Post-Tribune

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Gary caucus fills council's 3rd district, at-large seats

By Maya Wilkins
POST-TRIBUNE

Former Gary Councilwoman Mary Brown's husband will fill her seat after a Thursday night caucus, while a local nonprofit founder will take the At-Large seat in January.

The Lake County Democratic Party hosted a caucus for the Gary Common Council's open third district and at-large seats Thursday night at the Calumet Township Multipurpose Center, 1900 W. 41st Ave. Oliver Gilliam, Brown's husband, won in the third district, and Jeremiah King, founder of Building Leaders Advancing Community Knowledge, won the at-large seat.

Six precinct committee members voted for the third district seat, and Gilliam needed four to win. He received all six votes.

He faced Norman Hairston and Kerry Rice for the seat. Hairston was originally a candidate for the at-large seat, but Lake County Democratic Chair Mike Repay said he withdrew ahead of the caucus.

"My interest is to complete the term," Gilliam said Thursday night. "There are some things that I know had been started. Prayerfully, I can pick those up because, for quite a lot of the time, (Brown) wanted to get some things done, and she was disabled to the extent that she could not."

Gilliam said he won't seek re-election for the third district seat. The seat was left open after Brown died in early October.

Gilliam said his children are excited that he'll be filling the vacancy.

He told voters Thursday that he plans to develop relationships with both the council and his constituents. Gilliam previously told the Post-Tribune that he'll continue the city's mission of blight elimination and increasing development.

Gilliam wants to help build a business corridor on 11th and 15th avenues, which he said was one of Brown's goals.

"I'd like to do the best I can to reinvigorate that, if at all possible," he said. "I will tell you a slogan that I gave here a whole lot of years

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Lake County Democratic Party caucus winner Jeremiah King speaks after learning he won Thursday. **MAYA WILKINS/POST-TRIBUNE**



Porter County deputy prosecutor Chris Hammer pauses for the retirement of the colors after playing taps during the Veterans Day ceremony Friday at the Service Memorial at Foundation Meadows in Valparaiso. **ANDY LAVALLEY/PHOTOS FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE**

'An extraordinary day to pause'

Valparaiso honors Veterans Day with early kickoff

By Doug Ross
FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE

Veterans Day got an early kickoff Friday morning at Foundation Meadows Park in Valparaiso.

"What a beautiful and reflective place this is," Mayor Jon Costas said, as he stood in front of the Duty and Service Monument honoring the war dead and first responders who have died in the line of duty.

Two wreaths in their memory stood waiting to be placed as part of the service. It took three readers to go through their names, from World War I to the present day.

"Veterans Day is an extraordinary

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Josh Koch, left, and Robert Shankland at the Veterans Day ceremony at Foundation Meadows.Koch was an Army gunner from 2001-07. Shankland was an Army dentist from 1967-73.



Tracy Millard leads the honor guard bearing the colors at the start of the Veterans Day ceremony.Millard is a captain in the Valparaiso Fire Department.

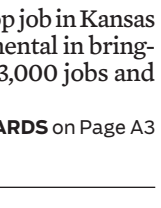
Valparaiso chamber leader sets retirement

'A passion for me': Rex Richards leaving after more than 20 years

By Shelley Jones
FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE

Rex Richards will be the first to tell you what a lucky guy he is to have served as president of the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce for the past 20 years.

"Everything the chamber has, that I need to do, was a passion for me," he said. It's "really very satisfying to know you're helping a community grow and providing jobs that people can have."



Richards

The community will fete him later this month as he prepares to step down to pursue his next chapter, setting up his own marketing and sales business and selling real estate. "I think there are a lot of things I can do to continue helping Northwest Indiana grow," he said.

Richards has made his entire career heading chambers of commerce, over the course of 54 years, since graduating from Indiana University. While taking classes in Bloomington, he gravitated toward political science, public speaking and economics classes. It was during an internship for a congressman in Washington, D.C., that he became aware he could combine all three by working at a chamber.

He took his first job leading the chamber in Jasper, Indiana, right out of school and has served six others in three states since then. After Jasper, he served chambers in Logansport and Michigan City, where he helped bring the John Anderson Company and 1,000 jobs to the city for the production of windshield wipers.

"That was a very satisfying achievement," Richards said. That company stayed in the city for 12 years.

Richards then took the top job in Kansas City, where he was instrumental in bringing a GM assembly plant, 3,000 jobs and

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JEFF SCHULTZ 1985-2026

Actor, public servant, journalist died in car crash

By Philip Potempa
FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE

Northwest Indiana stage talents, community leaders and journalists have devoted this week to sharing stories and memories for their friend and colleague Jeff Schultz, 41, who died in a car accident on Oct. 31.

One week later, on Saturday, funeral services will honor his life.

"I cast Jeff in his first play at Chicago Street Theatre back in 2011 when he was my George Bailey when I directed the radio play version of 'It's a Wonderful Life,' " said Dona Henry, a close friend of Schultz.

"Jeff did a great rendition of actor Jimmy Stewart, and he loved the story of 'It's a Wonderful Life' and the theme of how an angel can earn wings. It just so happens that Chicago Street Theatre is doing the full play of 'It's a Wonderful Life' next month for the holidays, and Jeff was so excited to help spread the word."

Schultz, a trained writer and journalist whose byline earlier in his career included writing for the Post-Tribune and the Chesterton Tribune, provided his communication skills and writing craft to serve as the publicity and public relations contact for Chicago Street Theatre, including creating and distributing press releases and social media outreach.

"On Oct. 29, just two days before his accident on Halloween, myself and everyone at Chicago Street Theatre received our final email from Jeff reminding us all that this holiday production was his favorite and he had some great marketing ideas for promotion," Henry said.

"Besides his bows on stage in starring roles, including playing the brother who thinks he's President Teddy Roosevelt in the run of 'Arsenic and Old Lace' I directed Jeff in last month, he was also on the Chicago Street Board of Directors with me serving as the recording secretary at our meetings."

Schultz, who lived in Valparaiso, died from injuries following the car accident around 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, at Ind. 49 and County Road 250 South in Morgan Township. Witnesses told police that a vehicle traveling westbound on County Road 250 South reportedly disregarded a stop sign and struck Schultz's vehicle, which overturned and resulted in Schultz being extricated. He was later pronounced dead at Franciscan Health Crown Point, according to police.

The driver of the other car, also from Valparaiso, and his passenger also needed to be extricated, police said. The driver was airlifted to the University of Chicago Medical Center, and his passenger was transported to Franciscan. The driver, according to the crash report, suffered incapacitating injuries. Police are continuing to investigate, including whether or not the driver who struck Schultz's vehicle might have been impaired from alcohol consumption.

Schultz's other public identity was serving in public office and his full-time position as the court manager working with Porter County Prosecutor Gary Germann and his staff at the Porter County Government Center.

"We are devastated and heartbroken in the prosecutor's office beyond words," Germann said in a public Facebook post, describing it as "a somber day in our office."

"We all knew Jeff as the kindest, sweetest, loving man. We have set aside his desk so no one will take his place because no one can."

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Jeff Schultz will be honored with a memorial and celebration of life at Valparaiso First United Methodist Church at 11 a.m. Saturday. **VALPARAISO FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY	SUN.	MON.
H:51 L:38	H:58 L:39	H:62 L:45

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