

Addressing issues



The Commercial Review/Bailey Cline

The Journey Home, a veterans service organization based in Winchester, is considering the former Jay County Country Living facility (pictured) as its new home. On Monday, Jay County Commissioners agreed to allow the organization to hire engineers to evaluate some concerns that have been identified with the building.

Commissioners approve hiring engineers

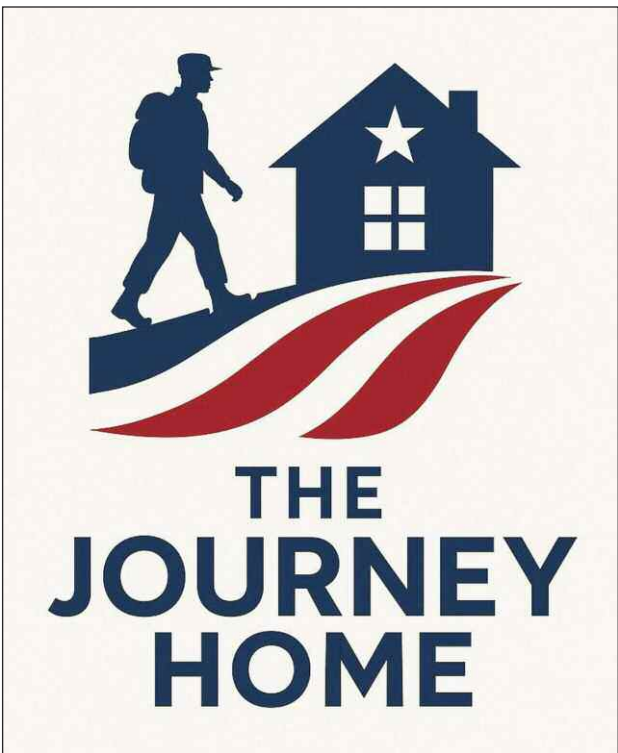
By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review

The Journey Home has three main concerns regarding the Jay County Country Living facility — the foundation, electrical system and sprinkler system.

Jay County Commissioners on Monday approved allowing the organization to hire engineers to look into each matter.

The Journey Home of Winchester has expressed interest in the Jay County Country Living building, which had its final resident move out earlier this month.

Justin Lester, director of advancement and operations at The Journey Home, noted the Department of Veterans Affairs released a report this month about the facility. Although the department had recommended The Journey Home not move into the building, Lester said at a Jay County Council meeting Dec. 10 there are a few critical changes to



be made that could make the property viable for its operations.

Lester said Monday the organization has narrowed its concerns down to three issues — the limestone founda-

tion, outdated electrical systems and the sprinkler system.

He said the newer half of the building appears to have a working sprinkler system, while the other half does not. He

said the Department of Veterans Affairs would like a fire marshal to sign off on the system. There have also been concerns that some of the fire alarms did not respond during a recent test.

Commissioners president Chad Aker noted the alarm system, sprinkler system and extinguishers should be tested annually. Maintenance worker John May later said as of last week the fire alarm system passed inspection, although he said the sprinkler system hasn't been tested recently. He noted the kitchen fire suppression system also needs to be drained and discharged.

Lester asked for permission from commissioners to hire a structural engineer and electrical engineer to inspect the facility. Answering a question from Aker, Lester confirmed The Journey Home would pay the cost.

Commissioners then OK'd Lester to hire engineers.

Also Monday, commissioners heard from Jay County Country Living director Stacey Johnson and maintenance worker John May.

Johnson said all residents have moved out of the facility. Leftover food has been donated to Second Harvest Food Bank. She confirmed she has turned in her keys to the facility and has virtually finished her role as director.

Johnson also explained May will be working through the week to keep up with maintenance on the building.

Aker suggested installing security cameras at the facility to prevent break-ins, vandalism or other potential issues. May said wifi repeaters may be needed for cameras with online cloud storage, with Aker suggesting hardwiring a camera system.

See **Issues** page 2

Process to annex moves forward

Final vote on 10 acres expected in January

By RAY COONEY
The Commercial Review

DUNKIRK — The city should be ready to vote on annexation in January.

Dunkirk City Council took a step in the process Monday, formally approving a resolution regarding the fiscal plan for annexation.

The city has been working toward a project to construct apartments on a new street to be built on about 10 acres of property located east of Dollar General (1001 S. Main St.) Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation owns the property.

Council members were presented with the financial plan in November, with city attorney Wes Schemenaur saying then that the analysis from financial advisory firm Baker Tilly showed “no meaningful additional cost” because police and fire service are already provided and sewer and water lines are already in place. He reiterated those details during Monday’s meeting.

Following the presentation of the financial plan, the council voted Nov. 11 to approve a petition to proceed with the annexation. Monday’s vote to formally approve the financial plan was the next step in the process, with Schemenaur saying a vote on annexation would likely be set for January.

Council members Jesse Bivens, Christy Curts, Dan Watson, Donna Revolt and Randy Murphy unanimously approved the plan.

Dunkirk Mayor Jack Robbins noted that once annexation is complete, the city can continue work on creating a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the property, which will capture taxes on the increased value after development to be used by the city’s redevelopment commission on targeted projects.

See **Process** page 2

Weighing tax options

By TOM DAVIES
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com

Indiana legislators face some hefty fiscal decisions on how much they want to go along with the broad federal tax cuts that President Donald Trump pushed through Congress last summer.

An analysis from Gov. Mike Braun’s administration estimates that total state tax breaks on businesses and individuals could top \$900 million over the next two years if the Legislature were to adopt all the tax changes included in what Republicans dubbed the “One Big Beautiful Bill.”

Republican legislators are poised to take up proposals on conforming the state tax code with federal rules after the legislative session resumes Jan. 5.

State lawmakers have decisions to make on how to implement federal changes

The federal changes include temporary deductions for individuals who receive tips and overtime wages along with the interest on loans for vehicles built in the U.S. Other adjustments give numerous tax breaks to businesses, including a broader deduction for some production facilities.

Chad Ranney, Braun’s state budget director, called conformity with the federal tax code “a

provision-by-provision decision in conjunction with the Legislature.”

“There’s nothing that says you have to take all or nothing,” Ranney said. “We’ll figure out, working with the Legislature, what makes sense from a policy perspective, what makes sense from a fiscal perspective and, frankly, what gives Hoosiers the best bang for their buck.”

See **Tax** page 2



Tribune News Service/Syracuse.com/N. Scott Trimble

Under the star

The sun sets over the skaters enjoying the Clinton Square ice rink under the glowing Christmas tree in downtown Syracuse.

In review

The Portland Foundation is accepting applications for its winter grant cycle. Deadlines are Jan. 5 for The Portland Foundation, Pennville Endowment and Dr. Donald Johnson grant applications, and Feb. 20 for scholarships.

Applications are available at portlandfoundation.org.

Weather

Jay County had a low of 24 degrees on Monday before the temperature climbed to a high of 45 late in the day.

There is an 80% chance of rain tonight with a low in the upper 30s. Skies will be cloudy on Christmas with a steady temperature in the mid 40s.

See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

There will be no newspaper Thursday in observance of the Christmas holiday.

We will resume our regular publishing schedule on Friday.

Coming up

Friday — Results from the East Central Indiana Classic wrestling tournament.

Saturday — A look at the new East Central Indiana Art & Culture Plan.

Tuesday — Coverage of the JCHS boys basketball game against Wapahani.



Process ...

Continued from page 1

Schemenaur said the process of creating the district could be complete by mid-2026.

Robbins added that next steps will also involve utility work and seeking a developer for the planned 32 apartment units.

Council members also approved year-end payouts for unused vacation time for the police and fire departments.

Clerk-treasurer Kara Lowe expressed concern about the requests — 552 hours of over-time from the police department for \$18,775.36 and 95 hours from the fire department for \$1,540.91. She noted that the city handbook indicates that vacation time must be used and will not be paid out at the end of the year, but that the council has not stuck to that policy. She added that one officer took no vacation time in 2025, saying she believes in some cases it is a purposeful practice with the expectation that the unused vacation time will essentially become a year-end bonus.

Lowe argued that the payouts are not fair to employees of other departments, who are told to use their vacation time.

Robbins noted that there would likely still be some chal-

lenges with a full staff of six police officers. The department currently has four and will be down to three as of Jan. 2 with one away at Indiana Law Enforcement Academy.

Curts shared Lowe's concern about the officer who took no vacation time.

Bivens, the council president, said he has talked to Police Chief Dane Mumbower, saying he is also frustrated by the situation but doesn't currently have a better solution to keep shifts covered. He cautioned that the situation will likely continue to occur and encouraged council members to bring forward any sugges-

tions they might have.






The council ultimately voted 5-0 to pay out the unused vacation time.

In other business, council:

- Approved the following: an \$11,012 contract with American Pump Repair for repairs to the fine screen equipment at the wastewater treatment plant; a \$9,000 contract with Pavement Solutions of Middletown for crack sealing Industrial Drive (and other streets, if possible); and payment of claims totaling \$412,159.92.
- OK'd a water bill adjustment of \$728.41 for 631 Lincoln St.

There was some discussion about the adjustment, as water department superintendent Brock Farmer said he had informed the property owner about the leak in September and it took months for them to take action. The property owner said they did not receive the notifications.

- Agreed to change the fund from which \$29,350 will be used to install pickleball courts at Dunkirk City Park. The park board requested the change to allow more flexibility to complete other projects. The council had approved the funding at its previous meeting.

CR almanac				
Thursday 12/25	Friday 12/26	Saturday 12/27	Sunday 12/28	Monday 12/29
 48/40 Cloudy skies with temperatures in the 40s on Christmas Day.	 56/41 There's a 60% chance of showers Friday morning, with the temperature reaching up to 56 degrees.	 54/47 Saturday's forecast shows mostly cloudy skies with a low temperature around 47.	 50/15 Sunday looks like showers and wind, with the high in the 50s and the low in the teens.	 22/17 Monday's forecast shows mostly sunny skies with temperatures in the mid teens late.

Lotteries	
Powerball Monday 3-18-36-41-54 Power Ball: 7 Power Play: 2 Estimated jackpot: \$1.7 billion	Daily Four: 0-5-6-3 Quick Draw: 7-10-11-12-13-25-34-36-38-40-42-45-47-48-51-52-55-70-78-79 Cash 5: 1-3-20-30-45 Estimated jackpot: \$90,000
Mega Millions Estimated jackpot: \$100 million	Ohio Monday Midday Pick 3: 5-4-1 Pick 4: 6-1-3-5 Pick 5: 3-8-7-6-5 Evening Pick 3: 8-2-6 Pick 4: 0-3-9-7 Pick 5: 7-9-6-0-3 Rolling Cash: 4-7-8-23-25 Estimated jackpot: \$190,000
Hoosier Monday Midday Daily Three: 7-9-9 Daily Four: 4-2-0-5 Quick Draw: 5-7-11-13-20-25-28-32-33-39-45-46-51-58-68-73-76-77-79-80 Evening Daily Three: 5-9-8	

Markets	
Cooper Farms Fort Recovery Corn.....4.67 Jan. corn4.65 Feb. corn4.65	Jan. beans10.44 Wheat 4.72
POET Biorefining Portland Corn.....4.65 Jan. corn4.62 Feb. corn4.59	ADM Montpelier Corn.....4.48 Jan. corn4.48 Beans10.44 Jan. beans10.44 Wheat4.87
The Andersons Richland Township Corn4.52 Jan. corn4.52 Beans10.41	Heartland St. Anthony Corn.....4.62 Jan. corn4.57 Beans10.16 Jan. beans10.16 Wheat4.67

Today in history	
<p>In 1814, the United States, United Kingdom and allies signed the Treaty of Ghent, officially ending the War of 1812.</p> <p>In 1818, “Silent Night” carol, composed by Franz Xaver Gruber, was performed for the first time at St. Nicholas parish church in Oberndorf, Austria.</p> <p>In 1822, Clement Moore composed “The Night Before Christmas” — originally known as “Visit from St. Nicholas” — while traveling home from Greenwich Village.</p> <p>In 1826, the “Grog Mutiny,” also known as the eggnog riots, started at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York. They lasted through Christmas Day.</p>	<p>In 1865, Confederate veterans formed the Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee.</p> <p>In 1877, Thomas Edison filed for a patent for invention, the phonograph. It was issued until a little under two months later.</p> <p>In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Reserve Act, creating the Federal Reserve System.</p> <p>In 1941, Japanese forces defeated United States troops at the Battle of Wake Island during World War II.</p> <p>In 1951, Libya gained its independence. It had been formerly ruled by Italy for nearly 40 years.</p> <p>— The CR</p>

Citizen's calendar	
Monday, Jan. 5 3:45 p.m. — Jay County Solid Waste Management District, 5948 W. Indiana 67, Portland. 5 p.m. — Jay School Board, General Shanks, 414 E. Floral Ave., Portland. 5:30 p.m. — Portland City Council, fire station,	tion, 1616 N. Meridian St. 7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St. Tuesday, Jan. 6 5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.

Issues ...

Continued from page 1

Also, Aker shared an update on plans for a public safety building in Jay County. The facility would include Jay Emergency Medical Service, Jay County Health Department and Jay County Coroner's Office, he said.

The county has been looking at the building where Jay Emergency Medical Service currently operates, with county officials discussing whether to expand the facility or build a new structure. IU Health has agreed to donate the building and 2 acres of land for the proposed facility.

Aker said some county officials and department heads recently met to review floor plans, saying there were indications it may not be a good idea to renovate the existing building.

Looking instead at building a new structure in the area would require IU Health Jay to provide additional land further to the north. County officials indicated they don't foresee an issue garnering support, but formal approval would still be required.

In other business, commissioners Aker, Duane Monroe and Doug Horn:

- Scheduled an executive session for 3:45 p.m. Jan. 12 regarding pending litigation with right-of-way access for an upcoming bridge project and a special session to follow at 4 p.m.
- Approved the following: a \$254,250 contract with Jay County Development Corporation for services next year; spending \$160,975.85 on buying and equipping three new

Commissioners updated on plans for public safety facility

vehicles for Jay County Sheriff's Office; paying \$20,000 annually over the next five years out of Jay County Sheriff's Office budget for new tasers — they include 45-foot probes — from Axon; spending \$36,059.76 on Microsoft 365 licensing and other software upgrades, including email backups and cloud managed protection and response, through LEAP Managed IT; paying \$21,350 to Top Shelf Concrete to install concrete in the enclosed salt bay for Jay County Highway Department; several claims for Jay Emergency Medical Service, including \$11,544.89 for a regular maintenance agreement with medical equipment company Stryker, \$1,300 for a medical director stipend for Jan Kornilow and \$1,160 for EMS student testing through Platinum Educational Group; spending \$19,579 to WA Jones of Columbia City for two snowplows; a \$7,500 grant application for Jay County Emergency Management Agency in hopes of receiving funds for purchasing the department a new drone and spending \$2,328.99 on an air compressor for the highway department.

- Tabled a \$3,000 claim from East Central Indiana Regional Planning District for Community Crossings

grant work with Salamonia and Pennville. Monroe expressed confusion about the claim, saying he had heard the organization hadn't been working in either community. Commissioners decided to invite director Bill Walters to the next meeting to discuss the claim and his organization's services included with the county's annual membership.

- Approved drainage plans from Lakeside Health and Wellness, which is planning development at the corner of Votaw and Charles streets in Portland.
- OK'd allowing Jay Emergency Medical Service director Jessica Curtis to sign claims for her department.
- Heard a monthly financial breakdown from JEMS director Gary Barnett. In November, the department had \$133,564.18 in expenses and \$70,668.63 in income. The department also made 121 ambulance runs, with 64 of those runs going to IU Health Jay.
- OK'd giving May access to a county credit card to purchase parts as needed for maintenance repairs.
- Accepted bids from US Aggregates and IMI Aggregates for next year.

Tax ...

Continued from page 1

Indiana's last major conformity update came in 2023, when Indiana adopted the Internal Revenue Code as of Jan. 1, 2023, bringing the state into line with pandemic-era relief measures such as the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan.

The state analysis provided to the Indiana Capital Chronicle on Monday projects that taxpayers would save nearly \$275 million over the next two years with the deduction for overtime wages.

The tax break on tips would total about \$80 million during that time, while the vehicle loan deduction was estimated at \$70 million.

The biggest of the business tax cuts amounts to an estimated nearly \$380 million over the two-year period.

But those savings mean revenue loss for the state budget.

The tax conformity debate will come in the wake of an improved forecast of state tax collections released last week. The new projections show that the state's cash reserves could grow to nearly \$5 billion by the middle of 2027 — more than double what was anticipated when the

new state budget took effect in July.

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Ryan Mishler, R-Mishawaka, was noncommittal on what tax code changes legislators will take up.

“Ideally it'd be nice to be revenue neutral on some of that,” Mishler said. “You know, some of them are cost savings and then some would cost money. So I guess we just have to balance that out.”

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

SERVICES

Sunday, Dec. 28

Overholser, Ruby: 2 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

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Photo provided

First responsibility

First graders at East Elementary School received recognition for demonstrating responsibility. Pictured in the front row from left are Reina Chub Xol and Oliver Yaney. In the back row are Kenna Penrod, Piper Bihn, Maya Kline. Not pictured is Camila Zaugg.

Dinner outfit shocks man

DEAR ABBY: I'm an active senior man. To keep my beard looking attractive, a hairstylist trims it every two weeks. I've had the same stylist for three years, and we have become good friends, to the point that she has invited me to her home for an evening meal with her family. I have been there several times, but on the last occasion, she did something odd and, I believe, disrespectful.

She is a very attractive 50-year-old lady. Arriving at her home, I was left in the company of her parents while she and her son (and perhaps her husband) prepared the food. When it was finished, she brought me my plate, then served her parents. What shocked me was that she was dressed in what she called a swimsuit. To me, it was the barest thong and bra I had ever seen and two inches from being naked. Earlier that day, when she was trimming my beard, she wore sweatpants and a sweat-shirt.

Her excuse for the "swimsuit" was that there was something wrong with a spot on her hip that required a patch, and she couldn't wear clothing over it because it would put too much pressure on the afflicted spot. (I don't buy it.) I felt that, if nothing else, she could have at least put on one of her husband's shirts. I felt embarrassed and insulted. Although I said nothing, I decided never to go to her home again. Should I tell her why if she asks? — LOOKING GOOD IN COLORADO

DEAR LOOKING GOOD: Your "barber(ella)" wasn't entertaining you alone. Her parents, son and (possibly) her husband were also there. She obviously felt comfortable enough around you that she wore something she usu-

Dear Abby



ally wears in that environment and had no idea you would react the way you have. From now on, politely refuse her dinner invitations. If she asks why, I don't think it would be rude to level with her that you felt embarrassed she wasn't more covered up. It's the truth.

DEAR ABBY: My wife's family is rather enmeshed. They have never really accepted me and are rude and unkind toward me. Recently, her father's attitude has shifted from rude to downright hostile. He has tried to physically assault me. (I didn't fight back.)

They watch our kids three days a week. I appreciate it and try hard to be a respectful and good person, but I am not sure what to do. My wife is unable or unwilling to take a strong stance against her father's behavior. Any advice? — PUNISHED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR PUNISHED: There is something wrong with your father-in-law. The next time he lays a hand on you, call the police and have him arrested, as you would ANY OTHER aggressor. As to your "enmeshed" wife, some joint sessions with a marriage counselor might help her to reorganize her priorities. However, if she can't manage that, you may need to decide if you want to remain married to her or climb out of that snake pit.

Taking Note

3:30 to 4:30 p.m., 5 to 6 p.m. and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Registration is required. Call or visit the library to sign up.
Other activities going on next month include:
•Adult book bedazzling, 1 to 2:30 p.m. and 6 to 7:30 p.m. Jan. 13

•Wintergreen "Take and Make" activity bags, available Jan. 19

Tree festival

Fort Recovery's annual tree festival is underway.
Fort Festival of Trees continues this week during normal business hours at Fort Recovery Public Library. Patrons may cast a vote for one of 19 decorated trees on display. The tree with the most votes earns the title of People's Choice Award, and the decorator's name is added to a plaque at the library.

Community Calendar

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

Wednesday

WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB — Will meet at 8 a.m. in the east room of Richards Restaurant. All women are invited to attend. Includes activities and devotional time.
PING PONG — Will be played from 11 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays at West Jay Community Center.
PORTLAND ROTARY CLUB — Will meet at noon each Wednesday in the cafe at John Jay Center for Learning, 101 S. Meridian St., Portland.
EUCHRE CLUB — Will meet at 2 p.m. the fourth Wednesday of each month at Chalet Village Health and Rehabilita-

tion in the North Lounge.
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.
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.

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 Fel-

lowship 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.

Sudoku

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

Level: Intermediate

Tuesday's Solution

2	9	3	5	1	4	8	7	6
4	1	6	7	3	8	5	9	2
7	8	5	6	2	9	1	3	4
3	7	8	2	6	5	4	1	9
5	2	4	3	9	1	7	6	8
1	6	9	4	8	7	3	2	5
6	3	1	8	4	2	9	5	7
8	5	2	9	7	3	6	4	1
9	4	7	1	5	6	2	8	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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Section will be distributed in The Commercial Review, The News Gazette & The News Times

Space for color ads is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Deadline for ads is Wednesday, Jan. 20

Contact Lindsey at
L.Cochran@thecr.com
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Small gesture was the stuff of art

Editor's note: This column is being reprinted from Dec. 21, 2005. There is a certain magic to the Christmas season. Traditions evolve over time, but it's important to keep the spirit of the season alive.

By JACK RONALD
The Commercial Review

No wonder Norman Rockwell came here to paint. It's just that sort of place. It was an afternoon last week before the big snow hit. I was trying to get an early jump on things by mailing some Christmas packages to our daughters in Boston. There I was, looking like a holi-

Back in the Saddle



day caricature, bundled up against the weather and carrying three large cardboard boxes, stacked so high I could barely see where I was going. Ascending the steps in front of the post office, I was watching for my footing out of the corner of my eye.

When I was about halfway up the steps, the door swung open. Out came a guy I didn't know. He was of medium build, and his hair was closely cropped. He had a beard that was only about half a step up from five o'clock shadow. He zipped past me, flipping through his mail and reading the envelopes as he went down the stairs. Then the Norman Rockwell moment happened. As he neared the foot of the steps and I neared the top, he swung suddenly around, ran

up the stairs and beat me to the door. Grabbing the handle, he swung it open to let me in. Then, remembering the second doors from the vestibule into the post office lobby, he followed me in and repeated the gesture. "Thanks," I said. "Thanks. And Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas," he said. And he was gone. And I stood there, having received a special Christmas gift in that simple act of courtesy and generosity, and grinned like an idiot. Norman Rockwell, I thought,

could have turned that into a classic cover for the old Saturday Evening Post. He would have captured the chill in the air and how ridiculous I looked with that big stack of packages. He would have done justice to the humanity of the moment. It was pure Americana. ***** *For the record, Rockwell did come here to paint at one point in the early 1950s. A print of his charming rendition of then-county-extension-agent Herald Rippey hangs in the Jay County Courthouse.*

Congress seems to have learned nothing

Boston Herald
Tribune News Service

It's understandable that members of Congress try to remain in office for as long as they can: if they worked in the private sector, they'd be fired by now. As the Hill reported, senators in both parties are bracing for another government shutdown next year after Republicans blocked a proposal to extend expiring health insurance subsidies. This is the same issue that triggered a 43-day government closure earlier this fall. The shutdown finally ended when eight Democrats, mostly centrists, voted to reopen the government in hopes that Republicans might agree to a bipartisan compromise. But "bipartisan compromise" has become an oxymoron in Washington, and the talks are foundering.

If lawmakers learned anything from the shutdown, it should have been the level of pain it inflicted on the American people. Most egregious: A halt in SNAP benefits, which had food assistance recipients panicked and scrambling. Keeping American families in need fed should have been Congress' lodestar. What did they learn? Nothing.

The concept of funding-as-leverage is back among Democrats, with the Jan. 30 government funding deadline the target to force Republicans to make major concessions on federal health care spending. "The fight is not over," said Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Can lawmakers please leave American families out of this fight? Surely they read the news stories of worried families straining food banks and citizens organizing help for community members. "We the people" doesn't mean that ordinary Americans step up as our representatives' in-fighting lays waste to federal assistance. We're in this together, unless you're a Capitol Hill elitist, protected by the shortages you impose on voters. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., called the Republican vote against extending the enhanced subsidies "an outrage."

What's outrageous is that these enhanced subsidies, passed as part of a COVID relief package under the Biden adminis-

Guest Opinion

We're in this together, unless you're a Capitol Hill elitist, protected by the shortages you impose on voters.

tration, were set to expire at the end of this year. They went into effect under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and extended by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. That's three to four years that could have been spent coming up with a forward-thinking plan. Three to four years to reach some sort of compromise, come up with another way to ease health care costs. Does no one have a calendar in Washington? But the kick-the-can-down-the-road mentality brought us here, on the heels of a government shutdown and staring down the barrel of another. Now the focus is on playing keep-away with "leverage." Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., is pushing hard to get a package of five appropriations bills passed next month to take away leverage from Senate Democratic progressives who want to threaten another shutdown to squeeze Republicans to back another Obamacare subsidy extension, according to The Hill. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, warned that if most of those bills are left in limbo by the end of January, Democrats could replay the shutdown strategy. "They may be tempted to do it, as disastrous as the last one was," he said. Voters deserve better than this.



Rural voters must stand up

By DYLAN HEWITT
The Press-Republican (Plattsburgh, New York)
Tribune News Service

Last week's announcement that Netflix plans to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery for over \$70 billion, and Paramount launching a hostile counter-takeover, should face aggressive scrutiny. If approved, either merger will create a corporate giant with massive control over what Americans watch, what they pay and, in some cases, which news reaches their homes. Entertainment makes headlines, but Netflix, Paramount and Warner aren't the only ones using well-connected lobbyists to sweet talk regulators. The same monopoly playbook is being deployed across every essential part of our economy, and in rural America, it means something more destructive: abandonment when we are no longer profitable enough. I'm running for Congress in New York's 21st District to take a sledgehammer to the monopolies that keep selling working families out just so Wall Street keeps getting richer. When everything costs more, we have less freedom. Paychecks that used to cover the basics now fall short, which leaves families to make impossible choices: heat our homes or buy groceries, fill our prescriptions or fix the car? That isn't the result of a free market, it's the result of corporate power without accountability. Look no further than healthcare. UnitedHealth Group dominates health insurance, hospital systems, physician practices and pharmacy benefits, controlling nearly every point where we pay for care. When one corporation has that much power, it sets the price, and we have no other options. At the same time, private equity firms buy up rural hospitals, load them with debt and shut them down

Dylan Hewitt



when returns don't satisfy. Here in NY-21, doctors have warned about an impending 114-mile medical desert as a result of our broken health care system. That's a question of life and death, and it's why I'll go to Congress and use its anti-monopoly powers to break up healthcare mergers that price us out of staying alive. Or look at your utility bill. In much of rural New York, families have no real choice of energy provider. Monopoly utilities like National Grid keep raising rates while infrastructure fails, while executives collect million-dollar bonuses. During long North Country winters, we can't shop around energy options, we just end up paying more. That's not freedom. Congress should take on price gouging with its teeth, break up exclusive service territories and ban utility company executives from receiving bonuses when rates rise faster than inflation. Where monopoly utilities fail, we need public utilities, municipal providers and rural co-ops that answer to customers instead of shareholders. Then there's our food. Just four companies control nearly all meat processing in the United States: Tyson, JBS, Cargill and National Beef. They set the prices our farmers receive and the prices North Country families pay at checkout. Farmers are locked into one-sided contracts while grocery prices soar and Big Agriculture posts record profits. Instead of spending billions

in tax dollars to patch over the damage caused by consolidation, Congress should use fair trade agreements to open markets where they can compete. Congress lets all this happen because the same corporations driving up your costs are funding their campaigns. For example, one of the top contributors to Elise Stefanik's campaign is Apollo Global Management, one of the largest private equity firms. They use the money they squeeze out of working families to buy political influence that protects their control. That's why I refuse corporate PAC money. You can't fight monopolies while taking their checks. As a White House trade official, I served our country to protect American workers and farmers against a rigged economy. I've seen firsthand how corporate consolidation hollows out local economies like ours. When companies have to compete for your business, they lower prices to win you over. Right now, they don't have to compete, and they jack up prices because you have nowhere else to go. Congress has the tools to actually make life affordable. Enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act from 1921 to rein in the meatpacking giants and rebuild regional supply chains where farmers get fair prices. Block further healthcare mergers that restrict access to life-saving care. Break up exclusive utility territories. The laws exist, but Congress just needs the courage to use them. I'm running to be that courage. We deserve an economy where hard work pays off, and the basics are affordable. Where competition is real, costs are fair and families have the freedom to build a life and plan for the future. That's worth fighting for, and it's time someone did.

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—Thomas Jefferson
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Area churches are listed with location, pastor and phone number, services and website or email address. All services are Sunday, unless otherwise indicated.

Asbury United Methodist
204 E. Arch St., Portland
Josh Arthur
(260) 726-8464
Services: 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.
asburyministries.org

Bellefountain United Methodist
440 S. 600 East
Pamela Freeman
Services: 9 a.m.

Bluff Point Friends
80 E. 650 South
Services: 10 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Boundary St. Paul
Corner of Treaty Line Road and county road 300 East
Ava Gannon
(260) 726-2373
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Bryant Wesleyan
209 S. Hendricks St.
Paul VanCise
(260) 997-6231
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.
bryantwesleyanchurch.com

Calvary United Methodist
301 N. Main St., Dunkirk
Susan Durovey-Antrim
(765) 499-0368
Services: 10:30 a.m.
susan.duroveyantrim@inumc.org

Christ Chapel
2535 Wabash Road, Fort Recovery
(419) 733-1469
christchapelfr.com

Church of the Living God (Miracle Missions)
8472 S. 800 East, Union City
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Church of God of Prophecy
797 N. Creagor Ave., Portland
Nanette Weesner
(260) 766-9334
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
nanybell@yahoo.com

Church of the Brethren
Floral and Chicago avenues, Portland
Kevin McClung
(260) 729-7295
Services: 10 a.m.

Church of the Living God
South Broad Street, Dunkirk
Services: 7 p.m., 7 p.m. Friday

Collett Nazarene
450 South, 1 mile west of U.S. 27
Billy Stanton
(260) 251-2403
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Cornerstone Baptist
211 E. Main St., Portland
Wayne Ward
(260) 726-7714
Services: 10 a.m.

Cornerstone Church of Pennville
190 W. Main St., Pennville
Jack Houck
(260) 729-2164
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Dunkirk Nazarene
226 E. Center St., Dunkirk
Tom Fett
(765) 768-6199
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Evangelical Methodist
930 W. Main St., Portland
Steve Arnold
(260) 251-0970
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

Fairview United Methodist/Jay County
2875 E. 200 South
Pamela Freeman
Lay leader: Beth Stephen
(260) 726-9184
Services: 10:15 a.m.

Faith Community
9560 W. 200 South, Dunkirk
Mark Acree
(260) 251-0987
Services: 10 a.m.

Family Worship Center
200 E. Elder St., Portland
Ronald Willis
(260) 726-4844
Services: 11 a.m., 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
thefamilyworshipcenter.org

Fellowship Baptist
289 S. 200 West
Hugh Kelly
(260) 726-8873
Services: 9 a.m., 11 a.m.
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
pastorkelly@fbc-portland.com

First Church of Christ
1049 Union City Road, Fort Recovery
David J. Nicholson
(419) 375-2860
Services: 10:30 a.m.
fccftrecovery.org

First Community Baptist
341 S. Meridian St., Redkey
Everett Bilbrey Jr.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. Wednesday

First Free Will Baptist
12369 W. 600 South, Dunkirk
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
Services: 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m., 6 p.m. Wednesday

First Presbyterian
402 N. Ship St., Portland
Rev. M. Rex Espiritu
(260) 726-8462
Services: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 10:15 a.m.
firstpcportland.org

Fort Recovery Church of the Nazarene
401 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery
(419) 375-4680
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Kids vision and teen ministries: 6 p.m. Wednesday
frnaz@frontier.com

Fort Recovery United Methodist
309 E. Boundary St., Fort Recovery
Rev. Carol McKay
(304) 617-0101
Services: 9 a.m.

Full Gospel Lighthouse Tabernacle
468 E. Washington St., Dunkirk
Robert Thomas
(765) 348-4620
Services: 6:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Thursday

Geneva First United Methodist
100 W. Line St., Geneva
Barry McCune
(260) 368-7655
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Geneva Nazarene
225 Decatur St., Geneva
(260) 525-8609
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
Sunday school: 9 a.m.
Prayer meeting: 6 p.m. Wednesday

Gilead Church
County road 650 North, one-quarter mile east of Balbec
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Hickory Grove Church of the Brethren
Indiana 1 and Indiana 26
Earl Doll
(260) 731-4477
Services: 10:30 a.m.

High Street United Methodist
435 High St., Geneva
Rev. Joseph Hampton
(260) 368-7233
Services: 9 a.m.

Holy Trinity Catholic
7321 E. Indiana 67, Bryant
Fr. Peter Logsdon
Fr. Martin Sandhage
Services: 8 a.m., 4:30 p.m. Saturday

Hopewell of Life Ministries
County road 200 South, 2 miles east of Indiana 1
Rev. Ruth Funk
(260) 251-8581
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Immaculate Conception Catholic
506 E. Walnut St., Portland
Fr. Peter Logsdon
Fr. Martin Sandhage
(260) 726-7055
Services: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, 10:30 a.m. Sunday

Kingsley Full Gospel
4030 S. 700 East, Dunkirk
Stuart Phillips
Services: 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday

Mary Help of Christians
403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
(419) 375-4153
Services: 4:30 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.

Mount Tabor Community Church
216 W. Pleasant St., Dunkirk
Scott McClain
(765) 768-7273
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Mount Zion United Methodist
County roads 600 East and 200 North
Rev. Darrell Borders
(260) 726-4786
Services: 9 a.m.

New Beginnings Holiness Church of Blaine
4017 W. 200 South
Randy Smith
(260) 251-2406
Services: 10 a.m., 6 p.m.
nbholiness.com

New Covenant Fellowship
1238 W. 450 South
Chuck Myers
(260) 251-0063
Services: 10:30 a.m.

New Life Ministries
415 S. Helen St., Portland
Dr. Kay Fairchild
(260) 223-2961
Services: 4 p.m.
drkayfairchild.com

New Mt. Pleasant United Methodist
5905 S. Como Road
Neil Butcher
(765) 499-7838
Services: 9 a.m.

Noble Congregational Christian
1964 N. 800 East
Aaron Huey
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Oak Grove United Methodist
829 S. Indiana 1
Neil Butcher
(765) 760-9085
Services: 10:45 a.m.

Pleasant Hill
9945 N. 800 East, Union City
Bruce Bryan
(765) 964-3664
Services: 9 a.m., 6 p.m.
mypleasanthillchurch.org

Portland Church of Christ
1217 W. Votaw St., Portland
Bob Graham
(260) 726-7777
Bible class: 9:15 a.m.
Services: 10:20 a.m.
Bible School: 6 p.m. Wednesday
portlandcoc.com

Portland First Church of Nazarene
920 S. Shank St., Portland
Steve Cecil
(260) 726-8040
Services: 10:45 a.m.

Portland Friends
226 E. Main St., Portland
Herb Hummel
(260) 202-9732
Services: 10 a.m.
Sunday school: 9 a.m.

Praise Chapel Church of God
4527 E. 1000 North (Jay-Randolph county line)
Rev. Josh Canfield
(765) 584-7045
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Redeemer Lutheran
Malin and Elm streets, Bryant
(260) 997-6787
Services: 9:30 a.m.

Redkey Faith Ministries
9811 W. Indiana 67, southwest of Redkey
Rev. Craig and Robin Cotherman
(765) 369-2920
Services: 10 a.m.
RedkeyFaith.org

Redkey First Christian
Union and Malin streets
Jeff Hammers
(765) 468-6172
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

Redkey United Methodist
122 W. Main St.
Lori McIntosh
(765) 369-2085
Services: 10:30 a.m.

Redkey Church of the Nazarene
801 W. High St.
Fred Stevens
(765) 369-2676
redkeynaz.org
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

River of Life
722 W. Main St., Portland
Susan Hathaway
(260) 729-1095
Services: 10:30 a.m.

The ROCK
1605 N. Meridian St., Portland
Matt Ransom
(260) 726-7474
Services: 10 a.m.
matt@therockkjc.org

Salamonia Church of Christ
3900 S. 600 East
Bruce Phillips
(260) 335-2017
Services: 9 a.m.

Second Chance at Life Ministries
228 S. Meridian St., Portland
Dave Keen (260) 251-8792
Mike Eads (260) 703-0733
Services: 10:30 a.m.

St. Joseph Catholic
1689 St. Joe Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 7:30 a.m. Sunday

St. Mary's Catholic
346 S. Broad St., Dunkirk
Rev. Kevin Hurley
Services: 5 p.m. Saturday, 5:30 p.m. Thursday

St. Paul Catholic
517 Meiring Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 11 a.m. Sunday

St. Peter Catholic
1477 Philothea Road, Fort Recovery
Rev. Alexander Witt
Services: 9 a.m. Sunday

Sugar Grove Nazarene
3984 N. 550 West, Portland
Pastor Mike Heckman
(615) 517-1017
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Bible study: 6 p.m. Wednesday

Sugar Grove Church
County roads 600 South and 1150 West, Dunkirk
Scott McClain
Services: 9 a.m.

Temple Baptist
17920 Indiana 167, Dunkirk
John Elam
(765) 768-7708
Sunday school: 10 a.m.
Services: 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., 7 p.m. Wednesday
7pillarsdirector@gmail.com
templebaptistin.com

The Church at Westchester
4487 E. 400 North
(260) 726-6311
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Services: 10:35 a.m.
churchatwestchester.org

Trinity Lutheran
301 N. Wayne St., Fort Recovery
Ron McCallum
(419) 375-4498
Services: 9 a.m. (contemporary service, fourth Sunday)

Trinity ArchBridge Church
323 S. Meridian St., Portland
Dan Vore
(260) 726-8391
Sunday school: 9 a.m.
Services: 10:15 a.m.
portlandtrinity.com

Union Chapel
6200 N. 375 West, Bryant
Interim Pastor Chris Kruchkow
(260) 849-0687
Services: 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.

Union Chapel Church of the Nazarene
County road 900 North (Jay-Wells county line)
Fred Stevens
Services: 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Walnut Corner
County roads 200 North and 500 West
Steve Rogers
(260) 251-1113
Services: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday school: 9:30 a.m.

West Walnut Church of Christ
204 W. Walnut St., Portland
Gil Alicea
(260) 726-4691
Services: 10 a.m.
westwalnutchurchofchrist.org

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Ron McCallum
218 E. High St., Portland
(260) 726-8832
zionlutheranportland@gmail.com
Services: 10:30 a.m.

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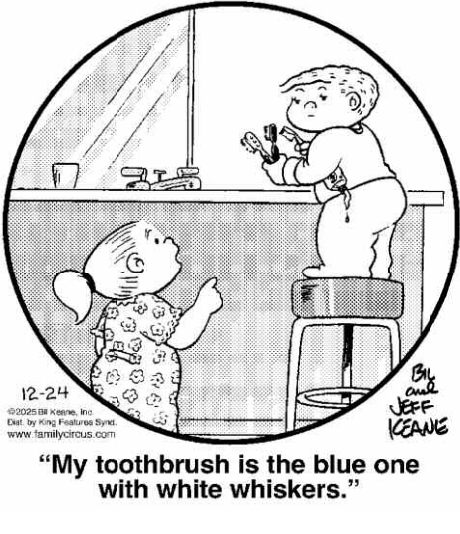
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SPEED BUMP Dave Coverly



THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

A stitch in time saves nine

South dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A K Q 5
♥ A 6 2
♦ 10 9 4
♣ 7 4 3

WEST
♠ 9 7
♥ J 10 9 7
♦ K 7 3
♣ K 9 5 2

EAST
♠ J 10 6 2
♥ 8 4 3
♦ A 6 5
♣ J 10 8

SOUTH
♠ 8 4 3
♥ K Q 5
♦ Q J 8 2
♣ A Q 6

The bidding:
1 ♠ South 1 ♣ West 1 NT North 3 NT East
Opening lead — jack of hearts.
Let's say you're declarer at three notrump and West leads the jack of hearts. You count your sure tricks and see you have seven. If the spades are divided 3-3, you'll have an eighth, and a successful club finesse would then give you nine.
However, these possibilities, though real, are not as promising as the chance of developing two tricks in diamonds. Besides, if the spades are going to break evenly and the club finesse is going to succeed, there's no hurry about testing them yet, since you can do that

Tomorrow: Two wrongs make a right.
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12-24 CRYPTOQUIP

OSTRHYK ZSXJ YISGQ Y
HFTRURSGZ, UAGCITK KGTFQRHF
JRVQ: "R'C JFQQRX" CGVV RX
VSA UOARZQCYZ."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE THE MAN HAD GROWN WEARY OF DWELLING IN A MONASTERY FOR MANY YEARS, HE THREW IN THE COWL.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals Y

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 23 Tickle 25 Teller's 1 Enjoyed 14 Mtn. stats 15 Docu-mentarian 2 Luminary Burns 3 Low-cost lodgings 4 Lyrics of dance 5 Ouzo flavor 6 Harvest 7 "Hamil-ton" actor many "spam" — Jr. emails 8 — Major (constel-lation) oratorio, with "The" 9 Tangles area muscle 10 Post-op gulf 12 "Glee" guitarist 28 Range brand 29 Arcade enthusi-ast 30 Poet Nash 31 April forecast 32 Epoch 34 Oodles 35 Nullify

DOWN 1 Envelope part 5 Carry- (travel bags) 8 Some corp. recruits 12 Rifle with foliage 13 Automa-ton, for short 14 Highly-rated 15 Morales of "Ozark" 16 "Today" alter-native, briefly 17 Took the train 18 Frolicking 20 "Casa-blanca" cafe owner 22 "White Christ-mas" star 26 Before 29 Speech fillers 30 Garden tool 31 Animated figure 32 Hog haven

Solution time: 23 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 12-24

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 12-24

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Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Two wrongs make a right

North dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 3
♥ A 9 8 5
♦ 10 8 2
♣ A K Q J 3

WEST
♠ 2
♥ Q 7 4
♦ K 7 6 5 4
♣ 9 7 4 2

EAST
♠ J 9
♥ J 6 3 2
♦ A Q 9 3
♣ 10 6 5

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 10 8 7 6 5 4
♥ K 10
♦ J
♣ 8

The bidding:
1 ♠ North 1 ♣ East 4 NT South 6 ♣ West
Opening lead — ?
The Blackwood convention, correctly used, is extremely valuable in bidding or avoiding slams. It is especially important in hands where the number of aces is the key to how many tricks can be made.
Assume you're South in this deal, which occurred in a tournament, and partner opens one club. The question of whether there is a slam depends almost entirely on how many aces partner has.
Without Blackwood — or a similar convention — you'd be totally in the dark as to how high to go.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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12-25 CRYPTOQUIP

RORVRYI HNODN JE DNYLAOH
TYXNDAYI EJD CALV YWJRX JON
JE VYOXY BIYRV' DNAOLNND:
BJTNX WJJCV.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HOLIDAY SONG ABOUT A DELICIOUS, CRUMBLY YULETIDE GIFT: "I'M GETTIN' MUFFIN FOR CHRISTMAS."
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals G

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 33 Activist Parks 34 In the past 35 Roker and Michaels 36 Prank 37 Film that intro-duced the song "White Christ-mas" 40 — -Aid 41 Slow-pokes 45 Kin of IMHO 47 Barn bird 49 Enfold 50 Info 51 "The Simp-sons" bartender 52 Verdi opera

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Jay swim makes light work of Jets

MONROE — Both the girls and boys are back in the win column.

The Jay County High School swim teams traveled to Adams Central to face the Jets on Monday. The JCHS girls whooped the Jets 142-17 while the boys picked up a 104-69 victory.

The girls (5-1, 3-0 Allen County Athletic Conference) nearly pulled off a clean sweep of the top spot in every race, but just missed the 50-yard freestyle.

Dual event winners for the girls include Maria Laux, who swam the 200 freestyle and 100 butterfly, Elly Byrum, who claimed wins in the 200 individual medley and 500 freestyle, and Brooklynn Byrum, who touched the wall first in the 100 freestyle and 100 breaststroke.

Other victories for the girls came from Kali Newell (1-meter diving), Avery Wentz (100 backstroke) and the relay teams.

Grady Warvel and Cooper Glentzer led the Patriot boys (3-3, 2-1 ACAC) with a pair of individual wins.

Warvel handled the 200 IM and 100 butterfly, while Glentzer swam the 100 freestyle and 100 breaststroke.

Lincoln Clamme and Carson Westgerdes both won an individual event as well, claiming the 200 freestyle and 500 freestyle, respectively.

The JCHS boys also got wins in the 200 and 400 freestyle relays while missing out on the top spot on the 200 medley

Local Roundup

relay, 50 freestyle, diving and 100 backstroke.

After a clean sweep, the girls hold their own destiny in the ACAC, while the boys will continue punching up at Bluffton.

Just short

HOUSTON, Ohio — A rough third quarter kept the Fort Recovery girls basketball team from picking up its first win of the season as it fell to the Houston Wildcats 38-36.

The Indians (0-9) made it to halftime with a 1-point lead but got outscored by Houston 10-5 in the third quarter. While FRHS was able to win the final period, Houston (6-3) did just enough to hold onto the lead.

After being held scoreless in the first quarter, Cameron Muhlenkamp put up 16 points to lead the Tribe. Bridget Homan also finished in double figures with 11 points.

Makenna Huelskamp and Kayla Gearke were the only other Indians to find the hoop with seven and two points, respectively.

Olivia Burks scored 17 points to lead the Wildcats.

Fort Recovery will get another shot at a win on Saturday against Preble Shawnee.



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Matthew Fisher swims the 100-meter backstroke on Dec. 5 when the Jay County High School swim team took on the Bluffton Tigers. On Monday, both the JCHS boys and girls teams beat Adams Central to round out the regular season meets against Allen County Athletic Conference teams.

Chiefs agree to deal to move to Kansas in 2031

By **SAM McDOWELL, MATTHEW KELLY and KACEN BAYLESS**

The Kansas City Star
Tribune News Service

TOPEKA, Kan. — The Kansas City Chiefs announced Monday their plans to move across the state line and build a new stadium in Wyandotte County.

The announcement came after a group of top Kansas lawmakers met in Topeka to approve an incentive package, and as Gov. Laura Kelly spoke at a news conference to announce some of the details.

The stadium will be built in Wyandotte County and will be surrounded by an entertainment district, Kelly said. A new team headquarters and a practice facility will be built in Olathe, Kan.

“Kansas is not a fly-over state. We’re a touchdown state,” Kelly said, calling today’s announcement “a little bit surreal.”

In a written statement, Chiefs owner Clark Hunt confirmed the news and added further details.

“Today we are excited to take another momentous step for the future of the franchise,” he said. “We have entered into an agreement with the State of Kansas to host Chiefs football beginning with the 2031 season.

“In the years ahead, we look forward to designing and building a state-of-the-art domed stadium and mixed-use district in Wyandotte County, and a best-in-class training facility, team headquarters and mixed-use district in Olathe, totaling a minimum of \$4 billion of development in the State of Kansas.”

Lawmakers approved incentives

A council of Kansas lawmakers in Topeka voted unanimously to approve a

deal negotiated with Chiefs ownership by Lt. Gov. David Toland on behalf of the Kansas Department of Commerce.

The lawmakers, eight members of Kansas Legislative Coordinating Council, met at 1 p.m. CST in the Kansas Capitol. Within an hour, they had met in executive session, out of the view of the public, and returned to vote unanimously to approve an incentive package that would allow the Kansas City Chiefs to move to Kansas.

Rep. Sean Tarwater, a Stilwell Republican, said he helped craft the souped-up stadium incentive package, and said STAR bonds are “a unique way to fund really big, cool, fun things.

“It’s a way to build things and allow the people who visit the attractions to pay for it, rather than putting it on the taxpayers’ backs.”

He had high praise for Lt. Gov. David Toland, a Democrat, who led negotiations with the Chiefs.

“I can’t really comment on the details until the governor speaks for all of the work that they did. They did a lot of really good work on this. David Toland is an incredible negotiator; and I feel like the state of Kansas got a great deal,” Tarwater said. Meeting in Topeka

Monday’s meeting at the Kansas Statehouse had loomed for days as it emerged to play a pivotal role in deciding which side of the Missouri border the Kansas City Chiefs would build their future on.

Top Republican and Democratic lawmakers in Topeka were expected to discuss the status of a possible massive subsidy deal to lure the Chiefs across the state line at the meeting of the Legislative Coordinating Council, or LCC.

See **Chiefs** page 9



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Notre Dame, USC will pause rivalry game

By RYAN KARTJE
Los Angeles Times
Tribune News Service

LOS ANGELES — One of college football’s longest-lasting and most storied rivalries will be taking a break in 2026.

After months of negotiations and public posturing, USC and Notre Dame have failed to reach an agreement to continue their rivalry series.

“USC and Notre Dame recognize how special our rivalry is to our fans, our teams, and college football, and our institutions will continue working towards bringing back The Battle for the Jeweled Shillelagh,”

the schools said in a joint statement they released Monday. “The rivalry between our two schools is one of the best in all of sport, and we look forward to meeting again in the future.”

USC has now turned its focus to finding a new nonconference opponent to fill out its 2026 schedule. The earliest the two rivals could play again, a person familiar with discussions told The Los Angeles Times, is the 2030 season.

Four months ago, USC athletic director Jennifer Cohen told The Times she was “hopeful” the two schools could come to an

agreement to continue the series.

USC had just extended an amended offer to Notre Dame, one that accommodated its rival’s desire for a multi-year agreement. The Trojans had previously been reluctant to lock in a long-term extension, given the uncertainty surrounding the future of the College Football Playoff format.

“We’re trying to extend the series,” Cohen said at the time. “This is an important series for us and for our fans and for our program, and hopefully we get to a resolution that supports

and is in the best interest of our program.”

Given the new demands of the Big Ten travel schedule, USC had hoped to move the game to the beginning of the football season. In her recent State of Troy address, Cohen noted, without mentioning Notre Dame by name, that USC wanted to “play our non-conference opponents in the Coliseum as early as possible every year.”

“USC is the only team in the Big Ten to play a nonconference road game after Week 4 in either of the past two seasons,” she wrote. “USC is also the only

team to play a nonconference game after Week 4 in both seasons.”

But after appearing for months to be on track for an agreement, discussions around playing the game during Week Zero of the 2026 season broke down in recent weeks.

The rivalry series dates back to 1926 and was only previously paused for World War II. With the exception of the 2020 pandemic-shortened season, the two schools had played for 78 straight seasons. They last met in October, with Notre Dame dealing USC a 34-24 defeat.

Chiefs ...

Continued from page 8

The Kansas Legislative Coordinating Council, or LCC’s, meeting was a significant revelation after state lawmakers passed a supercharged bonding program, known as STAR bonds, for the Chiefs.

The influential eight-member panel includes the top Democratic and Republican leaders in both chambers of the Kansas Legislature and oversees state business when lawmakers are not in session.

Kansas plans to fund the development through a supercharged version of its Sales Tax and Revenue, or STAR bonds program, which is designed to fund regional attractions by paying back developers with future sales tax revenue generated by tourists. Per the program, the bonds can fund up to 70% of a new stadium project. It’s not yet clear how much of a new Chiefs stadium will be publicly subsidized.

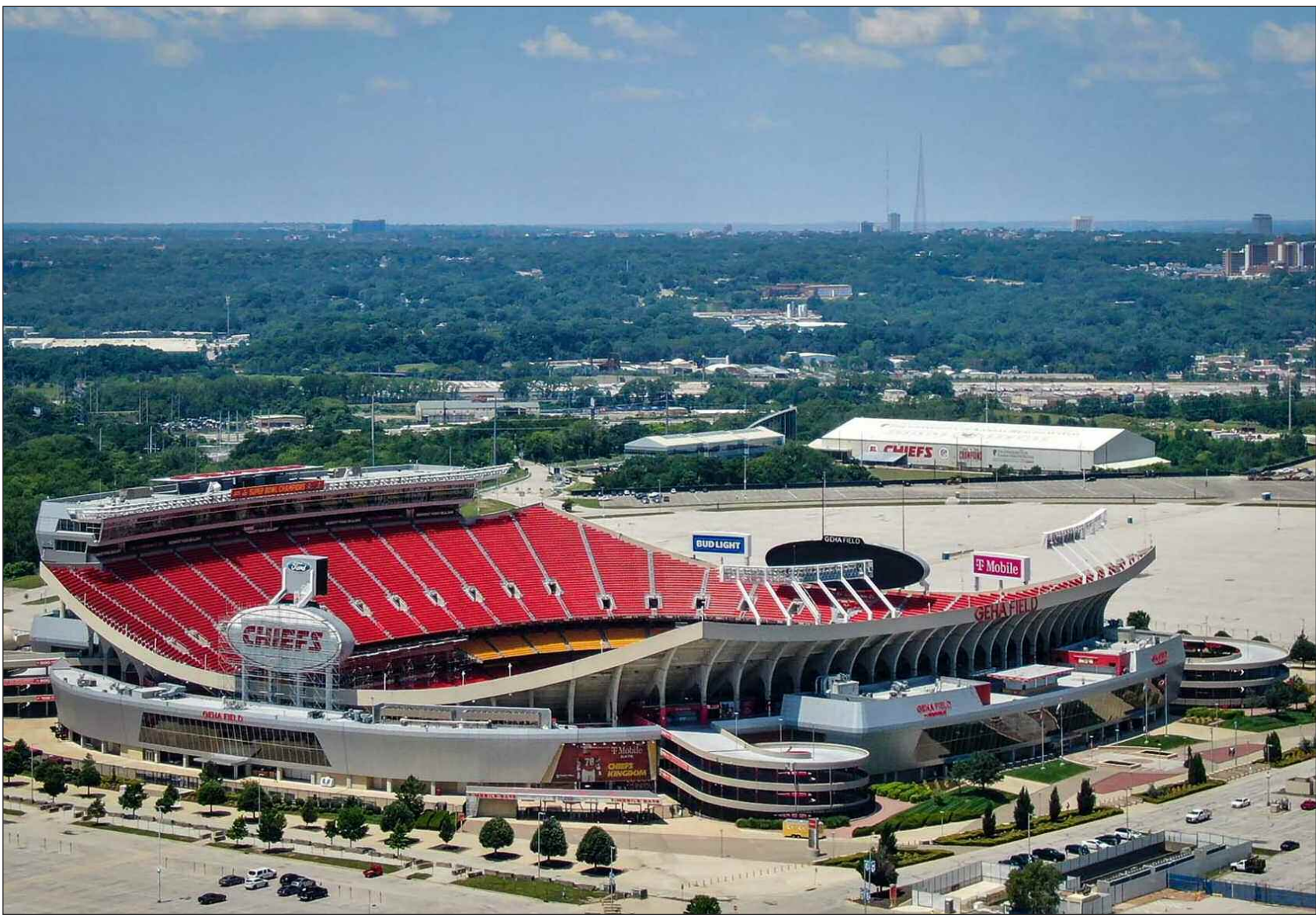
A new domed Chiefs stadium is estimated to cost around \$3 billion, not accounting for any practice facilities.

Arrowhead Stadium

The Chiefs have played at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., since 1972, and it’s been home to the birth of a recent football dynasty. Their current lease expires after the 2030 season.

The seismic decision comes after a year and a half of the Chiefs playing Kansas and Missouri officials off of each other to secure the most favorable stadium deal.

The move is likely to send shockwaves across the Chiefs’ home state of Missouri, where officials



Tribune News Service/Kansas City Star/Tammy Ljungbald

Arrowhead Stadium at the Truman Sports Complex in Kansas City. The Kansas City Chiefs recently announced plans to leave Arrowhead Stadium and jump the state line to build a new stadium in Wyandotte County by 2031. The Chiefs have spent the last 53 years playing at Arrowhead Stadium.

have routinely touted ongoing negotiations to keep the team inside state lines.

In April 2024, Jackson County voters rejected the 40-year extension of a local sales tax that would have funded a new Royals Stadium and major renovations at Arrowhead Stadium.

When the ballot question was rejected, Kansas officials seized on the opportunity to make their own pitch.

Missouri officials remained optimistic in the lead-up to the Kansas Legislative Coordinating Council’s vote that a competing incentive offer to

fund up to 50% of stadium costs with public money would be enough to keep the Chiefs from crossing the border.

“No matter how long we had to think about this as a possibility, it’s still a shock to the system,” Missouri House Speaker Jonathan Patterson, a

Lee’s Summit Republican, said in a phone interview after news of the Chiefs’ move broke.

Patterson characterized the Chiefs’ move as a business decision, saying that a new domed stadium in Kansas was an offer that Arrowhead Stadium in Missouri could not match.

“As easy as it would be to now play the blame game here in Missouri, I think it’s best we regroup and get together as city, state and county leaders and see what we can do about maybe keeping the Kansas City Royals in Missouri,” Patterson said.

Sports on tap

Local schedule Saturday Jay County — Boys basketball vs. Wapahani — 6 p.m. Fort Recovery — Girls bowling vs. Parkway at Speedway Lanes — 9 a.m.; Wrestling at Parkway — 9 a.m.; Girls basketball vs. Preble Shawnee — 11 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. Parkway at Speedway Lanes — 1 p.m.; Boys basketball at South Adams — 6 p.m.	TV schedule Today 8 p.m. — College football Hawai'i Bowl: Cal vs. Hawai'i (ESPN) Thursday 12 p.m. — NBA: Cleveland Cavaliers at New York Knicks (ESPN) 2:30 p.m. — NBA: San Antonio Spurs at Oklahoma City Thunder (ESPN) 4:30 p.m. — NFL: Detroit Lions at Minnesota Vikings (CBS) 5 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at Golden State Warriors (ESPN) 8 p.m. — NBA: Houston Rockets at Los Angeles Lakers (ESPN) 8:15 p.m. — NFL: Denver Broncos at Kansas City Chiefs (ABC) 10:30 p.m. — NBA: Minnesota Timberwolves at Denver Nuggets (ESPN) Friday 1 p.m. — College football GameAbove Sports Bowl: Central Michigan vs. Northwestern (ESPN) 3 p.m. — Premier League soccer: Manchester United at Newcastle United (USA)	4:30 p.m. — College football Rate Bowl: New Mexico vs. Minnesota (ESPN) 7:30 p.m. — NBA: Boston Celtics at Indiana Pacers (FDSN Indiana) 8 p.m. — College football First Responder Bowl: FIU vs. UTSA (ESPN)
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