

November 11, 2025 – America 250 IN Noble planning meeting

NOTES:

The Celebrate Noble County Indiana 250” working committee met on November 11, 2025 in the Cole Room, lower level, Noble County Public Library in Albion. Grace Caswell, committee chair, commenced the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

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

- | | | |
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| • Mike Fitzgibbon | • Rhonda | • Adam Dunlap |
| • Alexis Wagner | Stienecker | • Leigh Pranger |
| • Grace Caswell | • Cyndi Schlemmer | • Katie Schaller |
| • Ruby Ramey | • Lori Gagen | • Becca Adair |
| • Pam Younce | • Tiffany Parker | • Ardean Ebert |
| • Doug Younce | • Judy Richter | • Larry Palmer |
| • Roberta Stone | • Bill Shultz | • Julia Tipton |

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:

- We need one individual to be a point person for the Block Party in Albion.
- Follow & share the America 250 IN Noble Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61582797324025>
- Save the dates for upcoming meetings (see list below).
- Send to Grace an image/description of what your organization will place on an exhibit table to be displayed at the county Annex or Courthouse to promote America 250 IN Noble – could be an item representing your mission/facility, a figure that represents the activity or event flier in a frame with a description and QR code, etc. Please submit ASAP so Grace can get permission for the exhibit.
- Have similar promo items available for NoblePalooza if you want anything handed out at the Expo on March 14. If you can volunteer at the table, let Rhonda Stienecker know – 419-302-7567 or rhondastienecker@gmail.com
- If you know someone who might donate to this effort, send that lead’s name and email to america250innoble@gmail.com so they can be added to the campaign.
- Share the Kickoff T-shirt info below (and buy a shirt!) – help Avilla raise funds for the kickoff!

UPDATES:

- Grace will be presenting to the Albion Town Council in January. Someone is needed to volunteer to be the point person to help coordinate the Block Party, work with the

town, and handle other tasks. Lori Gagen said she and the Albion STAR Team are willing to help, however asked Grace to speak with the Town Council and seek their engagement first. Pattie Gatman has expressed interest in helping. Lori suggests asking Abby Lindsey.

- Grace noted that Julia Tipton, CLC, has also offered to help coordinate activities in Kendallville, in particular.
- A new Facebook page has been launched for the celebration:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61582797324025> Everyone is asked to Follow and Share the page to grow the audience.
- The CVB has fronted the funds for the committee to pay dues to the Indiana State Festival Association and a ½ page ad. As funds come in for the celebration, the CVB will be reimbursed.
- The committee has also set up a new Hubspot account to help handle communications. Anyone who should be on the leads list to become a donor in this effort should be added.
- Noble County asked to know exactly what will be on display before giving approval to use space in the Annex and/or Courthouse. Samples or descriptions from locations hosting events/activities are sought for a promotional “teaser” display. Items should be representative of the host, event, or activity, and could include a QR code for more information. Please let the CVB know details ASAP so she can notify the county of the exhibit contents. Grace would like to have a ribbon cutting when the display is done for the media.
- There was some discussion around where exhibit materials should be shared – at libraries or the county spaces. Clarification was made that anything “interactive” (can be held, touched, collected and kept, etc.) should be at a library, while items exhibited at the county space(s) will be more promotional and “look, but don’t touch or take”.
- Lori Gagen asked the group if they wanted a companion Instagram account so posts could be put on both Facebook and Instagram. The consensus was yes, so she will set that up. Grace encouraged anyone who enjoys social media to volunteer to be an admin to help.
- Grace noted that the planning committee has received good media coverage. A suggestion to share articles on Facebook and the website was received and will be fulfilled ASAP.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Rhonda Stienecker reported that \$1,800 has been raised in donations, with another \$5,000 sought and pending. The fundraising campaign has not yet been launched because of a

lack of email contacts for leads to give. After some discussion, Lori agreed to seek out the industry contacts from the EDC. Rhonda will provide a list of donors so they can be noted on the website and all committee members can see who has already given. Sponsorships are available in multiple levels, published on the website. Electronic donations are collected by the Community Foundation of Noble County and Rhonda will be notified regarding levels of support as gifts come in.

The link to sponsor: <https://go.cfnoble.org/america250nc>

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Meeting dates were set for continued planning and anyone is welcomed to attend. **All meetings will take place beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Cole Room, lower level, NCPL in Albion:**

- **January 7, 2026**
- **February 4, 2026**
- **March 4, 2026**
- **April 1, 2026**
- **May 6, 2026**
- **June 3, 2026**

NOBLEPALOOZA EXPO:

America 250 IN Noble will have a booth at NoblePalooza on Saturday, March 14, 2026 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Community Learning Center. This will serve as a promotional opportunity for everyone who will host an activity or event. Volunteers are encouraged to help man the booth and to provide materials people can scan or take home to make plans to participate. Rhonda Stienecker volunteered to take the lead on the booth; Grace, Alexis, and Lori can all help set up as well. Others will be at the Expo (Tiffany, Cyndi, Julia, etc.) as well. The booth fee is \$25. Grace noted that maybe by then we will have the passports to distribute – and will work towards that goal. Adam reminded to include sponsor names on any promotional items, as we may get more sponsors there, too. Lori suggested having a donation bin at the booth. Julia suggested using the CVB's kiosk at the booth, too, for info/donations.

ORGANIZATION UPDATES:

Community Learning Center - Julia Tipton reported that the CLC has sought a grant to host something (TBA) in May or June. She will be reaching out to Caroline at Caroline's Cottage in Rome City for a possible quilter lecture program.

Freedom Festival & Restore Avilla – Katie Schaller says volunteers are raising funds to have a fireworks display. T-shirts are on sale now – available by calling Julie at 260-242-3535.

Kick-Off Party T-Shirts

October 16, 2025 / in Festival News / by Festival Team



Just \$25 each – Adult Sizes S, M, L, XL, 2X

Just \$18 each – Kids Sizes M, L, & XL

Contact Julie to get your shirt(s) today by calling 260-242-3535.

Your purchase supports the 2026 firework fund.

Ligonier: Cyndi shared that she is working in Ligonier to spark engagement and noted the new Veterans Memorial has been dedicated. She hopes a picnic and/or ice cream social might come together. The Visitors Center and Heritage Museum will be a passport stop as well.

Windmill Museum: There was some extensive discussion around the museum connecting the dots for the celebration to include a custom lighted lawn display. Pam reported the design would be about 5' tall by 10' wide and feature America 250, the US, Indiana, and highlight Noble County at a cost of about \$3,100. The museum would store, transport, and set up the display in Noble County on a schedule TBD, and have it at their Winter Wonderland in December to close out the celebration. The display could be at the CLC for NoblePalooza (if ready in time), then Avilla for the Kickoff, and other places TBD. Lori made a motion, seconded by Adam, with a vote to approve ordering the display. Funds will need to be raised to cover costs.

Albion STAR Team: Lori reported that she explored doing guided historical tours in downtown Albion, but due to conflicts does not have an individual to lead them. She is shifting towards developing a walking, self-guided tour with QR Codes and will have a video of late 1800's/early 1900's photos taken from the courthouse tower that morph into photos of the same views taken in Oct. 2024 to share.

Visit Noble County: Grace noted they are leading the promotions and administrative efforts for the Noble celebration and will host their first annual meeting on February 12 at the CLC. The luncheon will take place in the Assembly Room. More will be coming soon.

Rome City: Roberta Stone said fundraising is underway for fireworks and they are hoping Lady Mother of Mercy will be a collaborator in the events this year. Fireworks will be on July 4th. Volunteers are expanding plans for Chautauqua Days as well and would like to have the new light display on hand if possible. Rhonda Stienecker said they hope to have many more parade floats this year, the high school band, and more. This festival is on August 8th.

Gene Stratton-Porter SHS: Tiffany Parker shared that a new Mother's Day Tea will be themed for America's 250th with historic recipes, and perhaps featuring women's suffrage. This will happen on May 2, Another event will take place on June 6 in honor of the Old Growth Forest designation recently received, called "If Trees Could Talk." They are also exploring tree planting, and the Wild Game Cookout will also feature a "foraging for food" element – on November 7th.

Noble County Genealogical Society & D.A.R.: Judy Richter reported that they are working on development of a workshop.

Noble County Public Library: Becca Adair reported that the Cromwell Library staff is activating to work with the town to have an event TBD on July 2nd.

Noble County Historical Society: Bill Shultz reported that the museum will be a passport stop all summer, and will begin planning related activities in January and February TBA.

Noble County Gas & Steam Assn: Larry Palmer inquired about parades and asked for flyers for the events to share. That prompted an agreement by the executive team to make a flyer ASAP for distribution. It was noted that the Noble County Fair will also be America 250 themed, and Larry said they will have a tractor/implements display there for sure.

Other: Other open conversations revealed:

- A Civics Bee will be held at the CLC in March
- Julia suggested when promotional materials are made to include slides that they can share in assemblies.
- Tiffany suggested we share the "official event" badges with everyone. Pam made a motion, seconded by Julia, with a vote to invest in table tents that can be shared across the county – one side will have an "official event host" promo, the other will be a general "celebration county-wide" promo. Lori will work on those.

The next meeting will be on January 7, 2026, 10:30 a.m. at the NCPL, Cole Room.

- Submitted by Lori Gagen