

2013

Celebrating the People of Bloomington



Photo by Adam Kent-Isaac

Perry Metz Broadcaster

Perry Metz, executive director of WTIU-TV Public Television and WFIU-FM Public Radio, “views what we do as a public trust,” he says. “Our job is to try to help our communities be better, whether that’s through information, arts, culture, or education. And I think that’s a great mission—one I really enjoy.”

Metz studied journalism and political science at Indiana University, later returned for a master’s degree in communication management, and then worked for IU in various administrative capacities. In 2003, he took his current post, where he oversees WTIU and WFIU’s broadcasting of NPR, PBS, BBC, and original content.



Photo by Jim Krause

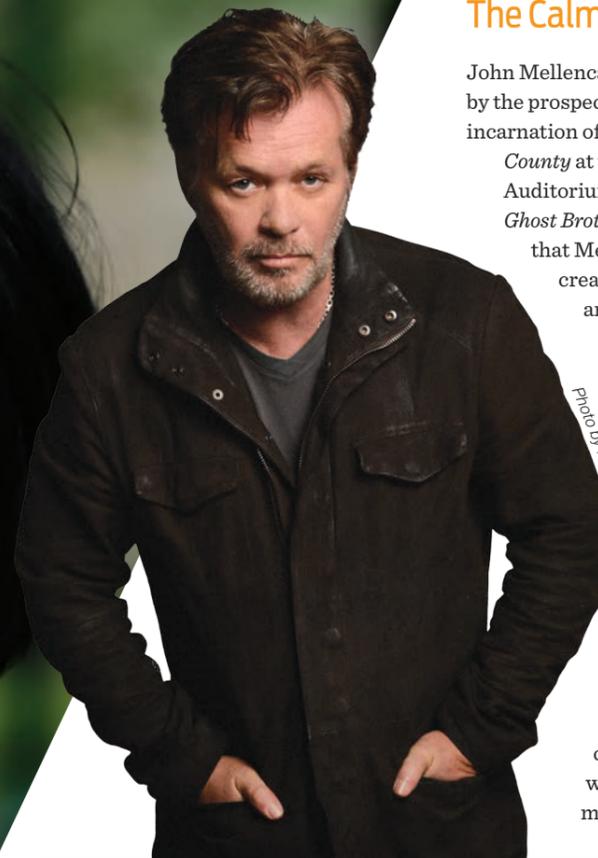


Photo by Kevin Mazur

John Mellencamp The Calm Before the Tour

John Mellencamp seems genuinely excited by the prospect of launching the latest incarnation of *Ghost Brothers of Darkland County* at the Indiana University Auditorium in his adopted hometown. *Ghost Brothers* is “a play with music” that Mellencamp collaborated to create with author Stephen King and musician and producer T Bone Burnett. “It’s a very complicated Stephen King story,” he explains. “Very complicated, a lot of characters.”

Mellencamp insists that people who know his work and who might have preconceived notions of what they will see should just throw those notions out the window. “I can assure you, you are wrong,” he says. “Because we couldn’t even imagine where we’re at now. We couldn’t have made this 13 years ago.”

Jeannine Bell Law Professor

Jeannine Bell is an expert at reminding Americans about a topic many of them would rather forget. Bell, a Harvard University graduate and a professor of law at Indiana University, is a national authority on the racial hatred that neighbors sometimes inflict on one another, mainly in poor white neighborhoods that are in the process of integrating.

Her books, *Hate Thy Neighbor: Move-In Violence and the Persistence of Racial Segregation in American Housing and Policing Violence*, examine the disjuncture that persists in integrating neighborhoods. “Bloomington,” says Bell, “is a safe place to write about these incredibly violent things that happen, because I’m surrounded by people who look really different from me, who have absolutely no problem with me.”



Photo by Shannon Zahnle

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Sha'Darrion 'Shai' Warfield-Cross Athlete and Singer

Born in 1994, Sha'Darrion "Shai" Warfield-Cross is a basketball standout at Bloomington High School North and is headed to the University of Tennessee at Martin next year on an athletic scholarship.

Her greatest passion, however, is singing.

"I started playing basketball when I was 5," Warfield-Cross explains. "I've always wanted to be a singer, though."

Warfield-Cross gained unwanted fame when, during her sophomore year, Bloomington North received a letter complaining that the way she sang the national anthem before a basketball game against Martinsville was disrespectful. "The administration told me to sing it in a 'traditional' way," she says.

Local and national media—including *Good Morning America*—interviewed Warfield-Cross. "I really didn't want that kind of attention," she says. "It was torture."



Photo by Shannon Zahle



Photo by Richard Ashcroft

The Unconventional Joshua Bell

This fall, virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell was back on the Indiana University campus, where he addressed a gathering of Jacobs School of Music students about careers in the arts.

Bell, who attended Bloomington High School North, gained childhood fame as a violin prodigy, auspiciously debuting as a guest soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra at age 14. In the classical music world, there's not a lot that Bell hasn't accomplished: *Billboard* magazine's Classical Artist of the Year in 2004; Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame inductee in 2005; Avery Fisher Prize winner in 2007; and named to the New York Philharmonic board of directors in 2010.

A few years ago, Bell bought a home around the corner from his parents just southeast of Bloomington. He stays there when he comes to town.



Photo by Adam Kent-Isaac

James Alexander Thom Historical Novelist

James Alexander Thom, acclaimed historical novelist and native son of the Indiana hill country, initially pursued his career elsewhere. Born in Gosport, he served a stint in the Marine Corps during the Korean War and worked for *The Indianapolis Star*.

In the mid-70s, Thom returned to Owen County and his novels began garnering attention. After releasing *Panther in the Sky*, a novel about Chief Tecumseh, Thom was invited to the 1989 spring Shawnee "Bread Dance" festival, where he met his wife-to-be, Dark Rain.

From their cabin, Thom spends his days writing, doing woodcarvings, and reflecting on life. "Just being alive in this world is such a massive, miraculous blessing," Thom says. "What we ought to do is try to live to be worthy of it."



Photo by Steve Raymer

Talisha Coppock Business Leader

Talisha Coppock says that the Bloomington downtown of her 1980s Indiana University student days was practically lifeless. "Half the downtown was empty parking lots. Only the bottom floors of buildings around the square were occupied. There were 20 restaurants and 1,500 employees."

Coppock studied in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs, majoring in urban administration and public finance, and, at 27, became the executive director of Downtown Bloomington, Inc. (DBI), a corporation formed to revitalize the city's center.

Now, she says, "there are 23 buildings on those empty lots, 112 restaurants, and 13,000 employees."

She points out other additions: the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, WonderLab, and the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center.

Says Coppock, "I like that my work has interesting subjects that move our community forward."

Coppock is also executive director of Monroe Convention Center.

Kyla Cox Community Leader

Kyla Cox wears many hats around Bloomington. She directs the influential Leadership Bloomington-Monroe County program, has served as board president of Community Kitchen of Monroe County, and works as director of public relations and community outreach at Indiana University's Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Born and raised here, she earned an undergraduate degree in English, studio art, and art history from IU in 2002 and relishes working on behalf of the community through her job and volunteer work. "I've watched people come and go and seen a lot of high school classmates who have moved away and returned," she says. "I've decided I'm going to skip that moving-away and returning, and I'm just going to stay."



Photo by James Keller

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