Gary Chamber of Commerce

LIFELINE

"Connecting Businesses to Customers"

Please visit us @www.garychamber.com and catch a lifeline...

Volume 23, Issue 2
May 2026

WORLD CIVILITY DAY 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Congressman Frank J. Mrvan

What a wonderful sample size of the seven (7) communities and people who proudly came out in the name of Civility. This picture represents a beautiful mosaic of Northwest Indiana.

In all cases youth is served as Brandon Walker a senior honor student from Munster High School delivered the welcome and opening address to the audience.

Congressman Mrvan greeting attendees.

Chuck Hughes presents the Association of Retired Members of the Indiana General Assembly 2025-2026 Civility Award to Sen. Mark Spencer.

Awards where the main topic of World Civility Day dinner.

(left) Chamber President Chuck Hughes and *(right)* Denise Dillard were presented the Distinguished Hoosier Award from Senator Mark Spencer.

Denise Dillard

Marcella Gregory

Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas

World Civility Awards were also given out to Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas who was the first top city official to approach us about being intrinsically involved with World Civility Day. The Town of Merrillville, Gary City Councilwoman Linda Barnes-Caldwell, Town of Munster, City of East Chicago, City of Hammond, and City of Whiting were also honored.

This is the visual of Northwest Indiana when we work together.

Community Civility Counts.

Gary Chamber of Commerce

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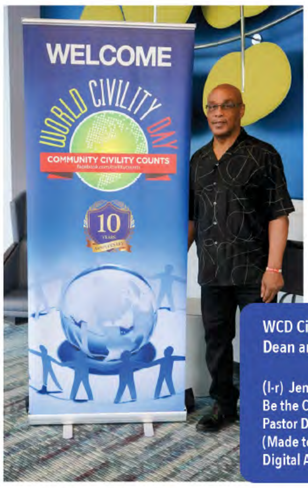
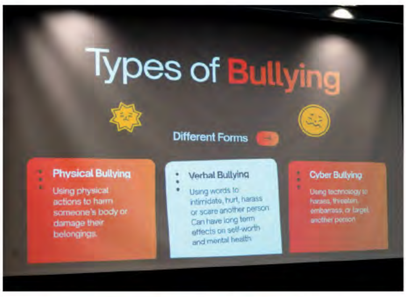
WCD CIVILITY DAY WORKSHOPS HELD AT THE DEAN AND BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER



Jennifer Walter -



WCD Civility Workshops held at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center.

(l-r) Jennifer Walton - "Rise above Bulling: Be the Change"
Pastor Dennis Walton - "Born to Give" (Made to Live); Darrell Riddell - "Civility in the Digital Age";

Pastor Dennis Walton

Chuck & Darrell Riddell

Pastor Dennis Walton
"Born to Give" (Made to Live)

Lynn Budzielek, Lynicia Gransburyl
from Methodist Hospitals
"Civility Starts In The Home With You"

Schools in attendance:
West Side Leadership Academy; Thea Bowman Leadership Academy; (students & adults).

Gary Chamber's January 2026 Luncheon

" Fireside Chat" with the Lake County Councilmen (l-r Kyle Allen, Jerry Tippy, Michael Repay), who were instrumental in voting for the City of Gary to receive the convention center.

What's Up Chuck?

A special thanks to the communities that had their leadership attend the World Civility Day and pledge to take the theme of kindness, love and respect back to their cities and towns.

THE GARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Presents
BANKING STRATEGIES
with
DAVID FLICK
Managing Director and Senior Investment Strategist at Bank of America Private Bank
Monday, May 11, 2026
@12:00 Noon | $25 per person
The Chateau Banquets
530 W. 61st Avenue | Merrillville, IN

The Chateau Banquet Hall recently held a grand re-opening and ribbon-cutting of its newly renovated banquet facility. The event featured a ribbon-cutting and lunch, with vendors showcasing event services for weddings, receptions, and special events. Located at 530 W. 61st Avenue, Merrillville, call (219) 887-4000 to book your upcoming special event. Visit: www.chateaubanquets.com.

Gary Chamber of Commerce Board member **Cynthia Roberts,** interim executive vice chancellor for academic affairs at **Indiana University Northwest,** is pictured on the cover of the April/May 2026 issue of Northwest Indiana Business Magazine. The issue features Northwest Indiana Business Magazine's 2026 Best of Business winners. Other Chamber members listed as receiving awards included: Banking; **Centier Bank, Notre Dame** FCU; Internet Providers: **MTA/Midwest Telecom of America;** Education: **Purdue University Northwest;** and Entertainment: **Hard Rock Casino Northern Indiana.**

Building Pathways - Changing Lives is what **MET Construction, LLC** of Indianapolis, Indiana, is doing. Now enrolling and accepting referrals for Workforce Training & Career Pathways in Construction for youth and adults. For additional information, call 317-694-2519 or 860-268-7572, or email tonia.miller@metconstructionllc.com.

Safe Storage offers clean & well-maintained, gated access, and secure drive-up storage designed for you. Located at 950 Old Hobart Road, Lake Station, Indiana. For rental information, contact (219) 946-6804 or safestoragein.com.

Comcast Business has launched **Total Solutions Advantage,** a new suite of simplified, all-in-one technology plans that combine high-speed connectivity and built-in cybersecurity into a predictable monthly price starting at $60/month. Small business owners can explore Total Solutions Advantage and check local availability at comcastbusiness.com/small-business.

Tiny's Coffee Bar, 555 S. Lake St., Gary, will host "Trivia Nights with Benny" every other Thursday night into September. Enjoy a summer of awesome nights filled with fun and brain teasers. Gather your friends and bring your A-game. He'll theme every night for popular topics for you to enjoy. Table service is provided for ordering food, cocktails, beer, wine, or espresso drinks. Full summer line-up call: (219) 939-0414.

HealthVisions Midwest, located at 2914 Highway Ave, Highland, IN, has a new name. It will now be known as Healthways Alliance. HealthVisions Midwest is a faith-based organization that advocates for the underserved, develops and facilitates partnerships, and addresses systemic community health disparities. For information on services offered, call (219) 844-2698 or contact Natali at Nalvarez@hvusa.org.

May is Small Business Month. Chase Bank community manager, Tammi Davis, is partnering with business organizations to provide a lineup of free "Financial Health Workshops " to help businesses grow and thrive. Individuals can also learn how to set goals, build a budget, improve their credit, and manage debt. Email Tammi at: tammi.davis@chase.com for the May lineup or call the Gary Chamber (219) 885-7407.

May 7, 2026 - Join the IU Northwest School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) for an informative session on AI in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors in NWI, 8:30 am - 10:00 am, IUN Library 105, 3400 Broadway, Gary. RSVP is required to eszarlet@iu.edu or **219-980-6695.** A light breakfast is included.

May 16, 2025 – Don't Stare, Care Exceptional Ability Walk, a 2 Mile Walk presented by **Be Exceptional Support Together (B.E.S.T.).** A day of fun and inclusion, 9:30 am at Hidde Lake Park, 6355 Broadway, Merrillville, IN. For additional information and to register, visit www.bestsupport.org or contact Seryna Smith at (219) 281-2405.

May 19, 2026 - The Urban League of Northwest Indiana is hosting its 2026 Leadership Symposium and Annual Leadership Awards Luncheon, 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM at Purdue University Northwest, Alumni Hall. Business and community leaders, HR professionals, educators, and nonprofit partners will come together to share ideas, strengthen partnerships, and explore strategies that move Northwest Indiana forward. For additional information, see attached flyers or call (219) 887-9621

May 20, 2026 - The Times Media Company and IN Business Magazine to host Business & Industry Hall of Fame 2026. 11:30 am, Avalon Manor, Merrillville. Special guest speaker: Mike Braun, Governor of Indiana, and special presentation by U.S. Steel. $40 pp, purchase tickets at go.nwi.com/halloffametickets, or call C. Kimmel at (219) 852-3035.

May 20, 2026 – HealthLinc East Chicago is hosting a "Mental Health Awareness" event at the East Chicago Salvation Army, 513 W. Chicago Avenue, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Additional information: contact Nichelle at (888) 580-1060 ext. 5730, or ncorley@healthlincchc.org.

May 23, 2026 - The Gary Historical and Cultural Society celebrates its 50th year of service to Gary and the surrounding communities. The theme of this event is the Harlem Renaissance, celebrating Dolly Millender's legacy. This historic event will take place at the Chateau Banquet Hall, 530 W. 61st Ave., Merrillville, IN, from 6 pm to 10 pm. Tickets can be purchased through: Zelle – (219) 680-7215, PayPal – ghcsin@yahoo.com, or Checks – GHCS, PO Box 64603, Gary, IN 46401

June 16, 2026 – The Governor of Indiana, Governor Mike Braun, will speak at the Hobart Chamber luncheon, 11:00 am, Avalon Manor, 3550 E. US 30 Hwy. Merrillville. Governor Braun will share insights on current initiatives, economic development, and the future of Indiana's business climate. Tickets: $40. Reserve your seat or become a table sponsor. Space is limited. For additional information, visit: https://business.hobartchamber.com/ap/Events/Register/ZRFb4xqfgCeC2

CONSTRUCTING FUTURES

Building Pathways. Changing Lives.

Workforce Training & Career Pathways in Construction For Youth & Adults

WHO WE SERVE:

- Youth (8th grade – high school)
- Young adults & adults
- Individuals with IEPs & learning differences
- Justice-involved & re-entry individuals

BALLERS TO BUILDERS

WHAT WE OFFER:

- NCCER Core Construction Certification
- OSHA-10 / OSHA-30 Training
- Hands-On Construction Training
- Blueprint Reading & Job Readiness Skills
- Direct Pathways into Apprenticeships & Employment.

SIGNATURE PROGRAM:

Ballers to Builders

Helping individuals transition from athletics, adversity, or uncertainy into skilled trades and sustainable careers.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Industry-recognized credentials
- Real career pathways (not just training)
- Supportive, structured learning environment

Now Enrolling & Accepting Referrals

Partner with us to connect individuals to career opportunities in construction.

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In Partnership with Constructing Futures Inc.

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Secure, drive-up storage designed for real life.

More Space. Less Stress.

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Family-Owned. Locally Trusted.

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950 Old Hobart Rd, Lake Station, IN 46405

Easy to Find —
On Old Hobart Road just off Route 20.

Scan to Book & See Current Specials

Trivia NIGHT

WITH BENNY

ROTATING PRIZES TO THE WINNING TEAM
TEAMS OF 4 AND UNDER

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY ALL SUMMER
STARTING MAY 7, 6:30–8:30

WWW.TINYSCOFFEEBAR.COM
IN THE ♥ OF DOWNTOWN MILLER BEACH
555 S. LAKE STREET, GARY, IN

PRESENTED BY

BE EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORT TOGETHER (B.E.S.T.)

DON'T Stare JUST Care

EXCEPTIONAL ABILITY WALK

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF
FUN AND INCLUSION

SAT. MAY 16TH, 2026 | 9:30AM

MEET US AT
HIDDEN LAKE PARK FOR A 2 MILE WALK,
6355 BROADWAY, MERRILLVILLE, IN 46410

REGISTER HERE

BESTSUPPORT.ORG

Urban League of Northwest Indiana, Inc.

LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT SYMPOSIUM

Building Pathways to Progress & Empowerment

Inspire. Engage. Lead the Way Forward

Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud

President & CEO/ Urban League of NWI, Inc.

Encompassing Leadership through Collaborations - Making the Connection

FEATURED SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS

Dr. Chris Holford
Chancellor
Purdue Northwest

Education and Community Leadership

Heather Ennis
President & CEO
NWI Forum

Regional Leadership

Lisa Daugherty
President & CEO
Center of Workforce Innovations

Regional Leadership

Dr. Danny Lackey
DL Consulting, LLC

Education Leadership

Attorney Nancy J. Townsend
Partner
Krieg DeVault

Navigating the Next Era of Inclusion

Dr. Carol Dahlen
Clinical Mental Health Counselor/ Behavioral Consultant

Mind, Body & Spirit

Christina Wagner
Peoples Bank
AVP, Marketing Coordinator

Recognizing Truth & Bias in Media

Mike Berta
Retired
Public School Educator

Education Leadership

Dr. Linda Gunn
President of
AGS Consulting

Leadership Professional Development

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026 | 8:30 AM - 2:00 PM
Alumni Hall Purdue Northwest | Hammond, IN

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Grass Roots Organizations
- Community Leaders
- HR Personnel
- Business/Corporate Administrators
- Educators & Students
- Police/Fire Personnel

REGISTER NOW AT www.ULOFNWI.org

PNW PURDUE UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST | NIPSCO A NiSource Company | Hard Rock CASINO

AWARDS LUNCHEON

RESERVE YOUR SEAT!

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Hall of FAME

2026

Q&A Speaker

Mike Braun

Governor of Indiana

THE TIMES | nwi.com MEDIA COMPANY | IN BUSINESS

PLUS A SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY US STEEL

WEDNESDAY
MAY 20, 11:30AM

AVALON MANOR | MERRILLVILLE

Please join us at a luncheon honoring the Class of 2026 for their substantial contributions to business and industry.

CLASS OF 2026

PETE KORELLIS | Korellis Roofing
BILL MASTERSON | The Times/Lee Ent.
BOB MIGLIORINI | American Precision Services
PATTI TRITSCHLER | Interior Image Group (IIG)

Enterprise of the Year:
BERGLUND CONSTRUCTION

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS AT
go.nwi.com/halloffametickets

IN BUSINESS CORPORATE SPONSORS:

NIPSCO | Peoples Bank | PNW PURDUE UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST | NorthShore HEALTH CENTERS

Harlem Renaissance

The Gary Historical and Cultural Society

Join us as we celebrate our 50th Year Anniversary!

Come dressed in your best Harlem Renaissance outfit to
The Chateau Banquet Hall
530 W 61st Avenue, Merrillville 46410
on Saturday, May 23, 2026, from 6 pm to 10 pm

The evening will include dinner, music, dancing, entertainment, a cash bar, and a silent auction.

Tickets are $100 per person
Purchase tickets with
Zelle - (219-680-7215)
PayPal & Credit Card - use QR code
or go to www.ghcsinc.weebly.com

Mail Checks to GHCS, PO Box 64603, Gary, IN 46401

Call (219) 680-7215
Email: ghcsin@yahoo.com

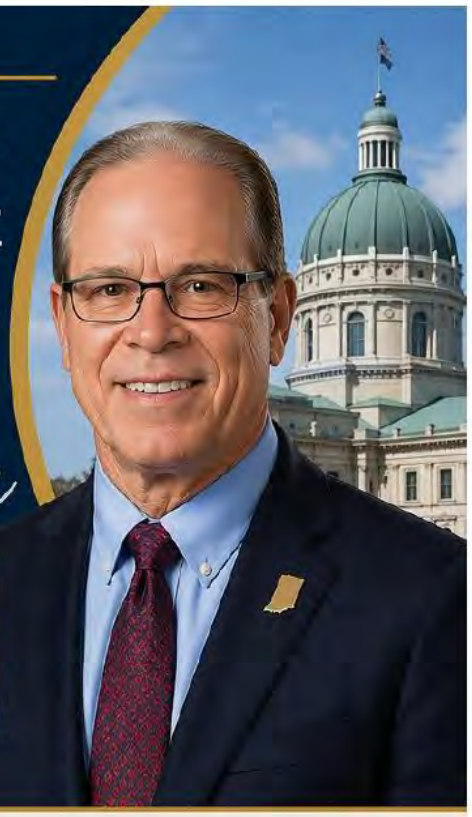
HOBART

★ SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER ★

GOVERNOR MIKE BRAUN

TO SPEAK AT THE

Chamber Luncheon



Governor Braun will share insights on current initiatives, economic development, and the future of Indiana's business climate. Don't miss this opportunity to connect, learn, and be informed.

DATE
6/16/26

TIME
11:00am - 1:30pm

PLACE
Avalon Manor
3550 E Lincoln Hwy
Merrillville, IN 46410

COST
$40
per person

★ SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY ★

TABLE SPONSOR

YOUR NAME

- ✓ Your name on a table sign
- ✓ 8 lunches (8 reserved seats)

$450

PROMOTIONAL RECOGNITION

- ✓ Logo on Social Media
- ✓ Shout out recognizing you as a sponsor

★ MUST REGISTER ★

Reserve your seat or become a table sponsor today!
Space is limited.

BELVEDERE

SENIOR HOUSING

MEMORIAL DAY COOKOUT

MAY 22 | 11AM - 1 PM

343 EAST 90TH DRIVE

MERRILLVILLE, IN

RSVP BY 5/18/26 TO 219-769-2145

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Pet Friendly

A ONE-TO-ONE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN GARY

We unite young people (Littles) with caring, positive adult role models (Bigs) in professionally supported one-to-one mentoring friendships. Together, our Bigs and Littles clear a path to success by **breaking societal barriers, closing opportunity gaps and overcoming adversities.**

The program will serve local youth ages 7 to 18 who could benefit from extra encouragement, consistency, and support. The youth are full of potential—they just need someone in their corner cheering them on, helping them build confidence, and showing them what's possible for their future.

Easy to start! Just show up, and we facilitate.

Bigs make a lasting impact on the lives of their Littles.

Our mentoring is 100% free to our families.

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY
5:30-7:00PM

GARY PUBLIC LIBRARY AND CULTURAL CENTER
(220 W 5TH AVE. GARY IN 46402)

WHAT'S NEXT?

If this easy-to-start program interests you, follow the two QR codes below to either volunteer as a Big, enroll a Little, or become a High School Big.

5th Sunday Classical Concert

Featuring

The Gary Civic Symphony Orchestra Woodwinds

Sunday, May 31, 2026
Gary Public Library
3 pm to 5 pm

Join us and surround yourself with the sounds of timeless classical music. Perfect for dates and soulful escapes.

Gary Historical & Cultural Society

Email ghcsin@yahoo.com - Tel (219) 680-7215

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER
NORTHWEST INDIANA

BLUE DOOR NEWS

MAY 2026

NFL Flag Football Registration is OPEN!

Ready, Set, HIKE! Flag Football Registration is now OPEN! Reigster here: **https://bgcnwindiana.my.site.com/V2/s/login-home**

Summer Registration is OPEN!

Summer Camp registration opens today! Get ready for the best summmer ever and reserve your spot:
https://bgcnwindiana.my.site.com/V2/s/login-home

Jun. 28 **Hooked On the Clubs: Fishing Derby**
Learn more: donqfishing.givesmart.com

Jul. 9 **Annual Golf Outing**
Learn more at bgcgolfing.givesmart.com

Learn more about all we have to offer at bgcgreaternwi.org or follow us on socials @bgcgreaternwi

www.bgcgreaternwi.org 219-764-2582 @bgcgnwi

Fresh County Market & The Gary Chamber of Commerce

Presents

Fresh County RIBBON CUTTING and Fest

Join us in welcoming Charleys Philly Steaks to Gary!

CHARLEYS PHILLY STEAKS

REFRESHMENTS • RAFFLES • GIVEAWAYS AND DIGNITARIES

Music by Rodney (DarkNite)

May 30th 2026 | 12pm-5pm

1921 W. 25th Avenue (Fresh County Plaza) | Gary, IN

Fresh County Market
Where you always get a good deal!

Gary Chamber of Commerce

CHARLEYS PHILLY STEAKS

A ONE-TO-ONE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN Merrillville

We unite young people (Littles) with caring, positive adult role models (Bigs) in professionally supported one-to-one mentoring friendships. Together, our Bigs and Littles clear a path to success by **breaking societal barriers, closing opportunity gaps and overcoming adversities.**

The program will serve local youth ages 7 to 18 who could benefit from extra encouragement, consistency, and support. The youth are full of potential—they just need someone in their corner cheering them on, helping them build confidence, and showing them what's possible for their future.

Easy to start! Just show up, and we facilitate.

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Our mentoring is 100% free to our families.

EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY
5:30-7:00PM

BARBARA AND DEAN WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER (6600 BROADWAY, MERRILLVILLE, IN)

WHAT'S NEXT?

If this easy-to-start program interests you, follow the two QR codes below to either volunteer as a Big, enroll a Little, or become a High School Big.

Enroll a Child

Become a Big