

SEEKPRAYSHARE

SISTERS OF ST. BENEDICT OF FERDINAND, INDIANA

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 2 | FALL 2026



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There's a popular saying. It's not about the destination, it's about the journey. This issue of *Seek Pray Share* is about a few journeys.

There's a very literal journey by the Women of the Rule to our monastery in Peru, and a journey of generosity as they celebrate another luncheon in which they choose projects to fund.

There's the journey of moving our gift shop from its current location up to the main monastery building. And the very personal journeys of Sisters Becky and Karen, each of whom celebrates a Jubilee this year.

Sister Jill takes a journey into the past as she interviews her parents for our podcast. And three of our Sisters come to the most beautiful part of their journeys as, in their passing after lives of devoted service, they each realize the fulfillment of God's promise for them.

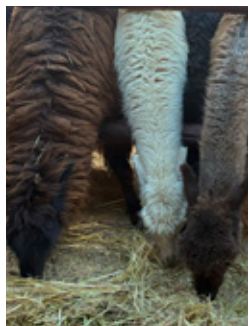
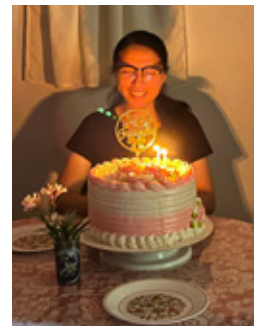
We are so grateful for the part you play in our journey. The many roads our Sisters have traveled in service to others would simply not be possible without your love and support. I hope as you read this issue you'll feel our gratitude on every page.

Sister Anita Louise Lowe, OSB

Sister Anita Louise Lowe, OSB
Prioress

Revisiting Peru with the Women of the Rule.

This summer, members of the Women of the Rule traveled to Peru to visit Monasterio Paz de la Cruz, our dependent monastery, which we established in Morropón in 1983, and to see the country.



Women of the Rule Do It Again.

Philanthropy circle funds projects for the Sisters.

The Women of the Rule are a unique philanthropic group with a simple idea. Each member makes an annual gift of \$1,000.

Sisters submit requests for funding, based on the community's needs and ministries. The Women of the Rule review the proposals and vote on grant recipients, then celebrate with the Sisters at the awards luncheon.

This year, that luncheon was held on August 21 at the monastery in Ferdinand, where members directed \$157,531.80

to fund the projects listed below. Together with projects funded earlier in the year, the Women of the Rule provided \$185,138.80 in total funding in 2026. (Some members even funded projects themselves with contributions above and beyond their annual donation!)

- Ecological Spirituality
- Outdoor Hospitality Area
- Additional Walking Paths
- Mission Trip to Mexico
- Living Our Faith:
 - A Catechetical Program for Jamaica
 - Replacement of North Courtyard Walkways
 - Monastery Exterior Signage Update
 - Benedictine Vocations Display Panel and Pull-Up Banners
 - Benedictine Vocations Digital Advertising Campaign
- Ministry to Women Who Are Incarcerated
- Mobile Food Pantry Pilot Program

- Partnership to Help Those in Need
- Jacobs Virtual Academy at Monastery Immaculate Conception
- Benedictine Hospitality and Spirituality Scholarship Fund
- Quilts for the new Benedictine Family Scholar House
- Benedictine Scholar House Emergency Assistance Fund
- Women Helping Women
- Water Softening System *
- Exercise is the Best Medicine!
- Repair of Grotto Shrine
- Monastery Church Pipe Organ Restoration

** Partially funded*

The Women of the Rule also enjoy opportunities throughout the year to grow in faith, fellowship and connection with the Sisters and one another — including this past summer's trip to Peru to visit the Sisters' monastery, tour the ancient city of Cuzco, and experience the wonders of Machu Picchu. (You can see photos from that trip on the previous page.)

\$1,272,636.01
FUNDING
PROVIDED SINCE
THE BEGINNING

\$574,216.05
ENDOWMENT
FUND BALANCE
AS OF JUNE 30, 2026

172
PROJECTS
FUNDED SINCE
THE BEGINNING



To join the Women of the Rule or just learn more, simply scan this QR code.



2 Tasty New Shortbreads!

Introducing two delightful new shortbread cookies! Baked right here at the monastery, our Cranberry Shortbread Cookies bring a tender, delicate crumb and the natural tartness of cranberries. For a savory twist on a timeless classic, our Garden Dill Shortbread Cookie blends the rich, buttery crumble of traditional shortbread with the bright, herbaceous flavor of dill weed. Baked in small batches with care, these shortbreads are well suited for gatherings, gifts, or a moment of refreshment alongside tea or coffee. Grab some at the Gift Shop or order yours online today — just scan the QR code at right with your smartphone!



The Gift Shop Has Moved!



Heading into the holiday shopping season, we're shaking things up a bit! On September 1, the Monastery Gift Shop relocated from its former space in the event hall up to the south side of the monastery in the former Alumnae Center. The new space allows our guests who are spending time on a retreat, taking a tour of the monastery, attending Mass or prayer with the Sisters, or simply visiting to have easier access to all the delights the Gift Shop has to offer. We hope you'll drop by for a visit in our new space. Of course, all your favorites are still available online 24/7. After all, that holiday shopping isn't going to do itself!



Finding Home. Finding Her Gifts.

Sister Becky grows into the life God planned for her.



When Sister Rebecca Ann Mathauer first came to Ferdinand in January 1997, she was a 19-year-old college student without a car, trying to understand where God might be leading her. “That first time I came here,” she recalls, “I knew I was home. I didn’t know when or how, but I knew I was going to live here someday.”

Nearly three decades later, Sister Becky’s sense of home has only deepened. Along the way, the Sisters of St. Benedict have helped her discover gifts she didn’t always recognize in herself — gifts that have touched the lives of countless students, families, fellow Sisters and, most recently, the Oblates of the Sisters of St. Benedict.

Growing up in Indianapolis, Sister Becky was always drawn to the Church. “Most kids, teenagers, sometimes their parents had to drag them to church,” she says. “I was never one of those kids. I always wanted to go.”

She became involved in Eucharistic ministry and served as a reader at Mass. That connection continued when she enrolled at Marian College in Indianapolis. While studying theology and pastoral ministry, she became active in campus ministry and youth ministry.

An internship paired her with a Sister from Beech Grove at a small inner-city parish on Indianapolis’ near east side. That opened the young student’s eyes to a possibility she hadn’t seriously considered before: religious life.

A Sister encouraged her, and she began exploring different communities, including the Franciscans in Oldenburg and the Carmelites in Indianapolis. With the help of a spiritual director at Marian, she continued to listen, question and discern.

She visited the Benedictine Sisters in Beech Grove in November 1996. Two months later, she was invited to Ferdinand. There was just one problem. She didn’t have a car.

Sister Rose Mary Rexing, then vocation director, arranged for her to ride with another young woman who was coming to visit. That weekend changed the course of her life.

She finished college, earning a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and theology from Marian College, along with National Certification in Youth and Young Adult Ministry. She graduated in May 1999, and entered Monastery Immaculate Conception that August.

She made her first profession on July 14, 2001, and her perpetual profession on October 6, 2007.

“I’ve quite literally grown up in community,” she says. “I’ve grown and been stretched in so many ways.”

One of those “stretches” led her somewhere she never expected: the classroom. As a student, Sister Becky had struggled academically. She didn’t have great study habits and never imagined that teaching would be one of her gifts. But one of her Sisters did.

Sister Mary Celestine encouraged her to volunteer at Ferdinand Elementary School as a teaching assistant. Sister Becky agreed and spent a year working with students from kindergarten through sixth grade.

“I just fell in love with teaching, with the classroom and the schedule and working with students in that capacity,” she says. That discovery began a teaching ministry that would span more than two decades.



LEFT

Sister Rebecca Ann Mathauer making her final vows at Monastery Immaculate Conception in 2007.

Sister Becky moved to Louisville in 2004, serving at St. Albert the Great as a middle school instructional assistant and seventh-grade religion teacher. Two years later, she joined the newly formed St. Andrew Academy, teaching Religion full time to 180 sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders each day.

When staffing changes brought that position to an end, Sister Becky returned to school, this time at the University of Southern Indiana, completing a bachelor's degree in elementary and middle school education and earning her teaching license.

While studying, she worked as a substitute teacher and helped in the office at St. Joseph Catholic School in Vanderburgh County, where she also completed her student teaching.

She later taught at St. Joan of Arc in Indianapolis, living with the Sisters in Beech Grove, before returning to Louisville to teach sixth-grade English at St. Patrick Catholic School.

Eventually, another Sister saw a new opportunity for her. Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz, then prioress, encouraged Sister Becky to consider a religion teaching position in Jasper. She accepted and began what would become the longest chapter of her teaching ministry, first at Holy Family School and then at Holy Trinity Catholic School following the consolidation of three Jasper Catholic schools.

She also continued her own education, earning master's-level catechesis certification through the Archdiocese of Louisville and a master's degree in education with a concentration in literacy and reading from the University of Louisville.

Her ministry has also included Director of Religious Education and youth ministry work, resource teaching, religion program coordination, vocation and Confirmation retreats, and directing drama programs for students.

For someone who once doubted she could be a teacher, education became one of the great joys of her life.

"I think being a struggling student myself has made me a better teacher," she says. "I am more patient."

She especially loves the moment when a student who had been struggling suddenly understood. "When I see a

student's face light up, when I see them go, 'Oh, okay,' and their eyes brighten," she says, "they get excited. I get excited."

Teaching religion let her create a place where young people could wrestle with questions about faith.

"They want to understand why we do what we do and say what we say and pray what we pray," she says. "Giving them a safe space to be able to do that has been one of the greatest joys of my life."

Today, Sister Becky has stepped away from the classroom and into ministries she never expected. She serves as Oblate Liaison for the Sisters of St. Benedict, and she has recently joined the Mission Advancement team, helping to steward and deepen our relationships with our supporters.

Oblates are lay women and men who seek to live according to the Rule of St. Benedict within their own homes, families, careers and communities.



RIGHT
Sister Becky
teaching Religion at
Holy Trinity Catholic
School in Jasper

Sister Becky works closely with the Oblate leadership team to develop programming, formation opportunities, discussions, newsletters, articles and presentations.

Her path to the role began several years ago when she was asked to accompany a woman preparing to become an Oblate. The following year, she mentored another woman. Then Prior-ess Sister Anita Louise Lowe invited her to consider serving the Oblates in a leadership capacity.

“It’s been a wonderful surprise,” she says. “It’s been a wonderful stretch, definitely a stretch and growth process, but I’m learning a lot, and I love every minute of it.”

She sees the relationship between the Sisters and Oblates as deeply reciprocal. Oblates give generously of their time and talents to the monastery, but they also bring perspectives and experiences that enrich the Sisters.

“Our Oblates play a crucial role within our community,” she says, “because our relationship is very much symbiotic.”

Her work reaches beyond Ferdinand. Oblates are connected to the Sisters’ ministries and history in places including Peru and the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Sister Becky has helped strengthen those relationships, including traveling with a group to North Dakota to lead a retreat and reconnect with Oblates there.

It’s a new chapter, but it reflects what first attracted her to Benedictine life: the balance between prayer and service, between life within the monastery and life among the people.

That balance has sustained her through years of living and ministering in Louisville, Evansville and Indianapolis. Now at the monastery, she continues to discover what Benedictine life asks of her and what it can give in return.



“I have found a happiness here that I never knew was possible until I became part of this life and grew into this life,” she says.

Her own journey also shapes what she tells young people who wonder what God may be calling them to do. She doesn’t tell them they need to know the answer, but simply that they need to remain open.

“Just because you start asking questions, you’re not making a commitment,” she says. “You’re searching.” It’s advice that sounds very much like Sister Becky’s own story.

At 19, she began searching. She found a monastery that felt like home. Within that home, others saw gifts in her and encouraged her to use them. She became a teacher, something she never imagined she could be. She became a mentor and leader who hadn’t foreseen herself in either role.

And through each new call, Sister Becky has discovered more of who she is while helping students, families, Oblates and others discover something within themselves.

“That’s all that God asks of us,” she says, “to search and to be open to what that search can bring for us, regardless of where it leads.”

LEFT

Sister Becky at an Oblate meeting at the monastery.

BELOW

Sister Becky during her final year of teaching.





Sister Karen Celebrates Her Golden Jubilee.

On Saturday, June 27, Sister Karen Sue Durliat of the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana, celebrated her Golden Jubilee, the fiftieth anniversary of her Monastic Profession. The celebration included a Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving at the monastery church in Ferdinand, with a reception immediately following. The service was livestreamed online.



ABOVE
Sister Karen Durliat
celebrates her
Golden Jubilee

From Custar, Ohio, Sister Karen has a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree and a Certificate in Hispanic Pastoral Ministry. She has served as a Missionary in Cobán, Guatemala, as a high school teacher at Washington Catholic High School and Marian Heights Academy teaching business and religion classes, as

Director of Hispanic Ministry in Evansville, Indiana, and as an Administrative Assistant at the Family Neighborhood Health Center. Today, Sister Karen is Director of Religious Education for St. Patrick Parish in Indianapolis. She was attracted to the Ferdinand Benedictine community by the warmth and hospitality of the Sisters, and says that "living with others who are seeking God through prayer, work, and hospitality is a wonderful thing."



RIGHT
Sister Karen at St.
Patrick Church in
Indianapolis

Sister Jill Turns the Tables.

Followers of the Sisters' podcast, The Sisters on the Hill, are in for a treat. Recently our vocation director, Sister Jill Reuber, who hosts the podcast, sat down with her parents, Paul and Linda Reuber. They talked about what it was like for them when she was discerning religious life, then entering and becoming a sister, as well as what being part of this community has meant in their lives.

Recorded in our podcast studio at Monastery Immaculate Conception, which was funded through a generous grant from The

Women of the Rule, the podcast features meaningful conversations, stories and reflections from the Sisters as they discuss daily life together, how God called each of them to religious life, the ministries in which they serve, and more.

The Sisters invite and encourage you to listen on all major platforms, including Apple, Spotify, Pandora and more. Anyone can subscribe to the podcast on their platform of choice or at www.thedome.org/podcast.



Mobile Food Pantry Launches.

When students head back to school, many families face extra expenses for school supplies, clothing, and other essentials. To help ease that burden, the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand partnered with the Tri-State Food Bank to host a Drive-Through Mobile Food Pantry to distribute boxes of shelf-stable groceries to local families at risk of hunger on Friday, August 28. This pilot project complements the Sisters' other efforts to meet the needs of the hungry, including our own Blessing Cabinet.

Tri-State Food Bank's Mobile Food Distribution Program focuses on feeding people in underserved areas. The mobile food distributions are arranged in partnership with local churches or other local service agencies, and are intended for residents in that area. At each mobile food distribution, a truckload of food is distributed directly to people at risk of hunger in the form of pre-packed boxes along with produce and other fresh items when available.

This mobile pantry is also made possible with funds from the Women of the Rule, a philanthropic group that partners with the Sisters of St. Benedict to fund important initiatives like this one, including their support of the Blessing Cabinet ministry.



In Memoriam.

God's promise has been fulfilled for our dear Sisters.

Sister Jacqueline Shively died at 4:52 p.m. on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at Scenic Hills at the Monastery in Ferdinand.

Sister Jacqueline was born Janet Susan Shively on February 25, 1937, in Whitesville, Kentucky, the eldest of six children of J.C. and Mae Veronica (Thompson) Shively. She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in 1954 from Saint Mary of the Woods in Whitesville, and made her monastic vows in 1956.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her brother John David Shively and sister-in-law Alisa Kay (Jackie) Shively; her brother Raymond Edward Shively and sister-in-law Linda Caril (Ray) Shively; and her brother-in-law Martin Sablik. She is survived by her brother James Louis Shively and sister-in-law Ina Jean (Menser) Shively; her brother William Eugene Shively and sister-in-law Brenda Kay (Hardesty) Shively; and sister Beverly Ann (Shively) Sablik; her nieces and nephews, and her religious family.

Sister Jacqueline earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Saint Benedict College in Ferdinand, Indiana, and a Master's degree in Elementary Education with a Minor in Mathematics and Science from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

She served for decades as a teacher across Indiana: at Saint Bartholomew Elementary School in Columbus; at Saint Francis Xavier Elementary School in Poseyville; at Saint Mary Elementary School in Washington; at Holy Spirit Elementary School and at Holy Redeemer Elementary School, both in Evansville.

She also served as Assistant Director in the Diocesan Vocation Office for the Diocese of Evansville, and as Administrative Assistant in the Marian Heights Academy Business Office. At the monastery in Ferdinand, she served as an Administrative Assistant in the Business Office and to the Leadership Team, as part-time Assistant to the Vocation Director, as a Liturgy Assistant, Schola Music Assistant, Mail Clerk, and in prayer booklet subscriptions.

Faith was always a core part of Sister Jacqueline's life. Before she joined the community, she would attend Vespers so often that the Sisters gave her a book of her own. She was so touched by the Sisters' kindness and genuine love for her that she decided to follow in their footsteps.



Sister Mary Philip Berger died at 1:30 a.m. on Friday, July 31, 2026, at Scenic Hills at the Monastery in Ferdinand.

Sister Mary Philip was born Mary Arlene Berger on January 14, 1942, in South Bend, Indiana, third of nine children of Alvin Joseph Berger and Mary Elizabeth (Bickwermert) Berger. She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in 1961 from Saint Matthew's Cathedral in South Bend, and made her monastic vows in 1963.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her brother Thomas Berger and sister-in-law Hattie Berger; her brother Alvin Berger and sister-in-law Judith Berger; her brother Kenneth Berger; her brother Richard Berger; her brother Stephen Berger and her sister Caroline (Berger) Grzesk. She is survived by her brother George Berger and sister-in-law Judith Berger; her brother Philip Berger and sister-in-law Cindy Berger; her sister-in-law Sue Berger; her sister-in-law Linda Berger, her brother-in-law Greg Grzesk; her nieces and nephews and her religious family.



Sister Mary Philip studied at many universities, including Saint Benedict College in Ferdinand, Indiana and the University of Evansville in Evansville, Indiana. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in French from Mount Saint Scholastica College in Atchison, Kansas, and a Master of Arts in French from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

Sister Mary Philip served for decades as a teacher in Indiana: at Saint Mary Elementary School in Washington; at Saint Ferdinand High School in Ferdinand; at ACE Academy (Academic Creative Excellence for Every Learner) in Dale; and at Academy Immaculate Conception / Marian Heights Academy in Ferdinand.

She also served as Department and Program Director for ESL (English as a Second Language) at Brescia University in Owensboro, Kentucky. She volunteered at the Guadalupe Center in Huntingburg, Indiana. She served the Sisters of Saint Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana, in the Archives, as Academy Alumnae Director, Director of Volunteers, and in Supportive Services.

During her long career in education, she was beloved by class after class of students, and was known as the one Marian Heights Academy teacher with a long-standing nickname: Sister Mary Flip. She shared how she earned that nickname during an interview in 1988. "That was back when we wore the long habits and for some strange reason, I never learned how to hold up the front of the habit—I always held up the back and for that reason was constantly falling down the stairs—especially the odd, steep ones by Sister Mary Dominic's office. Anyway, as I walked into Sister Michelle's senior homeroom, there was this teeny, tiny, ever-so-small threshold. I walked in and fell flat. The kids didn't know me—all they saw was this young sister on the floor, clutching the bulletins. They didn't know whether they should laugh or cry. That was my first day in the Academy!" This story even inspired a children's book titled *Sister Mary Flip*, written by her niece.

In Memoriam *(continued)*

Sister Maura Beckman died at 9:18 a.m. on Sunday, August 16, 2026, at the Monastery in Ferdinand.

Sister Maura was born Flora Kathryn Beckman on July 21, 1930, in Jasper, Indiana, third of four children of Henry “Harry” Bernard Beckman and Flora (Zenthoefer) Beckman. She entered the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand in 1950 from St. Joseph Parish in Jasper, and made her monastic vows in 1952.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister, Sister Judith Beckman and her brother Frederick Beckman. She is survived by her sister Dorothy R. (Beckman) McCarthy and her religious family.

Sister Maura studied at many universities, earning her RN from St. Vincent’s in Indianapolis, Indiana and Sacred Heart School of Nursing in Yankton, South Dakota. She also majored in Social Gerontology at both the University of Evansville in Evansville, Indiana and St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in Terre Haute, Indiana.



Sister Maura worked for decades as a nurse in Indiana, starting in the monastery infirmary at age 23. She later served at St. Joseph Hospital in Huntingburg. She took on many roles across her medical career, even overseeing an obstetrics department after rigorous additional training. Sister Maura transitioned to hospital chaplaincy at Jasper Memorial Hospital in Jasper, where she also served as Director of Pastoral Care. Beginning this second career at the age of 60, she ministered to patients and families navigating the most vulnerable moments of their lives. When the hospital began incorporating hospice care, she was an early supporter, understanding the need for compassionate, holistic end-of-life care.

At age 94, Sister Maura learned that she was living with two life-threatening aortic aneurysms that could rupture at any time. She chose to forgo surgery and instead placed her trust in God’s timing, continuing to take part in the daily life of her community with remarkable calm and acceptance. Her years as a nurse and hospital chaplain had brought her alongside many people facing illness and death, and when her own time drew nearer, she demonstrated the same faith and peace she had offered to others. Sister Maura’s quiet readiness was a powerful example of what it means to live the Benedictine call to “keep death daily before your eyes,” not with fear, but with gratitude, purpose and trust. As she put it simply, “We do what we can do. And then we leave the rest to God.”

The Five-Minute Legacy

One simple form. A gift that carries your values forward for generations.

When people think about a future gift to the Sisters, most think of their will. But some of the most meaningful gifts we receive never appear in a will at all.

If you have an IRA, a 401(k)/403(b), a bank account, life insurance policy, Health Savings Account (HSA), Donor-Advised Fund (DAF), or an investment account, you once filled out a beneficiary designation form. These forms govern where your assets will go — all outside of your will. They're also a simple way to make a meaningful future gift. No attorney. No change to your will. Just a short form from your account administrator or an update through their website.

The Gift of a Lifetime.

Most legacy gifts come from faithful friends who gave what they could, year after year, and whose final gift became the largest they ever made. If you have ever wished you could do more for the Sisters, this may be your way.

A Gift That Gives More.

Retirement accounts are a tax-wise way to support a charity. If a person inherits a traditional IRA, distributions are taxed as income. But the Sisters receive it entirely tax-free, so the full value of your life's work goes directly to prayer, ministry, and service.

A Gift for Every Life.

Many of our dearest friends tell us they want their life's savings to reflect what they have held most sacred. Naming the Sisters as a beneficiary, for the full account or a percentage of it, ensures that what you've built continues the mission you've loved and supported. Designating a percentage rather than a fixed dollar amount is a simple way to make sure your intentions hold true no matter how the account changes over time.

Please Let Us Know.

Banks and retirement plan administrators aren't required to notify a charity that has been named a beneficiary. If we don't know about your gift, we may never know to claim it, and your kindness could go unfulfilled. Sharing your intention is never binding, and it lets us thank you in this lifetime and invite you to join the St. Hildegard Society, our community of legacy donors who are remembered in the prayers of the Sisters in perpetuity. Members may remain anonymous if they wish.

However you choose to give, please know how grateful we are. It is your generosity, your friendship, and your prayers that sustain this community and carry our mission forward. Thank you for walking with us.

Making Your Future Gift: Details Matter

When completing a beneficiary form, please use our legal name: Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, Inc. Address: 802 E 10th St., Ferdinand, IN 47532 EIN: 35-0953517

Consider naming the Sisters as a contingent beneficiary as well, so your charitable wishes are honored even if circumstances change.

3 Ways to Make a Difference Today

Qualified Charitable Distributions. If you are 70½ or older, give directly from your IRA tax-free.

Gifts of Appreciated Stock. Avoid capital gains tax. Deduct the full fair-market value.

Become a Monastery Angel, our community of monthly donors.

Learn more. Call Lydia Bolton at 812.367.1411, ext. 2678, email lbolton@thedome.org, or visit www.thedome.org.

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