

BRIEFLY

New Year's closings

CLARK COUNTY

Government offices: Jeffersonville, Charlestown and Clark County offices will be closed on New Year's Day. Clarksville offices will be closed New Year's Eve and Day.

Courts: Charlestown city, Jeffersonville city and Clark circuit and superior courts will be closed New Year's Day. Clarksville Town Court will be closed New Year's Eve and Day.

Schools: Classes in Clarksville Community, Greater Clark and West Clark schools and Providence High School will resume next Monday.

FLOYD COUNTY

Government offices: Georgetown Town Hall, the New Albany mayor's office and the county commissioners' offices will be closed New Year's Day.

Courts: Circuit, county and superior and U.S. bankruptcy and district courts will be closed New Year's Day.

Schools: New Albany-Floyd County Schools classes resume next Monday. Indiana University Southeast classes resume Jan. 10, with registration beginning next Monday.

Library: Closed New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

HARRISON COUNTY

Government offices: Corydon Town Hall will close at noon on New Year's Eve and will be closed New Year's Day. Harrison County offices are closed New Year's Eve and Day.

Courts: Circuit and superior courts will be closed New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Schools: Lanesville and North Harrison students return to class next Monday. South Harrison classes resume Friday.

GARBAGE PICKUP

Garbage, junk, recycling, solid waste and trash are picked up on different days in each community. For specific information, call these numbers:

- Charlestown: 256-3422
- Clarksville: 283-8233
- Georgetown: 951-3012
- Jeffersonville: 285-6455
- Floyd County: 948-4733
- New Albany: 948-5356

OTHERS

Driver's license branches: All license branches and administrative of-

COMMUNITY NEWSMAKER: JOHN DeFRIEND

Floyds Knobs resident drives anti-abortion billboard effort

By CYNTHIA SCHULTZ
 Special to The Courier-Journal

When the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the country in 1973, John DeFriend rented billboard space to deliver an anti-abortion message near a hospital in Minnesota, where he lived.

"I wanted to do something about it right away," he said.

A seed was planted, and DeFriend, who now lives in Floyds Knobs, is behind Billboards for Life, which is responsible for 35 permanent billboards in Indiana and Kentucky that bear anti-abortion messages. In addition, each fall up to 150 billboards bear such messages for two to three months.

In 1994, a few years after moving to Indiana, DeFriend wanted to begin a billboard campaign and called on his pastor, the Rev. Dennis Cousens of St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in Louisville, to endorse his efforts.

Cousens agreed, and letters were mailed to parishes in the Archdiocese of Louisville asking for money. It came.

The following year, Billboards for Life was born.

Outdoor Systems (now Viacom) was hired to install 40 billboards in Kentucky and Indiana near thoroughfares. The billboards were laced with Scripture. A sign now on State Street in New Albany reads: "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." (Jeremiah 1:5).

It bears a picture of Jesus and a baby in the womb.

DeFriend thought the campaign

"We've done over \$2 million worth of pro-life messages."

John DeFriend, who thought of using billboards as a venue for anti-abortion messages

would be a one-year project, but it has kept growing.

He says he hopes to change some hearts about abortion as well as "save some lives."

All the billboards include the phone number of the Pregnancy Resource Center in Louisville, a crisis center for pregnant women.

In the eight years since DeFriend began his crusade, 1,200 billboards have gone up, he said.

"We've done over \$2 million worth of pro-life messages," said DeFriend. The money has come from individuals, Catholic parishes and Knights of Columbus circles.

Although DeFriend is the project's mastermind, a handful of people from Kentucky parishes also help out.

At least 35 weekends out of every year, DeFriend travels to parishes to give presentations on his mission and collect money.

"We plan on expanding it in the

spring if things work out," said DeFriend, who runs a home-based dairy-broker and distributing company called Friendly Foods.

He said that he posted 12 billboards last year and 37 this year in the Diocese of Lexington, Ky.

Smaller billboards are appearing with the help of friends. One was built by the parishioners of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Marengo, Ind. Its double-sided message can be seen from Ind. 66, DeFriend said.

And Bernie Beam, a St. Joseph parishioner, will soon have one of DeFriend's billboards erected on his land near the Crawford County Junior/Senior High School.

"It's important to keep it (abortion) in the forefront, that it's not OK," Beam said.

Teresa Watson, director of the Pregnancy Resource Center, said it hears stories that indicate Billboards for Life is making a difference — people who say the messages changed their minds about abortion or assisted them in finding the help they needed.

"I admire John so much; he's a one-man show," Watson said.

The billboard campaign is "a very important mission; it has positive results," said the Rev. Cliff Vogelsang, pastor of St. Augustine Catholic Church in Jeffersonville, which helps support the cause.

DeFriend's goal for the coming year is "to saturate the area with billboards spring and fall" and get others to follow his lead in other parts of the country.



By ARZA BARNETT, THE COURIER-JOURNAL
 John DeFriend, left, with Dan and Judy Scholl, thought his anti-abortion billboard campaign would last one year, but it has kept growing.

Need Money?

HOME EQUITY LOANS FAST!

Borrow	Payment
\$30,000	\$180
\$40,000	\$240
\$50,000	\$300
\$75,000	\$450

NO APPLICATION FEE

FREE MORTGAGE ANALYSIS

- Up to 125% of Home Value
- Bill Consolidation Loans
- Home Improvement Loans
- Refinancing
- Past Bankruptcy OK
- Slow Credit OK

Mitchell woman says dog helped to save the life of her ill sister, 82

Associated Press

MITCHELL, Ind. — A Southern Indiana woman is crediting a dog

that was persistent, barking at her and then running to the door of Chastain's room, she said. Doc then ran back to her room to make

just a little bit longer she could've died," she said.

Wagner said Saturday that her sister is still hospitalized and is improv-