## In height of pandemic, Robinson steps up to plate

By Sean Douglas

Information Technology
Director Danny Robinson
has been an employee of the
City of Marion since 2005.
He is the sole IT employee
for the City and always has
a full workload.

His job is vital to communication, information, safety and security. Before the health pandemic disrupted normal operations, Robinson was already working on weekends and evenings with normal duties. In early

March of 2020, he took on new challenges. He has set up multiple employees with remote capabilities to help them to perform job functions from home. He has frequently assisted with video conferencing implementation and/or support. All of the extra assignments fall on top of his daily routine, but he tackles one job after another.

"Danny Robinson has been an integral part of the City for over 15 years," Mayor Jess Alumbaugh said. "Danny is always the first to arrive and the last to leave. Not only has Danny been a solid team player, his dedication to keeping our systems running smoothly deserves recognition."

City of Marion Deputy Controller Lynda Faw is one of many employees who has received assistance from Robinson.

"Danny's a one man operation for the entire city," she said. "He takes calls day and night. I have personally called him late nights or

early mornings for computer related issues. During this pandemic, on top of setting up several people to 'remote in' and work from home, Danny has been installing a new phone system. He's really the backbone of the City Hall operation, making sure everyone can do their work. I think often times because things are working properly, we overlook who is the mastermind behind it!"

Director of Marketing & Community Relations Director Layla Price-Bodkin is an employee who has recently received assistance from Robinson.

"Danny wears many hats, and there are more and more hats that fall under IT, especially as we endure this health crisis," she said. "Danny has had to problemsolve 'on the fly,' and handle unprecedented tasks on top of his main functions. I don't know what the City would do without his knowledge and his ability to adapt and press through



**Danny Robinson** 

each day. I speak for many in saying we are so thankful for him."

## Could "the answer blowin' in the wind"?

By Morton J. Marcu

Some see the protesters and their eyes fill with tears. Others, however, only see the looters and their hearts fill with rage.

The looters are opportunists taking advantage of a storm raised by the protesters. Some protesters are the thunder released by the guilt of being silent too long. And those of us who do not rise up in protest, who allowed decades of injustice to pass, we wait out the storm, knowing without our efforts the clouds will never disperse. Whether we protest now or not, by our prior silence we have been complicit in an injustice.



Morton Marcus
No matter how sophisticated the analysis of

summaries the result of many factors contributing to the conditions faced by African Americans: The median income of African American households in the Unites States was 33% below that of all households in 2018. Indiana's African American households were 38% below all Hoosier households.

(I will not apologize for all the numbers; the data provide a basis for measuring progress over time.)

The median is the number that separates the top half of a population from the bottom half. In dollars, those figures are astounding. Nationally, the median income of African American households was \$41,511, \$20,426 below the median of \$61,937 for all households. Here, in the Hoosier Holyland, the median for African American households was \$34,290, \$21,456 below the median income \$55,746 of all Indiana households.

It's a triple whammy. The difference between the median income of all U.S. households and that of African American household in Indiana was \$27,647. Of that amount, 74% results from being African American in America. Another 22% is the result of being a Hoosier

household with an additional 4% for being Black in Indiana.

This breakdown of the numbers doesn't suggest racism is a trivial issue in Indiana; it clearly indicates the problem is a national one, exacerbated by being both African American and a Hoosier.

You may easily explain these results by citing single parent households with children under age 18 and the education levels of the parents. Occupation is a contributor to the observed differential. Fault may be laid at the door of the schoolhouse, or decades of imprisonment in that other school, the penitentiary.

forms of emoting will not eliminate the causal factors of this income inequality nor create the outcomes being sought. The egregious behavior of some police officers and their departments are but a distillation of pervasive bigotry. Remedies have abounded for decades. Yet without dealing with the larger picture, we'll not be able to eliminate the offence of DWB (Driving while Black) or being a young Black man running. "How many roads must a man walk down

Before you call him a man?"

## State parks have improvements to share with summer visitors

Guests may notice a variety of improvements that enhance campgrounds, restrooms. trails, and other facilities in the Indiana State Parks system of 24 state parks and eight reservoir properties as we move into the traditional summer recreation season. Mississinewa and Salamonie parks are on the list of parks that have improvements for visitors to enjoy.

Skilled park staff completed many of the improvements. Partners and volunteers helped with many projects and nonprofit "friends" groups contributed thousands of dollars and hours.

Collectively, Indiana State Park properties manage more than 2,000 buildings, 700 miles of trails, 636 hotel/lodge rooms, 17 marinas, 75 launching ramps, 17 swimming pools, 15 beaches, 7,701 campsites, more than 200 shelters, 160 or so playgrounds and 150 cabins.

"Creative and dedicated employees stretch the dollars that you pay when you enter the gate, rent a campsite, launch a boat or attend a special workshop or program," said Ginger Murphy, deputy director of Indiana State Parks. Examples of systemwide improvements include:

New, efficient LED lighting in various buildings, from offices to comfort stations; various small campground improvements in different locations, ranging from leveling and adding gravel to sites to new fixtures, sinks and dividers in comfort stations, and upgrades from 30- to 50amp service; invasive plant removal, prescribed fire and habitat improvements totaling several thousand acres: fish habitat improvements at several reservoirs.

Examples of site-specific improvements include: Mississinewa Lake - A new camp store was completed and is ready to open at the beach pavilion; a public canoe rental will operate at the beach; Bostwick Pond in Miami SRA was stocked with perch; a new fishing pier is being installed at the campground mooring area and Shepocanah Trail will have a 1/2 mile added to it this summer.

Salamonie Lake: A new paved asphalt basketball

court and goals were installed in the modern campground; the Lost Bridge West launching ramp parking lot has a new vault toilet; a new accessible fishing pier was installed near the beach; the gravel exit lane next to main gate was paved; new stone has been added to several sites in the modern campground; new sidewalks were poured around campground comfort station; a new gift shop is available in the property office; nearly 40 acres of native grasses and wildflowers for wildlife and pollinators were added and over 3,000 native tree and shrub seedlings were added to improve wildlife food and cover.

Other state park improvements visitors may be interested to know are: New road pavement projects at Harmonie State Park and Hardy Lake: complete renovation of 20 rustic cabins at Turkey Run State Park and of the rentable officers homes at Fort Harrison State Park and new vault toilets in select locations at Monroe Lake and at O'Bannon Woods and Whitewater Memorial state parks.



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