



NATE LUTHER/Submitted photo

**HUNDREDS OF** volunteers have assisted the Samaritan's Purse with hurricane aid and relief efforts in Burnsville, North Carolina.

# Cherryhill Twp. man returns from providing hurricane relief in N.C.

By **NATHAN ZISK**  
NZisk@indianagazette.net

As the holiday season rolls around the corner, celebrations for many North Carolina families will be overshadowed by the aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

The Category 4 hurricane uprooted thousands of families across the East Coast, hitting North Carolina particularly hard with at least 103 confirmed deaths, the Department of Health and Human Services reported Tuesday.

But in the wake of the deadliest storm to hit mainland United States since Katrina in 2005, countless people have come together to assist those impacted by Helene, and the Indiana community is no exception.

Nate Luther, of Cherryhill Township, recently took it upon himself to provide aid in Burnsville, North Carolina.

Luther said he had been to areas like Burnsville before and felt a "strong calling" to help people affected by

the storm. So, the United States Army and Air Force veteran loaded his Toy Hauler camper and made the roughly 500-mile trip to assist the Samaritan's Purse with relief efforts between Oct. 27 and Nov. 2.

"My heart went out to the people of these beautiful areas that had been so harshly affected," Luther said. "I had a strong calling to help people who lost so much. I was happy I had the ability to do so."

Luther said he spent around \$1,500 out-of-pocket to finance the six-day trip. During his time in Burnsville, he helped complete 12 work orders for the Samaritan's Purse, which involved things like cleaning homes and wells, cutting trees, replacing roofs, restoring water systems, repairing infrastructure and more.

"It was hard work," Luther explained.

He said he was overwhelmed by the gratitude community members expressed toward volunteers, and his

biggest takeaway from the trip was the interconnection people share during times of immense hardship.

"(People would) instantly begin to cry and hug all the volunteers — they were all so grateful," Luther said. "It's really powerful. A great human connection is instantly forged between you and the family. ..."

"When people are in terrible situations, a little kindness is very uplifting. It gives you a sense of hope when people come together."

By the time Luther left Burnsville, the Samaritan's Purse still had around 800 outstanding work orders. So, he plans to return to the Tar Heel State in late December or early January to pick up where he left off.

"It's so important to help one another," Luther said. "These people need a lot of support. So many have lost everything — including loved ones. Showing up to help their situation brings them some relief and a sense of hope."

# Man channels life-long interest in Civil War for debut novel

By **AMANDA DUNLOP**  
adunlop@indianagazette.net

A retired Indiana businessman remains busy, five years after selling his family's century-old company, as an author, drawing upon a lifetime interest in the American Civil War.

From noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dennis Roumm will have a formal book launch and signing at the Book Nook, 711 Philadelphia St., downtown Indiana, for "Antietam Affairs."

He said "Antietam Affairs" is about a romance that spans across death and time as it toggles between the present day and one of the bloodiest battles of the 1861-65 conflict, along Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg, Maryland, on Sept. 17, 1862.

"In the summer of 1988



Submitted photo

**"ANTIETAM AFFAIRS"** by local author Dennis Roumm is available in paperback and eBook formats.

computer whiz Sam Baker becomes embroiled in a grassroots effort to protect historic farmland adjoin-

ing the Antietam Battlefield," Roumm said. "When he and Kelly Gracie, the secretary for the organization, discover a Civil War soldier's grave at the site, they begin experiencing vivid dreams that reveal a tragic love story from the past; one that may be their own previous lives."

In a plot that might recall one-time television series such as "Time Tunnel" or "Quantum Leap," Roumm said Baker and Gracie find themselves drawn deeper into a mysterious connection between the battlefield they are seeking to preserve and a haunting romance that unfolded there more than a century and a half earlier.

"Through parallel narratives, 'Antietam Affairs'

See **ROUMM: A-10**

Salary Board.

Among the changes was approval of a new full-time director and assistant director of nursing.

James Brady was named full-time director of nursing, replacing Jessica Stonebraker, who in turn had been named in March to replace Tamara Corneille.

Brady assumed the position effective Tuesday, and inherited the \$95,000 annual salary approved for Stonebraker in March.

The board also approved Lydia Slovkosky as full-time assistant director of nursing, replacing Tiffany Brower effective Dec. 9, at a salary of \$75,000 per year.

The board consists of Commissioners R. Michael Keith and Bonni S. Dunlap (Commissioner Sherene Hess was absent) and county Treasurer Kimberly McCullough. Tuesday's meeting was the first for new Commissioner Dunlap on the salary board.

Also at the county's personal care home, five position changes were approved:

• Cassandra McClure moved from full-time licensed practical nurse to a per diem position as a licensed practical nurse,

## GIVING BACK



**MICHAEL B Shoes** and Naot Footwear donated 100 pairs of Naot shoes worth \$15,000, to the Alice Paul House on Tuesday. The donation was part of the "Naot Gives Back" campaign that benefited Indiana's only domestic violence shelter. From left are APH Executive Director Audia Boyles and Michael Boiano, C.Ped.

### Index

Classifieds ..... B-10, B-11  
Comics/TV ..... B-5, B-6  
Dear Abby/History ..... B-9



Entertainment ..... B-8  
Family ..... B-7  
Sports ..... B-1-B-3  
The Mini Page ..... B-4  
Viewpoint ..... A-6

### Deaths

Obituaries on **Page A-4**  
**FERGASSE**, Linda Jo (Grube), 77, Indiana  
**PROTZ**, Bonnie Lee (Blystone), 80, Blairsville

**Late death**  
**EDDER**, Roger L., 74, Rochester Mills

### To our readers

The Indiana Gazette will not publish Thursday in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. Publication will resume Friday.

Dixon Butchery  
The Meat Cooler  
Weekly Features  
And More.  
We Are Here To  
Serve You.  
(724) 726-5137.  
dixonbutchery  
themeatcooler.co

**Holiday Sale Starts Monday, December 18**  
**Storewide Savings & Bonus Discounts**

We will be **CLOSED** Thanksgiving day through Sunday for the holidays.

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

# Indian Haven moves dominate Salary Board agenda

**SALARY BOARD:** From A-1

per hour effective Oct. 30. Patterson later left that position and is noted among this month's separation acknowledgements.

• Angel Davis as a full-time housekeeping aide, replacing Dana Wilshire, at \$12.56 per hour effective Nov. 1.

• Faith Cunningham as a full-time dietary aide, replacing Isabell Blystone who moved to a per diem position, at \$12.56 per hour effective Nov. 14.

• Danielle Fleming as a full-time life enrichment coordinator, replacing Symone Kinnan, at \$18.53 per hour effective Nov. 20.

• Jeffrey Simmons as a full-time housekeeping aide, replacing Lindsey Gray, at \$12.56 per hour effective Nov. 19.

• James Brandle as a full-time licensed practical nurse, replacing Sarah Smith, at \$26.39 per hour effective Monday.

In other departments Tuesday:

• In county Maintenance,

Floyd Neal Ruffner III was promoted from full-time maintenance technician to full-time maintenance supervisor, replacing Peter Yacovone effective Nov. 18 at \$21.50 per hour.

• For Children and Youth Services, one of three full-time fiscal technician positions was reclassified as a full-time fiscal aide at Pay Grade 3 effective Nov. 4. The other fiscal technician positions were filled in promotions of Ashley Reynolds from full-time clerk typist III (replacing William

Bracken) and Paul Frustaci (replacing Christy Kimmel), both effective Dec. 2 at \$16.11 per hour.

• In the District Attorney's office, Jaime Patterson was moved from full-time investigative assistant to full-time paralegal (replacing Angelina Ashbaugh), effective Nov. 18 with Patterson's rate remaining \$15.39 per hour.

• In the Emergency Management Agency, Jamie Smith, Katelynn Rearick and Kyle Rishell each were moved from part-time to

full-time dispatcher positions, replacing Terry Gardner, Derek Fether and Michael Mulgrew, respectively, all effective Oct. 28 at \$18.75 per hour. (Mulgrew was listed as having retired.)

• Also in EMA, Evan Keener moved from full-time dispatcher to full-time supervisor, replacing Nikolas Sharbaugh effective Monday at \$22.91 per hour.

• At the jail, full-time Correctional Officers Glenn Smathers and Troy Mack Jr. completed probation, Smathers on Nov. 2, Mack on

Nov. 3, each getting \$21.58 per hour.

• In the office of Prothonotary and Clerk of Courts, Ashley Murphy was rehired as a full-time department clerk II, replacing Debra Nardecchia effective today at \$12 per hour.

Separation acknowledgements were made for Yacovone, Patterson, Smith, Nardecchia, Ashbaugh, Sharbaugh, Mitchell Emanuel, Joseph Keener, Amanda Osborn, Karen Coffman, Sir-Maree Wallace and Faith Cunningham.

## Man channels life-long interest in Civil War for debut novel

**ROUMM:** From A-1

explores the enduring nature of love and the possibility that some connections transcend time itself," Roumm said.

Roumm retired in 2019 after 45 years in the business his grandfather, David Roumm, founded in 1912, RSM Company. He sold RSM to P.J. Greco and Sons of Kittanning, which moved its operations to Lucerne Road in Center Township, near the Indiana County Solid Waste Authority.

"I wanted to make sure that our customers continue to receive respect and quality service," Dennis Roumm said in 2019.

It was a family-run business that started out with a horse-drawn wagon collecting recyclables in small mining towns, and became one of the oldest, continuously-run, non-farming, family-run enterprises in Indiana County.

After the sale, Roumm took up a pen and began to write.

As a lifelong student of the Civil War, Roumm has been fascinated with that era of history since playing army as a child with the neighborhood kids. He also said that, in his studies he has encountered many re-enactors who have such a pull to that terrible conflict that they truly believe they had once

lived and fought in that war.

That fascination, in turn, led to his writing "Antietam Affairs," as he said recently, "to excite the hearts and minds of all souls longing to romanticize over that mystery."

The book is Roumm's first. "A friend of mine said, 'You're always reading about the Civil War; why don't you write about it?'" And so Roumm did. He originally set out to write a history book, but as he sat down to write, this novel is what began to flow out.

Roumm said that writing was both a challenge and a surprise. "It was all challenge. It just seemed

to flow at first, but putting good ideas together, that was the difficult part. To make it something that other people would want to read."

But in the end, the process was a rewarding one.

"I just kept thinking, 'Did I really write that? Where did that come from?' The whole thing was a surprise because I've never really done anything like this before."

Throughout the writing process, Roumm had help from friends and family. His mother, a former English professor, as well as a friend who's a journalist, and Roumm's wife, Teresa, looked over the book.

"They all gave it a look

over and my wife and I put the finishing touches on it," he said.

After finishing his writing, another challenge arose in finding a publisher. Roumm sent out multiple queries and was either rejected or wasn't given a response. That was until he came across New Authors Publishing, who read the book and ultimately published it. The company also created the cover after Roumm designed it.

Roumm thanks both his wife and White Township Supervisor Gail McCauley for pushing him to publish the book. "She (McCauley) was really inspirational in getting me to finally go ahead and publish it."

Since publishing, the book has received praise from readers including four 5-star editorial reviews.

Thoroughly bitten by the writing bug, Roumm is already in the process of writing his second book. "It's going to be completely different from this one," he said.

"Antietam Affairs" is available in paperback or eBook from Amazon, Kindle, Kobo.com, Barnes & Noble and other retail stores. There will also be copies available at Saturday's signing at the Book Nook in Indiana.

Gazette staff writer Patrick Cloonan also contributed to this article.

## Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah start ceasefire after nearly 14 months of fighting

By **JOSEF FEDERMAN, KAREEM CHEHAYEB and BASSEM MROUE**  
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah militants began early today as a region on edge wondered whether it will hold.

The ceasefire announced Tuesday is a major step toward ending nearly 14 months of fighting sparked by the ongoing war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas.

There were no immediate reports of alleged violations of the truce, and there were signs of celebration in Beirut. But Israel has said it will attack if Hezbollah breaks the agreement.

The ceasefire calls for an initial two-month halt to fighting and requires Hezbollah to end its armed presence in southern Lebanon, while Israeli troops are to return to their side of the border. Thousands of additional Lebanese troops and U.N. peacekeepers would deploy in the south, and an international panel headed

in Beirut since the start of the conflict that in recent weeks turned into all-out war. At least 42 people were killed in strikes across the country, according to local authorities.

The ceasefire does not address the devastating war in Gaza, where Hamas is still holding dozens of hostages and the conflict is more intractable.

There appeared to be lingering disagreement over whether Israel would have the right to strike Hezbollah if it believed the militants had violated the agreement, something Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted was part of the deal but which Lebanese and Hezbollah officials have rejected.

Israel's security Cabinet approved the U.S.-France-brokered ceasefire agreement after Netanyahu presented it, his office said. U.S. President Joe Biden, speaking in Washington, called the agreement "good news" and said his administration would make a renewed push for a ceasefire

Iran, which backs both Hezbollah and Hamas and exchanged direct fire with Israel on two occasions earlier this year.

**ISRAEL SAYS IT WILL 'ATTACK WITH MIGHT' IF HEZBOLLAH BREAKS TRUCE**

Netanyahu presented the ceasefire proposal to Cabinet ministers after a televised address in which he listed accomplishments against Israel's enemies across the region. He said a ceasefire with Hezbollah would further isolate Hamas in Gaza and allow Israel to focus on its main enemy, Iran.

"If Hezbollah breaks the agreement and tries to rearm, we will attack," he said. "For every violation, we will attack with might."

Biden said Israel reserved the right to quickly resume operations in Lebanon if Hezbollah breaks the terms of the truce, but that the deal "was designed to be a permanent cessation of hostilities."

a senior official with the group said Tuesday it had not seen the agreement in its final form.

"After reviewing the agreement signed by the enemy government, we will see if there is a match between what we stated and what was agreed upon by the Lebanese officials," Mahmoud Qamati, deputy chair of Hezbollah's political council, told the Al Jazeera news network.

"We want an end to the aggression, of course, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of the state," he said, referring to Israel's demand for freedom of action. "Any violation of sovereignty is refused."

**WARPLANES BOMBARD BEIRUT AND ITS SOUTHERN SUBURBS**

Even as ceasefire efforts gained momentum in recent days, Israel continued to strike what it called Hezbollah targets across Lebanon while the militants fired rockets, missiles and drones across the border.

There were no reports of casualties.

The Israeli military said it struck targets linked to Hezbollah's financial arm.

The evacuation warnings covered many areas, including parts of Beirut that previously were not targeted. Residents fled. Traffic was gridlocked, with mattresses tied to some cars. Dozens of people, some wearing pajamas, gathered in a central square, huddling under blankets or standing around fires as Israeli drones buzzed overhead.

Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adrae issued evacuation warnings for 20 buildings in Beirut's southern suburbs, where Hezbollah has a major presence, as well as a warning for the southern town of Naqoura where the U.N. peacekeeping mission, UNIFIL, is headquartered.

UNIFIL spokesperson Andrea Tenenti said peacekeepers will not evacuate.

**ISRAELI FORCES REACH LITANI RIVER IN**

Hezbollah began firing into northern Israel on Oct. 8, 2023, saying it was showing support for the Palestinians, a day after Hamas carried out its attack on southern Israel, triggering the Gaza war. Israel returned fire on Hezbollah, and the two sides have exchanged barrages ever since.

Israel escalated its bombardment in mid-September and later sent troops into Lebanon, vowing to put an end to Hezbollah fire so tens of thousands of evacuated Israelis could return to their homes.

More than 3,760 people have been killed by Israeli fire in Lebanon the past 13 months, many of them civilians, according to Lebanese health officials. The bombardment has driven 1.2 million people from their homes. Israel says it has killed more than 2,000 Hezbollah members.

Hezbollah fire has forced some 50,000 Israelis to evacuate in the country's north, and its rockets have