

The Commercial Review

Portland, Indiana 47371 www.thecr.com \$1

Consolidation discussion

Council votes to explore moving to centralized dispatch

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

The city will move forward with a process to consider consolidation of dispatching services.

Portland City Council voted unanimously to move forward with a process to explore consolidating the dispatching of emergency responders.

The decision followed a presentation from Barry Ritter of public safety consulting firm Ritter Strategic Services, who has

worked with the county on upgrading its emergency radio system. A former Richmond police officer, he said he is a proponent of consolidation but added that he recognizes there are local officials who are against it.

Ritter emphasized that the main reason for consolidating — it would shift all dispatching to Jay County 911 — should be to improve public safety rather than to save money, though there

may be cost savings involved in the form of personnel and equipment.

Providing statistics, he said Jay County 911, which is operated at Jay County Sheriff's Office, had taken 5,200 911 calls as of mid-November. Over that time, 911 calls forwarded to city police dispatch totaled 293. He said that number has dropped to nearly zero in the last few months, as he advised the county that making those transfers is a liability. (He

pointed out that Portland dispatch does not have the equipment to handle all of the data that comes in from a caller.)

Ritter said it is important to include all stakeholders in a discussion about consolidation, with that list including the mayor, sheriff, police chief, fire chief, 911 director and other supervisors, county commissioners, city council, county council, dispatchers, the clerk-treasurer, county auditor and human

resources personnel. He added that a staffing study would be needed to determine how many employees Jay County 911 would need if dispatching services were consolidated.

"Because it's not as simple as saying, 'Tomorrow, we're gonna have a centralized dispatch,'" he said. "This is a methodical process that requires a strategic plan to determine how, when, what do we need."

See **Consolidation** page 2



The Commercial Review/Ray Cooney

Clearing snow

Rick Shreve clears snow from the sidewalk in front of his business, Hair Studio, 303 N. Meridian St., Portland, on Tuesday morning. About 2 inches of snow fell Monday evening, leading to Jay School Corporation calling off classes for the second day in a row Tuesday.

Envoy meeting with Putin

Potential peace plan is being discussed

By TONY HALPIN and OLESIA SAFRONOVA
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Moscow to meet with President Vladimir Putin, who claimed a key Ukrainian city had fallen to Russia on the eve of Tuesday's talks about a potential peace plan to end his war.

Putin said Russian troops had taken the city of Pokrovsk in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region in a video announcement posted late Monday by the Kremlin, an advance that would be Russia's most significant on the battlefield in nearly two years. Ukraine's Military Staff spokesman Bohdan Senyk denied its forces had lost the city in a message early Tuesday.

Bloomberg isn't able to independently verify the claims of either side.

Putin will meet with Witkoff and Jared Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law, for the talks, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, according to the state-run Tass news service. They're set to discuss the latest proposals for ending Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine following negotiations between U.S. and Ukrainian officials in Florida.

Amid fears in Europe that the plan risks rewarding Russian aggression by forcing Kyiv into a deal, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the latest version "looks better" during a visit to Paris on Monday to meet with French counterpart Emmanuel Macron. Zelenskyy, who also spoke with Witkoff in Paris, traveled to Ireland on Tuesday where he met with his negotiating team for a "detailed briefing" on the Florida talks.

"We are committed to achieving a real peace and guaranteed security," Zelenskyy said in a post on social media.

See **Meeting** page 5

Map is 'politically gerrymandered'

Redistricting bill author acknowledges motivation for legislation

By LESLIE BONILLA MUNIZ
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

The author of Indiana's new congressional redistricting bill acknowledged the maps are "politically gerrymandered" during committee questioning Tuesday but defended the proposal against accusations of illegal racial gerrymandering.

The maps, released Monday

morning, were drawn "purely for political performance" of Republicans, Rep. Ben Smaltz told indignant Democratic colleagues.

The current districts, drawn by the GOP in 2021, are 7-2 in favor of Republicans. The House and Senate GOP worked with the National Republican Redistricting Trust to engineer a likely 9-0 sweep of the districts ahead of the 2026 midterms.

"They're politically gerrymandered, if you'd like to say that," Smaltz, R-Auburn, said.

He was adamant that no racial information was used in crafting House Bill 1032.

The targeted districts now held by Democratic Reps. André Carson and Frank Mrvan are by far Indiana's most racially diverse. The maps split Carson's district, which largely overlaps Marion County borders, four ways, and halves Mrvan's.

See **Map** page 5



Indiana Capital Chronicle/Leslie Bonilla Muniz

State Rep. Ben Smaltz (R-Auburn) introduces his congressional redistricting bill during committee on Tuesday. He said the maps were drawn "purely for political performance" of Republicans.

Deaths	Weather	In review	Coming up
Robert Anderson , 97, Redkey Details on page 2.	Jay County had a high temperature of 32 degrees Monday. The low was 16. There is a 40% chance of snow Wednesday with a low of 17 and winds gusting to 20 mph. Skies will be cloudy Thursday with a steady temperature around 20. See page 2 for an extended outlook.	Jay County Civic Theatre will open its production of the classic musical "Annie" at 7 p.m. Thursday at Arts Place. Additional shows are set for Dec. 5, 6, 12, 13 and 14. Tickets are available by visiting bit.ly/JCCTAnnie, calling (260) 726-4809 or visiting Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut St., Portland.	Thursday — Details from the season opener for the JCHS swim teams. Friday — Coverage of this week's joint county commissioners and council meeting. Saturday — Results from the JCHS boys basketball team's game against Woodlan.



Consolidation ...

Continued from page 1

Asked by Mayor Jeff Westlake, Ritter said the overall process could take a year. It would need to include discussions of all aspects of the transition, including employment levels, seniority, salaries, benefits, standard operating procedures and other considerations.

Council president Kent McClung asked about the impact of the radio upgrade project, noting that it includes dispatching equipment for the city. Ritter said he feels he and the county could work with Motorola to redirect those funds if the city decides to consolidate dispatching services.

Responding to a question from council member Dave Golden, Ritter said he can't provide clear answers on how much money consolidation could save the city at this point because there are too many factors involved.

Westlake, who worked for 12 years as a dispatcher for the city,

expressed concern about employees potentially losing jobs in such a consolidation. He said he is open to discussion but asked that dispatchers be involved.

Council member Ashley Hilfiker said while she understands that concern, the city's leadership is responsible for looking out for its about 6,000 residents. She asked the mayor to go into the process with an open mind.

Following a question from Westlake, Jay County Sheriff Ray Newton expressed neutrality on the issue. He said it is up to the city to decide if it is interested in consolidation and that he will be available for discussion if Portland decides to pursue that path.

Council members also discussed the decision-making process. The council controls funding for city departments while the board of works would enter into any contracts necessary to bring about consolidation.

The council voted unanimous-

ly to move forward with a process to explore consolidating dispatching services. Ritter said he would put together a potential consulting agreement for the mayor and council to review.

In other business, council members:

- Approved an economic development agreement with Bizy Dips. The agreement calls for a \$137,500, 15-year loan with no interest for the first five years. The loan is secured with a mortgage. Bizy Dips owner Hannah Long previously indicated plans to purchase The Flower Nook and convert part of its space to a commercial kitchen in order to expand food offerings. She said plans are to continue to operate the flower shop under a new name and the current Bizy Dips site inside John Jay Center for Learning.
- Heard a request from resident Aaron Kuhn that the city establish an ordinance regard-

ing livestock. He said he has had issues with being woken up early in the morning by a rooster that lives nearby. Kuhn shared ordinances from several other municipalities. Council members agreed to consider the issue and plan to have it on the agenda for their Dec. 15 meeting.

- Agreed to contribute an additional \$12,500 in funding to help Jay County Development Corporation cover the wage gap to allow the organization to hire its top candidate for its open community developer and grant writer position. (Dunkirk committed an additional \$2,500 to help cover the gap as well.) While not naming the candidate, JCDC executive director Cearn Bales said he is a Jay County High School graduate who is an architect and has a master's degree in urban planning.
- Heard an update from Bales regarding Rollin' J Lanes, which

has been closed since the spring and is up for sale. The city made a \$50,000 economic development income tax (EDIT) loan to owners Tammy and David Jellison for improvements to the facility. Bales said the Jellisons have a potential buyer for the bowling alley.

- Approved the payment of claims. Hilfiker questioned the city's use of Hopkins Auto Repair for police vehicle repairs, saying it seems like a waste of money when the city employs a mechanic. Westlake said sometimes the city's mechanic gets busy and street and parks department superintendent Matt Shauver said some of the computer work can't be done in-house.
- McClung thanked the city's street department for its work to plow streets.
- Received their nepotism disclosure forms to be filled out for 2026.

CR almanac				
Thursday 12/4	Friday 12/5	Saturday 12/6	Sunday 12/7	Monday 12/8
 24/13 Thursday's weather looks like mostly sunny skies with the low at night dipping to 13 degrees.	 30/24 Friday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with temperatures hovering around freezing.	 32/23 Cloudy on Saturday, when the temperature may peak at 32 degrees.	 29/17 Sunday weather looks like cloudy skies as well with a slight chance of rain.	 26/18 Mostly sunny, with the low decreasing to around 18 degrees late.

Lotteries	
Powerball Monday 5-18-26-47-59 Power Ball: 1 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$775 million	Daily Four: 7-8-1-0 Quick Draw: 1-3-7-8-10-17-18-22-23-24-39-43-49-54-57-59-61-68-71-75 Cash 5: 6-9-21-30-41 Estimated jackpot: \$75,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$90 million	Ohio Monday Midday Pick 3: 4-8-0 Pick 4: 2-9-2-8 Pick 5: 0-4-8-7-0 Evening Pick 3: 0-9-1 Pick 4: 8-7-2-8 Pick 5: 2-0-1-6-3 Rolling Cash: 20-27-30-32-33 Estimated jackpot: \$150,000
Hoosier Monday Midday Daily Three: 2-8-7 Daily Four: 2-8-7-4 Quick Draw: 2-3-7-15-16-18-21-23-25-34-41-44-50-51-52-56-61-71-79-80 Evening Daily Three: 2-3-8	

Markets	
Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.68 Jan. corn4.60 Feb. corn4.62	Jan. beans11.20 Wheat 4.97
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.68 Jan. corn4.60 Feb. corn4.55	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.46 Jan. corn4.46 Beans11.16 Jan. beans11.19 Wheat5.07
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.55 Jan. corn4.55 Beans11.17	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.55 Jan. corn4.55 Beans10.88 Jan. beans10.91 Wheat4.87

Today in history	
In 1847, Frederick Douglass published the first issue of his newspaper, "North Star." The paper focused on antislavery ideals, also stressing Black self-improvement and responsibility.	Downing of Portland died at the age of 44 when he was involved in a near head-on traffic collision on U.S. 27 just south of Bryant.
In 1967, the world's first human heart transplant occurred at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa. Doctor Christiaan Barnard performed the surgery, transplanting the heart to Louis Wasahkansky, who survived for 18 days.	In 1984, "Do They Know It's Christmas" released in the United Kingdom. The popular single was written by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure and sung by Band Aid.
In 1972, James J.	In 2021, the Jay County High School boys basketball team topped the Woodlan Warriors 53-35 in their third consecutive win for the season.

Citizen's calendar	
Thursday 5:15 p.m. — Portland Board of Works, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 5:30 p.m. — Portland Plan Commission, Community Resource Cen-	ter, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. Monday 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

Obituaries

Robert M. Anderson
June 15, 1928-Nov. 25, 2025
Bob's Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, came for him early Nov. 25, 2025, at his home.

Bob was born on June 15, 1928, to Edna and Maurice Anderson, Louisville, Kentucky. He graduated from Laconia High School in 1946, The Indiana University with a bachelor's degree in 1950 and Ball State University with a master's degree in 1960.

He was preceded by his father (1935); brother Jim (1976); mother (1981); his beloved wife June (2012); his sister Jeanne (2014); and his son Rob (2020).

He is survived by his daughter,

Debra; and son, Jeff (Marti). Also surviving are six grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Our love and thanks to Leroy and Shayla Brown Family for being there for us always. Melanie Whetsell, Jackie McCullum, Candy Hatzell (Cliff), Shannon Freeman-Frogge and Dad, your kindness will never be forgotten.

Visitation will be from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5, 2025, at Redkey Faith Ministries Church. Masonic services and funeral will follow at 2 p.m. with Pastor Craig Cotherman officiating. Private fam-



ily burial will be held in Hillcrest Cemetery in Redkey.

In lieu of flowers, Bob asked that donations be made to Redkey Faith Ministries (PO Box 93, Redkey, IN 47373) due to his love of his church and church family.

Arrangements entrusted to MJS Mortuaries – Redkey Chapel per Bob's wishes.

The Commercial Review publishes death notices for those with a connection to our coverage area free of charge. They include the name, city of residence, birth/death date and time/date/location of services. There is a charge for obituaries, which are accepted only from funeral homes or mortuary services.

Map ...

Continued from page 1

"You're OK with ... racially gerrymandered maps if you get your desired outcome for ... politically gerrymandered maps?" asked Rep. Cherrish Pryor, D-Indianapolis.

"We didn't look at that, at any of that," Smaltz replied.

He faced more than an hour of intense questioning from Democrats on the House Elections and Apportionment Committee on Tuesday, which also featured ominous testimony from Marion County's elections chief and a prominent Republican.

It was the House's only hearing on the maps, held with less than a day of notice. A committee vote is expected sometime today.

Local election officials typically have a year before an election to make redistricting-related adjustments, Marion County Clerk Kate Sweeney Bell told the committee.

If approved next week as planned, clerks would have a matter of months before the May 5 primary election.

She detailed the complex updates required to reassign the likely hundreds of thousands of impacted

Indianapolis voters, retrain thousands of poll workers, update public communications and more — all on a smaller budget.

Precinct splits backed into the bill present further "administrative burden."

"If any of this is done incorrectly, voters are going to feel the impact when they come to vote," the clerk said.

She urged lawmakers to reject the proposal, adding, "If it passes, there will be chaos. Chaos in clerk's offices around the state. Chaos when candidates file at the election board. ... That's exactly what election administrators want to avoid."

More than 20 witnesses spoke in opposition to the proposal by midday, including retired Ivy Tech Community College Sue Ellspermann. The Republican previously served as lieutenant governor under former Gov. Mike Pence, and as a House lawmaker.

"We have fair maps. The ones we have performed — some might say over-performed — for the Republican majority," she said. "The plea to redraw Indiana's map is coming

out of Washington, D.C. Some may argue that they have the right to ask, and in that case, we certainly have the right to answer, 'No.'"

She reminded lawmakers — including former colleagues amid 2011 redistricting — that they pledged to "serve all Hoosiers, not just those who voted for us or the current president" in their oath of office.

Hoosiers "have a reputation for standing up to political pressure," Ellspermann added, lauding Pence for his refusal to overturn the 2020 election.

Just two witnesses had spoken in favor of the maps by midday: Paul Logemann, an Indiana resident and lobbyist with D.C.-based Heritage Action and Indianapolis resident Nathan Roberts.

Logemann pushed legislators to advance the maps, saying they "reflect the will of Hoosiers and ensure that Hoosier voices are not diluted in Congress."

California, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and Utah have already heeded — or countered — President Donald Trump's call for more GOP U.S. House seats.

SERVICES

Today

Crump, Stephen: 11 a.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Friday, Dec. 5

Anderson, Robert: 2 p.m., Redkey Faith Ministries, 9811 Indiana 67, Redkey.

Saturday, Dec. 6

DeBolt, Miriam: 11 a.m., Klaehn, Fahl & Melton Funeral Home, 6424 Winchester Road, Fort Wayne.

Service listings provided by

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Photo provided

Food drive

Jay County Christian Academy recently held a food drive. Students and staff collected more than 1,700 items that will be distributed to food pantries in Jay County.

Advances could threaten longtime friendship

DEAR ABBY: I'm struggling with my integrity and an important friendship. My friend "Beth's" husband, "Jerry," came to my house to help with a construction project. After discussing the project, we sat down to visit for a bit. He was very forward with me and overly affectionate. (It's been 10 years since I've had any affection.) He also talked about how affection doesn't have to "mean any-

Dear Abby



thing," which I believe is true — to an extent. I told him it was inappropriate, but I didn't stop either of us when Jerry kissed me before leaving.

Part of me was thrilled at being kissed again, even though I know it was wrong. I am sure that I won't allow it to happen again. I'm afraid to contact him and deliver that message directly, because there's a chance it wouldn't be a private message. I couldn't tolerate Beth knowing this happened. I treasure her friendship. I've no idea if Jerry said anything to her about what happened. I'm pan-

icked that I may have lost a treasured friend. Advice? — AFRAID AND WORRIED
DEAR AFRAID: I do have some. If Jerry behaved this way with you, it is likely that he does this with other women who consult him about construction projects. I don't think it is necessary for you to inform Beth about what happened, but seriously consider using another construction company for

your repairs now and in the future. Jerry appears to be a classic cheater, and you are vulnerable after a long dry spell.
.....
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips.
Contact Dear Abby at Dear-Abby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Community Calendar

Notices will appear in Community Calendar as space is available. To submit an item, email news@thecr.com.

Wednesday
WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB — Will meet at 8 a.m. in the east room of Richards Restaurant. All women are invited to attend. Includes activities and devotional time.
PING PONG — Will be played from 11 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at West Jay Community Center.
PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB — Will meet at noon each Wednesday in the cafe at John Jay Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.
SINGLES AND SEPARATES SUPPORT GROUP — For anyone who's lost a loved one or has a spouse

living in long-term care or suffering from an illness, the group will meet at 2 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month in the Arthur & Gloria Muselman Wellness Pavilion in Berne. For more information, call Sarah Conrad at (260) 589-4496.
COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING — A non-confrontational, evidence-based intervention for helping families affected by addiction meets at 4 p.m. each Wednesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP — New Beginnings, a support group for friends and families of alcoholics, will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Zion Lutheran Church, 218

E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 726-8229.
A BETTER LIFE – BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. each Wednesday at Redkey United Methodist Church, 122 W. Main St. Come early for a meal. For more information, call Pastor Randy Davis at (765) 369-2085.
Thursday
CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.
SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.
JAY COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP — Will

meet from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. the first Thursday of the month at Jay County Cancer Society's office, 227 N. Meridian St., Portland. Open discussion for cancer patients, survivors, family members or anyone interested in helping with the group. For more information, contact Linda Metzger at (260) 726-1844.
PORTLAND LIONS CLUB — Will meet the first Thursday of the month at Portland Lions Civic Center, 307 W. 100 North. The meal will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7 p.m.
FORGET-ME-NOT — A support group for parents, friends and relatives who have lost a baby through miscarriage, birth or illness will meet from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Vincent Randolph Hospital, Winchester, in community room 1.

Friday
PAST RECOVERY SERVICES — Peer Addiction Support Team recovery support group meets at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. each Friday at the Jay County Drug Prevention Coalition office at 100 N. Meridian St., Portland. To learn more information, please call (260) 251-3259.

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Sudoku

		1		7	2			
	7		6		1		5	
				9	4			
	8	2						
1				9		3		
			5					
9						6		7
	5	3						
6			3	8				

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

7	8	2	9	3	1	5	6	4
3	4	6	5	7	8	9	2	1
1	5	9	4	2	6	8	7	3
2	3	1	6	5	7	4	8	9
8	9	5	1	4	2	7	3	6
4	6	7	8	9	3	2	1	5
9	7	3	2	1	5	6	4	8
6	1	4	7	8	9	3	5	2
5	2	8	3	6	4	1	9	7

The objective is to fill a nine-by-nine grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine three-by-three boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

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SMILE...

It's that Time Again!

Our Season's Greetings issue will appear in the CR December 17! If you would like to schedule a picture, the ad must be 15" or larger and a \$15 fee will be charged to come take your picture or if you provide a picture.

Deadline for all ads & photos is December 10th!

We try hard not to miss anyone who wants in this issue. If you do not get contacted and would like in the greetings, please call us at (260) 726-8141

The Commercial Review

Holidays don't have enough hours

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Nov. 30, 2005. The holidays are a busy time of year, with Christmas events, shopping and planning on top of regular duties. As you make your way through these next several weeks, make sure to take the time to slow down and enjoy them.

By JACK RONALD
The Commercial Review

Einstein, of course, had it right.

Time is relative.

Anyone who remembers how slowly summer days could pass when you were 10 and how quickly the deadline could pass until your next homework assignment was due knows that.

Anyone over a certain age can assure you that time speeds up as you get older. Years disappear

Back in the Saddle



in a heartbeat. That kid who was your paperboy the other day is now your colleague at work, showing you pictures of his children, who look way too much like him.

If you needed any further proof, I offer this: December.

It's upon us this week, and suddenly time becomes constricted. There aren't enough hours in the day. And the calendar becomes something more than just a way to figure out

what day it is. It becomes, instead, a matter of logistics.

Now, unless you have been the parent of twins, logistics may not be something you worry much about.

But, in December, it's a part of everyone's reality.

Starting on Thursday, the clock is ticking.

We'll have 24 days to get our act together so we can enjoy the 25th.

When do you put the lights up? Check the calendar.

When's the office Christmas party? Check the calendar.

When are the kids in the pageant at school? Check the calendar.

You know the drill.

At our house, with the twins off living on their own and Sally away at college, you'd think things would be simpler.

But you would be wrong.

It's as crazy as ever.

The lights aren't up, though I hope to get that done the first weekend of the month.

And then there are the holiday dinners, the fancy and the not-so-fancy.

Some of them, we might be able to skip. But some of them are not-skipable.

Friday, if I have this right, is the annual Koffee Klatsch at The News and Sun in Dunkirk; and my presence is required. I'm not sure why, though folks there always seem pleased to see me.

The week after that is the Koffee Klatsch in Portland at Arts Place. If you haven't received an invitation, let me know. I'll see if I can squeeze you in.

The Koffee Klatsch is an event that was launched in the 1950s (no

one knows the exact date) as a way of showing the business community how much it is appreciated by the newspaper. These days, it's mostly a matter of maintaining community spirit, tradition and a sense of hospitality.

(Some say it's the only day I do any real physical labor, since I'll be pouring coffee and carrying trays of doughnuts.)

Along the line, in between shopping for presents, the parties, the photo assignments, the meetings, and the other festivities, I need to elbow in room for the company's annual meeting, the company Christmas party, the completion of a report on my findings in Belarus, and the writing of a Christmas story for my kids.

I wonder if I could borrow a couple of days from February.

U.S. in need of a Venezuela strategy

Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

With the deployment of the USS Gerald R. Ford, the world's largest aircraft carrier, the U.S. has amassed a fearsome array of assets off the shores of Venezuela: dozens of advanced fighter jets, thousands of troops, guided-missile destroyers, special operations forces, armed drones, gunships, possibly a nuclear submarine. More useful, however, would be a strategy.

What purpose this armada is meant to serve remains stubbornly opaque. Strikes on speedboats allegedly running drugs in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific — which have killed more than 80 people since early September — hardly require such firepower.

The Pentagon has reportedly generated options to expand the campaign to targets in Venezuela itself, presumably in hopes of driving dictator Nicolas Maduro from power. At the same time, the president denied any such plans late last month, and White House officials seem unclear about the legal basis for an attack.

Many Americans would favor greater focus on the drug trade, which contributed to more than 80,000 deaths in the U.S. last year — 10 times as many as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.

But the ad hoc nature of the administration's campaign is arguably doing more harm than good. Focusing on the Caribbean ignores the main cause of U.S. overdoses: fentanyl smuggled from Mexico. Widely viewed as illegal, the boat strikes have reportedly led partners such as the UK and Colombia to cut off some intelligence sharing with the U.S. Maduro, by standing up to American bullying, may have bolstered his standing at home and in the region.

Meanwhile, the costs of this show of force are mounting. Operating a carrier strike group burns through millions of dollars a day. Each boat strike costs hundreds of thousands of dollars. Then there are the indirect trade-offs: With the Gerald Ford in Latin America, the U.S.

Guest Opinion

currently has no carriers deployed in waters off Europe or the Middle East. Any land-based strikes would likely involve Tomahawk missiles, of which the U.S. has a limited supply.

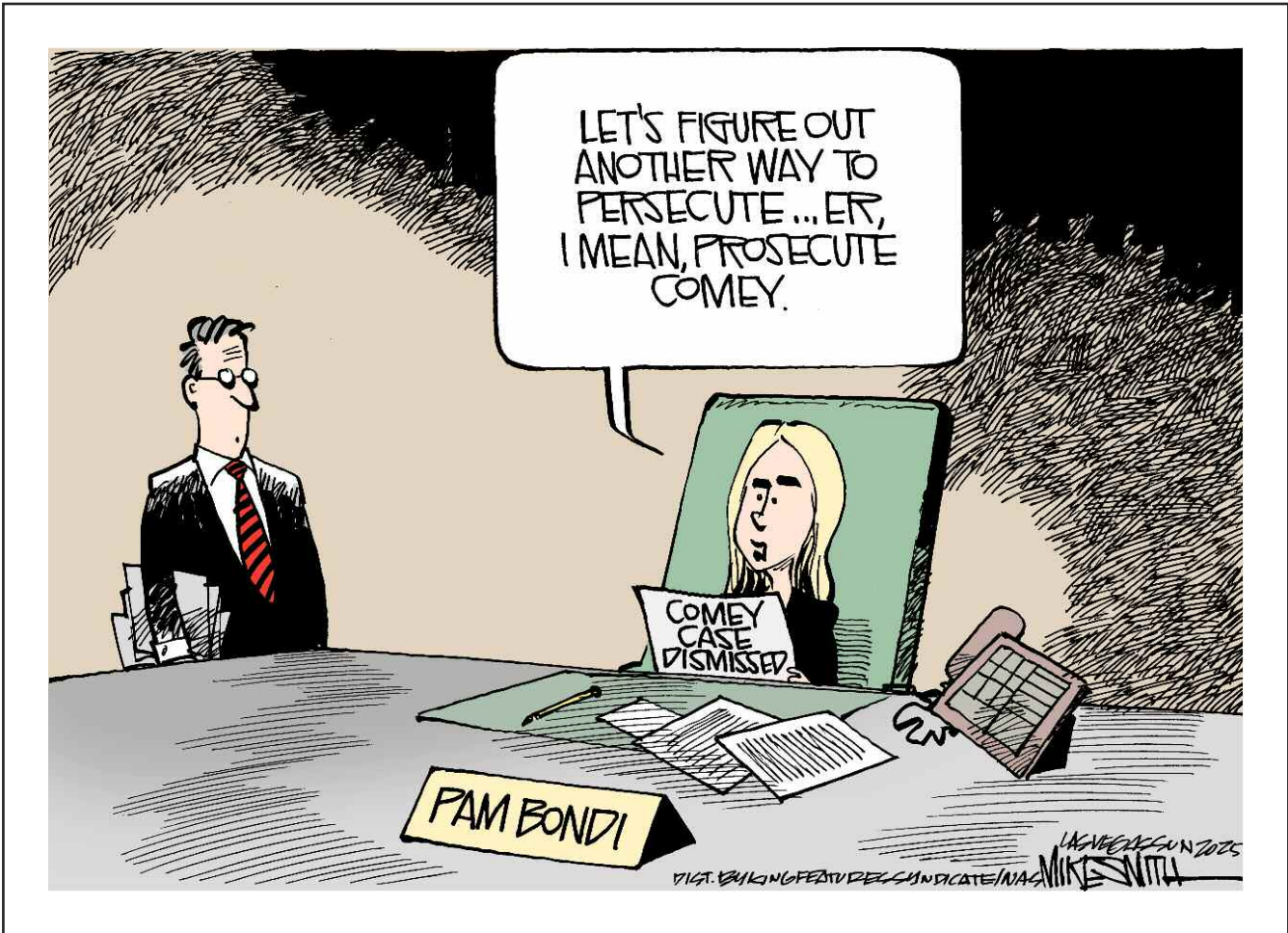
The consequences of such an attack wouldn't end there. Air and missile strikes are far from guaranteed to drive out Maduro or prompt a coup. Sending in the Marines could lead to a quagmire. Even if Maduro did step down or was captured by U.S. forces, there's no guarantee any transition would be smooth. Political instability would create more space, not less, for cartels to expand.

The White House needs to decide what its goals are. If the hope is that gunboat diplomacy will encourage Maduro to resign peacefully, the administration should be ramping up talks to seek a credible handover of power. Airstrikes would be unwise, let alone an invasion. Yet the longer U.S. forces are engaged in unprincipled attacks, the less intimidating they will be.

If, on the other hand, the administration really wants to stem the flow of drugs to the U.S., it ought to bring the right resources to bear. Rather than aircraft carriers and submarines, what's needed are more Coast Guard cutters and Drug Enforcement Administration operatives. Rather than threatening Colombia and Mexico — the main sources of cocaine and fentanyl — the U.S. should be working with them to develop intelligence on cartels' financial and logistics networks. If drones or special operations forces are required for specific missions, they should be employed with the full cooperation of host countries, not unilaterally.

The Pentagon's most advanced assets should be focused on deterring a major conflict with a peer competitor such as China or Russia.

The sooner they can return to that mission, the better.



Empower instead of subsidizing

By KIM-LIEN NGUYEN
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

Congress ended its impasse to reopen the government, but the Democrats' reason for the shutdown remains unresolved: the renewal of expiring subsidies for insurance premiums under the Affordable Care Act.

Republicans offered an olive branch to end the standoff by proposing to make payments into Americans' health savings accounts or flexible spending accounts. Although this idea was not realized, the proposal should not be forgotten as the parties work on compromises for long-term government appropriations. The Republicans' plan would allow individuals to choose between putting the money toward insurance premiums or spending it directly on health care. This offers a refreshing change from the top-down approach to health care that has dominated both political parties for generations.

Moving away from insurance subsidies and directing payments to taxpayers would serve as a first step toward empowering Americans to make their own health care choices and leverage their self-interest to contain health care costs. Americans would be incentivized to curb spending and would have the upper hand in bargaining for lower costs with providers. This approach offers a path for opening up access to health care while addressing the underlying problem plaguing our system: health care inflation.

When politicians talk about containing the escalating health care costs, they take a top-down approach that fails fundamentally to change the face of American health care. Just as the Biden administration negotiated for price caps on prescription drugs used by Medicare recipients, President Donald Trump recently negotiated a price drop for

Kim-Lien Nguyen



anti-obesity drugs. These gimmicks grabbed headlines but did little to address a persistent paradox: while health care costs vastly eclipse inflation, health care innovation has flattened.

The Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid suffer from similar flaws as top-down health reform initiatives that expand access at the cost of our system's long-term viability. Their reimbursements have focused on short-term cost-cutting that ends up stifling competition, crippling innovation, and raising long-term costs. The Affordable Care Act's cost-cutting centerpiece is higher government reimbursements for "coordinated care," with the well-intended logic that economies of scale through integrated networks are the best way to expand access and cut short-term costs. This approach has "worked" inasmuch as reimbursement incentives have led small physician practices to merge en masse and prompted private equity to buy out free-standing medical centers. The result is regional oligopolies and closures of rural hospitals. For every dollar saved through consolidation, more is being spent on the endlessly growing compliance red-tape that buries doctors in paperwork and distracts them from patient care.

We don't have to settle for a managed decline of our health care system. Both parties have said they want to make the Affordable Care Act "better." The Republicans' proposal of contributions to health savings accounts or flexible spending

accounts would represent a first concrete step.

Hospitals often charge several times more for procedures when insurance or government reimbursement is used than when paid in cash. Those with HSA or FSA grants could pay the lower prices and contain health care costs. Instead of letting insurers dictate which procedures patients can and cannot access, the government would let patients take ownership over their health care.

The government can also motivate people to be good stewards by allowing them to retain unspent medical funds for future health expenses. By working through consumer advocacy groups to negotiate cash prices and by taking advantage of policies on pricing transparency, patients would have a personal stake in their health and be more informed consumers. Empowering consumers may also incentivize the marketplace to innovate based on consumer demand and help hospital systems better discern which services are valued.

The past two generations of health care have been about gradual socialization of medicine, which has subordinated both patients and doctors to faceless bureaucrats and insurers. But the recent Republican proposal to direct supplemental payments to HSAs and FSAs, coupled with transparency requirements for health care costs, offer a way to put patients back in the driver's seat. Our leaders would do well by empowering consumers to make health care choices and by embracing a bottom-up approach to cost management and innovation. This is the best pathway to making care both accessible and affordable.

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Nguyen is an associate professor of medicine at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and a practicing cardiologist.

The Commercial Review



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VOLUME 151—NUMBER 151
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2025

www.thecr.com

The Commercial Review is published daily except Sundays, Mondays and six holidays (New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas — holidays are observed on Tuesday when they fall on a Monday) by The Graphic Printing Co. Inc., 309 W. Main St., Portland, Indiana 47371. Periodical postage paid (USPS 125820) at Portland, Indiana. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Commercial Review, 309 W. Main St., P.O. Box 1049, Portland, Indiana 47371 or call (260) 726-8141.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Law will unlock billions for recovery

By JENNIFER A. DLOUHY
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

President Donald Trump on Monday signed into law a measure authorizing billions of dollars in federal funding to help prevent drug overdoses and aid patients recovering from addiction, according to the White House.

The measure effectively reauthorizes a public health program that was first established under Trump in 2018 and

Money will go toward preventing drug overdoses and aiding patients who are recovering from addiction

expired five years later. Included are a raft of services designed to combat drug addiction and address mental health, as well as initiatives to bolster research and repay loans for professionals

treating substance abuse. Funding generally will still be subject to future appropriations by Congress.

The legislation marks the latest effort by Washington to address a public

health crisis over drug addiction and overdose deaths, in particular from fentanyl, a powerful painkiller. Trump has seized on the crisis, citing it as justification to slap tariffs on China to

curtail flows of fentanyl and precursor chemicals, to bolster border security and to carry out attacks on purported drug-trafficking vessels in the waters around Venezuela.

The U.S. has launched more than two dozen strikes on alleged drug boats and Trump has threatened to expand them to hit targets on Venezuelan land even as his administration faces questions over the legality of the attacks.

The new law also makes changes that would expedite the delivery of some controlled substances — such as when those are self-administered in the presence of doctors.

Capsule Reports

Annexation accepted

Fort Recovery Village Council accepted plans Monday to annex Nathan and Alison Ruhenkamp's 15.89-acre parcel along Ohio 119 on the east edge of the village. The annexation, which was approved by Mercer County Commissioners, will become effective in 30 days.

Council also approved next year's wage ordinance on a first reading. Approximately 3.5% raises are factored into the ordinance, which will be up for a second reading and adoption at the next meeting.

Also Monday, council heard Fort Recovery Police Department purchased two shields for \$1,691.96. Approximately \$1,000 of the cost was donated by Mercer County Prosecutor's Office.

Council was also reminded about the upcoming Fort Recovery Radio Christmas Gala set for 7 to 10 p.m. Dec. 10 at Cooper Pavilion.

Plowing accident

Three Portland residents were injured after a vehicle drove into the path of a snow plow along Indiana 67, causing a crash about 9:30 p.m. Monday.

Donald C. Muhlenkamp, 80, was driving a 2015 Chevrolet Equinox north on the highway near county road 200 West. At the same time, Christopher F. Figert, 32, Muncie, was driving a 2025 Freightliner 108SD snow plow south on the highway. Figert told police he watched as Muhlenkamp's vehicle entered his lane of travel and crashed into him. Muhlenkamp told police he couldn't remember much from the accident,

explaining the snow made it difficult to see.

Muhlenkamp complained of chest pain. Passenger Anita L. Isch, 79, sustained a minor head injury, and passenger Judith B. McIntire, 83, complained of chest pain.

Muhlenkamp's vehicle was towed. Damage is estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000. The plow truck is registered to Indiana Department of Administration in Indianapolis.

Left of center

A Muncie man lost control of his vehicle and crossed the center line on Indiana 67, causing him to crash into oncoming traffic about 1:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Drake A. Imel, 23, was driving a 2011 Ford Fiesta south on the highway near its intersection with Indiana 26 when his vehicle crossed the center line. His vehicle crashed into a northbound 2004 GMC Savana driven by 64-year-old James Threewits of Columbia, Tennessee.

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

Church sign hit

A Dunkirk man lost control of his vehicle at the intersection of Indiana 26 and Indiana 1, causing an accident about 4:55 a.m. Monday.

Brandon G. Wilburn, 40, was driving a 2016 Chevrolet Malibu east on Indiana 26. He told police he couldn't see because of dense fog in the area, and his vehicle slid through the highway's intersection with Indiana 1. His car struck Hickory Grove Church's sign.

Damage is estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Wilburn's vehicle was towed.

Backing crash

A Portland man backed a plow truck into a Dunkirk man's truck along county road 200 South and Indiana 67 about 7 a.m. Tuesday.

Sean A. Kunkle, 46, was driving a 2013 Western Star 4700 east and plowing snow along county road 200 South. He began turning around to plow the westbound portion of the road, backing into a 2005 Chevrolet Silverado driven by 24-year-old Ludy R. Bailey.

The plow truck is registered to Jay County Highway Department. Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

Down in ditch

Damage is estimated between \$25,000 and \$50,000 after a Pennville man's vehicle slid off county road 500 North and into a ditch about 6:30 p.m. Saturday.

Dustin R. Sapp, 41, was driving his 2024 Dodge Durango west on the road and approaching the intersection with county road 650 West. His vehicle slid through the intersection, diving into a ditch and hitting a road sign registered to Jay County Highway Department. Sapp's vehicle was towed.

Missed deer

A Portland teen swerved off Indiana 67 to avoid hitting a deer, causing her to crash into a tree about 9:48 a.m. Saturday.

Kaileigh P. Compton, 17, was driving a 2006 Pontiac G6 west on the highway near Indiana 26

when a deer ran into her path. She drove off the west side of the road and overcorrected, causing her to lose control of the vehicle. The car continued into a ditch on the east side of the road, across a driveway at 1891 W. Indiana 67 and into a tree.

Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The vehicle was towed.

Pole hit

A Dunkirk woman lost control of the vehicle she was driving along county road 400 South, causing her to hit a utility pole about 11:35 a.m. Saturday.

Shelby L. Sullivan, 24, was driving a 2010 Chevrolet Traverse east on the road and approaching its intersection with Indiana 67. She told police her car began to slide on the snowy road surface, and she wasn't able to regain control. Her vehicle slid into a utility pole owned by Indiana Michigan Power.

Her passenger, 25-year-old Logan J. Clough of Elwood, sustained a minor face injury.

The vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Rolled vehicle

An Indianapolis man lost control of the van he was driving along Indiana 67, causing him to lose control and roll the vehicle about 11:30 a.m. Monday.

Thony Larousse, 46, was driving a 2004 Honda Odyssey south on the highway near county road 500 South when he attempted to pass a vehicle in front of him. He told police he wasn't

able to maintain control of the van, and it left the road. The vehicle collided with an embankment along county road 500 South, causing the van to begin rolling. It came to a rest on its roof.

The vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Tree hit

A Portland man lost control of his truck and hit a tree along county road 400 South about 8 p.m. Saturday.

Juan D. Serna Mendez, 28, was driving his 2002 Ford Ranger west on the road near Indiana 67 when he lost control. His vehicle went off the north side of the road and into a tree.

Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000. His vehicle was towed.

Into ditch

A Portland man was cited for driving without a license after crashing the vehicle he was driving along county road 400 South about 7:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Gilbert Lopez, 30, was driving a 2002 Dodge Caravan west on the road near county road 700 West when he lost control of the vehicle. He told police he wasn't able to regain control, and the car went across the center line and off the south side of the road at its intersection with county road 700 West.

His passenger, 49-year-old Raul Robles of Portland, sustained a minor head injury.

Damage is estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000. The vehicle — it's registered to Michael Flores of Portland — was towed.

Meeting ...

Continued from page 1
“This is exactly the level of commitment that must be compelled from the Russian side, and this task can be accomplished only together with our partners.”

Putin has signaled an openness to talks, saying last week that Trump's proposals for ending the war could be “the basis for future agreements,” while adding that no final version exists yet. Still, he's given no sign that he's ready to roll back Russian demands.

Witkoff, who's meeting Putin in Russia for the sixth time this year, promoted the original 28-point plan that emerged last month and was drawn up with Kremlin envoy Kirill Dmitriev. Those proposals horrified officials in Ukraine and Europe by outlining Russian demands for concessions that Kyiv has repeatedly rejected.

An Oct. 14 phone call between Witkoff and Putin's foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov showed that the U.S. envoy suggested they work together on a plan to end the war in Ukraine modeled on Trump's Gaza peace deal, according to a recording of the conversation reviewed and transcribed by

Bloomberg. Ushakov and Dmitriev also discussed the plans in an Oct. 29 phone call.

Zelenskyy told reporters in Dublin on Tuesday that Witkoff was “very welcome to Ukraine,” but that he wasn't sure if the U.S. delegation “are on this way these days, that they are ready to come.”

The seizure of Pokrovsk, a defensive hub that's been the focus of intense fighting for more than a year, would potentially open up the path for Russia to threaten the larger cities of Slovyansk and Kramatorsk. It would offer Moscow a symbolic victory as Putin continues to insist that Ukraine must surrender the entire Donetsk region under a deal to end the war.

Putin claimed in October that his military had encircled Ukrainian troops in Pokrovsk. That was rejected by Ukraine, though it acknowledged Russian soldiers had entered the city.

Russia's forces are spreading through Pokrovsk, particularly in central and northern areas, in an attempt to seize the city, the DeepState mapping service that cooperates with Ukraine's Defense Ministry said late Monday.

Felony arrests

Drug possession

A Dunkirk man was arrested Monday for drug possession.

Michael K. Atkins, 33, 4880 S. Arlington Ave., was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony for possession of cocaine or a narcotic drug.

He was released on a \$4,500 bond from Jay County Jail.

Domestic battery

A Portland man was arrested Sunday for domestic battery.

Joshua L. Gilbert, 30, was preliminarily charged with a Level 6 felony for the alleged crime, as well as a Class A misdemeanor for strangulation.

He was being held on a \$4,500 bond in Jay County Jail.

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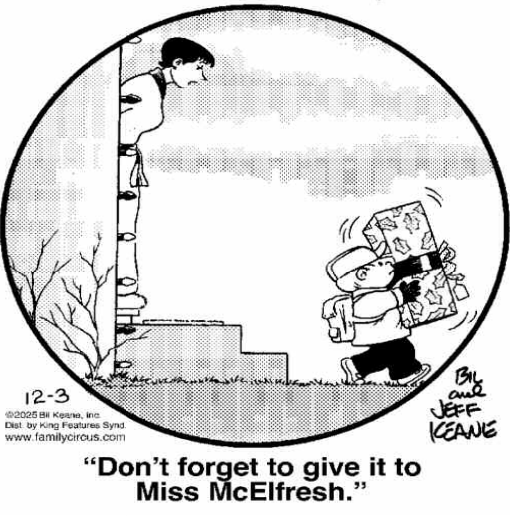
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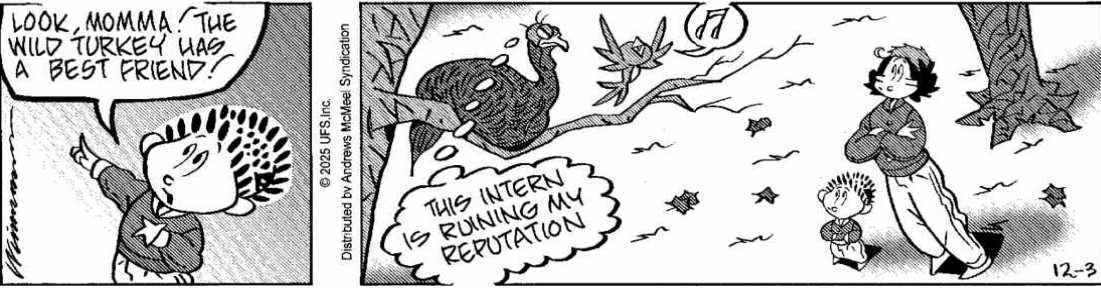
By Bil Keane



Peanuts



Rose is Rose



Agnes



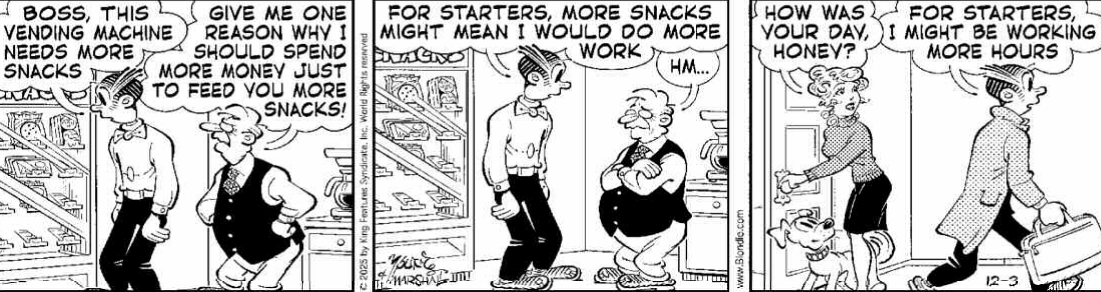
Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

Teamwork on defense

South dealer.
East-West vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ K Q
♥ 10 9 8
♦ 9 4
♣ A J 10 6 4 2
WEST
♠ 8 2
♥ K J 6
♦ K Q J 10 6 3
♣ 8 5
EAST
♠ 6 5 3
♥ Q 7 4 2
♦ A 8 7 2
♣ K 7
SOUTH
♠ A J 10 9 7 4
♥ A 5 3
♦ 5
♣ Q 9 3

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ 2 ♦ 3 ♠ 3 ♦
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠

Opening lead — king of diamonds.
Good defense is mostly a matter of good partnership understanding. When play begins, the defenders have only a vague idea of their combined values. As the play progresses, they must try to clarify their respective holdings to each other in order to make the most of their assets.
Consider this deal where West led the king of diamonds against four spades, East signaling with the eight. South ruffed the diamond continuation, drew trump and tried

the club finesse. East took his king and returned a heart, but South went up with the ace, ran the clubs and finished with an overtrick.

However, the defenders should have beaten the contract, and East was the player at fault. He should have overtaken the king of diamonds with the ace at trick one and shifted to the deuce of hearts at trick two.

Declarer could not have prevailed against this defense. If he goes up with the ace, he later loses a club and two hearts to go down one; if he ducks the heart, West wins with the jack and returns a heart to produce the same result.

With dummy's threatening clubs in plain view, East should base his defense on the hope that his side can score two heart tricks. He should realize that his partner almost surely has six diamonds for his vulnerable overcall, leaving declarer with only one diamond. West then simply follows his partner's chosen line of defense to achieve the desired result.

This type of partnership rapport constitutes the backbone of good defense. The defenders cannot actually see each other's cards, but by working carefully together, they can usually achieve the same result as if they did.

Tomorrow: A case of self-delusion.
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12-3

CRYPTOQUIP

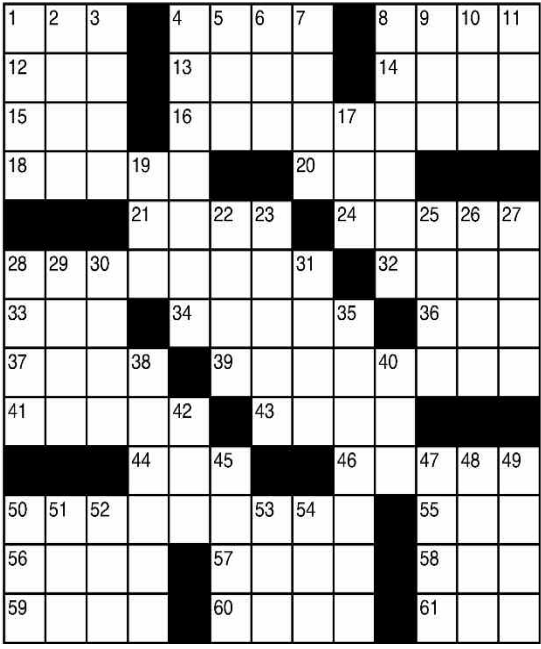
DLOA NLHN XOAT VB JGBXOET
SYZE Z CZJJHAI IZFO, H
SBOTGF O JLOE FG TJ LHJ Z
YVJ VP PVDY CZYYT.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF PEOPLE BAD-MOUTH EACH OTHER, BUT LATER ARE BACK ON FRIENDLY TERMS, DO THEY DIS AND MAKE UP?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals G

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Texter's "Incidentally"
4 Use a phone
8 Membership
12 Roth svgs. plan
13 Actress Falco
14 Maintained
15 Pen name
16 Desserts with a molten chocolate center
18 Teapot feature
20 Enthusiast
21 Monarch
24 Mob scenes
28 Resort in Lombardy
32 Sore spot
33 —de France
34 Stitched baseball features
36 Casual shirt
37 Anti-fur org.
39 Restaurant kitchen worker
41 Disdain
43 Old Italian money
44 — Maria
46 Warning trophy
50 Type of fish eggs
56 Man of war?
57 Sea eagle
58 Resort
59 Bulb measure
60 Pairs
61 — Aviv
DOWN
1 Baby-food catchers
2 Stumble
3 Texas city
4 Boston team
5 Nabokov novel
6 Tyler of "Jersey Girl"
7 Canadian flag emblem
8 "Up!" singer
9 "A mouse!"
10 Tavern order
11 Gridiron scores, for short
17 Train unit
19 Guitar's kin
22 Yuletide song
23 AOL alter-native
25 Eight (Pref.)
26 Lt. Kojak
27 Hunt for
28 "My — are sealed"
29 Mr. Guinness
30 Low-carb diet
31 Prefix meaning "all"
35 Mexican wraps
38 Monet or Degas
40 Western st.
42 Diarist Anais
45 Like wine or cheese
47 Formerly, once
48 Lariat
49 Blue shade
50 Legislation
51 — pro nobis
52 Animal doc
53 French vineyard
54 Colorful card game

Solution time: 23 mins.

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Guards ...

Continued from page 8
“He does provide a bit of a calm offensively. He’s still got a lot to learn and still got to do a little bit better against some of that pressure. He does provide another ball handler and did a really good job tonight.”

The Patriots entered the fourth quarter up three points, but Comer finished Overton’s work to go up double digits.

It started when Comer picked off a pass from Thomas Stargell for an easy layup. On the next possession, Cole Forthofer set a ball screen for Comer on the wing and the junior guard stepped up to knock down his sole triple of the day. Comer capped off a personal 7-0 run with a reverse layup to go up 48-38 with six minutes remaining.

“Just taking care of the ball, that’s our main thing,” Comer said. “Then I was just getting to the rack and that’s all it takes.”

Comer continued to contribute throughout the rest of the fourth quarter as well. With four minutes left, he drove the baseline before finding Forthofer in the lane for a push shot, assisted Benson Barnett during a play designed to run the clock down and iced the game away with a pair of free throws with 12.9 seconds remaining.

“I was just dragging their defender and then kicking it when they come,” said Comer, who matched Aiden Phillips with a game-high three assists. “I love getting my teammates buckets.”

After Comer’s free throws, Richmond could-



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Jayden Comer of the Jay County Patriots drives the lane during Monday’s 56-53 win over Richmond. Comer scored the first seven points of the fourth quarter, assisted two more buckets and hit the final free throws to ice the game away.

n’t get a good look against JCHS quick enough as Hubbard only got a three off at the buzzer.

While Comer and Over-

ton controlled the second half, Forthofer and Phillips powered the first two quarters. Forthofer finished with a team-high 14 points, 10 of which

came in the first half, while Phillips shot 3-of-3 from the field for eight first-half points.

Gradin Swoveland also added 13 on an effort split

throughout the game. Tyrel Brown and Treston Bennett were the only other Red Devils in double figures with 11 and 10, respectively.

Box score

Richmond Red Devils
at Jay County Patriots

Boys varsity summary

Richmond (1-1)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
McKnlly-Bglik	1-4	0-0	3
Hubbard	8-13	1-3	20
Harris	0-0	0-0	0
Bennett	5-12	0-0	10
Brown	4-10	0-0	11
Sanders	0-3	0-0	0
Jhnsn-Philps	3-6	0-1	7
Stargell	1-4	0-0	2
Totals	22-52	1-4	53
	.423	.250	

Def. Rebound percentage: .588

Jay County (1-1)			
	FG-FGA	FT-FTA	PTS
Overton	3-5	0-0	6
Comer	4-9	2-2	11
Barnett	1-1	0-0	2
Wasson	0-0	0-0	0
Petro	1-3	0-0	2
Forthofer	7-9	0-0	14
Phillips	3-3	2-2	8
Swoveland	5-8	2-2	13
Sommers	0-0	0-0	0
Totals	24-38	6-6	56
	.632	1.000	

Def. Rebound percentage: .424

Score by quarters:

Richmond	8	16	14	15	—	53
Jay Co.	10	14	17	15	—	56

3-point shooting: Richmond 8-20 (Hubbard 3-4, Brown 3-5, Jeravion Johnson-Phillips 1-2, McKinley-Bigalk 1-4, Sanders 0-1, Bennett 0-2, Stargell 0-2). Jay County 2-6 (Swoveland 1-1, Comer 1-4, Petro 0-1).

Rebounds: Richmond 29 (Hubbard 14, Team 6, McKinley-Bigalk 2, Bennett 2, Sanders 2, Johnson-Phillips 2, Brown). Jay County 21 (Forthofer 6, Phillips 3, Swoveland 3, Team 3, Overton 2, Sommers 2, Barnett, Petro).

Assists: Richmond 8 (Harris 2, Bennett 2, Brown 2, McKinley-Bigalk, Johnson-Phillips). Jay County 11 (Comer 3, Phillips 3, Overton 2, Barnett, Forthofer, Swoveland).

Blocks: Richmond 2 (Hubbard, Brown). Jay County 3 (Forthofer 2, Swoveland).

Personal fouls: Richmond 11 (McKinley-Bigalk 3, Bennett 2, Sanders 2, Hubbard, Harris, Brown, Stargell). Jay County 11 (Overton 2, Comer 2, Barnett 2, Swoveland 2, Petro, Forthofer, Phillips).

Turnovers: Richmond 19. Jay County 19.

90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
Located: 8341 N 400 E
Bryant, Indiana
(Bearcreek Farms)
Saturday Morning
DECEMBER 6, 2025
9:30 A.M.
**HOUSEHOLD GOODS-
OLD & COLLECTORS
ITEMS**
Metal African Tribal Statue, approximately 4' tall, VERY UNUSUAL; Oak curved glass secretary with leaded glass; Oak curved glass secretary

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90 SALE CALENDAR

bookcase; Oak large size roll top desk; wing back chair recliner; Messages and Papers of the Presidents book set; political buttons; glass elephants; Fenton tall candlesticks; Coke thermometer; cuckoo clock; scales; Thomas Kinkade pictures;LARGE SET OF PFALTZGRAFF DISHES WITH MANY EXTRA PIECES; jewelry; Shriner's hat; Lefton; cast iron chicken fryer; assortment of vintage glassware; Indian Princess dolls; large assortment of dolls; clown figurines; and other items not listed.
TOOLS
Bolens front tine tiller; Skil 10t miter saw; Stihl BG72 gas blower; B & D 18V Sawzall; palm sander; post driver; foggers; screwdrivers; air tools; fishing poles; oil cans; metal index cabinet; step stools; wire racks; balls; hitch pins; nails; screws; ladder jacks; roll of wire; axes; levels; cythe; and many other items not listed.
HOLTEN FAMILY
Loy Auction
AC#31600027
Auctioneers
Gary Loy AU01031608
Travis Theurer AU11200131
Aaron Loy AU11200112
Kaden Khayyata AU12400069

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

LEGAL NOTICE OF BIDS
Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received in the office of the Jay County Auditor, at the Courthouse in Portland, Indiana, 47371, Friday, December 19, 2025 until the hour of 4:00 PM with opening at 9:05 AM on December 22, 2025 for cash rental of approximately 68 acres of farm ground owned by Jay County located in Section 18, Wayne Township, Jay County, Indiana. The term of the lease agreement shall be for the 2026 crop year only. The Board of Jay County Commissioners shall select the highest and most responsive bid. The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids, or to accept the one which, in their judgment, will be in the best interest of Jay County, being the best and/or lowest response and responsible bidder. The property may not be leased to a person who is ineligible under I.C. 36-1-11-16.
Emily Franks,
Jay County Auditor
CR 12-3,10-2025-HSPAXLP

90 SALE CALENDAR

PUBLIC AUCTION
Located: Women's Building at the Jay County Fairgrounds, 806 E Votaw St., Portland, IN
Thursday Evening
DECEMBER 4, 2025
6:00 P.M.
REAL ESTATE - PIKE TOWNSHIP, JAY COUNTY INDIANA
TRACT 1 - 31.48 acres of land located in Section 30 of Pike Township. 28.92 acres of tillable land and the balance in non tillable land and roadway. This parcel of land has road frontage on CR 175W and CR 800 S.
TRACT 2 - 43 +/- acres of land with approximately 42 acres of tillable land and the balance in roadway and utility transmission towers.
This parcel of land has road frontage on CR 175W.
TRACT 3 - 74.48 +/- acres of land, which is the combination of Tract 1 and Tract 2.
For more information contact Gary Loy, Auctioneer at (260) 726-

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

LEGAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL BIDS
Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received in the office of the Jay County Auditor, at the Courthouse in Portland, Indiana, 47371, Friday, December 19, 2025 until the hour of 4:00 PM local time for Item 1 to be delivered to the county in the amounts and at such time as ordered by the head of the department. Bids are to be from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 with option escalator clause as an alternate. Specifications are available in the Jay County Auditor's Office, Portland, Indiana, 47371 for the following items:
Item #1 Crushed Stone 150,000 tons or less of crushed stone conforming to the 1995 Indiana Department of Highways Standard Specifications. All stone is to be loaded on County trucks. The Board of Commissioners reserve the right to reject any and/or all bids, or to accept the one(s) which, in their judgement will be in the best interest of Jay County, being the best and/or lowest response and responsible bidder for each line or class of materials by the order of the Board of Commissioners of Jay County, Indiana.
Emily Franks
Jay County Auditor
CR 11-26,12-3-2025-HSPAXLP

90 SALE CALENDAR

5160 or Kim Loy, Real Estate Broker at (260) 726-2700.
MITCH AND CHRISTI LOY
Loy Auction
AC#31600027
Auctioneers
Gary Loy AU01031608
100 JOBS WANTED

AMISH CREW LOOKING for any work. No job is too big or small. Pole barns, roofing, remodeling. 260-849-2489.

130 MISC. FOR SALE

SCRATCH PADS ARE BACK various bundles sizes and XL pads. \$1.25 plus tax. Pick up at The Commercial Review Tuesday thru Friday 10am to 4pm.

PAPER END ROLLS FOR SALE Various sizes and prices. Call The Commercial Review at 260-726-8141 for more information.

190 FARMERS COLUMN

AG RENTAL Spreaders: BBI, Artsway Vertical. New Holland 228 skid loaders w/full cab, heat/ac. Fort Recovery 419-852-0309

200 FOR RENT

LEASE SPACE available, Coldwater, OH. Manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, distribution, offices, inside and outdoor storage. Easy access to major highways and railroad access with loading docks and overhead cranes available. Contact Sycamore Group, 419-678-5318, www.sycamorespace.com

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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

Summons – Service By Publication/Unknown Heirs and Devises of Marjorie E. Harris
State Of Indiana County Of Jay In The Jay Superior Court Cause No: 38D01-2507-MF-000016 U.S. Bank Trust National Association, Not In Its Individual Capacity But Solely As Owner Trustee For RCAF Acquisition Trust Plaintiff -vs- Unknown Heirs And Devises Of Marjorie E. Harris, Rhonda R Harris, Portfolio Recovery Associates, LLC, IMC Credit Services LLC Defendant(s) Notice Of Suit To the defendants above named, and any other person who may be concerned. You are notified that you have been sued in the Court above named. The nature of the suit against you is the foreclosure of a mortgage upon the property legally described as follows: Fifty-Five (55) feet off of and along the entire east side of the following: Beginning at a point on the north line of Floral Avenue in the city of Portland that is 350 feet east of the southwest corner of Lot 29 in Jackson's subdivision of the part of Out Lot 22 in Jackson and Reed's South Side Addition to the City of Portland, Indiana, and running thence north on a line parallel with the west line of said Lot 29, a distance of 173 feet more or less to the lands conveyed by corrected deed to Henry P. Garber (see deed record 38 page 17 of records in the Recorder's Office of Jay County, Indiana, for a description of same) thence east on and along the south line of same 100 feet; thence south on a line parallel with the west line of said Lot 29 a distance of 173 feet more or less to the north line of Floral Avenue; thence west to the place of beginning. Commonly known as: 538 East Floral Avenue, Portland, IN 47371 This summons by publication is specifically directed to the following defendant(s) whose whereabouts are unknown: Unknown Heirs and Devises of Marjorie E. Harris In addition, to the above-named defendants being served by this summons, there may be other defendants who have an interest in this lawsuit. An answer or other appropriate response in writing to the Complaint must be filed either by you or your attorney with the Clerk of the Court for Jay County at: Jay County Clerk 120 North Court Street #2 Portland, IN 47371 on or before the 9th day of January, 2026, (the same being thirty (30) days after the Third Notice of Suit), and if you fail to do so, a judgment may be entered against you for what the plaintiff has demanded. Phillip A. Norman, P.C. /s/ Benjamin Pliskie #30407-45 Attorney for Plaintiff Phillip A. Norman, P.C. 2110 Calumet Avenue Valparaiso, IN 46383 Telephone: 219-462-5104 25-00677 Attest: November 17, 2025 /s/ Melissa Elliott Clerk, Jay Superior Court
CR 12-26,12-3,10-2025-HSPAXLP

250 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Notice is hereby given that Jay County, by and through its Board of County Commissioners, will receive sealed bids for the construction of:

JAY COUNTY CCMG FY 26 PROJECT
CR 400 S from SR 1 to SR 67
JAY COUNTY, INDIANA

Sealed proposals will be received at the Jay County Auditor's Office, 120 North Court Street #2, Portland, Indiana 47371 by 9:00 A.M. (local time) on December 22, 2025. If CCMG Funds have been awarded to Jay County, then all proposals will be opened and read aloud during the County Commissioner's meeting, which begins at 9:00 A.M. (local time). Bids will then be taken under advisement for review by the owner and engineer. Any proposals received after the above-designated time will be returned unopened.

Bids will not be opened, reviewed, or awarded prior to award of CCMG funds. If funds are NOT awarded to Jay County for this project, bids may be returned. The proposed construction will include the installation of 1.5" of HMA Surface with minor wedge and level, and all incidental work required, as specified in the Contract Documents and Provisions.

All proposals must be submitted on State Board of Accounts Form No. 96 together with the proper forms included in the Contract Documents, the entire set of which shall be filed intact as a bid. The bid envelope must be sealed and have the words "JAY COUNTY CCMG FY 26 PROJECT" legibly written on the front. Bidders must be INDOT pre-qualified per Indiana Code (IC) 5-16-13-10

The contract documents are available at www.questcdn.com. This contract is QuestCDN project number 9936772. A contractor may view the contract documents at no cost prior to deciding to be a planholder. To be considered a planholder for bids, a contractor must register with QuestCDN.com and purchase the contract documents in digital form at a cost of \$22.00. Registering for all prime contractors and subcontractors is recommended as planholders will receive automatic notice of addendums and other contract document updates via QuestCDN. Contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in membership registration or downloading digital project information. Bidders shall assure that they have obtained complete sets of drawings and Contract Documents and shall assume the risk of any errors or omissions in bids prepared in reliance on incomplete sets of drawings and Contract Documents.

SECURITY: Any person, firm or corporation who submits a proposal must file with their bid a CERTIFIED CHECK, BANK DRAFT, CASHIER'S CHECK OR MONEY ORDER issued by a financial institution insured by an agency of the United States in the amount of five percent (5%), made payable to the Treasurer of Jay County. In lieu of the above, any person, firm or corporation who submits a proposal and has a principal place of business in the State of Indiana MAY file with their proposal a BID BOND in the amount of five percent (5%), made payable to the Board of Commissioners of Jay County. Proposals may be held by the Board of Commissioners for a period not to exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the public opening.

The successful Contractor will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and Payment Bond in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price, each, within ten (10) days after award of the contract and a two (2) year Maintenance Bond in the amount of thirty percent (30%) of the contract price prior to completion and final payment of the contract.

Jay County in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C 2000d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally assisted programs of the Department of Transportation and Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200, Title VI Program and Related Statutes, issued pursuant to such Acts, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability/handicap and low income in consideration for an award.

No Contractor may withdraw his proposal within sixty (60) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

The Jay County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to ask for clarification for any bid submitted. In comparing bids, consideration will not be confined to price only. The successful bid will be the lowest responsive and responsive bidder, however the Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject any proposal, to waive technicalities or irregularities therein, to delete any bid item or items and to award a contract on the proposal that in their judgment is most advantageous to Jay County.

Jay County Board of Commissioners
Chad Aker
Duane Monroe
Doug Horn

CR 11-26,12-3-2025-HSPAXLP

Sports

Guards step up

Overton, Comer have big second half in win over Richmond

By ANDREW BALKO
The Commercial Review

The frontcourt carried the bulk of the load in the first half.

But it was a pair of guards that came up clutch to secure the game in the final two periods.

Gabe Overton reclaimed the lead in the third quarter for the Jay County High School boys basketball team before Jayden Comer put the Richmond Red Devils away in the fourth for a 56-53 victory on Monday.

“Trying to survive is what it felt like to be honest with you,” said first-year JCHS coach Tyle Rigby, whose team managed to stall out the final two minutes for the narrow victory. “I thought we struggled a little bit in the first half with the pressure again but we did respond in the second half, but we did respond in the second half. ... (Richmond) is so good creating offense with their defense. You just can’t turn it over, can’t miss an easy layup or they’re going to get out in transition.

"But I thought our guys responded really well in the second half. It could have folded pretty easily and they didn't. They responded with a little bit of intensity themselves and that's good to see."

The Patriots (1-1) allowed Richmond (1-1) to hang around in the first

half as they committed 10 turnovers that allowed eight transition points, including a pair of alley oops to Elijah Hubbard.

Richmond turned up the defensive pressure even more to start the third quarter, leading to a Zaevion Sanders pull-up and a transition dunk by Hubbard — he led all scorers with 20 points — to go up 28-24.

“Our defense is what we hang our hat on,” said RHS coach Josh Jurgens. “Offensively we do struggle at times and that’s on me. I’ve got to get better at calling plays, drawing up stuff and getting these kids moving a little bit more. We feel like our defense can travel even if our offense is off, the defense can still be there.”

RHS got one more transition bucket, but the Patriots cut it to a two-point deficit before figuring things out for good. Jay County started to settle in when Overton was bringing the ball up the floor.

JCHS went on an 8-0 run including three buckets by Overton, two in transition and one on a back cut, to reclaim a 41-35 advantage.

"He brings an intensity defensively," Rigby said of Overton. "He can get after it and he's really good on the ball."

See **Guards** page 7



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Jay County High School's Gabe Overton floats up a shot during the Patriots' 56-53 victory over Richmond on Monday. Overton scored six straight points as part of an 8-0 run that reclaimed the lead for Jay County in the third quarter before Jayden Comer put the game away in the fourth.



Psi Iota Xi sorority presents
Jay County Civic Theatre's production of





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ANNIE

Book by
THOMAS MEEHAN

Music by
CHARLES STROUSE

Lyrics by
MARTIN CHARNIN

Original Broadway Production Directed by Martin Charnin
 Based on "Little Orphan Annie"
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Shows are 7 p.m. Dec. 4, 5, 6, 12 and 13, and 2 p.m. Dec. 14



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 Available by visiting bit.ly/JCCTAnnie, by calling (260) 726-4809,
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Annie
 Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)
 All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI
www.MTIShows.com



















On tap

Local schedule

Thursday
Jay County — Swim vs. Anderson — 6 p.m.; Girls wrestling vs. Hamilton Southeastern — 6:30 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Woodlan — 6 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball vs. Woodlan — 6 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Girls basketball vs. St. Henry — 6 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball vs. St. Henry — 5 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at St. Henry — 5 p.m.

Friday

Jay County — Boys basketball vs. Woodlan — 6 p.m.; JV boys wrestling at Blackford — 5:45 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball vs. Woodlan — 6 p.m.

Saturday

Jay County — Boys wrestling at West-
 ern — 9 a.m.; Girls wrestling at East
 Noble — 9 a.m.; Swim in Celina Sprints —
 10 a.m.; Girls basketball vs. Fort Recovery —
 12 p.m.; Boys basketball at Fort Recovery — 6 p.m.
 Fort Recovery — Swim in Celina Sprints
 at Jay County — 10 a.m.; Girls basketball at
 Jay County — 12 p.m.; Boys bowling in tour-
 nament at H.P. Lanes — 12 p.m.; Girls bowl-
 ing in tournament at H.P. Lanes — 12 p.m.;
 Boys basketball vs. Jay County — 6 p.m.

TV schedule

Today
2:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Arsenal FC at Brentford (USA)
5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Kentucky at Miami (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — NBA: Denver Nuggets at Indiana Pacers (FDSN Indiana)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Indiana at Minnesota (BTN)
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: N.C. State at Oklahoma (ESPN2)
7:15 p.m. — College basketball: Louisville at Arkansas (ESPN)
7:30 p.m. — NHL: Buffalo Sabres at Philadelphia Flyers (TNT)
9 p.m. — College basketball: Northwestern at Wisconsin (BTN)
9:15 p.m. — College basketball: N.C. State at Auburn (ESPN)
9:15 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Tennessee at Stanford (ESPN2)
10 p.m. — NHL: Utah Mammoth at Anaheim Ducks (TNT)
11 p.m. — College basketball: UCLA at Washington (BTN)

Thursday

12 p.m. — PGA Tour Champions: World Champions Cup (ESPN)
3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Manchester United at West Ham United (USA)
5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Florida at Virginia Tech (ESPN2)
7 p.m. — Women's college basketball: North Carolina at Texas (ESPN2); South Carolina at Louisville (ESPN)
7 p.m. — NHL: St. Louis Blues at Boston Bruins (FSDN Indiana)
7:30 p.m. — College hockey: Minnesota at Ohio State (BTN)
8:15 p.m. — NFL: Dallas Cowboys at Detroit Lions (FOX)
9 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Notre Dame at Ole Miss (ESPN2); LSU at Duke (ESPN)

Friday
4:30 a.m. — Formula 1: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (ESPN2)
12 p.m. — FIFA World Cup 2026: Group Stage Draw (FOX)
12 p.m. — PGA Tour Champions: World Champions Cup (ESPN)
6 p.m. — College hockey: Minnesota at Ohio State (BTN)
7 p.m. — College football: Troy at James Madison (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Gonzaga at Kentucky (ESPN2)
7:30 p.m. — College basketball: Cincinnati at Xavier (TNT)
8 p.m. — College football: UNLV at Boise State (FOX); North Texas at Tulane (ABC)
8 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Chicago Bulls (FDSN Indiana)