

New developer



Photo provided

Colby Cline, a Jay County High School graduate who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Ball State University, will step into his new role as Jay County Development Corporation's community developer on Tuesday. Cline fills the position that was discontinued for several years as the county tried a different approach. Cline brings a variety of experience, including as an urban designer for Design Collective in Baltimore.

Braun brings back a board for training programs

Group was needed to comply with federal law on workforce initiatives

By TOM DAVIES
Indiana Capital Chronicle
indianacapitalchronicle.com
Indiana Gov. Mike Braun has re-established a board overseeing the state's workforce training programs just months after a similar board was dissolved. Braun signed an executive order saying the State Workforce Development Board was needed to comply with federal law on the implementation of state and federal workforce initiatives.

The governor's office said the board would serve "as a central coordinating body to align employers, education and training providers, and state agencies around measurable workforce outcomes."

Braun's order released Monday comes after the 21-member Governor's Workforce Cabinet was eliminated as of July 1. The Workforce Cabinet was enacted in 2018 at the request of then-Gov. Eric Holcomb.

The state budget bill approved by the General Assembly last year repealed the Workforce Cabinet from state law and transferred its activities to the state Department of Workforce Development.

Braun has not yet named members to the board or specified its makeup.

The order said Braun will be a board member and that the governor will appoint other members from those nominated by Indiana business organizations, trade associations and labor unions.

Board members must include officials responsible for state workforce programs and from local government.

"We will use the Indiana Workforce Development Board to bring together an elite team of job creators and workforce development experts to help create new opportunities and bigger paychecks for Hoosier workers," Braun said in a governor's office statement.

The workforce board's reinstatement follows a renewed push by some Republican lawmakers to reduce Indiana's roster of more than 250 state boards and commissions. Legislation specifying which board might be eliminated had not been released as of Friday.

Cline will step into revived role Tuesday

By BAILEY CLINE
The Commercial Review
Jay County native Colby Cline has been fascinated with historic buildings in the area since he was 8 years old — it's what led him to pursue a career in architecture. As the county's new community developer, one of his goals involves helping with local restoration efforts. Cline joins Jay County Development Corporation as its newest employee Tuesday. "I wanted to become an architect because I was always watching our downtown buildings being boarded up and not maintained very well," explained Cline, a rural Portland resident. "I always had an interest since I was very young in (determining what it would) take to get our downtown looking nicer."

A 2012 Jay County High School graduate, Cline earned his bachelor's degree in architecture and his master's degree in urban design from Ball State University. He served as an urban designer for Design Collective in Baltimore, working on mixed-use building projects around the Washington, D.C., Baltimore, New Jersey and Maryland areas for about a year before returning to Indiana. Cline worked for a few other companies, including DELV Design and real estate developer Flaherty & Collins Properties of Indianapolis, before returning with his wife, Haley, and children to Jay County in 2022. Cline helped out at his family's business, 4TC Corporation, for about six months before transitioning

into a job with architectural firm Fanning Howey of Celina, Ohio. When the position opened up with JCDC, he said, it seemed like fate. The job combines his love for architecture as well as an untapped desire to delve into the entrepreneurial world, all while keeping it local. "The fact that this job popped up right in my hometown where I want to raise my family and my kids, it just is perfect. Too perfect," he said. "It's been wonderful to be able to work within my profession and be back in a town of, you know, 6,000 people, a county of 20,000 people." JCDC has not had a community developer since former Jay County Community Development director Christy Shauver's resignation in 2022. The

role was discontinued for a few years, with the county hiring a community coordinator to serve in a similar capacity through a two-year contract with East Central Indiana Regional Planning District. Following Jay County Commissioners' decision in August not to renew the contract, JCDC decided to reinstate its community developer and grant writer position. JCDC executive director Ceann Bales said the organization lucked out with Cline, pointing to his education and his local tie. "We are just so thrilled, we really believe (and are) confident he's going to help us grow Jay County, but really his unique skill set will help our office," she said. See Developer page 2

Retrospect



The Commercial Review/Laurie Chen

Undecking the halls

Twenty-five years ago this week, Portland residents were taking down their holiday decorations. Pictured from the Jan. 3, 2001, edition of The Commercial Review, Karen Alexander picks up a strand of Christmas lights at her home at 615 W. Arch St., Portland. Alexander had put up the decorations over the Thanksgiving 2000 weekend.

Deaths

Alva Eley, 88, rural Portland
Charles Meinertding, 87, Fort Recovery
Jacqueline Cowan, 70, Portland
Vivian Bennett, 76, Montpelier
Details on page 2.

Weather

The temperature was in the 20s throughout the day Friday with a high of 26.
Skies will be mostly cloudy today with a high of 30. Expect a low of 16 tonight. Sunday's high will also be 30 before Monday's high climbs to 40.
See page 2 for an extended outlook.

In review

Cat Tales is hosting a Chips & Trims event from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. today. Nail trimming will be available for dogs and cats for \$5 to \$10, depending on size. Microchipping will be available for \$20. Cat Tales is located at 601 N. Charles St., Portland.

Coming up

Tuesday — Coverage of the JCHS boys basketball game at Muncie Central.
Wednesday — Details from next week's Jay School Board meeting.
Thursday — Results from the Jay County girls basketball game against Concordia.








places around the country, such as community gathering spaces. He voiced his own desire to establish more of those locations in the area.

"The more ... actively engaged communal spaces you have, the better your people of your community are going to know each other and have common interest," he said. "The collaboration really starts at a communal level. So the community developer title, I really like that title, because it all starts with community."

"A big focus of mine is making (Jay County) a more welcoming Hallmark kind of (place) for people to live in," added Cline.

CR almanac

Sunday 1/4	Monday 1/5	Tuesday 1/6	Wednesday 1/7	Thursday 1/8
 31/26 Mostly sunny skies on Sunday when the low may reach the mid to upper 20s.	 42/35 Monday's weather looks like mostly sunny skies with a low around 35.	 48/36 Cloudy on Tuesday when the high may reach the mid to upper 40s.	 44/35 Mostly sunny skies, when the high will be around 44 degrees.	 53/49 Thursday's forecast shows a nearly 80% chance of rain.

Lotteries

Hoosier
 Midday
 Daily Three: 9-7-4
 Daily Four: 1-7-3-0
 Quick Draw: 4-5-11-
 16-19-24-25-28-29-31-35-
 43-44-47-48-63-65-69-75-
 76

Ohio
 Midday

Pick 3: 7-4-7
Pick 4: 9-9-9-5
Pick 5: 0-3-1-4-9

Powerball
Estimated jackpot: \$64 million

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$157 million

Markets

**Cooper Farms
Fort Recovery**

Corn.....	4.56
Feb. corn	4.58

**POET Biorefining
Portland**

Corn.....	4.55
Feb. corn	4.49
March corn	4.49

Wheat	4.62
ADM	
Montpelier	
Corn.....	4.38
Feb. corn	4.40
Beans	10.29
Feb. beans	10.36
Wheat	4.87
Heartland	
St. Anthony	
Corn.....	4.53
Feb. corn	4.48
Beans	10.01
March beans	10.16
Wheat	4.62

Today in history

In 1521, German priest Martin Luther was excommunicated by Pope Leo X. Luther's questions about Roman Catholic practices started the Protestant Reformation. (On the same day, in 1962, Pope John XXIII excommunicated Fidel Castro for changing Cuba into a communist state.)

In 2011, Jay County Commissioners granted a rollover of vacation time for a highway

department employee. Superintendent Ken Wellman asked commissioners to roll over two weeks of vacation time for the department's road foreman, who wasn't able to take the time off because of weather-related work.

In 2016, a 15-2 first half run was key for the Jay County High School girls basketball team as it fought off Fort Recovery for a 56-51 victory.

—The CR

Citizen's calendar

Monday
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, 1616 N. Meridian St.
7:30 p.m. — Fort Recovery Village Council, village hall, 201 S. Main St.

Tuesday
3:45 p.m. — Jay County Commissioners executive session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.
4 p.m. — Jay County

Commissioners special session, auditorium, courthouse, 120 N. Court St., Portland.

4 p.m. — Jay County Development Corporation, Community Resource Center, 118 S. Meridian St., Portland.

5:30 p.m. — Portland Park Board, fire station, 1616 N. Meridian St.

6 p.m. — Jackson Township Advisory Board, 5341 W. 400 North, Portland.

7 p.m. — Pennville Town Council, town hall, 105 N. Washington St.

7 p.m. — Salamonia Town Council, Schoolhouse Community Center.

Obituaries

Aug. 22, 1937-Jan. 2, 2026



Eley

He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He will be missed.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Wanda; his sons Robert and James; granddaughters Milissa and Wanda; step-granddaughters Tina, Jean and Alison; step-great-granddaughters Angel and Tory; and great-grandson Alexander.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2026, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home in Portland. Burial will follow at Bluff Point Cemetery, south of Portland.

Oct. 27, 1938-Dec. 31, 2025

A black and white portrait of John W. Bickel, an older man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a checkered shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

Meinerding

Chuck was born on Oct. 27, 1938, in Portland, Indiana, to the late Jerome and Virginia (Miller) Meinerding. Chuck is survived by his wife of 63 years, Natalie (Shannon) Meinerding of Fort Recovery, Ohio; his children, Michael (Jill) Meinerding of Coldwater, Ohio, and Angela (Todd) McAbee of Fort Recovery, Ohio; his grandchildren Hunter (Brian) Hemmelgarn, Bryce McAbee, Shannon (Nate) Neargarder, Matt Meinerding and Hudson McAbee; his six great-grandchildren; and his siblings Thomas (Susan) Meinerding, Marcella (Meinerding) Bodle and James (Mary) Meinerding.

Capsule Reports

Rear collision

Multiple rural Portland residents were injured after a Portland man's car struck the vehicle in front of him while driving on Indiana 67 about 12:21 p.m. Wednesday.

Ryan J. Acker, 38, was driving his 2015 Subaru Legacy northeast on the highway near Indiana 26. He told police he noticed a log truck behind him turning onto Indiana 26 with another semi driving southwest behind it, and he worried the other semi would drive into his lane.

When he looked forward, he noticed the 2021 Toyota Highlander in front of him stopped and preparing to turn. Acker swerved but wasn't able to avoid hitting the Highlander driven by 43-year-

Both vehicles were towed, with damage estimated between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

Pole hit

A Portland woman lost control of her truck and hit a pole about 11:38 a.m. Thursday along county road 300 South.

Laurin H. Cline, 30, was driving a 2007 Ford F-150 west on the road near county road 400 East when she lost control as a result of the slick road surface. She told police she wasn't able to regain control and went off the north side of

the road, hitting a utility pole registered to Jay County REMC. Her vehicle stopped in a ditch on the north side of the road. Damage is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Her truck was towed.

Hit tree

A Portland woman lost control of her vehicle and crashed into a tree about 12:45 p.m. Wednesday. Maisey B. Keller, 18, was driving a 2006 Honda Element north on Mount Pleasant Road when she lost control on the slick road surface, causing her to slide off the west side of the road and hit a tree with the passenger side of the car. The vehicle was towed, with damage estimated between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

Jan. 5, 2026, at Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church. Burial, with full military honors, will follow in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Guests may visit with Chuck's family on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, from 1 to 5 p.m. and again on Monday from 9 to 10 a.m. at Brockman Boeckman Funeral Home, Fort Recovery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be given to the Cancer Association of Mercer County or St. Jude's Children Research Hospital.

Condolences may be shared with the family by visiting brockman-boeckmanfh.com.

Jacqueline Cowan, age 70, of Portland passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025, at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie.



Cowar

She was born in Portland, the daughter of Andrew and Mary Helen (Somers) Derringer. She had worked for Ken Kunkle Chevrolet, Teledyne Portland Forge in Portland and UTA in Berne. She was an avid reader and enjoyed crocheting.

Surviving are a daughter, Angela J. Clemmons (husband: David) of Portland; one brother, William Derringer of Troutdale, Oregon; four granddaughters, Bailey Hood, Elizabeth Brooks, Avery West and Megan Slack; and three great-granddaughters.

She was preceded in death by two sisters, Rebecca Wyatt and Jeanne Craig.

Funeral services will be Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m. in the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home with Pastor Allen Schoonover presiding. Visitation will be on Wednesday from 3 to 6 p.m. Burial will be in the Green Park Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to Jay County Public Library.

Condolences may be expressed at bairdfreeman.com.

Vivian Lynn Bennett, Montpelier, a relative of Geneva residents, Jan. 18, 1949-Jan. 1, 2026. Services will be held at 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at Walker & Glancy Funeral Home, 109 W. Windsor St., Montpelier.

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.

SERVICES

Monday, Jan. 5
Meinerding, Charles: 10:30 a.m., Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 403 Sharpshurg Road, Fort Recovery.
McIntosh, Sharon: 2 p.m., Williamson-Spencer and Penrod Funeral Home, 208 N. Commerce St., Portland.

Wednesday, Jan. 7
Cowan, Jacqueline: 6 p.m.,
 Baird-Freeman Funeral Home,
 221 N. Meridian St., Portland.

Thursday, Jan. 8
Bennett, Vivian: 4 p.m.,
Walker & Glancy Funeral Home,
109 W.Windsor St., Montpelier.

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*Ads must run in January

The Commercial Review

✉ L.Cochran@thecr.com ☎ (260) 726-8141

Ask us about reduced rates for running the same ad a second time!

Fort Recovery library hosting used book sale

Fort Recovery Public Library will host a used book sale Jan. 12 through Jan. 17.

Free will donations will be accepted for materials from the sale. The library accepts donations of clean and gently used items. Items not accepted are materials in poor condition, encyclopedias, dictionaries, textbooks, magazines, cassettes and VHS tapes.

The library is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fridays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

For more information, call the library at (419) 375-2869.

Learning series

John Jay Center for

Taking Note

Learning's next senior lunch and learn series is coming up this week.

Rusty Inman will share a presentation on maple syrup harvesting at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at the learning center. Lunch starts at 11:30 a.m., with the presentation to follow.

Reservations are \$5 for seniors 55 years old and older.

Also, next month, Kim McAbee will present "Travel to Israel" Feb. 5 at John Jay Center for Learning. To learn more, call (260) 729-5525.

Coworker hasn't been honest

DEAR ABBY: A co-worker, "Erin," has been allowed to work from home since the COVID-19 pandemic, while the rest of us came back to the office. We function alongside each other much like a small family. We have no drama, no office politics and an overall great atmosphere. Erin's absence has caused a strain on our team and has fueled resentment. Many feel it's unfair.

It so happens that Erin has accepted a new job and hasn't told our boss because she's worried about how the boss will react. When I found out, I did tell the boss even though Erin told me not to. So now I am caught in the snare of my own little trap of deceit. Advice? — TANGLED WEB IN NEW MEXICO

DEAR TANGLED WEB: I'm sorry you didn't mention what the benefit structure is at your company. Erin took a job on the Q.T. while still on your boss's payroll. In the state where I live (California), that would be a reason to fire her. I do not regard enlightening your boss about what Erin did as deceitful. I think what you did was the right thing to do and loyal to the company.

Dear Abby



DEAR ABBY: I'm nearly 70, and suddenly I'm remembering things from the past that I haven't thought about in years — mostly conversations in which I wish I had responded differently. (I've never been really quick about responding to things.) Now they keep popping up, and I can't seem to stop thinking about what I wish I had said. I don't know why this is happening or how to stop it. Any advice? — MEMORY-RIDDEN IN MICHIGAN

DEAR MEMORY-RIDDEN: If this is how you are spending your leisure time, you may have too much of it on your hands. When this happens, try to redirect your thoughts to something else. Then remind yourself that none of us can change the past, but we can LEARN from it so we don't

repeat our mistakes (or errors of omission) in the future. If what's happening leads to depression or anxiety, you might benefit from consulting a therapist about it.

DEAR ABBY: I have been an avid reader my entire life, and you have always given solid advice, especially when it comes to topics regarding proper etiquette. That's why you were the first person I thought to ask when my friend shared this information from our Catholic priest on how to attend Mass with reverence. "Don't cross your legs. Crossing your legs is considered a disrespectful posture." I'm all for proper manners and posture, but I have never heard this before. — WONDERING IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR WONDERING: This is the first I have heard of it, but your friend may be correct. In some Orthodox cultures outside North America, crossing one's legs is considered to be very disrespectful. Here in America, however, it is not taboo, but it is considered to be "too casual and relaxed" for church.

Community Calendar

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

Saturday

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

ROAD RIDERS FOR JESUS — Will meet at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month in the West Walnut Church of Christ fellowship hall, 204 W. Walnut St., Portland. (Please enter from the door facing the alley on the north side of the building.) For more information, call (260) 726-8463.

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

Sunday

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

Monday

PORTLAND BREAKFAST OPTIMISTS — Will meet at 7 a.m. for breakfast at Richards Restau-

rant.

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

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP — Will meet at 1 p.m. the first Monday of each month at Portland Place, 430 W. Lafayette St. For more information, call (800) 589-1121.

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.

Tuesday

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.

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

SMART RECOVERY — A group for those struggling with addiction that focuses on motivation, coping with cravings, managing thoughts, feelings and behavior, and living a balanced life meets at 11 a.m. each Thursday in the IU Health Jay Outpatient Behavioral Health Center, Entrance C, 510 W. Votaw St., Portland.

JAY COUNTY TRAILS CLUB — Will meet at 6 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at Jay Community Center.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY — A 12-step Christian recovery program meets at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at A Second Chance At Life Ministries, 228 S. Meridian St. in Portland. For more information, call Brenda Eads at (260) 726-9625 or Dave Keen at (260) 251-8792.

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, call (260) 251-3259.

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GENERAC

Sudoku

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

Level: Advanced

Friday's Solution

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

Our Wedding special section will be distributed in:

*The Commercial Review (Portland),
The News-Gazette (Winchester)
and The News Times (Hartford City)*

full-page color – \$625

full-page B&W – \$525

1/2-page color – \$425

1/2-page B&W – \$325

1/4-page color – \$275

1/4-page B&W – \$225

Big business card (3x3.5) – \$110

Business card (2x2) – \$52

Space for color ads is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.
Deadline for ads is Tuesday, Jan. 20.

GRAPHIC PRINTING
NEWSPAPERS

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Recording officers is not a crime

Las Vegas Review-Journal

Tribune News Service

An official with the Department of Homeland Security recently suggested that following or recording federal law enforcement officers “sure sounds like obstruction of justice.” The statement was given to Reason magazine in response to a direct question, was confirmed in writing and followed by a warning that DHS will prosecute such conduct “to the fullest extent of the law.”

It’s also ridiculous and an affront to First Amendment case law.

As Reason’s C.J. Ciaramella observes, the issue is not whether officers deserve protection from

Guest Editorial

real interference or danger. They do. The issue is that recording or observing officers in public is not — in and of itself — an act of interference. It is a protected form of gathering information about how the government exercises its authority.

Seven federal circuit courts have upheld the public’s right to record police or federal agents, as long as the person filming is not

physically obstructing the officers. In one 2017 decision, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that “a First Amendment right to record the police does exist,” subject to reasonable limits. The 10th Circuit echoed that view in 2022 when it allowed a First Amendment claim to proceed after a man was barred from filming a traffic stop. Courts have also protected the public’s right to alert others to police activity, recognizing it as part of public discourse and not a crime.

This principle is not new. In 1987, the Supreme Court struck down a Houston ordinance that made it a crime to interrupt or challenge an officer. Justice William Brennan wrote that the

freedom to oppose police action without risking arrest helps distinguish a free country from a police state. Recording officers is simply a modern way of maintaining that freedom.

State attempts to limit filming have largely failed. Mr. Ciaramella points out that Arizona’s 2022 law restricting filming within 8 feet of police was blocked by a federal judge. Other states have passed distance requirements, but these measures face challenges because of vague language and concerns about arbitrary enforcement.

Simply recording officers is not an act of aggression. It is a method of ensuring transparency, reinforcing public trust and

creating an independent record of government conduct. It is central to accountability in a democratic society. As Mr. Ciaramella points out, some of the most serious allegations against federal officers in recent years have surfaced only because bystanders had the courage to hit “record.”

DHS officials must be free to go about their business. But bystanders must also be free to document their activities as long as they do not willfully obstruct the administration of justice. The Constitution has already answered the question. The right to observe government power is not subject to the whims of those who carry badges.

Father’s boats weren’t criminals

By CARMEN ROJAS

Progressive Perspectives
Tribune News Service

I know boats. Catamarans where water laps at your legs. Fishing boats with bright colors and splintered seats. Even though I grew up in the heart of Silicon Valley in San José, California, I come from a line of Venezuelans who were fed by the ocean. And, like all the fishermen before him, my father’s sunworn skin smelled of salt.

My father was born on Margarita, the largest of Venezuela’s hundreds of islands. As a kid, I’d sit on the shore watching my dad and his brothers disappear with empty boats and reappear with a bounty of fish of all kinds. They would cook on the beach on an open fire, in giant pots, surrounded by family and loved ones, listening to llaneras and playing tambor.

In the United States, the current administration would have you believe that the only use for boats is drug trafficking. President Donald Trump and his allies are exploiting the fact that most Americans have no idea what people in Venezuela are like. They are betting that their descriptions of drug gangs, rapists and criminals will be enough to justify extrajudicial murder.

Yes, murder. That is what it is and what we should call it. Once again, our government is using our tax dollars to kill people far from us, lying about it, and getting away with it.

My dad left Venezuela in 1957 because he grew up under a different dictatorship, one that ended with the leader, Marcos Pérez Jiménez, living in Miami for years until he was finally extradited. My father came to the United States to escape the danger he was in and to seek opportunities for a better life.

All over the world, including here in the United States, people use boats to deliver food, make a living and visit family. From my own time in Venezuela, I know that boats are how people who live on the ocean stay alive. They are our freeways, our subways and our cars.

The Trump administration has cruelly assumed — without evidence or investigation — that each and every Venezuelan

Carmen Rojas



boat is part of the drug trade. It has directed attacks that have killed more than 100 people based on those assumptions, people whose lives, jobs and intentions none of us can know, all in service of a vague and convenient war on drugs.

But if this administration is so concerned about how drugs have ravaged cities, communities and families in our country, why have they cut \$345 billion from addiction and overdose protection services?

And if Trump was really interested in curbing drug trafficking, why did he pardon the former president of Honduras Juan Orlando Hernández, sparing him from a 45-year prison sentence for his role in bringing 400 tons of cocaine north through Honduras into the United States?

The truth is that Trump has been inching toward war with Venezuela, including the recent targeting of fishing boats in the Caribbean and the Pacific, for one, sadly predictable reason: oil. He has ordered the killing of people on boats as part of an effort to gain control over the nation with the largest oil reserves in the world.

When you watch this administration and its spokespeople tie themselves in knots to describe the why and whatnot of the murders they’ve committed with our tax dollars, remember that when they had the chance to address the opioid epidemic here in the United States, they instead cut programs and pardoned drug dealers.

When they’ve had the chance to create a more robust safety net to keep people healthy, they’ve hoarded all the resources for themselves and their friends. When they’ve talked about protecting people from danger, it’s never people like me and you. And it’s never people like my father.

.....

Rojas is president and CEO of the Marguerite Casey Foundation, a private, independent grant-making foundation based in Seattle.



Braun enters '26 in freefall

By JOHN KRULL

TheStatehouseFile.com

Santa Claus left Indiana Gov. Mike Braun a true lump of coal in his stocking for Christmas.

A Public Policy Polling survey of 636 registered voters in Dubois County — where Braun is from — found that the Republican governor is about as popular there as pot-holes and busted water pipes.

Overall, 16% of the folks in Dubois County approve of the job Braun is doing as the state’s chief executive while 62% disapprove and 23% don’t have an opinion one way or the other. (Rounding up accounts for the extra 1% in the total.)

There was a typical gender split in the poll results. Dubois County men like their hometown governor about as much as they do the common cold, with 23% approve/56% disapprove numbers. Women view with the same affection they do a terminal disease and come in at 10% in approval with 66% disapproval.

Again, this is in the governor’s home county — the place where the people know him the best.

That’s one bit of bad news for Braun.

Another even worse bit is that Dubois County is a GOP stronghold, one of the counties in Indiana where Hoosier Republicans count on recording solid — sometimes even spectacular — majorities on election days. If Braun is in trouble there — and this poll indicates he’s in real trouble — then he must be one step away from disaster in other parts of the state.

If these results are a shock to the governor, then he’s the only one in the state — and maybe in the whole world — who’s surprised.

Weeks ago, a veteran Republican political professional told me that GOP internal polling showed

John Krull



Braun with a 24% approval rating.

At the time of that conversation, I expressed skepticism. This was Indiana, I said, a solidly red state. How could any Republican poll that poorly?

The GOP pro attributed it to a politically deadly combination of arrogance and inexperience.

Braun never has lost an election, but that undefeated record can be deceiving.

In every race he’s been in, he’s drawn upon his significant personal fortune to outspend — even bludgeon — his opponents. When he ran in the Republican primary for one of Indiana’s U.S. Senate seats in 2018, the entire party was stunned by how much of his own money Braun was willing to spend to gain the GOP nomination and ultimately the seat.

But because he didn’t have to ask others to invest — or at least invest greatly — in his candidacy, he missed the opportunity to build a coalition that would sustain him in times of trouble. He built his political house on sand rather than solid ground.

He also has little experience dealing with political adversity. He left his Senate seat after a single term and therefore never had to defend a legislative record of — we’ll be charitable — insignificant achievements.

He repeated the pattern while running for governor. He made a costly mistake at the convention by letting some of his delegates leave early, thus allowing upstart lieu-

tenant gubernatorial candidate Micah Beckwith to slip past Braun’s own candidate for the second spot and claim the nomination.

It was a careless error of which veteran politicians took note. They realized that the governor either doesn’t know how to count or doesn’t pay attention.

That did not seem to affect Braun’s estimation of his own status. Every incoming gubernatorial team comes in thinking they are world-beaters, but I’ve never heard more complaints — from both Republicans and Democrats — than I did about the Braun squad’s overweening self-regard.

Folks in both parties were eager to see the governor take a fall. He obliged them — first by allowing himself to be dragged into stupid no-win fights like the squabble over how Indiana University should be run and then by transforming himself from a governor into an errand boy for one of President Donald Trump’s worst ideas.

The battle over gerrymandering Indiana mid-decade cost Braun in two ways.

First, it proved, once again, that he either doesn’t pay attention or can’t count. The votes never were there and everything Braun and Trump did to try to manufacture them backfired.

Second, it showed that Braun doesn’t have an agenda or convictions of his own. Few people will follow a leader who doesn’t have a clear idea of where to go or why the journey even matters.

That’s why Mike Braun is in so much trouble.

.....

Krull is director of Franklin College’s Pulliam School of Journalism and publisher of TheStatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students.

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— Thomas Jefferson

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1-3 CRYPTOQUIP

QY NVC XSZS AGHRRQRB IV
YVCRU H MLNUQTQRB MOEVLG,
NVC MEVCGU LRVX IEHI
STSZNVR S XQGG UZVA VCI.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHY DID A DARING
FISH SWIM ALL THE WAY FROM ONE SEASHORE
TO ANOTHER? TO GET TO THE OTHER TIDE.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals H

Trivial Review

(Answers are printed below, upside down.)

Around the bowls

- 1) What is the oldest continuously played
bowl game not tied to New Year's Day?

2) In what city was college football's
Bluebonnet Bowl played?

1) The Sun Bowl
2) Houston

1-5 CRYPTOQUIP

TXAB N TZFEC ENSA M
VZZJPAO PZ XAEG YA PNCQ FG
TNPX M VOZZY, N YNLXP
PMSA YQ JTAAGNBL GNEEJ.
Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU WERE PLANNING
TO FOUND A SKYDIVING SCHOOL, YOU SHOULD
KNOW THAT EVERYONE WILL DROP OUT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals W

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to shopping.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 25 = A)

A. 7 21 25 16 10 25 12 7 8 9 16
Clue: Buying or selling something

B. 12 25 10 22 8 24 21
Clue: Store employee

C. 12 9 11 19 9 16
Clue: Form of discount

D. 19 11 21 12 22 25 10 24
Clue: Buying something

Answers: A. transaction B. cashier C. coupon D. purchases

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to shopping.

TSOER

Answer: Store

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born in Barbados on December 31, 2008. I discovered my passion for acting as a young girl, and I attended the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. My first professional role was in the short film, "Red." Now I'm one of the "outcasts" on a Netflix series about a girl from an unconventional family.

Answer: Evie Templeton



Food FACT:

This sweetened beverage was once a bitter drink made from roasted cocoa beans.

Answer: Hot chocolate

How they say that in...

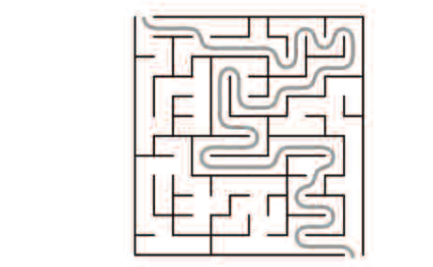
English: Mug
Spanish: Taza
Italian: Tazza
French: Mug
German: Tasse

Maze Craze

Can you find your way through the maze?

START

FINISH



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

DEC 29

1607: Pocahontas pleads for John Smith's life when tribal leaders attempt to execute him.

1845: The United States annexes the Republic of Texas.

1913: Cecil B. DeMille begins filming Hollywood's first feature film.

NEW WORD

COCOA

a hot drink made from cocoa powder mixed with sugar and milk

SHOPPING WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

aisle, bag, barcode, boutique, budget, cart, cashier, checkout, clearance, coupon, delivery, discount, inventory, mall, merchandise, online, price, purchase, receipt, refund, retail, sale, shopper, storefront

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Pickle holder
4 Slightly
8 Nuisance
12 Miner's quest
13 Sassiness, informally
14 "As — saying ..."
15 Mauna —
16 Voting group
17 Classic Kinks song
18 Coffee station appliance
21 Red — beet
22 U.K. military fliers
23 Unspoken
26 "Uh-huh"
27 — Pérignon (French bubbly)
30 Lawyer Clooney
31 Selleck of "Blue Bloods"
32 New Delhi dress
33 Part of LGBTQ

DOWN

34 Resistance unit
35 Fitness program with Latin music
36 South, in Spanish
37 Note after fa
38 Dessert-creating appliance
45 Cast a ballot
46 United — Emirates
47 Eggs
48 Country singer Jackson
49 Actress Hatcher
50 Stannum for one
51 Interior designer Berkus

19 Bar chart
20 Pirate's
21 Auctioneer
22 Villain in "Wonder Woman"
23 Kids' game
24 "I — Rock"
25 Low isle
26 — Kippur
27 Weir
28 Sphere
29 Ms. Farrow
31 Menaces
32 1973 Toni Morrison novel
34 Wilder's " — Town"
35 Dead man walking?
36 Public outburst
37 Brainy
38 Tennis great Lendl
39 Pop flavor
40 Coup d'—
41 Geometric calculation
42 Japanese instrument
43 Satan's forte
44 McNally partner

Solution time: 26 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31 32

33 34 35

36 37

38 39 40 41 42 43 44

45 46 47

48 49 50

51 52 53

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

How to capture a king

North dealer. East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

The bidding:

North 1♦ East 1♠ South 2♥ West Pass

Opening lead — ace of spades.

East almost surely has the king of clubs for his vulnerable overall. South should therefore seek some way other than a club finesse to escape a club loser.

After due deliberation, South sees a light at the end of the tunnel. He begins by cashing the A-K of trump, East showing out, and then makes his bid for fame and fortune by cashing the ace of clubs, deliberately shunning the finesse. Next comes the Q-J of trump, producing this position:

North ♦ A Q 8 ♣ J

South ♥ 8 ♦ 5 ♠ Q 10

When South now cashes the eight of hearts, discarding the jack of clubs from dummy, East is kaput. Whatever he discards, declarer wins the rest of the tricks.

In adopting this line of play, South rejects the tempting club finesse in favor of an approach that will succeed if East has four or more diamonds in addition to the king of clubs. Given the circumstances, this offers declarer his best chance of getting home safely.

Contract Bridge By Steve Becker

Famous Hand

West dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

The bidding:

West Pass North 1♠ East 1♥ South 3NT

Opening lead — six of spades.

It's difficult to fathom some of the oddities that occur in world-championship play. Consider this deal from the 1966 match between Italy and North America.

At the first table, with Lew Mathe North and Bob Hamman South for North America, the bidding went as shown. Certainly the North-South hands justify bidding a grand slam in notrump, since that contract is sure to come home with a heart lead, or if the clubs are divided 3-2, or if the jack of dia-

monds falls as the A-K-Q are led, or by a heart finesse if that proves necessary, or possibly, by a squeeze.

But it is much easier to proclaim the merits of seven notrump with the cards exposed than it is to bid it at the table. North's four-club bid was Stayman, asking partner if he had a four-card major, and South's four-diamond response denied having one. North then leaped to six notrump, knowing that the combined point count was at least 35 or 36 — a point or two short of the 37 that would make a grand slam mandatory — and that was the end of the auction.

When the deal was over and Hamman had wrapped up 13 tricks, it seemed likely that the Italian North-South pair at the other table would either tie the result by also bidding six notrump, or would gain 750 points by reaching seven notrump.

This was certainly a reasonable expectation, especially with the highly accurate Giorgio Belladonna and Walter Avarelli occupying the North-South seats. But when Eric Murray and Sami Kehela held the East-West cards against them, the bidding surprisingly went:

West Pass North 1♥(!!) East 3NT South Pass

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Bread spread
4 Nullifies
9 Chow down
12 Assoc.
13 Fund
14 Previously
15 "La La Land" actress
17 Old Olds
18 Airport screening org.
19 Move fast
21 Shrewd
24 "Alternatively," in texts
25 ISP giant
26 Like Abner
28 Malia's sibling
31 "Arrivederci —"
33 Gut-punch reaction
35 Ocho —, Jamaica
36 Indian tea region
38 Chart format
40 Republicans

DOWN

1 Average guy
2 Pitcher's pride
3 "Ben-Hur" studio
4 Yacht or schooner
5 Toronto's province
6 Wedding words
7 "Tiny Bubbles" singer
8 Workout wear
9 Capri-corn, for one
10 Baseball's Tommie
11 Animated figure

16 Off-roader (Abbr.)
20 Fly like an eagle
21 Irene of "Fame"
22 Bathrooms, to Brits
23 Night-marish address
27 Prune
29 Owl call
30 Nile vipers
32 Swiss river
34 Greek orchard planting
37 Gold diggers?
39 Deletes
42 Judge's prop
44 Arles buddy
45 Bagel variety
46 Tied
50 Rock's Brian
51 Pen tip
52 Coquet-tish
53 Away from WSW

Solution time: 21 mins.

Saturday's answer 1-5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34 35

36 37 38 39 40

41 42 43 44

45 46 47

48 49 50 51 52 53

54 55 56

57 58 59

By Bil Keane



MA'AM?

WHAT KIND OF TEST ARE WE HAVING TODAY?

MULTIPLE CHOICE?

GOOD! I CHOOSE NOT TO TAKE IT!

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I KEEP LOOKING... BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN A FOX.

FOXES ARE HIGHLY INTELLIGENT CREATURES... THEY ARE SNEAKY AND CLEVER... WE HAVE TO BE PATIENT, PASQUALE.

WE ALSO LOVE COMPLIMENTS

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MY BEHIND WAS ITCHING A LOT LAST NIGHT!

HYGIENE?

NO! IT MEANS A MASSIVE STORM IS HEADED OUR WAY! TWENTY OR FORTY INCHES OF SNOW!

WOW! THAT'S JUST WHAT I PRAYED FOR!!

WOW! PRAYERS AND ITCHY BEHINDS REALLY WORK!

DONT WASH TOMORROW. I'M GOING TO PRAY THE SNOW NEVER MELTS!

DAVID T. STEVENS

MY FAMILY USED TO SIT DOWN AT THE DINNER TABLE EVERY NIGHT.

EATING IN FRONT OF THE TV IS OUR FAMILY TRADITION.

Eric Penner

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

"GOING"? WHY WOULD YOU THINK I'M GOING SOMEWHERE?

YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP

"DRESSED UP"? I'M WEARING JEANS AND A SHIRT

OH

SOMETHING TELLS ME I NEED TO UP MY GAME WITH MY REGULAR SWEATPANTS AND PAJAMA TOP HOME-OFFICE ENSEMBLE

DAVID COVERLY

WELL, THIS BIRD SURE SEEMS HAPPY! LISTEN TO HIM SING!

TWEET!

OH, HE IS!

HE GETS THIS WAY EVERY JANUARY 5TH...

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT JANUARY 5TH?

IT'S NATIONAL BIRD DAY!

TWEET!!

YEAH, BESIDES...

...IT'S THE DAY WE CAN GET A NEW BIRD!

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15

DID YOU BORROW MY TOOTHBRUSH?

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT WAS ME?

NOBODY ELSE BRUSHES LIKE YOU!

GREG + MORT WALKER

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The Commercial Review *We Deliver*

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The
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word
12 insertions. \$1.52/
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26 insertions. \$1.77/
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PM
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closing. Closing to be
held within 45 days or
less from day of auction.
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INGS~POND
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BLACKFORD
SCHOOLS
3 BEDROOM ~ 2 BATH
1576 SQUARE FEET~2
CAR GARAGE
TRACT 1: Buildings~
Pond~ Approx. 5 Acres
TRACT 2: Approx. 30
Acres
TRACT 3: Tract 1 & 2
Combined
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Public Notice

STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF JAY, SS:
IN THE JAY CIRCUIT COURT
2025 TERM
In the Matter of
the Unsupervised
Administration of the Estate of:
June Lucas, Deceased
No. 38C01-2512-EU-000033
NOTICE OF
ADMINISTRATION
Notice is hereby given that
Judith Hammers and Vivian
Champ were, on the 23rd day of
December, 2025, appointed
Personal Representatives of the
estate of June Lucas deceased,
who died on November 4, 2025.
All persons who have claims
against this estate, whether or
not now due, must file the claim
in the office of the Clerk of this
Court within three (3) months
from the date of the first
publication of this notice, or
within nine (9) months after the
decedent's death, whichever is
earlier, or the claims will be
forever barred.
Dated at Portland, Indiana, this
23rd day of December, 2025.
HINKLE, RACSTER,
SCHEMENAU & LANDER
121 W. High Street
Portland, IN 47371
Attorney
Melissa Elliott
Clerk of the Circuit Court,
For Jay County, Indiana
CR 12-27-25,1-3-26-HSPAXLP

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Patriots fall in ACAC contest

WOODBURN — The Patriots just took down a sectional opponent. But then they turned around and dropped a game to a conference foe.

The Jay County High School girls basketball team let the game slip away in the second half in a 56-54 loss to the Woodlan Warriors on Friday.

The Patriots (8-3, 2-1 Allen County Athletic Conference) gave up 30 points in the second half, including 15 to Alyssa Anderson, who had a team-high 17 points, alone. Woodlan (7-6, 5-0 ACAC) also got five points from Kaitlyn Sterling (11 total) in the third quarter, seven from Savannah Scheumann (12) in the fourth and Jamma McDaniel added a late 3-pointer as well.

Hallie Schwieterman carved up the Warriors, dropping 30 points. She had 21 in the first half before cooling down slightly in the second.

Raylah Newton was the only other Patriot to reach double figures, finishing with 10. Karsyn Schwieterman added nine points, while Natalie May had five.

Tribe falls

FORT RECOVERY — A 20-point third quarter wasn't enough as the Fort Recovery boys basketball team fell to the Lincolnview Lancers 65-51 on Friday.

The Tribe front-court put in some work, as Breaker Jutte, Brody Barga and Hudson Overman combined to score 44 points. Barga and Overman both had 15 points, while Jutte scored 14.

But it wasn't enough as the Indians (6-2) couldn't slow down Max Hammons or Marshall.

Hammons, who dropped 21 and 18 points, respectively for Lincolnview (7-1).

Colson Post, Dylan Klenke and Douglas Bihn all scored a bucket in the game, while Grant Fortkamp hit a free throw.

FRHS trailed 31-21 at halftime and while it nearly doubled its point total from the first two periods, it gave up 18 in the third to keep Lincolnview in control.

Sports on tap

Local schedule

Today

Jay County — Boys wrestling at Monroe Central – 8:30 a.m.; Boys basketball at Muncie Central – 6 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Girls bowling in tournament at Rollhouse Fairfield – 9 a.m.; Boys bowling vs. St. Henry at Plaza Lanes – 1 p.m.; Boys basketball vs. Botkins – 4:30 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball at Parkway – 10 a.m.

Monday

Jay County — Junior high girls basketball at Delta – 5:30 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball vs. Delta – 6 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Freshman boys basketball at New Bremen – 5 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at New Bremen – 5 p.m.

Tuesday

Jay County — Swim at Bellmont – 6 p.m.; Girls basketball vs. Concordia Lutheran – 6 p.m.; Boys wrestling at Coldwater – 7 p.m.; Junior high boys basketball at Yorktown – 6 p.m.; Junior high girls basketball vs. Yorktown – 6 p.m.; Junior high wrestling at Coldwater – 7 p.m.

Fort Recovery — Swim in tri-meet at South Adams – 5:30 p.m.; Middle school boys basketball at Memorial – 5:30 p.m.; Middle school girls basketball vs. New Bremen – 5 p.m.

TV schedule

Today

11 a.m. — College basketball: Virginia at NC State (ESPN2)



The Commercial Review/Andrew Balko

Madison Gage of the Jay County High School girls wrestling team works on Wes-Del's No. 15 Sophia Gropp during the IHSAA Sectional 10 hosted by Muncie Central on Friday. Gage took the two-time state qualifier all the way to the ultimate tiebreaker but got called for locking hands three seconds before she would have won on a rideout.

Jay junior falls to No. 15 Gropp in ultimate tiebreaker; second-place finish leads Patriots in sectional tourney

By ANDREW BALKO
The Commercial Review

MUNCIE — Wrestling can be a finicky sport.

Athletes need to be locked in because just one slip up can result in being put on your back for a pin.

No one was more engaged than Madison Gage.

The junior took the 15th-ranked wrestler in the state of Indiana not just three rounds, not just the sudden death overtime, not just the two extra overtime tiebreakers but all the way to the ultimate tiebreaker.

Gage couldn't have wrestled better for 8 minutes, 27 seconds. But with just three seconds left, one slight slip up cost her the title.

Despite falling to No. 15 Sophia Gropp of Wes-Del 1-0 in the 155-pound title match, Gage wrestled the most intense contest for the Jay County High School girls wrestling team as it finished fourth at the IHSAA Sectional 10 tournament hosted by Muncie Central.

Despite taking the loss, Gage (23-9) moves on to the IHSAA Regional 3 hosted by Muncie Central on Jan. 10 by placing fourth or higher. Also qualifying were Katie Rowles, Amara Crawford, Maleah Parsons, Gracie Rowles, Alison Tipton and Kenady Lyons.

Gage's runner-up finish also was an improvement from last year when she struggled against Gropp

(25-4), who is a two-time state qualifier and finished seventh in 2024.

"It was really tough, but I just kept a good mindset all the way through," Gage said. "I think today was a step forward, because last year I went against her, and I lost within the first period and I ended up placing third."

"This year, I ended up going against her in the finals and went three periods even (quadruple) overtime and only lost by a point and I ended up getting second. So I think today was a pretty good day."

After a scoreless first period, Gage chose to start the second period on top, and multiple times started to turn Gropp's shoulders, but couldn't hold it long enough to score any near fall points. When Gropp started on top in the third period, Gage had a chance to escape 15 seconds in but the Warrior regained control.

After a clean sudden death period, all eyes in the gym were glued to the girls battling for the title.

In the first tiebreaker, Gage failed to turn Gropp. In the second, Gropp chose to start on bottom and tried for a quick escape, but Gage got her arms around Gropp's torso to push her back to the mat.

The duo had to take things to the ultimate tiebreaker, in which Gropp again chose to be bottom.

Gage was able to keep control, but just three seconds away from a rideout victory, the official called Gage for a locked hands violation to put Gropp up 1-0.

"I think, because I had a needle through, which is when you have your arm between their legs and you have your other arm, with the arm that's in between their legs," Gage said. "I think he thought that hands over hands, locked hands. I didn't, but it's OK."

After the violation, Gage only had three seconds to try and pin Gropp, but was unsuccessful.

Gage's runner-up finish helped the Patriots to 153 points in the tournament, placing them fourth. New Palestine had just five more points for third place, while Hamilton Southeastern won with 170 — which also earned them a berth to the team state tournament — and Carmel was second with 164.

"Almost what we expected," said JCHS coach Troy Jacks. "I thought we had eight that could go through. We ended up getting seven. Sometimes that's just the way it goes when you wrestle them out, but we're a young team. ..."

"When you take a step back and look at where you are, my goal for the season was to win sectional. We weren't that many points out even though we finished down the line. But a lot of underclassmen, which means a lot of future

points. The girls are excited to go wrestle at the regional, so I feel like we did great."

While Gage didn't win her weight class, No. 7 Katie Rowles (100 lbs) and No. 16 Crawford did.

Katie Rowles (25-3) rolled through Tess Self (9-11) of Carmel in 1:30 and walked Hamilton Southeastern's Charlotte Drago (23-12) onto her back in 1:38.

Crawford (24-4) faced New Palestine's Miranda LaRoche (13-10) in the 190-pound title match and also ran a walker for a pin in 1:35. (The JCHS sophomore had a more difficult battle in the semifinal, in which she beat No. 10 Josie Belloti (15-4) of Carmel by throwing a headlock back for a fall in 5:02.)

No. 7 Parsons (27-7) also competed for a sectional crown, but dropped the 135-pound title match to No. 5 June Wagner-Gilbert (29-3) of NPHS after being picked up and thrown to the mat leading to a quick pin in 27 seconds.

The Patriots also had four more girls advance to the regional through the consolation side of the bracket, including Gracie Rowles in the 125 weight class. The JCHS freshman hadn't competed since Nov. 22, when she broke her collarbone at the Mooresville Team Duals.

Gracie Rowles (8-6) had to wrestle an opening match against Muncie Central's Abygail Berkshire (2-18).

She was a little timid to open but started attacking after the first minute. She won the match in the second round with a reversal into a pin at 2:28.

"I was scared I was gonna break it again," Gracie Rowles said. "It's reassuring I was able to win matches and I just need to learn from the ones I lost."

Gracie Rowles' lone point in the quarterfinal loss to Masha Newson (9-11) of Carmel came on a locking hands violation.

She beat Monroe Central's Kinlee Taylor (12-14) in 27 seconds but her make-or-break match started off disastrous. She was down 7-0 to Savannah Scott (18-16) of HSEHS midway through the second period before a full Nelson violation gave her a point.

She made a breakthrough with 16 seconds left, rolling Scott with a reversal right into a half Nelson for the pin.

"She just lifted up pressure and I just slid in and pulled out a move," she said.

Rowles ended up dropping her third-place match against New Palestine's Kalissa Jacobs (19-11) to earn the No. 4 seed at the sectional.

Tipton (12-12) and Lyons (7-11) finished fourth at 115 and 235, respectively.

Chloe Torres (5-12) and Reagan Mannah (4-6) also finished in fifth for the Patriots in the 105 and 145 brackets.

Tuesday

5 p.m. — TGL golf: The Bay Golf Club at Atlanta Drive GC (ESPN)

7 p.m. — NBA: Cleveland Cavaliers at Indiana Pacers (FSDN Indiana)

7 p.m. — College basketball: Duke at Louisville (ESPN); Michigan at Penn State (FS1); Cincinnati at West Virginia (ESPN2)

7:30 p.m. — NHL: Florida Panthers at Toronto Maple Leafs (TNT)

8 p.m. — College basketball: Iowa at Minnesota State (BTN)

8 p.m. — NBA: Miami Heat at Minnesota Timberwolves (NBC)

9 p.m. — College basketball: Texas at Tennessee (ESPN2); Texas Tech at Houston (FS1); TCU at Kansas (ESPN)

11 p.m. — NBA: Dallas Mavericks at Sacramento Kings (NBC)

11 p.m. — College basketball: San Diego State at Nevada (FS1)

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To have an event listed in "Sports on tap", email details to sports@thecr.com

5 p.m. — College basketball: Minnesota at Northwestern (BTN)

6 p.m. — College basketball: Wichita State at Charlotte (ESPNU)

7 p.m. — College basketball: Illinois at Penn State (BTN)

8 p.m. — NFL football: Seattle Seahawks at San Francisco 49ers (ABC)

8 p.m. — College basketball: Purdue at Wisconsin (FOX)

Sunday

12 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Illinois at Michigan State (BTN)

1 p.m. — NFL football: New Orleans Saints at Atlanta Falcons (FOX)

1 p.m. — NFL football: Indianapolis Colts at Houston Texans (CBS)

1 p.m. — College basketball: Florida Atlantic at Tulane (ESPN2)

1 p.m. — College basketball: UAB at South Florida (ESPN2)

1 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Stanford at North Carolina (ESPN)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Marquette at UConn (NBC)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Rutgers at Ohio State (BTN)

3 p.m. — NBA basketball: Indiana Pacers at Orlando Magic (FSDN Indiana)

3 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Mississippi at Texas (ESPN2)

3 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Baylor at Iowa State (ESPN)

12 p.m. — NHL hockey: Pittsburgh Penguins at Detroit Red Wings (ABC)

12 p.m. — College basketball: Providence at St. John's (FOX)

12 p.m. — College basketball: Kentucky at Alabama (ESPN)

12 p.m. — College basketball: Villanova at Butler (TNT)

12:30 p.m. — Premier League soccer: AFC Bournemouth at Arsenal FC (NBC)

1 p.m. — College basketball: Oklahoma State at Texas Tech (ESPN2)

1:30 p.m. — College basketball: BYU at Kansas State (CBS)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Houston at Cincinnati (FOX)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Baylor at TCU (TNT)

2 p.m. — College basketball: Vanderbilt at South Carolina (ESPN)

3 p.m. — College basketball: Tennessee at Arkansas (ESPN2)

3:45 p.m. — College basketball: Duke at Florida State (CBS)

4 p.m. — NHL hockey: Montreal Canadiens at St. Louis Blues (FSDN Indiana)

4 p.m. — College basketball: LSU at Texas A&M (ESPNU)

4 p.m. — Speed Skating: U.S. Olympic Trials (NBC)

4:30 p.m. — NFL football: Carolina Panthers at Tampa Bay Buccaneers (ABC)

5 p.m. — College basketball: Colorado at Arizona State (ESPN2)

4 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Penn State at Wisconsin (BTN)

4 p.m. — Speed Skating: U.S. Olympic Trials (NBC)

4:25 p.m. — NFL football: Detroit Lions at Chicago Bears (FOX)

4:25 p.m. — NFL football: Kansas City Chiefs at Las Vegas Raiders (CBS)

5 p.m. — College basketball: Bradley at Murray State (ESPN2)

5 p.m. — Women's college basketball: LSU at Vanderbilt (ESPN)

6 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Indiana at Maryland (BTN)

8 p.m. — College basketball: Washington at Indiana (BTN)

8 p.m. — College football: North Central vs. Wisconsin River Falls (ESPN)

8:20 p.m. — NFL football: Baltimore Ravens at Pittsburgh Steelers (NBC)

9 p.m. — College basketball: Loyola Marymount at Gonzaga (FOX)

Monday

6:30 p.m. — College basketball: Columbia at Cornell (FS1)

6:30 p.m. — Women's college basketball: Minnesota at Michigan (BTN)

7:30 p.m. — College football FCS National Championship: Montana State vs. Illinois State (ESPN)

8 p.m. — Unrivaled soccer: Rose BC at Lunar Owls BC (TNT)

8:30 p.m. — College basketball: USC at