy.”

The growing activity surrounding downtown could, Olson speculated, lead to additional economic development and the realization of downtown Yorktown as a bonafide economic hub.

To learn more, visit www.yorktownindiana.org or www.rebardev.com.

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HIDDEN *Gems*

Albany Glass Museum Features Hundreds of Locally Made Model Flint Pieces

The Indiana Gas Boom of 1893 was a major 19th century economic event. Towns all over East Central Indiana exploded with residential and commercial growth. Albany was among them.

But at that same time, natural gas deposits in nearby Ohio were fading. Two glass companies - one in Findlay, Ohio, and another in nearby North Baltimore, Ohio, were idling workers and watching Indiana's boom closely.

Just as Albany was discovering its vast, subterranean gas reserves, Findlay's Model Flint Glass Company and North Baltimore Bottle Company decided to relocate their operations,

choosing the tiny town of 500 residents north of Muncie.

Eventually, three glass companies would call Albany home for a short time. Indiana's gas boom fizzled a few years later, claiming all three manufacturers, which by 1903 had quadrupled Albany's size.

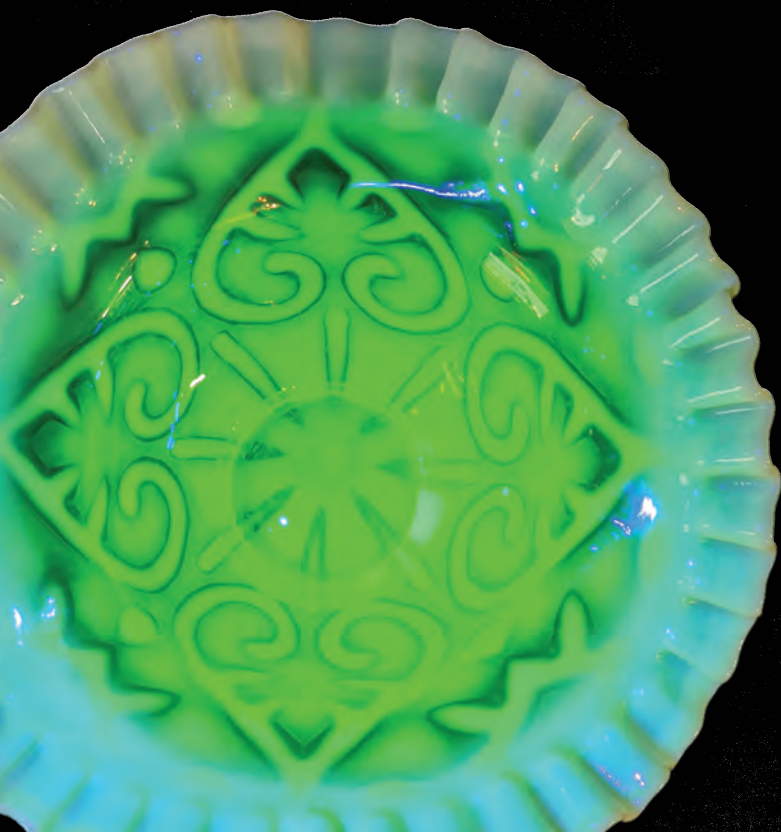
Yet, like with any explosion of commerce, when the boom has gone silent there remains a residue of what once was. In Albany, the gas/glass boom's colorful, sparkling artifacts are housed in the Albany Glass Museum, in the back of the Albany Community Library.

Opened in 2018, the museum just celebrated its three-year anniversary. According to Ryan Gill, a museum board member and volunteer, the project got started when residents Ernest and Sue (Wooters) Coleman donated their 500-piece Albany Glass collection to the library.

Library officials and others then decided to convert storage space in the back of the building into a museum. Gill said the group worked with Delaware County Commissioners and got a grant from the George and Frances Ball Foundation, which financed renovations and 26 glass display cases in which the collection could be housed.

A spate of fundraising over the last few years guaranteed the purchase of seven more display cases that were added at the end of September.

Gill said the term Albany Glass is a catch-all phrase that encompasses any glass or glassware



made in Albany between 1893 and 1903. North Baltimore Bottle Company and Buckeye Window Glass did operate factories in Albany, and examples of their work are in the collection. However, it's Model Flint's popular pressed glass kitchenware that makes up the bulk of the museum's holdings.

According to Gill, the Albany Glass Museum has about 1,200 pieces in all. The Colemans' 500 pieces were combined with about 450-500 more donated by Gill and two other volunteers, who are all collectors. More collectible glass has been donated, while ongoing fundraisers pay for purchases of rare and hard-to-find pieces.

Additionally, the museum works with other glass museums to bring interesting and unusual pieces to town. Gill said the Dunkirk Glass Museum has loaned a few pieces, and the Museum of American Glass in West Virginia has loaned three pieces.

The Albany Glass Museum operates under the nonprofit status of the Albany Community Library. Currently, the museum has no sign, but a key donation looks to change that soon. Gill said a local family donated one of the glass basketball boards from the old Albany High School. The museum plans to refurbish the backboard and repurpose it for a museum sign, and they'll use a clever fundraiser to do it.

According to Gill, the museum is selling display case sponsorships to help fund projects like the

new sign and ongoing glass purchases. He said families can sponsor cases or use the sponsorships to commemorate loved ones who might've been Albany Glass collectors.

The Albany Glass Museum, 105 S. Broadway St., is open Saturdays and Sundays, and by appointment. To learn more about the museum or its fundraisers, visit the museum's Facebook page, or email Gill at albanypride@live.com. To see a catalog of items in the museum's collection, visit www.modelflint.com.



HIDDEN

GO

Gems

***Muncie Arts & Culture Council's
Box! Box! Program Has Seen
Local Artists Paint Nearly All of
Muncie's Traffic Light Control Boxes***

Green Means Go





Elements of urban environments can sometimes be unsightly. Power line stanchions, guardrails, traffic signals and overhead cables all add to an almost overwhelming sense of spartan industrialization at so many urban intersections. So ubiquitous are these austere, yet necessary, mechanisms that many of us have become numb to their stark appearance.

But, the Muncie Arts & Culture Council (MACC), along with artists young and old in Delaware County, are working to change all that. MACC's Box! Box! project, currently winding up its fourth year, is taking the colors of traffic intersections way beyond merely green, red and yellow.

Traffic signal control boxes appear at intersections where stoplights are present. Inside the box is an apparatus that establishes the traffic lights' timing, thereby regulating traffic flow. Most of the time these metal cases appear as nondescript, muted-gray steel boxes that, up until recently, were lucky to collect even a little bit of graffiti.

"Across the United States, communities are painting traffic signal control boxes to develop attractive, vibrant places that reflect the culture of the area and engage the community with the public environment,"

the MACC website says. "Muncie Arts & Culture Council brings this exciting and popular movement to our fair city with Box! Box!, a project to encourage bold designs and promote engagement and interaction between local artists and the wider community."

Box! Box! started in 2018. Between 2018 and 2019, about 18 boxes were painted by several different artists, enlivening street corners with bursts of color depicting interesting themes. The program was popular to start with, but when Covid hit in 2020, enthusiasm among artists and donors skyrocketed. Last year saw 31 traffic boxes painted, and donations were plentiful.

This year, 21 more boring, gray traffic boxes were transformed into vibrant community artworks, making a total of 70 newly decorated public displays that help enrich residents' lives and inject color and culture into otherwise drab areas.

The program started with funds from an arts grant acquired by the City of Muncie. Now, the Sherman and Marjorie Zeigler Foundation has helped underwrite the program with a matching grant scenario that puts MACC in a good fundraising position. Additional funds come from the Indiana Arts Commission and other private donors.



According to MACC Executive Director Erin Williams, not every artist or aspiring artist gets to paint a box. In establishing an equitable process for allocating boxes, of which there are a limited number, the nonprofit organization has developed a multi-part application process, which includes a sampling of a given artist's previous artwork; a developed concept for the box design, artist biography, and an essay portion that describes why the artist wants to paint a box in the first place.

All ages of artists, including those under 18, can apply for a box. Likewise, student groups with an adult sponsor can also apply.

"We look for a wide range of different demographics, so that we can make sure that we do have kids having a voice in their community, as well as people who are older, as well as people who are disabled," MACC Executive Director Erin Williams told the Star-Press recently.

The program costs artists nothing, but MACC does provide them with some safety gear, since they're often doing their work at busy traffic intersections. Day-glo yellow vests, pedestrian signs, and traffic cones help alert motorists to artists' presence. MACC also provides artist stipends to help offset their time commitments. Large boxes bring \$250, while smaller ones bring \$150. MACC also helps underwrite the cost of an artist's materials, with amounts depending on box size.

"It's really important for us that anyone participating in public art for the community should be compensated," Williams told Alliance. "We work with the city, the county – we have all our permits. We're completely up front. We want to be able to pay artists for their work and pay for their supplies. We do as much as we can to make sure this is entirely a community-based project."



While there are only two box sizes, the design concepts artists propose are very diverse. There are floral themes and messages like “Stay Creative!” and “Keep Muncie Weird.” Animals make up a fair share of box designs, as do abstract artwork and paintings depicting food. While they’re all radically different from one another, they all share a common characteristic: bold colors and clean lines.

In her project statement (a requirement of the Box! Box! Application), Sarah Shaffer summarized her box design concept.

“It features a field of peony flowers with a cardinal flying through the air,” Shaffer, who has since become Program Coordinator at MACC, said on the Council’s website. “Beyond being beautiful, the peony is Indiana’s state flower. While creating a public art piece for Muncie, it is important to include notes of Indiana. The cardinal represents both Indiana and Ball State, visually alluding to the new slogan, ‘We Fly’. The subjects are expressively painted in bright, vibrant colors.”

Shaffer’s design is located on a traffic signal box at the intersection of Riverside and Tillotson.

To learn more about Box! Box!, visit www.munciearts.org.



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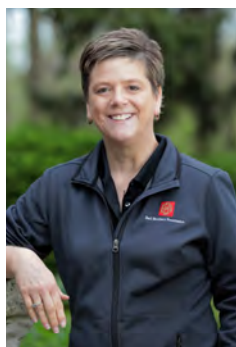
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*2019 numbers provided due to the pandemic



Homeward Found

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



Donna Munchel



Muncie Central
High School
Class of '93

Age: 53

Company or Organization & Title: Ball Brothers Foundation – Program Officer & Grants Manager

Hometown: Muncie, IN

High School/Year Graduated: Muncie Central High School, 1986

Extracurricular Activities/Class Officer: Honor Society, Spanish Club

College Attended, Year Graduated: Ball State University, 1993

Family Members: Husband – Chris Munchel, Children – Aaron McWhirt, Jaylee McWhirt & Cole Munchel

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

A Being a first-generation college graduate, I didn't really think much about leaving. Ball State was in my back yard and that's just where I was expected to go. Once there, I realized how fortunate we are to have it in our community. After graduation, I was able to secure employment that allowed me to continually grow and advance my career while staying close to family and friends.

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 My favorite teacher was probably Vicki Fisher. I was in her class for fifth grade at Lincoln Elementary and then sixth grade at Southview. She was always very kind and encouraging. She believed in her students and had great expectations for them. I didn't realize it at the time but being from the south side of town wasn't always looked upon as acceptable. She never treated us with anything but respect. In the back of my mind, even when things weren't always easy, I wanted to finish college and make her proud.

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

A Muncie schools provided me with a wonderful foundation that set me up for the success I have been able to achieve. When I had children and moved out to the county, I found that the smaller schools offered the same opportunities for them. We are fortunate in our community to have some of the finest schools around and teachers that truly care about our children and their futures. If we are supportive of them they will give their all to see that our children succeed.

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

A For a community of our size, we are very fortunate to have a wide variety of recreational opportunities available. If you are interested in outdoor recreation, the Cardinal Greenway, White River Greenway, and Prairie Creek offer some of the best trails and activities around. Minnetrista, Muncie Civic Theatre, Muncie Symphony, and Cornerstone Center for the Arts provide arts and culture options for all ages and there are many local sports clubs and teams to join or cheer for.

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

A I've been in this community for many ups and downs. Right now is probably the most exciting time that I can recall. Hard work is finally starting to pay off. A bustling downtown area, new companies moving to town, small businesses thriving, quality schools, and neighborhoods that are rebounding are all things that we can be proud of.

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 |



Qiana (O'Neal) Clemens



Muncie Central
High School
Class of '93

Age: 42

Company or Organization & Title: Ivy Tech Foundation Muncie-Henry County, Executive Director of Resource Development

Hometown: Muncie, IN

High School/Year Graduated: 1997

Extracurricular Activities/Class Officer: Cheerleading, Volleyball, Sr. Economics Class President, Spanish Club, Latin Club

College Attended, Year Graduated: Oral Roberts University/Ball State University '03, Indiana Wesleyan University, MA, 2020

Family Members: Husband – Duane L. Clemens, Sr. 44; Son – DarShawn S. Barnes, 20; Son – Duane L. Clemens Jr. 23

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

A The long and short of it is simple: I love Muncie! Some days I wish I could pick it up and move the whole city to the beach, but it's a great place to live, work, and raise a family. We have our challenges, but overall, this community always comes together to support one another. I love the closeness and the safety of my community. I love knowing my neighbors. I love that most of my neighbors not only know me, but know my parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents.

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 have been blessed to have some of the most amazing teachers throughout my years. My grandparents were educators and so I grew up with some of my favorites at my disposal at all times. But outside of Nana and Papa, I will say I loved all my teachers at Mitchell Elementary. But Mrs. Vicki Fisher, my third grade teacher at Mitchell, made an impression on me. She invited us to her home for hot chocolate and marshmallows. Who does that? I also was very fond of my freshman computer class and cheerleading sponsor Mrs. Kay Rankin. She was and still is amazingly supportive.

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

A Muncie Community Schools offer a first-rate education. I am super proud of the fact that students can graduate from high school with an associate's degree from Ivy Tech Community College! There are so many opportunities for our students right here at home. I have dedicated much of my career to youth development work and education, from my days of founding the Black Achievers program at the YMCA to my current role here at Ivy Tech Community College, I've always wanted to give young people, especially those young people of color and those who are marginalized.

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

A I love what is happening in Muncie, especially downtown. I love to walk down Walnut and see all the businesses returning to downtown and the fantastic upgrades to that area. I think it is great that the Muncie Visitor's Bureau is now

downtown. I'm happy to see the go-kart track, (now Victory Laps) reopened. We love visiting local restaurants with live music like Elm Street, Savages, and the Guardian. We visit our beautiful parks often. I absolutely love the Cardinal Greenway!

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

A There used to be a commercial a long time ago that said, "Muncie... America's Hometown!" I really know that to be true. While it may lack the bright lights and big city vibe of places like Indy, we have all we need ... each other. I believe in Muncie. Muncie is home.

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 |



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