



# The Golden Hoosier Award

*2023 Awards Ceremony*

*Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023*

*Hosted by*

Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch

The Division of Aging, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

AARP Indiana

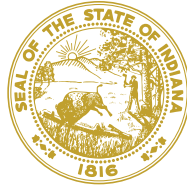




# The Golden Hoosier Award

*Congratulations to the recipients of the  
2023 Golden Hoosier Award*

<b>Mike Andree</b>	<b>Clorius Lay</b>
<b>Bonnie Carrigan</b>	<b>Rob Ohlemiller</b>
<b>John Clarke</b>	<b>Jim Peters</b>
<b>Tom Farris</b>	<b>Jeanne Wease</b>
<b>Phil Griffith</b>	<b>Bob Wortman</b>



**OFFICE OF LT. GOVERNOR  
SUZANNE CROUCH**

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Sept. 26, 2023

Greetings!

It is my pleasure to honor our recipients of the 2023 Golden Hoosier Award, the highest honor I can bestow upon an older Hoosier on behalf of the state of Indiana.

Since 2008, Hoosiers have been recognized for service to their communities with the Golden Hoosier Award. It is not just one act of community service, but rather a lifetime of community service and commitment to serving others that we honor on this special occasion. As the 52nd Lt. Governor of Indiana, it is my privilege to continue this great tradition of expressing our appreciation to these fine Hoosiers.

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration's Division of Aging and I, along with our co-host, AARP Indiana, are thrilled in recognizing these deserving individuals receiving their awards this year. They are heroes from every corner of our state and serve their communities in many capacities.

Please enjoy the ceremony and the celebration of Indiana's Golden Hoosiers! It is individual Hoosiers like these who make Indiana great and are moving our state forward every day.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Crouch  
Lt. Governor

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Presenters*

## **Suzanne Crouch**

*Lieutenant Governor of the State of Indiana*

Proud to have been born and raised in Evansville, Indiana, Suzanne previously served as Indiana's State Auditor since January 2014.

Before becoming Auditor, she served as the State Representative for House District 78 which encompasses parts of Vanderburgh and Warrick counties. She was elected to the seat in 2005, and served as the Vice Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and on the Public Health Committee. Throughout her years of public service, Suzanne has been focused and committed to programs and services for people with disabilities.

Prior to serving in the House of Representatives, Suzanne spent eight years as Auditor of Vanderburgh County. During that time, her office received its first clean bill of health in decades from the State Board of Accounts. She then went on to serve as a Vanderburgh County Commissioner until joining the Indiana House of Representatives. She presided as president of that body during her third year in office.

Constitutionally, as lieutenant governor, Suzanne serves as the President of the Indiana Senate.

Statutorily, the Lt. Governor oversees a portfolio that includes the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and Indiana Destination Development Corporation.

Additionally, she chairs the Roundtable on Mental Health, the Intellectual and Development Disabilities Task Force and the Civics Education Commission. She and her office also oversee the Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program, Hoosier Women Artists, and the Golden Hoosier Award.

## **Daniel Rusyniak, M.D.**

*Secretary of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration*

Daniel Rusyniak, M.D., was appointed as secretary of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration by Governor Eric J. Holcomb, effective Aug. 1, 2021. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Rusyniak served as FSSA's chief medical officer. He is also continuing his work as a professor of emergency medicine at Indiana University School of Medicine.

Dr. Rusyniak graduated from Villanova University and earned his medical degree from Wake Forest University. He completed an emergency medicine residency and medical toxicology fellowship at the IU School of Medicine. Dr. Rusyniak served several roles at the IU School of Medicine including vice-chair in the Department of Emergency Medicine, medical director of the Indiana Poison Control Center, division chief of Medical Toxicology, and a term as faculty president. In addition, Dr. Rusyniak was a National Institutes of Health-funded researcher studying the medical impact of substance use disorders. He has had over 100 publications, a podcast and a blog and is a nationally recognized expert in the field of toxicology.

As the FSSA chief medical officer, Dr. Rusyniak was one of the leaders during the statewide COVID-19 response serving as the point person for long-term care facilities. He was the executive sponsor for the state's efforts to reform Indiana's long-term services and supports system and was the project director for the state's Pregnancy Promise Program—a program funded by a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services grant to improve health outcomes in pregnant women with opioid use disorder.

He and his wife Janet have three kids and two dogs. Along with spending time with family he loves hiking, fly-fishing and making pizza.

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Presenters*

## **Leslie Huckleberry**

*Director, Indiana Division of Aging*

Leslie Huckleberry is the Director for the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration's Division of Aging. The Division of Aging supports the development of alternatives to nursing home care and coordinates services through a network of Area Agencies on Aging.

Before becoming the Director for the Division of Aging, Leslie was the General Counsel for the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. In her time with FSSA, Leslie has worked on various initiatives in order to support and foster networks that provide information, access and long-term care options that enhance choice, autonomy and quality of life for Hoosiers. Prior to joining FSSA, Leslie practiced law as a family law attorney and worked to provide support for families through difficult challenges.

Leslie earned her bachelor's degree from Purdue University and attended the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, earning her Juris Doctor.

## **Sarah Waddle**

*State Director, AARP Indiana*

Over the past 18 years, Sarah has served in a variety of roles with AARP Indiana, including the past eight years as state director. In this position, she has led Indiana's team efforts to enhance the quality of life for all Hoosiers as we age. During her time at AARP, Sarah has worked alongside volunteers and community partners in various capacities, expanding awareness and engagement around AARP's issues, programs and activities, building relationships with community and policy leaders, and positioning AARP to be relevant in communities across Indiana. Additionally, Sarah currently serves on the board of Joy's House and is an appointed member of the Serve Indiana Commission. Sarah calls Indianapolis home, where she lives with her husband, two children and too many animals.

## *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

### **Mike Andree, Sr.**

*Griffith, Lake County*

*Nominator: Judith Schoon*

Retired Griffith Fire Department captain Mike Andree, Sr. has been giving his all to his town since 1978, when he first suited up as a volunteer firefighter. Retirement didn't slake his passion for service, however. Since 2012, Mike has been a member of the Volunteer Emergency Services Team, an organization comprised of citizens who wish to volunteer their time and skills with the Griffith Police and Fire Departments.

V.E.S.T members, while not armed, wear uniforms and often drive emergency vehicles. V.E.S.T. members may take on station responsibilities, neighborhood patrols, funeral escorts, vehicle tows, traffic control and more. Mike averages over 200 hours a month assisting the police and firefighters in whatever way they need, freeing up their time for other duties. He also raises the funds needed to support these volunteer activities.

Mike is always there for anyone who needs help. He has been a great role model for his family, his town and his country. His two sons have followed his example and serve on the Griffith Fire Department. His community is proud to honor him for all he has done.

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

## **Bonnie Carrigan**

*Rising Sun, Dearborn County*

Rising Sun's own "rock star" Bonnie Carrigan has found a rock-solid way to bring attention to her Ohio County town and promote community spirit.

Bonnie began the "Rock on Rising Sun" organization seven years ago and has tirelessly led it ever since. Using the Rising Sun Hoosier Boy Senior Housing activities room, Bonnie and her team of "Rolling Stones" paint rocks with whimsical images, which are then hidden within the city limits for others to find and re-hide (or replace with their own creation). Photos of the discovery and its finder can be posted on the Rock on Rising Sun Facebook page. The rock search is open to all, whether a city resident or not.

Through the years, these miniature masterpieces have been relocated in other states and countries. If the thrill of the search isn't enough, the fact that rock hunts often come with prizes and help worthy causes makes them even more special.

Bonnie seeks out local sponsors to provide supplies for her painters and fun prizes for the finders. Recently, winning rocks sponsored by area businesses yielded their finders \$5 by returning the rock to its supporter. Once returned, the company pledged to make a donation to the Bulletproof Classroom Door Project for Rising Sun-Ohio County Community Schools, a cause that Bonnie is passionate about.

Bonnie and her Rolling Stones are always on hand at local festivals with their painted rock projects. Their latest venture is Shiner, the rock snake, that grows longer by the day in downtown Rising Sun. The public is invited to paint a section of Shiner's body and see how long they can make him.

Bonnie is the go-to person for all the residents in her senior building and is always eager to assist others in any capacity. Her contributions are never taken for granite.



## **John Clarke**

*Bentonville, Fayette County*

*Nominator: Jenny Hamilton*

For 47 years, John Clarke has served with the Bentonville Volunteer Fire Department, where he is now captain. He provides assistance with all emergency calls, including those needing unusual rescues, and he engages in complex firefighting work to prevent and extinguish fires. Throughout the years, he has served in a variety of roles within the department, including treasurer, secretary, vice-president, president, assistant chief and chief. John has repeatedly gone into burning buildings, rescued people trapped in cars and offered assistance when lifesaving measures were required.

Serving on the foundation's grant committee of the Fayette Community Foundation, John helps make policy decisions, develop endowments and supervise the Foundation's activities. By supporting donors and attending to community concerns, the Foundation supports the entire county. John is the first to arrive and the last to leave Foundation events, nearly always assisting in set up and clean up. Members recall John delivering dozens of bricks to the Foundation's first outdoor winter event to hold down the holiday decor. He had the foresight to consider that the bricks would be needed and the willingness to give his time and energy to make it happen.

John joins a team of volunteers each month in a tailgate distribution of commodities from the Fayette County Food Council. His work with the local emergency planning committee, through the Fayette County Office of Emergency Management, involves the development of a local emergency hazard material response plan.

John's dedication demonstrates his sincere desire to help others by contributing to the safety of his community. He is constantly ready to step in and help out wherever he is needed. In all of his interactions, his kindness and love for his community are evident.

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

## **Thomas L. Farris**

*Fountain City, Delaware County*

*Nominator: Jenny Hamilton*

Tom Farris has spent more than 50 years dedicating his life to non-profit organizations, his community, his church, Ball State University and area businesses. When it comes to art and communication, he's always been a creative genius, to the benefit of East Central Indiana.

As president of the Ball State Alumni Association and long-time member of the Alumni Council, Tom led over 200,000 BSU alumni to support university advancement, strategic plans and programs. He helped raise over \$200 million for the Ball State University Bold Campaign, the most ambitious campaign ever completed by the university. These funds were invested in scholarships, endowed chairs and other projects that have reinvigorated the school. His volunteerism with Ball State covers over 50 years.

Tom has had a great impact over his many years of serving on the board of LifeStream Services and Yorktown Properties. He helped provide oversight as chairman of the board, supporting its mission to improve quality of life and maintain independence for older adults and those with disabilities. His volunteering with LifeStream covers over 30 years. Tom has also been a leader with other East Central Indiana non-profits. In 2001, he was named Outstanding Board Member by the Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

Tom has been an idea developer for the business community and city/county officials for years, looking for innovative options that will improve Delaware County and East Central Indiana. His expertise is appreciated as he works to make organizations more effective in strategically achieving their missions.

At age 79, Tom is an award-winning artist, photographer, sculptor, writer and inventor. He's an avid pickleball player and fitness enthusiast. He encourages people of all ages to develop and share their talents and passions to make our communities better places for all, including seniors.

## **Phillip Griffith**

*Valparaiso, Porter County*

*Nominator: Chief Stewart McMillan*

Phil Griffith, the retired chief of the Valparaiso Fire Department and the Porter County Emergency Management Agency, has been a first responder for his entire career. Since retiring, he has been helping at the Multi Agency Academic Cooperative Foundation, where he has earned the unofficial title of “most amazing volunteer.”

The non-profit MAAC Foundation was established to serve public safety professionals. The MAAC Foundation develops training opportunities for firefighters, police officers and EMS. The 28-acre, state-of-the-art campus in Valparaiso offers quality instruction built to meet National Fire Protection Association requirements. Phil has volunteered there since its inception in 2017.

Phil manages the MAAC reception desk from 7 a.m. to noon every day of the week. He gives tours of the facility and helps with fundraising. Phil tracks the training times of the various agencies that train at the MAAC facility from all over the nation. He also teaches many classes on CPR, emergency preparedness, home emergency escape plans, disaster planning and more. He does anything that he is capable of—and he is capable of a lot.

Phil is also very involved with Boy Scouts of America as a leader and with helping Eagle Scouts with their projects. Wherever there is a need in his community, Phil will be there.

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

## **Clorius Lay**

*Gary, Lake County*

*Nominator: Floyd Donaldson*

Through his countless volunteer efforts and contributions, attorney Clorius Lay has long been a distinguished leader in the city of Gary. He is a former Gary City Councilman and a current Lake County Councilman who has volunteered for numerous community organizations and boards and been elected to multiple positions.

In his 47 years of service to the Gary Frontiers Service Club, Clorius has organized social events, awards ceremonies and fundraisers. He has provided free legal services for the Club, and during his 16 years as the Chair of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast over \$400,000 has been raised for the organization. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast, one of the most prestigious events in Northwest Indiana, has hosted more than 10,000 guests from all over the state.

Clorius partnered with the Gary One Love Firefighter Association to raise the proceeds for the restoration and beautification of their park for the local community and city. As a practicing lawyer for over 50 years, and he has provided pro bono legal services and served as a trustee for his church, Trinity Missionary Baptist Church of Gary. He also has served many other organizations throughout his long career, including the NAACP, the Northwest Sickle Cell Foundation and the Indiana University Northwest Medical School Scholarship Committee.

He is also well-known as Northwest Indiana's "King of Checkers." A Top Master, Clorius has been a checkers champion since childhood, and for years was the highest-ranking player in the state.

Clorius was named a Distinguished Hoosier and was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash and most recently was presented with the Key to the City of Gary. He has built a stellar career of activism and community service.

## **Rob Ohlemiller**

*Indianapolis, Marion County*

*Nominator: Barbara George*

Robert “Rob” Ohlemiller, a former employee of the Indiana Department of Correction and the Marion County Sheriff’s Office, retired in 2016 after a 43-year career in criminal justice and corrections. Before his retirement, he was active in supporting St. Vincent de Paul in Indianapolis and as a mentor to individuals in transition from prison to their communities.

Since then, Rob has volunteered as the Indiana coordinator for the Center for Mindfulness in Public Safety. Mindfulness is a skill that promotes overall well-being and helps to reduce and more effectively manage stress. The practice of mindfulness has been shown to be beneficial in improvement of law enforcement officers’ situational awareness, sleep and interpersonal relationships.

Rob has been practicing mindfulness for many years and continues to assist law enforcement professionals through his work with the CMPS. He hosts a weekly evening gathering bringing together public safety workers to engage in a period of mindful practice, shared conversations about experiences and best practices and presentations by guests.

Rob has presented workshops and hosted a weekly call-in program. He has helped to form a network of public safety workers to share cognitive social and emotional learning tools to aid them in their work. Rob has supported these programs out of his own income. He has also mentored many others in non-profit program development, including connecting them with resources for establishing their own service programs. Rob is especially proud to be a charter member of the Marion County Re-Entry Coalition.

Rob has presented a compassionate and caring attitude to all whom he meets and is a dedicated granddad. Though his recognition as a Golden Hoosier is richly deserved, Rob could receive no greater award than the simple “thanks” of those folks with whom he has worked and supported.

## *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

### **James L. Peters**

*Greenfield, Hancock County*

*Nominator: Katie Ottinger*

Jim Peters has been and continues to be an amazing community servant. He is tirelessly involved in so many things in the community, and his admirers say they can't imagine their community without him.

Jim was the executive director of Love INC of Greater Hancock County for several years. Now, in his retirement, he serves his community by volunteering with the Hancock County Community Organizations Active in Disaster. There, he organizes meetings, writes and manages grants and coordinates services throughout the region. Jim puts in place disaster response and recovery plans, then organizes table-top and field exercises to practice those plans. He serves as a spokesperson in the community for the importance of disaster response preparation.

Jim spends many hours volunteering in the COAD warming shelter for anyone without safe and adequate heat during the cold months. He will not hesitate to provide hands-on assistance to someone in need. He will drive someone who is experiencing homelessness and without transportation to a local motel. Once, there was a gentleman in the warming center who had foot surgery, and Jim was the only person who could pick him up and find a place for him to go to recover.

Jim served over 10 years on the Salvation Army of Hancock County, and he continues to assist with the Red Kettle campaign. Also, Jim assisted with the formation of several non-profits in Hancock County, including Character Council, Hancock-4Kids, and Hands of Hope Communities. He is an amazing person who is so involved in a hands-on fashion. He is a true public servant and community visionary.

## **Jeanne Wease**

*Crown Point, Lake County*

*Nominator: Pastor Jennifer Trowbridge*

Jeanne Wease states, “I don’t do stuff to be recognized. I just do stuff.” But there are few in her community who have been able to do as much stuff for as many—and with such humility. Anyone in Lake County who works with people in need knows the name Jeanne Wease.

Jeanne’s career as an educator led to her work in education administration. She became a trendsetting leader in her community. Jeanne is most humbled that in 1991 she was selected as Indiana’s Principal of the Year.

Volunteerism has long been a vital part of Jeanne’s life; she and her late husband Eugene spent more than 20 years delivering food through Meals on Wheels. As vice-chair of Northwest Indiana Community Action, she educates the community about the complexities of poverty. NWICA serves 60,000 individuals each year through programming for people experiencing financial hardship.

For several years, Jeanne was active with AARP Indiana, serving on the Executive Board, and in 2014 she received the AARP Andrus Award for Community Service. Jeanne serves on the First United Methodist Church of Crown Point’s endowment and mission committees and was the chair of trustees.

Jeanne is a Court-Appointed Special Advocate who advocates for children involved in abuse and neglect cases. As a CASA volunteer, she assesses each child’s status, determines their needs, evaluates the services being offered and develops a relationship with the child. She has served the children of Lake County in this capacity for 17 years.

Jeanne is an exceptional candidate for this award. As she says, “When you retire, it gives you a gift of time and an ability to use your talents, if you have some, for a good cause. People need to care about people. I think that is what it is all about.”

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Recipients*

## **Bob Wortman**

*Morristown, Shelby County*

*Nominators: Allyson Smith and Mary Gobble*

J.R. “Bob” Wortman has filled dozens of volunteer roles and spearheaded countless projects to serve his community. A believer in endowments, Bob has established several foundations in Hancock and Shelby Counties.

Bob serves on the Hancock Health Foundation Board of Directors, providing guidance for strategic planning as well as day-to-day work like fundraising. He’s always there to give advice or provide advocacy on behalf of the Foundation.

Bob has established funds at the Community Foundation of Hancock County, including: The Wortman Family Literacy Fund for Hancock County Children; the Wortman Family Foundation Endowment; the Robert and Sue Wortman Family Fund; and the Fountaintown Gas Company, Inc. Scholarship Endowment. All funds are perpetual and provide grants on an annual basis. Bob is also president of the Shelby County Library Foundation.

Bob led the fundraising and support for two medical centers honoring his wife: The Sue Ann Wortman Nephrology Center in Shelby County; and the Sue Ann Wortman Cancer Center in Hancock County.

Bob served as a trustee on Operation Round Up, a non-profit funded by members and customers of NineStar Connect who round up their utility bills to the nearest dollar. He reviewed applications and performed site visits of applicants. Bob is proud of his membership in the Masonic Lodge and the Scottish Rite, having received their highest awards for community service.

Bob, a former U.S. Marine and Korean War veteran, has been named a Distinguished Hoosier and was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash. There’s even been a book written about him, “Giving Back and Moving Forward,” documenting Bob’s eventful life.

Bob attributes his success in life to others. “I’d be nothing without the people of my community. They’ve done so much for my family and my business over the years,” he says. But those who know Bob know that they’re the fortunate ones.



# Agenda

12 p.m.	<b>Doors open, recipient check-in</b>
12–1 p.m.	<b>Statehouse south atrium</b> <i>Refreshments served</i>
1 p.m.	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> <i>Master of Ceremonies Leslie Huckleberry welcomes audience to the Indiana Statehouse</i> <i>Remarks by AARP Indiana State Director Sarah Waddle</i> <i>Remarks by Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch</i> <i>Remarks by FSSA secretary Dr. Dan Rusyniak</i>
	<b>Awards presentation</b> <i>Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch and Dan Rusyniak, FSSA secretary, present awards</i>
	<b>Conclusion of ceremony</b> <i>Master of Ceremonies</i>
2–4 p.m.	<b>Indiana Statehouse tours available after the conclusion of the ceremony</b>

Parking is available at the Indiana Government Center Senate Ave. or Washington St. parking garages or the Capitol Ave. surface lot. By parking in one of our designated lots, we will be able to validate your parking ticket so you won't be charged. Be sure to present your parking ticket when you check into the event.

A recording of the ceremony will be available after the event at [www.in.gov/lg/lt-governor-initiatives/golden-hoosier-award/](http://www.in.gov/lg/lt-governor-initiatives/golden-hoosier-award/). Click on the Golden Hoosier Award ceremony icon.

# *2023 Golden Hoosier Award Partners*

## **AARP Indiana**

*1 N. Capitol Ave., Suite 1275, Indianapolis, IN 46204*

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP Indiana has led efforts to support family caregivers, encourage retirement savings, and make communities more livable. Learn more and get involved with AARP Indiana at [aarp.org/IN](https://aarp.org/IN).

## **The Indiana Division of Aging**

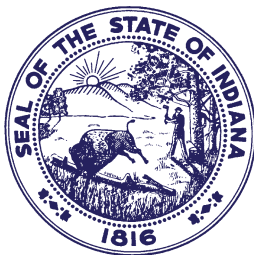
*402 W. Washington St., Room W454, Indianapolis, IN 46204*

The Division of Aging (part of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration) is committed to helping Hoosiers find the information and resources they need. Our goal is to put knowledge in Hoosiers' hands so they can make better decisions, not only for themselves but also for their loved ones. We support the development of alternatives to nursing home care and coordinate home- and community-based services and funding through the statewide INconnect Alliance network. The INconnect Alliance is comprised of 15 local agencies charged with providing a comprehensive array of services to, and advocating for, the needs of Hoosiers residing in their areas. [www.in.gov/fssa/da](https://www.in.gov/fssa/da)

Each glass award has been  
handmade by the artisans  
at Zimmerman Art Glass  
in Corydon, Ind.



*Thank you to our partner...*



**Division of  
Aging**

*This event was organized by the office of the Lieutenant Governor  
and the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.*

*Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch*

*Dr. Dan Rusyniak, Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration*

*Leslie Huckleberry, Director, Division of Aging*