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3 NWI gems

Calvin Bellamy

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Cal Bellamy

Provided

Calvin Bellamy

Northwest Indiana is blessed with a wonderful variety of organizations, clubs, festivals and events. This rich mixture gives our Region its own unique character and quality of life. More than a few of these organizations and events attract people from outside our area. I would like to highlight just three of these that may be underappreciated but nevertheless so valuable to Northwest Indiana's culture and future.

The first is the Society of Innovators, headquartered at Purdue Northwest's Westville campus. Founded in 2004 by John Davies and currently ably led by Sheila Matias and Gary Johnson, the Society identifies, encourages and recognizes local innovation. Wait, What? How could there be enough local innovation to keep the Society going for 20 years? Actually, an incredible amount of innovation is happening all around us and comes in all shapes and sizes, from business start-ups to forward looking established businesses.

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Here are just a few examples. In the start-from-nothing category, consider: Albanese Candy, beginning small as the vision of a local businessman and now known worldwide; MACC Foundation emerging from a related business and now recognized as setting the bar for training first responders; Luke initially a small heating oil business but evolving ever since, first into gas station/convenience stores, then to land development and now even an apple orchard; Paradise Snax, a minority owned business offering a unique blend of flavorful toppings that are marketed throughout the United States. (X)



she said said
with Jerry & Karen Davich

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True believers in Jesus don't need a "secondary plan" for salvation and eternal life. They need to follow the actions of Jesus Christ, according to Pastor Greg Lee of Suncrest Christian Church in St. John. "Followers of Jesus - church people - tend to forget that following Jesus is the way to get to heaven. But they've somehow constructed a different way in their mind by beating people into it, or convincing people about it, or telling people they're wrong," Lee says. On this week's show, Lee joins us in the studio to examine the gospel about Jesus Christ and why too many Christians don't act Christ-like in their daily lives. "If you look at who Jesus had his harshest words for, it was for religious people who were harsh to people who were on the margins," Lee tells Jerry, who's been on the margins of spirituality for decades. We hope you join us for a candid conversation - not a sermon - about faith, redemption, conviction and forgiveness. Also, how to demonstrate grace and mercy with a species that instinctively seeks justice. About the show "She Said, He Said" with co-hosts Jerry Davich and Karen Davich unpacks all the baggage about relationships, couples and issues between the sexes (and the ex's). "Because there's a lot to unpack," Karen says. The dangers of online dating. The fun of flirting. Blended families. Difficult in-laws. Connecting after arguments. First kisses and final divorces. You name it, they'll unpack it on "She Said, He Said." All episodes are now available for viewing at **NWI.com** or to listen on your favorite platforms such as Apple, Spotify, Google and Audacy. Subscribe to not miss any new episodes. The couple's podcast is sponsored by Times Media Co. and Lee Enterprises, the second largest media company in the Midwest each week at 
 CreataSpacePlace studios in Hobart, Indiana, with local guests in the studio and timeless topics on the table. 

Our legacy businesses also innovate — BP's Hydrogen Hub project, Arcelor-Mittal's East Chicago research center developing lighter weight, stronger steel, and Alverno Laboratories' medical testing innovations. Other examples abound.

The second activity deserving more recognition is World Civility Day. This annual, day-long event, always held on the second Thursday of April, was conceived of eight years ago by Chuck Hughes, Executive Director of the Gary Chamber of Commerce. Well designed and meaningful, this event seeks to help overcome the divisiveness and sometimes outright nastiness that seems to be plaguing our polarized society. Small group discussions and an evening keynote address by a prominent individual make this event well worth the time.

The third organization is the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission (SEAC). This all-volunteer effort was formed in 2005 by a small group of private citizens and local government officials with the goal of bringing ethics training to local government employees. To date, twenty-three Northwest Indiana communities have joined this effort, agreeing to provide training on ethical decision-making for all their employees. SEAC also hosts an annual Ethics Summit. This half-day event is open to the general public free of charge. Each election season, SEAC also asks every local candidate to commit to employee ethics training and support for effective whistle blower protection.

Three very different organizations, but with the common purpose of encouraging the growth and development of a community we can be proud of. As noted, there are many other examples and I invite others to write about them. Let's put the spotlight on the good things all around us.



Government sets out new mi...



Calvin Bellamy is a life-long resident of Northwest Indiana who has been active in community affairs for several decades. The opinions are the writer's.