

February 11, 2026 – America 250 IN Noble planning meeting

NOTES:

The Celebrate Noble County Indiana 250” working committee met on February 11, 2026 at the Community Learning Center, Multipurpose Room B, Kendallville. Grace Caswell, committee chair, commenced the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

A sign-in sheet was passed around and attendees signed in:

- Pam Younce
- Doug Younce
- Mike Fitzgibbon
- Alexis Wagner
- Lori Gagen
- Judy Richter
- Grace Caswell
- Adam Dunlap
- Julia Tipton
- Jan Sweeney
- Cyndi Schlemmer
- Tiffany Parker
- Judy Richter
- Bill Shultz
- Tara Streb
- Leigh Ann Pranger
- John Metzger
- Earle Franklin
- Casey Myers
- Wendy Howard

Grace welcomed attendees and introductions were made. She also provided a brief overview of America 250 and the IN Noble planning committee’s objectives, noting development and promotions of historical reenactments, festivals, educational opportunities, patriotic exhibits and displays in Noble County primarily from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2026. She noted season-long initiatives, including a lighted LED display that will travel around the county and that the Old Jail Museum is celebrating 150 years in existence all summer.

OLD BUSINESS:

- The group was reminded the landing page for **all things America 250 IN Noble** is located on the tourism bureau’s website, accessible at <https://www.visitnoblecounty.org/america-250>. Also, the domain www.america250innoble.com points to the bureau’s landing page and a logo button then links to the landing page. Everyone is encouraged to use the **logos available** on the landing page in their own promotions (and those can be emailed upon request as well.)
- Lori Gagen added that if anyone is **not receiving email notifications** from America 250 IN Noble to **add america250innoble@gmail.com** to their contacts.
- All **America-250 related activities** in Noble County can be included in free promotions, but details must be **sent to america250innoble@gmail.com by no later than March 11** to be included. Please include:

- Title
- Date
- Time & duration
- Location
- Admission fee (or “free”)
- Images/flyers
- Additional details

Check the calendar at <https://www.visitnoblecounty.com/america-250> for accuracy and to know if your event is included in promotions. (The calendar is our “list”.)

- Lori will produce both **table tents** to be shared at area restaurants and a .pdf download of countywide events based on what has been identified/included as of the March 11 meeting. We will have the tent cards for distribution at the April 1 meeting and will ask volunteers to help canvas the restaurants.
- The Noble County Historical Society is leading efforts to put together a **display for the lobby of the Noble County Annex** in Albion. Those who want to participate with artifacts or other display materials need to reach out to Bill ASAP. He can be reached at (260) 508-6636.
- Grace Caswell pledged to contribute up to \$250 personally to help cover costs of the Annex display.
- America 250 IN Noble has been granted use of the **Kendallville Area Chamber of Commerce window display** space to promote activities beginning April 1. The visitors bureau will lead this effort and anyone who wants to help or has items for consideration should reach out to the bureau staff.
- Alexis and Grace gave updates about efforts to create a **scavenger hunt or passport-type of activity** to engage people in the various locations participating. Tara confirmed the cost to add a MapMe layer map is \$220. Lori suggested the Clio travel app also be considered before spending anything, it may work as well. Lori will share links with the visitors bureau to explore.
- **For the “passport” activity**, some in the group suggested having participants take and submit photos to prove their engagement and qualify for prizes. Lori noted she can create a Wufoo form entry system (or Google forms could possibly be used) for people to update some photos. She needs to check the limitations and will advise. Photos would eliminate the need for a person to be present to ‘stamp’ anything.
- The **commemorative light display** was discussed. These are the key takeaways:
 - A photo of the finished display was shared.
 - It measures 10’ wide by 6’ high.
 - It is LED, so will not consume much power at all.

- Locations to host it must choose a site on a lawn within 100' of an electric outlet.
- Museum volunteers will provide transportation, set-up, tear down, extension cord, and timer.
- A schedule needs to be put together to determine gaps and additional exhibiting opportunities. Julia and Lori will work on that.
- The stakes on the piece go up to 18" into the ground, so sites should be carefully selected to avoid any underground damage.
- More information will be shared soon to firm up the traveling display schedule.
- Lori provide these updates for the **Albion STAR Team**:
 - A STAR Team board member, Kayla Traylor, has agreed to be the point person for the **Block Party in Albion on July 3**. She has some ideas for family activities and will be supported by the STAR Team to coordinate.
 - First steps will include development of booth registration forms, coming soon.
 - STAR Team has also approved up to \$166 to produce four sidewalk signs to promote as needed in Albion. This provides up to 8 different messages available and is exploring funding the purchase and installation of patriotic decorations for the gazebo.
 - A reminder was given that porta-potties will be needed for the Block Party. Grace suggested the visitor bureau's 2026 grant program may be a way to fund those, but someone needs to apply.
 - Casey also had some ideas. He and Lori will follow up and discuss further.
 - Tiffany noted that both Jamie Howard at CN and Jalyssa Kessler at Arc Foundations have expressed interest in the Block Party. Lori will follow up.
- Casey noted he is working to create a system for **vendors to apply to participate at the CN school campus for fireworks on July 3**. They have room for several. New signs will also be produced to help promote.
- Grace noted she will address the **Avilla Town Council** in March and hopes they will contribute some funding.
- A full **financial report** will be provided in March. One was not available today.
- **March 14 NoblePalooza** is the first kick-off of promotions.
- Julia suggested that Grace book a **podcast interview** with Nikole at the Kendallville Area Chamber.
- Casey noted he has Albion's **torch from the Bicentennial celebration**. He and Lori will talk about getting permission and a site identified to display it. Others are

encouraged to do so as well. Tara confirmed Kendallville's is at the Windmill Museum. The museum has two. Tiffany noted the visitor's bureau torch was stolen.

- Adam provided updates for **Avilla Freedom Festival**:
 - Concerns about duplication of fundraising efforts were noted. Adam has a list of contributors to Avilla Freedom Festival to help avoid duplication.
 - Confirmation was provided the festival is encouraged to use the America 250 IN Noble logo on shirts they want to produce.
 - Adam is helping the committee find reenactors. Places that may help are Stone's Trace and Sons of the American Revolution.
 - Adam is continuing to try to firm up an exhibit of "founding documents" for the celebration.
 - Other festival plans include a Gas & Steam engine exhibit, East Noble Show Choir performance, reading of the Declaration of Independence, and possibly an essay contest.
- Judy reported that the **Genealogical Society** will likely contribute the booklet copies of the Constitution for distribution. Grace suggested a quantity of 250 if possible.

The next planning meeting – open to anyone interested – will be on March 11 at the Community Learning Center, Multipurpose Room B at 10:30 a.m.

- Submitted by Lori Gagen