



# The Torch

The official newsletter for Indiana state employees

## Insurance Commissioner to Seniors: know your options for Medicare

On November 11, Commissioner Stephen Robertson advised seniors who have Medicare Advantage plans with UnitedHealthcare, including ones sold through AARP, to confirm that their preferred providers will be part of the network throughout 2014, because of reductions the company recently made to its provider network.



affiliated with any insurance company and is staffed by a crew of volunteer counselors.

“Our counselors attend semi-annual training events and have up-to-date information available regarding Medicare coverage options,” said Cheryl St. Clair,

SHIP Director. “I encourage everyone who is unsure about their Medicare decisions to call for help.”

“Seniors who want to stay with the health care provider they’re currently seeing may be able to do so. I recommend that anyone currently on a UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage or AARP plan – or any Medicare Advantage plan – call our SHIP counselors, check whether their doctor will continue to be a part of their plan, and learn about their options,” said Robertson.

Medicare Advantage plans are different than traditional Medicare plans, because members are restricted to the doctors who participate in their network. Thus, it is critical that seniors understand their options during the Medicare open enrollment period, which ends December 7, 2013.

SHIP, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, is a free and unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana Department of Insurance for Medicare beneficiaries in Indiana. SHIP is not

Although SHIP counselors can be found state-wide, SHIP’s central office can be reached at (800) 452-4800. Information on its web site can be found at [www.medicare.IN.gov](http://www.medicare.IN.gov).

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*The Torch* is published monthly by the State Personnel Department and is available online at [www.in.gov/spd](http://www.in.gov/spd)

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Governor appointments

## New DOL commissioner named

On November 4, Governor Mike Pence named **Rick Ruble** Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Labor (DOL).



“Rick Ruble is the right man at the right time to lead the Indiana Department of Labor,” said Pence. “With extensive experience in a variety of roles within the Indiana Department of Labor, his skills and background will serve him well as he strives to advance the safety, health and prosperity of the Hoosier workforce in the years ahead.”

Ruble currently serves as Interim Commissioner for DOL, a position he has held since September 18, 2013. Prior to this role, Ruble served as Deputy Commissioner of Labor and General Counsel within the agency beginning in 2007. He also worked within DOL in the Research and Statistics division for ten years before graduating from law school in the late 1990s and entering private law practice.

Ruble, of Martinsville, earned his undergraduate degree from Indiana University and his law degree from Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

Holiday eating

## Choose Indiana products to fill your holiday table

Indiana is rightfully known for our agricultural heritage and there is no better time to showcase the many great products made in Indiana than now. With the holiday season in full swing, it is easier than ever to add elements of Indiana’s bounty to any festive holiday table. Whether it’s drinks, sides, ingredients or the main course, Indiana’s artisanal food producers have you covered this season. Below are just a few samples of great Indiana products for the Christmas and holiday tables. For more information on Indiana’s agricultural products, log on to [VisitIndiana.com](http://VisitIndiana.com):

[Turkey Pot Pie: Strongbow Inn, Valparaiso](#)- One of the most famous Thanksgiving locations in the state is Strongbow Inn, which serves 3,500 people on Thanksgiving Day. A lot of people also stop by to pick up pie, desserts, turkey pies, or whole dinners to eat on Thanksgiving or any day.



[Riesling: Oliver Winery, Bloomington](#) - Oliver is Indiana’s oldest and largest winery and Riesling is a perfect accompaniment to the traditional Thanksgiving meal.

[DeBrand Chocolates: DeBrand Chocolatier, Fort Wayne](#) -

DeBrand has a number of fall and winter themed chocolate flavors- sweet potato pie chocolate, sugar and spice bar and a classic hot chocolate kit.

[Great Harvest Bread Company: Turkey Bread Loaves, Lafayette](#) -

Great Harvest handcrafts bread daily using only pure and simple ingredients. The turkey shaped bread loaf is a specialty product for the holidays.



[Pumpkin desserts: Ghyslain Chocolates, Richmond](#) -

Ghyslain makes beautiful desserts year round and has flavors that are perfect for the holidays- pumpkin cheesecake, pecan bourbon caramel tart, apple cinnamon cheesecake and the fall Charlemagne, a decadent dessert with chocolate on chocolate on chocolate.

This is just a sampling of what Indiana has to offer. Our agricultural output feeds the country, but we Hoosiers save the best for ourselves.

**INDIANA**  
VISITINDIANA.COM



## 2013 was the year of wellness but this is just the beginning

This year, State Personnel launched the Invest In Your Health wellness program, to promote a healthy lifestyle culture, educate on the health care system and provide tools and support to help you spend your time and dollars more wisely.

Governor Mike Pence declared September Health and Wellness Month to engage employees in a daily routine of focusing on their health. To celebrate, SPD packed the month with various activities and promotions that got employees thinking about their health and possibly making small changes to improve it. During this month, the state planned a variety of daily activities and held a contest to win a FitBit Zip wireless activity tracker. More than 700 state employees logged onto the Invest In Your Health Indiana website to register for their chance to win and 21 lucky employees won. "My wife loves using the FitBit to track her daily activity. It gives you much more than I thought it would. You can track calories, your steps, the intensity of your activity and your sleep patterns. It is a neat product," said Jason House, Indiana Department of Environmental Management. You can see a few of the winners and hear their stories [by clicking here](#). Congratulations to all those who won! We hope that your FitBit Zip helps you live a more active lifestyle.

Also during Health and Wellness Month, the Steps Challenge was a statewide walking challenge hosted on the Healthy Lifestyles wellness portal. More than 1,100 state employees walked almost 117 million steps. That amount of steps equates to 58,401 miles which is far enough to walk

around the planet earth twice! This averaged to about 6,991 steps a day for 30 days. Employees reported having more energy, losing weight, being more social with neighbors and trying healthier food all by just dedicating time to walk every day.

Read one employee's story: "I've been walking every day, where in the past I would skip a day or so. My weight has stayed pretty much the same during the challenge, which is great because for the first time in 20+ years, I'm at my ideal weight. I don't need to lose any more weight, and the calorie counter has really helped with that. I'm going to continue using the web site even after the challenge is over at the end of this month. I've never tried to count calories before because it seemed too complicated. Entering each food I eat and the amount is easy on the website and the computer program does the entire math. I went to the doctor six months ago and my total cholesterol was higher than normal, and I thought that I had been eating healthy. I went to the doctor two weeks ago, and every one of my numbers went down."

Great job to all of those who participated in the Steps Challenge and we hope you continue to walk and track your steps!

In an attempt to gain a better understanding of the needs of state employees from a wellness perspective, the State Personnel Department also launched a wellness survey. The survey confirmed that over 70 percent of respondents agreed that they would like to participate in wellness programs. Further, we learned that the biggest

areas of need include nutrition, physical activity, weight loss and stress management. This feedback will help us build on our current wellness program to meet these needs and serve state employees to the fullest potential. Stay tuned for future wellness programs.

The State Employee Healthy Recipe Contest was another event that saw good participation throughout the state. Overall, 38 recipes were submitted by state employees. The winning recipe was a delicious Italian Stuffed Zucchini, submitted by Natasha Pulley of FSSA. You can read her story by [clicking here](#). Congratulations Natasha!

The month concluded with a pair of weekend events. Saturday, Sept. 28 was State Employee Family Fitness Day. A variety of YMCA locations throughout the state opened their doors offering free admission to state employees and their family members for the day. Sunday, September 29 was National Lands Day sponsored by the State Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Natural Resources. In similar fashion, all state parks allowed free admission to state employees and their family members for the entire day.



### Castlight

Since launching Castlight in June, 5,848 employees have registered. Castlight Health is a searchable database that enables the state

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## 2013 was the year of wellness but this is just the beginning

of Indiana and its employees to take control of health care costs and improve care. It provides cost estimates and quality ratings for doctors and procedures, while also educating employees about compliance for chronic health care conditions.

Positive testimonials of how Castlight is saving employees time and money have been trickling into SPD. Read just a few of these below:

- “I have found Castlight to be very useful and very user friendly. I really like that it does the math for me, so I don’t have to calculate out-of-pocket expenses, limits, deductibles, and other confusing things. I also like that it explains your coverage with easy to understand graphs,” said **Isabel Carrero**, Department of Child Services.
- “I signed up with Castlight so that I could compare some tests my husband and I were going to have to see if we were getting them at the lowest price possible. I’ve also compared our doctor with some of the surrounding doctors because we are discussing the possibility of changing doctors,” said **Sheila Heidenreich**, Department of Revenue.

State employees who have been enrolled in medical benefits for more than 30 days can register and begin using Castlight. For more information on Castlight and how to sign up, please visit [www.investinyourhealthindiana.com/castlight/](http://www.investinyourhealthindiana.com/castlight/)

### Healthy Lifestyles

In the spring, SPD launched Healthy

Lifestyles. Since then, more than 4,400 employees have signed up for the free service of Healthy Lifestyles.

This site offers you a personalized well-being program that sets you up for success. If you’re willing to commit some time and energy, this program can help you look and feel better, increase your energy, decrease your stress, and improve your longevity to just name a few.

With a personal Well-Being Plan created just for you, you are able to take small, manageable steps towards a healthier, happier life. More than 3,400 employees have completed the online health assessment. Start yours today and discover a variety of tools and support at [MyHealthyLifestyles.com](http://MyHealthyLifestyles.com).

You can also benefit from helpful resources, tools, programs and guidance to assist you. Your involvement is completely confidential and free of charge.

### Healthy Lifestyles

The site is full of customized trackers to help take charge of your exercise, medication, weight or healthy eating goals. Other features include:

- Personalized member home page
- Self-improvement planning, including suggestions and goals to manage stress, anxiety, exercise and nutrition
- Health and wellness practices, references, recipes and self-care tips for all family members
- Access to QuitNet, a

comprehensive, Internet-based approach to tobacco cessation, including an online community of more than 1 million members

- Email and site reminders for vaccinations
- Online coaching from certified personal trainers, registered dietitians and accredited psychologists - all available to answer member questions
- Wellness resources, including videos, articles, healthy recipes and more.
- Online groups for connecting with people who have the same goals.
- Healthy Lifestyles is available only to state of Indiana Anthem members and their adult dependents.

You are the one who can make the biggest impact on your own health. To maintain or improve your health, you not only need to make good lifestyle choices – you need support and help to do so. So think about what you want in your plan for your health and go for it. Become intentional, informed and involved. You will undoubtedly see some personal health benefits. SPD wishes to thank all the employees who participated in the wellness programs this year. Our goal is to continue to offer help and support along with programs and services to help you create a healthier life.

Look for more events and opportunities in 2014 with Invest in Your Health. Continue to check out [Investinyourhealthindiana.com](http://Investinyourhealthindiana.com) for stories, health resources, tips and recipes throughout the year



## Eleven tips to help you survive holiday eating this season

The holiday season is full of joy, planning, wrapping, parties and for some of us trepidation about what to eat and how to keep our calories in check. While the season itself is wonderful and full of family and work gatherings, it is still important to keep focused on balancing your diet and activity patterns during this busy holiday.

When attending or preparing for family gatherings, work parties, church pitch-ins, or other events where food is involved, a little planning can go a long way. It can be more difficult to eat healthy at these types of gatherings but it isn't impossible. At times, you may not know what is to be served. Other times, you may know they are not serving very healthy options. There are ways to enjoy friends, family and the food and still keep your nutrition and health in good shape. Here are a few tips:

**Be realistic.** The average American gains six pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Trying to lose weight during the holidays is an uphill battle. Instead, setting your goal at maintaining your weight during the holidays is more realistic.

**Do not arrive at holiday parties hungry!** Nine out of 10 individuals overeat if they skip meals. Our bodies are designed to eat every four to five hours. Skipping meals to "save calories" for party eating sets you up for failure. Eat a light meal before a party and arrive in control of your appetite and actually eat less.

**Make time for exercise during the holidays.** Even the best-derived plans leave room for error. Exercise helps burn off some additional calories. However,

keep in mind, that you have to walk approximately 30 minutes at four miles per hour to burn off one small slice of pumpkin pie.

**Donate food gifts to a food pantry.** Don't even tempt yourself by bringing holiday favorites home.

**Call ahead!** If you feel comfortable with the people hosting the party, call ahead to find out what they are serving. If the food is going to be rather high in fat, try to choose lower fat choices throughout the rest of day.

**Look before you leap.** Be sure to look over all of the choices before starting to fill your plate and make a plan. If you know what is at the end of the line, you may want to pass up something at the beginning of the line to allow for that item.

**Get your fill of healthy fibers.** Try to choose more of the fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods when available and less of the higher fat foods. Choices without gravies and sauces reduce calories as well.

**Think about your drink.** Drink water or sugar free drinks. Sodas, punch, fruit drinks and alcoholic beverages can add several calories to a meal.

**Eliminate the sampler platter.** If several desserts are served, choose one to try. A small sample of all of them can add up in fat and calories very quickly.

**Take a healthy food choice as a gift.** Taking a vegetable or fruit tray is a nice gesture and you are assured you have at least one choice that is high in nutrition and low in calories.

**Turkey Trot!** If you still eat a little more than usual, talk family or friends into going for a walk after dinner. It is a good bonding time for people at the gathering and allows you to burn those extra calories.

Lighten up meals that you prepare. You can try some of the following ideas:

- Make a list before grocery shopping. (Don't shop when you're hungry!)
- Serve meals on smaller plates.
- When preparing turkey, choose a plain bird, rather than a self-basting bird.
- Remove the skin on turkey before eating.
- Use a gravy cup or refrigerate the pan juices and skim the fat off the top before making gravy. (It can remove up to 56 grams of fat per cup of gravy.)
- When preparing dressing, use less bread and add more onions, celery, vegetables and even such fruits as cranberries and apples.
- Leave out the margarine and marshmallows when preparing yams. Instead, sweeten the dish with fruit juice, such as apple, and flavor it with cinnamon.
- When preparing mashed potatoes, use skim milk, garlic powder and a little parmesan cheese instead of whole milk and butter.

All foods can fit when eating healthy. It may just take a little planning. Don't eliminate your favorites, but limit the serving size and don't feel pressured to "try everything." Take time to think about your food choices and make conscious decisions. Most importantly, enjoy yourself because you are worth it!

*Thanks to the [Indiana Dietetic Association](#) for this submission.*

## Nine ways to save on health care

**Establish a relationship with a primary care doctor.** Your first visit with a new doctor costs 30-50 percent more than a return visit, even for new problems. You can avoid multiple first-time visit charges by maintaining a relationship with one primary care doctor. It's important to select a primary care doctor that offers the affordable, high-quality care that's right for you.

**Take advantage of covered preventive care.** Under the new healthcare law, health plans are required to pay 100 percent for your annual physical and other age- and gender-appropriate preventive screenings (e.g., well child exams, mammograms and colonoscopies) regardless of your deductible status. And, if you use your free annual physical for your first visit with a new doctor, you can avoid the higher first-visit costs altogether.

**Use specialists only when referred by your primary care doctor.** Specialists can charge double or more than a primary care doctor for an office visit. Plus, you also will incur the additional first-time visit or consultation fee for your first visit to a specialist. A good primary care doctor can take care of most of your problems and can refer you to specialists only when needed. Using a specialist as your primary care doctor adds significant costs that may not be necessary.

**Use national laboratory groups for blood tests.** Similar to how you can take a drug prescription to the pharmacy of your choice, you can ask for a written lab order and take it to the lab of your choice. National laboratory groups, such as Quest and LabCorp, have significantly lower prices.

**Ask for copies of all lab and imaging results.** Keep a file that you take to all of your doctor visits. Not only does historical data help your doctor provide more comprehensive care, but you can avoid unnecessary duplicate tests.

**Get your flu shots and other preventive shots.** Know what vaccines are covered by your plan and get vaccinated accordingly. Talk to your doctor about what safe and effective vaccines will help you avoid the cost of a serious illness later.

**Avoid the ER.** Studies show that more than 25 percent of ER visits are non-urgent and should be taken care of in other facilities. An ER visit can easily cost you \$1,000 more than a visit to a primary care doctor. In the case of an emergency, never hesitate to go to the ER immediately; but for non-urgent care, go to your primary care doctor or consider your local urgent care clinic.

**Identify your closest urgent care clinic.** Urgent care and walk-in clinics (such as CVS's MinuteClinic) provide a convenient, low-cost alternative for non-emergency care after hours and on weekends. Plan ahead and identify the urgent care clinics nearest to your home. When you can't get in to see your primary care doctor, an urgent care clinic can be the most affordable way to get care.

**Use Castlight.** Castlight is an excellent resource to help you find the highest quality affordable care for your given situation. In fact, using [Castlight](#) is the easiest way for you to take advantage of all of the suggestions above!

## A letter to State Personnel Department

I just wanted to let you know how happy I've been with the health care coaching through Condition Care.

I first signed up because of my diabetes, but because of the alert and persistent questioning of the nurses staffing the phone line, I got myself into an allergist and diagnosed with asthma. With their encouragement, I've been managing my asthma which has in turn helped my diabetes management.

I used to get sick every couple months with a sinus infection. These have become more and more serious as the years go by and more difficult to recover from. Last winter, I had an extended illness that was a frightening experience for me.

This season, I feel much stronger and have been able to fight off several snuffles before they turned into colds, much less sinus infections. My energy level is higher and I feel much more positive about my health. Without the support of the nurse line, I probably would have settled into denial to avoid yet another diagnosis.

I thought Anthem would want to discourage me from going to yet another set of doctors because of the cost. Instead, they helped me recognize my condition, access treatment, and improve my overall health. The long-term costs are probably cheaper. I am very impressed with this service. Thanks again.

Sincerely, an FSSA Employee

## Four Indiana state hospitals recognized as top quality performers

On October 30, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) announced that Madison State Hospital, Evansville State Hospital, Logansport State Hospital and LaRue D. Carter Memorial Hospital have all been recognized as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® by The Joint Commission, an independent, not-for-profit that accredits and certifies health care organizations and programs in the United States.

Out of 3,343 eligible hospitals that submitted accountability measure data to The Joint Commission, 1,099 were recognized as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures, as they met or exceeded evidence-based accountability measures that are shown to improve care conditions.

“This recognition from the Joint Commission reinforces our commitment to quality care and

exceptional treatment,” said Kevin Moore, director of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction. “A great deal of focus and effort by hospital staff created this opportunity for success. I am very proud that four of our state hospitals have attained this level of quality achievement.”

To be named a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures each hospital had to achieve a cumulative performance of 95 percent or above across all reported accountability measures. Each accountability measure represents an evidence-based practice. Examples pertaining to psychiatric hospitals include appropriate admission screenings, patient safety practices and creation of continuing care plans. Hospitals had to also achieve performance of 95 percent or above on all reported accountability measures where there were at least 30 cases and have at

least one core measure set that had a composite rate of 95 percent or above.

“Each of these Indiana hospitals, and all the Top Performer hospitals, have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to quality improvement and they should be proud of their achievement,” said Mark R. Chassin, M.D., FACP, M.P.P., M.P.H., president and chief executive officer of The Joint Commission. “We have much to celebrate this year. Nearly half of our accredited hospitals have attained or nearly attained the Top Performer distinction. This truly shows that we are approaching a tipping point in hospital quality performance that will directly contribute to better health outcomes for patients.”

### DNR

## Deer attractants illegal for use in hunting in Indiana

The Department of Natural Resources is reminding Indiana hunters that even though deer attractants found at retail stores can be purchased and used in the wild, hunting near them is illegal.



They are considered bait.

Indiana regulations prohibit the hunting of deer with the use or aid of bait, which is defined as “a food that is transported and placed for consumption, including, but not limited to, piles of corn and apples placed in the field; a prepared solid or liquid that is manufactured and intended for consumption by livestock or wild deer, including, but not limited to,

commercial baits and food supplements; salt; or mineral supplements.”

This includes artificial products marketed under names such as Deer Co-Cain, Buck Jam, Trophy Rock, as well as mineral blocks,

salt blocks, and even natural foods such as corn and apples.

“Basically, if you place anything that isn’t grown in the area and hunt there, it’s illegal,” said Lt. Larry Morrison, outdoor education director for DNR Law Enforcement. “Hunting next to a corn field or from an apple tree is legal, but placing corn or apples under your tree stand would put you in conflict with current Indiana law.”

An area is considered baited for 10 days after the product and the affected soil is removed from an area.

Odor differs from bait. Cover scents or scent attractants are legal to use when hunting.

Archery season currently is underway in Indiana and continues through Jan. 5, 2014. The urban zone segment in designated areas continues through Jan. 31, 2014.

Indiana’s deer hunting season with firearms ended Dec. 1, followed by the muzzleloader season (Dec. 7-22) and the special antlerless season (Dec. 26-Jan. 5, 2014).

A violation of Indiana’s no baiting regulation is a Class C misdemeanor.

## Education

### Center for deaf and hard of hearing education aligns community services

On October 24, the grand opening celebration for the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education (CDHHE) marked the beginning of aligned outreach and support services for Indiana's deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. Although the CDHHE had a "soft" opening on July 1, the past few months have been spent creating the infrastructure that would allow the Center to be fully operational.

"Governor Daniels and the Indiana Legislature established the Center in 2012 to ensure that children who are deaf or hard of hearing acquire optimal language skills and academic abilities regardless of the mode or modes of communication used," said State Health Commissioner William VanNess, M.D. "We are honored they entrusted the Indiana State Department of Health to house the Center and carry out its important mission and pleased to celebrate its opening with members of the community."

The CDHHE's central office is located on the campus of the Indiana School for the Deaf in Indianapolis. The Center will also have a presence across the state through the establishment of regional locations over the coming year.

The Center is responsible for the educational needs of all deaf and hard of hearing children in the state, including:

- Tracking and monitoring individual child progress from birth through school exit.
- Coordination with the various state agencies involved in providing services to deaf and hard of hearing children.
- Training and support for both professionals and parents/guardians about all communication options.
- Assessment services and support of schools in meeting the needs of the children in their districts.

"I'm very excited about the possibilities that the CDHHE embodies for children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Indiana," said CDHHE Director, Gayla Hutsell Guignard. "We are bringing several services under one umbrella to enhance and build upon some of the good things we were already doing and capitalizing on this synergy to benefit children and their families by providing a more seamless system of services."

To learn more about the CDHHE, visit [www.in.gov/isdh/25883.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/25883.htm).

## Holiday list

### Mark your calendars for next year's holidays

The following is a list of the 2014 state holidays and the dates on which they will be observed:

**New Year's Day:** Wednesday, Jan. 1  
**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day:** Monday, Jan. 20  
**Good Friday:** Friday, April 18  
**Primary Election Day:** Tuesday, May 6  
**Memorial Day:** Monday, May 26  
**Independence Day:** Friday, July 4  
**Labor Day:** Monday, September 1  
**Columbus Day:** Monday, October 13  
**General Election Day:** Tuesday, Nov. 4  
**Veterans Day:** Tuesday, Nov. 11  
**Thanksgiving Day:** Thursday, Nov. 27  
**Lincoln's Birthday:** Friday, Nov. 28  
**Christmas Day:** Thursday, Dec. 25  
**Washington's Birthday:** Friday, Dec. 26.

## State parks

### 2014 annual passes are now available

Annual entrance, boating and horseback riding permits for Indiana State Parks & Reservoirs for 2014 are available online at [InnsGifts.com](http://InnsGifts.com) and at state park and reservoir property offices.

State Parks & Reservoirs entrance permits cost \$40 for Indiana residents and \$60 for out-of-state residents. Golden Hoosier Permits, which are entrance permits for Hoosiers age 65 or older, cost \$20.

Annual entrance permits allow entrance into all of the Indiana state parks and reservoirs and gated state forest recreation areas, and make great a holiday gift or stocking stuffer.

Camping gift cards are available at property offices and at [camp.IN.gov](http://camp.IN.gov), and additional gifts for outdoors lovers are sold at [InnsGifts.com](http://InnsGifts.com).



*On Oct. 24 Members of the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education transition team raise their hands at the Center's grand opening.*



## Nappanee Apple Pie, Holiday World and Notre Dame are “Best of Indiana”

The voters have spoken and Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann and the Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) have announced the winners of the 2013 Best of Indiana Fall contest. The contest, a component of the popular fall travel site [VisitIndianaFall.com](http://VisitIndianaFall.com), asked Hoosiers to select Indiana’s best signature fall food, best fall family-fun destination and best college football game day tradition in the state. The winners are:

- **Best Signature Fall Food:** Nappanee Apple Festival’s 600 pound apple pie
- **Best Fall Family-Fun Destination:** Holiday World’s Happy Halloween Weekends
- **Best College Football Game Day Tradition:** University of Notre Dame

“Fall is a special time to travel Indiana and these winners are just three of the many reasons why,” said Mark Newman, IOTD’s executive director. “All of this year’s nominees showcase a diversity of travel opportunities that is unrivaled by any state.”

Indiana’s nationally-recognized tradition of heritage and cultural festivals includes a veritable bounty of local and seasonal delicacies. This year’s Best Signature Fall Food winner is prepared during Nappanee’s annual Apple Festival. Seven feet in diameter and weighing more than 600 pounds, the Nappanee Apple Festival’s apple pie is Indiana’s largest and a must taste for the festival’s 80,000 annual visitors.

While basketball may be the sport most associated with Indiana, college football in the Hoosier State has a legacy second to none. This legacy was created in large part



because of the historic success of this year’s winner for Best College Football Game Day Tradition, the University of Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish have won many games and championships on the field, and the fans have taken that winning tradition off the field to create Indiana’s best college football game day experience.

Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari is a great Indiana destination throughout the year and is uniquely so in the fall. Voters selected the award-winning theme park’s Happy Halloween Weekends as Indiana’s Best Fall Family-Fun Destination. Many of Holiday World’s famous rides remain open during these specialty weekends; and they are joined by a number of seasonal activities for kids of all ages.

Nominees for Best Signature Fall Food and Best Fall Family-Fun Destination were recommended by members of Indiana’s travel, tourism and hospitality industry. Each of Indiana’s 21 college football programs was eligible for voting.

VisitIndianaFall.com is associated with [VisitIndiana.com](http://VisitIndiana.com), the official state travel website where discounts, trip ideas and helpful tips are easily accessible.

## BMV’s social media presence grows

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) recently added accounts on several media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in an effort to improve communication with customers. The BMV’s Facebook and Twitter accounts are updated daily with tips, alerts and helpful information.

The agency also has its own free mobile application for iPhones and Androids that is available for download. It allows users to complete a number of transactions from their mobile device, such as renewing a driver’s license and updating insurance information. For the most up-to-date information follow @INBMV on Twitter, and visit them on [facebook.com/inbmv](http://facebook.com/inbmv) and [instagram.com/inbmv](http://instagram.com/inbmv).



### Step Challenge results

From Sept. 3 to Oct. 1, employees went walking for a steps challenge issued by Healthy Lifestyles. Congratulations to the following individuals and teams for winning the challenge!

**Individuals:**

1. **Carol Foster**, DOC - Indiana Women’s Prison: 1,259,680
2. **Melissa Cline**, IDEM: 1,157,275
3. **Lisa Olson**, DCS - Lake County: 1,077,360

**Teams:**

1. State Personnel Department
2. Homeland Security
3. Putnamville Correctional Facility - DOC

## INDOT reminds you to be a cautious driver this winter

The top priority of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) during winter is snow and ice removal. INDOT uses all available resources to keep roads as safe as possible and maximize the mobility of the traveling public during winter weather. However, the biggest impact to safe winter travel begins and ends with driver behavior. Be prepared for winter weather conditions before driving.

**Know the roadway conditions.** Go to [www.TrafficWise.in.gov](http://www.TrafficWise.in.gov) or call 1-800-261-ROAD. INDOT Facebook and Twitter pages will also offer updates.

**Know the forecast.** Safe drivers know the weather and their limits. If the



weather is bad, remember "Ice and Snow, Take it Slow... or just don't go."



**Prepare and inspect your vehicle.** A breakdown is bad on a good day, and dangerous in winter weather. Check your vehicle's battery, tires, wiper blades, fluids, lights, belts and hoses. Remove any snow or ice on your vehicle's windows, lights, brake lights and turn signals. Make sure you can see and be seen.

**Give snowplows room to work and drive safely.** In the winter, INDOT snowplow drivers are out on the roads to keep them clear of snow and ice to keep you safe. Unsafe driving in

winter weather puts people in danger, and a crash that causes backups can prevent snow plows from reaching congested sections of roadways.

**Slow down** and drive at a safe speed for conditions. Be patient. Leave plenty of time to reach your destination safely.

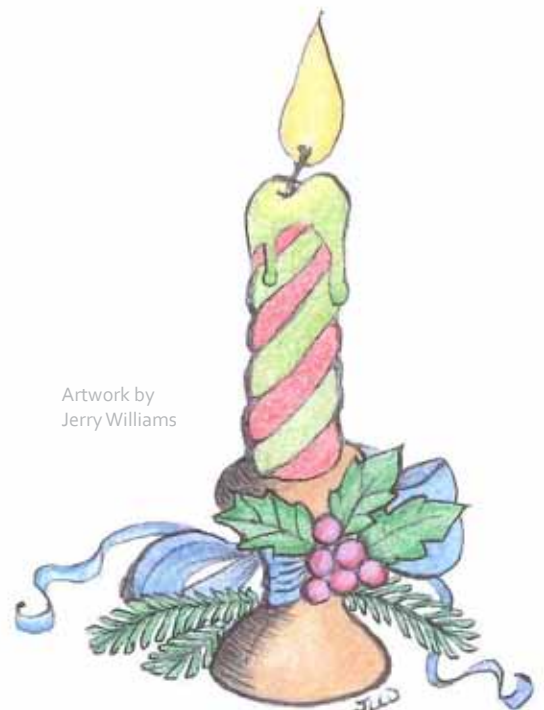
**Stay attentive of other vehicles,** especially snow plows. Give yourself space from other vehicles, avoid tailgating and try not to pass.

**Avoid distractions.** Driving in bad weather conditions is difficult enough without distractions. Remember, distracted driving is doing anything other than driving.

For more winter driving safety tips, visit [www.winterdrivingsafety.in.gov](http://www.winterdrivingsafety.in.gov).



On Nov. 13, Governor Pence greets attendees of the first-ever Governor's Information and Awareness Adoption Fair, which brought together more than a dozen adoption organizations to provide resources for adoptive and potential adoptive families. To see more pictures of Governor Pence, visit [www.in.gov/gov/2387.htm](http://www.in.gov/gov/2387.htm)



Artwork by  
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