

News

First Lady's TV series on community begins June 7

by Randy West
write the author

For the past year or so, Indiana First Lady Judy O'Bannon has been traveling the state, assembling a 13-part public television series called "Communities Building Community."

The purpose of the series, said Lori Plummer of Public Television Station WFYI in Indianapolis, is to showcase the extraordinary ways Hoosier citizens work together to generally improve the quality of life in Indiana by strengthening and revitalizing their schools, neighborhoods and communities, from remote farming areas to densely populated inner-city dwellings.

Judy O'Bannon of Corydon is the host and "field correspondent" for the episodes which are being produced by WFYI in partnership with "Indiana 2016," a statewide initiative embraced by the First Lady that recognizes the many ways in which Hoosiers are strengthening their communities for the future.

"Communities Building Community" will demonstrate the impact that Hoosiers are having on their own lives, the lives of those around them and the places to which they belong," O'Bannon said. "As people join together, they build new understandings, friendships and commitments to each other."

One of the programs was filmed in late February at Thach Hang Dat's Buddhist monastery and retreat center in a secluded wooded area west of Corydon. It features O'Bannon talking with Thach Hang Dat, a Buddhist monk, the Rev. Neal Kentch of the Corydon Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Dr. Wayne Willis, interim pastor at Corydon Presbyterian Church, and others.

The first program in the series, "Youth as Community Builders," will air on KET at 5 p.m. Saturday, June 7. It was shot at the Johnathan Jennings Elementary School in Charlestown, where a program on kindness proved that it can be infectious.

Dick Hoffman, program director for the Kentucky Education Television network, which serves this area, said "Communities Building Community" will be aired eight consecutive Saturdays at 5 p.m. on KET2 or WKMJ.

The program about the Buddhists is expected to play sometime in late summer, perhaps Aug. 9.

Each program has a different theme, such as “Youth as Community Builders,” “Neighborhood Development,” “Global Community,” “Arts As a Community Builder,” “Acts of Faith,” “Technology and Education,” and “Grassroots Community Building.”

Other settings include Aurora, Jeffersonville, Marion, Elkhart and Indianapolis.