

Envoys to visit as Putin rejects parts of plan

Ukrainian negotiators will join new round of talks in Florida

By ALIAKSANDR KUDRYTSKI
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

Ukrainian negotiators will join a new round of talks in Florida as Russian President Vladimir Putin said some of the points in a U.S.-backed peace plan were unacceptable to him, the latest sign an agreement likely remains distant.

The negotiations are difficult, and Moscow disagrees with some of what's been suggested by the U.S., Putin said in an interview to India Today, as cited by the state-run Tass news service. The full interview will be released later on Thursday.

Putin's comments are likely to cast more doubt over U.S. President Donald Trump's push to broker a peace deal after almost four years of Russia's full-scale invasion. Intense shuttle diplomacy over the past few days has failed to break the deadlock as the Kremlin presses Ukraine to hand over control of land that Moscow has failed to seize by force in the east of the country. Kyiv has repeatedly rejected that demand.

Trump said Wednesday that he doesn't know what the outcome of successive rounds of talks over a deal will be, though he called the last meeting his special envoy, Steve Witkoff, and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, held with Putin in Moscow on Tuesday "reasonably good."

See Plan page 2

Emergency hub?



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

Some Jay County Commissioners and council members toured Jay Emergency Medical Service's base in Portland, along with the Jay County Health Department and Jay County Coroner's Office, on Wednesday as part of a meeting to evaluate needs and consider plans for a possible multifaceted public safety building. IU Health Jay has expressed a willingness to donate the Jay Emergency Medical Service base and adjacent land to the county for the project.

Commissioners, council discuss potential facility and discuss the next steps with department heads

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review
Officials have a starting point.

Now they say it's time to get down to business.

Jay County Council and Jay County Commissioners reviewed sketches Wednesday for a new multi-faceted public safety building in Portland and discussed next steps with department heads.

County officials have been discussing creating a hub for Jay Emergency Medical Service,

Jay County Health Department and Jay County Coroner's Office for years.

Discussion renewed recently after commissioners agreed on a 2-1 vote in August to move forward with a \$119,000 contract with MSS Engineering for designing the project, with plans at that time to build on the county's 68 acres along Votaw Street on the west side of Portland. Commissioner Duane Monroe suggested instead expanding the current Portland Jay Emergency Medical Service

base, which is owned by IU Health Jay.

Recently, the board of directors that oversees IU Health Jay agreed to donate the Jay Emergency Medical Service building and 2 acres of land for the county, according to IU Health chief operating officer and chief nursing officer Christina Schemenaur.

Council members let a transfer request in the commissioners' budget for the project die for a lack of a motion at two council meetings in September.

They voiced concerns at the time about the increased cost in the project's scope and whether it would require a new request for proposals.

Travis McDaniel of MSS Engineering said Wednesday it won't be a large additional cost to amend plans and expand the existing base instead of constructing an entirely new building. He shared a potential design of the facility Wednesday with council and commissioners.

See Hub page 2



Tribune News Service/cleveland.com/Joshua Gunter

Down the hill

Northeast Ohio residents take advantage of the fresh snow from a winter storm with a little sledding at Big Creek reservation. A winter storm hit the Midwest on Monday evening. The forecast calls for a slight chance of snow daily from Sunday through Wednesday.

Education leaders warn

School officials say tax reforms are destabilizing budgets

By CASEY SMITH
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana school officials are warning that the state's new property tax overhaul is pushing districts into an unprecedented financial squeeze — which dozens of Hoosier superintendents say is already forcing staff cuts, delaying maintenance and increasing the likelihood for other reductions.

Their concerns are at the heart of a new statewide survey released Thursday by the Indiana Coalition for Public Education, first published by the Indiana Capital Chronicle.

The report highlights how Senate Enrolled Act 1 is reshaping local school budgets just months after its passage.

The survey — completed by 148 of the state's 290 traditional public school corporations — found that 95.3% of Indiana districts expect SEA 1 to negatively affect their funding in 2025, and 99.3% expect impacts in future years.

Concerns cut across geography and school size.

Large suburban districts worried about their ability to accommodate growth without operational dollars, while small rural districts said they face "existential threats" in the form of potential staff layoffs, school consolidations and the reduction of essential services if operational funding continues to shrink.

Urban districts additionally said longstanding structural disadvantages make them especially vulnerable to revenue compression, noting that dense populations, aging buildings and higher concentrations of high-needs students leave them with fewer ways to absorb shrinking tax collections.

For many superintendents, the financial strain isn't a future concern, but a problem already unfolding inside their buildings.

See Warn page 2

In review

Trinity ArchBridge Church will host its Festival of Nativities this weekend. The display at the church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland, will feature more than 500 Nativity scenes, ranging from mass-produced to hand-crafted. It will be open from noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7.

Weather

The high temperature was 27 degrees Wednesday in Jay County. The low was 16.

Tonight's low will be in the low teens with winds gusting to 20 mph. Skies will be mostly cloudy Saturday with a high in the lower 30s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon today in the shopping center at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, the parking lot east of Redkey Post Office and the parking lot south of Salamonina Fire Station.

Coming up

Saturday — Results from the JCHS boys basketball team's game against Woodlan.

Tuesday — Details from Monday's Jay County Commissioners meeting.

Wednesday — Coverage of Monday's Dunkirk City Council meeting.



Hub ...

Continued from page 1

The proposed plan resembles a sketch created four years ago when commissioners president Chad Aker met with department heads about the topic. It includes a JEMS living quarters with four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a shared dayroom and kitchen area and a patio, as well as an exercise room, a training room, a conference room, a break room, a lobby for Jay County Health Department and various offices, restrooms and storage rooms.

If constructed in full, the facility would sit at just under 10,000 square feet. At an estimated \$500 per square foot, the building could cost nearly \$5 million.

A few council members balked at the price Wednesday, with council member Bryan Alexander saying there isn't support for the plan among council. He and council member Harold Towell also said the

project wouldn't be popular with the public.

Council vice president Cindy Bracy said the county wouldn't be able to afford a \$5 million project, indicating cuts would likely need to be made. She suggested potentially focusing instead on expanding the EMS base and leaving the health department and coroner's offices in their current locations.

Commissioners Duane Monroe and Aker, absent Doug Horn, took tours of both the health department on Arch Street in Portland and the JEMS facility along Creagor Avenue in Portland along with council member Matt Minnich on Wednesday. Health department administrator Heath Butz explained the department would benefit from a different building layout as well as additional parking. Jay Emergency Medical Service directors Kyle Gerlach and Gary Barnett

showed the living quarters and offices, noting various spots have been overtaken for storage needs.

Monroe explained Wednesday's goal was to look into whether the location is feasible for building plans. Several folks pointed to an existing wastewater line underground near the Portland base. (There's also a walking path to IU Health Jay, although Schemenaur said it could be relocated.)

Discussion circled around whether the county would have enough space to expand the current building or whether it would need to build a new structure, with officials indicating they could negotiate with IU Health Jay to place it on part of the hospital's land north of the Portland base.

Regarding cuts to the project, Jay Emergency Medical Service officials originally argued against, citing needs for a training room on campus. Butz also

questioned whether the health department would still be considered in plans.

Council president Matt Minnich pointed out the main question Wednesday: Where can the building fit, and what all does it need to include? He also expressed frustration with department heads regarding potential cuts.

"It doesn't sound like there's any room to give, so this might be dead on arrival, because there's no room that you guys can work with any deductions," he said. "I don't know where we're going to go."

Department heads took a step back, saying plans are negotiable. Jay Emergency Medical Service director Jessica Curtis added that any plans would be an upgrade from the current facility.

Towell chided department heads and officials, saying Wednesday's discussion should've happened a month

prior. He suggested they get together to begin planning soon.






County officials discussed doing a survey on the land and having Portland wastewater superintendent Brad Dues locate the sewer line.

Schemenaur and council members discussed utilizing the hospital for conference and training rooms, with Alexander suggesting a memorandum of understanding.

County attorney Wes Schemenaur, Christina Schemenaur's husband, noted the county's lease with the hospital for the Portland base expired in April. He advocated for taking some sort of action soon, pointing out that the hospital's donation was not on the table in previous years.

Aker also advocated for taking action on the project swiftly, asking officials to keep an open mind as they move through the process.

CR almanac

Saturday 12/6	Sunday 12/7	Monday 12/8	Tuesday 12/9	Wednesday 12/10
 33/28 Saturday's weather looks like cloudy skies with a high around freezing.	 33/11 Sunday looks to be snowy with a nearly 50% chance of precipitation.	 24/17 Mostly sunny skies on Monday when the low will be around 17 degrees.	 33/29 Cloudy on Tuesday when the low may hit around 29 degrees.	 38/20 There's a 75% chance of snow on Wednesday.

Lotteries

Powerball 1-14-20-46-51 Power Ball: 26 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$820 million	Daily Four: 1-4-3-6 Quick Draw: 3-8-11-15-17-25-26-27-30-32-38-39-48-50-53-56-58-61-65-77 Cash 5: 15-18-27-32-39 Estimated jackpot: \$85,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$50 million	Ohio Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 4-4-2 Pick 4: 9-1-2-1 Pick 5: 7-8-0-5-3 Evening Pick 3: 1-5-9 Pick 4: 0-6-7-2 Pick 5: 9-2-4-7-2 Rolling Cash: 1-13-28-29-37 Estimated jackpot: \$201,000
Hoosier Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 7-6-4 Daily Four: 1-0-1-3 Quick Draw: 6-7-15-16-28-29-30-35-38-39-44-46-49-52-54-64-66-72-75-76 Evening Daily Three: 3-1-0	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.69 Jan. corn4.60	Wheat 4.96
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.64 Jan. corn4.56 Feb. corn4.51	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.42 Jan. corn4.42 Beans11.13 Jan. beans11.16 Wheat5.11
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.51 Jan. corn4.51 Beans11.13 Jan. beans11.16	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.51 Jan. corn4.51 Beans10.83 Jan. beans10.88 Wheat4.86

Today in history

In 1484 , Pope Innocent VIII condemned witchcraft. He later sent inquisitors to Germany to put accused witches on trial.	Southside Senior Hemmelgarn led the way by finishing off Daquevon Hopkins of the Rebels in just 49 seconds in the heavyweight match.
In 2013 , Jay County High School's wrestling team racked up eight pins, including six in the first period, as it knocked off Muncie	In 2018 , Jay County High School senior Vivienne Kunkler signed to continue her swimming career at Bethel College.

—The CR

Citizen's calendar

Monday 9 a.m. — Jay County Commissioners, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 4 p.m. — Jay County Public Library Board of Trustees, community room, library, 315 N. Ship St., Portland. 6 p.m. — Jay County Country Living Advisory Board, living facility, 1194 E. 200 North, Portland.	7 p.m. — Dunkirk City Council, city building, 131 S. Main St. Tuesday 5:30 p.m. — Portland Board of Zoning Appeals, Community Resource Center building, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 6 p.m. —Ridgeville Town Council, fire department, 302 N. Walnut St.
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Warn ...

Continued from page 1

Survey responses were kept anonymous in ICPE's published report.

One superintendent described being unable to cover even the most basic operating costs, saying their district's finances had reached the point where "I cannot pay my utility bill," and warned that rising gas, electricity and insurance costs are outpacing any funds available to cover them.

Another district leader said the combined effect of inflation and the property tax cap changes mean their operations fund is shrinking each year while costs climb.

"The negative impacts of SEA 1 cannot be overstated," the superintendent wrote, adding that "uncontrollable cost increases in utilities, transportation and insurance cannot be addressed adequately" under the new levy limits.

Indiana schools depend on local property taxes to fund essential serv-

ices like custodial work, transportation, facility maintenance and bus purchases — areas where costs have risen sharply in the last decade.

SEA 1 decreases the taxable assessed value available to school corporations through expanded deductions that phase in through 2031. Although the law was intended to provide tax relief to property owners, superintendents emphasized in the survey that it has weakened the financial foundation for operating public schools.

Several respondents pointed to a mismatch between what's expected of schools and the dollars they receive.

One rural superintendent reported that their district had "a history of doing more with less," but that the law's projected reductions in the operations fund would soon make it "very difficult to simply run school."

A suburban superintendent separately noted that long-range finan-

cial planning has become nearly impossible because "constantly changing regulations" leave districts unsure how much revenue they will receive from one year to the next.

Cuts ripple across classrooms, The survey found that 65.3% of Indiana districts that responded have already reduced or will reduce support staff, and 55.8% have already reduced or will reduce teaching staff.

Combined with the districts that are considering reductions, more than 90% reported that cuts to staffing or facilities are on the table.

In write-in responses, superintendents said they're postponing or canceling bus purchases, scaling back technology upgrades, holding off on building repairs, and in some cases, preparing for building closures.

The story was edited for length. To read the full version, visit indianacapitalchronicle.com.

SERVICES

Today

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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Optimists are accepting oratorical entries

Jay County Optimist Clubs are accepting speeches to enter into the annual Optimist International Oratorical Contest. This year's topic is "The Moment I Realized I Belonged — My Definition of Community." Local Optimist clubs will judge students' speeches based on content and presentation. Winners will receive awards, with winners advancing to zone, district, regional and world championships, with a chance to win up to \$22,500 in scholarships. The contest is open

Taking Note

Wife continues talking with former friend

DEAR ABBY: My best friend of more than 10 years, "Ian," ghosted me! We used to talk about everything — wives, children, jobs. We spent hours together and helped each other sort out our problems. He knew more about me than my wife. With no explanation, he stopped responding to texts and messages and is ignoring my calls. I have come to terms with this and deleted him from my social media and social circles. It's been two years now. The problem is my wife. Everyone else in my family has removed him from their social circles. However, my wife maintains contact with him. As far as I knew, they were only acquaintances. Yet now they comment on each other's posts

Dear Abby



gaming — they were still communicating online. My wife didn't respond when I asked her why she was still in touch with him. I'm not sure what my next steps should be. I can't believe my partner would choose to remain in contact with someone who hurt me so badly. I'm also concerned about what Ian might say to my wife, because we used to talk about marital issues we had with our wives. Help! — UNEASY IN CANADA

DEAR UNEASY: When you expressed to your wife that she was a big girl and you didn't care if she maintained a relationship with Ian, she regarded it as permission. Did you TELL her how deeply you were hurt when

Ian ghosted you? If you haven't, it's time you did. I can't predict how she will react, but if she cares about your feelings, she may stop playing games with your former friend. (I can't help wondering if she knows why Ian cut ties with you so abruptly. Have you asked her?)

.....

DEAR ABBY: A year ago, I became seriously ill. I spent a long time in the hospital and 20 days in rehab learning how to walk again. My daughter told me I should stay in a nursing home and give up on walking. When I refused, she stormed out and hasn't spoken to me since. I'm back on my feet now, back at work full-time, walking with a cane. I can't quite bring

myself to forgive her for that, because I needed her so badly. How do I resolve this? — DISAPPOINTED MOM IN TENNESSEE

DEAR MOM: Why do I have the feeling that there are facts you may have omitted from your letter? Surely, this didn't happen out of the blue. Your daughter's reaction to the fact that you want to live independently is bizarre, unless she was afraid she might have to take care of you. It appears you raised a daughter who is lacking in character and compassion. Resolve this by walking your own path (literally) and deriving support from people who are capable of caring about you.

Community Calendar

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

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.

SOFT SHOULDERS — A support group for anyone suffering from memory loss, will meet at 10:30 a.m. the first Friday of each month in the Fireplace Room at Edelweiss Place at Swiss Village in Berne. For more information, call (260) 589-3173.

Saturday
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3336 or (260) 729-7000.

ROAD RIDERS FOR JESUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month in the West Walnut Church of Christ fellowship hall, 204 W. Walnut St., Portland. (Please enter from the door facing the alley on the north side

of the building.) For more information, call (260) 726-8463.

MUSEUM OF THE SOLDIER — Is open from noon to 5 p.m. the first and third Saturday and Sunday of the month. It is located at 510 E. Arch St., Portland. The website is museumofthesoldier.com.

Sunday
A BETTER LIFE – BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for all kinds of addictions, will meet from 5 to 6:30 p.m. each Sunday at Fellowship Baptist Church, 289 S. 200 West, Portland. Come early for a meal. For more information, call (260) 766-2006.

Monday
PORTLAND BREAKFAST OPTIMISTS — Will meet at 7 a.m. for breakfast at Richards Restaurant.

PING PONG — Will be played from 9 a.m. to noon each Monday at Jay Community Center.

JAY COUNTY DRUG PREVENTION COALITION — Will meet at noon the second Monday of each month at Jay County Campus of Arts Place, 131 E Walnut St, Portland. For more information, call (260) 251-3259.

EUCHRE — Will be played starting at 1 p.m. each Monday at West Jay

Community Center, 125 Hoover St., Dunkirk.

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY (TOPS) — Will meet for weigh-in at 4:30 p.m., with the meeting at 5 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 323 S. Meridian St., Portland. New members welcome. For more information, call (260) 726-5924.

THE LIFE CENTER — Free pregnancy testing with ongoing support during and after pregnancy, as well as help with the needs of the family. The center is located at 1209 S. Shank St., Portland. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (260) 726-8636. Walk-ins accepted.

BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY FAMILY MEAL — Will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Asbury United Methodist Church, 204 E. Arch St. in Portland. Everyone is welcome.

PORTLAND EVENING OPTIMIST CLUB — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Monday of each month at Richards Restaurant.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 6:30 p.m. each Monday 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.

REDISCOVERING JOY — The support group of widows and widowers meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at R & R Fabrications, 601 E. Washington St., St. Henry, Ohio.

an Church, 218 E. High St., Portland. For more information, call (567) 279-8352 or (260) 729-7000.

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.

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.

PORTLAND EAGLES — Will meet at 6 p.m., on the second and fourth

Wednesday of the month at the Eagles' lodge, 320 N. Meridian St., Portland.

JAY COUNTY CIVIC THEATRE — Holds its regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the boardroom at Arts Place, 131 E. Walnut 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.



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Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced


Thursday's Solution

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

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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Take time to handwrite your cards

Chicago Tribune
Tribune News Service

We’ve all come to dread checking the mail. And not just when property taxes are due. Most of the year, the only post we get is bills, which are depressing, or advertisements, headed straight for the trash. Our mailboxes, once filled with interest and promise, have become a breeding ground for junk. Once a year, that changes. Yes, each day’s haul overflows with glossy printouts and holiday gift guides, but they’re also stuffed with photos and letters from friends and loved ones, a return to the joyful nostalgia of those days when the mail was our primary means of correspondence.

Guest Editorial

Cards with pictures of smiling faces show up in bright-colored envelopes, and lucky households gather a collection that can adorn entire doorframes — or refrigerators or fireplace mantels— with cheerful galleries, offering warmth every time you walk by. Sure, there are the overlong letters that accompany some cards, replete with mass-produced rundowns — often highly

embellished — of a child’s impressive achievements or that trip overseas that was absolutely to die for. The disappointments of life rarely make the cut. But even the eyerolling inspired by faux-humble brags comes with its own pleasures tradition, an inside joke shared with spouses and kids. We’ve grown to love the fruits of those over-posed, high-priced family photos on custom cards, knowing full well the folks who send them spent a fortune on a professional photographer and coordinated outfits. So what? They look great and we love seeing them. They’re often our only glimpse of a nephew we haven’t seen in months or a

friend’s new baby we haven’t met yet. Or a sneak peek of a new home or an old one we haven’t visited in ages. We also enjoy shots that include cats and dogs. We’re here for it all. More than anything, we cherish a heartfelt message from someone who took the time to write something personal to us. It may seem simple, but it’s one of the best gifts any person can get. If you’re thinking of skipping cards this holiday season for financial reasons, we understand. Custom cards — and the stamps to go with them — can run a few hundred bucks per season, and if you’re on a budget this is a logical place to cut.

The good news? A stack of blank cards is a fraction of the cost, and trimming your list down to those you love and miss the most is a way to make the project more manageable. Industry estimates still suggest Americans send more than a billion holiday cards each year, spending a small fortune for something that, on paper, should have gone extinct. But those envelopes in the mailbox remain a quiet civic glue, connecting families, neighbors and colleagues with a human touch no text message can match. A handwritten card isn’t just tradition; it’s one of the last rituals that asks us to slow down and mean what we say.

We should take care of basic needs

By SONALI KOLHATKAR
OtherWords

The recent government shutdown was a stark reminder that 42 million people across the United States rely on federal food benefits. That’s 12 percent of the nation’s population that lawmakers and President Donald Trump threw under the bus, cutting off SNAP benefits in an attempt to force a deal.

The shutdown has ended, but SNAP remains in jeopardy. SNAP benefits were already less than a fourth of the average food expenditure per person nationwide. And in 2023, Congress and the Biden administration imposed work requirements on the program as part of a deal to raise the debt ceiling. Then, in summer 2025, Trump’s so-called “Big Beautiful Bill” deeply cut safety net programs to fund tax breaks for corporations and the rich — including the largest SNAP cut in history.

Trump expanded Biden’s work requirements, ending exemptions for veterans, immigrants with legal documents, and the unhoused. Moreover, states will have to pick up a bigger portion of SNAP’s cost. “States are gonna have to pony up beginning next October, and then that’ll only ramp up from there,” said Anya Rose, Director of Public Policy at Hunger Free Colorado. Rose, who used to staff a food resource line, explained that SNAP is “an incredibly important anti-hunger program, and it is also so full of barriers.” And “if you talk to food banks, food pantries, they would tell you we’ve been in a crisis well before [the shutdown], with higher demand than they saw during the pandemic.”

Colorado is not alone. Nationwide, food insecurity is rising — especially among older Americans — fueled by inflation, tariffs, unemployment, and wage stagnation. But the Trump administration decided to stop measuring food insecurity altogether, dismissing the information gathering as “redundant, costly, politicized, and extraneous.” To make matters worse, Trump’s agriculture secretary Brooke Rollins is demanding all 42 million SNAP recipients reapply for their benefits to root out alleged “fraud.” Yet the government’s own data shows how small such anomalies are. When there is overpayment, it amounts to about \$10 or \$11

Sonali Kolhatkar



in food vouchers per person. “The policy is largely designed around how do you keep the wrong people out rather than how do you make sure to actually solve the problem,” said Rose. So how does one solve the problem? It sounds obvious, but if people are hungry, one can simply feed them. To counter the sordid state of affairs at the federal level, Rose’s organization, together with numerous other community organizations in Colorado, helped pass a pair of propositions in November 2025 aimed at fully funding school lunches. What’s powerful about Colorado’s school lunch program is that it’s universal. All children are provided with meals at school regardless of their household income. This means there’s no question of eligibility or fraud. Moreover, the ballot measures allocate money to purchase locally grown food, which benefits farmers, and to increase wages for cafeteria workers to make healthier meals. It’s a win-win-win. To pay for universal school lunches, Colorado imposed a modest tax increase on residents making more than \$300,000 a year — people whose own children will also benefit from the school lunches. It’s a simple calculus, one that we’re seeing more of in the absence of federal action — and not just on food. New Yorkers just elected a mayor promising universal childcare paid for by taxing the rich, similar to a program that New Mexico already enacted. Seattle residents also elected a mayor who designed a tax program aimed at large corporations, and Boston’s hugely popular mayor sailed to reelection unopposed, in part by pioneering a universal free transit program. A majority of Americans favor raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy to pay for our basic necessities such as food, childcare, transit, etc. While people are turning to cities and states to achieve the same goal, the Trump administration is intent on doing the opposite, at its peril.



Reforms could inspire fairness

By NAFEES ALAM
InsideSources.com
Tribune News Service

Marriage rates in the United States have plummeted nearly 60% since 1970, hitting historic lows amid rising divorce risks and financial pitfalls. This decline isn’t primarily a gender war but a finance-based crisis: The specter of divorce as a wealth transfer discourages commitment. Enter China’s bold 2025 divorce law reforms, effective Feb. 1, which overhaul post-divorce asset distribution and eliminate alimony. By prioritizing individual contributions and pre-marital ownership, these changes aim to curb impulsive splits and boost family formation. The United States should seriously consider adopting similar measures, not to mimic authoritarian policies but to promote fairness and informed consent in marriage, potentially reversing our own marital downturn. Under China’s revised Civil Code, property division shifts from automatic equal splits to a system based on who paid for or holds title to assets. Pre-marital property remains solely with its original owner, unless proven joint contributions exist. In marital asset cases, courts now emphasize evidence of payments or investments, rejecting blanket 50/50 divisions. Alimony, long a contentious payout, has been abolished, with support limited to exceptional cases like child-rearing hardships. A mandatory 30-day cooling-off period for mutual consent divorces further discourages rash decisions. These reforms address China’s plunging marriage and birth rates, where men increasingly view wedlock as a financial trap, echoing U.S. sentiments. In America, divorce laws vary by state, but many follow community property (equal division of marital assets) or equitable distribution (fair but not necessarily equal splits). Alimony, often permanent or long-term, adds to the sting. Eighty-eight percent of recipients are women, though high-earning women like Adele have paid it too. As Florida’s recent cap on perma-

Nafees Alam



nent alimony shows, reforms are underway, but they’re piecemeal. China’s approach offers a blueprint for systemic fairness: By protecting pre-marital wealth and tying divisions to actual contributions, it reduces the incentive for divorce as a lucrative exit strategy. No longer can one spouse claim half of the assets they didn’t help build, fostering a sense of justice that could make marriage less daunting. Fairness here isn’t about punishing one gender; it’s about equity rooted in reality. Critics might argue that this disadvantages homemakers who forgo careers for family duties, a valid concern. Yet, China’s model doesn’t ignore such roles; it allows courts to consider non-financial contributions such as child care in exceptional rulings. In the United States, we could enhance this with mandatory prenuptial discussions, ensuring couples negotiate terms upfront. Imagine entering marriage with explicit rules: pre-wedding assets shielded, joint efforts rewarded proportionally. This aligns with informed consent; partners agree knowingly, reducing post-divorce bitterness. As Charlie Munger wisely said, “Show me the incentive, and I’ll show you the outcome.” Current U.S. laws incentivize prolonged disputes; China’s incentivize stability. Informed consent is key to rebuilding trust in marriage. Prenups in America are often invalidated if deemed signed under duress, undermining their utility. Adopting China’s emphasis on pre-marital protection could strengthen them, making courts honor agreements absent fraud. Couples could customize, perhaps allocating funds for a stay-at-home

parent via insurance or trusts, ensuring no one feels exploited. This transparency addresses the financial issue of when divorce looms as a wealth grab, leading high-net-worth individuals to opt out. By clarifying asset rules from the start, we empower informed choices, much as Tennessee’s push for paternity testing to ensure child support is distributed fairly. The potential benefits extend beyond finances. With 42% of first U.S. marriages ending in divorce, and higher for remarriages, reforms could stem the loneliness epidemic, where 63% of young men are single and projections show 45% of women under 45 childless by 2030. Fairer laws might encourage leaps into companionship, yielding measurable perks such as better health, longer life and lower suicide rates among the married. Opponents may decry this as regressive, favoring the wealthy, but it’s the opposite: It levels the playing field by deterring opportunistic unions while protecting genuine partnerships. Adoption wouldn’t be wholesale; America’s system demands state-level tweaks, and we must safeguard vulnerable spouses through safety nets like temporary support. Yet, ignoring China’s experiment risks perpetuating our marital free fall. Texas and Louisiana are eyeing curbs on no-fault divorce; why not pair them with asset reforms? True equality demands shared risks and rewards, free from exemptions. In a nation where love increasingly bows to logic, China’s policies remind us that marriage thrives on fairness and consent, not ambiguity. By adopting elements of these reforms, the United States could muster the courage for soulmate leaps, transforming commitment from a gamble into a secure bond. The alternative? A continued slide into isolation, where the institution of marriage fades not from irrelevance, but from avoidable inequities. ***** Alam is a professor in social work at Boise (Idaho) State University.

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Expanding opportunities

Innovation lab set to expand soybean markets in Africa

By LAUREN QUINN
University of Illinois

Developing a thriving soybean market in Africa doesn't just represent a new crop in the rotation for smallholder farmers — it builds an entire ecosystem of seed companies, processors, and trade partners ready to enter the global soybean market. The Soybean Innovation Laboratory at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has been working toward this reality for more than a decade.

“With 12 years of federal funding from USAID, we conducted the research, built the infrastructure with our partners, and de-risked market-led growth in Africa’s soybean sector,” said Peter Goldsmith, SIL director and emeritus professor in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at Illinois.

With USAID shuttered, SIL has gone from working in 31 countries to four: one of which is Malawi, where they’re leveraging the Shire Valley Transformation Program’s irrigation infrastructure to build up soybean in the region. This work was made possible by an anonymous \$1 million donation. Now, SIL has secured another \$1.5 million from the Gates Foundation to strengthen and expand testing of new seed products across sub-Saharan Africa.

Breaking bottleneck

The new two-year investment will fund the expansion of SIL’s Pan-African Trials (PAT™) platform — a first-of-its-kind, market-based system that allows new soybean varieties to be tested, registered, and commercialized across multiple countries simultaneously.

For decades, African countries struggled to move new crop varieties from research to market due to fragmented, slow, and expensive



University of Illinois

The University of Illinois’ Soybean Innovation Lab recently conducted a soybean demonstration tour in Malawi. It was part of a project to expand soybean markets in Africa through a \$1.5 million grant through the Gates Foundation and a \$1 million anonymous contribution.

sive national registration processes. As a result, farmers in countries like Malawi lacked access to new and improved soybean varieties, sometimes for a decade or more.

“Historically, the seed approval process in many countries takes at least two years, which can slow down the availability of new soybean varieties in the market,” Goldsmith explained. “Through PAT™, we’ve found a way to work within Africa’s regional trade structures so that once a soybean variety is registered in two countries, it becomes available in up to 28 others. That’s a massive breakthrough for farmers and seed companies.”

By 2027, SIL and its partners aim to register at least 10 new soy-

bean varieties in the SADC and COMESA regional catalogs, including varieties with soybean rust resistance. Goldsmith is confident the plan will be successful because SIL and its partners have supported the release of eight new soybean varieties in Malawi alone since launching the PAT™ platform in 2019.

Investments benefit

While SIL’s work focuses on African farmers and seed systems, Goldsmith says the ripple effects reach far beyond the continent. Strengthening Africa’s soybean market helps stabilize the global supply chain, creates new trade opportunities, and opens pathways for collaboration across hemispheres.

Soybean demand is growing rapidly across sub-Saharan Africa, fueled by the rise of poultry, aquaculture, and plant-based protein industries. Goldsmith says opportunities abound for U.S. exports as soybean and soy products become the industrial standard across Africa.

“Every time a country builds a functional, transparent seed and grain market, the global system becomes more efficient and resilient,” Goldsmith added. “It creates a foundation for trade — from grain and seed to inputs, machinery, and management know-how — and those are areas where the U.S. continues to lead.”

Building foundation

Goldsmith emphasizes that

this milestone is built squarely on the foundation laid by years of public investment.

“This project wouldn’t exist without USAID’s early and sustained support,” he said. “Those funds enabled us to do the research, build partnerships, and understand the system well enough to make it work commercially. The market is taking over, which is good. However, what about the next innovation, breakthrough, or improvement? The Soybean Innovation Lab’s impact demonstrates the critical and powerful role public funding plays in the high-risk and slowly developing world of early-stage research and development.”

Pearson joins climate office

By DEVYN RAVE

Purdue Ag News

Austin Pearson has been promoted to assistant state climatologist for the Indiana State Climate Office, while continuing his work as a climatologist at the Midwestern Regional Climate Center (MRCC). Pearson will continue monitoring Indiana’s climate through tracking extreme weather conditions, such as temperature, precipitation patterns and drought scenarios, and translate that information into clear insights for the public.

“Austin has already been doing the work of an assistant state climatologist and has provided considerable support to the Indiana State Climate Office,” said Beth Hall, state climatologist and Indiana State Climate Office director.

Working with Hall, Pearson co-leads the development of Indiana’s weekly recommendations for the U.S. Drought Monitor. They collaborate with Purdue University Extension educators and various state agencies to access vegetation, water resources and soil moisture across the state and determine how drought is affecting local conditions.

“We have ongoing drought activity in the state this year, so we monitor conditions and regularly communicate with the national U.S. Drought Monitor authors,” said Pearson. “On a day-to-day basis, we work with many state agencies, including the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture and the State Department of Transportation, as well as various others.”

Through Extension publications like the Pest and Crop Newsletter, the Purdue University Vegetable Crops Hotline and Purdue Landscape Report.



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Jay County Civic Theatre's production of



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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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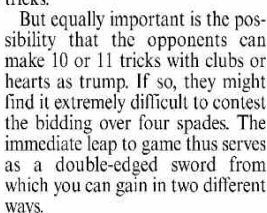


Annie

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals T

ACROSS	38 Courts	DOWN	24 Sashimi
1 Efron of "Neighbors"	39 Maestro — -Pekka Salonen	1 Whizzes (by)	25 ACLU issues
4 He gives a hoot	41 Redact	3 Monte —	26 Compass pt.
7 Doppler device	45 Intent look	4 Okla-homa tribe	28 Citric beverage
12 Eggs	47 Expert serve	5 Heated (up)	30 Writer Levin
13 — chi	48 Holiday tree decorations	6 Cruise ship	31 Texter's "Incidentally"
14 Long stories	52 Shark feature	7 — Martin (cognac)	32 Brazilian city
15 Rowing need	53 Espresso foam	8 Chest-beating beast	33 Rock producer Brian
16 Holiday tree decorations	54 Darjeeling, e.g.	9 Cacophony	36 Actor Jared
18 Wire measure	55 British ref.	10 Play part	37 Hurtle
19 Nail smoother	56 Yarn unit	11 Blog feed	40 Blitzen's boss
20 Neatnik's nightmare	57 Singer DiFranco	17 Asia's — Sea	42 "Platoon" actor Willem
22 Epoch	58 Hosp. sections	21 Sanctify	43 Less
23 Bern's river		23 Tequila source	

Solution time: 25 mins.

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Yesterday's answer 12-5

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Jay girls can't hang on in second half vs. Knights

FOUNTAIN CITY — A strong second quarter kept the Patriots in the game with the Knights. But they couldn't hold on as the home team dropped 21 points in the third to help secure the victory.

Jay County High School's girls basketball team suffered a 64-56 loss at the hands of the Northeastern Knights on Wednesday.

The Patriots (1-3) and Northeastern (4-2) entered halftime tied at 29. The Knights created a slight separation in the third quarter as seven players

Jay County Roundup

combined to put up 21 points, while JCHS had 16. The Knights also edged the Patriots by four in the final period to stave off any comebacks.

Karsyn Schwieterman led Jay County with 16 points, while Hallie Schwieterman added 14. Raylah Newton also fin-

ished one point shy of double figures after knocking down two triples in the second quarter and scoring three more points in the third.

Northeastern had three girls finish with 10 or more points. Adysson Kischer led with 16 points, 11 of which came in the first half, while Karri Gammon had 13 and Fiona Breibebach had 10.

Other Patriots to find the basket were Elizabeth Brunswick (six points), Natalie May (four), Charlee Peters (four) and Claudia Dirksen (three).

Seven pinned

The Jay County boys wrestling team opened its season on Wednesday with a 53-29 victory over the Centerville Bulldogs.

The Patriots (1-0) secured seven victories via fall in the dual. The fastest coming from Cooper Glassford in the 132-pound weight class when he put Alex Nobble on his back in 46 seconds.

Also securing victories with pins were Corbin Lotheridge, Syllas Wenk, Jason Landers, Caleb Sibray, Bryan Fields and No. 17 Alan Ortiz.

Miles Jones also earned his first win of the season. The 144-pounder didn't get the pin, but he still didn't need the full three periods as he ran up a score of 20-4 on Nick Roberts for a tech fall.

The remaining six points came from a Centerville forfeit in the 126 weight class.

Jay rolls

Jay County High School's girls wrestling team ran through the Centerville Bulldogs on Wednesday for a 66-12 victory.

Just under half of the Patriots' points came from forfeits, but they still won one six of the seven contested matches.

Jay County (3-1) rolled through the middle weight classes with Alexis Tipton, Aubree Shan-non, Kaylee Bramlett, Maleah Parsons, Madison Gage and Amara Crawford all winning via pin.

JCHS followed up the win over Centerville with a duel against No. 10 Hamilton Southeastern on Thursday and will travel to East Noble on Saturday.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Kali Wendel, a freshman at Jay County, pushes back toward the start blocks during the 500-yard freestyle against Bluffton on Wednesday. Wendel earned the runner-up spot in both the 500 freestyle and the 200 freestyle to help fuel a 173-133 victory over the Tigers in the Allen County Athletic Conference opener.

Freshmen ...

Continued from page 8

Brooklynn Byrum still picked up an individual victory in the 200 freestyle with a time of 2:17.90. The other first-place finish that didn't come from a freshman belonged to Lauren Fisher, whose 1:23.76 claimed the top spot in the 100 breast-stroke.

Joining Warvel and Elly Byrum with a pair of victories was Maria Laux. The freshman beat teammate Sophia Hoevel in the 100 freestyle with a time of 59.61.

Her race against Bluffton's Tess Frauhiger ended up being neck-and-neck nearly the whole way through. The two were virtually tied for the first 50 yards of the race, but on the second turn, Laux gained a slight advantage. She held strong to finish with a time of 1:07.63, beating Frauhiger by 1.77 seconds.

"I knew that she was right there with me in the medley relay when I swam the back," Laux said. "So I knew whenever I'd have to swim her in the 100 back, I would have to be aware that she'd be right there with me.

"I was swimming and I could see her in my peripheral view and I just thought, this is my time to get the edge on her off this turn. So I just made sure to kick over fast on my turn and do strong underwater and I

think that's what gave me the edge."

The race Laux referenced was the 200 medley relay. Laux opened the relay for Jay County (1-0, 1-0 ACAC), while Frauhiger led off the Tigers. Lauren Fisher, Brooklynn Byrum and Elly Byrum swam the other three legs, leading to a first-place finish in 2:01.84.

The JCHS girls also won the 200 and 400 freestyle relay races. Hoevel replaced Lauren Fisher in the 400 freestyle relay that completed the race in 4:12.86. Hoevel, Lauren Fisher, Kaitlyn Fisher and Ariel Beiswanger made up the 200 freestyle relay team that won with a 1:56.32.

Along with the nine victories, the Patriot girls locked up the runner-up spot in seven races and placed third four times. Jay County's boys had the second-place finisher six times and four swimmers earned third.

Slavik will look to have the JCHS tankers continue to work and build off the strong start.

"They're all well aware that we're in the beginning stages of our training," Slavik said. "We kind of enter into things a little bit slow so to speak. It's my coaching style, because I want to have them all at the pinnacle of what they're capable of by the time we get to the conference meet and sectionals."

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today

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 bow-ling in tournament at H.P. Lanes — 12 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. Jay County — 6 p.m.

TV schedule

Today

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)

Saturday

4:30 a.m. — Formula 1: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (ESPN2)

7:30 a.m. — Premier League soccer: Aston Villa at Arsenal FC (USA)

9 a.m. — Formula 1: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (ESPN2)

10 a.m. — Premier League soccer: AFC Bournemouth at Chelsea (NBC); Tot-

tenham Hotspur at Brentford (USA)

11 a.m. — Horse racing: America's Day at the Races (FS1)

12 p.m. — College football confer-ence championships: Miami (OH) vs. Western Michigan (ESPN); BYU vs. Texas Tech (ABC)

12 p.m. — College basketball: Iowa State at Purdue (CBS); Duke at Michigan State (FOX); Dayton at Virginia (ESPN2)

12 p.m. — Women's college basket-ball: Indiana at Illinois (BTN)

12 p.m. — PGA Tour: Hero World Chal-lenge (NBC)

12:30 p.m. — College basketball: Old Dominion at Richmond (USA)

12:30 Pm. — Premier League soccer: Leeds United at Liverpool FC (NBC)

2 p.m. — College football: Prairie View A&M at Jackson State (ESPN2)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Ohio State at Northwestern (BTN); Marquette at Wisconsin (FS1); Boise State at Butler (TNT); Louisville at Indiana (CBS)

2:30 p.m. — College basketball: Princeton at Loyola Chicago (USA)

2:30 p.m. — MLS: Inter Miami at Van-couver Whitecaps (FOX)

4 p.m. — College basketball: Rutgers at Michigan (BTN); Maryland at Iowa (FS1)

4:30 p.m. — College basketball: Bay-lor at Memphis (CBS)

6 p.m. — College football conference championships: Georgia vs. Alabama (ABC)

6 p.m. — College basketball: Wash-

ington at USC (BTN); Wake Forest at West Virginia (ESPN2); Illinois at Tennessee (ESPN)

6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Iowa at Rutgers (FS1)

7 p.m. — NHL: St. Louis Blues at Ottawa Senators (FDSN Indiana)

8 p.m. — College football conference championships: Indiana vs. Ohio State (FOX); Duke vs. Virginia (ABC)

8 p.m. — UFC fighting (ESPN2)

10 p.m. — College football: Rhode Island at UC Davis (ESPN)

10 p.m. — College basketball: Auburn at Arizona (ESPN)

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90 SALE CALENDAR

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NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION

Notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the City of Portland, Jay County, Indiana that the Common Council of the City of Port-land, appearing in the City of Portland Council Chambers, 1616 Franklin Street, Portland, Indiana 47371, on December 15, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. will consider the following additional appropriation in excess of budget for the current year.

1101-003-116	Council- Insurance	\$107,301
1101-003-326	Council - Other Contractual	\$55,600
1101-005-326	Plan Commission - Other Contractual	\$5,302
2204-001-322.001	Park Pool - Utilities	\$10,800
2204-001-325.001	Park Pool - Repairs & Maintenance	\$17,000
2206-001-111	Aviation - Regular Salary	\$5,000
2520-001-325	Sidewalk Repair & Maintenance	\$71,350
7704-001-116	Insurance Surplus	\$100,000

Taxpayers appearing at the meeting shall have a right to be heard. The additional appropriation as finally made will be referred to the Department of Local Government and Finance. The DLGF will make a written determination as to the sufficiency of funds to support the appropriations made within fif-teen (15) days of receipt of a certified copy of action taken.

Lori Phillips, Clerk Treasurer
City of Portland

CR 12-5-2025-HSPAXLP

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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF JAY
IN THE JAY CIRCUIT COURT
IN THE MATTER OF THE
NAME CHANGE OF:
BRYSON J. GAHRET,
A Minor Child
KELLY J. CASSEL,
Petitioner
and
BRANDON J. GAHRET,
Respondent
CAUSE NO.
38C01-2511-MI-000031
NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME
NOTICE is hereby given that
Kelly J. Cassel, the next friend of the
minor child, Bryson J. Cas-
sael, filed a VERIFIED PETI-
TION FOR CHANGE OF NAME
OF MINOR CHILD on November
5, 2025 to change the name of
Bryson J. Gahret to Bryson J. Cas-
sael.
The VERIFIED PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME OF MINOR
CHILD is scheduled for hearing
in the Jay Circuit Court, Court-
house - Third Floor, 120 North
Court Street, Portland, IN 47371,
on January 26, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.,
which is scheduled to be more
than thirty days after the third no-
tice of publication. Any person
has the right to appear at the hear-
ing and to file a written objection
on or before the hearing date.
Dated this: 11-17-2025.
Missy Elliott
Clerk of the Jay Circuit Court
Courthouse - Second Floor
120 North Court Street
Portland, IN 47371
Telephone: (260) 726-4951
CR 11-21,23,12-5-2025- HSPAXLP

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250 PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF RIGHT
OF REDEMPTION
Notice is given (pursuant to IC
6-1.1-25-4.5) to Sharon L. Craw-
ford, Helen L. Bailey, any un-
known heirs and any person
who has a substantial interest
in the following described real
property located in Jay County,
Indiana that it was sold at the
Jay County Tax Sale on Septem-
ber 12, 2025 pursuant to judicial
order for non-payment of prop-
erty taxes and assessments:
"U" PT E 1/2 SE 1/4 109' S20
T23 R14.30 A
Address: 328 Jaqua Ave.,
Portland, IN 47371
Parcel No.:
38-07-20-401-098.000-034
Tax ID Number: 382500091
The name of the purchaser is
Brayden Collins. A petition for
tax deed will be filed on or after
September 14, 2026. The pur-
chaser is entitled to receive a
tax deed for the real property if
it is not redeemed before
September 14, 2026. The owner
or person with a substantial in-
terest of public record or any
person is entitled to redeem the
real property. The real property
has not been redeemed. The
amount required to redeem the
real property includes delin-
quent taxes, title search costs,
attorney fees and interest and
the total shall be determined by
the Jay County Auditor. The
purchaser is entitled to reim-
bursement for additional taxes
or special assessments on the
real property paid subsequent
to the tax sale and before re-
demption and any additional
costs incurred.
The date of expiration of the pe-
riod of redemption is Septem-
ber 14, 2026 and if the real prop-
erty is not redeemed by that
date then the owner of record at
the time of the tax deed is is-
sued may have a right to any tax
sale surplus. The attorney rep-
resenting the purchaser is
Joshua A. Atkinson, 940 N.
Meridian Street, Portland, IN
47371.
CR 11-23,12-5,12-2025- HSPAXLP

Patriot girls basketball fell to Northeastern Wednesday, see roundup below

Jay boys basketball hosts ACAC opener vs. Woodlan, see Sports on tap

Sports

Freshmen fitting in

Byrum, Laux and Warvel lead Patriots against Bluffton

By ANDREW BALKO
The Commercial Review

During the 2024-25 campaign, a trio of freshmen led the Patriot tankers.

History repeated itself as a new trio of freshmen put together a strong day in the first dual meet of the season.

Freshmen were responsible for six of the 10 individual victories for the Jay County High School swim teams on Wednesday as the girls beat the Bluffton Tigers 173-133 while the boys fell 190-109.

"I'm ecstatic with how the kids swam tonight," said JCHS coach Matt Slavik. "Where we're at right now with the start of the season, it's good to see some times with the work that they're putting in and a lot of positives through the night. So it's a good feeling kicking off the season like this."

Grady Warvel led the Patriot boys (0-1, 0-1 Allen County Athletic Conference) with two of the four first-place finishes. (The others came from Bryden Carter in the 1-meter diving with a score of 174.3 points and Carson Westgerdes in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1 minute, 7.63 seconds.)

The JCHS freshman dominated the 200 individual medley. He hit the wall after 2:10.24, while Bluffton's Braden Lemer took just under 10 seconds longer to claim second place with a 2:20.19.

Warvel's second individual event ended up a little bit tighter, but he still beat Lemer's 59.53 with a time of 57.39.

"I've been working hard in practice," Warvel said. "Definitely my 200 IM (stood out), I dropped two seconds. My 1 fly



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Jay County High School freshman Grant Glentzer swims the 500-yard freestyle during the boys swim team's 190-109 loss to Bluffton on Wednesday. Glentzer placed third in both the 500 freestyle and 200 individual medley to help support the efforts of fellow freshman Grady Warvel, who earned victories in the 200 IM and 100 butterfly.

wasn't my best, but I still felt pretty strong on it."

Fellow freshman Elly Byrum claimed the same races on the girls side.

She beat out teammate Kaitlyn Fisher (2:44.10) in the 200 IM by swimming a 2:36.27.

To win the 100 butterfly, she had to beat her older sister, Brooklynn Byrum, who didn't go down easily. Elly Byrum edged Brooklynn Byrum by 1.09 seconds with a final time of 1:10.68.

"I just swam a strong first 50," Elly Byrum said. "The third 50, I just tried to stay with her because we stayed with each other the whole 100. Then the last 25 I just used the rest of my energy and just barely pulled through."

See Freshmen page 7



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