

Day on Friday, August 4th, where they ranked 27th overall (class rank of 13th). However, prior to State Fair, the Blackford Jr/Sr High

costuming and music. It featured selections such as "Ecstasy of Gold" and "The Good, Bad, and Ugly" as well as other western mu-

students and staff work all summer long in the hot sun to prepare for competition season, which seems to be over almost as soon as it be-

Band, and Blue Felt Jazz Group along with the traditional junior and senior high band classes, and 6th grade band as well. Working

and while their rank matched that of last year's show, their overall score still increased.

In addition to their community showcase

also scheduled to be there as a food option for those interested. All in all, it was a fun evening of celebration for the community.

# Montpelier Redevelopment Commission

By Mary Beal

The Montpelier Redevelopment Commission met at city hall on July 27. Bill Walters, ECIRPD, introduced Julie Thompson, BSN, RN, who is the Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Nursing Officer for Bluffton Regional Medical Center, Bluffton.

The center is part of the Lutheran Health Network. The two organizations will be staffing and coordinating the medical office that will open as soon as November in one section of Montpelier's former Chaney Hardware and Appliance buildings on South Main Street. Local residents may have noticed that the building has been under renovation for a couple of

months and one side is substantially complete, according to Montpelier Mayor Kathy Bantz.

Bluffton Regional plans to have a physician's assistant or a nurse practitioner and staff supervised by a doctor who will be in the office periodically. Visits will be by appointment only, city officials have said.

"We'll try to get you in as soon as possible," Walters told Thompson, adding that the commission had received a match grant to renovate the exterior and interior of the structure and had applied for more funds.

The mayor announced that she also had requested \$100,000 from the Blackford County Economic Development Corporation to perform more work

on 123 S. Main.

Thompson told the commission, "We're excited, especially with what's happened in Blackford County with IU Health. We think it will be key to have someone here (in Montpelier.) We will be looking at and posting for a mid-level position, either a PA or a nurse practitioner because it's hard to find family practitioners. We just can't find them, so the PA or LPN will be under the supervision of a doctor, probably Dr. Williams, because he would be the closest, in Markle, and he's well established," Thompson commented.

Speaking of visiting staff at the office, she continued that cardiac personnel have been hard to find since



Mayor Kathy Bantz, left, and the MRC welcomed Julie Thompson, BSN, RN, CAO and Chief Nursing Officer for Bluffton Regional Medical Center, right, to their July 27 meeting.

Photo by Mary Beal

COVID, with one cardiologist at Bluffton passing away from COVID and another deciding not to practice in this area two weeks before he was supposed to start, so Bluffton's cardiologist comes from Lutheran. However, when staffing levels recover, Thompson commented, "I'd like to have one come

down here a couple days a month.

"Currently, our OB provider at the hospital has resigned, but I have a good lead on another one, and if so, it would be good to have one come here a day a month to see patients. I'm looking forward to it," Thompson said.

With the contract

signed, if positions are filled and credentialed and the interior design approved, the office should open in mid-November. The building will include a procedure room, two exam rooms, a restroom, supply area and break room for employees, according to Thompson.

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WEEKLY BIBLE VERSE

Community Happenings

posted soon on the city's website, the mayor remarked, and Thompson said that some folks from Bluffton Regional would likely be marching in the Montpelier Jamboree Parade.

As to 125 S. Main's renovation, Walters said that the contractor was waiting for doors to be delivered and for window rehab. A study of the former bank building is being completed along with a complete plan for the preservation of the downtown area, he told members.

A survey of the former bank building and the Star Financial drive-up property, which have been separated into two parcels, is complete, the mayor said. Questioned about when the ITM machine would be available to bank customers, she said that internet would be hooked up to the ITM

wait for the ITM equipment, Bantz previously remarked.

Walters reviewed other possible economic development grant funding in Montpelier and regional grant applications that include Montpelier as part of the region. He told board members that he had a meeting set up the next week about the school with a possible developer, and was working with AEP on drastically increasing the electrical capacity for a developing data center project in the industrial park by 20 million to 100 million watts, but AEP's delivery of electrical equipment like capacitors was far behind schedule.

He said that Grant County has two such data centers and Delaware County has one, in which portable data storage equipment can be

for companies. The centers are a fairly new concept, and policy and regulations for locating them has not caught up with practice, Walters said.

Bantz said that she had not heard anything from the company owner lately.

The commission continued the discussion about the rest of the new city entrance signs to be designed, constructed and installed by Michael McClain of the Stick It sign company. The commission voted at its last meeting to hire McClain.

So far, McClain has crafted one welcome sign so far for the city's eastern boundary on SR 18, and commission members had said that they wanted to see one and then would decide whether to have McClain make more. Along with the new welcome signs, there are plans to con-

Mayor Bantz mentioned that the Tri Kappa Sorority wanted to have a sign made, for example.

McClain brought several older, large signs that had been individually displayed around the city for some years, such as the Freemasons sign, DAR sign, Tree City Welcomes You, Home Town of David Ford, signs honoring athletes, notices about golf carts, etc., and asked what officials wanted to do with them, since most were not in good condition, he said.

Dave Kieser, regional grant consultant, counseled the commission to keep the Tree City sign from about 2000, saying that the Tree City award designation was a prestigious honor that didn't expire. Bantz said that city hall housed a plaque to go with the sign and probably had a tree ordinance.

es to their next meeting. The commission voted to go with the stone look for the posts on the welcome signs, at a total of \$2,600 more than regular wood posts.

Bantz and Rick Sills, commission president, reminded members that the city will soon have a monument erected in the bank park on Main Street that will have the names of all the city mayors and other city, state or national notables listed on it. The granite monument, engraving, base and installation will cost \$18,000 and should be finished by the end of the year.

Billy Paxson reviewed with the commission what he's been doing as far as his summer mowing assignment. Doug Richardson, member, said he would like to see a lot more trimming done at the former baseball field and some

down and clear out the foliage on the property when the weather cools, and to work with Jeff Clouse to trim and clean up the playground and trim a tree at the former Montpelier Elementary School. The commission will pay Paxson by the hour for extra work other than mowing, they said. Paxson remarked that he has been getting a lot of complaints from the public and doesn't want conflict with anyone, to which Sills replied that he just needs to worry about what the commission thinks.

Members spent the rest of their meeting discussing financing options for the planned remake of Baldwin Park and possible buyers for the former school, as well as the expenses of maintaining the three-story building until a new owner takes it off the commission's hands.

## Informal Roundtable Ponders Blackford's Medical Crisis

By Mary Beal

On Thursday, Aug. 3, a group comprised of the session's organizer, Daphne Dickey, RN, a longtime registered nurse; Indiana State Rep-

health care task force to explore the issues.

The closing news immediately galvanized longtime nurse Daphne Dickey, RN, into action. Dickey lived and worked

ford ER as well as some recommended intravenous infusions that are required to be performed in an emergency room setting in a hospital. Although, she said, "In the

is that Marion Health is building a new, full service hospital, including an ER, near the Gas City I-69 exit's intersection with SR 18 W, but she said the facility won't

clinic coming to the city and said that perhaps it could expand its planned services to include some ER functions. It would be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and have two nurse

departments work with schools on health-related matters, which Blackford's already does, and remarked that he was particularly interested in the defibrillator units that