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# BUSINESS LEADER

MORGAN COUNTY

October 2021



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## LET THE GIRL PLAY

*Kim Merideth leads as the first female president of the Morgan County Council*



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# A note on civility

While I no longer serve in an active government role, our nation's system of government – from the federal level all the way down to the smallest of local levels – remains dear to me. It is fascinating to study, to know how the layers connect, and as someone who loves history, how we got here with our system of government is a topic I read about and ponder often.

But can I be candid with you? Our lack of civility toward one another is remarkably discouraging. It is heartbreaking to see how we talk to each other, or about each other, even when discussing very simple topics. And let us not forget the internet has made each of us infectious disease experts, foreign policy experts, education policy experts and tax policy experts, just to name a few. Okay, I wrote that last sentence with just a hint of sarcasm!

Has it always been this bad? History suggests we have long wrestled with civility. After all, we progressed from the deadly Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton duel of 1804, just one of many historical events that suggest civility is not a new problem. Thomas Jefferson, my favorite historical figure, and sitting president at the time of the infamous duel, said this: "I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as a cause for withdrawing from a friend." Well said. Fast forward 180 years and Ronald Reagan had this to say: "The person who agrees with you 80 percent of the time is a friend and an ally – not a 20 percent traitor." Bravo.

How do we fix this? I am not presumptuous enough to think I know how to end a civility problem that has plagued humans since the beginning of time. I do, though, have a few ideas on



**RYAN  
GOODWIN**

what might help, or better yet, what has directly helped me:

Read the news from trusted sources instead of listening to or watching talking heads. Digesting the news in written form from multiple credible sources – even if you do not always agree with the source – and then reflecting on it before rushing to conclusions, is a much more peaceful process than listening to people argue about the topic on television or radio. I'll take coffee and a newspaper early in the morning over a polarized television show at night any day. I'm not suggesting if you watch news on TV that you are not civil; I'm just sharing an observation from personal experience.

Seek to understand more than being understood. When someone has a very different view or belief than you, it is likely rooted in good reason – after all, do you not think your views or beliefs are rooted in good reason? Find out why and fully

understand their perspective. Maybe their perspective will change or otherwise broaden yours, maybe it will not; but you will walk away with a deeper appreciation of their perspective and will likely have more civil interactions as a result. Great leaders are known to surround themselves with people of contrasting values and perspectives – it is possible to be principled without being myopic.

I've saved the best advice for last: use social media to relish in the photos and memories of your cherished friends and family, or to promote your business, or both it is not a place to convince someone of your political views or other views, beyond making an observation. Earlier this year, I shared a few thoughts from a book I read in business school, written by Clayton Christensen, titled "How Will You Measure Your Life?" The most impactful piece of that book for me was the author's suggestion to cultivate your family and friends as your greatest earthly source of happiness. I could not agree more, so I'll continue to fill my Facebook page up with photos of my boys and friends, instead of the latest political meme. The memes, perhaps funny, do little to change your mind and they certainly do not cultivate a culture of civility and understanding.

Let's all heed the words of Jefferson and Reagan: be kind and remain friends.

Ryan Goodwin is a former Morgan County Commissioner and current board member of the Indianapolis Airport Authority. He holds an MBA from Purdue University and writes on business and government.

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# How to you handle problems?

Problems. We all have them. Our family members have them. Our friends and colleagues have them. They come in all shapes and sizes: big, small, financial, health, personal, or professional. They are as inevitable as night and day.

There is no escaping them so the only thing controllable is how we handle them. Just take a few minutes and watch a little TV. Every program, even if it is a documentary, reveals a problem. We spend the next 30, 60, or 120 minutes seeing how the characters approach, and usually, solve the problem. It is not always a pretty picture. And you know what they say, art imitates life.

But there is something different about successful small business owners, community leaders, and problems. Problems are not painted over with glitter and rainbows. Neither are business owners dispirited or crushed by them. They stay calm and rational. They face reality with a practical analysis to see exactly where they stand and what they can do.

In fact, it is very common for small business owners to approach a problem as a challenge, or a puzzle, or even an opportunity.

Take for instance, Kim Merideth, President of the Morgan County Council. She seeks out problems across the county and collaborates with others in government and the community to understand not just the extent of the problem, but options to solve it and even more, what the consequences of the solutions will be. Her perspective is in deference for all the residents of Morgan County.

Dr. Leah Miller saw problems of pet owners



**JIM HESS**  
From the Publisher

and aligned them with the problem she faced about her career as a new Indiana resident. The alignment revealed an opportunity for pets, owners, and her family. Her solution: a mobile veterinary practice. She has found people welcome house calls and she has the flexibility needed for a wife and mother of three daughters. She also is laying a path to realizing her dream of owning a private practice of her own. Despite sounding trite, it is a win-win-win.

Problems for Brian Rogers are a challenge. When work was not satisfying, Rogers put his head down and went to work building his own business. As he says he only knew how to get work, how to do work, and how to solve problems. Staying busy for him is a way of life and he stays busy solving problems. Firewire LEDs began by producing strip LED lighting for vehicles to make it safer for police officers, firemen, safety workers, and even off-road four-wheelers.

Problems will always exist. Morgan County is full of successful small business owners whose solutions to problems have made it a great place to live, work, and play.

**CORRECTION:** In the September 2021 issue of the Morgan County Business Leader, Chip Keller was incorrectly named as a Morgan County Commissioner. Mr. Keller is a Morgan County Councilman. We regret the error.

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MORGAN COUNTY

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# This vet makes house calls

## INTEGRATIVE VETERINARY CARE

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### By Elaine Whitesides

Morgan County Business Leader

Dr. Leah Miller grew up in northern Kentucky. She never aspired to be a veterinarian. She had no idea what she wanted to be or do, and she was not ready for more years of schooling. After graduating high school in 1999, she found a job working in a veterinarian practice. She loved the experience. She knew what she wanted to do and this time, she was ready to get the schooling.

Miller graduated from IUPUI (Purdue University) in 2007, as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

During her career she worked with horses in North Carolina. Then in a private practice in Florida for five years.

## ANIMAL ACUPUNCTURE AND BOTANICAL MEDICINE

In Florida, Miller noticed the number of clients asking for acupuncture services. In 2016 she decided she would investigate this treatment option since so many customers wanted this service. "I wasn't sure I bought into it at first," Miller said.

There are only three acupuncture certifying bodies in the nation. She enrolled in the program at one of them, Curacore, previously a part of Colorado State University.

"They brought in this chicken," she said. "It was flapping its wings and carrying on. The instructor put a needle in, and the chicken went to sleep. I decided there must be something to it and I have since been blown away."

Pet owners have different reasons for seeking acupuncture for their animals. Some animals



Dr. Leah Miller

have chronic illnesses such as heart disease that prevents them from taking prescription medications. Other pet owners want to avoid a surgical option. Miller said, "Trying the least invasive, less aggressive treatment first makes sense. If it doesn't work for the animal, then you move on to the next option. Once a surgery is done, it's done, and you can't take it back."

Also, there are anti-inflammatory and pain reduction properties to acupuncture. When inflammation is causing pain, acupuncture allows many animals to improve, and live more comfortably.

"As I started seeing more acupuncture patients," Miller said, "I started researching botanical medicine." Witnessing the benefits for animals, Miller went back to Curacore, completed the course work, and received certification in botanical medicine.

## THE ROAD TO MOBILE VETERINARY SERVICES

Leaving Florida, she spent seven years in a practice in Kentucky. Her long-term goals evolved. She realized she wanted her own practice. A potential opportunity arose to take over the practice in Kentucky, but it did not work out.

In August 2010, Miller and her husband Dylan moved to Indiana with their three daughters, Macayla, now 9 years old; Haylee, now 7; and Ella, now 3. Their realtor introduced Miller to Dr. Shari Lyons, a vet in Zionsville. Lyons was looking for a surgeon. The two veterinarians hit it off and a relationship developed.

Performing surgeries two days a week, Miller knew she wanted more. Flexibility was important for the family and small business ownership would give her what she wanted. It was time to figure out how she would be able to have her own practice.

Her first question was if there was room for her in Indiana. Deep in demographics research was when the idea for a mobile veterinary service came to her.

Sitting on a beach, on vacation, the spark had been lit. "I had no paper, only paper towels," Miller said. "I began brainstorming strategies for making a mobile veterinary service work." After pages of paper towels were written, she saw she had a way to make her goal of having her own veterinary business a reality.

## THE BUSINESS MODEL

Miller's primary goal always was to provide good quality care with the best medicines and treatments. COVID had set the stage for expanded delivery services. She saw promise in a special niche bringing care directly to people's homes within a 45-minute range, which includes portions of Morgan County.

She defined her target audience. Her practice would mostly concentrate on dogs and cats. Potential customers included cat owners who dealt with the stress of getting a fearful pet into a carrier. Some dogs get anxious as

well. The ordeal causes dread and delays check-ups and other care.

There were pet owners with transportation issues: people living in senior housing, recovering from an illness or injury, or parents with young children. There were the older clients who could not lift elderly animals that struggled physically and were no longer nimble enough to get up into a vehicle.

Whatever the reason the pet owner had, Miller would be the vet that made house calls.

## BECOMING A SMALL BUSINESS

Miller admits the idea of being a small business owner gave her a bit of pause. "But I knew I was doing it for the right reasons."

Immediately Miller set up a Google business page and opened a website with e-commerce shopping. Her first marketing effort was a festival booth. She distributed cards and brochures. Very quickly Miller saw people wanted her services. "I am surprised how fast the business got going," Miller said.

Mobile services include regular checkups and vaccinations as well as treatments for illnesses and injuries. Because she has mobile diagnostic equipment, almost anything outside emergency care is possible.

Her first acupuncture patient was a referral from Dr. Lyons's clinic in Zionsville. "They don't do acupuncture, so I do," Miller said. Likewise, the Zionsville office makes it possible for Miller to offer more extensive, full-service care, including surgery. For those clients who do not wish to travel to Zionsville, she offers a pick-up and delivery service.

To help with administrative duties and for an extra set of hands to manage large animals or those with difficult behavior, she hired a part-time assistant.

The dream of running her own practice still sits in Miller's mind. "Even when I start my own practice, I will still offer mobile services," Miller said. "I have learned that it is efficient and makes life easier for people. They love it."

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# Tread wisely when putting new money into this market

As we head deeper into the fall, the world economy is beginning to slow. After months of pumped-up growth fueled by never before seen fiscal and monetary policy decisions like “B-52 money” (as if bombers are dropping massive amounts of free money from the sky), there are increasing signs that growth is tempering. Even as free money poured into the system is lessening, supply chain issues, to include components, commodities and worker shortages will remain constraints on growth. These are big, systemic, fetters to growth which will take months, many months to work through.

The chief culprit in the current global supply chain quagmire has been excess demand. Back when the world shut down, (March 2020) a lack of components, commodities and labor wasn't a pain point. We were stuck scared in our homes collecting unemployment, watching Netflix and eating home-cooked meals. We weren't buying much of anything but Ramen and M&M's. Then when the vaccine appeared to take effect, mandates were lifted, and people felt safer again to venture out... Well, we kinda went bonkers and quickly bonkers at that. According to Federal Reserve Economic Data, July '21 U.S. Retail sales are 12.7% and 52 months, (yes, 4 ½ Years) ahead of pre-COVID



**JEFF BINKLEY**  
Finance

trend lines. That's one of the reasons we're still seeing so many partially filled to empty shelves in the supermarket.

But empty shelves only tell us one side of the story. There is lots of stuff yet stuck in this global supply chain back up. Container ships, semi-trailer trains, even cargo planes still have billions of dollars of products to be unloaded behind a massive back-up of ships, trains and cargo planes ahead of it. Until the supply chain issues resolve and retail sales fall back to long term trend lines, getting non-suspect data to make wise buying decisions into this market will remain challenging.

Jeff Binkley is the Founder and Managing Director of Binkley Wealth Management Group LLC located in Avon. His firm is an Independent Fee-Only Indiana Registered Investment Adviser that has adhered to the fiduciary rule since its founding in 2010.

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# LET THE G

## Kim Merideth leads as the first female president of the Morgan County Council

By Elaine Whitesides  
Morgan County Business Leader

Morgan County is experiencing another new first with Kim Merideth assuming the role in January 2021 of President/Chair of the Morgan County Council. “Being named the first female president is another hurdle we have crossed as women,” Merideth said. “The boys are letting a girl play. It shows the county is moving in a direction that they are seeing women in leadership positions and roles. Morgan County is seeing that women can get the job done.”

Getting the job done is very much a part of the identity Meredith has established in her work and life.

When Merideth graduated from IUPUI with a bachelor’s degree in business, she took a job at a bank. A year later, she took a customer service position in an insurance agency. She had found her career. Over the next five years Merideth studied and achieved all the certifications and licenses to be a property and casualty agent.

Insurance was not the dream Merideth originally thought she would live. “I wanted to stay in the financial end of things,” she said “Life and opportunities came about and changed my life – in a good way. Insurance has been great for me.”

Being a working wife to Bret and the mother of two sons, Cory and Brandon, Merideth knew all the roles held by a modern woman. She said insurance is an industry where a woman can fill a nurturing professional role and be helpful to folks in the worst times of their lives. The hours are flexible. “You’re local and can build strong relationships and be ingrained in the community,” she said. Being rooted in the community is a natural part of life for Merideth. She is excited seeing the children of clients coming in with their little ones. She enjoys the generational aspect of her work as she watches families and the county grow together.

After almost three decades in the same agency group, Meredith moved to Mayfield Insurance in March 2021. She was glad to step out of her COVID-driven home office and back into the collegial office atmosphere. With her own

### MORGAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Kim Merideth, President/Chairman  
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governmental role, business owner Peggy Mayfield understands the demands of balancing professional, personal and civic life.

### CIVIC LIFE

Currently a resident of Martinsville, Merideth grew up out in the country on the western side of Morgan County. She remembers trailing her politically active father as a youngster. She started as a girl handing out cards and flyers at the polls with her father. He planted a seed that she has nurtured and grown. She developed an interest in politics, so considering public office was not a far reach.

Feeling drawn to serve, Merideth began her own civic involvement campaigning for Trustee on the Washington Township Board. She shared that it was the first run in politics outside high school where she was class vice president.

The decision to run was not made lightly. “I didn’t really know politics at that point,” Merideth said. “There were a lot of financial issues at the time.” The future looked economically uncertain. She felt her financial background could make a difference. “We had to make big, hard decisions,” she said, “and get a lot of things in order.” Within two years, she says, they had a \$1 million surplus.

While in her second term as Trustee, Merideth was approached by long-time Morgan County Councilor Robert O’Neal, who was not running for another term. He thought she should throw her hat in the ring. He had been impressed with her work as a Trustee, and she felt honored that he expressed such faith in her. “He said he would support me.” She resigned from the Washington Township Board and began another campaign.

“The surprise to me,” Merideth said, “I didn’t realize how sizeable the county was. You learn just how many doors there are to knock on in Morgan County.” She was elected and joined the seven-member council. She was happy to find that “policies and positions did not impact



relationships,” she said. “Even though you didn’t agree, you still left as friends when the meetings concluded.”

At the beginning of her second term, she was elected President of the Council. She believes her willingness to dig in and be prepared for discussions played an integral role in the unanimous vote. “I was honored to be asked to step into that role,” Merideth said, “to have others have faith in me and be respectful of the way I handled myself.”

### ON THE JOB IN THE COUNCIL

The Morgan County Council is the fiscal branch of the county government. “We hold the checkbook,” Meredith said. While the budgets and bills are large amounts, she says it is much akin to the financial side of running a business. “There may be more zeroes on the end, but we pay our bills

# Economy

## HEATING - AIR COND - PLUMBING

# GIRLLPLAY



across the county, such as Churches in Mission and the Re-development Commission. She also attends as many community events as possible, so she can talk with constituents to learn what they see and need.

“Our job is to dig in, understand the needs, and how to resolve them.” Ideas flow in from all directions but, she says, “all are working in the same direction.”

She is especially listening for changing needs as the county sees growth. “We are on the cusp of huge expansion and growth,” Meredith said. “Needs must be considered carefully. We need to be cautious of what we let become part of our county.” For example, it is unknown what changes the I-69 expansion will drive. She said, “We want to be more than truck stops and exits on the highway.”

With the growth, Merideth anticipates the coming challenges. There are 700 homes being developed right now that will impact schools, emergency management services, the sheriff’s department, roads, water, and sewers. Anticipating what needs to be done with infrastructure to protect those entities and their families remains in the back of her mind with every conversation.

In the business sector, growth is anticipated as well. What kinds of businesses needed in the county and what kinds of companies come in are part of the discussions. The Council has a relationship with economic development and all the information gathered contributes to the cumulative capital improvement plan. “We want to be looking down the road, 5, 10, 15 years ahead and look at what we are going to be facing,” Merideth said.

## THE WORLD IS CHANGING

Change, of any kind, is never easy.

Merideth says the world is changing and the county needs to change, too. She says it is time to look at, and perhaps go, in new directions. The phrase, “we’ve always done it that way” is like fingernails on the chalkboard for Merideth. She said, “Maybe we don’t have to do it the way it’s always been done to move forward in a good way.”

Morgan County has always been a place where neighbors step up to lend a hand and help each other. She sees the same relationships between organizations, and the County Council as well. Smaller departments across the county have decided to combine their resources and work together. Other departments have seen services cut and taken it upon themselves to fill the gap, so the community does not suffer. “If we all do a little,” Merideth said, “it comes out to a lot.”

She says that the Council has good people in place and is moving in a good direction. “I want to be part of that,” Merideth said, reflecting on her future in government. “It certainly makes it easier to lead.”

There are nights Merideth says, when she feels the weight of the responsibility she has accepted. However, she feels part of a strong team, so she is not shouldering that responsibility all by herself. “Just like in business, one person can’t do it all. Great people step up and bring something to the table.”

Teamwork is a word that comes up time and time again in conversation with Merideth. She says it is a guiding principle for her.

Personally, she says she and husband Bret are empty nesters who make a great team. They are informed of each other’s schedules and attend many community events together. “I can’t imagine if you didn’t have someone support you or have a problem with the hours you keep.”

On the Council, Meredith says working as a team means everyone is working toward a common goal to better the towns and counties. Individuals on a team align so everyone is moving in the same direction. “A team will work as one,” Merideth said.

Good communication is key for county government as well as spouses. The level of communication between the council and the commissioners is good and she says it helps her do her job better.

An informed constituency also makes leadership easier and better. All the council meetings are recorded and can be viewed at any time on YouTube. All residents are invited to attend meetings on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 in the Lucille Sadler room of the Morgan County Administration Building.

While Merideth is honored to be President/Chair of the Morgan County Council and enjoys her work immensely, she says it is not about her personally. Instead, she is planting seeds and showing the way for future generations of women to be leaders and strong team members.

“I think of my two granddaughters,” Merideth said. “I want to build better for them, so they have a community they want to live in and work in and raise their families in someday.” Just as she did with her father, her youngest granddaughter tags along with her as she ventures throughout the county. “I want them to see women are capable of doing any job. I want them to look back and be proud of their grandma and community. I want a future that is better for all.”

just like a family does. We must watch expenses and see where we can reduce costs or renegotiate contracts.

“We have a big job,” Merideth said. “Those who have been elected to fill those positions are very well equipped for the job. There are people with diverse backgrounds that will do the best for the county.” She views the council as a team where everyone contributes to reaching county goals. It was during her first term on the council that a proposal was made to the county commission for a county administrator to be hired and a human resources department established. They agreed and those changes have provided another level of personnel to guide the 400+ employees to “get it done” for the county.

Staying informed of the needs in the county on a local level can be challenging. Merideth sits on several boards

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### By Elaine Whitesides

Morgan County Business Leader

Brian Rogers worked for money before he was old enough to drive a car. That did not seem out of character to him. He grew up working on the family farm in Belleville, Ind. “It was my dad and myself,” Rogers said. “We had 200 acres but farmed several thousand. We were busy.” Rogers has stayed busy ever since.

By the time he got his driver’s license, he owned three cars. “I have had over 100 vehicles over my lifetime,” Rogers said. “I would fix them up and sell them.”

After high school, Rogers had a variety of jobs, never figuring out what he wanted to do but knowing working in the steel mill or a plant wasn’t it.

Because he found himself working rotating shifts in the plants, three or four days on, then the same off, and rotating between day and night shifts, Rogers had time on his hands. That



Brian Rogers

is, he had time on his hands after he figured out if he was on or off, and if he was late for the day shift, or needed to get ready for the night shift.

To stay busy, Rogers bought a van and a power washer and started Roger’s Mobile Power Washing. He knocked on doors and worked up to a crew of 12 full-time employees working 24/7. Rogers said, “Then we added snow plowing services.”

Rogers had married Shannon and business was good. Then 2008/2009 happened. “We made it until the end of 2009,” Rogers said. “But in 2010 we had to close everything.” He went back to working rotating shifts in the ethanol plant.

### LIGHT IT UP!

Once again Rogers found himself with time on his hands. While he had been snowplowing, he noticed the trucks only had hazard lights. He felt it would be safer for everyone if the trucks had additional lighting. Here was a problem and he wanted to solve it.

He placed three LED diodes every two inches on a half-inch wide strip. The strip of lights resembles a wire and is installed under the doors creating rocker panel lights. He found that additional lighting was expensive and that was often paid for by individual officers in police, fire, and other safety jobs.

He launched Firewire LEDs in 2013 to offer a quality LED lighting product

at an affordable price. Firewire started as an online business through an e-commerce website and selling product at trade shows, car shows, and other events. Just like when he started the power washing business, he also started knocking - on police department doors.

The Firewire product line has expanded into a wide variety of strip and strobe lighting. Other vehicle accessories like headlights, bulbs, resistors, and window tinting are also available.

### GROWING SUCCESS AND PAINS

“There were growing pains,” Rogers said. “All I knew was to get work, do work, and solve problems. But I am seeing-is-believing, figure-it-out kind of person.” He explained he did not know anything about accounting or business, so he learned how to do everything himself, including the financing of the business.

Rogers began contacting upfitter shops across the nation and into Canada. “I would reach out to them, load up product, and drive to their store,” he said. “Every single time they bought what I took. That told me there was a need for it.” Today, Firewire has a distributor network of more than 80 outlets.

Because the company continually improved and developed new lighting products, sales grew.

Each time the company relocated to a larger space they quickly outgrew it. Within a month after moving into a building where they could install lights and tint windows, they were looking for new space.

The new space they found was a building in Mooresville. “The cost of Morgan County is less than other counties,” Rogers said. After four years, he says Morgan County has been a great place for Firewire.

### FAMILY ROOTS

Firewire is a family business. Rogers works with his wife, sister, and mother. “We are a team,” Rogers said. He says they all have his same work ethic.

The move to Mooresville was good for the company and for the Rogers family, which had grown to include a daughter and a son. Before moving to Mooresville, he and Shannon would work until 10 or 11 P.M. “We were working way too much when the shop was closer to home,” Rogers said. “Now it is far enough away that I won’t just drive to the shop over the weekend.”

In 2017 life threw a plot twist and Rogers found himself counting on his family to keep everything going. Rogers was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a rare blood cancer. “Everything stopped,” Rogers said. “It was the first time my mind was empty, completely cleared.” Doctors gave him a plan, procedures, and showed him he could live.

Three days a week he went for treatments. He was hospitalized for 14 days for a bone marrow transplant. Three days after that, he went back at work. Days after that, he packed up his medication and brace and left for a show in Las Vegas. “I walked 27 miles that week and continued on with my life,” Rogers said. “It’s my drive. It’s who I am.”

“Life hasn’t been easy,” Rogers said, “but I haven’t made it easy.” Rogers has spent more years with Firewire than at any job. And he is not inclined to stop doing it or get rid of it. “I don’t look at it as work. It’s life.”

The successful business the family has built makes him proud. He is also proud of how they as a company work for continuous improvement, keep adding products, and are extending the LED lighting technology.

Rogers doesn’t get bored. Instead, he gets busy finding a solution to a new problem.

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# Your mental health matters?

Morgan County teachers, counselors, social workers, youth organizations and others will tell you the number of our children experiencing trauma continues to rise each year. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, domestic violence, mental illness, addiction, and more have been identified in our schools as children struggle to cope and learn.

“Many of our kids in school haven’t learned how to effectively cope with challenges such as receiving a bad grade, criticism from their peers, or changes in their home life. As a result, they’re either getting angry or having a meltdown in the classroom and when they come to see me, some of them want to crawl under my desk or table to escape the stress they’re feeling,” said Niki Walls, a Youth First Social Worker at Bell Intermediate Academy in Martinsville. “If they can’t learn to cope at this age, what’s going to happen when they’re adults and they have a melt down or worse?”

That’s why the Community Foundation of Morgan County (CFMC) is working with educators, school psychologists, community leaders and others to provide the necessary training, manpower and additional resources to ensure our kids receive the help they need. With everyone’s support, these students can work towards becoming healthier and productive adults in our communities.



**BRITTANI BENTLEY**

“Everyone asks me what’s the biggest issue I handle with these students. I would honestly say the root of it stems from their lack of self-esteem. Many of them, unfortunately, hate themselves,” added Walls. “I challenged one student to write four positive things about them self and they really struggled in completing the task.”

The Community Foundation of Morgan County (CFMC) is taking a different 2021 grantmaking approach by prioritizing K-12 mental health. Many philanthropic organizations providing grant dollars are also prioritizing key community needs in response to growing needs. CFMC is focused on creating dynamic impact, providing guidance for sustainability, and finding solutions to end cycles of poverty. CFMC opened the IMPACT Grant Cycle for 2021 with new guidelines.

Children experiencing mental health issues have risen due to the pandemic in our schools. Partnering with our community through private and corporate philanthropy makes these real solutions possible. The youth of today are Morgan County’s future leaders, they deserve to be prioritized.

Brittani Bentley, with more than a decade of corporate accounting experience, is the President of Community Foundation of Morgan County and has spent the last 7 years dedicated to serving the community of Morgan County in the non-profit space. She is passionate about philanthropy and community building.

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## Being prepared brings peace of mind

To say that society is struggling with “supply-chain” issues is a HUGE understatement! Everything from building materials to food at the grocery has been in less supply and higher priced. The heating, air conditioning and plumbing industry is no exception. There are repair parts that we have been waiting on since March, with no real answers as to when we can expect them.

Why am I mentioning this to you? The LAST thing you want for your home or office is to find yourself in a situation of needing a repair on your comfort system in the middle of the upcoming cold months, and the needed parts be unavailable. Being prepared is the answer! Schedule an appointment with a trained and licensed HVAC contractor to thoroughly inspect, clean, and prepare your heating system



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for the winter. The sooner the better! This is NOT just a dusting off and vacuum job. This should be a complete disassembly of the combustion section, thorough cleaning and inspection of these components as well as the air circulation and exhaust sections. A weak component can often be detected and addressed long before it fails. My hope is that everything is great and ready to provide you with reliable comfort all winter, but if an issue is detected during this inspection process, we have time to locate parts.

We would love to show you why we have been the preferred heating and air conditioning service provider in Morgan County for 45 years. Give us a call at 317-831-5279 or visit us at EconomyHeatingandAir.com to schedule an appointment and get the peace of mind that preparedness brings.

# DOES INSURANCE COVER THAT?

## Water Damage Caused by a Dishwasher

**Yes, a Homeowner's Insurance Policy does cover Water Damage caused by a Dishwasher...**

Yes, a Homeowner's Insurance Policy does cover Water Damage caused by a Dishwasher...

Water Damage caused by a dishwasher is common. They normally do not cause significant water damage if the homeowner catches early.

A homeowner's policy does cover water damage caused by a dishwasher but its important to know that if the water damage was happening for a long period of time it may not get covered. The Insurance Company will cover the Emergency Water Mitigation Services and Repairs up to the policy limits. **The only out of pocket expense for the property owner is the Insurance deductible and the cost to replace the Water Spigot.**

Do you need help with Water Damage



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[Visit their Website at www.lifeimpact.care.](http://www.lifeimpact.care)

# How intellectual is YOUR property?

For the past three months, I've been writing about intellectual property and how it relates to the technology and software we use in our day-to-day lives. Today we'll wrap this series up with a few specifics, some things to think about, and an action or step you can take if think you may be at risk (or have an opportunity to protect something great).

Intellectual property falls into 4 key categories: Patents, Copyright, Trade Secrets, and Trademarks. We're all aware of the prestige and cost that goes into obtaining a patent, but there's often just as much importance to identifying and protecting proprietary processes and marketing language in the small business world. If you create an awesome infographic that goes viral, what's in it for you? If someone "reverse engineers" your secret recipe that makes your secret sauce amazing, is there anything you can do about it?

The laws of intellectual property are much more complicated than I have the knowledge to write about (or you have the interest to read), but it's important to think about what we've produced that falls under it, and also what we are using that may be protected under someone else's rights. Here are a few "quick tips" that you may want to consider for common situations we as business leaders find ourselves in.

- **Research Early.** Got a new business, product name, or phrase you want to use? Look it up on [uspto.gov](http://uspto.gov) and Google it. If someone else has already camped out on your name or phrase (especially if they're in the same line of work as you), proceed carefully, and if it's really important, get legal advice. Using a name or phrase protected by someone else (either through a formal registered trademark® or informal existing usage) can lead to confused customers, a cease and desist complaint, or formal legal action.
- **Don't Get Lazy.** We all know how easy



**CHET CROMER**  
Technology

it is to "right click and save" an image off of the web that would work perfect in a newsletter or on our website. Take it from a guy who got in a hurry one time and received a nastygram in the mail - it's not worth the shortcut. Make sure you have rights to use the images and text you use in your materials, and keep track of where they came from.

- **Get Help When Needed.** I sometimes dread calling my attorney for advice. I know the clock starts ticking right away, but the cost of the services I receive has always been well worth it. Whether they've helped me with a dispute after-the-fact or putting an agreement together that will last for years, don't be afraid to get professional help when you've got something new to get off the ground.

Intellectual Property law is not for the faint of heart, but it's worth paying attention to. Your business may have some very valuable assets in this area, and whether you are simply protecting them or valuing them as part of your business' worth, it's well worth understanding and taking proactive care of.

Chet Cromer is the president of C2IT Consulting, Inc., a Plainfield-based technology business that provides websites, mobile apps, and IT consulting/support to businesses across central Indiana. He can be reached at [chetcromer@c2itconsulting.net](mailto:chetcromer@c2itconsulting.net) or (317) 721-2248.

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# Be a better listener today!

Most of us are pretty good at talking, but many of us have challenges when it comes to listening. One sage said, "The only reason we listen is because we know we get to talk next." Here are some tips that will improve your listening immediately by simply changing your listening behavior.

**First, Names!** Repeat the person's name when you first meet him or her. This will make you listen first and talk second. It's best to have a good working strategy to become a better listener, and repeating a person's name will help you do just that. Don't hesitate to ask a person how to say their name or to repeat their name a second time, especially if the name is unusual. When you do this, you are showing concern for the other person, which is an important aspect of listening. Use the person's name in your response. "Is this your first time here, Suzanne?"

**Second, Ask a question!** When you are anticipating making a comment on what a person has said, ask a question instead. This will keep you listening longer, and often the added information will help you make a higher quality contribution to the conversation. Get information before you give information.

**Third, Pause!** Don't rush to answer the phone when it rings. Pause a moment so that you can be mentally ready to listen to the person calling you rather than thinking about what you were doing when the phone rang. Taking a few extra seconds to refocus and think will make you a better listener from the beginning of the phone conversation. In addition, listen as though you are going to report the message to someone else. This keeps you focused on the main reason or idea of the call.

**Fourth, Streamline!** Eliminate clutter around the phone and your desk so you won't be easily distracted when you are talking



**JACK KLEMEYER**  
Business Coach

by phone or have a person talking to you in your office. Notes, pens, folders, clocks, and knickknacks can and will distract you, and you may not even be aware of the distraction until you realize you have no idea what the person just said.

**Choose your time!** Remember, multitasking is a myth.

**Fifth, when possible choose your listening time** during the part of the day when you are most mentally alert. If you are a morning person, make your most important appointments, interviews, or phone calls during that time. If mornings are difficult for you, make the afternoon your time for calls. You lose listening acumen and consistency in focusing when you are tired physically or mentally.

**Finally, Admit!** Don't be afraid to admit that you're having a hard time listening and then make the necessary adjustments. You might say something like, "I'm sorry I missed that last point. Please repeat that for me." Or "I'm having a hard time concentrating; let me move to another chair." Or "Could we

pick up the conversation later this afternoon? I need a break and some lunch." Any of these responses will tell people that you want to listen to their messages, and that what they have to say is important to you.

Some listening skills, such as suspending judgment, dealing with biases, and avoiding daydreaming, take time to develop because of the mental self-discipline they require. Following these tips, however, will improve your listening immediately.

Grow Your Business™ Coaching founder Jack Klemeyer is recognized as a preeminent resource for business professionals. As a John Maxwell Certified coach, speaker, trainer and facilitator of Mastermind groups for business owners and professionals, his results-driven philosophy calls for action and accountability. Jack can be reached at Jack@GYBCoaching.com or at 317-755-6963. Learn more at GYBCoaching.com.

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