

‘Pull the plug’



Rundell Ernstberger Associates

Jay County Council voted Wednesday to instruct consulting firm Rundell Ernstberger Associates to cease planning for infrastructure related to a proposed housing project on 68 acres along Votaw Street on the west side of Portland. The above drawing shows a portion of that proposed project, which called for single- and multi-family housing.

Jay County Council votes to cease planning for infrastructure for 68 acres on Portland’s west side

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

Some county officials have decided it's time to step away from developing infrastructure for a potential housing project in Portland.

Jay County Council voted Wednesday to stop planning for the project on 68 acres of county-owned land along Votaw Street on the west side of the city.

Jay County Commissioner Duane Monroe had suggested the measure at commissioners' meeting Monday, citing a recent meeting between county officials and consulting firm Baker Tilly. He said the discussion

indicated the county could reallocate American Rescue Plan Act dollars dedicated to the project.

Monroe approached the council Wednesday to explain the situation.

"Pull the plug," responded council vice president Cindy Bracy, who also sat in on the conference call with Baker Tilly. "It's done. It's over. We sat, we listened, we got advice from a fellow who is dealing with ARPA money ... Yes, do we need housing? Absolutely. Is that the right place and the right way to make it happen? No. We need radios."

The county purchased the 68 acres in 2023 and hired planning

firm Rundell, Ernstberger and Associates on a \$395,000 contract to develop a plan for building infrastructure on the land.

Council and commissioners agreed in November 2024 to enter into an interlocal agreement with Jay County Redevelopment Commission for the remaining \$1.24 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars to be spent on the project. Those federal coronavirus relief dollars had to be allocated by the end of 2024. Per guidelines, they are also supposed to be spent by Dec. 31, 2026.

No bids were submitted in September for the infrastructure project. Plans had been to

negotiate directly with vendors.

County attorney Wes Schemenauer cautioned council Wednesday, noting American Rescue Plan Act dollars were given to communities in a unique fashion. He voiced concerns about the county being forced to pay the money back to the federal government if an issue arises in a future audit.

"I mean, it is a risk," he said. "My problem is, as your attorney, I can't quantify that risk ... at \$1.2 million dollars. I'm not comfortable signing my name to that saying, 'Yeah,' because I've never seen anything like this before."

See **Plug** page 2

Kyiv sends draft plan to Trump

NATO leader warns that Russia will not stop at Ukraine

By ALIAKSANDR KUDRYTSKI
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte warned Russia will come for the rest of Europe if its war-mongering is not checked now, just moments before Ukraine's allies were slated to discuss U.S. President Donald Trump's latest peace push.

"We need to be crystal clear about the threat," the military alliance leader said in a speech Thursday in Berlin. "We are Russia's next target. And we are already in harm's way."

Rutte painted a stark picture of what's at stake for the continent as Moscow continues to press its maximalist demands for territory and NATO restrictions in return for a vague promise to end its full-scale invasion, currently heading into its fourth winter.

"Russia has brought war back to Europe," Rutte said. "And we must be prepared for the scale of war our grandparents and great-grandparents endured."

Rutte's remarks come as Europe frets over what the Trump administration may do in its ongoing talks with Russia over the war. Trump is pressuring Kyiv to make concessions that many in Europe feel will leave not just Ukraine, but the entire continent, exposed to future Russian aggression.

The prospect has sent European officials into a flurry of activity. On Thursday night, leaders from more than 30 countries that are part of the so-called coalition of the willing will hold their second virtual meeting this week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video address.

See **Draft** page 2

Crucial Senate vote set

Editor's note: A vote planned for Thursday on redistricting Indiana's congressional districts was not complete before press time. See Saturday's newspaper for details

By CASEY SMITH and TOM DAVIES
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

A congressional redistricting proposal that has split Indiana's Senate Republicans advanced to its final stage Wednesday after lawmakers quickly dispatched three Democratic amendments and positioned the high-stakes bill for a decisive vote on Thursday.

But it remains unclear whether the Senate GOP caucus has enough support to pass the measure.

The chamber met for just 30 minutes with little of the marathon discussion that marked Monday's six-hour committee hearing.

Democratic amendments fail ahead of redistricting decision

House Bill 1032 targets Indiana's current two Democratic U.S. House members and is designed to create a 9-0 Republican map ahead of the 2026 midterm election — as demanded by President Donald Trump.

No Republican amendments were filed Wednesday, and all three Democratic proposals failed on voice votes.

The bill passed the Senate Elections Committee 6-3 earlier this week.

Sixteen GOP senators have publicly supported the bill; 14

have said they oppose it; and 10 — including several who supported advancing the bill out of committee — have not revealed how they plan to vote on the chamber floor.

Indiana's Constitution requires a majority of the 50-member Senate to approve legislation, meaning the 40-seat Republican supermajority must muster at least 26 votes if all 10 Democrats vote no. GOP Lt. Gov. Micah Beckwith can break a 25-25 tie if all members are present.

See **Vote** page 2



Indiana Capital Chronicle

Sens. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, and Linda Rogers, R-Granger, talk on the chamber floor before the start of session on Wednesday. Jay County is part of Holdman's Senate district.

Deaths

Daniel Baker, 94, Hartford City
Details on page 2.

Weather

The high temperature was 41 degrees Wednesday in Jay County. The low was 32.

Tonight's low will dip into the teens. There is a slight chance of snow Saturday with a high in the lower 20s and winds at 10 to 15 mph. Snow is likely in the evening.

See page 2 for an extended forecast.

In review

Jay County Solid Waste Management District will have recycling trailers available from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday in the parking lot at 220 Lincoln St., Portland, and Dunkirk City Park.

Coming up

Friday — Details from this week's Jay County Council meeting.

Saturday — Coverage of Friday's Portland Redevelopment Commission meeting.

Tuesday — Jay County resident celebrates her 100th birthday.

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Vote ...

Continued from page 1

But not all senators have been at the Statehouse this week.

Several GOP senators were missing on Monday and Tuesday, and by Wednesday, Republican Sens. Jim Buck, Scott Alexander and Ryan Mishler remained absent.

Sen. Linda Rogers, R-Granger, noted in committee Wednesday morning that Alexander recently had open-heart surgery and said he was “doing really well,” but Senate Republican staff could not confirm who would or would not be present for Thursday’s vote.

The bill’s advancement follows a Monday committee vote where two Democrats and one Republican

opposed the measure — although several Republicans who voted to move it to the floor said they could still vote no on final passage.

That included Sens. Greg Goode, Stacey Donato and Rogers. The three are among the 10 GOP lawmakers who have not publicly committed to mid-cycle redistricting.

Goode, R-Terre Haute, said after Wednesday’s Senate session that he remained undecided ahead of Thursday’s expected vote.

“I’m going to give it one more night to sleep on it, and then I want to hear one more time among my colleagues the arguments for and against,” he told the Indiana Capital Chronicle.

Goode said he has had two phone calls with Trump about redistricting, the most recent one on Monday and another call with White House officials Wednesday.

Goode described those calls as “very spirited advocacy,” but said he has “never felt threatened or pressured by the White House.”

At least a dozen legislators, many Senate Republicans — including Goode — have publicly disclosed being targeted in swatting attempts, bomb threats and more. The incidents have prompted an ongoing investigation now led by the Indiana State Police.

Sen. Mike Crider, R-Greenfield, said Wednesday he remained a

firm opponent of the redistricting plan and that senators needed to resist such intimidation attempts.

“When you get kind of bullied and threatened, if that tactic works, then you can expect to deal with that for the rest of your political career,” Crider said after Wednesday’s Senate session. “This has been really kind of a discouraging thing that we’re experiencing this in Indiana. It’s not been our style in the past, and I’m hopeful that it’s not something we deal with in the future.”

This story was edited for length. For the full version, visit indianacapitalchronicle.com.






Obituaries

Daniel Cedrick Baker, Hartford City, the father of a Geneva man, March 15, 1931-Dec. 8, 2025. There will be no services.

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.

CR almanac

Saturday 12/13	Sunday 12/14	Monday 12/15	Tuesday 12/16	Wednesday 12/17
 25/2 Saturday's forecast shows snow with temperatures at night reaching nearly 2 degrees.	 13/1 Cold temperatures Sunday under mostly cloudy skies. The low may hit 1 degree.	 19/17 Monday looks to be mostly sunny with temperatures in the teens.	 32/29 Mostly sunny on Tuesday when temperatures will stick around the freezing point.	 40/37 Wednesday's weather shows mostly cloudy skies. The high may hit 40 degrees.

Lotteries	
Powerball 10-16-29-33-69 Power Ball: 22 Power Play: 3 Estimated jackpot: \$1 billion	Daily Four: 4-5-5-7 Quick Draw: 3-5-10-12-13-16-17-20-28-33-35-40-47-57-59-62-67-68-70-76 Cash 5: 12-17-20-26-32 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$70 million	Ohio Wednesday Midday Pick 3: 5-7-3 Pick 4: 1-8-2-6 Pick 5: 4-9-2-2-7 Evening Pick 3: 0-9-4 Pick 4: 9-8-1-8 Pick 5: 4-0-4-1-1 Rolling Cash: 14-26-32-34-36 Estimated jackpot: \$120,000
Hoosier Wednesday Midday Daily Three: 9-7-6 Daily Four: 4-4-7-9 Quick Draw: 4-5-7-14-16-17-19-23-25-29-33-36-40-49-56-64-67-70-72-78 Evening Daily Three: 2-3-0	

Markets

Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.67 Jan. corn4.60	Wheat 4.85
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.63 Jan. corn4.55 Feb. corn4.50	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.41 Jan. corn4.41 Beans10.80 Jan. beans10.83 Wheat5.00
The Andersons Richland Township Corn.....4.51 Jan. corn4.51 Beans10.80 Jan. beans10.83	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.60 Jan. corn4.55 Beans10.50 Jan. beans10.55 Wheat4.74

Today in history

In 1745, John Jay was born in New York City. Jay later served as a delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses, debating whether the American colonies should become independent of Great Britain. Among other activities, Jay helped in negotiations with the Treaty of Paris and served as the secretary of foreign affairs.

In 1964, Kenya became a republic. The day also marked its first anniversary as an independent entity,

having previously been governed by Britain.

In 1974, Sara Jane Moore pleaded guilty to an assassination attempt on President Gerald Ford, earning her a life sentence. (Moore was released after serving 32 years.)

In 2000, the United States Supreme Court named George W. Bush as president in its Bush v. Gore decision, effectively ending the chance of a ballot recount in Florida.

— The CR

Citizen’s calendar

Friday 8 a.m. — Portland Redevelopment Commission executive session, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland. 9 a.m. — Portland Redevelopment Commission, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.	5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St. 6 p.m. — Jay County Regional Sewer District, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland. 6:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery School Board, community room, high school, 400 E. Butler St.
Monday 1 p.m. — Jay County Sheriff’s Office Merit Board, training room, 224 W. Water St., Portland.	7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.

Plug ...

Continued from page 1

He added that if there was a process through which the U.S. Department of the Treasury were to approve the change or another similar approval method, he would feel comfortable.

Council president Matt Minnich pointed out that if the county does pull the federal funding from the 68-acre project, it will need to be cautious with how it’s spent.

County officials in November 2024 had considered using the \$1.24 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars to pay for a chunk of the county’s radio upgrades but chose to move forward with the 68-acre project instead. Bracy suggested Wednesday that the county reallocate the funds for radios, pointing to some language in documents submitted to the federal government as well as the fact the county previously used American Rescue Plan Act dollars to help pay for a radio study.

A decision on whether to reallocate American Rescue Plan Act dollars will need to be approved by Jay County Commissioners and Jay County Redevelopment Commission.

Council member Harold Towell recalled how commissioners last month voted 2-1 not to make a formal financial request to the redevelopment commission for the project. Commissioners president Chad Aker had requested the board provide an additional \$400,000 for the project to match a contribution from the City of Portland, which was contingent on receiving said match.

“I think it’s time to kill it,” Towell said.

He added that the project could always be revisited later and completed in a different scope.

“I hate to kill it, but I think that’s where it’s going,” said council member Randy May.

“It was a big dream project, and we never got the funding we asked for, (that) really kicked it off,” added

council member Faron Parr, referencing the fact that the county is expecting to receive only a portion of funding from a Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) 2.0 grant it had anticipated.

To date, no formal award from READI 2.0 for the project has been announced.

Answering a question from Minnich, Bracy said her comment to “pull the plug” was a motion. Her intentions were for the county to inform Rundell, Ernstberger and Associates to cease work on the project.

Council members Bracy, Minnich, Towell, Parr and May agreed. Council members Bryan Alexander and Michael Brewster were absent.

In other business, council:

- Heard from Bracy that Jay County Country Living has no more residents, with the last individual having moved out Monday. Bracy, Monroe and others did a walk-through of the facility before the meeting Wednesday. Bracy noted maintenance will continue keeping up with the building, and Sheriff Ray Newton indicated plans for patrols around the facility as needed.
- Spoke with Justin Lester, director of advancement and operations at veteran service organization The Journey Home. The organization, currently based in Winchester, has expressed an interest in the Jay County Country Living building. Lester said the Department of Veterans Affairs released a report today about the facility, indicating it would not recommend moving in. Despite the report, Lester said there are changes that could be made at the facility to make it viable, such as updating fire alarms. (Some of the alarms didn’t work during an inspection, Lester noted.) He shared hopes to conduct an assessment of the building with engineers soon.
- Amended next year’s salary ordinance, moving a Jay County Coun-

Draft ...

Continued from page 1

Allies will discuss the state of peace talks and the latest draft plan that Ukrainian officials sent to Washington overnight, people familiar with the planning said. U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz are also expected to brief participants on an exchange they had with Trump on Wednesday, the people said on condition of anonymity as the talks take place behind closed doors.

Merz has said he was “relatively optimistic” after the “very constructive” exchange with Trump. A meeting may be held in Berlin at the start of next week to keep discussing the issue, he added.

“Above all, it’s about the territorial concessions that Ukraine is ready to make — but that’s a question that the Ukrainian president and the Ukrainian people must answer,” Merz said in Berlin after

meeting with Rutte. “We made that clear to President Trump.”

Zelenskyy submitted a new version of a peace plan to the White House, following discussions with key European partners this week. The 20-point draft is a “fundamental document” to end the war, Zelenskyy said. Ukraine also developed two additional proposed agreements from the plan, addressing U.S. security guarantees and future recovery, he said.

“We are actively working on the key steps – and they must be doable steps,” Zelenskyy said.

Trump has stepped up pressure on the Ukrainian leader to accept his peace plan, reinforcing a call for Zelenskyy to organize presidential elections. The vote — currently restricted under martial law — would be possible if the U.S. and Europe ensure security in Ukraine, Zelenskyy said earlier this week. He met with lawmakers to discuss changes to the election law.

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Browse thru 70+ tables of new and used farm toys and a few related crafts. You may find toys from 1/64th scale all the way up to pedal tractors with scaled size implements! This is a great opportunity to find something special for the farm enthusiast in your family, regardless of their age! Handicap accessible. Plenty of parking. Concessions in the side room by local 4-H.

For more info call or text: 260-726-6433 or 260-251-0463



Photo provided

New member

Portland Rotary Club recently inducted a new member. Pictured above is new member Peyton Wason next to sponsor LeeAnn Miller.

Mental health issues impact family dynamic

DEAR ABBY: As my parents have aged, my father has been misremembering things or making wrong assumptions. It has increasingly gotten on my mom's nerves (she has also become more impatient and snappy lately), and she has been yelling at him in response. Sometimes, he responds back, but usually he doesn't.

My sister snapped at them, saying she is tired of their bickering, so they don't do that around her as often anymore. But anytime I have gotten upset about it or tried to suggest to them how to resolve things, Mom gets upset with me. My mental health isn't the best right now, so continuing to do that doesn't seem like a good idea, but I'm at a loss about what to do. Any thoughts? — UNCERTAIN IN IOWA

DEAR UNCERTAIN: Before this situation grows worse, please understand that it may be necessary for both of your parents to have physical and neurologi-



Dear Abby

cal examinations. If you can arrange for that, PLEASE do. The changes you describe in your father may be signs of dementia, and your mother may be stressed to the point that she can no longer deal with him without losing it.

DEAR ABBY: My 13-year-old son was getting off the school bus. His friend was in front of him. My son thought it would be funny to take his friend's water bottle out of his backpack and drop it on the pavement. A few days later, my son got sent to the principal's office, not because he was in trouble but because the parents had called the school to complain about their son's scuffed water bottle and wanted it

replaced. They asked for \$23.

I wrote a check and was tempted to add a snarky comment, but I didn't. Yes, my son should keep his hands to himself, but the water bottle is still functional. My son apologized. Am I living my life wrong, or is it OK that they just invoiced me like that? — UNSURE IN ILLINOIS

DEAR UNSURE: Your son may have been trying to be funny when he damaged another student's property, but the boy's parents didn't see the humor in it. The bottle wasn't the disposable kind, and the parents were not out of line to expect to be reimbursed for your son damaging it. Perhaps HE can reimburse YOU.

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 DearAbby.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@the-cr.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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SUICIDE GRIEF — Meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the third Monday of each month. The support group serves to help individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. To register, contact Stephanie Patterson at (260) 251-3259.

Tuesday
JAY COUNTY PASTORS AND CHAPLAINS — Meet at 11:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month in the chapel at Indiana University Health Jay Hospital.

COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP — A group for anyone with a substance use disorder that helps individuals find connections as they develop long-term recovery meets at noon each Tuesday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

FRIENDS OF JAY COUNTY LIBRARY — Will meet at 6 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month at the library.

A BETTER LIFE - BRIANNA'S HOPE — A faith-based recovery group for substance abuse. Meal starts at 6 p.m. and the meeting is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday at the Nazarene Fellowship Building across from the Nazarene church, 249 E. Center St., Dunkirk. For more information, call Amanda Price at (765) 283-2107.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS — Will meet at 7 p.m. at Zion Evangelical Lutheran 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.
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
STITCH AND CHATTER QUILT CLUB — Meets from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center. Show and tell is at 1 p.m. The club is open to all ages and is for anyone who wants to sew. Bring unfinished projects and a sewing machine. For more infor-

mation, call Nan Weesner (260) 766-9334.

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.

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those strug-

gling 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.

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Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Thursday's Solution

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

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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GRAPHIC PRINTING NEWSPAPERS

The Commercial Review

Thank you for supporting auction

To the editor:
Thank you to everyone who helped make the 43rd Annual Holiday Benefit Auction at the Jay County Campus of Arts Place such a wonderful success. Our auction, held on Friday, Nov. 21, raised \$20,233. These funds will support important programs such as MusicWorks, ArtWorks and Arts in the Parks, as well as exhibitions and performances at both the Jay County Campus of Arts Place and the Hudson Family Park Amphitheatre. I am truly grateful for the

Letters to the Editor

generous donors and enthusiastic bidders who made the evening so memorable. A heartfelt thank you goes to the Arts Place staff: executive director Carolyn Carducci, Jay County Campus center director Shawn-da Roussey, Amanda Chaffins,

Teresa Penrod, Greg Ashley and Allison Smiley. I also want to recognize our Holiday Benefit Auction Committee, including Anni McClung, Sarah Lingo, Bonnie Maitlen and Mary McCord, as well as the Arts Place Board of Directors, for their dedicated work behind the scenes. We are also thankful for the many businesses and individuals who added to the night's success. Appreciation goes to Loy Auctioneering for their excellent services, and Kuhn's Den, Mrs. P's and Walmart for cater-

ing. We are grateful to Marie McKinley for painting a live scene of the event and Jordan Wickey and Niyah McIver for sharing their musical talents with us. I also want to thank Rob Weaver at WPGW, Bailey Cline at The Commercial Review, and groups such as the PAX Exchange Students, Jay County Wrestling Club, Jay County Civic Theatre and Alcove and Friends for their support. To the businesses, artists and private donors who contributed unique and creative auction items, thank you for your talent

and generosity. And to our bidders, whether returning supporters or first-time attendees, your excitement and energy brought the evening to life. Thank you again for being an essential part of the 43rd Arts Place Holiday Benefit Auction. Your support makes a lasting difference in the arts within our community. We look forward to seeing you next year on Friday, Nov. 20, 2026. Thank you, Kristen Gibson 2025 Holiday Benefit Auction Committee Chair

Cuts could hurt our rural hospitals

By MICHAEL CHAMEIDES
OtherWords

When Dr. Ed Paul visits Nogales, Arizona, he sees well-trained, hardworking doctors and nurses. Yet as in many smaller towns and rural communities, its health care staffing, infrastructure, and funding doesn't meet the needs of residents.

People who need health care have a tough time accessing it — and the people delivering it feel overburdened. With limited providers, Dr. Paul notes, it's hard to get an appointment, so patients either wait, travel long distances, or simply go without.

As the Policy Director for the Rural Democracy Initiative, I support groups across the country who are working to ensure rural Americans have access to quality, affordable health care. But 80 percent of rural America is medically underserved — and Arizonans face particular barriers to care, ranking 42nd nationwide in the rate of providers to people.

Dr. Paul is trying to change that. He travels to rural and tribal communities across Arizona with colleagues in the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program to help create a workforce development pipeline for state medical school graduates. AHEC is a federally funded program that helps provide medical staffing to underserved areas across the country. Dr. Paul's work with AHEC keeps more graduates in Arizona and increases staffing in rural areas. Along with the University of Arizona, they're creating new primary care training opportunities in rural areas so graduates don't have to leave the state to find them.

"If we create more residency slots, we can keep more doctors in the state," Dr. Paul said. "If we train more doctors in the state, more will stay in the state. Our focus is on developing more pipelines that lead to an increase in the primary care physician workforce."

When doctors stay and practice in their own state's rural communities, that makes more providers available to patients, improving the overall health care landscape.

The federal government should boost the efforts of Dr. Paul and those in other states who are driving solutions. But this decades-long work is being undermined by huge cuts to Medicaid as part of the GOP's "Big

Michael Chameides

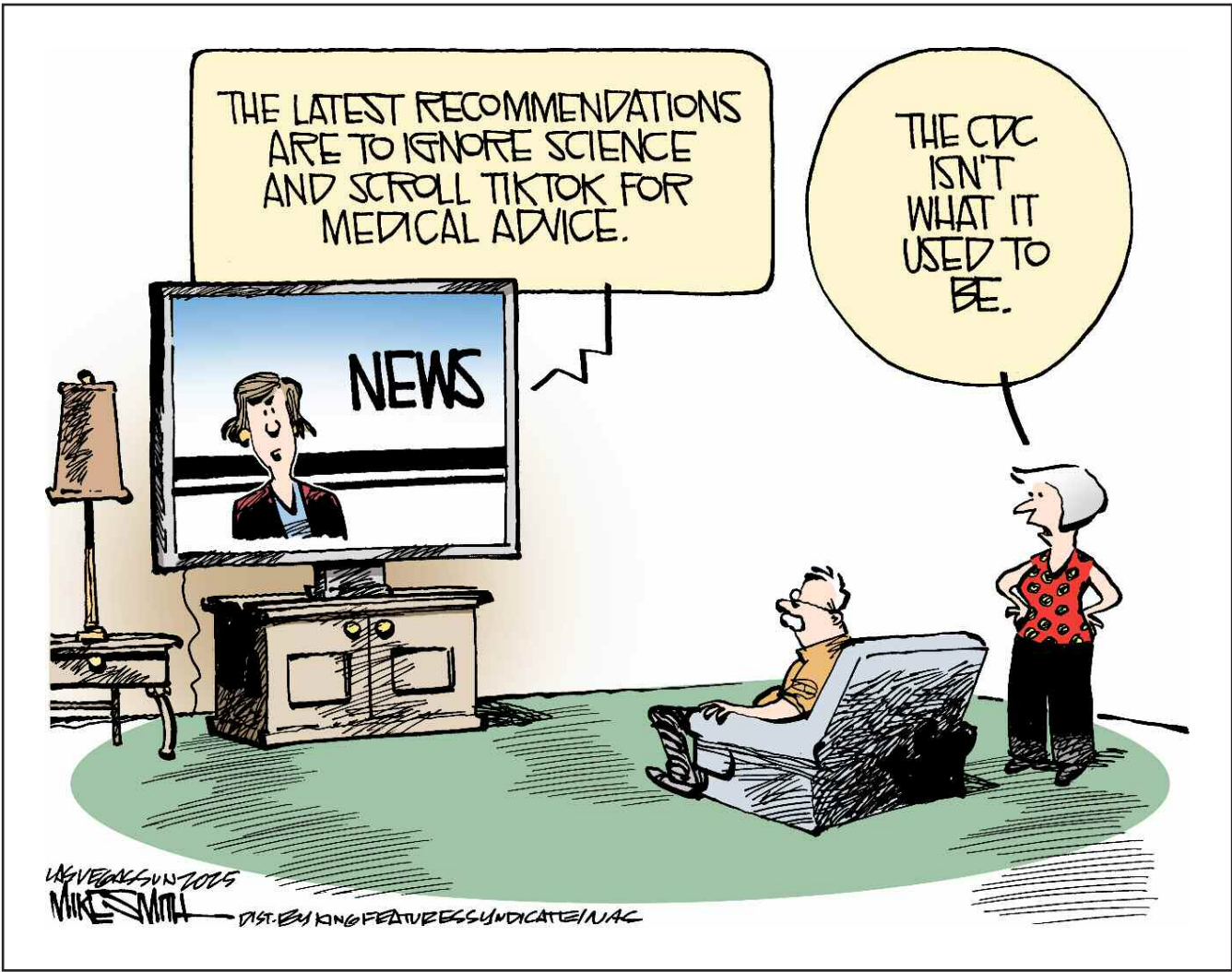


Beautiful Bill" that Congress passed in 2025, which slashes programs like SNAP and Medicaid to fund tax cuts for the wealthy. These Medicaid cuts, Dr. Paul fears, could cripple rural health care organizations, many with very tight operating margins. Fewer patients on Medicaid means fewer dollars flowing into Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), full-service health centers which are required to treat any patient, regardless of their ability to pay. "We predict that enrollment in our state Medicaid program will drop significantly" once new eligibility requirements take effect in late 2026, Dr. Paul said. "It is a real conundrum. FQHCs funding is directly threatened because the cuts will result in lower reimbursement and increased numbers of uninsured. Hospitals and ERs will take the brunt of that."

Rural hospitals need Medicaid revenue to cover the cost of services and pay for the doctors and nurses who deliver care. One quarter of rural Americans rely on Medicaid, and it covers nearly half of all rural births — plus 60 percent of individuals in rural nursing homes. As funding erodes and revenue from insured patients evaporates, so does the availability of care. Rural hospitals, birthing centers, and clinics will face significant challenges to remain open as Medicaid cuts go into effect. "The real bottom line is, based on the regulations that have been put forth, a lot of people will fall off the roster because of the requirements. More uninsured people is not good for the whole medical economy period," Dr. Paul said. "We're trying to fight back and make the point as to how this affects our most vulnerable citizens in our state, especially in rural communities."

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Chameides is the communications and policy director for the Rural Democracy Initiative.

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Sound management may be the key

By CLIVE CROOK
Bloomberg Opinion
Tribune News Service

Across much of the industrial world, trust in government is low and declining. Why is this happening and why, exactly, does it matter?

An unusually thorough new study looks at these questions and finds answers that are somewhat unexpected and, in one way, more disturbing than you might have guessed.

The fact of diminished trust is hardly a revelation, least of all in countries such as the U.S., where anti-establishment populists have turned politics upside down and elite expertise has become not just distrusted but disdained.

Last year a survey found that fewer than one in six Americans expect Washington to do the right thing "nearly always" (1%) or "most of the time" (15%).

At the turn of the century, such measures for the U.S. were more than twice as high. Across the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, many other countries (including the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, New Zealand and Chile) have also seen trust decline. But in others (such as Finland, Ireland, Portugal, and Mexico) trust has increased. Levels of trust, as opposed to rates of change, also vary a lot. These widely differing patterns make it possible to examine causes.

On the face of it, the collapse of trust seems like a phenomenon of social psychology — a perspective that tends to highlight a confluence of cultural and technological factors. Social media, disinformation and misinformation, echo chambers, epistemic bubbles and whatnot are often taken to be responsible.

This view is mistaken, according to a study by Michael Boskin, Alexander Kleiner and Ian Whiton, all of Stanford University. Their paper adds to a body of research that says straightforward economic factors are what count.

Looking at 34 countries between 2007 and 2023, they find that per capita gross domestic product, debt,

Clive Crook



social spending, unemployment, and inflation all have pronounced effects on trust in government. In their analysis, the interactions and trade-offs among these measures largely explain the outcome, leaving non-economic factors to play "only a supporting role."

Overall, an increase in per capita GDP (in real, after-tax terms) of \$1,000 corresponded to a rise in trust of 0.2 percentage points. The effect of higher social spending was even more pronounced: An increase of \$1,000 per capita is associated with a 1.4 percentage-point increase in trust.

Higher inflation and higher unemployment both reduce trust, as you'd expect; each increase of a percentage point reduces trust in government by 1.6 and 1.0 percentage points, respectively. Half a century ago, the economist Arthur Okun coined the "misery index," the sum of the rates of inflation and unemployment. Evidently, misery means distrust, and inflation is especially likely to induce it.

More important are the trade-offs connecting these various measures. Other things being equal, trust rises when social spending goes up. If higher spending coincides with a period of high unemployment and spare economic capacity, it's likely to cut joblessness without pushing inflation up.

The net effect, thanks to lower unemployment, would then be an even bigger improvement in trust. But if the spending coincides with full employment and no spare capacity, it will likely drive up inflation — most likely by enough to yield a net reduction in trust. The authors surmise that this is what happened in

many countries, especially the U.S., once the recovery from the pandemic was well under way.

One way to summarize the finding is to say that sound macroeconomic management — not the same as "big government" or "small government" — promotes trust, and that the main test of sound macroeconomic policy is low unemployment and (especially) low inflation. But there's another more unsettling implication: Declining trust will be self-reinforcing if, as seems likely, it makes sound macroeconomic policy more difficult.

A vicious circle of macro mismanagement and declining trust is plausible. Inflation expectations are anchored by the credibility of policymakers' commitment to keep prices under control. If that credibility erodes, achieving low inflation gets harder.

And this risk isn't confined to the decisions made by central banks. Fiscal policy is equally implicated. Rising debt arouses distrust in its own right; at a certain point, it also calls into question the government's preference for low inflation (because higher inflation would reduce the debt in real terms). Higher inflation means less trust; less trust makes higher inflation more likely. Trust in government requires good government; good government requires trust in government.

The good news in this study is that restoring trust might be more straightforward than cultural revolution and/or technological stasis. Plain old sound economic management — with particular stress on keeping inflation tamed — might suffice. The bad news for countries like the U.S., which have seen trust in government fall so precipitously, is that sound economic management is now a lot more difficult than before.

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Crook is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist and member of the editorial board covering economics. Previously, he was deputy editor of the Economist and chief Washington commentator for the Financial Times.

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Farmers: Bailout won’t end slump

Administration proposed package to help those hit by tariffs

By ERIN AILWORTH, MICHAEL HIRTZER and ILENA PENG
Bloomberg News
Tribune News Service

U.S. growers say the Trump administration’s \$12 billion aid package brings temporary relief, but is unlikely to kickstart a lasting recovery for the American farm economy.

President Donald Trump on Monday unveiled a package to a key base of support that includes as much as \$11 billion in one-time payments to crop farmers who have been hit hard by his tariff regime and low crop prices.

“This is kind of a Band-Aid — we need more markets more than we need aid,” said Missouri farmer Marty Richardson, adding that he feels like 2026 will be just as bad as this year. “We’re already buying seed for next year and fertilizer, and we’re behind the eight ball.”

It’s a familiar sentiment across the Farm Belt, as farmers have been struggling for years with weak exports, falling crop prices and rising costs. The effects of the president’s trade wars, which have squeezed demand and raised costs further, have left the sector in a state of extended uncertainty.

Meryl Kennedy Farr, a rice farmer from Louisiana who sat between the president and Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins when the farm aid was announced on Monday, said rice prices are the lowest she has ever seen.

“What we are seeing and facing right now is astronomical, and rice is not the only commodity,” she said, adding that the financial issues are taking a mental health toll on growers. “I’ve had farmers



Tribune News Service/The Minnesota Star Tribune/Renee Jones Schneider

Freshly harvested soybeans are loaded into a semi-truck in October to be brought to the grain elevator in Tracy, Minnesota. President Donald Trump on Monday unveiled a package to a key base of support that includes as much as \$11 billion in one-time payments to crop farmers who have been hit hard by his tariff regime and low crop prices.

calling me for weeks just almost in tears about what is going to happen.”

Some growers, who are long-time supporters of Trump, are still optimistic about a recovery beginning next year, and farmer sentiment is at the highest level since June on hopes for trade with China. But the fundamentals aren’t pointing to a turnaround anytime soon.

Federal data shows farm bankruptcies on the rise, while income from selling corn, soybeans and wheat crops has declined since 2022. The U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts net farm income will increase this year, but that is largely driven by government assistance.

Barry Evans, who grows grain

sorghum, cotton and wheat in Texas, was seated not far from Trump on Monday. He said timing is of the essence for South Texas farmers who are just several weeks away from planting, and need to make plans and secure bank loans.

“Cotton and wheat all depend on export markets and they are in the tank right now,” he said. “Definitely need this relief.” While he echoed many farmers who say they wished they didn’t need federal aid, Evans said he was grateful for it.

“As a farmer, we can’t control what the markets do. We can’t control what other governments do,” he said. “They don’t all play fair, and so sometimes it’s necessary to have support.”

Many growers were seeking clarity on how much they might get from Trump’s bailout, as the announcement Monday didn’t include crop-specific breakdowns for aid. Analyst and trader Ken Morrison estimated payments could be as much as roughly \$50 per acre for farmers of crops such as soybeans, cotton and sorghum.

“That’s substantial and would be enough to matter and help out cash flow,” said Ryan Wagner, a South Dakota grains grower. “As far as whether or not that’s enough to compensate for lost export business and a damaged reputation as a reliable trade partner, that’s another question entirely.”

Stress has been particularly

acute among soybean farmers after China, the world’s top importer, avoided U.S. supplies this year to gain leverage in trade talks. Though China has resumed purchases following recent diplomatic agreements, its commitment has yet to fully pan out.

The reality is that America’s agricultural dominance is dwindling. Trump’s first trade war resulted in China accelerating a diversion of its supply chain away from the U.S. to places like South America. U.S. farmers have lost crucial market share to competitors, particularly Brazil.

“Economics 101: trade wars, nobody wins,” said Ryan Loy, an agricultural economist at the University of Arkansas. “We can point at politics, but really for many reasons at the end of the day, China goes, ‘They’re cheaper, I’m gonna buy it from them.’”

The difficulty in predicting a recovery in the U.S. farm economy was underscored last month as equipment makers including Deere & Co. gave disappointing outlooks for the year ahead, as farmers continue to hold back on buying tractors, despite Trump’s urging. The president on Monday pressured the companies to drop prices for their machines, blaming them for driving up costs for farmers.

Richardson, who grows corn and soybeans, said that while he is older and established enough to weather the strain, his sons have been squeezed.

“It’s putting the crunch on my boys,” he said. “They’re, you know: I’m not buying a new pickup or not even going to John Deere, so no use for me even thinking about that because it isn’t going to happen.”

Many believe the U.S. farm economy will continue to be mired in this downturn throughout the coming year.

“This time next year, we’re going to be having much the same conversation about margins for growers, about the potential need for economic support,” said Sam Taylor, a farm inputs analyst at Rabobank. “We could be in a trough for a little bit longer than some people would want.”

New strategies identified

By LAUREN QUINN
University of Illinois

To meet ambitious U.S. Department of Energy targets for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), production of purpose-grown energy crops must ramp up significantly.

Although researchers have made substantial progress in understanding the management and conversion of these crops, key knowledge gaps hold the industry back. Now, two new studies from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign help fill in the blanks for Miscanthus and switchgrass management.

“We have come a long way in our understanding of purpose-grown energy crops for SAF, but we still need to optimize agronomic management practices, like harvesting and nutrient management, to reduce production costs and incentivize growers,” said D.K. Lee, senior author of both studies and professor in the Department of Crop Sciences, part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at U. of I.

Previous studies have been limited in spatial scale or focused on the first years after establishment, early in the perennial life cycle. But Lee’s group is working to provide more realistic, long-term solutions to maximize biomass productivity and grow a more sustainable fuel industry.

In the first of two recent studies, Lee’s team conducted an economic and environmental analysis of two harvest methods for switchgrass.

“Harvesting operations account for 60-80% of the total production costs for switchgrass,” said Muhammad Umer Arshad, postdoctoral researcher in Lee’s group and first author on the Bioresource Technology paper. “We wanted to understand why the harvesting cost is so high and how each operation contributes to cost, energy use, and greenhouse gas emissions, as

Research focuses on boosting bioenergy profits

well as identify where reductions are possible.”

Arshad explains that switchgrass harvesting can happen via the stepwise method, in which tasks like mowing, raking, baling, and roadsiding are separated into individual operations; or the integrated method, which uses different equipment to consolidate mowing and raking into one pass. Hypothetically, an integrated approach could reduce effort, energy consumption, and costs. But, after analyzing data from 125 Virginia commercial-scale sites varying in field size and biomass yield, Arshad found a more nuanced answer:

“We found that the integrated method makes more sense for smaller fields (less than 3 hectares, or 10 acres) and low-yield (less than 3.2 tons per acre) conditions, reducing GHG emissions by 9% and energy use by 5%,” Arshad said. “The stepwise method was better for large fields with high biomass yield, reducing harvesting costs to \$37.70 per ton and achieving the lowest GHG emissions.”

The costs were estimated assuming the farmers are using their own machinery, tractors, and harvesting equipment.

Lee adds that the results reveal the importance of tailoring harvesting strategies to site-specific conditions and provide the first evidence-based guidance that harvest methods can improve both economic and environmental outcomes.

In a separate study published in Biomass & Bioenergy, the team tackled age-

related declines in Miscanthus biomass yield, a function of tiller (stem) mass and density. These long-lived perennial grasses follow a predictable growth trajectory, including a juvenile stage that builds over several years to reach peak biomass yield, followed by a slow decline after about 10 years. Until now, it wasn’t clear which components of yield change over time and how nutrient management might help.

Postdoctoral fellow Nicot Namoï analyzed data from a long-term Miscanthus trial with nitrogen fertilization treatments that varied in amount and timing. First, he looked at how tiller mass and density changed over time and with various nitrogen treatments. Then, he asked what other soil fertility factors may influence the decline in biomass yield in older stands.

“We found that both tiller mass and density increase from the first year of establishment to the fourth year, and if you apply nitrogen, you get an increase in both factors,” Namoï said. “But over time, as you withdraw nitrogen by harvesting biomass, the first component to be impacted is tiller mass. So tiller mass is very sensitive to nitrogen management.”

Namoï adds that tiller density continues to increase until individual stands become saturated, with no more space for further expansion. After that point, biomass yield is determined by tiller mass.

He notes that the decline in biomass yield over time may not be entirely tied to nitrogen. With every harvest, soil nutrients tied up in plant biomass are removed from the system, depleting elements that play a role in photosynthetic efficiency.

“Our findings identify tiller mass as a key determinant of biomass yield in aging Miscanthus and highlight the need for nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium management for long-term productivity,” he said.

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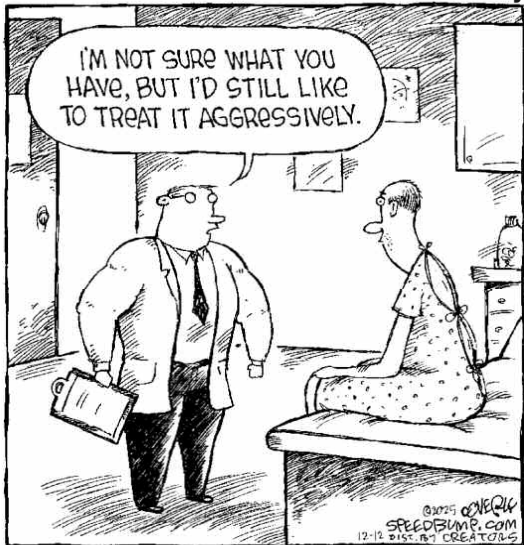
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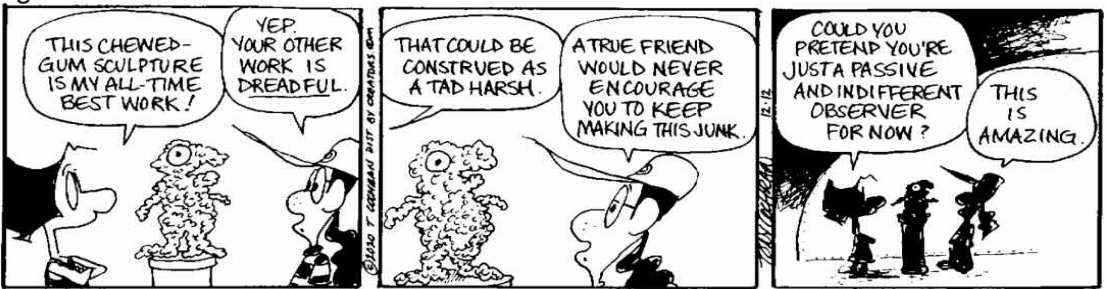
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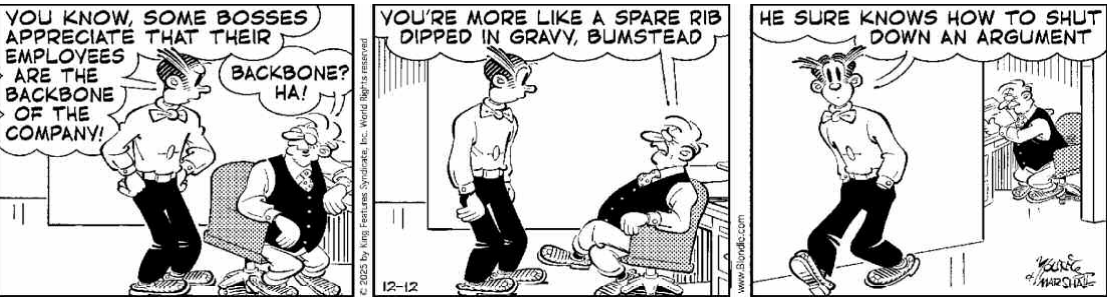
Hi and Lois



Between Friends



Blondie



Snuffy Smith



Beetle Bailey



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

You are South, and the bidding has gone:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♣	Pass

What would you bid now with each of the following four hands?

- ♠842 ♥AK7 ♦KQ10874 ♣5
- ♠Q5 ♥J4 ♦KQ1963 ♣AQ8
- ♠6 ♥K4 ♦AQ8652 ♣QJ103
- ♠Q96 ♥K52 ♦AKJ864 ♣10

1. Two spades. Partner's two-heart bid, a new suit by responder, is 100% forcing, and you should now make the most descriptive bid possible. You can do this by bidding two spades. Partner already knows that you started with minimum values because of your two-diamond rebid, and it's now time to let him know that you have modest support for spades.

It would be wrong to raise two hearts to three hearts, which would indicate greater length in hearts than spades. The high-card disparity between the two suits is not a decisive factor. It is far more important to find the longest combined trump suit. Partner should have at least five spades (if he had four spades and four hearts, he would have responded with one heart initially), in which case spades will almost surely be the better trump suit.

2. Three notrump. Your two-diamond bid was a slight underbid, but there was no better alternative at the time. You can now compensate for this by jumping to three notrump. The chance of making three notrump opposite a partner who has made two forcing bids is excellent.

Two notrump would be inadequate, because that's what you'd bid if your queen of clubs were the deuce. Since it isn't, you bid three notrump to show that your two-diamond bid was based on maximum values.

3. Three clubs. It is better to bid three clubs than two notrump, which might seem the more normal thing to do. The failure to bid two notrump is a warning to partner that your cards are mostly in the minor suits, leaving you very few in the major suits. At the same time, you are telling partner that you don't have a notrump type of hand. Once you've bid three clubs and described your hand properly, you can leave the rest to partner.

4. Three spades. It would be wrong to bid only two spades, which would indicate values similar to those shown in the first hand above. With reasonable support for both of partner's suits, and a singleton club besides, you should happily give partner a jump-preference in spades.

Tomorrow: The end justifies the means.
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12-12

CRYPTOQUIP

QCM GTJRQ YQJTHY CD EDJTTL

QELNRI QM QJTH, ZBQ J ODC

BRMGDRDS OTMCDEY HDGQ

ZBSSNRI NR.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT MIGHT YOU CALL SOMEBODY WHOSE WORK IS DESIGNING PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS? A PARK-ITECT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals L

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- Rainy month
- "Kapow!"
- Radiator sound
- "— No Good" (Ronstadt hit)
- Brit. record label
- Author Harper
- Pop star John
- Massachusetts university
- Garden figurines
- Playwright William
- Neckline shape
- Ballot marks
- Lawn tool
- Estate measure
- Emporium
- Carl Sagan series
- Business goal
- Hosiery shade

DOWN

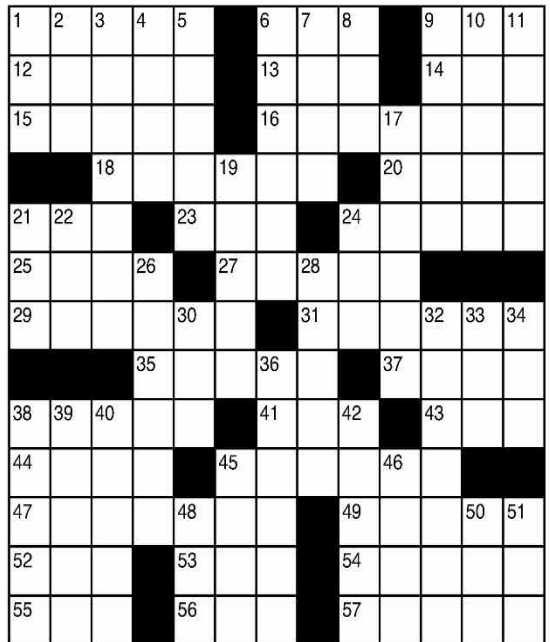
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- D.C. figure
- New Jersey university
- Press
- Fine china
- Command
- You love (Lat.)
- Russian space station
- Word on the street?
- Suit fabric
- Passover meal
- YouTube uploads
- Big rigs

19 Soccer star

- Lionel
- Rug cleaner, briefly
- Green prefix
- Mess up
- Insignia
- Puccini piece
- British ref. work
- New York university
- Variety
- Overly
- Put on weight
- Early Peruvians
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Yesterday's answer 12-12



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No. 6 Boilermakers top Minnesota

BY JOEL RIPPEL
The Minnesota Star Tribune
Tribune News Service

The Minnesota men’s basketball team couldn’t carry over its strong finish to the first half, as No. 6 Purdue pulled away for an 85-57 victory Wednesday in West Lafayette, Ind.

The Gophers (5-5, 1-1 Big Ten), coming off a 73-64 victory over No. 22 Indiana at Williams Arena on Dec. 3, went into the halftime break behind by three points after trailing by as many as 12 in the first half.

The Boilermakers (9-1, 2-0), who fell out of the top spot in the rankings after suffering an 81-58 loss to visiting Iowa State on Saturday, scored the first 21 points of the second half to go up 56-32 with 14 minutes remaining.

After senior forward Cade

Tyson scored the Gophers’ first points of the second half with 13:42 left in the game, the Boilermakers scored eight consecutive points to take a 64-34 lead with 11:26 to play. During their 29-2 run to start the second half, the Boilermakers were 13 of 16 from the field.

“You can’t go on runs like that unless you’re getting stops,” Purdue coach Matt Painter told reporters. “Defensively, we were pretty good. At the end of the first half, they got a lot of layups. At the start of the second half, we got into a groove.”

The Boilermakers led by as many as 32 points in the final eight minutes as they won their sixth straight meeting with the Gophers. Purdue has also won eight of the last nine matchups.

Senior guard Braden Smith, the Big Ten Player of the Year and a first-team All-American last season, had 15 points and 12 assists to lead the Boilermakers, who start four seniors and a sophomore. Smith leads all active Division I players with 849 career assists. He is averaging 9.3 assists per game.

Smith, who surpassed 1,500 points for his career on Wednesday, became the first player in Big Ten history to reach 1,500 points, 800 assists and 500 rebounds for his career.

He is one assist away from joining D.J. Cooper, who played at Ohio University from 2013-16, as the only Division I players to record 1,500 points, 850 assists and 550 rebounds in their careers.

Purdue senior forward Trey

Kaufman-Renn, a first-team All-Big Ten selection last season who entered Wednesday averaging a Big Ten-leading 10.7 rebounds per game, had 14 points and 10 rebounds. Senior center Oscar Cluff, a transfer from South Dakota State, contributed 14 points and 11 rebounds for Purdue, which outrebounded the Gophers 46-23.

Junior forward Jaylen Crocker-Johnson led the Gophers with 17 points, and Tyson had 15. Tyson went into the game ranked first in the Big Ten and seventh in Division I in points per game (21.8). Senior guard Langston Reynolds added 11 points for the Gophers.

After trailing by as many as 12 points in the first half, the Gophers outscored the Boiler-

makers 17-8 over the final six minutes to pull within 35-32 at halftime.

Purdue opened the game with a 7-0 run. After a field goal by redshirt freshman forward Grayson Grove got the Gophers within 14-11 with 11:43 left in the half, the Boilermakers used an 11-2 run to open a 25-13 lead with 7:27 remaining in the half.

Crocker-Johnson scored eight of his 11 first-half points to spark the Gophers’ run to close the half.

The Gophers next host Texas Southern on Sunday at Williams Arena. The Gophers also have nonconference home games against Campbell (Dec. 21) and Fairleigh Dickinson (Dec. 29) before resuming Big Ten play on Jan. 3 at Northwestern.

Alonso ...

Continued from page 8

Alonso’s deal, which was first reported by ESPN, includes a partial no-trade clause, the source said. Alonso had the option to take a six-year offer with a lower annual average value but higher total, the source also said. He instead chose to take the five-year deal at \$31 million per season — the largest for a first baseman in MLB history.

The Orioles met with Alonso, a Tampa, Fla., native, on Tuesday at the winter meetings on the same day mega-agent Scott Boras, who represents the “Polar Bear,” said that he and Elias were in “regular communication” about free agents.

That annual average

value is \$1 million more than designated hitter Kyle Schwarber received Tuesday from the Philadelphia Phillies in his five-year, \$150 million contract. The Orioles reportedly offered that same contract to Schwarber, according to The Athletic, but he instead chose to remain in Philadelphia.

For the Orioles, it is the largest average annual value they’ve ever given to a player. In 2022, the Orioles’ payroll was a puny \$43 million under then-Chairman and CEO John Angelos. Now, they’ve handed out \$31 million to one player under David Rubenstein in the private equity billionaire’s second offseason as owner.

The Orioles are coming

off a 75-87 season in which they were 24th in runs scored and tied for 11th in home runs. Offense had been the backbone of their success in 2023 and 2024 when they secured consecutive postseason berths, but regression from several of their young hitters in 2025 cast doubt over the unit’s upside potential.

Having already traded for outfielder Taylor Ward last month, president of baseball operations Mike Elias made what is now one of the signature moves of his tenure to further shore up the middle of Baltimore’s lineup. Last year, the Orioles struggled mightily against left-handed pitching with a .661 OPS that ranked 22nd in MLB. With Ward and O’Neill,

two righty sluggers with impressive numbers versus southpaws, the Orioles had turned one of their biggest weaknesses into a strength.

Elias said Monday from the Orioles’ suite at the Waldorf Astoria hotel that he was “talking to a whole bunch of hitters.” The one he got is among the most feared in the game, and his presence — both in the lineup and in the clubhouse — could take pressure off a young core that regressed last season. The Orioles’ lineup looks to be one of the best in the American League with Alonso, Ward, Gunnar Henderson, Jordan Westburg, Jackson Holliday and Adley Rutschman.

The addition of Alonso

raises questions, though. Does spending \$31 million a season on a first baseman mean the Orioles won’t be making another big move this winter, perhaps for a starting pitcher? On Monday, Elias indicated that wouldn’t be the case, saying that the Orioles had the payroll space to add both a big arm and a big bat. The Orioles’ payroll in 2025 was \$164 million, according to Cot’s Baseball Contracts. After adding Alonso, the projected 2026 figure is \$152 million.

Alonso’s addition fogs up the future for first basemen Ryan Mountcastle and Coby Mayo in the organization. It’s unlikely that both are on the 2026 roster, and they could be

trade pieces if the Orioles acquire a starting pitcher. Baltimore also signed catcher Samuel Basallo to an eight-year, \$67 million extension in August and the 21-year-old is capable of playing first base as well.

Where the Orioles could suffer is on defense. Alonso has accumulated minus-12 defensive runs saved and minus-18 outs above average at first base over the past two seasons. The Orioles could opt to use him exclusively at designated hitter, something he was rumored to be open to as a free agent, but that would prevent them from playing Rutschman and Basallo there to keep their bats in the lineup every day.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today
Jay County — Girls basketball at Adams Central – 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Boys basketball vs. Marion Local – 6 p.m.
Saturday
Jay County — Boys wrestling hosts ACAC Duals – 9 a.m.; Girls wrestling at Northwestern Dreamcatcher – 10 a.m.; Boys basketball at New Castle – 6 p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. Minster – 9 a.m.; Wrestling at Versailles – 9:30 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. Minster – 1 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. Bradford – 6 p.m.
Monday
Jay County — Swim at South Adams – 6 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball vs. St. Henry – 6 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball vs. Blackford – 6 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball at Northside – 6 p.m.

p.m.
Fort Recovery — Girls basketball vs. Ansonia – 6 p.m.; Freshman boys basketball at St. Henry – 6:30 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball vs. Parkway – 5 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at Memorial – 5:30 p.m.

TV schedule

Today
11 a.m. — Euroleague basketball: FC Bayern Munchen at Dubai (FDSN Indiana)
12 p.m. — College volleyball: Indiana at Texas (ESPN)
1:30 p.m. — Euroleague basketball: Fenerbahce at Monaco (FDSN Indiana)
2:30 p.m. — College volleyball: Wisconsin at Stanford (ESPN)
6 p.m. — College soccer: Furman at Washington (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: Missouri State at Xavier (TRU)
7 p.m. — NBA: Indiana Pacers at Philadelphia

76ers (FDSN Indiana)
7 p.m. — College volleyball: Texas A&M at Louisville (ESPN2)
8 p.m. — College basketball: Texas at UConn (FOX)
8:30 p.m. — College soccer: NC State at St. Louis (ESPN)
9 p.m. — College football: Stephen F. Austin at Montana State (ESPN)
9:30 p.m. — College volleyball: Kansas at Nebraska (ESPN2)
Saturday
12 p.m. — College football: South Carolina State at Prairie View A&M (ABC); Villanova at Tarleton State (ESPN)
12 p.m. — Serie A soccer: Parma at Lazio (CBS)
12 p.m. — College basketball: Iona at St. John’s (TNT); DePaul at Wichita State (ESPN); Arkansas at Texas Tech (ESPN2); Michigan State at Penn State (BTN)
12:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Burnley at Fulham (NBC)

12:30 p.m. — College basketball: Old Dominion at George Mason (USA)
1 p.m. — College basketball: Old Dominion at George Mason (USA)
1 p.m. — Horse racing: America’s Day at the Races (FS1)
2 p.m. — College basketball: Jackson State at Northwestern (BTN); Providence at Butler (TNT); Cincinnati at Georgia (ESPN)
2:30 p.m. — College basketball: George Washington at Georgia (ESPN2)
3 p.m. — College football: Army at Navy (CBS)
3 p.m. — College basketball: Kansas State at Creighton (FOX)
3:30 p.m. — College basketball: Memphis at Louisville (ESPN)
3:30 p.m. — College football: South Dakota at Montana (ABC)
4 p.m. — College basketball: UC Davis at Oregon (BTN)
4 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Oklahoma at Oklahoma State (ESPN)
4:30 p.m. — College basketball: Pittsburgh at

Villanova (TNT)
5:30 p.m. — College basketball: UConn at Southern Cal (FOX)
6 p.m. — College basketball: Southern Utah at Washington (BTN)
6 p.m. — Women’s college basketball: Louisiana Tech at LSU (ESPN)
7 p.m. — College basketball: North Florida at Dayton (CBS); Arizona State at Santa Clara (TNT)
7:30 p.m. — College basketball: Indiana at Kentucky (ESPN)
8 p.m. — College football: Boise State vs. Washington (ABC)
8 p.m. — College basketball: Michigan at Maryland (FOX); San Francisco at St. Louis (FDSN Indiana); Rutgers at Seton Hall (FS1); Ohio State at West Virginia (ESPN)
9:30 p.m. — College basketball: Arizona at Alabama (ESPN)
10 p.m. — College basketball: Mississippi State at Utah (ESPN)
11:30 p.m. — College basketball: UCLA at Gonzaga (ESPN)

90 SALE CALENDAR	100 JOBS WANTED	250 PUBLIC NOTICE	250 PUBLIC NOTICE	260 PUBLIC AUCTION
<p>PUBLIC AUCTION SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026 10:00 A.M. Location: 7851 W. 400 N., Pennville, IN 47369 OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025 - 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2026 - 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM OR BY APPOINTMENT REAL ESTATE BEING OFFERED: 1 ½ STORY HOME - 3,208 SQ. FT.; 3 BDRM; 1 BATH; KITCHEN; DINING RM/LIVING RM COMBO; UTILITY RM; BASEMENT W/ WOOD STOVE; DETACHED GARAGE; 2 BARN; PASTURES; STEEL GRAIN BIN; 6.46 +/- ACRES. CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION!! TERMS OF SALE: 10% Non-refundable deposit day of sale. Property being sold as-is, where is. New Survey has been completed in December 2025. Taxes prorated until day of closing. Possession at closing. Closing to be held within 45 days or less from day of auction. Title Insurance will be provided and taxes prorated to the day of closing. ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE DAY OF AUCTION WILL TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ANYTHING IN PRINT. OWNER - LARRY MOSER ESTATE Mel Smitley's Real Estate & Auctioneering 119 E Main St. Portland, IN Laci Smitley - AU10600051 260-729-2281 - Cell Ryan Davidson AU10600063 260-726-5076</p>	<p>AMISH CREW LOOKING FOR any work. No job is too big or small. Pole barns, roofing, remodeling. 260-849-2489.</p> <p>130 MISC. FOR SALE</p> <p>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.</p> <p>PAPER END ROLLS FOR SALE Various sizes and prices. Call The Commercial Review at 260-726-8141 for more information.</p> <p>190 FARMERS COLUMN</p> <p>AG RENTAL Spreaders: BBI, Artsway Vertical. New Holland 228 skid loaders w/full cab, heat/ac. Fort Recovery 419-852-0309</p> <p>200 FOR RENT</p> <p>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</p> <p>230 AUTOS, TRUCKS</p> <p>WE PAY CASH for junk autos. We pick up at your location. 1-765-546-2642 or 1-765-857-1071. Slocum's Salvage</p>	<p>Public Notice</p> <p>NOTICE OF RIGHT OF REDEMPTION Notice is given (pursuant to IC 6-1.1-25-4.5) to Sharon L. Crawford, Helen L. Bailey, any unknown 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 September 12, 2025 pursuant to judicial order for non-payment of property 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 purchaser 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 interest 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 delinquent taxes, title search costs, attorney fees and interest and the total shall be determined by the Jay County Auditor. The purchaser is entitled to reimbursement for additional taxes or special assessments on the real property paid subsequent to the tax sale and before redemption and any additional costs incurred. The date of expiration of the period of redemption is September 14, 2026 and if the real property is not redeemed by that date then the owner of record at the time of the tax deed is issued may have a right to any tax sale surplus. The attorney representing the purchaser is Joshua A. Atkinson, 940 N. Meridian Street, Portland, IN 47371. CR 11-28,12-5,12-2025- HSPAXLP</p> <p>READ THE CR THEN RECYCLE</p>	<p>Public Notice</p> <p>ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that Jay County Solid Waste Management District of Portland, Indiana, by and through its Citizens Advisory Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Owner, will receive sealed proposals for: JAY COUNTY RECYCLING FACILITY. Bids may be forwarded by registered mail addressed to George McGinnis, Coordinator/Director, Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371 and will be considered by the Owner at a public meeting called to receive such proposals, provided the same shall have been received not later than 3:45 P.M. local prevailing time, on January 26, 2026 at Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371, ATTN: George McGinnis. Proposals received after the bid opening process has begun will be returned unopened. Bids will be evaluated, and is the intent that an award of contract will be made on February 23, 2026. The Owner reserves the right to hold the bids for up to a thirty (30) day holding period. Bids shall be submitted in an enclosed opaque sealed envelope, marked "JAY COUNTY RECYCLING FACILITY". Prior to the acceptance of Bids the Owner will hold a Prebid Meeting at 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371 on January 5, 2026 at 3:45 P.M. The work to be performed and the proposals submitted, including any and all separate and combination proposals, shall include sufficient and proper sums for all General, Construction, Mechanical, Electrical, Installation, Labor, Materials, Tools, Equipment, Taxes (both Federal and State), Permits, Licenses, Insurance, Service Costs, and so forth, incident to and required for the construction of the facility. In general, the project includes the installation of a New Recycling Facility at the south side of West Tyson Road, Parcel#: 38-07-19-300-024.002-034. The project also includes clearing, site drainage, utilities, pavement, sidewalks and grading improvements, and site restoration. All materials furnished and labor performed incident to and required for the proper and satisfactory execution of the contracts shall be furnished and performed in accordance with the requirements of the contract documents as defined in the General Conditions of the Construction Contract, and any addenda thereto, prepared by the Engineer, MSS Engineering, LLC. Said drawings are on file in the office of the following: the Engineer, 414 W 5th St.; Auburn, Indiana 46706; the Owner, Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W State Road 67, Portland, IN 47371. Approved Performance and Payment Bonds guaranteeing faithful and proper performance of the work and materials, to be executed by an acceptable surety company, will be required of each Contractor at the time of contract execution. The bond will be in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price and must be in full force and effect for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of written acceptance of and final payment of the work. Bids shall be properly and completely executed on bid forms provided by the Engineer which shall include the Non-Collusion Affidavit. Each bid shall also include the Indiana State Board of Accounts Form No. 96, all as required by Statute. No bids shall be withdrawn after the opening of bids without the consent of the Owner for a period of thirty (30) days after the scheduled time of receiving same. The Owner reserves the right to reject any bid, or all bids, or to accept any bid or bids, or to make combination of bids as may seem desirable, and to waive any and all informalities in the bidding. The Project Manual, Technical Specifications, and all bid documents will be made available at www.mssengineer.com/jcswmdbid. Plans also on file at MSS Engineering, LLC, 414 W 5th St., Auburn, IN 46706. CR 12-12-2025,1-2-2026- HSPAXLP</p>	<p>PUBLIC AUCTION SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026 10:00 A.M. PROPERTY BEING OFFERED ON LOCATION: 7743 W. 400 N., PENNVILLE, IN 47369 OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 2026 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM OR BY APPOINTMENT REAL ESTATE BEING OFFERED: 1 ½ STORY HOME – 3,208 SQ. FT.; 3 BDRM; 1 BATH; KITCHEN; DINING RM/LIVING RM COMBO; UTILITY RM; BASEMENT W/ WOOD STOVE; DETACHED GARAGE; 2 BARN; PASTURES; STEEL GRAIN BIN; 6.46 +/- ACRES. CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION!! TERMS OF SALE: 10% Non-refundable deposit day of sale. Property being sold as-is, where is. New Survey has been completed in December 2025. Taxes prorated until day of closing. Possession at closing. Closing to be held within 45 days or less from day of auction. Title Insurance will be provided and taxes prorated to the day of closing. ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE DAY OF AUCTION WILL TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ANYTHING IN PRINT. OWNER - LARRY MOSER ESTATE MEL SMITLEY'S REAL ESTATE & AUCTIONEERING 119 E MAIN STREET PORTLAND, IN 47371 **To view full ad & pictures view auctionzip #11389.** LACI SMITLEY RYAN DAVIDSON RB14034083 AU10600063 AU10600051 (260)726-5076 (260)729-2281 CR 12-12-2025</p>

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Michigan’s Moore arrested after firing

BY TONY PAUL
The Detroit News
Tribune News Service

DETROIT — Former Michigan head football coach Sherrone Moore was in jail on Wednesday night, hours after his firing.

Moore was in police custody minutes before Michigan publicly announced his firing.

After 10 p.m. Wednesday, Pittsfield Township police confirmed it was investigating an alleged assault, without naming Moore, but in response to multiple media queries from The Detroit News about Moore on Wednesday. Police said an investigation began around 4:10 p.m.; Michigan publicly announced his firing at 4:43 p.m.

Pittsfield Township police said "a suspect" was taken into custody, and Moore was in the Washtenaw County Jail as of 11 p.m. Wednesday, according to online court records. He was booked at 8:30 p.m., according to court records.

"The incident does not appear to be random in nature, and there appears to be no ongoing threat to the community," Pittsfield Township police said in a media statement Wednesday night, released by chief of police Patrick Gray.

"At this time, the investigation is ongoing. Given the nature of the allegations, the need to maintain the integrity of the investigation, and its current status at this time, we are prohibited from releasing additional details.

"Further details regarding the incident will be released as soon as possible."

Saline police chief Marlene Radzik confirmed to The News earlier Wednesday that Pittsfield Township's police department was handling a complaint involving Moore.

Pittsfield Township police said an investigation began in the 3000 block of Ann Arbor Saline Road, according to the release Wednesday night. There is an apartment complex in that vicinity.

Additional details, including on any

Former Wolverines coach was arrested hours after his firing on Wednesday

potential charges, were not immediately known Wednesday night.

Moore, 39, was fired by Michigan on Wednesday after two seasons as head coach, after an investigation into an alleged inappropriate relationship with a staff member.

Moore joined Michigan's staff under then-head coach Jim Harbaugh in 2018, as tight-ends coach, and was promoted to offensive coordinator. He was acting head coach for multiple games in the 2023 national-championship season, while Harbaugh served multiple suspensions.

After Harbaugh left to become head coach of the NFL's Los Angeles Chargers following UM's national title in January 2024, Moore was promoted to head coach.

Moore was suspended two games in the 2025 season as fallout from the Connor Stalions sign-stealing saga, and was to be suspended for the season opener against Western Michigan in 2026. Moore had three years left on his contract that was to pay him more than \$6 million a year. UM fired him for cause.

Moore previously was on coaching staffs at Central Michigan and Louisville.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Barga barges in

Brody Barga of the Fort Recovery High School boys basketball team drives past the Jay County Patriots’ Gradin Swoveland during the Indians’ 49-40 win over the Patriots on Saturday.



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Slugger Alonso signs with O’s

5-year deal is worth \$155 million

BY MATT WEYRICH and JACOB CALVIN MEYER
The Baltimore Sun
Tribune News Service

ORLANDO, Fla. — In one of the most significant moves in franchise history, the Baltimore Orioles landed the big bat they’ve been chasing.

Baltimore reached an agreement with first baseman Pete Alonso on a five-year, \$155 million free agent contract at MLB’s winter meetings Wednesday, a source with direct knowledge of the move confirmed to The Baltimore Sun. The deal is the second-largest financial commitment the Orioles have ever made to a player, behind only Chris Davis’ seven-year, \$161 million deal in 2016.

The Orioles have yet to announce the deal.

Alonso, 31, has spent all seven years of his MLB career with the New York Mets, hitting 264 home runs — a franchise record. The five-time All-Star, two-time Home Run Derby champion and 2019 National League Rookie of the Year Award winner will be relied on as a veteran clubhouse presence and an immediate power threat in the heart of the Orioles’ lineup.

Last season, Alonso hit .272 with 38 home runs, 126 RBIs and a career-high 41 doubles while playing all 162 games for the second straight year. He carries a lifetime slash line of .253/.341/.516 and has posted five seasons with at least 37 home runs. Nobody on the Orioles’ current roster has ever hit more than 37 in a single season.

See Alonso page 7