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Inside of the Binkley Cave System, located in Corydon, Ind. Photo courtesy of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

In December, the Harrison County Emergency Management Agency and the Harrison County Hospital Emergency Medical Services worked with other agencies and volunteers in the area to respond to and help coordinate rescue efforts at the Binkley Cave System.

Cave rescues are not uncommon in Harrison County, which is home to the Binkley Cave System, the 11th longest cave system in the United States.

When seven experienced cavers did not emerge from the cave system at their scheduled time, a coordinated emergency response effort to locate them started. Heavy rainfall, high water levels in the cave and cold temperatures complicated and slowed response efforts. Agencies were on scene for roughly 14 hours.

Harrison County EMA was contacted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to help coordinate response efforts. EMA Director Greg Reas and one of the volunteers responded, providing a trailer, light towers and generators. The trailer was used by DNR as a command post that doubled as an area for warmth and debriefing once the cavers were rescued.

Harrison County EMS maintained a crew of two emergency medical technicians and a paramedic on-site during the entire response to evaluate and care for the safety of responders and the cavers once they were rescued. After the cavers were brought above ground, the EMT examined the cavers before they were released from the scene.

D1 Hospital Committee Brings Cybersecurity Session to NW Indiana

On December 7, a Cybersecurity Awareness Symposium was held in Schererville, Ind. The event was coordinated by the U.S. Attorney's Office, and was sponsored by the Hospital Emergency Planning Committee within IDHS District 1, as well as the Northwest Indiana Information Sharing and Security Alliance (NIISSA).

Speakers at the event represented various public and private sector organizations, such as the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Dept. of Justice, and Methodist Hospitals. The major topics that were covered included the rise in cybercrimes, rising threats to mobile devices, and destructive malware. Approximately 120 people were in attendance, representing the emergency

management community and the private sector.

Some of the tips provided by speakers included:

- Continue working with law enforcement agencies to help maintain cyber safety, and engage with them early and often.
- Build relationships with companies and organizations, such as Infragard, that work with both public and private sector groups on cybersecurity.

- Remind colleagues to use strong passwords, as these are the first line of defense against those trying to steal personal information.
- If there has been a suspected breach in cybersecurity, notify IT staff immediately.

For more information on NIISSA, visit NIISSA.org. For more information on cybersecurity, visit GetPrepared.in.gov.



Burn Survivor Makes Top 10 in State Fair Pageant

Last year, Brianna Bolinger was selected to represent Wells County in the Indiana State Fair Queen Pageant. Unlike many of her competitors continuing from the county-level to the state pageant, Bolinger is a burn survivor. She is also a collegiate feature twirler and a nursing student.

When Bolinger was 4 years old, her family barn was burned in an accidental fire. She suffered third-degree burns over 55 percent of her body, including her face, right ear, legs, hands, arms and feet. Despite her injuries, Bolinger has persevered.

On January 8, 2017, Bolinger competed in the Indiana State Fair Queen Pageant and reached in the top 10. Despite her history, she pursued her dream to be an Indiana State Fair Queen. As she said during her Miss Wells Pageant in July 2016, "My name is Brianna Bolinger. I am a burn survivor. I may be imperfect, but I am beautiful no matter what society tells me."

Bolinger now attends Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



Photo courtesy of Brianna Bolinger (Instagram @bbtwirl)

Safety Tips to Share for St. Patrick's Day

Indiana State Emergency Medical Services officials are providing local EMS with a message to those celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

State EMS, part of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, is encouraging local EMS professionals to educate Hoosiers about potential dangers on St. Patrick's Day, with particular focus on the signs of alcohol poisoning and the importance of calling 911 immediately if alcohol poisoning is suspected.

"Don't drink alcohol until you turn green," says Dr. Michael Olinger, State Emergency Medical Services Director. "If you need green on St. Patrick's Day, wear green clothes or eat green candy."

State EMS are concerned about excessive alcohol consumption and its consequences, including dehydration, drinking and driving, public intoxication and alcohol poisoning.

"People are more likely to become dehydrated when they consume alcohol, so drink plenty of water before, during and after consumption," said Dr. Olinger.

"If someone is showing signs of alcohol poisoning, it is important to help prevent further injury," said Mike Garvey. "Have the person sit down to prevent falling. If the person can't sit up straight, have them lie on their side to prevent airway blockage from possible vomiting."

Alcohol poisoning signs and symptoms include:

- Confusion
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow breathing, less than eight breaths a minute
- Irregular breathing, a gap of more than 10 seconds between breaths
- Blue-tinged skin or pale skin
- Unconsciousness

Additional alcohol safety tips:

- Never accept an alcoholic beverage from a stranger.
- Be cautious of the number of drinks consumed.
- If bar or club offers a St. Patrick's Day special, it does not mean that it is safe to consume more alcoholic drinks.

And no one should fool themselves into thinking they can drink and drive. "Be careful. Your family, friends -- even your pet -- will be sad if you don't come home safe," said Garvey.

Here are some tips from the Indiana Department of Transportation:

- Choose a designated driver before partying, and ensure they are sober.
- Take mass transit, order a car, or ask a friend to drive home.
- As long as it's safe, spend the night where the activity is being held.

For designated drivers:

- Immediately report impaired drivers to law enforcement.
- Practice defensive driving.
- Always wear a seat belt. It helps keep drivers and passengers safe.

For more information, visit GetPrepared.in.gov.



Former Pike Co. EMA Director Passes Away

Former Pike County Emergency Management Agency Director Ernest Hume, 91, passed away January 15, 2017.

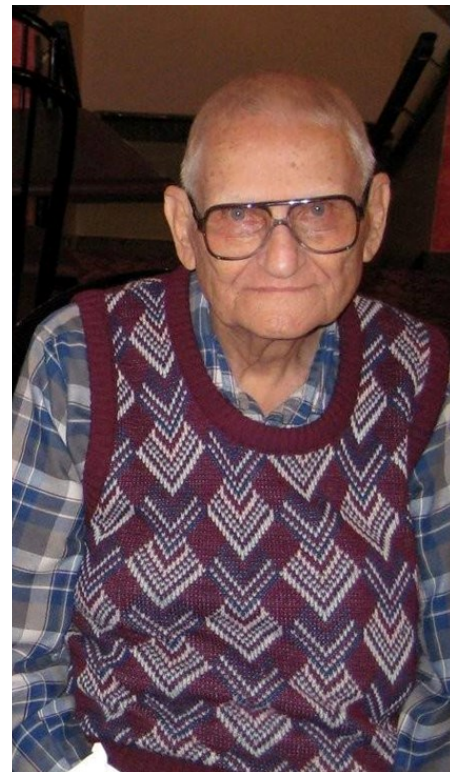
The former 33-year rural letter carrier and 911 director was also a veteran of the United States Army during World War II. Hume fought in the Battle of the Bulge and in other areas. He was discharged as a staff sergeant, having received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and the Belgian Fourragere.

As a concerned citizen, Hume helped re-establish the (then) Civil Defense Department in Pike County during the 1960s. In 1983, he became the director, serving through 2013. He assisted the county in recovering from the

1990 Petersburg levy break, which left Petersburg and much of Pike and Gibson counties without water. He additionally led emergency management through the 1990 tornado recovery, as well as another in 2006, when Otwell suffered the loss of 98 homes.

As 911 director, a position he held from 1994 through 2011, Mr. Hume and his assistant, Tonda Dixon, worked to catalog the entire county from the existing address style to the updated enhanced 911 address methodology, allowing the county to expand their 911 services.

Mr. Hume is survived by his wife of 70 years, Marilee Hume.



Did you know?

IDHS offers safety resources and information on various topics, such as:

- Severe weather preparedness
- Earthquake safety
- Fire safety
- Disaster response
- and much more.

Visit GetPrepared.IN.gov
for more information and fact sheets



March 19-25 is Severe Weather Preparedness and Flood Awareness Week

March 19-25 is Severe Weather Preparedness and Flood Awareness Week, and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security and National Weather Service is encouraging emergency responders to spread the word to Hoosiers to prepare now for severe weather that frequently accompanies the arrival of spring.

Historically, Indiana has experienced some of the worst thunderstorms, tornadoes and flooding incidents during the spring months. In 2011, Indiana was devastated by a record 72 tornadoes, including 32 on April 19, and 26 on May 25. Flooding is also a serious threat to Hoosiers in the spring and summer months. In 2016, St. Joseph County was devastated by severe flooding that caused major damage to roads, businesses and homes.

To prepare for the serious threats of severe weather in Indiana, families are encouraged to have the following things ready in their preparedness kits at all times:

- Food and water for three days, including one gallon of water per person per day
- Battery-operated all-hazards radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries for radio and flashlight
- First aid kit
- Important documents like photo ID, Social Security card, insurance and banking information
- List of emergency phone numbers
- Cash (power outages can limit ability to use ATMs and credit cards)
- Special items for babies or medications for any family members



Having a preparedness kit ready at all times is important. So is knowing what to do in a severe weather emergency.

Tornado Drill March 21

As part of Severe Weather Preparedness Week, on Tuesday, March 21, there will be a statewide tornado drill at 10:10 a.m. and 7:35 p.m. These drills provide an excellent opportunity for families, schools and businesses to practice their severe weather emergency plans. Some ways families can practice during the statewide tornado drill are:

- Take household members – quickly but calmly – to the location (ideally a basement; secondarily the center of an interior room with no windows, on the lowest level of the building) they would move to in severe weather.
- Practice moving under a sturdy table or desk, or pulling a mattress into a protective position.
- Walk through potential evacuation routes, both from the home and the neighborhood.
- Conduct a family drill in which children pretend to call 911 and calmly talk with an emergency dispatcher (a family member or friend can be on the other end of the line, requesting appropriate information).

Hoosiers can use the resources on GetPrepared.in.gov to start preparing for severe weather. GetPrepared.in.gov has fact sheets and guidelines on how to make a preparedness kit, how to create a family emergency plan and how to prepare for and respond to flooding, thunderstorms, tornadoes and other severe weather incidents.

IDHS will also be posting severe weather and flood safety tips on social media sites throughout Severe Weather Preparedness week. Be sure to visit facebook.com/IndianaDHS or @IDHS on Twitter.

Mission

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security will provide statewide leadership, exemplary customer service, and subject matter expertise for the enhancement of public and private partnerships and the assurance of local, state and federal collaboration to continually develop Indiana's public safety capabilities for the wellbeing and protection of our citizens, property and economy.

Contact

The Hoosier Responder is a publication of The Indiana Department of Homeland Security. Please direct any questions or comments to the IDHS Office of Public Affairs at (317) 234-6713 or pio@dhs.in.gov.

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