

**'Wrangler' helps people clear clutter**



**Q&A with District 46 legislative candidates**

Heaton, Mann in Indiana House race LOCAL | D8



Bob Heaton



James Mann

# The Herald-Times

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## business



**'Alex Cross' On Screen**  
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Re-Elect  
**JUDGE FRANCIE HILL**

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Francie Hill



Jaclyn Ray, AKA "the Clutter Wrangler," sorts paperwork at a client's home. **AT RIGHT:** A closet goes from disorganized to neat and tidy.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

### IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

## Bloomington is a growing culinary destination

Last summer Bloomington was named one of the best small towns for food in America by Rand McNally and USA Today. We've been called one of America's fastest growing culinary destinations by Orbitz, so it's no secret Bloomington is an incredible foodie town.

We have more than 100 one-of-a-kind restaurants, a collegiate culinary arts program, two locally owned wineries, three locally owned breweries, a weekly newspaper food section, the best farmers' market in the world, an independent restaurant association, several unique organic farm-to-table experiences and multiple world-renowned chefs, wine makers and brew masters. Thanks to all of you talented, hard working people for making this happen!



**Mike McAfee**  
A MONROE COUNTY VOICE

Food and drink are gigantic economic drivers. Nationally, foodie spending is on par with health care spending. Locally more than \$320 million are spent in Monroe County annually at restaurants and drinking establishments. Culinary tourism is part of that. Not all visitors go to a sporting event, art gallery or music festival, but they all eat.

Sixty three percent of our visitors eat at a locally owned restaurant and 24 percent enjoy our wineries or brew pubs. Of the more than 35,000 people who log on to visitbloomington.com each month, more than 3,000 of them are looking for a place to eat when they get here. Foodie traffic on our site has increased by 267 percent in 2012. People want to come here and eat.

This isn't happening by accident. As described above, we have the foodie scene to back it up and we are promoting that scene and targeting culinary travelers more than ever. Local cuisine is one of the top motivating factors for visitors when choosing a destination and the fact is, they spend money. The higher the restaurant bill is, the more likely the patron is a visitor. Every Monroe County visitor spends, on average, more than \$52 on food when they are here.

Earlier this week we pitched 10 foodie story ideas to the editor of a culinary magazine and we will continue to do that. In September we hosted more than 20 travel writers on a Bloomington tour that included a meal on Fourth Street. They loved it. These efforts and our partnerships with the Bloomington Independent Restaurant Association and area culinary organizations will only keep growing right along with that scene.

Mike McAfee is executive director of VisitBloomington. Next week's column will be by Ron Walker, president of the Bloomington Economic

# MAGIC TOUCH

Can't dig out? Local business is there to help

**By Rod Spaw**

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Jaclyn Ray loves clutter. Well, maybe "loves" is not the right word, but she certainly isn't scared of it. After all, without clutter, she couldn't make a living straightening out other people's messes.

Ray is the "Clutter Wrangler," a professional organizer who recently transplanted herself and her business from Toronto, Canada, to Bloomington, where her husband teaches at Indiana University.

She's already lined up a list of clients in her new home town. Clutter, it seems, is international.

Ray has been in the business of tidying up after people for 10 years, but she says she was born to it, being one of those rare children who preferred a neat room.

Now, for a fee, she will show you how to keep what you have from taking over your life, whether it is an unmanageable mangle of things in a closet or a chaotic schedule that doesn't leave time to catch a breath. You see, clutter does not just exist in the physical spaces we inhabit; it also accumulates in the obligations and responsibilities of a full life that keep tripping up our good intentions to get to the next thing on the list. Both have the same

basic cause: too much stuff; not enough time and/or space to deal with it.

That's where Ray comes in. She speaks order to chaos and helps people set priorities and let go of what they no longer need.

"A lot of people just call and say, 'I don't know where to begin,'" she said. "A lot of people are looking to me to ask the right questions."

Ray said the process often involves finding out why people are attached to certain things. Ray asks: Is an item sentimental? Is it useful? Do they like it; or do they just have it?

"You have to give yourself permission to say your tastes have changed," she said. What she brings into a household is an objective perspective, someone who can look around and say, "You don't need 10 sets of sheets." Ray says few of her clients would qualify as



The Clutter Wrangler leaves unneeded items at the edge of the street with For Free signs attached. She says it's an easier way to redistribute the items than hauling them to a donation site.

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## WRANGLER

Everything has its place even if it's the curb

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hoarders, people with a compulsion to collect and keep large quantities of objects of no apparent value. Instead, she said most of her customers simply are having difficulty dealing with "an average amount of clutter."

"There are just moments in your life when you end up with a lot of stuff," she said.

One of her first clients in Bloomington was Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, which operates a food pantry and maintains three community gardens. The organization needed room in its garden sheds for tools and supplies, and Ray volunteered her expertise for the task.

The results were "amazing," according to Stephanie Solomon, director of education and outreach at Mother Hubbard's. She said Ray not only helped the group figure out how to store what it really needed, but also how to operate more effectively.

"She teaches you how to organize and maintain that organiza-



Jaclyn Ray, who works as the "Clutter Wrangler," finishes a toy corner at a client's home.

tion in a way that makes your day-to-day work style more efficient," Solomon said. "It was just amazing how much easier it was to maintain the space once she went through it."

Ray said much of her clientele in Toronto were women — moms with growing children, working women and women whose grown children had moved away and

were left with a household that needed reducing.

Balancing what you have with where you keep it is critical, said Ray.

"If you have a house the size of a football field, you can have a jukebox collection," she said.

Ray said there are sure signs of when clutter is becoming overwhelming.

If the piles of stuff around a house creates stress, becomes a distraction or causes someone to not want to go home at the end of the work day or not to invite friends over for dinner, then there may be a problem.

"If you're at the point where you think you need off-site storage, call a professional organizer," she said.

## The wrangler in brief

Jaclyn Ray, the "Clutter Wrangler," is a professional organizer who specializes in helping people get rid of what they don't need and then organizing the rest so that they may enjoy a clutter-free life.

She works both with households and small businesses. She charges \$35 an hour for a three-hour minimum appointment.

Ray also offers time management services and can help with such things as organizing bills and payment schedules, doctor appointments and even planning vacations.

She has operated her business for 10 years exclusively by bicycle.

Find out more about her business by going to [www.clutterwrangler.com](http://www.clutterwrangler.com) or by calling 330-2353.

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